

## **San Luis Rey Watershed Council**

### ***Meeting Minutes***

**February 23, 2004**

Fallbrook Public Utility District Conference Room  
990 East Mission Road, Fallbrook, CA 92028

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:12 p.m.

#### **INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Meeting attendees introduced themselves and the organization they represent.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Copies of the January 26, 2004 meeting minutes were distributed via email and available in hard copy at the meeting. A motion was made by Scott Murray and seconded by Margarete Morgan to approve the meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

##### *Cleveland National Forest*

Carlton Joseph, Christopher Nyce and Tom Brand from the United States Forest Service, Cleveland National Forest (CNF) were guest speakers and gave an overview of the Cleveland National Forest, with a focus on the Palomar Ranger District. The Mission Statement for the USFS is to maintain healthy and productive forests for future generations.

The CNF was formed in 1907 with forest rangers managing for frequent fires and the protection of local water supplies. It encompasses 450,000 acres, has 426 miles of roads, 356 miles of trails, and 200 administrative buildings. CNF employs 240 permanent staff, 50 apprentices and 140 seasonal staff on a \$22 million budget.

There are three range districts in the Cleveland National Forest – Descanso, Trabuco and Palomar. The Descanso District, located in the southeast section of San Diego County, abuts the Anza Borrego National Park and has many recreational activities - more than the other two districts. The Trabuco District lies in three counties: Orange, Riverside and San Diego. The Palomar District includes parts of Temecula, Pauma Valley and Palomar Mountain and a section of this district lies in the San Luis Rey watershed.

The USFS prefers to see hillsides with vegetation, which helps to capture water and drain to underground aquifers and surface creeks and rivers. In San Diego County 85 – 90% of the vegetative cover in the CNF is chaparral. In the Palomar District, oak woodlands are very prominent and pine forests are located at higher elevations also in the Descanso District in the Laguna Mountains.

The Cleveland National Forest addresses many forest related issues. The biodiversity of wildlife is one of the largest in the United States and the habitats are unique and irreplaceable. There are 64 threatened or endangered species and 450 sensitive species, many of them endemic (native to the region). The CNF provides open space and a quality of life that is dear to people that live near and use the forest. Up until World War II most county residents depended on the water draining from the Cleveland Nation Forest for their survival. Now approximately 90% of water is imported. Urban growth is a concern for the forests because of the wildland/urban interface that is becoming more prominent as people move out to these wilderness areas.

The CNF has several commodities and issues approximately 6,000 special use permits. Some of the many recreational activities include:

- ❑ Hiking - the USFS manages approximately 100 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail that traverses through CNF
- ❑ Wilderness Areas including Agua Tibia in the Palomar District, Pine Creek, Hauser and San Mateo Canyon
- ❑ Two observatories - the Palomar Observatory and Mount Laguna Observatory in the Descanso District
- ❑ Camping – 18 campgrounds are located in CNF

The CNF also has special uses including telecommunications sites, power lines, grazing and forest products and has one of the busiest air bases located in Ramona.

The speakers then fielded questions from the Watershed Council meeting attendees. For those questions that could not be answered immediately, the speakers will find the answer and share with Cynthia Mallett. Cynthia will then distribute the answers to the Watershed Council.

Q: Does the CNF have experimental browse ways for deer?

A: None of the speakers could answer this question but they will ask Jeff Wells, who is the biologist in the Palomar District.

Q: As a result of the recent wildfires have there been any policy changes relative to prescribed burns and fuel breaks?

A: There have been no policy changes. Community protection is the number one priority, though.

Q: How have the recent fires affected the grazing program on the forest?

A: Speakers were not familiar with the grazing leases but will get the answer from the appropriate staff people.

Q: Has CNF been cutting down dead trees on Palomar Mountain affected by the bark beetle infestation and overcrowding?

A: The CNF has only a small amount of land on Palomar Mountain. Most of the land is privately owned and it is up to the property owners to manage. There are very steep hillsides and there needs to be consideration of the downstream effect of tree removal. There are different methods that could be used including mechanical and grazing. In the CNF areas, overcrowding of timber and trees affected by drought and insects will be addressed. The priority is to thin the forest to a healthier stand. First priority will be to remove dead trees and then mid-size trees will be removed. In wilderness areas there are no mechanical projects - they let nature take its course.

Q: Is there a GIS layer/ shape file available to the public for the CNF boundaries?

A: Christopher stated he thought it was available and would get the contact information for the staff person who would be able to provide that GIS information.

Q: How effective are fuel breaks?

A: In Santa Ana conditions fires can jump over large fuel break areas. In other fire situations, the fuel breaks are effective. The Aguanga fuel break was constructed in the 1970's. It played a large role in stopping the spreading of the 1993 Warner Fire. Treating fuel breaks through prescribed burning on a five-year rotation is the general practice. It is becoming more challenging with population growth nearing the CNF boundaries.

Q: With three or four government agencies addressing a fire, which agency takes charge?

A: Depending on where the fire started, will determine which agency takes the lead. For example, the Paradise Fire started in the Valley Center area and was considered to be in the California Department of Forestry protection area. Therefore, they took the lead on that fire. A unified command starts as the fire

grows into different areas and there is a shared decision making process. An incident command system is used to communicate between different fire departments. This system is used throughout the world.

Q: How is communication established between the fire agencies in the field?

A: Each agency has a set of frequencies to communicate between the different fire agencies.

In San Diego County suppression is the priority. Currently, forest health is the priority for legislative funding, which includes thinning. The Palomar and Descanso districts received \$1.3 million for fuel reduction and additional funding to address forest health.

For more information about the Cleveland Nation Forest point your Internet browser to [www.r5.fs.fed.us/cleveland](http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/cleveland) or call 858-674-2901.

