Los Peñasquitos – San Diego River Watershed Workshop
Notes

September 21, 2012
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Mission Valley Library
2123 Fenton Parkway, San Diego, CA 92108

Attendance

Alan Grant, San Diego River Park Foundation
Andrew (Drew) Kleis, City of San Diego
Ann Van Leer, Land Conservation Brokerage, Inc.
Betsy Miller, City of San Diego
Bob Stafford, Friends of Santee's River Park
Bryand Duke, California Department of Fish and Game
Clay Clifton, EcoLayers
Christine Alexander
Chuck Muse, Helix Water District
Crystal Mohr, RMC Water and Environment
Deanna Spehn, Office of State Senator Christine Kehoe
Emily Michaelson, Katz & Associates
Fred Jacobsen, SDG&E
Gary Strawn, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Gloria Carrillo, The Nature School
Goldy Thach, City of San Diego
Greg Mendez, U.S. Geological Survey
Harold Bailey, Water Conservation Garden
Helen Davies, City of Santee
Janis Shackelford, Lakeside Historical Society
Jay Wilson, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation
Jim Baross, San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
Jim Peugh, San Diego Audubon Society
John Pilch, San Carlos Area Council, Mission Trails Park Advisory Committee
Judy Swink, Citizens Coordinated for Century 3
Julie Hocking
Kelly Makley, Rose Creek Watershed Alliance
Kimberly O'Connell, University of California, San Diego
Kristine Taniguchi, San Diego State University Geography Department
Lauma Jurkevics, California Department of Water Resources

Laurel Glass, AMEC
Lewis Michaelson, Katz & Associates
Mark Umphres, Helix Water District
Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority
Mary Niez, County of San Diego
Mike Porter, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Nancy Dewees
Natalie Roberts, I Love A Clean San Diego
Natalie Roderick, AMEC
Nicole Rieger, URS
Paul Schlitt, California Department of Fish and Game
Phil Pryde, San Diego Audubon Society
Rich Thesing, Tierrasanta Community Council
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment
Rudy Bilan, City of San Diego Trans/Storm Water Department
Stephanie Ponce, California Department of Fish and Game
Steve Cast, County of San Diego Parks & Recreation Department
Toby Roy, San Diego County Water Authority
Vicki Beatty, Friends of Mission Valley Preserve
Wayne Williams, Presidio Place Condominiums
Wesley Danskin, U.S. Geological Survey

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Lewis Michaelson, Katz & Associates (facilitator), welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room. Mr. Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation, explained the necessity for obtaining qualitative input at the workshop to use in developing the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan Update. The purpose of the workshop is to characterize the watersheds in the San Diego Region and identify water management issues and priorities for each of the watersheds.

IRWM Overview

Mr. Mark Stadler, San Diego County Water Authority, provided an overview of IRWM planning, the San Diego IRWM Plan Update, the current Proposition 84-Round 2 grant opportunity and project submittal process, and types of project integration. Mr. Stadler explained that IRWM planning is an innovative way to increase reliable water sources, improve water quality, and protect natural resources through cooperation among public agencies with different jurisdictions and nonprofit public interest organizations. IRWM planning is also a mechanism through which the San Diego Region is eligible for substantial grant funding from Proposition 84 and Proposition 1E. The IRWM Plan Update will revise and improve the 2007 IRWM Plan and meet new California Department of Water Resources (DWR) IRWM program requirements. The input received at the watershed workshops will be used to amend the existing IRWM Plan to characterize resources on a watershed-scale.

Mr. Stadler stated that DWR recently announced Round 2 of Proposition 84 implementation grant funding. There is approximately $10.3 million available for the San Diego Region in Round 2, which is expected to fund five to seven projects. To improve a project's likelihood of being selected to receive IRWM grant funding, a project should integrate multiple benefits and multiple project partners. An integrated project is one that contains at least one of the following components:

- **Partnerships** – Partnerships between different organizations
- **Resource Management** – Employing multiple water management strategies within a single project
- **Beneficial Uses** – Project supports several different beneficial uses
- **Geography** – Implementing watershed- or regional-scale projects
- **Hydrology** – Addressing multiple watershed functions within the hydrologic cycle

Los Peñasquitos Watershed

Watershed Characterization

Ms. Rosalyn Prickett, RMC Water and Environment, listed the references that are currently being used to characterize the Los Peñasquitos watershed:

- 2005 Los Peñasquitos Watershed Management Plan
- DWR Groundwater Bulletin 118
- 2010 Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs)
- Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plans (WURMPs)
- Multiple Species Conservation Plans (MSCPs)

Ms. Prickett asked for input on additional references to consult. Workshop attendees suggested the following references:

- Watershed Sanitary Surveys
- Rose Creek Opportunities Assessment
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan
- 303(d) listings
- Natural Resources Management Plan for Peñasquitos and Mission Bay Park
- Water quality testing at Mission Bay Park
- Rose Creek Hydrology Study
- U.S. Geological Survey Rainfall Runoff Model
- Regional Board Watershed Management Initiative
- AECOM map of invasive species and habitats
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
- Mission Bay Park Master Plan
- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), City of San Diego and County of San Diego data on pollution load from Miramar Landfill
- Sycamore Landfill Management Plan

Ms. Prickett presented the current characterization of the Los Peñasquitos watershed to obtain feedback from the workshop attendees.

