



The Los Angeles Urban Rangers is an interdisciplinary collective of local writers, artists, planners, architects, geographers, scientists, environmental historians, and educators. In conjunction with the *garden LAb experiment*, the Los Angeles Urban Rangers will offer a series of interpretive programs to address notable aspects of urban ecology in Los Angeles. Please join us at Art Center's South campus (a.k.a. the Wind Tunnel), at the Campfire Circle, on Saturdays throughout the exhibit. Sample Campfire programs are described here. Please be sure to check [www.gardenlab.org](http://www.gardenlab.org) for the most up-to-date schedule of events.

*Project Organizers:* Emily Scott, Jennifer Price, Sara Daleiden, Therese Kelly



## Thoreau Goes to Los Angeles

How can we write about nature in L.A.? Why have nature writers shunned this megalopolis? Why should L.A. in fact be a mecca for nature writing? Why would an interest in cities save nature writing from being so terribly boring? Ranger Jenny Price explores these questions and more as she surveys a wide range of urban nature stories that this literary genre has entirely ignored. Join her as she describes our connections to nature in L.A. through such topics as mango body whips, murdered chihuahuas, the social geography of L.A.'s air, and the saga of the L.A. River – which is arguably the most important L.A. nature story of all.



## Sustainability vs Sprawl: Revisiting Banham's Four Ecologies

Long maligned as the poster child of smog, sprawl and unsustainable development, Los Angeles has in the past few years surprisingly emerged as a leader in "green" urbanism. The three "greenest" buildings in the U.S. are located in Los Angeles, pioneering efforts in integrated watershed management throughout the L.A. River basin, locally-based efforts to reclaim abandoned industrial lands for parks, gardens and open space, and innovations in transit planning in the L.A. region are just a few of the growing number of important "green" designs, plans and policies shaping the city. Join Ranger Alan Loomis as he explores the beaches, the foothills, the freeways, and the flatlands of Green L.A.



## Industrial Habitat: The Baldwin Hills

Did you know that the only canine that can climb trees lives in the very heart of Los Angeles? Ranger Therese Kelly will share the story of the rare Gray Fox who's crazy feats also include living amongst 400 bobbing oil derricks in a massively degraded habitat. The Baldwin Hills – heavily industrial yet ecologically fragile – is set to become the largest urban park in state history. Rising 500 feet above the L.A. basin, the Baldwin Hills command impressive views to the Santa Monica Bay, the San Gabriel Mountains, the whole of developed Los Angeles, and even Point Dume. Come learn about this fascinating brownfield site in the middle of the city, which supports a rich array of native plants, insects, and animals.



## Hunting and Gathering in the Big City

Often when we think of hunting and gathering, ancient or "traditional" cultures come to mind. In many of America's greatest cities, however, the urban poor still forage for wild and domestic food simply to meet their daily caloric needs. These resources are not just limited to discarded trash, but include wild and feral urban animals such as birds, cats and dogs, fish, and rodents. In cities like Los Angeles, those without daily food security may also be forced to trespass onto private property in order to collect fruits, nuts, and other edible plants. Join Ranger Pete Alagona as he explores L.A.'s networks for finding, collecting, sharing, and preparing these urban foods. How do these foraging activities change traditional notions of human ecology, hunting and gathering, and ecological resources in the urban environment? And what do these practices – and our reactions to them – say about urban America today?



## End Landscaping: Los Angeles Freeway Gardens

Everyday, countless Angelenos whiz along the freeway at many miles per hour without noticing the landscaping at their side. Join Ranger Emily Scott to learn more about who manages these edgy green spaces, which plants cover the more than 8,000 acres of sinewy freeway "gardens" in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, why various flora are chosen for their ornamental value and/or abilities to endure drought, buffer sound, control erosion, resist weeds, and even counterbalance auto emissions. Discover, also, the wonderful world of "transportation art," intended for maximum community pleasure and minimum driver distraction. Finally, consider how and why these areas – first pitched as ideal picnic stops for leisurely Sunday afternoon excursions – are now almost entirely access controlled, or off-limits to embodied exploration and occupation.



## Toxic Tourism in Los Angeles

Ranger Donna Houston explores the toxic history of Los Angeles from the perspective of environmental justice. Participants will learn about the history and politics of environmental justice activism in Los Angeles as well as become acquainted with some important sites of environmental struggle via a virtual toxic tour of the city. Toxic touring is a way of reclaiming landscapes blighted by industrial pollutants and wastes as places of community and cultural memory. Toxic touring involves developing different strategies for "walking in the city" in order to recover histories suppressed through the often violent reorderings of L.A.'s urban and industrial landscape.



