

**SAN DIEGO RIVER WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**STAKEHOLDER INPUT REPORT NO. 2 (STRATEGY)
SUBTASK 11.3**

Prepared for

San Diego River Watershed Workgroup

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August 2004



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Note: Funding for this project has been provided in full, or in part, through a contract with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) pursuant to the Costa Machado Act of 2000 (Proposition 13), and any amendments thereto for the implementation of California’s NPS Pollution Control Program. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the SWRCB, nor does mention of trade or commercial products constitute endorsement, or recommendation for use.

1. INTRODUCTION

The scope of work states that a watershed management plan (WMP) for the San Diego River Watershed (SDRW) will be developed and implemented to restore and protect water quality and quantity in the SDRW. The size of the watershed and the complexity of the issues require that extensive outreach be conducted to encourage participation of residents and stakeholders in the planning process to better address areas of concern. Since stakeholder issues vary throughout the watershed, workshops are to be conducted in the three primary geographic regions (El Capitan, San Vicente, and San Diego Management Areas). A goal of the WMP is to increase stakeholder collaboration that results in a shared vision of the watershed to coordinate activities and to ensure projects are complementary.

Specifically, the scope of work identifies that stakeholders-at-large will be solicited to strategize and establish priorities for the WMP by:

- Conducting three public workshops in the watershed community to present data and assessments, and to determine a stakeholder-driven strategy; including goals, objectives, coordinated priority setting, best use of resources, education and outreach, integration of existing planning efforts, and schedule for implementation. Hold workshops in various locations throughout the SDRW (lower, mid, and upper) to encourage maximum participation. Potential locations include Ocean Beach, Mission Trails Regional Park, and Lakeside (sub-task 11.1).
- Conducting outreach to promote the workshops, by provide notifications in community newspapers, by providing information on the website, and by notifying all interested parties on the Stakeholder List, electronically, by fax or phone (sub-task 11.2).
- Producing Stakeholder Input Report No. 2 that summarizes and prioritizes the input provided by stakeholders at the “strategy” workshops (sub-task 11.3).

Each of these elements has been completed and all are included as part of this submittal. The approach, design, and results of the three public workshops held in July 2004 are presented in Section 2. The workshop sign-in sheets and handout materials from these workshops are presented in Appendices A and C, and various workshop notification media are presented in Appendix B.

2. APPROACH

The development of a vision, supporting goals, and strategies to achieve these goals are integral to the development of an effective WMP. The process of creating these elements can also be of significant importance as it relates to gaining support and commitment from key stakeholder groups. The County of San Diego recognized this early in the WMP process and conducted a series of three workshops in June 2002 prior to the selection of a consulting team for the development of the San Diego River WMP. This approach was significant, in that it provided an opportunity for the stakeholders in the SDRW to provide their ideas and concerns to the County regarding the development of the WMP prior to consultant solicitation and selection. This type of open public process has continued to be the focus of the Project Team as the various phases of the WMP effort have moved forward. Specifically, it influenced the approach and design of the three stakeholder workshops held in July 2004, as described in this report.

Three key approaches were used to facilitate stakeholder participation:

1. The workshops were geographically located throughout the SDRW in Julian, Lakeside, and Mission Valley
2. The workshops were held in the evening over several hours
3. The workshops were designed as informal open houses so stakeholders could participate at any time, for any amount of time, during the course of the workshop

The report summarizes each topic area in separate sections. Section 3 describes the locations, dates, duration, and design of the workshops. Section 4 describes the fourth mini-workshop that was conducted at the August 2004 Watershed Workgroup (WWG) meeting. Stakeholder input received on the development of a Vision Statement, the prioritization of the needs and expectations of the WMP, and the prioritization of the issues that the WMP should address is summarized in Section 5. Section 6 wraps up the report by presenting how the Vision, Goals, and Expectations are guiding the WMP process.

3. THE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

3.1. Organization and Design of Stakeholder Workshops

The stakeholder workshops were conducted on during mid-July 2004. The Mission Valley workshop was conducted on Friday, July 16th as a follow on activity to the San Diego River Coalition meeting at the Mission Valley Library. The workshop occurred from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm and was attended by 13 stakeholders. The Julian workshop was held on Wednesday, July 20th at the Julian Town Hall from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, and was attended by eight stakeholders. The Lakeside workshop was held on Thursday, July 21st at the Lakeside Community Center from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm and was attended by 11 stakeholders. The public could attend any workshop. The sign-in sheets for each workshop are provided in Appendix A.

Each of the workshops was designed as an “Open House.” This format allowed stakeholders to attend and participate at any time during the event and examine the information stations at their own pace. Each workshop was staffed by the WWG co-chairs Liz Giffen and Rob Hutsel, and at least one member of the project team to provide guidance and answer any questions the participants might have. The workshops were organized by five basic activities:

1. Watch a nine-minute PowerPoint slide show (Appendix C) that provides an overview of the Watershed Assessment Report and the issues identified therein
2. Provide input on a Vision Statement for the SDRW
3. Prioritize the Needs and Expectations identified by stakeholders in June 2002
4. Prioritize the issues identified by the Project Team to be addressed by the WMP
5. Provide input regarding the location of issues and resources throughout the watershed at the Geo-Center

As each participant arrived, they were provided a packet of voting materials and instructions to use at the various stations (see Appendix A). The participants were encouraged to begin by viewing the slide show to get background information. While they could visit the stations in any order they wished, the suggested pathway was the vision station, the Needs and Expectations station, the four Issues stations, and finally the Geo-Center.

3.2. Slide Show

The PowerPoint slide show was developed as a self-running show that presented information and issues identified in the Watershed Assessment Report which helped provide some additional information and background to participants.

3.3. Vision Statements

The Vision station was designed to allow participants to vote for one of four sample statements provided, or compose one of their own on the sheets of paper provided. The purpose of a Vision Statement was defined as: "A Vision Statement should paint a picture that creates a sense of desire and builds commitment to reaching the vision." This definition was followed by the instructions: "Please place a checkmark next to the statement that most closely matches your vision for the San Diego River Watershed, or compose a statement of your own on the sheets provided."

3.4. Needs and Expectations

The Needs and Expectations station was designed to allow participants to select the prioritization of 33 statements identified by stakeholders at the June 2002 workshops conducted by the County of San Diego. Each participant was provided with six gold stars and 12 red stars in their voting packet for use at this station. Each participant was instructed to use their gold stars to identify the statements that they felt were of highest priority for the WMP to address, and use their red stars to identify other high priority areas for the WMP.

3.5. Issue Areas

The four issue stations were developed around each of the major sections of the Watershed Assessment Report: Water Resources; Water Quality; Habitat and Wildlife; and Land Use and Planning. From each of these sections of the Watershed Assessment Report, issue statements were generated based on the findings contained therein. There were six issue statements developed for Water Resources; ten for Water Quality; five for Habitat and Wildlife; and six for Land Use and Planning. To help provide additional context and background information for participants to review, GIS-based maps for each issue area were also developed and presented at the workshops. Given this information, participants were

asked to vote for their highest priority issues within any of the four issue areas with their 12 blue dots and their lowest priority issues with their four red dots.

3.6. Geo-Center

The final station was the Geo-Center, which was a 4-foot by 6-foot aerial photograph of the watershed with some additional GIS data layers presented as overlays. Participants were asked to place small paper icons of watershed resources and issues/stressors with stickpins to indicate where they occurred. This method of stakeholder input has proven successful in engaging participants by providing them the opportunity to share with the project team specific individual knowledge about the portions of the watershed that they know best.

4. MINI-WORKSHOP AT AUGUST 2004 WWG MEETING

A mini-workshop was held at the August 13th WWG meeting, since many of the regular attendees were unable to participate in one of the three public workshops. The WWG members were asked to vote on the Vision, Needs and Expectations, and Issues, but were not asked to view the PowerPoint slide show, nor place icons of resources and issues/stressors on the Geo-Center. During this WWG meeting, seven individuals participated in the voting. Once their votes were cast, they were quickly tallied and compared to the results of the three workshops to help identify where concurrence and potential conflicts might occur between the better informed WWG and the general public stakeholders. These results and comparisons are presented in the following sections of this report.

