EXPLORE THE ARROYO SECO

Welcome to the Arroyo Seco

The Arroyo Seco, Spanish for "dry gulch", refers to both the stream course and the canyon that spans eight miles through the western portion of the City of Pasadena. Surrounded by urban development, the Arroyo Seco supports thriving natural ecosystems that include several native plant communities and provides shelter, food and nesting sites for hundreds of wildlife species. Efforts are underway by the city and local community organizations to protect, enhance and restore these ecosystems. Affectionately known to locals as simply "the Arroyo", the Arroyo Seco in Pasadena is protected parkland and open space with 22 miles of trails and myriad recreational opportunities. The Arroyo Seco was recently included in the National Register of Historic Places, placing it among the nation's top cultural resources.

Walking, Hiking, Jogging

Arroyo Seco trails provide opportunities for all users. One can take a leisurely stroll or brisk walk along a trail, jog around the Rose Bowl Recreation loop, or tackle the steep incline south of Devil's Gate Dam. All trails are easily accessible from adjacent residential neighborhoods, public transit stops and public parking areas. Information regarding universally accessible trails are online at www.cityofpasadena.net/publicworks/PNR. Dogs are welcome, but must be on a leash at all times and owners are responsible for cleaning up after their animals.

Equestrian Uses

Equestrians are welcome on most Arroyo Seco trails, although not recommended on the paved recreational loop. South of the Colorado Street Bridge, the trails on the east side of the channel are more accessible for equestrians. Equestrians can most easily access Arroyo Seco trails from the south entrance adjacent to San Pasqual Stables or in Hahamongna Watershed Park to the north. Hitching posts and water troughs are located in Hahamongna Watershed Park and behind the Brookside Clubhouse. Information on equestrian classes and facilities is available through the City's Human Services and Recreation Department at (626)744-6516. Equestrian events are available through Rose Bowl Riders in Hahamongna Watershed Park. Contact Rose Bowl Riders at www.rosebowl-riders.org

Bicycling the Arroyo

Cyclists are welcome on paved paths and roads throughout the Arroyo Seco as indicated. City ordinance prohibits bicyclists on unpaved trails in the Arroyo Seco. For bicycle routes throughout the city, please see the City of Pasadena Bike Map at www.cityofpasadena.net/trans

Picnic Facilities

Picnic facilities are located throughout the Arroyo Seco. Group picnic facilities are located in Hahamongna Watershed Park and Brookside Parks, with reservation information available from the Park Reservation Desk at (626)744-7275.

The Arroyo Seco is open from dawn to dusk.
Brookside Park and Rose Bowl area are open 6am to 10pm.

For more detailed information on the Arroyo Seco and driving directions, please see: www.cityofpasadena.net/publicworks/PNR/ArroyoSeco or call Parks and Natural Resources at (626)744-4321.

For information regarding reserving park facilities, contact Human Services and Recreation at www.cityofpasadena.net/reserve or call (626) 744-7195.

City of Pasadena
Department of Public Works
Parks and Natural Resources Division

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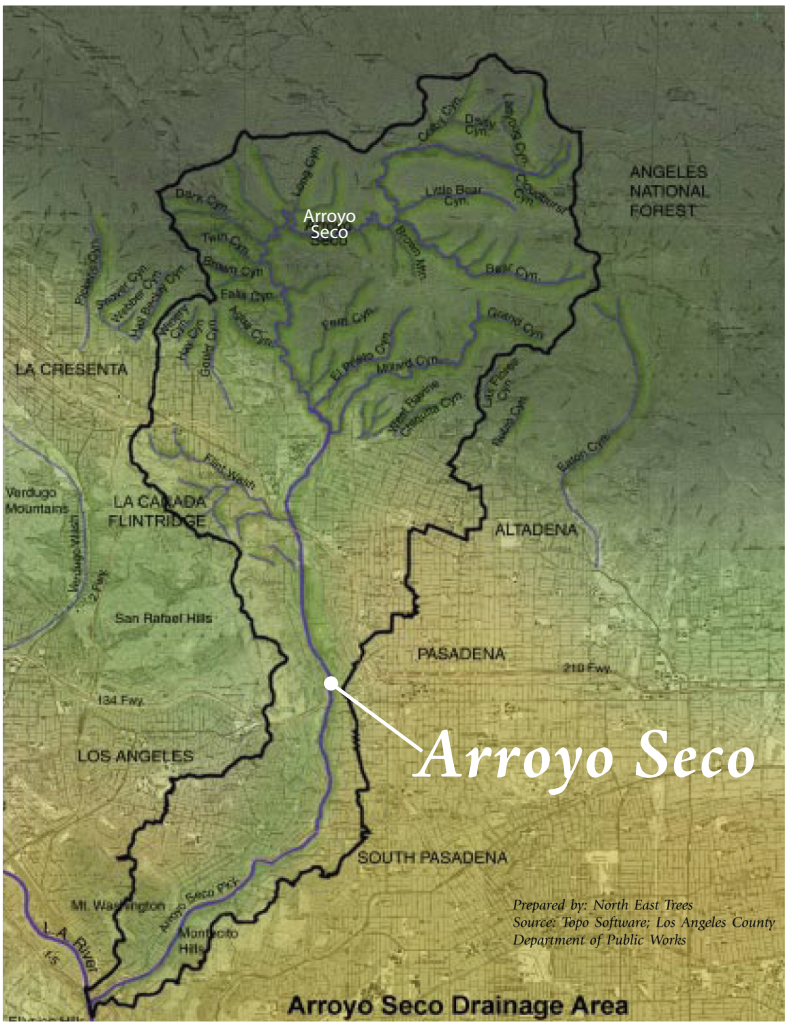
Regional Connections

