



BALLONA AND MALIBU CREEK WATERSHED

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Section Background

The Ballona and Malibu Creek Watershed Section was created to develop and implement multipurpose projects that incorporate new technologies and methodologies to meet the Division's watershed management objectives including flood hazard mitigation, water quality improvements (TMDL compliance), water conservation, and aesthetic enhancements of our facilities.

Initially, the Section covered not only the Ballona Creek and Malibu Creek watersheds, but also the Dominguez Channel, Topanga Creek, and other subwatersheds. Due to a reorganization in the Division, the Dominguez

Channel Watershed was transferred to the Santa Clara River Watershed Section.

When WMD formed, there were a number of existing watershed-related groups engaged in activities within the Ballona and Malibu watersheds. These included the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project, the Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council, the Topanga Creek Watershed Committee, and the Ballona Creek Renaissance. The new Section began to take an active role in these activities, committees, and groups.



Santa Monica Bay Watershed

Mission

To generate new ideas and projects to improve the quality of life in the Santa Monica Bay Watershed by providing responsive, efficient, and high quality public service. This will be done through watershed management incorporating flood protection, water conservation, water quality improvements, and other beneficial watershed improvements.

Accomplishments

The Section worked on a variety of watershed improvement projects made possible through partnerships and grant funding. The following is a list of projects that are in various stages of planning study, concept development, or project implementation within the Ballona and Malibu Creek watersheds:

Propositions 12 and 13 Grant Projects that were applied and/or awarded:

- Ballona Creek, Topanga Creek, and Manhattan Beach Low Flow Diversions Projects
- Ballona Litter Monitoring Project
- Ballona Creek Watershed Management Plan
- Methodology for Prioritizing Structural BMPs Study.

General Projects and Studies that were initiated:

- Malibu Creek Watershed Management Area Plan
- Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Study
- North Santa Monica Bay White Paper
- Living Lightly Guide
- Ballona Creek Wetlands Walkway Study
- Marina del Rey/ Ballona Creek Sediment Control Management Plan.
- Ballona Wetlands Flapgates

The Section worked closely with elected officials, Federal, State, and local agencies, environmental groups, and local businesses and residents to enhance the quality of life in the Malibu Creek, Topanga Creek, Ballona Creek, other Rural and Urban Watersheds.

Projects in the Ballona and Malibu Creek Watersheds

Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Study

WMD is in the process of developing regional leadership in flood management projects and programs that achieve multiple purposes and benefits. This study provides an opportunity to demonstrate integrative approaches for flood management that also consider habitat value and the intrinsic value of the Creek in defining place and community.



Las Virgenes Creek

ment, nonpoint source water pollution, urban heat island effect, passive recreation, and other related public benefits. Improvement need resulting from these issues will ensure the feasibility of habitat restoration, along with providing the necessary level of flood protection. To date, the con-

sultant study is near completion.



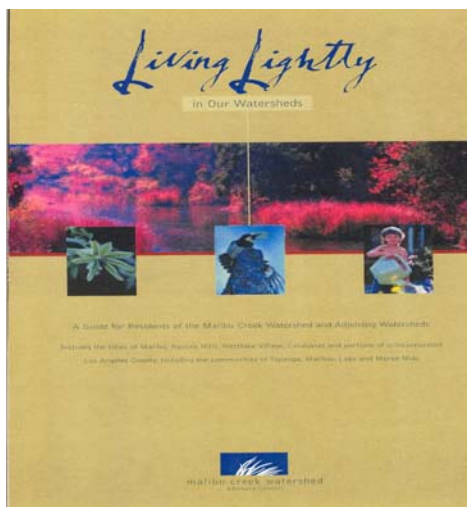
The study examines opportunities for on-site recommendations that address water resources manage-

The Living Lightly Guide

The “Living Lightly Guide” publication was created by the Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council’s Education Subcommittee. The Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCD) is the lead agency for the Advisory Council.

Living Lightly in the Watersheds is a bound resource guide sent to nearly 90,000 residents of the Santa Monica Mountains.

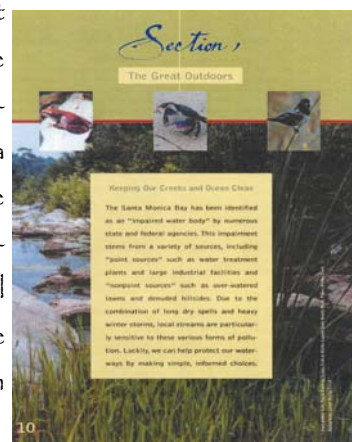
The Guide seeks to educate residents on how their everyday activities impact the watershed and provide them with current contacts for more information. Sample topics include “green construction and remodeling” and “outdoor education and volunteer op-



portunities”. The creation, development, and coordination of the guide parallel many WMD goals in serving as an educational tool for residents in contributing to the health of a watershed, creating partnerships amongst organizations and governmental agencies, including the watershed cities (Malibu, Calabasas,

West Lake Village,

and Agoura Hills), and fulfilling the educational requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.



Watershed Area Plans

Ballona Creek Watershed Management Plan:

Public Works is partnering with the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project and Ballona Creek Renaissance to develop a Ballona Creek Watershed Management Plan with State Costa-Machado Water Act’s assistance. The objectives are to conduct a comprehensive assess-



ment of the watershed’s ecological conditions and to identify habitat restoration potential and target areas for source control of pollutants of concern. Public Works will strategically select and prioritize cost-effective best management practices for achieving a set of water quality improvement/habitat restoration

goals. A long-term, community-based watershed monitoring plan, identifying existing and future funding sources for plan implementation will be developed.

