

Attachment 1**Exhibit 1-H**

News from around the Ojai Valley

Meadow could become stormwater swale



Details

Published on Tuesday, 14 January 2014 19:24



Justin Martos, of Furgo Consultants, works with one of the soil samples. (photo by Ashley Wilson)

Visitors to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's Ojai Meadows Preserve may see an unusual sight this week. A soil drilling rig can be seen on the back of the preserve near the intersection of Lomita Avenue and Besant Roa, in the field near Meiners Oaks Elementary School. The purpose of the rig is not to drill for oil or water. Rather, this is a routine test of soil properties in advance of a proposed project that would help clean local storm water.

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) has partnered with the Ventura County Watershed Protection District (VCWPD) on a grant proposal which would fund construction of a new bio-swale on a portion of the preserve. A bio-swale is a shallow depression that collects and carries storm water drainage, then uses natural vegetation and soil properties to clean the water. This proposed project would intercept an existing community storm drain and allow the water to pass through a shallow channel on the preserve before re-entering the storm drain. Native vegetation planted in the swale will help consume pollutants such as excess nutrients, and soil bacteria can decompose oil products found in percolating water. Another important project benefit will be intercepting water during the normally dry months when most of the water comes from urban uses, and is often polluted. This water will be retained and treated onsite by the swale, before it can make it back into the storm drain network.

This project represents a pilot project that will demonstrate how these swales can be managed throughout the Ventura River drainage to protect and enhance water quality. Before constructing the project, soil properties are studied to assess the permeability of the soil and the biological functions present in the soil. These are important first steps in assessing project feasibility and informing the design process. These properties will be assessed with the sampling.

Regular visitors to the Ojai Meadows Preserve may know that much of the site is already used as a natural floodwater retention project, and that much of the bird diversity and natural productivity on the preserve is a result of the creation of the wetlands. This proposed project would add variety to the approaches used at the preserve and will likely contribute to the growing diversity of habitats throughout the preserve.

The project is being proposed for grant funding from the State Water Resources Control Board, and project construction would be managed by the VCWPD. The OVLC will assist with re-vegetation of the site and supplying plants from its on-site nursery. If successful, OVLC will be able to show another way that communities can address storm water quality

improvement, while also increasing habitats for birds and other wildlife.

© Ojai Valley News, 2014

Like 0 Share 8+1 0

News from around the Ojai Valley

Stormwater project gets under way in Meiners Oaks



Details

Published on Thursday, 20 August 2015 17:26



The county of Ventura and Ojai Valley Land Conservancy have teamed to secure state grants to help improve the cleanliness of Meiners Oaks' stormwater. In the field between Meiners Oaks Elementary School and The Ranch House, Shaw Contracting began work this week on a bio-filtration vegetated swale and filters that will remove trash, sediment, bacteria and nutrients from the stormwater that flows into the Ventura River from approximately 40 percent of the community of Meiners Oaks. Construction is expected to last through October. (Ojai Valley News photo by Sarah Bourscheid)

© Ojai Valley News, 2015



Meiners Oaks Project Designed to Provide Cleaner Runoff to Ventura River

BY: Claudia Boyd-Barrett

POSTED: 5:32 PM, Aug 2, 2015

UPDATED: 5:48 PM, Aug 2, 2015



OJAI, Calif. - Water running off lawns and hard surfaces in Meiners Oaks will soon be channeled through a three-tiered filtration system so it's cleaner when it hits the Ventura River.

In early September, the Ventura County Public Works Agency's Watershed Protection District is expected to begin work on a mostly underground water treatment system, to be located on an undeveloped parcel at the Ojai Valley Meadows Preserve on South Lomita Avenue in Meiners Oaks.

Funded by a \$1 million state grant, the project aims to improve water quality in the river, removing contaminants that get washed into the watershed, such as fertilizers, dog waste and sewer leaks. The filtration system is designed to bring that runoff into compliance with new stringent standards set by the State Water Resources Control Board, county Stormwater Program Manager Ewelina Mutkowska said.

“Ventura River water quality has been determined to be impaired due to a couple of pollutants — bacteria and nitrogen,” Mutkowska said. “They impact the water quality and affect the beneficial uses of the river, like recreation and habitat for fish and aquatic species.”

The project, a collaboration between the county and the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, involves creating three filtration areas. The first will be an underground system that removes trash and other debris. Visitors to the site will be able to watch the system at work through a transparent lid installed in the ground, Mutkowska said.

Next, she said, water will flow through a bioswale of drought tolerant shrubs, grasses and trees that will further clean the water and allow plants to absorb excess nutrients.

A final filtration vault will remove bacteria from the water before it is rerouted to the Ventura River. Some of it is also expected to recharge groundwater supplies, she said. The program manager said officials estimate the system will remove about 90 percent of all bacteria from the runoff and reduce nitrogen levels by 80 percent.

The county awarded a \$450,000 contract to Shaw Contracting, of Carpinteria, for the project. The rest of the money will be used for planning, design, water monitoring, education and other administrative costs, Mutkowska said.

Construction activities include reconstruction of portions of the sidewalk on the east side of South Lomita for storm drain improvements; excavation and grading for construction of the bioswale and for the two treatment vaults at either end; and planting of the vegetation.

Because the work is on an undeveloped plot and not in the main part of the preserve, disruption to the public should be minimal, she added. Work is expected to last three to four months.

As part of the grant requirements, officials plan to provide educational classes and outreach to residents on creating drought-friendly gardens and capturing storm runoff. Classes are planned for late 2016, but exact times and locations have yet to be worked out.

http://www.vcstar.com/news/local-news/ojai/meiners-oaks-project-designed-to-provide-cleaner-runoff-to-ventura-river_40850165

OJAI VALLEY NEWS

www.ojaivalleynews.com



124th Year, No. 79 • Wednesday, June 24, 2015 • Newsracks, 75¢, retail stores, 70¢ plus tax • Yearly subscription, \$52

Meiners Oaks to get bioswale on South Lomita

June 2, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors awarded a \$447,000 contract to Shaw Contracting of Carpinteria to construct a project to improve the cleanliness of Meiners Oaks' stormwater. The project will consist of a bio-filtration vegetated swale and filters to remove trash, sediment, bacteria, and nutrients from the stormwater that flows to the Ventura River from

approximately 40 percent of the community of Meiners Oaks.

The project complements recent county street and sidewalk improvements in Meiners Oaks on El Roblar Drive and South Lomita Avenue, which improved both stormwater drainage and pedestrian safety. The stormwater project is being built in partnership with the Ojai Valley Land Conser-

vancy (OVLC) on OVLC property along South Lomita Avenue. Funding for the project comes from a Proposition 84 water bond grant. The project will improve the water quality in the Ventura River and benefit both human water users and aquatic species.

Supervisor Steve Bennett, whose district includes the

See Swale, Page A3

Swale:

Continued from Page A1

Ojai Valley, said, "This project is a great fit with the OVLC's environmental focus and we're very happy to partner with OVLC to improve water quality in the Ventura River. This is also a great example of voter-approved water bond funds coming back to the local community. The county has constructed a number of other stormwater filtering and infiltration projects around the county,

and I'm glad that we're able to bring a large one to the Ojai Valley."

Construction will start in July and run through October. The project also incorporates a public education component including seminars and workshops on installing "Ocean Friendly Gardens." The project will assist in meeting the water quality regulations for the Ventura River that have been enacted by the state.