

SECTION 4.0 PLAN OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

This section addresses the objectives adopted by the Watersheds Coalition and the three watershed committees. These objectives were established as a means to assure that implementation of water management strategies are appropriately integrated and to provide guidance in the selection of projects for implementation throughout the Region.

4.1 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Objectives

The following five objectives were adopted by Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County on May 11, 2006 and are the result of combining the objectives adopted for the Ventura Countywide Integrated Regional Water Management Interim Plan and the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Adopted Plan. These objectives were developed during numerous meetings and discussions and are based on the water needs, problems and issues identified throughout Ventura County. These objectives overlap with the Statewide Preferences and Priorities, also included in this section.

Overall Goal of the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County:

To develop a Countywide integrated regional water management plan which addresses all watersheds – large and small – in Ventura County and which is coordinated with adjacent regions/counties that share our watersheds.

Plan Objectives:

1. Reduce dependence on imported water and protect, conserve and augment water supplies

- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to increase and enhance the beneficial uses of local water supplies and implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include increased water use efficiency, wastewater recycling, land use policies, construction of facilities and other water management techniques.
- Improve water supply reliability.
- Better understand local watersheds by gathering more data and information regarding water supply (capacity, safe yield, flows) and water demand.
- Ensure secure water supplies by helping local water purveying districts address the impacts of future droughts and other water shortages.
- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve the management of local water supplies and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success.
- Protect current and future groundwater supplies through groundwater recharge projects and protection of recharge areas.
- Development of watershed management plans, where applicable, to enhance understanding of watershed characteristics and appropriate actions.

2. Protect and improve water quality

- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to improve water quality and to implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include water quality improvement, land use measures, construction of facilities and other water management techniques.
- Meet State and Federal water quality standards.
- Manage and remove salts in the watersheds and help establish and comply with TMDL requirements.

3. Protect people, property and the environment from adverse flooding impacts

- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to prevent and/or mitigate flooding and identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success.
- Develop and implement land use measures that will help mitigate the impacts of new development in floodplains.

4. Protect and restore habitat and ecosystems in watersheds

- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve and restore habitats and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success.
- Integrate and coordinate current and future efforts of a diverse number of agencies engaged in water management and ecosystem restoration through a joint process of setting goals, evaluating data and, developing future actions/projects.

5. Provide water-related recreational, public access and educational opportunities

- Enhance the public's knowledge and awareness of water issues and involve them in the integrated regional water management process.
- Identify opportunities to provide public access and recreation when implementing new projects and programs.

Watershed Specific Objectives

OBJECTIVES APPROVED FOR CALLEGUAS CREEK WATERSHED

- Reducing dependence on imported water
- Improving water supply reliability
- Managing and removing salts in the Watershed and complying with TMDL requirements

For further information regarding the objectives for the Calleguas Creek Watershed, please see the adopted Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan (June 2005).

OBJECTIVES APPROVED FOR LOWER SANTA CLARA RIVER WATERSHED

Overall Goal:

To develop objectives for the Watershed which protect local watershed resources for all users and the environment.

- A. Reduce dependence on imported State Water, protect, conserve and augment water supplies and improve water supply reliability
 - Strive for safe, clean, reliable and sustainable water supplies
 - Better understand the Watershed by gathering more data and information regarding water supply (capacity, safe yield, flows) and water demand
 - Minimize energy use to produce and distribute water and collect/treat wastewater
 - Continue to pursue and implement water use efficiency programs
 - Continue to pursue and implement water recycling projects
 - Ensure secure and reliable water supplies by helping local water suppliers address the impacts of future droughts and other water shortages
 - Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve the management of local water supplies, and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
 - Protect current and future groundwater supplies through groundwater recharge projects and protection of recharge areas
 - Develop watershed management plans which enhance understanding of watershed characteristics and appropriate actions
 - Identify and evaluate the opportunities to increase and enhance the beneficial uses of local water supplies and implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include increased water use efficiency, wastewater recycling, land use controls, construction of facilities and other water management techniques.