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Vision Statement

As indicated previously, participants were asked to vote for one of four vision statements or compose one of their own, which none of the participants chose to do. The four vision statements presented were as follows:

1. The SDRW is a natural ecosystem that offers opportunities for people to learn about, experience, and protect a rich blend of nature, rural character, and cultural history in an urbanized area.
2. The SDRW is a varied community of recreation, agriculture, commercial and residential uses sharing a clean environment. This shall be accomplished with the greatest respect and consideration given to the water resources, both surface and groundwater, in order to preserve and enhance natural habitats while balancing the needs of the communities and improving our quality of life.
3. The beneficial uses of water can be expanded by increasing water availability and improving water quality, while at the same time protecting and enhancing coastal and inland habitats and natural resources.
4. Protect, sustain, and restore the quality and beneficial uses of water, land, habitats and other natural resources of the SDRW.

Based on the voting at the three public workshops and the WWG, Vision Statement No. 3 received no supporting votes and has been dropped from consideration. Vision Statement No. 1 received at least one vote at each of the three public workshops, for a total of five votes, but did not receive any votes at the WWG. Vision Statement No. 2 received the most votes during the three public workshops with eight votes, but was not voted for at the Julian workshop or at the WWG. Vision Statement No. 4 received the second most votes during the three public workshops with seven votes, and received all seven votes at the WWG meeting. However it did not receive any votes at the Lakeside workshop where participants strongly favored Vision Statement No. 2.

When comparing Vision Statements Nos. 2 and 4 for content, there are many similarities in the topics captured, with the primary difference occurring in the way in which the topics are presented. Vision Statement No. 2 presents topics in more of a dialog form that may have been easier to understand by the general public than the more concise term-based

presentation form used within Vision Statement No. 4. Additionally, members of the WWG requested that cultural and historic resources be included in this statement. In an effort to improve support by the general public of this Vision Statement and to incorporate the requested addition of historic and cultural resources, the following revised Vision Statement is being considered by the WWG.

“Protect, sustain, and restore the quality, quantity, and beneficial uses of water, land, habitats, and other natural and cultural resources of the San Diego River Watershed.”

5.2. Prioritization of Needs and Expectations

To score the voting on the Needs and Expectations, the gold stars counted as three points each and the red stars counted as one. Based on the results of the three public workshops six of the Needs and Expectation statements captured 39.5 percent of the votes. The top six statements, in order, are as follows:

1. Land use and regional planning authorities need to be involved to implement ideas such as: limiting growth in order to protect water and habitat quality; integrating land use planning policy and ordinances to reduce runoff by infiltration and vegetation cover. Using swales and wetlands in new development to increase groundwater infiltration; improving water quality by land use policy to reduce contaminants from various land uses; reducing variances in planning and permits; acquiring land or conservation easements to create buffers in riparian areas; and converting impervious surfaces to grass parking areas (12 gold + 10 red = point total 46).
2. A coordinated and consistent effort toward the removal of exotics and invasive species is needed (11 gold + 8 red = point total 41).
3. The sum and goal of all policies should be to allow water to sustain natural communities and prevent health risks to humans from pollutants. (9 gold + 14 red = point total 41).
4. Encourage water conservation to increase water availability (10 gold + 4 red = point total 34).
5. The success of riparian habitats is dependent on the stimulation provided by floods (8 gold + 5 red = point total 29).

6. Strategies should be implemented to reduce or eliminate development in the flood plain to provide opportunities to widen channel segments that influence flooding (6 gold + 8 red = point total 26).