### **RECONVENE TAC TO ADDRESS THE GREGORY CANYON LANDFILL**

At the January 2004 Watershed Council meeting, a request was made for the Watershed Council to make a collective vote regarding the landfill. Again, Watershed Council members hesitated in doing so, especially since they had very little information to use to make any collective decisions. It was suggested that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reconvene to review and discuss new documents that have arisen since the last Watershed Council vote regarding the landfill. Then the TAC can report back to the Watershed Council as a whole with a summary of their findings. With this information the Watershed Council can then decide whether to make a collective vote or not. George Wilkins expressed interest in participating in the TAC. Rick Gundry stated that he would like to be noticed on the TAC meetings. Because Cynthia's staff time has been reduced to ten hours per week to work on the Watershed Council, it was suggested that the TAC meet without Cynthia so she can concentrate her time on other Watershed Council tasks. Cynthia will email the TAC to arrange a meeting.

### **HOLD WATERSHED COUNCIL MEETINGS AT OTHER LOCATION IN WATERSHED**

Typically the Watershed Council meetings are held in Fallbrook. Cynthia suggested the possibility of occasionally holding the Watershed Council meetings at another venue in the watershed. This gives the stakeholders an opportunity to see other parts of the watershed and learn about an issue specific to this section of the watershed. Two locations were suggested, the Henshaw Café near Lake Henshaw and the Flying Bridge Restaurant in Oceanside, which is located on the San Luis Rey River. Cynthia will investigate holding a meeting at one of these venues for a future meeting.

### **UPDATES, REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### *Watershed Guideline Supplement*

One of the tasks of the last Watershed Coordinator grant was to produce a Water Conservation supplement. With the help of a document produced by the San Diego County Water Authority and by conducting Internet research enough information was gathered to produce and print this supplement. A copy was placed in all San Luis Rey Watershed Management Guidelines that have not yet been distributed. For those who have a Watershed Guideline, a copy of this supplement is available for you to place inside the copy of your Guideline.

#### *San Luis Rey River Cleanup – December 6, 2003*

In conjunction with the City of Oceanside, the River Cleanup removed tons of trash from the San Luis Rey River watershed. 25 tons were removed from six Oceanside sites while 1.5 tons was removed from the two Watershed Council sites.

#### *Watershed Urban Runoff Management Program – Update*

Linda Isakson, City of Oceanside, announced that the annual report for the Watershed Urban Runoff Management Program (WURMP) was completed and available for review by the public. The report proposed implementing a water quality assessment program for the San Luis Rey River. This assessment

would utilize five sampling sites in Oceanside and one near the Bonsall Bridge. Parameters to be tested for include metals, bacteria and turbidity. This assessment program will help to determine the source of high bacteria levels at the mouth of the San Luis Rey River.

During the past year the North County Storm Water agencies coordinated a Stormwater Awareness Telephone Survey of the San Luis Rey and Carlsbad watersheds. The survey results are on the Project Clean Water website: [www.projectcleanwater.org](http://www.projectcleanwater.org). 60% of people know that stormwater is not treated before entering surface waters, but their behaviors don't necessarily protect water quality.

#### *San Luis Rey River Park*

Margarette Morgan gave an update on the proposed San Luis Rey River Park to be located between the Bonsall Bridge and Interstate 15. A consulting firm has been selected to develop the park design. This park is proposed to have passive recreation opportunities, including hiking, biking and horseback riding. This plan will be developed over the next year and include meetings to gather public input.

#### *Website Training*

Cynthia Mallett attended a website training program to obtain skills to produce a San Luis Rey Watershed Council website. The website will provide a link to the agendas and meeting minutes and information about the San Luis Rey Watershed.

### **GRANTS UPDATES**

- ❑ The Upper San Luis Rey RCD is awaiting the final signed contract from the California Integrated Waste Management Board to begin work on the Lilac Road cleanup project.
- ❑ Cynthia Mallett met with County of San Diego Staff and Park Rangers to begin outlining goals and objectives to improve Guajome Lake for recreational purposes and to create more wildlife habitat and recreational and educational opportunities at Wilderness Gardens. When a potential funding source is identified, some of these goals and objectives will already be outlined providing a foundation to draft a full proposal in a short time frame.
- ❑ The Patagonia Environmental Program Grant was not awarded. This project proposed to develop a comprehensive education outreach program for horse owners/operators.
- ❑ Department of Conservation, Watershed Coordinator Grant Program – Still waiting to hear of award notifications for this grant program. If awarded, this funding would support the Watershed Coordinator Grant program for three years.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 22, 2004 from 1:00 – 3:00 at the Fallbrook Public Utility District Board Room.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

### **MEETING ATTENDEES**

John Beresford .....La Jolla Band of Mission Indians  
Christine Brochard .....County of San Diego, Multiple Species Conservation Program  
Paul Campo .....Vista Irrigation District  
Paul Christensen .....Rainbow Municipal District  
Rick Gundry .....Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Jesse Hutchings .....Upper San Luis Rey Resource Conservation District  
Cynthia Mallett .....Mission Resource Conservation District, San Luis Rey Watershed Coord.

Margarette Morgan .....Bonsall Conservancy  
Scott Murray .....Mission Resource Conservation District  
Paul O'Neal.....State Senator Bill Morrow's Office  
Sam Powvall .....La Jolla Band of Mission Indians  
Rob Roy .....La Jolla Band of Mission Indians  
Don Smith .....Vista Irrigation District  
Vic Smothers.....Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Karen Tucker .....Fallbrook Land Conservancy  
Wallace Tucker .....Fallbrook Land Conservancy  
Joyce Ward.....RiverWatch  
Erica Warren .....North County Times  
Oggie Watson.....Pauma Community Services District