- B. Sustain, protect and restore ecosystem functions throughout the Watershed (includes upland areas down to estuaries/ocean)
 - Protect and restore viable ecosystems and enhance urban ecosystems
 - Protect pristine ecosystems from degradation; strive to keep natural systems or areas as natural as possible
 - Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve and restore ecosystems and habitats and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
 - Integrate and coordinate current and future efforts of a diverse number of agencies engaged in water management and ecosystem restoration through a joint process of setting goals, evaluating data, and developing future actions/projects
 - Restore wildlife and habitat connectivity across the Watershed through such means as land acquisition, land use measures, public/private partnerships, and public education
 - Identify and evaluate the opportunities for additional efforts to improve and protect ecosystems in the future

C. Protect and improve water quality throughout the Watershed

- Address coastal (ocean and estuarine) resources as part of the Watershed
- Meet State and Federal water quality standards
- Inform the public about the consequences of runoff contamination
- Manage and remove salts, excess nutrients and pollutants in the Watershed and comply with TMDL requirements
- Understand links between air quality and water quality
- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to improve water quality and to implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include increased water quality improvement, land use controls, public education, construction of facilities and other water management techniques.

D. Provide compatible watershed-related recreational, public access, and educational opportunities

- Combine education with recreation to enhance public understanding
- Consideration of appropriate public access as part of projects
- Educate public agencies and decision-makers
- Enhance the public's knowledge and awareness of water issues and involve them in the integrated regional water management process
- Identify opportunities to provide public access and recreation when implementing new projects and programs

E. Protect people, property and the environment from adverse flooding impacts (minimize damage from flooding)

- Integrate floodplain management with ecosystem and recreation objectives
- Recognize and allow natural river processes, including high flows, and plan accordingly
- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to prevent and/or mitigate flooding and identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
- Develop and promote land use measures and other actions that will help mitigate and minimize the impacts of development in floodplain areas
- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to assure improved planning and implementation of multipurpose flood management programs that protect property; improved water quality, stormwater capture and percolation; and protect or improve wildlife habitat

OBJECTIVES APPROVED FOR VENTURA RIVER WATERSHED

A. Maintain independence from imported State Water, protect, conserve and augment water supplies for all beneficial uses in the Watershed.

- Strive for safe, clean, reliable and sustainable water supplies
- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to increase and enhance the beneficial uses of local water supplies, and implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include

increased water use efficiency, wastewater recycling, land use controls, construction of facilities and other water management techniques.

- Improve water supply reliability
- Better understand the Watershed by gathering more data and information regarding water supply (capacity, safe yield, flows) and water demand
- Ensure secure water supplies by helping local water suppliers address the impacts of future droughts and other water shortages
- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve the management of local water supplies and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
- Protect current and future groundwater supplies through groundwater recharge projects and protection of recharge areas.
- Development of a watershed management plan, to enhance understanding of watershed characteristics and appropriate actions

B. Sustain, protect and restore ecosystem functions throughout the Watershed (includes upland areas down to estuaries).

- Protect and restore viable ecosystems
- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to improve and restore ecosystems and habitats and to identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
- Integrate and coordinate current and future efforts of a diverse number of agencies engaged in water management and ecosystem restoration through a joint process of setting goals, evaluating data, and developing future actions/projects.
- Restore connectivity in habitats

C. Protect and improve water quality throughout the Watershed

- Address coastal (ocean and estuarine) resources as part of the Watershed
- Identify and evaluate the opportunities to improve water quality and to implement appropriate projects or take appropriate actions to realize those opportunities. Such projects and actions could include increased water quality improvement, land use controls, construction of facilities, and other water management techniques.
- Meet State and Federal water quality standards
- Manage and remove salts, excess nutrients and pollutants in the Watershed and comply with TMDL requirements

