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SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

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SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2006-2011

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INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

The 2006 San Diego River Conservancy's (Conservancy's) *Five-Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan* (Plan) was prepared pursuant to the direction and guidelines provided by the State Department of Finance.

This *Five Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan* (Plan) describes current resource allocations to the Conservancy, public needs served by the Conservancy, policies and principles guiding the Conservancy and the intended and recommended future course of the Conservancy's efforts. This future course is expressed in terms of four major programs and a number of projects designed to implement each program. The Infrastructure portion of the Plan provides a reasonable estimate of the costs needed to conduct the projects. The Plan starts with background on the Conservancy, including the Conservancy's statutory authority, business principles and project criteria.

The San Diego River Conservancy (Conservancy) was established by an act of the California Legislature, Public Resources Code Division 22.9, commencing with Section 32630, (also known as the San Diego River Conservancy Act[1]) to preserve, restore and enhance the San Diego River Area. The Conservancy is a new, independent, non-regulatory agency of the State of California.

The San Diego River Conservancy's numerous statutory objectives are grouped into four major program areas that represent the essential themes of the Conservancy's work as established by the San Diego River Conservancy Act. The four major programs are:

- Land Conservation
- Recreation and Education
- Natural and Cultural Resources Preservation and Restoration
- Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance

Although the enabling statute does not specifically direct the Conservancy to protect the River's historical and cultural resources in the same direct way that it requires habitat and wildlife protection, it does nevertheless clearly articulate that the River's cultural and historical resources are of value to both the State and the Nation.

Furthermore, the statute indicates that it is the Legislature's intent for the Conservancy to consider the recommendations in the San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan when conducting its mission. The San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan, June 2002 (see Appendix 3a) specifically identifies three objectives that are mentioned and inferred in the

[1] See Appendix 1, Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe) for details

Conservancy's statute, but not directly identified as statutory objectives. These three additional objectives are 1) build a River Park and Trail; 2) protect cultural and historical resources, and 3) provide public access to the River. These three additional Conceptual Plan objectives are fully consistent with the Conservancy's overall mission and statute and the Governing Board had decided, as a matter of policy, to incorporate them into the Conservancy's objectives. In addition to Governing Board support, there is also very strong public support for the Conservancy to actively participate in achieving these additional objectives.

For each program area, statutory objectives are described along with the program goal, implementing projects, outcome measures, monitoring and tracking, and total estimated funding need for each program. Thirty projects are presented throughout the Plan. The Plan then includes a rollup of the Conservancy's program-by-program funding needs on page 46 (Infrastructure Plan). **This Plan estimates a total funding need of $164.5 million over the five year planning period ($41.1 million per year).**

The programs and projects have evolved from years of hard work by our nonprofit and public partners. Especially key to this endeavor have been the San Diego River Coalition, the San Diego River Park Foundation, Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, the Endangered Habitats League, the City of San Diego, the City of Santee, the County of San Diego, the U.S. Forest Service and the Helix Water District. It is largely due to the hard work by our partners that the San Diego River Conservancy was created. This Plan is a collaborative document derived in large part from previous planning efforts by our partners. The Conservancy's goals include helping the San Diego community implement its collective vision for the River. We thank our partners for their support and commitment to the vision of a San Diego River Park.

This *Five Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan* is a "living document," intended for reference in the course of conducting the daily activities of the San Diego River Conservancy. It will be subject to evaluation and updating at regular intervals following its initial submittal to the Department of Finance.

Statutory Authority

The San Diego River Conservancy (Conservancy) was established by an act of the California Legislature, Public Resources Code Division 22.9, commencing with Section 32630, (also known as the San Diego River Conservancy Act) to preserve, restore and enhance the San Diego River Area. The Conservancy is a new, independent, non-regulatory agency within the Resources Agency of the State of California. The Conservancy's eleven-member Governing Board consists of both state and local representatives, creating a partnership which reflects the diversity and dedication to conserving this highly valued resource of statewide significance. A copy of Public Resources Code Division 22.9, commencing with Section 32630, is included as Appendix 1.

