

## USFS/NFWF WILDFIRE RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

### St Francis Dam Overlook/Interpretive Trail

#### I. Project Description

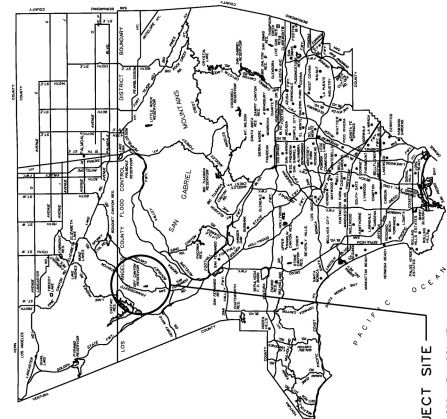
- a. **Background:** The historic property (Hazel Del Mining Camp) destroyed by the Copper Fire, is no longer extant, and not feasible for restoration. An alternative restoration, rehabilitation or improvement opportunity is the historic Saint Francis Dam Disaster Site. The Copper Fire denuded the vegetation on the hillsides surrounding the dam site. Subsequent winter storms in 2005 produced an increase in the magnitude of runoff, erosion, and debris flows that damaged an approximate mile long section of San Francisquito Canyon road that ran through the middle of the dam site, requiring the emergency construction of a road reroute. The original road alignment provided the public's access to the site. The St. Francis Dam Disaster site is located within the Copper Fire perimeter, on lands administered by the ANF. The site was designated a California Landmark in 1978 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The site is being considered as a potential Traditional Cultural Property (TCP), and has just recently (2019) been designated a National Monument and Memorial "H.R.2156 - Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act". The public has shown interest and support in improving interpretive opportunities at the site.
- b. **Objective:** ANF seeks to develop an interpretive trail leading to the St. Francis Dam Disaster Site, and installation of interpretive signs along the trail route. ANF anticipates approximately 0.25 miles (1200ft.) of trail leading to a monument overlook. Interpretive trail would aid the ANF in maintaining the goals of the Forest's Land Management Plan, which are to retain public access to the historic property. Additionally, this activity will support the Forest's Section 110 goals including enhancing interpretive opportunities. Project would need to integrate a deliverable from an earlier funded grant project that funded the construction of an interpretative kiosk to be installed at the location of the proposed start of the interpretative trail. That project has produced a sign panel ready for installation that provides information on the St. Francis Dam disaster, its new historical status as a National Memorial and Monument, in addition to its information on significant individuals and its National historical significance. (See below). As an added benefit, construction of the trail will direct visitor traffic away from the stream and riparian area, and help protect critical habitat for two threatened and endangered biological species.
- c. **Project Type:** Planning/Design and Implementation
- d. **Location:** The geographic extent is the area surrounding the Saint Francis Dam Site, specifically USGS 7.5' Quad for Warm Springs, T 5 N, R 16 W: SW ¼ of Sec. 1.

#### II. Technical Details

- a. **NEPA:** NEPA has not been completed and is required. Activity would likely be eligible under a NEPA level of Categorical Exclusion (CE): 36 CFR 220.6(e)(i) Construction or reconstruction a trail to a scenic overlook.
- b. **Permits:** Project team will need to communicate with ANF to identify any relevant permits that may be required. Particularly due to the designation of the site as a National Memorial and Monument, project activities will require planning and coordination with ANF and local stakeholder groups for review and approval throughout the project. Cultural and natural resource surveys may also be required to ensure protection of critical resources within the project area.
- c. **Skills:** Project team will need expertise and familiarity with trail construction and development of interpretative products. ANF has internal staff and local contacts available to consult or participate.
- d. **Monitoring:** Project Team will need to develop monitoring and evaluation criteria to monitor existing conditions, activity and outcomes, in coordination and approval with ANF.
- e. **Data:** ANF can supply relevant GIS data as needed. In addition, ANF has preliminary engineering designs developed by LA County (see attached).
- f. **Additional Details:** Additional information, including spatial data and project planning coordination, can be requested from: Dave Peebles, ANF Heritage and Tribal Relations Manager, 626-574-5273, [dpeebles@usda.gov](mailto:dpeebles@usda.gov)

