

SAN LUIS REY WATERSHED COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2005

The meeting was called to order by acting facilitator Scott Murray at 1:10 p.m.

Minutes: On a motion by Paul Campo, seconded by Jack Griffiths, the minutes of the June meeting were approved.

New Business:

1.) Dave Fritz from the Agricultural Commissioners office was introduced and he presented a power point presentation on confined animal enforcement and equestrian manure management. The Agricultural Commissioners office is charged with implementing enforcement of the NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit for agricultural businesses. Recently, oversight of horse facilities has been added to their duties and they have been searching for associations to do outreach and education for horse owners. The biggest problem in San Diego is manure management. 75% of the complaints received are the result of improper manure storage and the dumping of manure into streams. Proper manure management is now a matter of voluntary compliance and it is hoped that it will stay that way.

The regulatory history and definition of NPDES starts with the Federal Clean Water Act. The NPDES permits were issued in February of 2001. The three initial permits were industrial, commercial and residential. In San Diego, the Regional Water Quality Control Board sees that the conditions of the permits are being met. Some of the important definitions are to understand when talking about NPDES are:

Pollutants – anything causing or contributing to degrading water quality

Illegal discharge – discharge of pollutants or non-storm water substances

Stormwater conveyance system – any public or private drainage system (non-sewage)

Receiving Waters – any natural or semi-natural water body including lakes, oceans and streams.

Discharger – anyone performing an activity that may result in pollution of receiving waters.

Horse waste can impair water quality by introducing ammonia to the water, reducing dissolved oxygen, adding nutrients that produce algae bloom as well as adding salts, bacteria and viruses. These conditions are harmful to humans, plants and animals.

Another problem encountered when domestic horses are kept in a small area is that heavy grazing can trample and remove vegetation and expose soil. This exposes soil washes into the water and excessive sediment can fill pools. Mr. Fritz also described CAFO (confined animal feeding operations). A large CAFO consists of 500 horses, a medium is at 150 and a designated CAFO is any operation determined by the Regional Board.

Stormwater Ordinance Section 67.808 and 67.811 requires that manure must be cleaned up twice weekly and cannot be put into a stormwater conveyance. Manure must be composted or stored before disposal so it doesn't contact receiving water. Areas used for composting must be located or managed to prevent runoff to receiving water. For the horse owner, composting can be cheaper than disposal.

Voluntary compliance means voluntarily undertaking the necessary and appropriate management of any potential pollutant caused by having horses on your property. Voluntary compliance allows the horse community to demonstrate responsible stewardship while avoiding stricter enforcement. Horse owners should be informed and proactive. They should consider installing roof gutters on their horse facilities to control runoff, set up new manure storage systems and revegetate any creeks on their property. Property owners should monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their conservation practices. Horseback riders should also volunteer to maintain public trails. The principles of pasture and paddock care are grazing management, watching for soil compaction and considering riparian buffer strips between the paddock and water bodies. It is also important for horse owners to follow directions for the correct application of horse grooming products and minimize the use of chemicals.

A discussion period followed Mr. Fritz's presentation. The Council has the opportunity to make sure that owners of confined animal facilities in the watershed are educated about proper management procedures.

2.) The Council members reviewed the draft letter to the Los Angeles Times regarding Planting artichoke thistle plants which are highly invasive. **On a motion by Paul Campo, seconded by Jack Griffiths**, the council members unanimously approved sending the letter including a "Don't Plant a Pest" brochure.

UPDATES:

1. The San Luis Rey Watershed weed management area has a new brochure available called "Don't Plant a Pest" which outlines better, non-invasive plants to use in landscape.
2. Lake Hodges is up 70%
3. Jack Griffiths reported that the San Luis Rey Water District intends to supply to the Gregory Canyon Landfill.
4. The Fallbrook Planning Group has asked the new housing developments at I 15 and 76 to reduce the number of homes.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.