D. Provide compatible watershed-related recreational, public access and educational opportunities

- Combine education with recreation to enhance public understanding
- Provide public access as part of new projects
- Enhance the public's knowledge and awareness of water issues and involve them in the integrated regional water management process
- Identify opportunities to provide public access and recreation when implementing new projects and programs

E. Protect people, property and the environment from adverse flooding impacts (minimize damage from flooding)

- Integrate floodplain management with ecosystem and recreation objectives
- Recognize and allow natural river processes, including high flows, and plan accordingly

- Document and update the efforts being made by local water districts, environmental interest groups and other agencies to prevent and/or mitigate flooding and identify ways to build on these efforts for greater future success
- Develop and implement land use policies that will help mitigate the impacts of new development in floodplain

4.2 Regional Priorities for Plan Implementation

Regionwide Priorities

The Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) and the watershed committees have established regional priorities to include in the Plan that will help guide selection of projects and programs for implementation. Through the recent efforts of a WCVC subcommittee, the following list of projects and programs were developed for regional implementation. These address both short-term and long-term priorities. Projects identified for implementation are described in Section 6 and include short-term and long-term priorities.

Regional Program Priorities
Coordination of hydrologic and hydrogeomorphic models among agencies
Coordination, monitoring, assessment, characterization, analysis and enforcement among agencies (e.g. GIS spatial database)
Public-private partnerships
Outreach and education efforts
Regional coordination of efficiency and other programs
Research applicability of new, innovative solutions
Update IRWMP
Watershed planning

The WCVC will continue to address concerns within the Region and provide a means to present and discuss proposed projects.

Watershed-Specific Priorities

The following priorities have been established for each watershed based on input from the watershed committees.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CALLEGUAS CREEK WATERSHED

The following is an excerpt from the Adopted Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan (CCWMP), Volume II, Addendum, June 2005.

The Calleguas Creek Steering Committee met in several workshop sessions to develop a list of issues that the CCWMP would address. As stated in the CCWMP, the identified issues serve as the foundation for the development of the CCWMP Action Recommendations and represent the Calleguas Creek Watershed's Regional Priorities.

Long-Term Regional Priorities

- Water supplies are limited, yet no local consensus exists on priorities for beneficial uses of the water supply.
- Potential conflicts exist among wetland conservation, planned urban activities, and public facilities.
- Potential species/habitat impacts are unquantifiable because adequate data do not exist.
- Upland habitat loss may result in species endangerment, thereby necessitating future regulations with potentially adverse economic consequences.

Short-Term Regional Priorities

- All water dischargers need to comply with State and Federal water quality standards, including regulations for point and non-point pollution sources.
- The Watershed contains an accumulation of toxic chemicals, and the control and mitigation of pollution in the Watershed needs to be effective.
- Erosion, land loss, and sedimentation have been accelerated by agriculture and urbanization.
- Environmental regulations and responses should be coordinated and streamlined, and Watershed management should take a holistic, rather than a piecemeal, approach.
- All stakeholders want to maintain and, if possible, enhance the quality of life in the Watershed.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR SANTA CLARA RIVER WATERSHED

Priority Types of Projects and Programs For Implementation in the Santa Clara River Watershed – From Santa Clara River Watershed Committee Meeting on September 7, 2006

Not in Priority Order

General Projects/Programs:

- Develop watershed protection plan
- Create position for watershed coordinator
- Develop and maintain an inventory/assessment of information (biology, chemistry, hydrology, etc)
- Develop and maintain a database for the watershed

Water Supply Enhancement Projects:

- Implement coordinated water use efficiency program
- Implement recycled water projects
- Increase groundwater recharge
- Pursue importation of State Water entitlement
- Develop inter-tie projects that are mutually beneficial

Water Quality Improvement Projects:

- Salinity management (i.e. brine line)
- Remove septic systems

- Nutrient management projects (i.e. algae, agricultural discharge management)

Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Projects:

- Invasive species (plants and animals) control
- Remove fish passage barriers
- Pursue floodplain restoration projects
- Land protection/acquisition (i.e. for open space and habitat restoration)

