



Section Background

The San Gabriel River Watershed Section was created to administer the planning and implementation of projects that meet the Division's watershed management objectives in the San Gabriel River (SGR) Watershed.

The Section coordinates watershed management efforts in a watershed that encompasses an area of over 640 square miles and a river that extends for 58 miles with 80 percent of which is soft bottom. As much as 90 percent of the natural flow of the SGR is used for groundwater recharge with a small portion diverted for groundwater supply. Approximately 75 percent of the watershed is highly urbanized with more than four million people living in the valley and coastal areas. The remaining portion lies within the mountain region of the

Angeles Forest. The mountains region is heavily impacted by recreational users. The urban areas are protected by regional flood control and water conservation facilities built mostly by the Corps and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. The watershed consists of four main subwatersheds: Coyote Creek, San Jose Creek, Walnut Creek, and the San Gabriel Mountains.

When the Division formed, the development of the SGR Master Plan has become the Section's main focus. The Master Plan is a consensus-based document that will recognize and address SGR's issues and concerns of its stakeholders.



Map of the four main subwatersheds

Mission

To be the leader in the planning and implementation of watershed management principles in this watershed. Work with stakeholders, protect natural resources, enhance groundwater and stormwater conservation, and improve the quality of stormwater runoff to obtain a higher quality of life of the citizens of the watershed.

Accomplishments

The following are SGR watershed management projects that were in various stages of planning or implementation:

- The SGR Master Plan
- Woodland Duck Farm Project
- The Upper SGR Watershed Management Plan
- La Mirada Creek Project
- The Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan
- Via Verde and Fairplex Park and Ride Project
- SGR Coastal Spreading Basin Landscape Project
- Whittier Narrows Education Center
- Pilot Trash Net Program
- Zone 1 Ditch Project

These projects involved extensive outreach to diverse entities such as regulatory agencies, municipalities, utilities companies, environmental groups, and other County departments. Each entity represents a different role in bringing both opportunities and constraints during planning and implementation efforts. This Section's role has been to lead and collaboratively plan multiobjective projects within the parameters of flood protection, groundwater recharge, water quality, water conservation, and stormwater management. Although this Section typically does not lead projects outside these parameters, it remains supportive of multipurpose that do not constraint Public Work's ability to provide flood protection and/or water conservation services.

Projects in the San Gabriel River Watershed

Woodland Duck Farm Project

The SGR and RMC is in the process of acquiring the Woodland Duck Farm property for the development of a multiuse facility. The Woodland Farms property offers opportunities to integrate beneficial uses including flood hazard mitigation, groundwater recharge operations, habitat restoration, passive recreation and linkage to existing bicycle and equestrian trails.

The RMC is seeking Public Works' assistance to develop a groundwater recharge facility. The facility would be integrated with watershed management fea-



tures consistent with the Department's SGR Master Plan and the RMC's Open Space Plan. The Watershed Engineering Unit prepared a feasibility study outlining conceptual alternatives for a groundwater recharge facility. The

Woodland Duck Farm Boundaries

require participation from a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure the project incorporates multiobjective functions.

final project concept report will require participation and cooperation from a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure the project incorporates multiobjective functions.

The San Gabriel River Master Plan

The County of Los Angeles is seeking to establish the SGR as an integral part of the community and enhance the community's quality of life. To accomplish this objective, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors passed a motion in September 1999 to develop the San Gabriel River Master Plan (SGRMP). The SGRMP will be a multiobjective plan that identifies opportunities to preserve and enhance the San Gabriel River's recreation, habitat, and open space resources, while maintaining flood protection and water conservation.

Over 150 river stakeholders have been proactively involved with the planning efforts for the SGRMP.



West Fork, San Gabriel River

Mission Statement of the
SGRMP Steering Committee:
**The San Gabriel River will be the
corridor of an integrated watershed
system while providing protection,
benefit and enjoyment to the public.**

The stakeholder Steering Committee includes local cities, regulatory agencies, water professionals, and interested Community and en-

vironmental groups.

Through a consensus building process, the Steering Committee established a Vision and Broad Goals that will guide the development of the SGRMP.

In July 2002, Public Works executed a consultant services agreement to prepare the SGRMP. Several Steering Committee meetings have been held to identify key issues/constraints and develop a framework that will guide the planning process. Currently, Public Works and the consultant are meeting with river front cities to build solid relationships and promote participation and endorsement for the SGRMP. Completion of the SGRMP is anticipated by January 2004.



**San Jose Creek/San Gabriel River
Confluence**

The Upper San Gabriel Watershed Management Plan

The County of Los Angeles is partnering with the SGMRC, lead agency, to develop an Upper San Gabriel Watershed Management Plan (WMP) that will investigate three major subwatersheds:

- i) Upper SGR
- ii) Walnut Creek
- iii) San Jose Creek

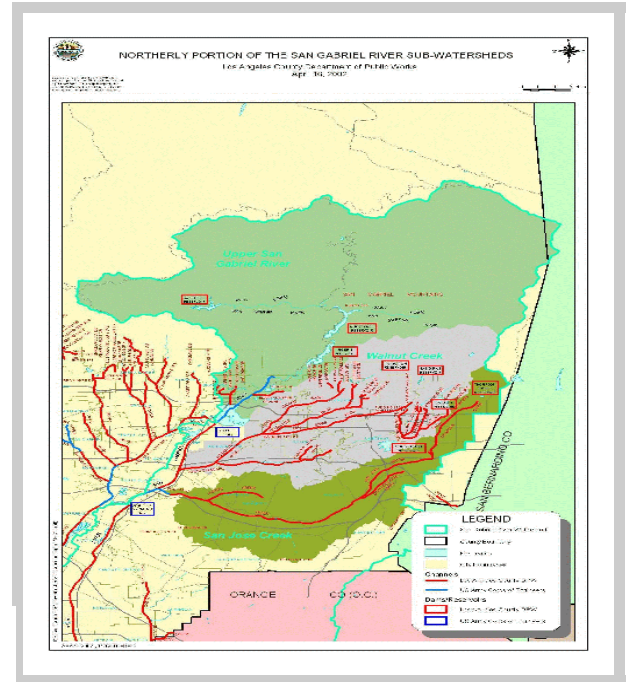
This WMP will provide management measures and recommendations that will address six goals:

- 1) Improve the water quality and reduce nonpoint source pollution
- 2) Protect and enhance "local water resources"
- 3) Protect and restore terrestrial and aquatic habitat and habitat connectivity

The Upper San Gabriel Watershed Management Plan cont.

- 4) Protect open space and land use benefits
- 5) Identify key pilot projects and monitoring/stewardship programs
- 6) Ensure stakeholder involvement in the Planning Process.

The SGMRC received a Proposition 13 Grant for \$200,000 to initiate the development of this WMP, which will be a stakeholder driven process that will take 2 ½ years to complete. The entire WMP is estimated to cost approximately \$5 million.



Map of the Upper San Gabriel River Watershed

La Mirada Creek Project

The purpose of the La Mirada Creek Project is to provide flood mitigation along with multiuse benefits to the unimproved section of La Mirada Creek, located south of La Mirada Creek Park and north of Imperial Highway, in the City of La Mirada. This portion of the natural creek is unlined and has a history of flooding the adjacent residences up to their front door steps. To eliminate this flooding, the project will increase the creek capacity while incorporating proposed multiuse benefits such as:

- 1) Linking the project to existing adjacent bike, walking, and equestrian trails
- 2) Creating a pocket park
- 3) Constructing a “detention basin”
- 4) Constructing a Continuous Deflection Separators (CDS) Unit to capture trash



- 5) Stabilizing creek bank slopes

This Section is in the process of preparing a project concept report for this project with technical assistance from Design Division.

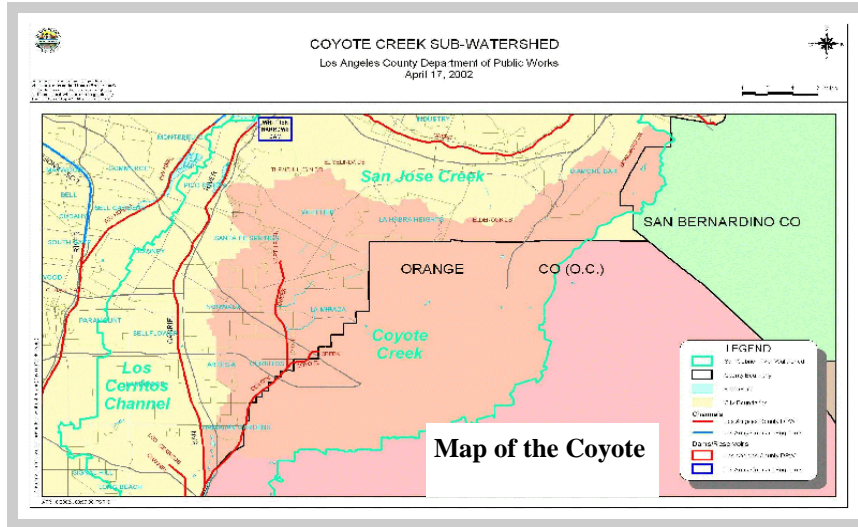
In addition, consultant services were acquired from a consultant to conduct a biosurvey of the project site in an effort to protect and restore the existing plant and species habitat during project development and implementation.

Unimproved La Mirada Creek

The Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan

The County of Los Angeles is partnering with Orange County to develop a Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan/Feasibility Study that

will assess the state of the Coyote Creek Watershed and identify projects that will mitigate problems encountered. Orange County will be the “administrative lead” while the Corps will be the “technical lead” that will conduct the actual Feasibility Study with input from all stakeholders. Orange County received a Proposition 13 Grant of \$200,000 and a Wetlands Recovery Project Grant of \$100,000 to initiate this study. The County is contributing \$250,000 toward the project. The total cost of this Feasibility Study/WMP is estimated to be \$3.35 million.



Lessons Learned

To date, the majority of this Section’s efforts have been focused on watershed and river corridor planning. Planning efforts have provided the opportunity to interact and develop positive relationships with a variety of stakeholders. In general, stakeholders tend to bring attention to issues that benefit their particular interest. This Section learned that these situa-

tions occur less frequently when everyone’s mission, issues, and concerns are expressed and recorded during facilitated stakeholder meetings.



The San Gabriel River’s outlet

Future

The Section anticipates completing the SRMP in January 2004. The plan will include an implementation component that identifies and prioritizes projects for future funding. The plan will also link and complement the RMC’s Open Space Plan. The Section is working with the RMC to create a joint-powers authority to fund projects of mutual interest. This complementary relationship will create a powerful

funding tool, ultimately bringing more dollars in providing watershed management benefits to the region.

The Section is looking to the future to continue collaborative planning and increase the role within the major subwatersheds. The Coyote Creek Watershed Management Plan and the Upper SGR Watershed Management Plan will increase our leadership role as these planning efforts come to fruition.