



July 31, 2014  
(20744)

Jemellee Cruz  
**Los Angeles County Flood Control District**  
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**SUBJECT: RESULTS FROM THE NATIVE TREE ASSESSMENT FOR THE RIVAS CANYON REACH MAINTENANCE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

Dear Ms. Cruz,

This native tree assessment memo has been prepared for the County of Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) to support the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for the proposed actions relating to the Rivas Canyon (Reach 119 Rivas) Maintenance Project (Project). Information contained in this document is in accordance with accepted scientific and technical standards consistent with the requirements of United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

Chambers Group, Inc. (Chambers Group) was retained by LACFCD to conduct a native tree assessment based on the literature review and reconnaissance-level survey results for the proposed Project. During the assessment, biologists identified, measured, and flagged any and all native trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of four inches or more within the Reach (from sidewall to sidewall) to determine the number of native trees to be avoided during non-native tree and shrub removal from within the channel.

#### **PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

Reach 119 Rivas is located in the County of Los Angeles along Rivas Canyon Road, north and south of Sunset Blvd., in the City of Pacific Palisades. Reach 119 Rivas flows south into Rustic Canyon Reach, which is located just south of Rustic Creek Lane (Attachment 1). Reach 119 Rivas is located in the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Topanga* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. Elevation in the survey area ranges from 190 to 275 feet above mean sea level (amsl).

The Project site is approximately 0.22 miles total in length Attachment 1. The survey area is located in a highly developed area surrounded by private residences. Habitat in the survey area is composed primarily of both native and non-native riparian vegetation and developed areas.

LACFCD intends to clear vegetation non-native vegetation that has grown within the 0.22 stretch of Rivas Canyon Reach using weed eaters, hedge trimmers, chain saws, hoes, pitch forks, tarps, loppers, and machetes.

## METHODS

The trunk circumference of the trees were measured at approximately 4.5 feet and 1.5 feet above the natural grade (breast height). The locations of native trees were recorded using a hand held sub-meter global positioning system (GPS) unit (Attachment 2). Native trees with a DBH greater than four inches were flagged using yellow flagging tape for avoidance. Native trees with a DBH less than four inches were not recorded using GPS but were recorded on field sheets.

## RESULTS

The assessment identified a total of 22 native trees with a DBH of four inches or more within the Project boundary (Attachment 2). A total of one western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), seven Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), two red willow (*Salix laevigata*), and 12 arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) were observed within the Project boundary. Complete details are found in the table below.

	Species Name	Location		DBH (in)	Number of Trunks
		Easting	Northing		
1	arroyo willow	360335	3768087	5	1
2	arroyo willow	360339	3768087	10	2
3	arroyo willow	360344	3768086	8	3
4	arroyo willow	360342	3768078	5	1
5	western sycamore	360344	3768077	5	1
6	arroyo willow	360341	3768075	10	5
7	arroyo willow	360341	3768070	10	2
8	arroyo willow	360340	3768070	5	2
9	Fremont cottonwood	360329	3768007	3	1
10	Fremont cottonwood	360329	3768005	5	1
11	Fremont cottonwood	360327	3768003	12	2
12	red willow	360332	3768001	4	1
13	Fremont cottonwood	360328	3768001	18	3
15	arroyo willow	360328	3767996	24	6
16	Fremont cottonwood	360325	3767992	13	1
18	Fremont cottonwood	360325	3767989	10	1
19	arroyo willow	360324	3767989	10	5
21	red willow	360318	3767985	37	2
22	Fremont cottonwood	360322	3767984	6	1
23	arroyo willow	360322	3767981	16	4
24	arroyo willow	360313	3767976	14	3
25	arroyo willow	360316	3767973	5	2

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment concluded that 22 native trees were found to within the 0.22 mile Rivas Canyon Reach Project boundary. All of the native trees were marked with yellow flagging on multiple parts of the individuals to clearly indicate avoidance measures to be taken. In addition, the assessment also noted and

recorded any trees causing structural damage to the sidewalls of the Reach and noted whether or not these trees were outside the Project boundary. Further details are noted in the table below.

ID	Issue	Easting	Northing	Description
14	red willow	360324	3768001	Red willow causing structure damage to side wall
17	Willow ( <i>Salix</i> sp.)	360330	3767987	Large willow tree from adjacent property growing onto side wall
20	Willow ( <i>Salix</i> sp.)	360318	3767990	Large overgrown willow tree growing across the creek causing structure damage (flagged)

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the Native Tree Assessment. I can be reached at (213) 623-1859, extension 7504.