Flood Management Projects:

- Remove hazards and facilities (such as sewer trunk lines) from the river
- Develop watershed-wide flood protection plan containing guiding principles, including investigation of alternatives to traditional flood management projects (i.e. projects providing more ecosystem benefits)
- Develop watercourse setback ordinance and/or policies

Recreation and Public Access

- Pursue development of Santa Clara River Parkway

REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR VENTURA RIVER WATERSHED

Priority Types of Projects and Programs For Implementation in the Ventura River Watershed, From Ventura River Watershed Council Meeting on August 30, 2006.

General Projects/Programs:

- Develop watershed protection plan (see Proposition 50 Step 2 Implementation Grant application for Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County)
- Create position for watershed coordinator
- Develop and maintain an inventory/assessment of information (biology, chemistry, hydrology, etc)
- Develop and maintain a database for the watershed

Water Supply Enhancement Projects:

- Implement coordinated water use efficiency program

Water Quality Improvement Projects:

- Remove septic systems
- Nutrient management projects (i.e. algae)

Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Projects:

- Remove arundo
- Remove fish passage barriers
- Pursue ecosystem restoration projects
- Land protection/acquisition

Flood Management Projects:

- Remove hazards and facilities (such as sewer trunk lines) from the river

- Develop watershed-wide flood protection plan containing guiding principles, including investigation of alternatives to traditional flood management projects (i.e. projects providing more ecosystem benefits)
- Develop watercourse setback ordinance and/or policies

Recreation and Public Access

- Pursue development of Ventura River Parkway

Process for Updating Regional Priorities

The Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County and the watershed committees continue to meet to address concerns within the Region and each watershed and provide a means to present and discuss proposed projects for implementation on an-ongoing basis. Thus, the committees have an active role in the decision-making process for project implementation. In the first scheduled IRWMP update in 2007, proposed projects will be evaluated in terms of the effect to the Region and/or individual watersheds, and the implementation order will be redefined as needed to address the highest priority issues.

Project Selection and Relation to Regional Priorities

The short-term priority projects are those projects described in the Section 6 and included in the Step 2 Implementation Grant application for Proposition 50, Chapter 8 funding. The WCVC will periodically consider modifications as needed.

4.3 Statewide Priorities and Program Preferences

Statewide Priorities

The following Statewide Priorities will be considered in the evaluation of funding proposals under Proposition 50, Chapter 8.

- Reduce conflict between water users or resolve water rights disputes, including interregional water rights issues
- Implementation of TMDLs that are established or under development
- Implementation of Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Watershed Management Initiative Chapters, plans, and policies
- Implementation of the SWRCB's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Plan
- Assist in meeting Delta Water Quality Objectives; Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Program Guidelines
- Implementation of recommendations of the floodplain management task force, desalination task force, recycling task force, or State species recovery plan
- Address environmental justice concerns
- Assist in achieving one or more goals of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Please see Table 6-3 in Section 6 for details regarding consistency of proposed projects with Statewide Priorities.

Program Preferences

The following program preferences are reflected in the evaluation criteria and will be taken into consideration during the review process. The State will give preference to proposals that, as applicable:

- Include integrated projects with multiple benefits
- Support and improve local and regional water supply reliability
- Contribute expeditiously and measurably to the long-term attainment and maintenance of water quality standards
- Eliminate or significantly reduce pollution in impaired waters and sensitive habitat areas, including areas of special biological significance
- Include safe drinking water and water quality projects that serve disadvantaged communities
- Include groundwater management and recharge projects that are located 1) in San Bernardino or Riverside counties; 2) outside the service area of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; *and* 3) within one mile of established residential and commercial development

Projects proposed for implementation by the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County are consistent with, and help meet, the Statewide Priorities listed above. The specific manner in which each project helps meet these priorities is contained in Attachment 13 to the Step 2 Implementation Grant application and in Section 6.