

San Luis Rey Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2002

Fallbrook Public Utilities District Building
990 East Mission Road, Fallbrook, CA

Introductions and Announcements:

The San Luis Rey Watershed Council meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Coordinator George Wilkins. The Coordinator welcomed everyone in attendance and asked that everyone sign in, adding their address and e-mail or verifying that the Council information is correct. Those in attendance were then asked to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes:

Approval of the November minutes were tabled until the next regular meeting in order to give members an opportunity to receive and read them. **On a motion by Margarette Morgan, seconded by Larry Carlson the Council approved tabling the minutes until the February meeting.**

Business and Reports to the Council:

1. The proposal to the Environmental Protection Agency for wetland reconstruction at Wilderness Gardens was not funded but the Coordinator is looking into other funding sources for the project.
2. The Watershed Event in November was brought to the table for comment and suggestions. Council members suggested that earlier in the day would have attracted more people and there should be fewer refreshments. The Council was in agreement that it was a good event and Margarette Morgan and Scott Murray were thanked for their efforts in arranging the event.
3. The Coordinator announced that the water quality monitoring proposal would not be sent in for consideration for Prop 13 funding. Prop 13 will not fund monitoring projects. A pre-proposal for an agricultural irrigation water management Best Management Practice grant will be sent in pending Council approval. Chris Means of the Regional Water Quality Control Board suggested submitting the wetland restoration project. Ruth Ward would like to see the Coordinator pursue other funding for the water quality monitoring program. There was no vote on this item.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

The Coordinator introduced Robert Asher, with San Diego County's Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) and Chief of the County's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). With Mr. Asher to assist on the MSCP presentation were Thomas Oberbauer, Environmental Resource Manager, and Maeve Hanley, Environmental Management Specialist. Mr. Asher introduced a discussion of the MSCP and habitat evaluation model. He also included a discussion of opportunities for the Watershed Council to participate. He announced that the County is looking for funding to initiate the preparation of a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for the San Luis Rey River. Before beginning his discussion, he showed a video on the MSCP. After the video, Tom Oberbauer presented a map of the proposed North County MSCP area. Tribal lands and Camp Pendleton are not part of the designated area, although they appear that way on the map. The County recognizes that it has no authority over federal or tribal lands, and is not doing any planning for these areas.

Mr. Oberbauer presented the Council with a brief history of the MSCP. It was first adopted in October, 1997 by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. It intends to satisfy federal and state requirements of the Endangered Species Act. An "implementation agreement" was entered into in March, 1998, spelling out responsibilities of San Diego County and federal/state wildlife agencies. Regulations now require that landowners desiring to develop property go through a complex permit process, often including separate environmental reviews by federal, state and local agencies. One purpose of having the MSCP is to delineate areas rich in natural habitat and designate these areas as requiring more rigorous environmental review before development. Areas outside the MSCP designation would require less review, due to having

less valuable habitat. Another goal of MSCP is to preserve this designated valuable habitat through the voluntary purchase and conservation of large blocks of land, and ultimately to protect the threatened and endangered species in these designated areas. The MSCP seeks to streamline the development permit process for lands outside the MSCP areas, while conserving the valuable habitat lands. The Biological Mitigation Ordinance, designed to implement the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is now in place. The County, over time, will seek acquisition of 21,000 acres from willing sellers. This will require establishing a regional funding source by the Board of Supervisors. For 2002-2003, this fund will have \$6,000,000. Land sellers will be offered a tax incentive, although all details are not yet worked out.

It is anticipated that public use of preserved land will include hiking and bird watching. Management and monitoring of preserved land is a main component of the program and will entail extensive surveying of wildlife. Vernal pools, riparian habitats, agricultural lands and road construction are issues that the North County MSCP still has to address. Right now, the County is looking for public and private partnerships to assist in this process. They have requested funding from EPA for the San Luis Rey River, Special Area Management Plan (SAMP). The North County MSCP does not provide for obtaining permits for land in riparian (river) areas. For these areas, it is necessary to go through the Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit process. The San Luis Rey SAMP will help streamline the Corps of Engineers' 404 permitting process.

