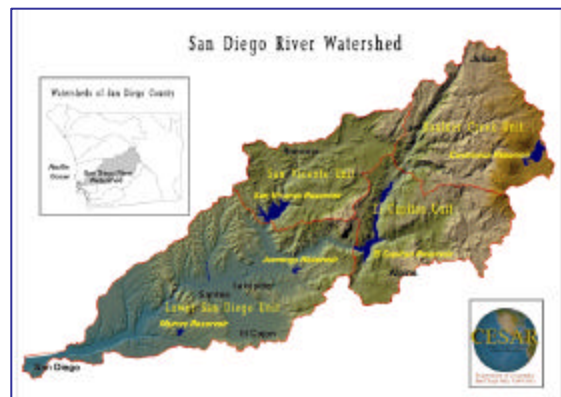


SAN DIEGO RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN WORKSHOP SUMMARY

POINT LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2002



Lewis Michaelson, the workshop facilitator, started the meeting with a brief overview of its purpose. Participants were thanked for their attendance and informed that this was the second in a series of three workshops aimed at soliciting the public's input and ideas on the development of a watershed management plan (WMP) for the San Diego River Watershed.

Teresa Brownyard, County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health (DEH), provided an overview of the project. After describing the scope of the project, Ms. Brownyard provided an overview of the many important environmental resources in the watershed. She emphasized the importance of public participation in ensuring that the WMP reflects the public interest. Participants were then provided with an overview of the project schedule. It was noted that prior to completion of the WMP in February 2005, there would be two more rounds of public workshops in mid-2004 and early 2005. In addition to the workshops, Ms. Brownyard encouraged interested members of the public to participate on the San Diego River Watershed Workgroup, which meets on the second Friday of even months from 1 -3 p.m. at the City of Santee, 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Building 8. She informed everyone of the project website (www.projectcleanwater.org) and emphasized that it should be used as an informational resource as well as an avenue for providing input.

Ivan Holler then spoke on behalf of the County of San Diego's Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU). Mr. Holler informed attendees that project management duties for WMP development would soon be transferring from DEH to the DPLU.

Mr. Holler's remarks were followed by a planning update by Eliana Barreiros of the City of San Diego's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program who tied in the City's current planning efforts with the development of the WMP.

After the presentations, participants were asked if they required any clarification on the information presented. Following this, they were encouraged to provide input on two aspects of the development of Plan:

- What should the goals and objectives of the Watershed Management Plan be?
- What methods should be employed to accomplish these goals?

Participants were informed that they would first address these issues in a facilitated discussion, following which they would be asked to write their suggestions and concerns down on index cards for consideration in the development of the WMP.

During the open discussion, participants were free to raise issues and make comments on any topic they chose. To facilitate the reader's understanding, however, comments have been grouped into categories by topic. The categories are listed in the order of the number of comments received, starting with topics receiving the most frequent comments.

DISCUSSION

1. Water Quality (8)

- a. What is the impact of reclaimed water versus pure water used in the watershed?
- b. The Plan should function comprehensively to accomplish the overall water quality goal. Water quality is what the watershed produces, and it is important to know for our health benefits and secondly for recreational use.
- c. Primary concern is water quality, second is recreational use.
- d. Water is the most important thing in some communities in the watershed, while community identity is important in others.
- e. Is the Watershed Management Plan land or water focused? Anything you do to the land directly affects water quality. Most San Diegans don't know that.
- f. Water quality has two aspects, one of which is sustainability of life; the other is health.
- g. Safety in and around the water is a concern. I would like to take children camping and allow them to drink directly from the creek without getting sick.
- h. Why are there always closure postings in Ocean Beach? Not due to the lack of cleanup after dogs but because of the tributaries. The Plan should look at trouble spots further up at the tributaries.

2. Flood and Fire Management (5)

- a. It seems as though one is limited to what one can do as to not adversely affect flood control. What one can and cannot do is dictated by the flood control and the consequences. It is a fundamental issue in what does and does not get planned. Habitat

restoration may lead to the offset of flood control. Need to find a balance.

- b. Others would argue “You are a fool if you build in a flood plain.” Must discourage development in flood areas/plains.
- c. The success of the riparian habitats is dependent on the stimulation provided by floods. This is lost in our region. Flood systems are like fires, the disturbance is necessary for the protection of these lands. With flood control this disturbance is lost. There is an over focus on control. The introduction of artificial disturbance should be discussed.
- d. Can flood plain land be recognized as BMP habitat? This would control pollutants and take care of the land use issue.
- e. Need more stringent flood control and opportunities for widening flood plain.

3. **Wildlife Habitat/Wetlands** (6)

- a. The buying of land in the flood plain for habitat preservation is being done in Lakeside, and it is very expensive. The money comes from the state but the land costs between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per acre. At that cost it becomes a question of priorities.
- b. Natural systems.
- c. The plan should have respect for the biota, including plankton and invertebrates.
- d. Get systems back to a natural state.
- e. Emphasis should be on habitat restoration, not flood control.
- f. Expand habitat restorations.

4. **Land Use** (2)

- a. There are a number of important questions to ask about land use and its effect on the watershed, including: what is the impact of increasing impervious surfaces and what is the effectiveness of various programs associated with industrial and residential runoff? What habitats are affected? How will current and future development affect the watershed? What is going to be done to protect from current and new development?
- b. There is too much impervious surface, which leads to flooding; this is a perfect example of land use impacts. The impervious surfaces should be converted to grass parking areas. Expand habitat

restorations. In Georgia you can raise an area, but you must excavate another.

5. Water Quantity and Reliability (1)

- a. More and more water is being imported into the watershed. What is the impact of this on how the watershed functions?

After the open discussion concluded, each participant was given index cards to document his or her suggestions and to offer any new ideas not brought up during the discussion. Participants were asked to list the most important issues and objectives that the WMP should address and/or the methods to accomplish them. If they chose, they could number their suggestions to indicate highest to lowest priority. Each set of comments below reflects the comments made by a single individual.

INDEX CARDS

Set 1:

1. Land Use
 - a. Integrate land use planning policy and ordinances to reduce runoff by infiltration and vegetation cover; increase riparian/wetland areas to absorb flooding and contaminants and preserve habitat.
 - b. Improve water quality by land use policy to reduce contaminants from various land uses.
 - c. Reduce variances in planning and permits to adhere to land use policy.
2. Preserve Wetland/habitat
 - a. Prevent water quality and flooding from damaging habitat.
 - b. Allow natural functioning of watershed system to enhance quality of life.
3. Protect Water Quality:
 - a. Sum and goal of all policies should be to allow water to sustain natural communities and prevent health risks to humans from pollutants.

Set 2:

1. Strategies to reduce/eliminate development in the flood plain in large part to provide opportunities to widen the channel segments of the flooding influence.

2. Improve the quantity and quality of native wetland. Riparian and upland habitats (this opportunity is provided with item number one).
3. Work with public to improve quality of urban runoff and development of wetland treatment systems by converting upland areas adjacent to wetland/drainage channels.
4. Strong implementation and conflict resolution strategies.

Set 3:

1. Dual use of riparian/wetlands for water cleansing and recreation/beautification.
2. Groundwater recharge with cleansed stormwater flows or greywater.
3. Real “public” participation and opinion, not water agency affiliations and participation. Goals and needs of public and agencies may be quite different!

Set 4:

1. Public involvement.
2. Public education on watershed factors (How does this affect me?).
3. Efficiency of the watershed. Maximize benefits for the spectrum (water quality habitat, etc.).