The same scoring process was used for the results of the WWG meeting, where five statements captured 41.4 percent of the votes. The top five statements, in order, are as follows:

1. Land use and regional planning authorities need to be involved to implement ideas such as: limiting growth in order to protect water and habitat quality; integrating land use planning policy and ordinances to reduce runoff by infiltration and vegetation cover. Using swales and wetlands in new development to increase groundwater infiltration; improving water quality by land use policy to reduce contaminants from various land uses; reducing variances in planning and permits; acquiring land or conservation easements to create buffers in riparian areas; and converting impervious surfaces to grass parking areas (6 gold + 4 red = point total 22).
2. Water quality should be improved by creating extensive wetland areas. Wetlands provide water filtration, nutrient and metals uptake, flood control, groundwater infiltration and recharge, and habitat (5 gold + 7 red = point total 22).
3. To preserve water quality, buffer zones should be established along riparian corridors to limit or prohibit industrial uses near water bodies (5 gold + 1 red = point total 16).
4. Acquisition of land to create wetlands is the surest way to preserve and protect water quality (4 gold + 3 red = point total 15).
5. To protect, enhance, and restore historical and cultural resources (4 gold + 2 red = point total 14).

Only one statement was common to the two groups of voters and was ranked first by both groups (1), which clearly underscores the importance of engaging and maintaining active participation in the WMP process by local and regional land use and planning authorities. When the two sets of scores are combined, three additional statements are added to the top 10 cumulative scores, which account for 59.3 percent of the total votes cast. The composite top 10 scoring statements are as follows:

1. Land use and regional planning authorities need to be involved to implement ideas such as: limiting growth in order to protect water and habitat quality; integrating land use planning policy and ordinances to reduce runoff by infiltration and vegetation cover. Using swales and wetlands in new development to increase groundwater infiltration; improving water quality by land use policy to reduce contaminants from various land uses; reducing variances in planning and permits; acquiring land or conservation easements to create buffers in riparian areas; and converting impervious surfaces to grass parking areas (68 points).
2. A coordinated and consistent effort toward the removal of exotics and invasive species is needed (47 points).
3. The sum and goal of all policies should be to allow water to sustain natural communities and prevent health risks to humans from pollutants (42 points).
4. To preserve water quality, buffer zones should be established along riparian corridors to limit or prohibit industrial uses near water bodies (41 points).
5. Encourage water conservation to increase water availability (38 points).
6. Acquisition of land to create wetlands is the surest way to preserve and protect water quality (36 points).
7. Water quality should be improved by creating extensive wetland areas. Wetlands provide water filtration, nutrient and metals uptake, flood control, groundwater infiltration and recharge, and habitat (35 points).
8. Strategies should be implemented to reduce or eliminate development in the flood plain to provide opportunities to widen channel segments that influence flooding (33 points).
9. The success of riparian habitats is dependent on the stimulation provided by floods (30 points).
10. The local school system is an untapped resource. The WMP should include an outreach program that engages schools and gives students hands-on experience with preserving and protecting wildlife and water quality (30 points).
11. The use of native vegetation needs to be promoted (30 points).
12. Individuals and stakeholders need to be educated about several different issues related to watershed maintenance. Some of these include appropriate landscaping for this region, nonpoint source pollution, manure management, septic/leach field

impacts, runoff versus drainage, groundwater monitoring, and aquifer monitoring/rate of loss (24 points).

One statement that was in the WWG's top five, dropped from the composite top 10. That statement is:

1. To protect, enhance, and restore historical and cultural resources.

In addition to determining which Needs and Expectations are of top priority, the voting also provides some insight into which statements were of lowest priority to the stakeholders. After scoring all four workshops, three of the original statements scored five points or less, suggesting that they are either not of major concern or are being captured within other statements that had broader appeal or applicability. The three statements are:

1. Property values need to be kept in mind and the Management Plan should also work to the benefit of property owners.
2. Given the scarcity of water in southern California, the Plan needs to look at how it interacts with projects such as the Emergency Storage Project.
3. Use the Website as a communications tool and create a bulletin board for the exchange of ideas and information between interested parties.

5.3. Prioritization of Issues

To score the voting on the Issues, a blue dot counted as one point each and a red dot counted as a negative one. Based on the results of the three public workshops, seven of the Issue statements captured 49.6 percent of the votes. The top seven statements, in order, are as follows:

1. Consistent implementation and enforcement of ordinances related to land development, construction practices, habitat protection, and storm water management need to be developed (24 blue – 0 red = 24 points).
2. Setting aside land for habitat preservation is important (21 blue – 2 red = 19 points).
3. Educating residents about the relationship between everyday activities and water quality is important (20 blue – 1 red = 19 points).
4. Best management practices, such as the use of native vegetation, avoidance of impervious surfaces, and site design to control sources of runoff, needs to be increased (19 blue – 0 red = 19 points).