Sincerely,

**CHAMBERS GROUP, INC.**



**Rebecca Alvidrez**

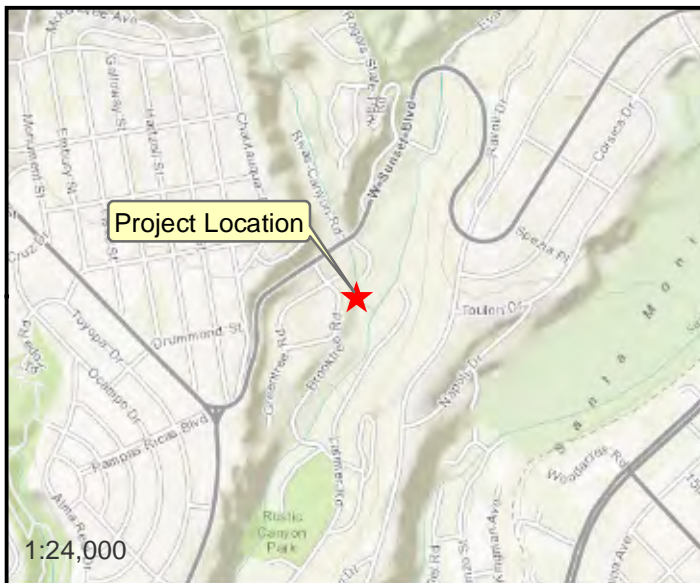
*Biologist*

Attachment 1 – Site Location Map

Attachment 2 – Tree Assessment Location Map

Attachment 3 – Site Photographs





#### Legend

— Project Location



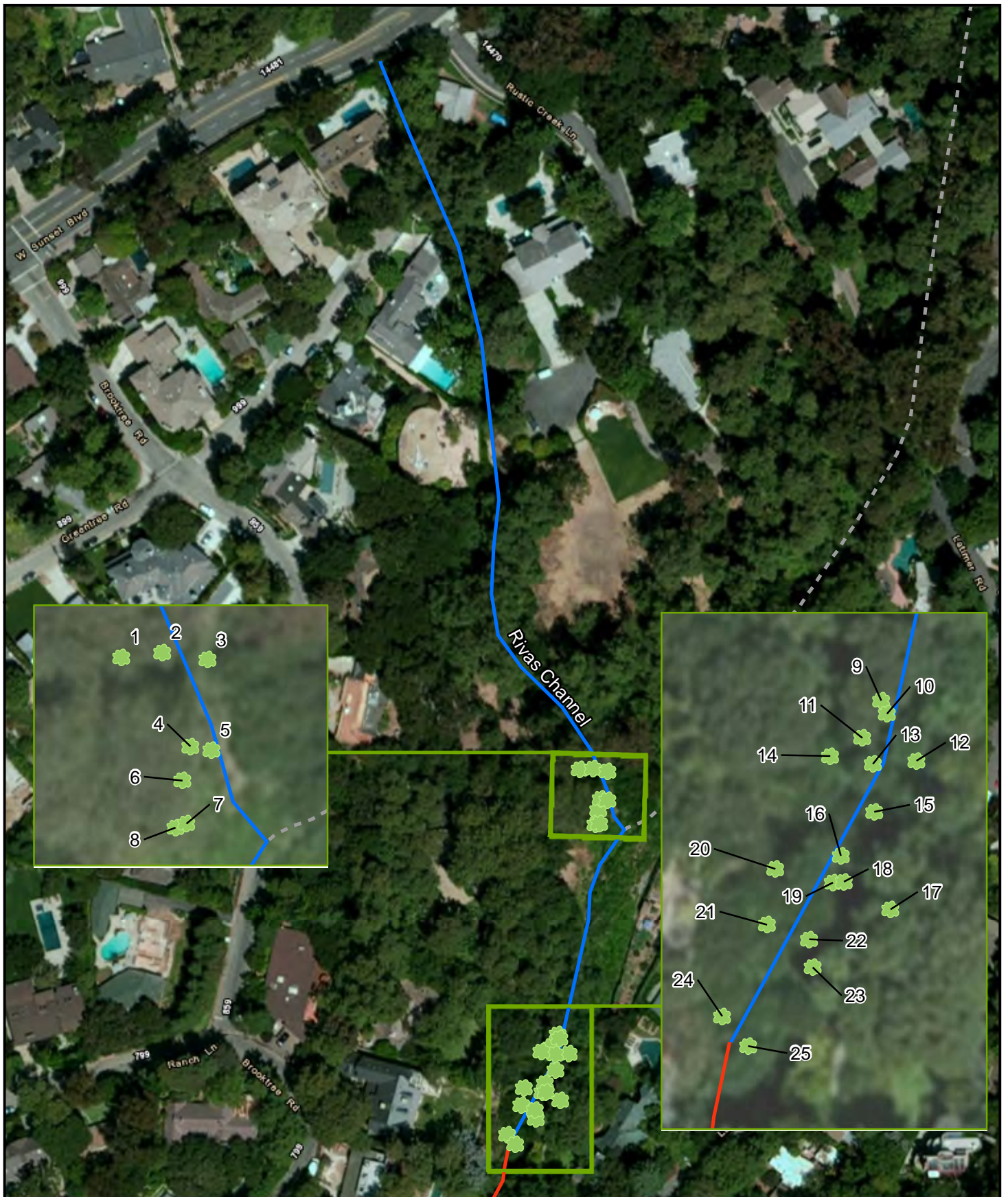
0 200 400 800  
Feet

## Attachment 1 Rivas Canyon Reach Project Location and Vicinity Map

Name: 20744 TS Rivas Attach 1 Location Map.Mxd  
Print Date: 7/21/2014, Author: msimmons







#### Legend

— Rivas Channel  
— Rustic Channel

--- Privately Owned and Not to Be Maintained by LACFCD

#### Tree Surveys

🌳 Tree Location



0 75 150 300  
Feet

## Attachment 2 Rivas Creek Reach Tree Survey Results

Name: 20744 TS Rivas Attach 2 Tree Survey.Mxd  
Print Date: 7/22/2014, Author: msimmons





### ATTACHMENT 3: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



**Photo 1.** The upstream limit of Rivas Canyon Reach. Photo taken from Rustic Creek Lane, showing non-native vegetation and ornamental trees along the edge of the walls. Photo facing southeast.



**Photo 2.** Section of the channel located just south of Rustic Creek Lane showing the thick leaf litter that was common throughout the Project site. Photo facing southeast.



**Photo 3.** Section of the channel located by Rustic Creek Lane. Thick litter layer present on top of concrete lined channel. A small stand of native alders are present in the photo. Photo facing northwest.



**Photo 4.** The downstream limit of Rivas Canyon Reach at the convergence of the Rivas Canyon Reach and Rustic Canyon Reach. Photo showing that this heavily vegetated area within the channels. Photo facing northwest.