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State Agrees to Buy Land for Park on L.A. River
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State parks officials agreed to purchase a half-mile-long sliver of land along the Los Angeles River near downtown for more than \$10 million — securing another piece of what environmentalists and local officials hope will one day be a corridor of trails and parks running the length of the river.

The 17.8-acre property, just south of where the Glendale Freeway crosses the river, is considered especially critical by urban conservationists because it is one of the few stretches of the waterway where the river bottom was not encased in concrete by flood-control engineers.

The area, which cuts through a hillside pass between the Santa Monica and Verdugo mountains known as the Glendale Narrows, is one of the river's most natural-looking, and is home to mallards, egrets and many other types of birds.

The latest acquisition, unanimously approved Friday by the state's public works board, will link the new state park at Taylor Yard, an old railroad service stop, to the river. The state is purchasing the property from the Union Pacific Railroad with \$10.5 million from Proposition 12, a state parks bond measure approved by voters in 2000.

"This is really moving us toward the bigger picture of a Los Angeles River parkway," state parks director Ruth Coleman said in an interview. "This is a soft-bottom part of the river, and it will be surprising to a lot of people, because there is a lot of wildlife down there, which is not something you see in too many parts of Los Angeles."

Environmentalists and state and local government officials have begun working together to buy more open spaces along the 52-mile river. Their plan is to eventually link them all together with a greenway running from the river's headwaters in the western San Fernando Valley to its mouth in Long Beach, or as much of that distance as possible.