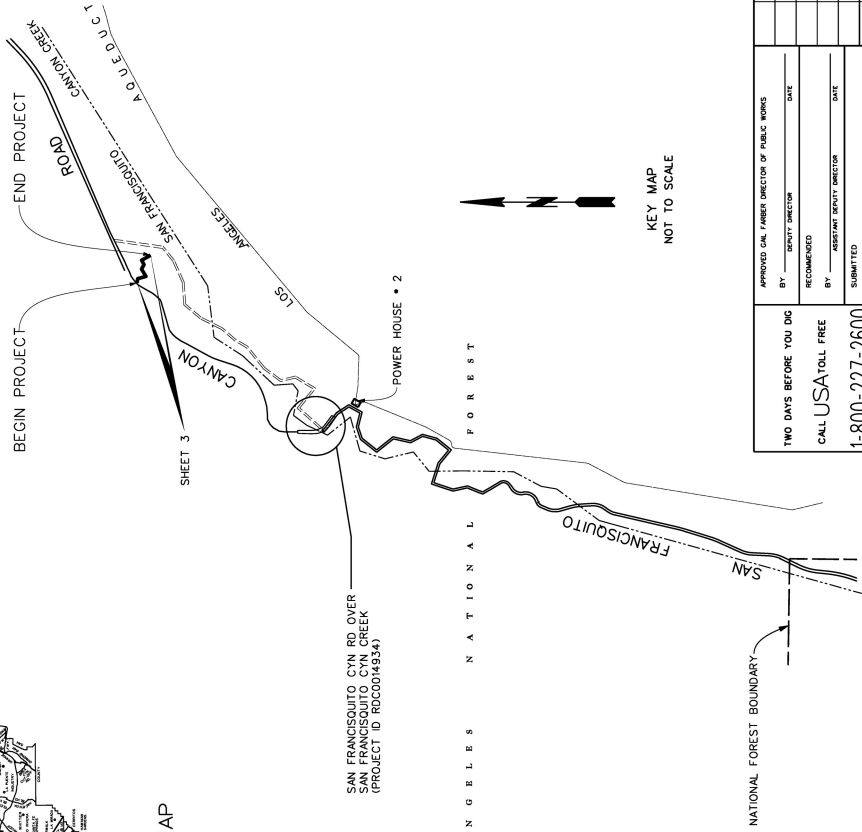
# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

## SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON ROAD OVER SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON CREEK



LOCATION MAP

PROJECT SITE  
T.C. 4280 (J7), 4281 (A7)  
R.D. 356  
S.D. 3



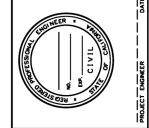
SAN FRANCISQUITO CYN RD OVER  
SAN FRANCISQUITO CYN CREEK  
(PROJECT ID RDC0014934)

INDEX

SHEET NO. 1	TITLE SHEET
SHEET NO. 2	NOTES AND REFERENCES
SHEET NO. 3	PLAN & TYPICAL SECTIONS

Los Angeles County  
Department of Public Works  
The Information Shown Hereon is  
**PRELIMINARY**  
Unofficial and Subject to Change

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	
SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON HIKING TRAIL TITLE SHEET	
PROJECT ID NO. RDC0015553	
PROJECT NUMBER	DATE
PROJECT SHEET	DATE