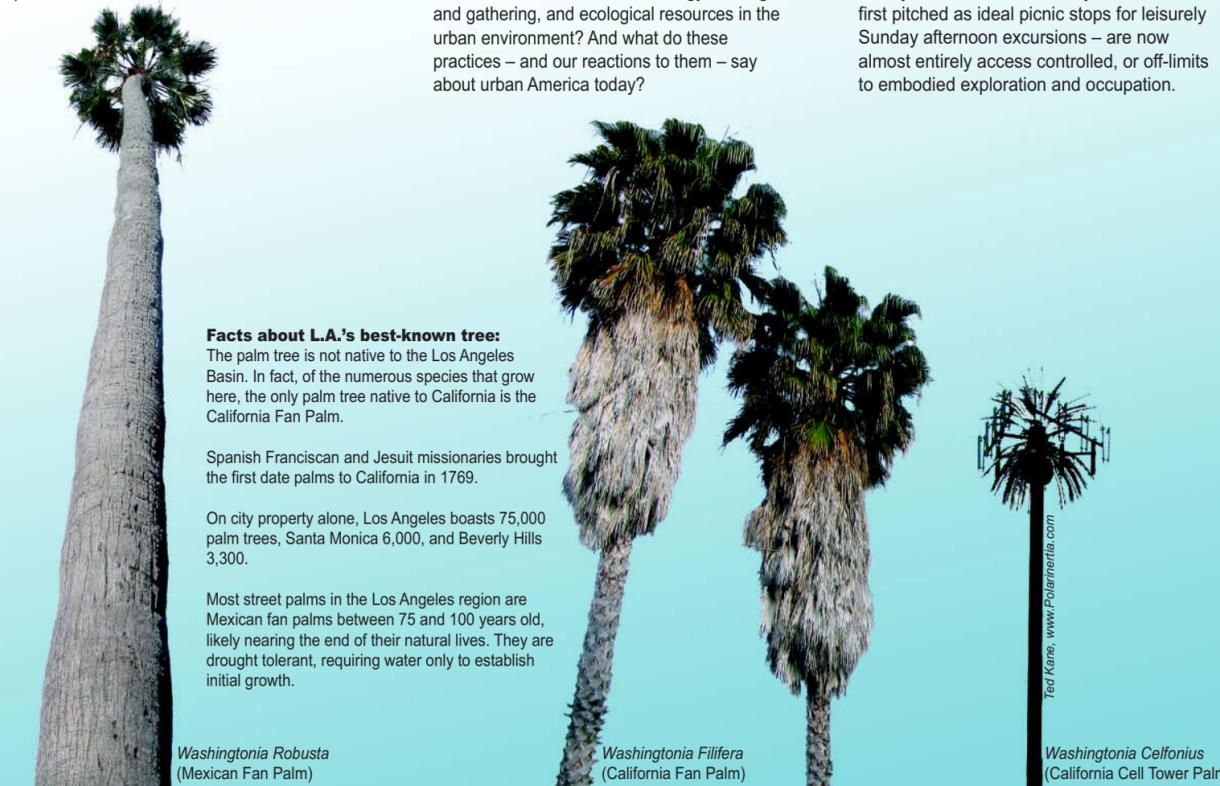
## Los Angeles and the Nature of Time

How we experience time in Los Angeles is structured by everything from cell-phones, which seek to minimize it, to movies featuring natural disasters in town, which seek to maximize it. Both are examples, however, of living only in the present. Ranger Bill Fox will help us rediscover time across a longer spectrum in Los Angeles – from the La Brea Tar Pits to the Forest Lawn Memorial Parks to the Mt. Wilson Observatory. Along the way we'll detour into the human neurophysiology of time, how to make lava for Hollywood, and why Los Angeles has the largest collection of faux classical Italian sculpture in its gardens.



## Alley CAT

The ranger-led alleyCAT tour will explore several alley sites located between ArtCenter's Wind Tunnel exhibition space and downtown Los Angeles. This is both a driving and walking tour with multiple stops, so be prepared to carpool/caravan and hit the alley trails. We will encounter illegally dumped trash, graffiti and tagging, as well as sublime views and wildlife. Your ranger will lead you on an encounter of these urban landscapes to spark discussion on their current state and provide a forum for participants to share their own reactions and visions. Alley's are a world away right behind our homes, a lesser-explored touch-point between public and private urban space. Please check [www.gardenlab.org](http://www.gardenlab.org) for sign-up and schedule for this tour.



### Facts about L.A.'s best-known tree:

The palm tree is not native to the Los Angeles Basin. In fact, of the numerous species that grow here, the only palm tree native to California is the California Fan Palm.

