



Esther Feldman, Principal

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Esther Feldman has pioneered innovative conservation projects and public finance initiatives throughout California and the U.S. for nearly four decades, focused on the intersection of people, nature, land, and water. She has a track record of successfully guiding visionary ideas from conception to reality and of leveraging funding from multiple sources. Her work integrates science, policy, and land use with community and governmental engagement. Her work has permanently improved California's landscapes, protected and restored natural areas, provided metrics-based approaches to managing stormwater runoff, and continues to improve the lives of people from all walks of life. Her current focus includes helping young people move from entry-level jobs to successful career pathways in the diverse conservation sector.

As Principal of Feldman Consulting, she brings a strategic, pragmatic and "there-is-no-box" approach to assist clients with challenging projects to advance conservation, climate resilience, community health and ecological sustainability. She integrates a broad range of technical, scientific, land use, policy, public finance, community engagement, and political expertise. She is adept at securing funding from government agencies, foundations and private funders; working with communities, elected officials and public agencies; and building diverse coalitions to achieve community and conservation goals. She provides training and coaching to assist individuals and community-based organizations in building the skills necessary to plan, fund and lead projects to success.

She is responsible for generating **over \$3 billion in new public funds** for park, recreation and conservation purposes in California and throughout the U.S. She started in 1988 with the Planning and Conservation League, helping to direct the successful citizen's initiative for the \$776 million California Parks and Wildlife Act (Prop. 70). She wrote state legislation to create a new public finance method, which in 1992 and 1996 resulted in two voter-approved Los Angeles County Park Acts (Props. A), creating over \$1.6 billion, and leading to the permanent \$100 million annually for parks and conservation in L.A. County. These measures resulted in purchasing, restoring and improving thousands of parks, beaches, natural areas, cultural institutions, rivers and trails, and has created jobs throughout the region.

In 1995, she helped to launch revitalization of the L.A. River Greenway, leading multiple L.A. River land acquisitions on behalf of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL). At TPL, Ms. Feldman established TPL's **National Public Finance Conservation Program**, which has since created over \$35 billion in new conservation funding throughout the United States. She established and directed TPL's Los Angeles Field Office, pioneering TPL's national presence in creating urban parks in the 1990s, including purchasing land and negotiating for the clean-up of a Superfund site along the L.A. River.

As Founder and President of the non-profit Community Conservation Solutions (CCS), Ms. Feldman spearheaded the **Baldwin Hills Park** in the heart of urban Los Angeles, **leveraging over \$80 million** in public funds for one of the most park-poor and ethnically diverse areas of California to purchase the stunning **Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook**, now one of the most visited natural parks in L.A. County. This work led to the creation of the state-funded Baldwin Hills Conservancy.

To tackle the challenge of capturing and re-using stormwater runoff, Ms. Feldman led CCS' **Green Solutions Project**, a web-based decision-making tool integrating data on a watershed scale. This 'green infrastructure' metrics-based tool identifies where to re-connect public lands and stormwater conveyance infrastructure – using nature-based solutions - to transform runoff into a source of sustainable water supplies. CCS' Green Solutions tool was the model for the CA Stormwater Resources Planning Act in 2014 (Pavley), leveraging \$200 million in new state funding.

Focusing on a **top priority 'Green Solution infrastructure' site** in one of the top 1% most polluted communities in California, CCS partnered with Legacy LA to create a community-based plan for the **'Pollution Solution' Natural Park at the Ramona Gardens Housing Development**. The Natural Park integrates stormwater capture, air quality and ecosystem science, native habitat restoration and recreation to transform a barren site between residences and 15-lanes of freeway. This project is advancing with a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department.

Ms. Feldman led construction of the first-of-its kind **Zev Yaroslavsky L.A. River Greenway and Habitat Trail** in the San Fernando Valley, creating an **ecosystem-focused model for habitat restoration** along concrete-lined urban rivers. This native habitat, walking trail and stormwater runoff project in Studio City planted over 3,000 native trees and plants and linked river segments to create the longest continuous river walking trail in the Valley.

Ms. Feldman has been awarded a National Chevron Conservation Award, was a delegate to China for the American Young Political Leaders Foreign Exchange Program, and served on the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission, with a jurisdiction of over 3,000 square miles.

She has received numerous commendations from elected officials, environmental, urban planning organizations and others, including The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the California State Senate and State Assembly, the LA County Board of Supervisors, and the LA City Council and Los Angeles Mayors.

Ms. Feldman has a Bachelor of Science in Soil and Water Science from the University of California, Davis. She has been an organic farmer, is adept at driving a forklift, and is an accomplished outdoorswoman with decades of experience in backpacking, rock climbing, skiing, wilderness travel, kayaking and outdoor adventures.

Prior Board memberships have included The Sierra Fund and the Sierra Nevada Alliance. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts and the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains.