

SECTION 3.0 STAKEHOLDER REVIEW PROCESS

There is a history of coordination and cooperation among water users, water providers, State and Federal regulatory agencies, environmental agencies, organizations and public interest groups throughout Ventura County. There is currently extensive stakeholder involvement in the process of developing this Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP), and the development of applications for Proposition 50, Chapter 8 funding, primarily through the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC). The Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County (AWA) has helped coordinate widespread involvement of local agencies in water management, and was involved in the development of the Interim and Final IRWM Plans. The Association of Water Agencies has over 150 members representing water districts large and small, consultants, suppliers and large water users.

As noted in the above sections, the WCVC was formed in 2006 and has been working actively to coordinate water management planning in Ventura County. Some members of the WCVC are also actively involved in the AWA.

3.1 Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County

This IRWM Plan was prepared through a collaborative process involving many agencies and organizations with a vested interest in improving water supply, water quality, flood management, and ecosystems within Ventura County. Participating agencies and organizations are listed below. These stakeholders represent all the agencies that participated in development of either the Calleguas Creek Watershed IRWM Plan and the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan (CCWMP) or the Ventura Countywide IRWM Plan, which have more recently participated in development of this consolidated IRWM Plan. The formation of the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County has strengthened the ability of the Region to address common needs and challenges.

The following provides a list of all participating agencies and organizations:

General Purpose Agencies

- City of Camarillo
- City of Fillmore
- City of Moorpark
- City of Ojai
- City of Oxnard
- City of Santa Paula
- City of Port Hueneme
- City of Simi Valley
- City of Thousand Oaks
- City of Ventura
- Ventura County Executive Office
- Ventura County General Services Agency
- Ventura County Resource Management Agency

Water Suppliers/Wastewater Management/Special Districts

- Calleguas Municipal Water District
- Camarillo Sanitary District
- Camrosa Water District
- Casitas Municipal Water District
- Fillmore Irrigation Company
- Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
- Golden State Water Company
- Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency
- Ojai Valley Sanitary District
- Ojai Valley Water Conservation District
- Pleasant Valley County Water District
- Saticoy Sanitary District
- Triunfo Sanitation District
- United Water Conservation District
- Ventura County Watershed Protection District
- Ventura County Waterworks Districts
- Ventura Regional Sanitation District
- Zone Mutual Water Company

Business Organizations

- Business Industry Association
- Farm Bureau of Ventura County
- Ventura County Economic Development Association

Recreational and Open Space Entities

- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- Conejo Recreation and Parks District
- Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District
- Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

- Santa Monica Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Regulatory and Resource Agencies – State and Federal

- California Coastal Commission
- California Coastal Conservancy
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Transportation
- California Department of Water Resources
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Forest Service – Los Padres National Forest
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Other Stakeholders/Non Profit Organizations

- Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County

- California Native Plant Society
- California Wildlife Conservation Board
- County of Los Angeles, Public Works Department
- David Magney and Associates
- Environmental Defense Center
- Friends of the Santa Clara River
- Hansen Trust – University of California Cooperative Extension
- Kennedy Jenks Consultants
- Matilija Coalition
- The Nature Conservancy
- Naval Base Ventura County
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- Surfrider Foundation
- Trust for Public Land
- Ventura County Resource Conservation District
- Ventura Hillside Conservancy
- Wetlands Recovery Project

Under the auspices of the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County, two new watershed committees have been formed for the Santa Clara and Ventura River Watersheds. These committees began meeting in May/June of 2006 and have each met a number of times to refine objectives for their respective Watersheds and to develop project concepts for future implementation. The Calleguas Creek Steering Committee was formed in 1996 (see further information below) and continues its management efforts in the Calleguas Creek Watershed.

In addition to the watershed committees, a subcommittee was formed under WCVC to review water management strategies and evaluate the effectiveness of certain types of projects and programs in addressing these strategies.

3.2 Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee

Started in 1996, the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan (WMP or Plan) is a comprehensive, stakeholder-driven effort to develop a resources management and protection program and strategy for the 341-square mile Calleguas Creek Watershed in southeastern Ventura County. Watershed stakeholders initiated the WMP in response to a clear need to work cooperatively and responsibly to develop a comprehensive plan which would guarantee the long-term health of natural resources in the watershed. Led by a broadly representative Steering Committee, the WMP has completed its first phase, the development of action recommendations and technical tools to address coordinated environmental and resource management by public agencies and private sector participants. Phase II, which is currently underway, focuses on how responsible parties in the Watershed will act collectively to address significant water quality improvements and meet the mandatory standards of the Federal Clean Water Act and California Porter-Cologne Act.

Stakeholder committee and subcommittee meetings are held on a regular basis (roughly monthly or quarterly) to allow discussion of issues facing the Watershed, including those of the IRWMP. These meetings are open to the public and all other interested parties. Copies of the meeting minutes from these meetings are provided on the CCWMP website (<http://www.calleguascreek.org/ccwmp>).