Mission of the San Diego River Conservancy

The mission of the San Diego River Conservancy is to further the goals of its enabling legislation (i.e., land conservation, recreation and education, natural and cultural resources preservation and restoration, water quality and natural flood conveyance), by conserving and restoring its land and water for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

This mission will be accomplished in part by building, with our partners, a San Diego River Park and hiking trail stretching from the headwaters of the River to the Pacific Ocean.

Assumptions

This *Five Year Strategic and Infrastructure Plan* (Plan) will become the San Diego River Conservancy's operational "road map." Because the Conservancy is currently scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2010, this Plan outlines a strategy for the Conservancy to help move the creation of the San Diego River Park significantly forward in the next four years. Successful implementation of this Plan should gain support for extension of the 2010 deadline. Subsequently this Plan would be updated to reflect the extension of the Conservancy's legislative authority beyond 2010. Therefore, this Plan assumes the Conservancy's activities for the next four years will be guided by its legislative authority.

The Conservancy is a California State agency solely dedicated to implementation of the vision outlined in its enabling statute, emphasizing programs and projects that best meet the objectives of the legislation. The Conservancy is committed to working together with partners to achieve that vision. Whenever possible, the Conservancy will leverage its funds and activities with its partners to get the greatest return. The Conservancy's partners include private, non-profit, governmental and community organizations. A list of key Conservancy partners is shown in Appendix 2. While key municipal partners include those governments with land use jurisdiction within the San Diego River Area such as the City of San Diego, City of Santee and the County of San Diego, other potential municipal partners within the larger San Diego River Watershed include the cities of La Mesa, El Cajon and Poway. In addition, the Barona, Sycuan, Viejas, Capitan Grande, Inaja and Cosmit Indian reservations are also located at least partially within the San Diego River Watershed and are important potential future partners for the Conservancy. Other future potential partners are the "California Indians of Mission Valley" who may not be part of a federally recognized tribal entity.

The Conservancy will continue to receive its baseline Support Budget as needed to conduct agency operations.

The Conservancy will be provided with a Capital Outlay Budget sufficient to help it achieve the goals of this Plan.

At every reasonable opportunity, the Conservancy will seek additional funds through grants, federal appropriations, donations and other means to help achieve the goals of this Plan.

Business Principles

The Conservancy will take a programmatic approach to implementing the vision embodied in its enabling statute. This approach defines four major Conservancy programs based on one or more statutory objectives. Each program will be implemented through a series of implementing projects.

The projects by which the Conservancy's programs will be implemented have been derived in large part from existing River planning documents. These documents, which are listed in Appendix 3, are the result of various planning efforts by Conservancy partners. The Conservancy supports consistency with these documents because they represent the shared community vision for the River Park. That said, it is impossible to complete everything envisioned in the River Park Planning in a five year window so this Plan emphasizes the highest priority projects where progress can most readily be achieved within the planning window.

Conservancy programs are all self-reinforcing and inter-related, knitted together by the common vision and mission. For this reason, many of the projects implement more than one program.

Consistent with its legislative authority and implemented through its major programs and projects, the Conservancy seeks to balance the need for human recreation with the strong protection of the Area's rich natural and cultural resources.

The Conservancy is a non-regulatory agency that strives for cooperation, coordination and consensus. The Conservancy seeks to work cooperatively in partnership, where possible, with private, non-profit and public entities and property owners interested in supporting conservation of the River and development of the River Park. The Conservancy only acquires land from willing sellers.

The Conservancy will facilitate land transactions, as needed, to assemble the River Park but will encourage long-term land ownership and management by responsible partners.

The Conservancy supports equitable representation and distribution of resources across the three municipal jurisdictions providing land use authority within the Conservancy's Area.

The Conservancy strives to minimize procedural delay and complexity in its work in order to best serve the public and best benefit the resource.

