

2.8 Data Gaps & Data Assessment

2.8.1 Terrestrial Resources

There is limited information regarding the mineral composition of soils in the watershed. Otherwise, there are no major data gaps in the information for climate, geology and soils, land uses, and recreation.

2.8.2 Water Resources

2.8.2.1 Surface Water

Surface and groundwater resource protection within the San Dieguito Watershed is the responsibility of the Cities of Escondido, Del Mar, Solana Beach, Poway, San Diego, the County of San Diego, and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Water quality goals for the basins are presented in the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Region by the RWQCB.

Although there are a number of water quality monitoring programs currently in place in the San Dieguito Watershed, they are not entirely comprehensive and do not represent the water quality conditions in the entire watershed.

The Urban Runoff Monitoring Program monitors wet weather water quality upstream of the golf courses, athletic fields and recreational facilities that lie in the floodplain of the lower San Dieguito River. As a result, there is limited data concerning the potential impacts that these facilities have on the water quality of San Dieguito River and Lagoon.

The Dry Weather Monitoring Programs in place throughout the watershed are limited in scope and generally only test for nutrients, oil and grease, coliforms, and a limited list of pesticides and metals.

Although the City of San Diego maintains a regular monitoring program at Hodges Reservoir and Sutherland Reservoir, there is limited water quality information available for the creeks and streams in the upper and middle watershed. As previously noted, future land use projections indicate an increase in impervious surfaces near many of these water bodies. There are currently no programs in place that will monitor the impacts of increased urbanization in the watershed on surface waters.

Other data gaps relating to surface water include the following:

The impacts to downstream aquatic organisms from water impoundment behind Hodges and Sutherland Dams are currently unknown.

- The prevalence and extent of endocrine contamination in the watershed is unknown.

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- The potential for remineralization of nutrients from the sediments in the San Dieguito Lagoon during low oxygen and closed inlet conditions is unknown.
- There have not been estimates completed of how much of the expected new development within the watershed will be subject to BMP standards. Additionally, there have been no studies to determine the effort needed to retrofit existing developments to meet the BMP standards.

2.8.2.2 Ground Water

With a few exceptions, the available hydrogeologic data for the three groundwater basins within the San Dieguito Watershed is fairly limited. Although there is much groundwater data for the basins within the watershed, most of the information is either out of date or site specific. Data gaps exist regarding groundwater levels and water quality within the watershed.

The long-term sustainability of agriculture in the San Pasqual Valley is a major issue in the watershed. In order to sustain the current amount of agricultural usage, water availability is critical. No studies have been conducted to determine the potential for using the San Pasqual Basin as storage for recycled or imported water. Such studies would include rigorous hydrogeologic and engineering investigations and feasibility studies.

If any projects that could potentially have an impact on groundwater are proposed within the San Dieguito Watershed, the impact of the project on groundwater resources should be fully evaluated. Such impacts would include the potential impact of pumping on groundwater levels or water quality. Any work involving or impacting groundwater within the watershed should be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the County of San Diego, the California DHS, and the RWQCB.

2.8.3 Biological Resources

Substantial background information on biological resources is available for the watershed, however, most of the information is from localized areas and most sources of information are more than five years old. More importantly from a watershed management perspective, only a few reports address the quality of the habitats. Substantial data gaps exist regarding habitat quality in many areas of the watershed.

A field reconnaissance survey is recommended to provide an overview of current habitat quality conditions in representative areas of the watershed. The representative areas should include selected areas on public lands along Santa Ysabel Creek, San Dieguito River, major tributaries, canyons, valleys, and preserves. The following types of information should be noted during the field reconnaissance: relative occurrence of exotic invasive plants, relative occurrence of vegetation within the river and its tributaries, relative extent of bank erosion and sedimentation within the river, extent of buffer between natural areas and urban development, eutrophication, trash/debris, and other indicators of disturbance, and implementation status of priority management tasks.

Resource protection within the watershed is the responsibility of the City of San Diego, City of Escondido, City of Poway, and County of San Diego as part of MSCP/MHCP agreements. In addition, the San Dieguito River Valley JPA manages lands within the San Dieguito River Park. Each of these jurisdictions has identified goals and objectives associated with biological resource protection, enhancement, restoration, maintenance, and/or monitoring. Various plans exist to guide resource management within the watershed, and several plans have identified priority tasks associated with management and monitoring. However, the status of implementation of priority tasks is not readily available. Stakeholder coordination with appropriate jurisdictional staff to determine current status of development of specific management plans for different MSCP MHPAs and MHCP FPA locations as well as implementation of actions from completed plans, as well as coordination with reserve managers is recommended to provide the most up-to-date information regarding issues of concern and planned enhancement/restoration efforts to provide appropriate background for the watershed management plan.

Restoration projects in this document are discussed only with respect to public projects. However, there are many private restoration projects being undertaken throughout the watershed. The full extent (activities and acreage) has not been quantified.

There are several habitat plans for various locations throughout the watershed which call for funding, but only modest funding has been provided. It is currently unknown what local habitat funding as gone to projects in the San Dieguito Watershed.

2.8.4 Social Resources

Although there are numerous known archaeological sites in the upper segment of the watershed, much of the area has not been surveyed. In particular, the Santa Ysabel Valley has yet to be surveyed. It is likely that sites are located in this region.

2.8.5 Regulatory Assessment

There are several governmental agencies that own land adjacent to one another within the watershed. In most cases, there are not currently existing agreements between them on how to best manage the lands together.