5. Exotic species management and removal, accompanied by revegetation of native plants, is critical to improving habitat throughout the watershed (18 blue – 2 red = 16 points).
6. A process for making decisions about the watershed, which includes numerous jurisdictions, needs to be developed (14 blue – 0 red = 14 points).
7. Environmental education programs, such as water quality monitoring, should be included in the K-12 curricula (13 blue – 1 red = 12 points).

The same scoring process was used for the results of the WWG meeting, where five statements captured 57.9 percent of the votes. The top five statements, in order, are as follows:

1. The amount of impervious surface coverage should guide land development and planning decisions (11 blue – 0 red = 11 points).
2. Best management practices, such as the use of native vegetation, avoidance of impervious surfaces, and site design to control sources of runoff, needs to be increased (9 blue – 0 red = 9 points).
3. Educating residents about the relationship between everyday activities and water quality is important (9 blue – 1 red = 8 points).
4. Environmental education programs, such as water quality monitoring, should be included in the K-12 curricula (8 blue – 0 red = 8 points).
5. Setting aside land for habitat preservation is important (8 blue – 0 red = 8 points).

All but one of the top WWG statements were in common with the top statements of the public workshops (WWG No. 1). When the two sets of scores are combined, two statements fall out of the top five cumulative scores (WWG No. 1 and Public No. 6), which account for 46.6 percent of the total votes cast. The composite top five scoring statements are as follows:

1. Consistent implementation and enforcement of ordinances related to land development, construction practices, habitat protection, and stormwater management need to be developed (30 points).
2. Best management practices, such as the use of native vegetation, avoidance of impervious surfaces, and site design to control sources of runoff, needs to be increased (28 points).
3. Setting aside land for habitat preservation is important (27 points).

4. Educating residents about the relationship between everyday activities and water quality is important (27 points).
5. Environmental education programs, such as water quality monitoring, should be included in the K-12 curricula (20 points).
6. Exotic species management and removal, accompanied by revegetation of native plants, is critical to improving habitat throughout the watershed (19 points).

The composite scoring also provides insight into those issue statements that gained no support during the workshops, as well as those that were controversial in nature. Three issue statements received more red dots than blue, causing their final scores to be negative.

They were:

1. Clarify through research potential impacts occurring to aquatic and riparian associated species resulting from water transfers from Lake Sutherland to San Vicente Reservoir (-11 points = -10 WWG, -1 public).
2. There is a strong connection between water quality goals and the beneficial uses established by the State Water Resources Control Board (-5 points = -3 WWG, -2 public).
3. Short and long-term flood protection projects need to be developed with site-specific information to resolve existing flooding issues, including the potential effects of the Cedar fire (-3 points = -3 WWG, 0 public).

The most controversial issues were:

1. Basic biological information needs to be collected in areas burned by the Cedar fire to determine potential impacts to critical habitat for threatened and endangered species (7 blue to 4 red).
2. More detailed existing land use/land cover mapping is needed to develop and implement water and resource protection actions (10 blue to 6 red).
3. The relationship between the increased use of imported water and development to increases in contamination of groundwater needs to be better understood (14 blue to 4 red).

6. NEXT STEPS

The project team will use the results of the four workshops to help guide the development of the Watershed Management Plan, by ensuring that the top Needs and Expectations, as well as the top Issues are incorporated into and supported by the action recommendations formulated. In particular, the top four Needs and Expectations, which captured 25.9 percent of the total score, will be used to help focus and direct the primary action areas developed for the WMP.