Project Criteria

The Conservancy has established the following Project Criteria to prioritize projects:

- Implementation of one or more Conservancy programs (i.e., statutory objectives) within jurisdictional area;
- Consistency with purposes of the Conservancy's funding sources;
- Consistency with existing River planning efforts of partners;
- Support from the public and/or partners;
- Need (desired project or result will not occur without Conservancy participation);
- Urgency (a threat or fleeting opportunity);
- Resolution of more than one issue;
- Leverage (contribution of funds or services by more than one entity);
- Readiness;
- Maintainability (the relative ease/cost or difficulty to maintain or manage the project annually);
- Sustainability (the relative ease/cost or difficulty to sustain the maintenance of the project in perpetuity);
- Success (How likely is the project to succeed?);
- Enhances the visibility and public use of the River; and
- Return to the Conservancy or partners (funds will be repaid, extending the revenues available to support other River preservation initiatives).

Because conservation resources are limited, priority will be given to projects that implement multiple programs and/or meet multiple project criteria.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

The four major programs[2] of the San Diego River Conservancy are:

1. Land Conservation;
2. Recreation and Education;
3. Natural and Cultural Resources Preservation and Restoration; and
4. Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance.

In the following sections each of the four major programs are described. The statutory objectives on which each is based are described first as well as the overall program goal. Following the programs is a description of the projects by which the programs are to be implemented. For every project, information is provided describing the project goal, strategies, and estimated funding need. Information which is common to all projects is provided only once, under the program description. Examples include outcome measures and monitoring and tracking. Information which is unique to each project is provided under each project.

In addition, for each project, the reader is provided a small summary table (see example below) indicating whether that project addresses multiple Conservancy programs, if it is included in one or more of our partners' existing River planning documents, and if it is entirely within the Conservancy's one half mile Area.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes/No: 1, 2, 3 or 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes/No List relevant documents from Appendix 3
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes/No

In this context, "*Addresses Multiple Programs?*" refers to the four Conservancy programs listed above. Many conservation efforts are multi-dimensional and this summary helps the reader identify projects which support multiple programs. "*Included in River Planning documents?*" lists, by code letter, the existing planning documents in which this project is mentioned or supported. The list of planning documents (and associated code letters) is included in Appendix 3. If a project is only partially located within the Conservancy's half mile Area[3], that will also be acknowledged in this summary.

[2] Derived from ten statutory objectives in Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe)

[3] One half mile on either side of the center line of the River.

Supporting Maps

Many of the projects within this Plan are described within their respective reach of the River. This Plan uses the reach definitions developed in the San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan: June 2002, but augments those definitions by including a reference to the municipal jurisdictions with land use authority within the River. From the headwaters to the ocean, those jurisdictions include the County of San Diego, the City of Santee and the City of San Diego. In order to simplify the descriptions for the reader, the three City of San Diego reaches of the River are consolidated into one category (City of San Diego Reaches) throughout this Plan. Map 1 shows the reaches and jurisdictions in perspective. Additional maps showing each individual reach in greater detail are provided in Appendix 4.

Map 1: Watershed and Reaches of the San Diego River (*see fold-out*)

PROGRAM 1: LAND CONSERVATION

The Conservancy's statutory objectives[4] include "***acquire and manage public land within the San Diego River Area.***" The Conservancy will implement these objectives through acquisition and other means, including donations, along the 52-mile length of the River. No one method of land conservation is favored; rather, each property is evaluated individually to determine the most cost and conservation-effective means to secure, preserve and manage the property in perpetuity. The Conservancy can secure and manage land directly or with partners but, in all cases, sellers must be willing. Land donations and voluntary dedications, including easements, are encouraged wherever possible.

Statutory Objectives

Acquire and manage public lands within the San Diego River Area.

Program Goal

Secure the preservation of 1,450 acres of land within the San Diego River Area.

Implementing Projects

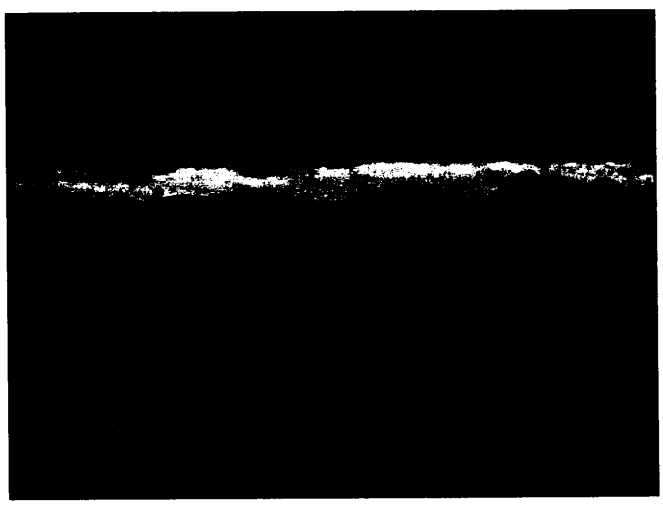
Five land conservation projects and one land management project.

Outcome Measures

1. Acres conserved or protected.
2. Management/Stewardship Agreements (number) in place.

Monitoring and Tracking (for all reaches)

1. Update Conservancy GIS-based parcel inventory and maps.
2. Regular communication with partners.
3. Qualitative and quantitative monitoring results (water quality, species, etc.).

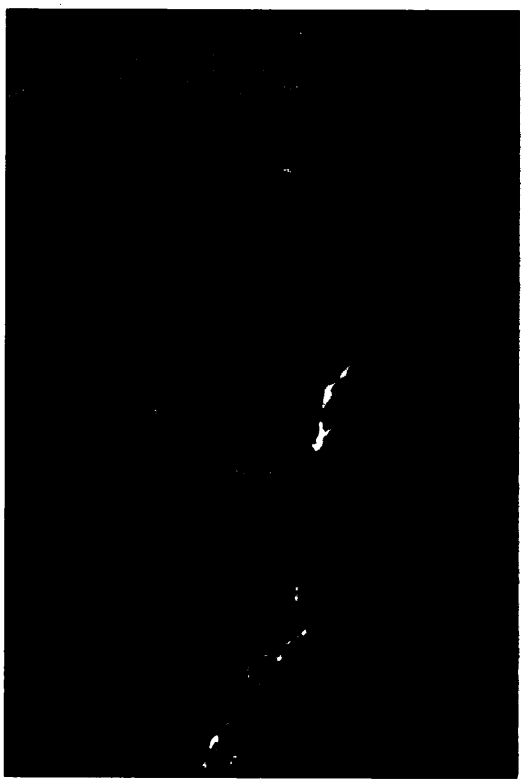


Cedar Creek
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Park Foundation

[4] See Appendix 1, Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe) for details

Project 1. Secure Key River Properties

This project supports land conservation activities, including acquisition by the Conservancy and its partners. Priority projects are described by reach below. Preservation targets are properties that meet the objectives of the Conservancy to protect both natural and cultural[5] resources.



Mildred Falls Near the Eagle Peak Preserve
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Park Foundation

PROJECT 1.1 CONSERVE 250 ACRES IN THE HEADWATERS *(HEADWATERS REACH)*

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Conserve 250 acres in the Headwaters Reach.

[5] Cultural resources are defined as prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic architectural sites and traditional cultural places.

Strategies

1. Support San Diego River Park Foundation's (SDRPF) effort to acquire additional land for the Eagle Peak Preserve portion of the San Diego River Park.
2. Work with Cleveland National Forest to achieve their goals of preserving forest inholdings.

Estimated Funding Need

$774,000

PROJECT 1.2 CONSERVE 500 ACRES IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY
(EL CAPITAN RESERVOIR TO 67 FREEWAY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, g, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Conserve 500 acres in El Capitan Reservoir to 67 Freeway Reach, specifically in El Monte Valley.

Strategies

1. Work with key partners, including the Helix Water District and the Endangered Habitats League, to preserve 250 acres, in fee or easement, in the El Monte Valley.
2. Work with key partners, including the Helix Water District and the Endangered Habitats League, to preserve 250 acres, in easement, in El Monte Valley.

Estimated Funding Need

$15,500,000

PROJECT 1.3 CONSERVE 300 ACRES IN LAKESIDE
(LAKESIDE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Conserve 300 acres in the Lakeside Reach.

Strategies

1. Assist the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, County of San Diego, and other partners acquire 300 acres in fee or easement along the River within the Lakeside Reach.

Estimated Funding Need
$27,000,000

PROJECT 1.4 CONSERVE 100 ACRES IN THE CITY OF SANTEE (*SANTEE REACH*)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, d, e, o
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Conserve 100 acres in the Santee Reach.

Strategies:

1. Work with City of Santee and others to conserve 100 acres, in fee or easement, along the River within the Santee Reach.

Estimated Funding Need
$3,000,000

PROJECT 1.5 CONSERVE 300 ACRES IN CITY OF SAN DIEGO (*ESTUARY, MISSION VALLEY AND MISSION TRAIL REGIONAL PARK REACHES*)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, e, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes, target lands are within the half mile Area.

Project Goal
Conserve 300 acres in the City of San Diego reaches including the Estuary, Mission Valley, and Mission Trail Regional Park reaches.

Strategies

1. Work with the City of San Diego and other partners to conserve 300 acres in fee or easement along the River within the City of San Diego reaches.
2. Target properties that will improve San Diego River access (in areas with limited access).

Estimated Funding Need
$27,000,000

Project 2. Improve Land Management

This project supports efforts to improve land management practices or principles. Land management is defined broadly and encompasses the protection of natural resources (including wildlife monitoring to assure the preservation of biodiversity) as well as the preservation and protection of historical and cultural resources pursuant to Public Resources Code 5024.[6] While acquisition will be at the center of much of the Conservancy's and its partners' activities in the first years of the River Park, land management will become more of a focus in the later years. It is essential that the Conservancy and its partners begin to address issues of long-term land management, both standards and practices, and assurances of funding so that land management will continue in perpetuity.

Volunteers in Action in Mission Valley
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Park Foundation

PROJECT 2.1 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT LAND MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS (ALL REACHES)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, e, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Develop and implement standard protocols for management of the River Park.

Strategies

1. Working with partners and the State Department of General Services, develop a standard protocol for managing San Diego River Park lands.
2. Review management protocols for other State chartered conservancies for their applicability to the River.
3. Investigate mechanisms, including the MSCP and Transnet, to provide on-going management funding for San Diego River Park lands.

Estimated Funding Need

Can be accomplished within the Conservancy's support budget.

[6] Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024 requires all state agencies to formulate policies to preserve and maintain cultural resources owned by those agencies. This responsibility extends to projects funded by the State agency. A specific review procedure must be followed to protect and inventory the resources.

PROGRAM 2: RECREATION AND EDUCATION

The Conservancy's statutory objectives include: ***"to provide recreation opportunities, open space,...and lands for educational uses within the area." "To provide for the public's enjoyment and to enhance the recreational and educational experience on public lands in the territory in a manner consistent with the protection of land and natural resources, as well as economic resources, in the area."***

In addition, the enabling statute specifically articulates that it is the Legislature's intent for the Conservancy to consider the recommendations in the San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan when conducting its mission. The San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan, June 2002 (see Appendix 3a) specifically identifies three objectives that are mentioned and inferred in the Conservancy's statute, but not directly identified as statutory objectives. These three additional objectives are 1) build a River Park and Trail; 2) protect cultural and historical resources, and 3) provide public access to the River. These three additional Conceptual Plan objectives are fully consistent with the Conservancy's overall mission and statute and the Governing Board had decided, as a matter of policy, to incorporate them into the Conservancy's objectives. In addition to Governing Board support, there is also very strong public support for the Conservancy to actively participate in the design and construction of the San Diego River Park and trail.

The Conservancy will implement these recreation and education objectives by facilitating public access to and within the River Park via multi-use trails, staging areas and visitor-services as envisioned in River Planning documents. Public activities could include walking, cycling, horseback riding, boating and fishing. These efforts will include interpretation of the River's natural, historic/cultural and recreational values as acknowledged in Article 1. Section 32631(a) of the statute; and enhancement of the visitor exper ience by improving public safety. Educational materials on the natural and cultural resources and history of the San Diego River will be included in interpretive displays and programs.

Due to the exceptional work of the Conservancy's partners over the past five years, especially the San Diego River Park Foundation, Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, the San Diego River Coalition, the Endangered Habitats League, and City of San Diego, public support for the development of a San Diego River Park is strong. However, the park currently exists more in planning documents than on the ground. Creating safe and continuous public access to the River is what will make the River Park a reality. Currently, there are approximately 8.5 miles of trail adjacent to and parallel to the River available for public use. Public amenities such as staging areas exist sporadically along the River, serving separate segments. There are no integrated interpretive elements that inform or direct the visitor in one part of the River to another.

Statutory Objective

Provide for the public's enjoyment. Provide for and enhance the recreational and educational experiences within the San Diego River Area.

Program Goal

Complete projects that will most expeditiously result in River Park amenities that the public can begin to see and use. Complete or significantly advance at least 32 miles of River Park Trail. Related projects focus on making the River Park safe and on encouraging public involvement in making the River healthier.

Implementing Projects

Four projects are presented addressing trail design, construction and improvements; amenities and enhancements; public safety improvements; and public outreach.

Outcome Measures

Miles of permanent trail planned, including completion of CEQA permit requirements.
Miles of permanent trail constructed.
Miles of permanent trail mapped with informational and directional signs installed.
Miles of temporary trail mapped with informational and directional signs installed.
Number of interpretive features implemented.
Public safety improvements implemented.
Reduced crime rate.
Increased public participation in education/outreach programs.

Monitoring and Tracking (for all reaches)

1. Update Conservancy GIS-based parcel inventory and maps
2. Regular communication with partners.
3. Qualitative and quantitative monitoring results including reduction in the crime rate and increased participation in River Park education and outreach programs.

Hikers in Mission Valley
Photo Courtesy City of San Diego

Project 1. Complete the San Diego River Park Trail

This project supports efforts to complete the San Diego River Park Trail from the headwaters to the ocean. There are currently approximately 8.5 miles of existing River Park Trail along the 52-mile length of the River. An additional .75 mile of River trail in the City of San Diego from Pacific Highway to Sefton Field/Hotel Circle Place is currently in planning with construction expected to begin by October 2006. This .75 mile segment of trail is fully funded and is not included in the needs analysis of this Plan.[7]

Note:
The following projects are not the sole focus of the Conservancy but are the highest priority projects most ready to move ahead within the time frame of this Plan, assuming fiscal support is received.

PROJECT 1.1 TRAIL FROM SAN DIEGO COUNTRY ESTATES TO CEDAR CREEK FALLS
(HEADWATERS REACH)

This project will improve and legalize a currently unofficial, but frequently used trail from the unincorporated community of San Diego Country Estates near Ramona to the popular recreational destination of Cedar Creek Falls by way of the Upper San Diego River Gorge. This trail project will provide the only public access to Cedar Creek Falls from the north side of the San Diego River. It leads to the base of Cedar Creek Falls. This project is designed and NEPA has been completed.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Construct/improve trail segment from San Diego County Estates to Cedar Creek Falls.

Strategies
1. Work with partners, including the Cleveland National Forest, Helix Water District and San Diego River Park Foundation, to improve this two-mile segment of trail to federal trail standards.

Estimated Funding Need
$100,000

[7] $2,000,000: from River Parkways Proposition 40 funds set-aside for the San Diego River.

PROJECT 1.2 TRAIL FROM EAGLE PEAK PRESERVE/SADDLEBACK TO CEDAR CREEK FALLS

(HEADWATERS REACH)

This project will improve a currently unofficial, but frequently used route, from the Eagle Peak Preserve/Saddleback area to the popular recreational destination of Cedar Creek Falls. This trail project will provide the only public access to Cedar Creek Falls from the south side of the San Diego River. The trail leads to the top of Cedar Creek Falls.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, e, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Design, permit, and construct trail segment from Eagle Peak Preserve/Saddleback to Cedar Creek Falls.

Strategies

1. Work with partners, including the Cleveland National Forest, County of San Diego and San Diego River Park Foundation, to design and permit improvements to this existing two-mile trail.
2. Construct trail improvements.

