

## Habitat Authority gets \$4.9 million boost to fight fires

*The grant from the Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy supports the agency's Fire Resiliency Project.*



Puente Hills Habitat Authority is being seeded and planted with native plant species at a 19.6-acre area in Whittier to restore it to Coastal Sage Scrub habitat. Area being worked on at center is next to Colima Road at Casino Dr. on Friday, February, 19, 2021. (Photo by Dean Musgrove, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

By [Anissa Rivera](#) | [arivera@scng.com](mailto:arivera@scng.com)

PUBLISHED: July 18, 2025 at 2:07 PM PDT

The Puente Hills Habitat Authority got a hefty boost in its mission to fight wildfires, courtesy of a \$4,977,000 grant from the state agency San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

The funding will support the Habitat Authority's Puente Hills Fire Resiliency project, which aims to enhance wildfire safety for the Puente Hills Preserve and the surrounding communities of Whittier, La Habra Heights, Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights.

"This comprehensive grant provides us with the necessary additional resources needed to implement priority wildfire prevention and protection strategies, preserve natural habitats, and safeguard local communities. It's a win-win for the region," said Andrea Gullo, Habitat Authority executive director.

The three-year grant agreement, expected to be disbursed in August, will go toward [wildfire](#) prevention and protection, wildfire prevention planning, biological consulting and contractor oversight and land acquisition.

The grant will include:

- Home hardening for an agency facility;
- Protective wrought iron boundary fencing at key locations;
- Vegetation and hazardous tree clearance;

Whittier Daily News

July 18, 2025

Page | 1

–Habitat enhancement;

–Equipment purchases including a flail mower, two 1,000-gallon mobile water trailers, and a 2,000 gallon water tender to be used for firefighting;

–Vegetation mapping;

–Fire fuel modeling;

Land acquisition; and

–Development of a permanent firebreak in the form of a trailhead.

The grant allows the Habitat Authority to address critical wildfire resiliency activities that would otherwise not be covered under the agency’s regular budget, which is funded in part by Measure PH.

Voters passed [Measure PH](#) in November, ensuring the agency will have the budget to fight wildfires and ensure trails and wildlife habitats on the Puente Reserve remain protected.

Among supporters that wrote letters to support the grant application are the city of Whittier, Sierra Club San Gabriel Valley Task Force, Friends of the Whittier Hills, and the nonprofit Hills For Everyone.

“We are extremely grateful to the RMC for their funding of this critically important grant. This proactive project is a part of the Habitat Authority’s ongoing commitment to wildfire preparedness for the benefit of the preserve and the local communities for years to come,” said Ivan Sulic, chair of the Habitat Authority’s board of directors.

The Habitat Authority was founded in 1994 with a mission to preserve and protect the more than 3,800 acres of natural habitats of the Puente Hills area, including Hacienda Hills, Turnbull Canyon, Sycamore Canyon, Hellman Park, Arroyo Pescadero, and Powder Canyon.

The state funding is sourced from the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, appropriations under Chapter 3 Wildfire and Forest Resilience.