The **Arroyo Seco** contains a dynamic stream that begins high in the San Gabriel Mountains and flows through the communities of La Canada Flintridge, Altadena, Pasadena, South Pasadena and Los Angeles, where it meets the waters of the Los Angeles River and continues on to the Pacific Ocean. In making this journey, the stream cuts a narrow, deep canyon through these communities and gave birth to much of the culture, history and unique identity within the region of this riparian corridor.

The Arroyo Seco is a passageway for both wildlife and people, linking its trails to those of the Angeles National Forest and the Rim of the Valley trail system. This network of trails provides opportunities for short leisurely strolls or day long adventures, just minutes from bustling metropolitan areas.



What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land that drains water into a particular creek, river, lake, or aquifer. Water drains downhill, so hills, ridges and other high points define the boundaries of a watershed. The Arroyo Seco watershed begins at the headwaters in the San Gabriel mountains and extends to downtown Los Angeles, where it meets the Los Angeles River.

Please enjoy your experience here, soak in the view, hug a tree, stay on the trails, and help keep "the Arroyo" a place for all to enjoy for generations to come!

Please remember: the Arroyo Seco is a dynamic system that can change from a trickle to a roaring river in short order and without warning. In the event of rain, please keep away from the streambed and move to high ground.

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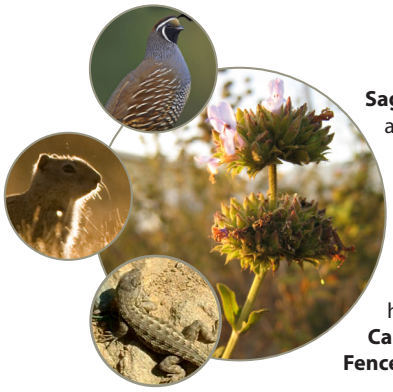
Plants & Animals *of the Arroyo Seco*

Mulefat & Willow Scrub are found in the streamside reaches of the park where the riparian corridor regains its natural appearance. This plant community is found in the floodbasin and along the banks of the stream where water levels fluctuate. The branches overhanging the water provide a cool refuge for aquatic life, including the **Arroyo Chub**, a small native fish recently reintroduced into the waters of the Arroyo Seco.

Sycamore Riparian Woodland features native sycamore trees, white alder and cottonwood. This proximity to streams gives birds a perfect place to nest, perch and watch for prey. Bird species commonly found in riparian perches include the **Red-Tail Hawk** (top) and **Nuttall Woodpecker** (bottom).