North Santa Monica Bay White Paper:

The “White Paper” is a report pertaining to the North Santa Monica Bay Watershed which includes Malibu Creek, Topanga Creek, and

other Rural Santa Monica Mountains watersheds. This area is subject to regulatory requirements including the NPDES Permit, TMDLs, and Assembly Bill 885. This report identified several issues unique to these relatively undeveloped areas. In

order to meet regulatory requirements and face this range of issues, the need for a regional compliance plan is clear. This compliance plan will be developed in the near future.

Malibu Creek Management Area Plan Revision:

This Section participated with Malibu Creek Permittees in the revision of the Malibu Creek Management Area Plan. The purpose of the revision is to help the cities in the Malibu Creek Watershed and Public Works combine resources to fulfill the NPDES Permit requirements by developing consistent programs and joint inspection trainings.

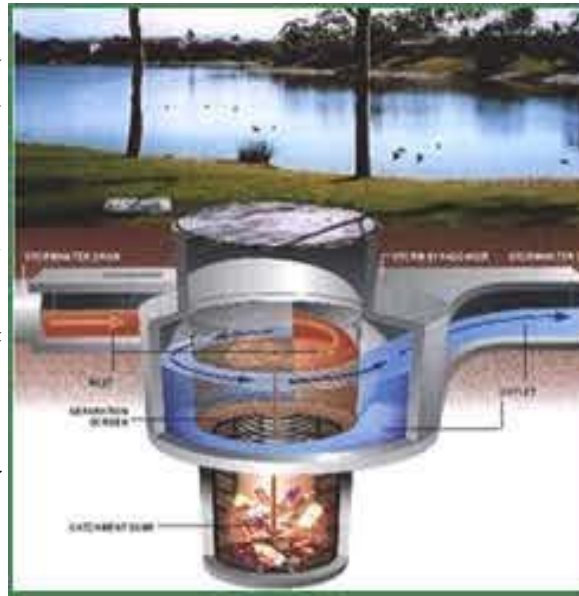


Topanga Canyon

Ballona Creek Litter Monitoring Project

The County plans to install 250 catch basin trash reduction devices and two CDS units to capture, analyze, and characterize the accumulation and removal of trash. The monitoring will last for one year. The monitoring result will be used in future projects that capture or divert trash from Ballona Creek. The knowledge gained will be invaluable in our efforts to improve the water quality of the Santa Monica Bay.

Reducing deposited trash in Ballona Creek and the Santa Monica Bay will improve water quality and ensure attainment of continued beneficial uses from these water bodies. As more trash reduction BMPs are constructed, improved water quality will benefit the health of ecosystem.



Continuous Deflective Separator Unit and Trash in Ballona Creek



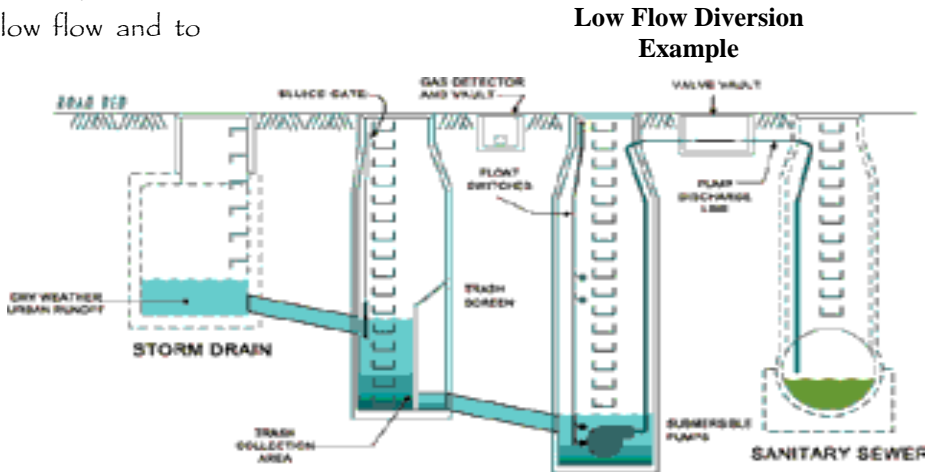
Manhattan Beach Low-flow Diversion Project

This project includes the design, engineering, and construction of a dry-weather diversion that connects Storm Drain No. 286 to the Los Angeles County Sanitation system for treatment. The primary function of the diversion system is to divert dry weather low flow and to

capture a portion of the first flush of a storm event. The system can also serve as secondary contaminant to capture undocumented wastes such as accidental sewage spills, illegal or illicit discharges, animal wastes, and overflowing or leaking sewage systems.



Manhattan Beach site



Lessons Learned

The Section has aggressively pursued grants to fund several proposed projects and studies that provide watershed enhancements. An example of lessons learned occurred when the City of Los Angeles and Public Works applied for the same grant to divert dry weather low flow to the nearby sewer system from the same storm drains. Duplicating efforts resulted from lack of communication with the City. In order to minimize or eliminate the possibility of overlapping efforts, the Section will increase our coordination efforts with all levels of government, as well as the local community groups. This has been a valuable lesson learned that can assist us in better serving the watershed in the future.

Future

The Section will continue to proactively address water quality regulations established and/or to be established for the watershed. This may include taking the leadership role in organizing the responsible agencies and stakeholders to address future TMDLs where the County is the lead agency. In addition to the existing responsibilities, the future role of the Ballona and Malibu Watershed managers would include project management duties beyond concept development through a collaborative effort with the stakeholders. The extended responsibility will ensure a seamless transition from the conceptual phase to the project delivery phase.