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CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Department of Recreation and Parks

February 19, 2003

TO: Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners
FROM: 
Manuel A. Mollinedo
General Manager
SUBJECT: OVERVIEW OF HANSEN DAM MASTER PLAN AND RECREATION AND
PARKS FEASIBILITY PLAN

The Hansen Dam Flood Control Project was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1940 at a cost of \$11,000,000. The Dam has a storage capacity of 29,700 acre feet of water, and is a part of a comprehensive plan for storm water management in the Los Angeles County Drainage Area. Hansen Dam provides flood protection and captures runoff water from both the Big and Little Tujunga Washes. The primary purpose of Hansen Dam is flood control. Secondary uses allowed by the Corps include biological protection and public recreation. Public recreation is offered through lease to the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP).

RAP leases 1,463 acres of land in the Hansen Dam Flood Control Basin for recreational purposes from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Nine hundred and seventy-five (975) acres of our leased land is currently undeveloped with 488 acres developed. The Corps last updated the Hansen Dam Master Plan in 1991, to assist in guiding both RAP and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the management of resources within the Hansen Dam project area.

The 1991 Master Plan calls for four specific uses within the basin: environmental by sensitive areas, intensive recreation, low density recreation, and areas which the Corps needs for operation of their flood control facilities.

The four specific basin uses are described as follows:

1. Environmentally sensitive areas are reserved for preservation of sensitive environmental habitats, wildlife, vegetation, or cultural resources. Appropriate improvements for this area as listed in the Master Plan are:
 - Equestrian trails
 - Hiking trails
 - Wildlife observation features
2. Intensive recreation areas are characterized as areas with a low risk of flooding, easy vehicular access, and are remote from residential or environmentally-sensitive areas. Recreational features and improvements allowed in these areas include:

- Recreation lakes
- Picnic areas
- Recreation parking areas
- Developed campgrounds
- Tot lots
- Nature centers
- Sports fields
- Golf courses
- Playgrounds
- Special event facilities
- Equestrian campgrounds
- Visitor centers
- Recreation centers
- Equestrian centers
- Resorts

3. Low density recreation areas are characterized as areas with a low risk of sedimentation and limited vehicular access. They generally serve as buffer areas between environmentally-sensitive areas and intensive recreation areas. The types of recreational use activities allowed in low density area include:

- Equestrian trails
- Hiking trails
- Primitive campgrounds

4. Corps Flood Control Activities

Refer to attached, "Alternate A Proposed Plan", Plate 1, for the location and distribution of the use areas within the Hansen Dam Basin.

In 1999 Planning and Construction Division provided an analysis of the proposed projects within Hansen Dam as a response to the \$10 million specified for the recreation area in Proposition K. The Plan identified six potential areas of development in the Hansen Dam Basin, and utilized the 1991 Corps of Engineers land use designations as the basis for the recommendations therein (see the attached Hansen Dam Facilities Plan #1). The Plan itemized a potential of \$14.5 million of recreational development projects for the six designated improvement areas.

The \$10 million in Proposition K funding is broadly earmarked for a Soccer Complex, RV park, Ranger Station/Visitor's Center, Road/Trail improvements, and fencing. The first phase of the Soccer complex is under construction at a cost of \$500,000.00. The remaining projects do not have specific budgets or project descriptions. Planning and Construction has the opportunity to be proactive on the Proposition K projects and create a comprehensive program to take to the community. Advanced planning for the balance of the Prop K projects will begin this year and will build on the 1999 feasibility plan and community needs assessment for Hansen Dam. The community priorities can then be forwarded to the Proposition K Regional VNOC to expend the balance for the \$9.5 remaining in the Prop. K specified program.

In addition, Proposition 40 allocates \$4.6 million for Hansen Dam. The Proposition 40 dollars are designated specifically for:

- Children's Museum
- Kids Campground
- Trails
- Skate Park
- Parking Lot

The attachments show the preliminary ideas for improvements. All of the designated projects are consistent with the Corps Master Plan and the RAP Facilities Plan. These projects are ready to start the community planning process to select suitable sites and develop the specific design program.

Report prepared by Robert D. Fawcett, Project Manager II.