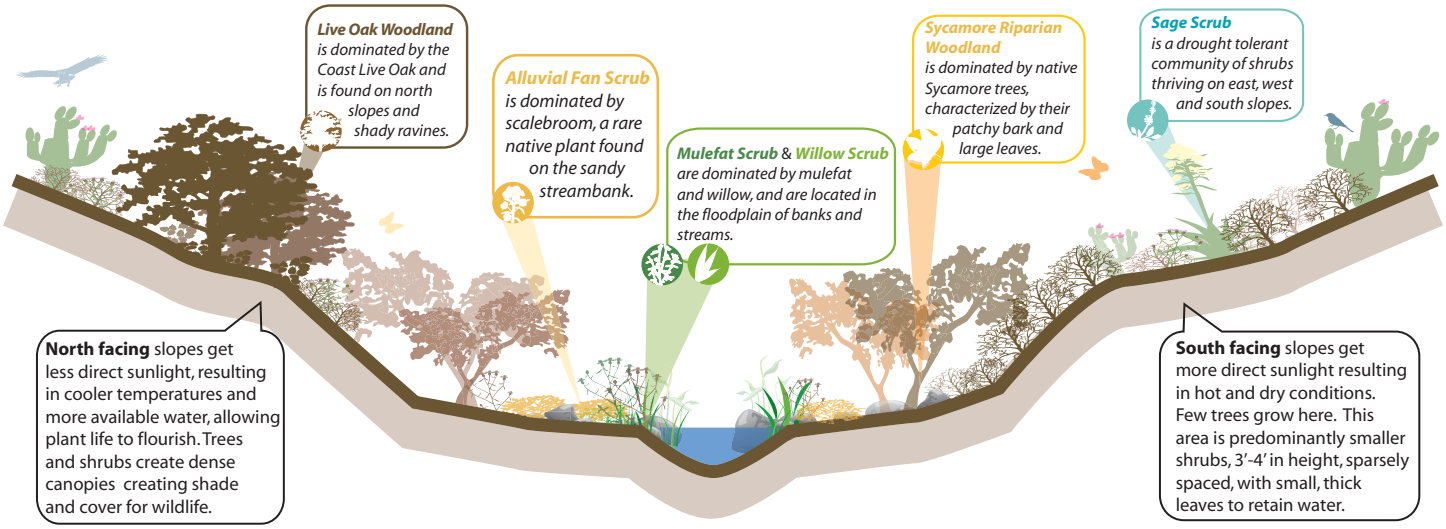


Sage Scrub is found on both the eastern and western slopes and is dominated by small drought-deciduous shrubs with aromatic leaves that may smell of mint, turpentine or sage. These shrubs include California Sagebrush, black sage and California buckwheat. Some animals that forage and nest in this habitat are (from top) **California Quail, California Ground Squirrel**, and **Western Fence Lizard**.

Ecology *of the Arroyo Seco*

Steep slopes, the presence of water, periodic flooding, and natural geography of the canyon contribute to the rich diversity of plant and animal life found in the Arroyo Seco. The natural **plant communities** that exist today are a result of both natural and human activities. The combination of water and native vegetation in the Arroyo Seco provide a haven for both local and migratory wildlife.

Coast Live Oak Woodland is found throughout the Arroyo. Other plants found in this community include toyon, laurel sumac, and poison oak. With its shady cover and plentiful acorns, oak woodlands provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for hundreds of wildlife species. Common species include (from top) the **California Sister Butterfly**, **Acorn Woodpecker**, and the **Aboreal Salamander.**



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WHAT YOU WILL FIND

Lower Arroyo Seco

The area south of Colorado Street bridge is known as the Lower Arroyo. The Lower Arroyo is a natural preservation area and a cultural landmark, with many unique features and recreational opportunities. The canyon walls support habitat for a variety of bird, insect, and mammal species. The secondary trails away from the concrete channel take you through oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub and riparian habitats. Stroll along the shaded, flowing streams along either side of the concrete channel between the Colorado St. Bridge and the casting pond. These streams were a result of restoration efforts by the City to create riparian habitat and shaded trails by diverting water from the concrete channel.

Bird Sanctuary

An outlook point for nature study, this location features a seating area and is often used by schools and other groups for formal and informal study of and instruction about the natural conditions of the area. In 1935, the Bird Sanctuary was constructed in honor of Emma Dickinson, a bird-lover, who had donated a portion of her large estate to the City. It is currently being restored.

Memorial Grove

This quiet, secluded area surrounded by oak wooded slopes is a peaceful place for walks or thoughtful solitude. Many of its trees have been planted by private groups or local residents in memory of a loved one. The trail at California Boulevard and Arroyo Boulevard leads directly to Memorial Grove.

Camels Hump

This unique geologic feature was created from the excavation of the flood control channel and has become a local landmark

La Casita del Arroyo

Designed in 1932 by Architect Myron Hunt and built by unemployed workers during the depression, La Casita was assembled of native Arroyo stone and lumber and now serves as a rental facility for public and private functions. Its drought-tolerant demonstration gardens are nestled amongst oaks in the shadow of Colorado Street Bridge, making this rustic location the perfect setting for events.

Casting Pond

Pasadena Casting Club has taught the principles of fly fishing for over 50 years in the Arroyo Seco, while also providing public programs at this site. The Clubhouse by the Casting Pond is open to the public on Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. and use of the pond for fly fishing practice is free and open to the public during park hours.
www.pasadenacastingclub.org

Archery Range

Established in 1935, the Pasadena Roving Archers Club is the oldest National Field Archery Club and Range in the United States. The Club's archery range consists of 23 hay bale targets, and is used for both organized events and informal practice. Free archery lessons are offered to the public on Saturdays between 8:30 am and 11:00 am.
www.rovingarchers.com

Central Arroyo Seco

The Central Arroyo Seco, the area between Devil's Gate Dam and the Colorado Street Bridge, is the most active and diverse portion of the Arroyo Seco. In these 470 acres, one can golf, swim, run, walk, jog, bike, picnic, bird-watch by the stream, play ball, fly a kite, or watch a world class football game at the Rose Bowl. The Central Arroyo Seco also provides opportunities for solace and places to experience the natural environment. Natural reaches of the Arroyo Seco stream are found under the 134 freeway crossing and between the Brookside Golf Course and Devil's Gate Dam. The John Crowley and Tad Williams trails provide undulating routes through native habitat areas. Brookside Park offers a diverse variety of recreational opportunities.