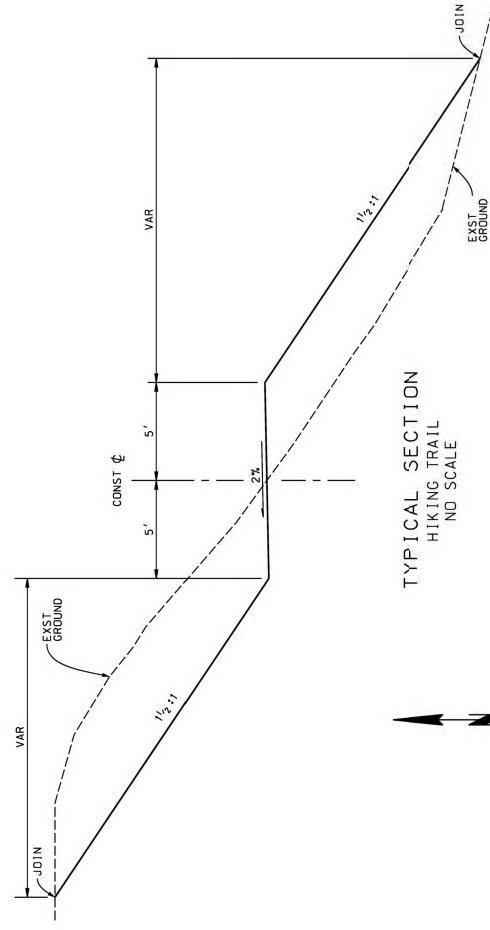
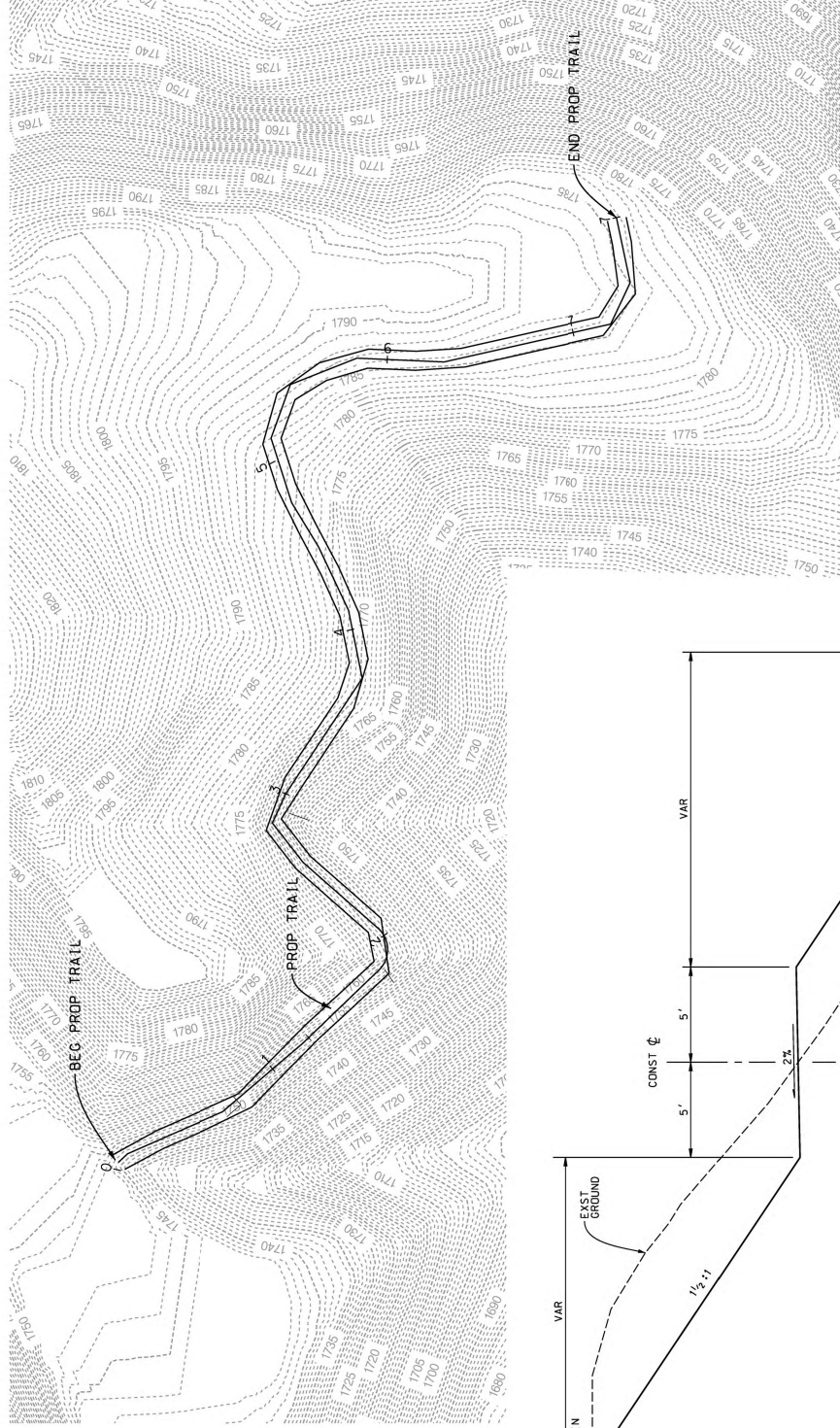


DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

APPROVED CIVIL ENGINEER DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS	DATE
BY: _____	DATE: _____
RECOMMENDED	DATE
BY: _____	DATE: _____
ASSISTANT CIVIL ENGINEER	DATE
SUBMITTED	DATE
BY: _____	DATE: _____

TWO DAYS BEFORE YOU DIG  
CALL USA TOLL FREE  
1-800-227-2600

DESIGNER	C. CASTLE
CHECKER	J. MELGAR
CADD PROJECT FILE NAME	RDC0015553 HIKING TRAIL.dgn (SMT 1)



Los Angeles County  
Department of Public Works  
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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
**SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON  
HIKING TRAIL  
TITLE SHEET**  
PROJECT ID NO. RDC0015553

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

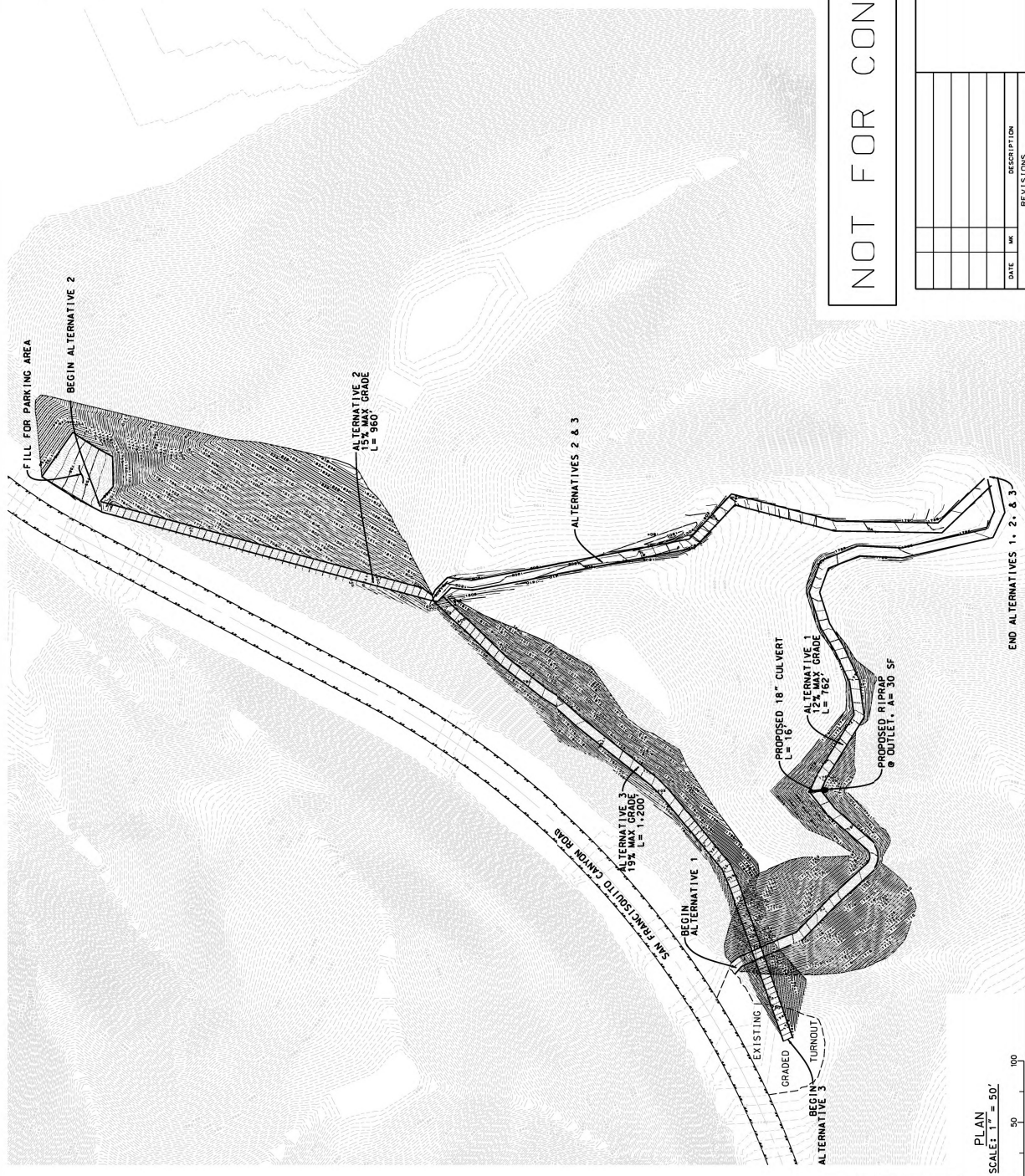
DESIGNER	C. CASTLE
CHECKER	J. MELGAR
DATE	
REVIEWED	
BY	
DATE	
PROJECT FILE NAME	RDC0015553 HIKING TRAIL.dgn (SHT 1)
CADD PROJECT FILE NAME	

**REFERENCES**

1. GEOTECHNICAL SITE ASSESSMENT, SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON ROAD-HIKING TRAIL LOCATION ALTERNATIVES, DATED 6/28/2011.

**CONSTRUCTION NOTES**

- 1. ELEVATIONS SHOWN ARE IN FEET ABOVE MEAN SEA LEVEL AND ALL EXISTING ELEVATIONS AND TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WAS DOWNLOADED FROM THE VIEW L.A. MAPS (<http://pmap.sfmta.gov/website/viewer/viewer.asp>).
- 2. GROUND SURVEY WILL BE REQUIRED FOR THE PREPARATION CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS.



**NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

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Department of Public Works  
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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
**SAN FRANCISQUITO CANYON  
HIKING TRAIL  
ALTERNATIVES 1, 2, & 3 PLAN VIEW**  
PROJECT ID NO. RDC0015553  
PCA25202113 | DWG

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

PLAN  
SCALE: 1" = 50'



DESIGNER	C. CASTLE
CHECKER	J. MELGAR
DATE	
REVIEWED	
BY	J. MELGAR
PROJECT FILE NAME	RDC0015553 HIKING TRAIL (1547 3)





PROJECT NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
 PROJECT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PREPARED BY: PETER SANDOLE