The MSCP is being coordinated with the San Diego County 2020 plan, with MSCP information being folded into the 2020 plan. There will be a need to have independent scientific review of habitat plans that are created. Modeling will be absolutely essential. It would be impossible to perform individual surveys on all properties. Data collected is used in modeling and there are many species to deal with. A major portion of the North County MSCP is within the San Luis Rey River Watershed. There will be public workshops and information is being shared with Riverside County. It is hoped that a draft plan will be available in the early part of 2003. The plan will then go through the CEQA process and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be developed. The County Board of Supervisors will then submit the plan to the State for approval.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

The Watershed Coordinator reviewed the water quality grant proposal and spoke about the state-proposed 303(d) listings for the San Luis Rey River. The federal Clean Water Act requires states to test their waters and to list any impaired waters on an EPA-reviewed list, at least once every two years. The Basin Plan standard for our region requires a maximum Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) reading of 500 parts per million (ppm) for any surface and ground waters sampled. 100% of the City of Oceanside well water samples analyzed by their Water Utilities laboratory have exceeded the Basin Plan limit for TDS. These samples appear to be representative of the surface and near-surface ground waters for the lower San Luis Rey River.

Consequently, the State Water Resources Control Board Region 9 (San Diego Region), has proposed that the western half of the San Luis Rey river (17 miles) be listed in 2002 on the updated 303(d) list as an "impaired waterway" for chlorides and TDS. If approved by the EPA, this portion of the watershed (or more) will be scheduled for development of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) regulations by 2009-2011. The proposed Watershed Council water quantity and water quality monitoring program for the San Luis Rey River would provide a scientific basis of data for determining actual river impairment. It would also give the Council an opportunity to address and resolve water quality issues before a TMDL is put in place for the San Luis Rey River, hopefully negating the need for such regulatory action. This will be discussed further at future meetings.

ACTION ITEM: The Council was asked to vote on whether the Coordinator should seek Proposition 13 funds for expanding an Agricultural Best Management Practices program and also a wetland restoration project (Wilderness Gardens). On a motion by Ken Peterson (Bonsall Sponsor Group), seconded by Scott Murray (Mission RCD), the Council unanimously approved moving forward with these proposals.

Vote: 10 yes
0 no

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Present at meeting:

Oggie Watson,	Pauma Valley Community Services District
Henry Rodriguez,	San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority
Paul Campo	Vista Irrigation District
Jesse Hutchings	Upper San Luis Rey Resource Conservation District
Robert Asher	San Diego County, Planning and Land Use
Trish Bogz	San Diego County, Planning and Land Use
Fred Weishaupl	Dennis Hollingsworth, Assemblyman, 66 th District
Nathan Mertz	City of Oceanside
Thomas Oberbauer	San Diego County, Planning and Land Use
Jerry Hittleman	City of Oceanside, Planning Department
Erica Warren	North County Times
Judith Good	San Diego County Parks Department, Wilderness Gardens
Vic Pankey	San Luis Rey Water District
Larry Carlson	Camp Pendleton
Bob Eisele	San Diego County, Agriculture, Weights and Measures
Joyce Ward	RiverWatch
Ruth Harber	North County Coalition
John Beresford	La Jolla Band, Clean Water Director
William Nelson II	La Jolla Band
Sam Powvall	La Jolla Band
Eric Klein	San Diego County, Environmental Health
Mike McGrath	City of Oceanside, Water Utilities
Brian Chuchua	
Miriam Rutz	Pauma Valley
Scott Murray	Mission Resource Conservation District
Maeve Hanley	San Diego County, Planning and Land Use
Ken Peterson	Bonsall Sponsor Group
Judith Mitchell	Mission Resource Conservation District