Spanish Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries brought the first date palms to California in 1769.

On city property alone, Los Angeles boasts 75,000 palm trees, Santa Monica 6,000, and Beverly Hills 3,300.

Most street palms in the Los Angeles region are Mexican fan palms between 75 and 100 years old, likely nearing the end of their natural lives. They are drought tolerant, requiring water only to establish initial growth.

*Washingtonia Robusta*  
(Mexican Fan Palm)

*Washingtonia Filifera*  
(California Fan Palm)

*Washingtonia Cellonius*  
(California Cell Tower Palm)

# Los Angeles Urban Rangers

Los Angeles Urban Rangers



garden Lab experiment  
The Wind Tunnel  
Art Center College of Design  
950 S. Raymond Avenue  
Pasadena, California  
September 7 - October 16, 2004

## The Los Angeles Basin

Los Angeles County is an 834-square-mile multiple-use area. Its beaches, mountains, and flatlands offer a great abundance and diversity of opportunities for dwelling, working, foraging, shopping, socializing, mating, and recreation.

## Getting Here/ Getting Around

The L.A. basin is easily accessible by car and aircraft; bus, train, and boat; motorcycle and scooter; foot, bicycle, and roller and inline skates; internet, phone, and fax; and movies and TV shows in many languages. Travel within the basin can be done also by subway

and light rail in limited areas. The most common method of travel is by car.

## The Landscape

The L.A. basin is a mosaic of geological zones, as well as ecological zones that include chaparral, coastal scrub, riparian areas, wetlands, oak woodlands, and grasslands. These zones have been overlaid by a territorial grid of city and county jurisdictions, as well as a transportation grid, a land-use grid, and a grid of shifting socioeconomic zones. These systems all interact in complex ways that can be difficult to predict. L.A.'s inhabitants have also translated

these interacting systems into a landscape of identity, with key zones that include the Valley, Pasadena, Long Beach, Downtown and Silver Lake, East L.A., South L.A., and the Westside.

## L.A.'s Famous Climate

Many people think of Los Angeles as a desert with year-round warmth and little rain. But in fact, L.A. enjoys a semi-arid, Mediterranean climate – a rare climate, enjoyed by just five areas worldwide, with hot, dry summers and mild winters with intermittent rains. A foggy layer of “June Gloom” often visits coastal areas in early summer as the inland region

heats up and draws moisture from the cool sea. From October to February, dry, hot Santa Ana winds may blow in from the desert at gusts of over 100 mph.

## Flora and Fauna

The distribution of animals and plants in this region is extremely complex, and includes species that are exotic (kudzu, starlings), native (chaparral species, mountain lions), wild domestic (ferrets), domestic gone wild (peacocks), wild domestic gone wild (parrots), cultivated (palms, peaches), and imported by the pound (most species in markets and restaurants). The potential for conflicts is

high, and poses one of the greatest management challenges in the region.