PROJECT NAME: SAINT FRANCIS DAM TRAIL PROJECT

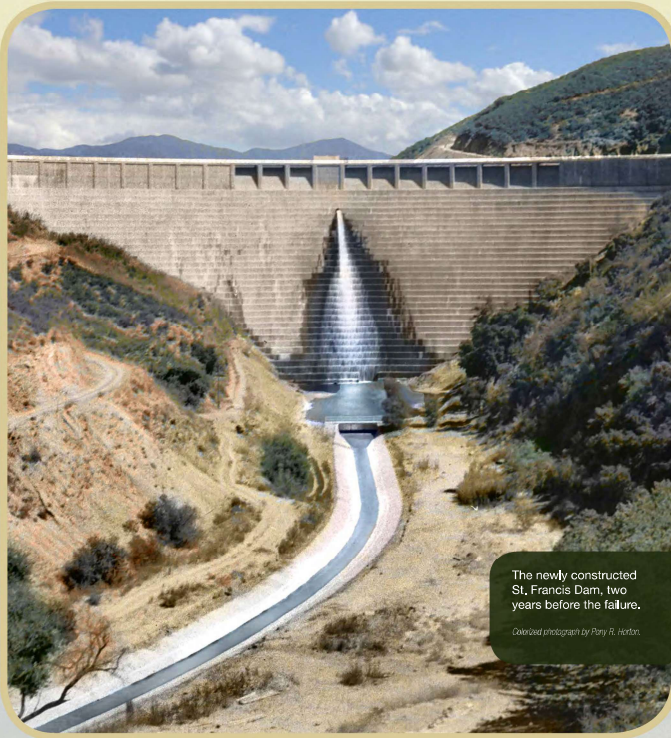
FILENAME: LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS ROAD MAINTENANCE DIVISION - DISTRICT 3

SCALE: NONE

SHEET: 1 OF 1



# St. Francis Dam Failure



The newly constructed St. Francis Dam, two years before the failure.

Courtesy photograph by Perry R. Horton.

Look around at the surrounding landscape. Do you see large chunks of concrete, both within the river channel and along the crossing ridge? Those are remnants of the St. Francis Dam, and the dam's wing wall. They are the physical remains of one of the most devastating dam failures of the 20th century.



Construction of the dam was completed in 1926 to store water from the Los Angeles Aqueduct, which transports water hundreds of miles from the Owens Valley to the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles County. By 1928, the reservoir behind the dam had reached full capacity. On March 12th, the dam was examined for leaking but it was determined to be structurally sound. Hours later, the dam would catastrophically fail. Just before midnight, 12 billion gallons of water burst through the dam and roared down the canyon, flooding nearly a dozen towns as the water made its way 54 miles to the Pacific Ocean. The disaster killed more than 400 people.

In 2019, the dam failure site was designated as a National Memorial. The concrete remnants remind us of the tremendous loss of human life and property that occurred in this tragic event— as well as the engineering challenges involved in securing and transporting water to the homes and businesses of Southern California.



## St. Francis Dam FACTS



The St. Francis Dam was designed and built under the direction of William Mulholland, engineer of the Los Angeles Aqueduct system.

The dam was 200 feet tall and its main structure was 700 feet across. The reservoir behind the dam could hold 38,000 acre feet of water.

The dam failure created a wall of rushing water over 160 feet tall, decreasing in height as it washed down the flood plain. It was 2.5 miles wide when it reached the ocean.

Flooding from the dam failure demolished 1,200 houses, washed out 10 bridges, knocked out power lines, and destroyed thousands of acres of ranches and farms.