They are:

1. Land use and regional planning authorities need to be involved to implement ideas such as: limiting growth in order to protect water and habitat quality; integrating land use planning policy and ordinances to reduce runoff by infiltration and vegetation cover. Using swales and wetlands in new development to increase groundwater infiltration; improving water quality by land use policy to reduce contaminants from various land uses; reducing variances in planning and permits; acquiring land or conservation easements to create buffers in riparian areas; and converting impervious surfaces to grass parking areas.
2. A coordinated and consistent effort toward the removal of exotics and invasive species is needed.
3. The sum and goal of all policies should be to allow water to sustain natural communities and prevent health risks to humans from pollutants.
4. To preserve water quality, buffer zones should be established along riparian corridors to limit or prohibit industrial uses near water bodies.

In addition to the top Needs and Expectations, the top four Issues, which captured 34.6 percent of the total score, will also be used to help focus and direct the primary action areas developed for the WMP.

They are:

1. Consistent implementation and enforcement of ordinances related to land development, construction practices, habitat protection, and stormwater management need to be developed (30 points).
2. Best management practices, such as the use of native vegetation, avoidance of impervious surfaces, and site design to control sources of runoff, needs to be increased (28 points).
3. Setting aside land for habitat preservation is important (27 points).

4. Educating residents about the relationship between everyday activities and water quality is important (27 points).

These two sets of guidance statements are very complimentary with each other and provide fairly consistent guidance for the Project Team. The Project Team will also work with the WWG during its upcoming September 9th meeting to determine which additional Needs and Expectations or Issue statements are appropriate to provide guidance to the priority actions within the WMP and which are appropriate for inclusion as guidance on longer-term or supporting action areas. To help with this discussion, the Needs and Expectations were used as the basis for developing a set of Goal statements that further define the Vision, and allow the Needs and Expectations to be used as Objectives that further define the Goals. The following nine Goals statements have been developed by the Project Team and are being considered by the WWG. Review, comment, and acceptance of these Goals will occur at the September meeting.

Goals:

1. Maintain, protect, and improve the water quality of coastal, surface, and groundwater.
2. Protect, maintain, restore, and enhance riparian and wetland habitats.
3. Sustain natural communities and prevent health risks to humans from pollutants.
4. Improve inter-agency coordination and cooperation in the development, implementation, and enforcement of policies, projects, and ordinances supporting watershed stewardship.
5. Restore, enhance, and protect native habitats and communities.
6. Maintain, protect, and improve local groundwater resources.
7. Minimize regional dependency on imported water.
8. Protect and manage flood plains to reduce risk of flooding and improve natural watershed functions.
9. Develop metrics to measure the success of plan elements.

During the August WWG meeting the attendees began developing a watershed project list, primarily for the purpose of submitting them for consideration for inclusion in a regional submittal for Proposition 50, Chapter 8 funds, which are aimed at Integrated Regional Water Management Plans. This list can also be used as the starting for implementation projects, both

short and long-term, that will be identified and supported within the WMP. The initial project list, verbatim from the stakeholders and in no specific order, includes:

1. Education as component of all projects – “how do human decisions affect watershed functions?”
2. Oak Creek – Acquire 30ac – water treatment of urban and equestrian areas – flood control & recharge.
3. Acquire 100ac in El Monte Valley from Hanson Aggregate.
4. Acquire miscellaneous parcels in Lakeside to buffer river.
5. Land acquisition/protection prior to development in the Fanita Ranch sub-watershed.
6. Provide reservoir protection (source water protection) via land acquisitions.
7. Continue researching groundwater demineralization opportunities.
8. Watershed-wide exotic species removal and management (Arundo-Tamarisk).
9. Chocolate Creek land management for impervious surfaces.
10. Continue to support Bureau of Reclamation efforts.
11. Restoration of Old Mission Dam and Reservoir.
12. Improve regional (Municipal-Public) understanding of impervious surfaces and affects-
Where are they? What is their significance?
13. Develop monitoring program for headwater wells and aquifers.
14. Augment water quality monitoring within urban areas.
15. Develop linkage and understanding of affects on marine resources.
16. Increase buffer around San Vicente Reservoir for Source Water Protection.
17. Identify and protect wildlife/habitat corridors for regional protection.
18. Develop a regional ‘manure’ management program (Equestrian).
19. Forester Creek – water quality improvement/enhancement.
20. “Active” groundwater management.

