



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 532711
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

June 10, 2009

Office of the
District Commander

Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas
Second District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
866 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisor Ridley Thomas:

I am writing with regard to a letter you recently received from Mr. George Wolfe of LA River Expeditions. Mr. Wolfe is requesting your approval to allow access to the Los Angeles River in the area known as Glendale Narrows, for purposes of "...guided recreational and educational boat trips down living sections of the LA River ..." Mr. Wolfe proposes to launch this endeavor with an inaugural event on Sunday, June 14, 2009 and, after a one year "pilot program" to extend the activity to other sections of the River.

The United States owns an easement interest in the portions of the river cited in Mr. Wolfe's request. Therefore, in-river activities such as those proposed, in the specific areas mentioned in the request, would require permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. I have not received a request from Mr. Wolfe regarding his proposal.

In July 2008 I approved Mr. Wolfe's request for a film permit. That permit specifically prohibited boating (kayaks, canoes or other vessels) as being an unsafe activity and incompatible with the channel in its current configuration. In direct violation of the conditions of the permit, Mr. Wolfe and his colleagues launched vessels in the river and over the course of two days, kayaked from the Valley to Long Beach. In light of past experience, I would be hesitant to approve any future requests submitted by Mr. Wolfe.

The Corps supports proposals to increase and improve use and safety of existing out-of-channel rights of way, through, for example, development of bike paths and additional signage, and we are prepared to work with all interested parties to ensure adequate analysis and efficient review of proposals for these types of improvements. The mission and authorities of the Corps of Engineers give priority to public uses rather than commercial uses of Corps-controlled property. Evaluation of any recreation proposal must be conducted within the framework of the Corps' Recreation Development Outgrant Policy and in collaboration with the County and other existing public partners to

first determine whether there exists a public need, and, if so, what public resources are available.

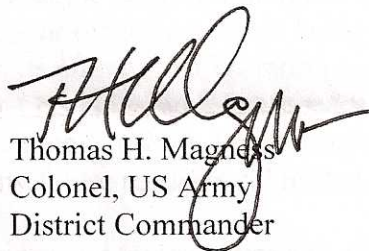
The active channel was designed as a single-purpose flood control project without plans for public in-channel recreation or safety, therefore there are limitations on use of the active channel without physical modifications due to high-velocity flows, and various safety concerns. Modifications which address safety and other issues would have to be accomplished before the Corps could support recreation in or public access to the active channel.

In areas such as those identified in the LA River Expeditions request, it is likely that activities of the sort proposed would interfere substantially with our ability to operate and maintain the channel for its intended flood control purpose, in which case I would not grant permission for the requested use.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at (213) 452-3961 or your staff may contact my Chief of Asset Management Ms. Terri Kaplan at (213) 452-3118. I would appreciate hearing from you regarding the County's ultimate decision on Mr. Wolfe's request.

Copies of this letter are being sent to Supervisor Gloria Molina, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Supervisor Michael Antonovich, Supervisor Don Knabe, Mark Pestrella, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, and George Wolfe, LA River Expeditions.

Sincerely,



Thomas H. Magness
Colonel, US Army
District Commander