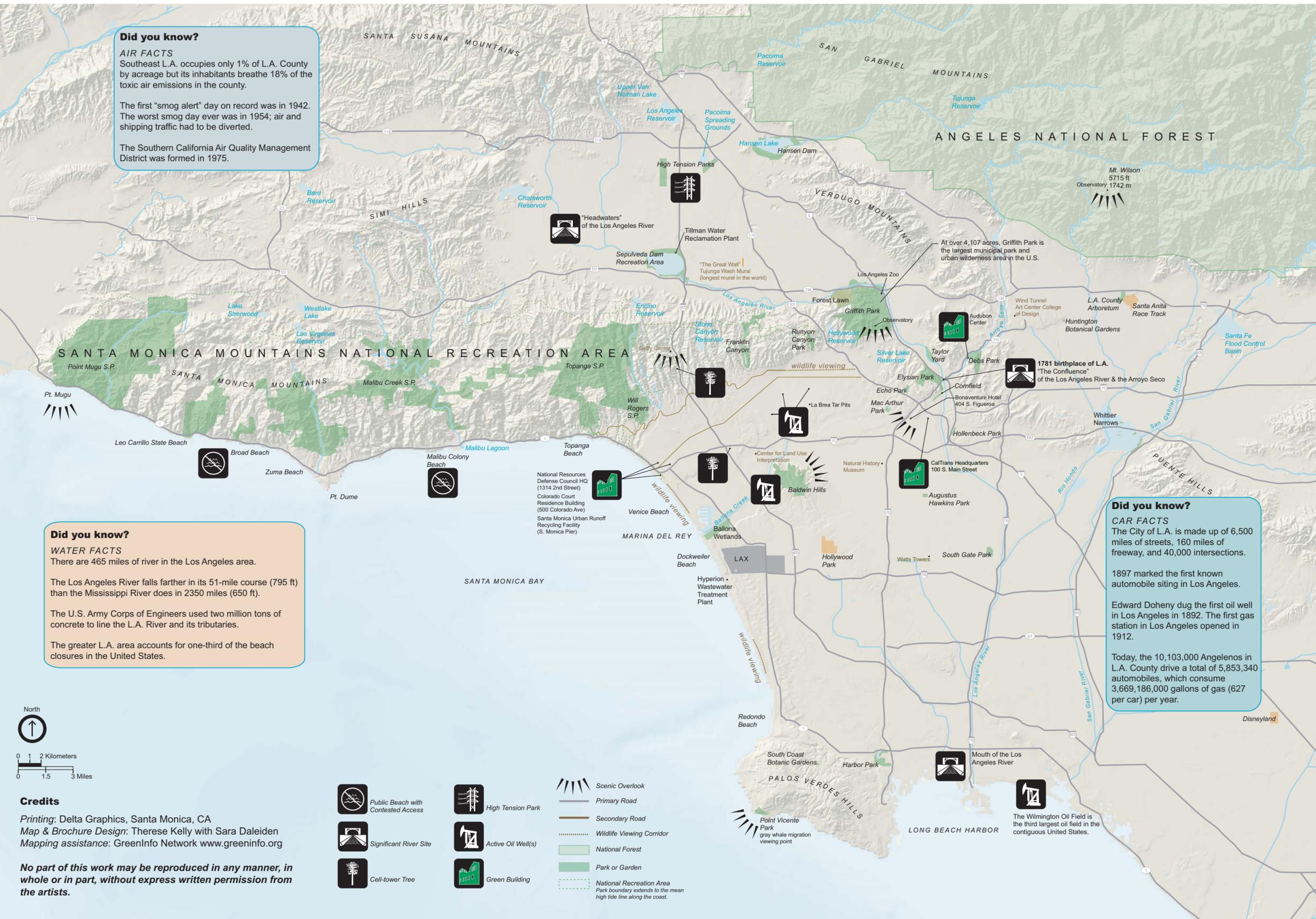
## Our Public Lands: Find and Enjoy them

We encourage you to enjoy public lands while respecting private property. Finding and using public lands successfully, safely, and legally in the L.A. basin can require careful effort and preparation. Poorer neighborhoods tend to be short on parkland, while gated neighborhoods typically offer no public spaces or roads; rivers and other public spaces can be illegal to enter; residents in some coastal and other areas will protect public lands

as private; and some public spaces intermittently become private for events such as film shoots and valet parking.

## For a Safe Visit

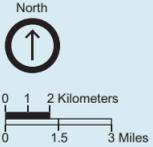
Proper sun protection such as a hat, sunscreen, and/or sunglasses is encouraged. When traveling, watch for drivers on cell phones. In mountain areas, beware of rattle snakes and mountain lions, and be prepared to evacuate in case of fire or mudslides. On some beaches, be prepared to show adjacent homeowners a copy of the California Coastal Act which describes public boundaries and access.



**Did you know?**  
**AIR FACTS**  
Southeast L.A. occupies only 1% of L.A. County by acreage but its inhabitants breathe 18% of the toxic air emissions in the county.  
  
The first “smog alert” day on record was in 1942. The worst smog day ever was in 1954; air and shipping traffic had to be diverted.  
  
The Southern California Air Quality Management District was formed in 1975.

**Did you know?**  
**WATER FACTS**  
There are 465 miles of river in the Los Angeles area.  
  
The Los Angeles River falls farther in its 51-mile course (795 ft) than the Mississippi River does in 2350 miles (650 ft).  
  
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers used two million tons of concrete to line the L.A. River and its tributaries.  
  
The greater L.A. area accounts for one-third of the beach closures in the United States.

**Did you know?**  
**CAR FACTS**  
The City of L.A. is made up of 6,500 miles of streets, 160 miles of freeway, and 40,000 intersections.  
  
1897 marked the first known automobile siting in Los Angeles.  
  
Edward Doheny dug the first oil well in Los Angeles in 1892. The first gas station in Los Angeles opened in 1912.  
  
Today, the 10,103,000 Angelenos in L.A. County drive a total of 5,853,340 automobiles, which consume 3,669,186,000 gallons of gas (627 per car) per year.



**Credits**  
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- Public Beach with Contested Access
- High Tension Park
- Significant River Site
- Active Oil Well(s)
- Cell-tower Tree
- Green Building
- Scenic Overlook
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Wildlife Viewing Corridor
- National Forest
- Park or Garden
- National Recreation Area  
Park boundary extends to the mean high tide line along the coast.