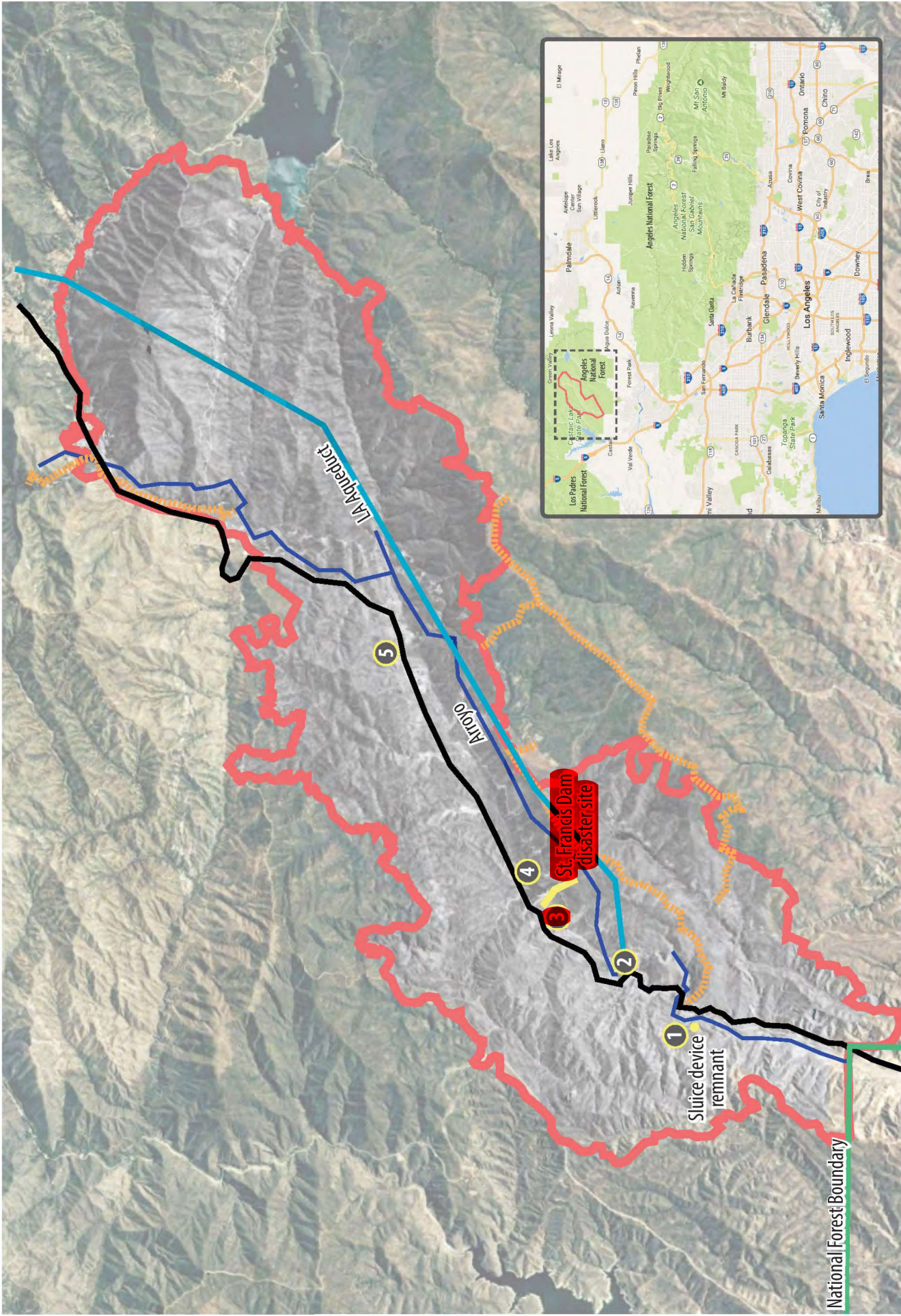


The St. Francis Dam failure is the second-greatest loss of human life in California's history, after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.

The St. Francis Dam, a day after it failed. Most of the remaining structure was eventually taken down for safety.

Courtesy photograph by Perry R. Horton.





**2002 Copper fire restoration boundary** (Red line)

**Los Angeles aqueduct** (Blue line)

**Sluice device remnant** (Yellow line)

**St. Francis dam disaster site** (Red area)

**Arroyo** (Black line)

**San Francisquito Canyon Rd** (Black line)

**4x4 OHV trail** (Orange dashed line)

**Signage Locations**

**1** Drinkwater Flats OHV staging area

**2** Power House 2 / USFS Fire Station / Information

**3** St. Francis Dam — South Overlook

**4** St. Francis Dam turnout

**5** Turn-Off near Pelton Ave

N

Location 3: St. Francis Dam — South Overlook