Numerous efforts have been made through the CCWMP Public Outreach sub-committee to include and notify the public about all aspects of the CCWMP. Public outreach activities include

developing a brochure summarizing the CCWMP, creating a public website with access to project information, and conducting all subcommittee meetings with public attendance. Public outreach activities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of the CCWMP.

In 2005 the CCWMP was revised to include an Addendum (Volume II) which provided the additional information required, to comply with the State standards for an IRWMP, under Proposition 50, Chapter 8. The Addendum addresses specific implementation projects designed to meet local and State water management goals and priorities. The revised CCWMP was adopted in July 2005 by the local stakeholders.

In addition to participating in the newly formed WCVC, the Calleguas Creek Steering Committee continues to meet to address issues specific to their planning process and to address the issues and priorities unique to the Calleguas Creek Watershed.

3.3 Santa Clara River Watershed Committee

In July 2006, a stakeholder group was formed to develop a long-term watershed management plan for areas along the lower Santa Clara River Watershed. The Santa Clara River Watershed Committee (SCRWC) was formed under the auspices of the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC). It is anticipated that these efforts will be coordinated more closely in the future with the upper Santa Clara River Watershed stakeholders.

The SCRWC has focused its efforts on developing objectives and future project concepts that will address water issues and problems in the Watershed. Attendance at these meetings has included more than 30 people representing State and Federal agencies (such as Fish and Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board) and local water agencies, Cities, the local Resource Conservation District, U.C. Cooperative Extension, the County Board of Supervisors and public interest and environmental groups (such as the Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Santa Clara River). Interested parties from Los Angeles County such as the City of Santa Clarita, Castaic Lake Water Agency, Newhall Land and Farming, County Sanitation Districts and Los Angeles County Public Works Agency are also participating in the SCRWC meetings. Currently, four conveners provide input into the SCRWC activities: Sue Hughes, Ventura County Executive Office; Bruce Hamamoto, County of Los Angeles Public Works Department; E.J. Remson, Nature Conservancy; and Dana Wiseshart, United Water Conservation District.

3.4 Ventura River Watershed Council

The Ventura River Watershed Council formed in May of 2006 and has met every three to four weeks. Attendance at these meetings has included more than 20 people representing State and Federal agencies (such as Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board) and local water agencies, Cities, the Resource Conservation District, the County Board of Supervisors and public interest and environmental groups (such as the Trust for Public Land, Matilija Coalition, Ventura Hillside Conservancy). The focus of these meetings has been to develop objectives and priority projects and programs to pursue in order to address water-related issues within the Ventura River and smaller coastal watersheds. This Council formed under the auspices of the Wetlands Recovery Task Force and is the only stakeholder group in the Ventura River Watershed that is guiding development of the IRWMP.

3.5 Former Ventura Countywide Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Group

The regional entity responsible for the preparation of the Interim Ventura Countywide IRWM Plan, which was completed in July 2005, was the Ventura Countywide Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Group (Group). The VCIRWMP Group which was formed in 2002 to build on past efforts to address water issues on a regional level and to prepare for Proposition 50, Chapter 8 grant funding. In early 2004, a consensus of Group members recommended that staff from the Ventura County Executive Office (CEO) and the Resource Management Agency Planning Division should coordinate the preparation of the Ventura Countywide Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (VCIRWMP) and apply for Proposition 50, Chapter 8 grant funds.

In August and September 2004, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved County collaboration with the Group and a share of funding to develop the VCIRWMP. The Group included 41 local governmental agencies (Cities, water agencies, County agencies, local, State and Federal agricultural service agencies), non-governmental organizations (environmental organizations, homeowners groups and public interest groups), and consultants. Of the 41 member agencies, 17 contributed funds for the preparation of the Planning Grant application, the Implementation Grant application, and Plan preparation efforts, totaling \$83,000.

The majority of the Group, 17 members, represented water and sanitation districts with direct retail supply and/or treatment responsibilities. In addition to the regular Group members, many other water supply and sanitation districts (through the Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County with over 170 members), were included on the distribution list for meetings and received regular information and notices regarding Group activities, including development of the Interim Plan.

Representatives from many other public agencies and public interest groups, such as the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Forest Service – Los Padres National Forest, the Resource Conservation District and a number of local environmental groups (Friends of the Santa Clara and Ventura Rivers, Nature Conservancy, Ojai Land Conservancy, Wetlands Task Force, the Trust for Public Land and others), were on the e-mail list for Group meeting notification, and are now included in the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County list. These organizations also have a stake in the outcome, or a direct role in implementation, of programs and projects associated with the WCVC IRWM Plan and are currently working with the Group and/or its individual members. They attend meetings as needed.