Recreation Loop

The roadway around the golf course and Rose Bowl Stadium provides for a 3.3 mile paved recreation loop. This loop has become an informal exercise area for bicyclists, walkers, joggers, and rollerbladers. Please be courteous and cautious as this is also a public road open to vehicular traffic. If you're in the designated pedestrian lane, please walk counter-clockwise to be safe!

Brookside Park

Brookside Park features a number of recreation facilities including historic Jackie Robinson Baseball Stadium, softball fields, tennis courts, a playground, picnic facilities, a fitness course and open lawn areas for informal use. The park is also home of Kidspace Children's Museum, and Rose Bowl Aquatics Center.

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WHAT YOU WILL FIND

Central Arroyo Seco (con't)

Kidspace Children's Museum
Kidspace Children's Museum is housed in the former Fanny Morrison Horticultural Center which was a series of greenhouse buildings that once grew the flowers used to decorate Rose Parade floats. In 1996 the buildings were renovated to house the museum. The museum offers exhibits for children up to 12 years of age.
www.kidspacemuseum.org.

Rose Bowl Stadium
A National Historic Landmark built in 1922 and known mainly for the New Year's Tournament of Roses Football Game, Rose Bowl Stadium has also earned its world-class reputation by hosting numerous other memorable events over the past 80-plus years.
www.rosebowlstadium.com

Rose Bowl Aquatics Center
The Amateur Athletic Foundation (AAF) Rose Bowl Aquatics Center is a world-class aquatics facility. The Center offers year round programming for all ages and abilities including: swimming and diving, water polo, pool therapy, summer camp, and water aerobics.
www.rosebowlaquatics.org

Brookside Golf Course
Reminiscent of an earlier era, the legendary 36-hole Brookside Golf Club is steeped in 75 years of golf tradition. This public course and clubhouse restaurant also hosts championship events, weddings and special events. The site of the 1968 Los Angeles Open, it is rated regularly in the top 15 public golf courses in California.

Hahamongna Watershed Park

Hahamongna Watershed Park is a 300 acre park which provides a transition from the urban land uses in Pasadena and its neighboring foothill communities to the vast open space areas of the Angeles National Forest. Here, one can find an interconnected system of hiking trails, prime oak woodland, picnic facilities, restrooms, equestrian gathering areas, a multi-purpose playing field, and the world's first disc golf course. Bicycle riding is permitted only on paved park roads. The flood basin behind Devil's Gate Dam supports water conservation, a rich diversity of plant habitat, and a refuge for numerous wildlife and bird species. Hahamongna recently grew by 30 acres and is now home: Rose Bowl Riders, Move A Child Higher (MACH1), Tom Sawyer Camps (Equestrian Operations), as well as the Los Angeles County Fire Camp Training Facility. For program information, please contact:
Rose Bowl Riders (RBR): www.rosebowl-riders.org
MACH1: www.moveachildhigher.org
Tom Sawyer Camps: www.tomsawyercamps.com

Oak Grove Field
This multipurpose field is used regularly for organized baseball, soccer, football, group activities and special events. It is bordered by coast live oak woodland, trails, historic Oak Grove Disc Golf Course, and scenic vistas.

Spreading Basins
Hahamongna Watershed Park is situated over part of an underground aquifer which contributes to much of the areas municipal water supply. The City of Pasadena uses these spreading basins to recharge this aquifer with water from the Arroyo Seco stream.

Flint Wash Bridge
This bridge, built of sustainable materials and opened in 2007, offers year-round access for pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists to a full trail loop around the Hahamongna basin.

Oak Grove Disc Golf Course
The Oak Grove Disc Golf Course is the first disc golf course in the world.
The 18-hole course dates back to the early 1970s as a "Frisbee" course where play was started between two posts. As a result of it's popularity, additional disc golf courses have been built around the world. The course is open to the public during park hours.

Devil's Gate Dam
Originally built in 1920, and later reinforced in 1998, this is the first dam built for Los Angeles County's flood control and water conservation system. Its name is derived from a unique rock formation below the dam that resembles the profile of a horned devil. In 1858, when Judge B.S. Eaton visited the site of the Arroyo Seco, he named the location "the Devil's Gate." The formation has since been covered during restoration of the dam and is no longer visible.

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