

STEWARDS OF PUBLIC LAND

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Stewards of Public Land Challenges Proposal for Lower Arroyo Archery Range

Stewards for Public Land today announced that the organization has filed a lawsuit against the City of Pasadena challenging the recent approval of a proposal for the Lower Arroyo Archery Range that grants the Pasadena Roving Archers use of a large part of the Lower Arroyo Nature Park, designates a seven-acre area of the Park exclusively for archery, authorizes holding large-scale archery events within the Park, and expands the archery range, including installation of two additional targets, barriers, and signage. The project, which was approved by a 5-3 vote of the Pasadena City Council on February 5, 2015, would restrict members of the general public from entering a seven acre stretch along the western side of the Arroyo just north of the La Loma Bridge and authorizes the construction of extensive barriers, structures and signage in an area that the Pasadena Municipal Code designates a natural preservation area.

“The Arroyo Seco is a precious resource for ALL the residents of Pasadena and our neighboring communities,” said Thomas D. Seifert, chairman of Stewards for Public Land. “We are happy to share this resource, but we do not support Pasadena’s recent plan to hand over seven acres to a private group, the Pasadena Roving Archers, for the exclusive use of archers. We support use of the area by the archers on a limited basis, with proper supervision of the archery range when it is open. At other times, the public must have the opportunity to use and enjoy these seven acres of treasured and limited open space in Pasadena. We are also very concerned that proper safety measures be implemented to protect the public and nearby neighbors.”

The Stewards of Public Land lawsuit will challenge the archery project's compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Pasadena City Charter, and the Pasadena Municipal Code. The lawsuit alleges that the Pasadena improperly exempted the project from having to undergo a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act. “For the last five years, residents have urged the City of Pasadena to initiate a full Environmental Impact Report for the use of the Lower Arroyo by a private group,” Seifert said. CEQA requires an EIR for projects, such as the Archery Range, that are situated in a protected natural setting and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Attorney Mitchell M. Tsai, who represents Stewards for Public Land, stated “An EIR will give the City of Pasadena and the community an opportunity to study the proposed plan for the Archery Range and to review possible alternatives. Proper protective measures for the natural open space in the Lower Arroyo should be explored and discussed within the community.”

“We, the Stewards of Public Land, are very disappointed that the City of Pasadena wants to restrict public access to this treasured area and has ignored CEQA regulations,” said Seifert. “We have no choice except to go to the Courts for relief.”