



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA RESOLVES ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE TO SUBWAY TUNNELING IN HOLLYWOOD HILLS

The MTA Board of Directors and two environmental groups, Rescue Our Canyons and Friends of Runyon Canyon, today reached an agreement on measures that will protect Runyon Canyon Park and private property during the Hollywood Hills subway tunneling.

The agreement is based on mitigation measures proposed by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and adopted by the MTA Board in January.

"The parties agree that these mitigation measures will serve as the basis for a consent decree," said Supervisor Yaroslavsky. "Today's agreement is a major breakthrough in our efforts to sweep aside the legal impediments to completing our subway system as safely and expeditiously as possible. This decree will ensure that private properties and public lands will be fully protected as Red Line construction proceeds through this sensitive area."

The consent decree makes a finding that compliance with the decree along with the prior MTA environmental documentation constitutes sufficient information to satisfy state and federal environmental requirements.

The mitigation measures contained in Supervisor Yaroslavsky's motion adopted in January, which will now be incorporated into the decree, principally restrict the use of explosives during construction and the amount of dewatering under Runyon Canyon. The motion also mandates a substantial reduction in the use of explosives in the tunnel construction under Runyon Canyon and a complete elimination of blasting in the tunnels under the remainder of the Hollywood Hills.

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When explosives must be used, the motion requires the intensity to be greatly reduced and limits the times when blasting may be conducted, Supervisor Yaroslavsky said.

The motion also requires extensive grouting to prevent water leakage from seasonal surface springs and the monitoring of the effects of the tunneling on vegetation. In addition, the MTA's special insurance program will be expanded to provide coverage to all private property which might be subject to vibrations from the tunneling.

"An important element of the consent decree is that the parties will select a qualified tunneling expert to serve as a "monitor" to review information regarding blasting and leakage and make quarterly reports," Yaroslavsky said.

"We have committed to the public that we will do everything in our power to build this subway as safely as possible," said MTA Chairman Larry Zarian. "This consent decree is another act that demonstrates our resolve to build a world class system, and at the same time do the construction work with respect for peoples' property and the vitally needed public spaces within our communities."

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