Questions/Comments

- In the current Los Peñasquitos characterization it says "contains largest block of diverse habitat in coastal San Diego County." Can you please explain? Recommend potentially phrasing this differently.
    - *This refers to the Los Peñasquitos Canyon and Lagoon. San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG) Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Conserved Land Database was accessed but additional analysis of GIS still needs to be done.*

The workshop attendees suggested that the following features be used to characterize the Los Peñasquitos watershed:

- Proportion of developed land to native land
- Climate adaptation and vulnerability
- Sedimentation and flooding problems in lower end of watershed
- Reduced storm water runoff due to water conservation
- Watershed discharges into two Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS)

Water Management Issues in Watershed

Ms. Prickett listed key management issues for the Los Peñasquitos watershed and asked for input on additional significant management issues the watershed faces. Workshop attendees shared the following management issues:

- Storm water management
- Sedimentation in Mission Bay Park
- Manipulation of sedimentation – flow requires active management
- Aging City of San Diego infrastructure, e.g., failing sewer pump stations
- Loss of historic marsh at base of Rose Creek – Kendall-Frost Marsh
- Desire to regain camp lands in Mission Bay to expand and create marsh
- Need to manage pollution load from Miramar Landfill
- Impacts of past wild fires on watershed
- Los Peñasquitos Lagoon restoration – sediment TMDL
- Impacts of Interstate 5 freeway widening on Los Peñasquitos Lagoon

IRWM Priorities for Watershed

Given the types of projects that IRWM is designed to fund, Mr. Michaelson asked the workshop attendees to think about what priorities in the Los Peñasquitos watershed could be addressed through an IRWM-based project. Workshop attendees suggested the following Los Peñasquitos watershed priorities:

- Swales at Rose Creek – construct wetlands to connect with marsh
- Reduce sedimentation to alleviate need for sediment management
- Increase floodwater retention capabilities to reduce flooding – flood retention basins
- Storm water harvesting – nexus with ASBS

San Diego River Watershed

Watershed Characterization

Ms. Prickett listed the references that are currently being used to characterize the San Diego River watershed:

- 2005 San Diego River Watershed Management Plan
- San Diego River Park Master Plan
- Cleveland National Forest Plan
- DWR Groundwater Bulletin 118
- 2010 UWMPs
- WURMPs
- MSCPs

Ms. Prickett asked for input on additional references to consult. Workshop attendees suggested the following references:

- Watershed Sanitary Surveys
- San Diego River Conservancy Five-Year Infrastructure Plan
- San Diego State University Live Action Monitoring by Dr. Rahn
- Mission Bay Landfill Study – San Diego River and flow to and from landfill
- City of San Diego Alvarado Creek Hydrology Report
- U.S. Geological Survey Rainfall Runoff Model – surface and groundwater monitoring
- San Diego River Coalition Work Plan 2012
- Bacteria Comprehensive Load Reduction Plan
- San Diego County Resource Management Plans for preserves – sdparks.org
- Lakeside River Park Conservancy plans
- Bureau of Reclamation – two studies regarding San Diego River
- Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
- San Diego River Park Foundation Web-based Mapping and State of River Report

Ms. Prickett presented the current characterization of the San Diego River watershed. The workshop attendees suggested that the following features be used to characterize the San Diego River watershed:

- Hundreds of acres of open space available for purchase or conservation
- Forester Creek has no dam; upper and lower connection
- Subsurface water
- 500,000-600,000 people live within watershed
- Three groundwater aquifers
- Extended length of watershed
- Contaminated groundwater from Kinder Morgan
- City of San Diego has set aside land west of Qualcomm Stadium for planned water supply and wastewater facilities
- Lower river floodplain constriction
- Significant biological diversity

Water Management Issues in Watershed

Ms. Prickett listed key management issues for the San Diego River watershed and asked for input on additional significant management issues the watershed faces. Workshop attendees shared the following management issues:

- Salinity management
- Groundwater remediation
- Sycamore Canyon landfill runoff
- Vegetation control in floodplains
- Dam repair and maintenance
- Invasive species – both flora and fauna
- Upstream mineral extraction
- San Diego River Trail – land use, recreation, water quality issues
- Trash in watershed from encampments
- Recreation on water, e.g., kayaking and canoeing
- Climate change
- Pollution from agriculture
- Loss of water in historic water bodies, such as Lindo Lake

IRWM Priorities for Watershed

Given the types of projects that IRWM is designed to fund, Mr. Michaelson asked the workshop attendees to think about what priorities in the San Diego River watershed could be addressed through an IRWM-based project. Workshop attendees suggested the following San Diego River watershed priorities:

- Historic and cultural resource management
- Groundwater management – water quality in aquifers is declining; need to decrease pollution and improve conservation
- Increase biological functioning around springs
- Tie-in of General Plans and City of San Diego Climate Plan to identify IRWM
- Collaboration and build-out of MSCP
- Manage and expand understanding of storm water as a resource
- Supply and demand analysis of water
- Protection of local water supply
- Collaboration between agencies to improve flood control on lower San Diego River
- Construct wetlands and sediment basins in canyons, e.g., Famosa Slough
- Expand public awareness of conservation and IRWM issues through education and outreach

Next Steps

Mr. Michaelson explained that the input provided at the workshop will be used to complete the Los Peñasquitos and San Diego River watershed characterizations. The draft characterizations will be distributed to the workshop attendees in March or April for review. Mr. Hutsel announced that interested persons can become a part of the San Diego River Coalition.