Estimated Funding Need

$120,000

PROJECT 1.3 TRAIL FROM CEDAR CREEK FALLS TO CITY OF SAN DIEGO LANDS NEAR EL CAPITAN RESERVOIR

(HEADWATERS REACH)

This project will plan the four mile segment of the San Diego River Trail which will connect the Cedar Creek Falls, San Diego Country Estates/Eagle Peak Preserve/Upper San Diego River Gorge area to the City of San Diego owned lands associated with the El Capitan Reservoir.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, e, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Design trail segment from Cedar Creek Falls to El Capitan Grande Reservation to City of San Diego owned lands near the El Capitan Reservoir.

Strategies

1. Working with key partners, including the Helix Water District, the Cleveland National Forest, San Diego River Park Foundation, City of San Diego and the County of San Diego, review issues associated with including tribal lands in the San Diego River Park.
2. Review permitting issues and alignment alternatives.
3. Following the recommendations arrived at during the planning phase, seek funding to implement this segment of the San Diego River Park Trail.

Estimated Funding Need
$75,000

PROJECT 1.4 EL MONTE VALLEY LOOP TRAIL
(RESERVOIR TO 67 FREEWAY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
Design, permit and construct a nine-mile El Monte Valley Loop Trail on land owned by the Helix Water District in the El Monte Valley near Lakeside.

Strategies

1. Work with key partners, including the Helix Water District, Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, Endangered Habitat League, and San Diego River Park Foundation, to plan and construct this trail segment.
2. Leverage additional resources from the associated aggregate mining activities to support the project.

Estimated Funding Need
$4,050,000 Please Note: The Endangered Habitats League expects a contribution towards this project of approximately $2 million from the associated aggregate mining activities resulting in a revised funding estimate of $2,050,000.

PROJECT 1.5 IMPROVE THE HISTORIC FLUME TRAIL
(RESERVOIR TO 67 FREEWAY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1 (partial or segments not now conserved), 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, f,
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Secure safe and legal public access on the historic six mile flume trail from El Capitan Reservoir to Lake Jennings.

Strategies
1. Work with key partners, including the Helix Water District, the County of San Diego, City of San Diego and stakeholder community groups, to define strategies required to secure safe public access on the historic flume trail from El Capitan Reservoir to Lake Jennings.
2. Address protection of the historic and cultural values of the flume.
3. Plan improvements needed along segments already in public ownership.
4. Secure trail easements with property owners along portions not currently in public ownership.
5. Plan improvements for sections brought into public ownership.
6. Construct trail improvements.

Estimated Funding Need
A funding estimate for this program still needs to be determined.

PROJECT 1.6 LAKESIDE'S RIVER PARK CONSERVANCY TRAIL
(LAKESIDE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: (Partial, for newly secured segments), 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, f, g, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Acquire private lands in fee title or easement with willing sellers. Complete the design, permitting and construction of two miles of trail in the Lakeside Reach.

Strategies
1. Work with key partners including the County of San Diego and the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy to define roles and responsibilities to complete the trail within the Lakeside Reach.
2. Complete design, permitting and construction in areas already secured.
3. Negotiate easements or purchases in fee for segments not yet in public ownership.
4. Complete design, permitting and construction for areas brought into public ownership.

Estimated Funding Need
$3,600,000

PROJECT 1.7 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL AND STAGING IMPROVEMENTS IN MAST PARK

(SANTEE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, d, f, g, o
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

This project will design, permit and construct enhancements in Mast Park for equestrians, pedestrians, joggers and hikers. This project will upgrade existing one-half mile of equestrian and one mile of pedestrian improvements originally installed in 1986.

Strategies

1. Working with the City of Santee and equestrians, pedestrians, joggers and hikers, address design issues to improve equestrian and pedestrian access and public safety in Mast Park.
2. Complete permitting and construction of improvements.

Estimated Funding Need

$1,000,000

PROJECT 1.8 TRAIL THROUGH THE CARLTON OAKS GOLF COURSE

(SANTEE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, d, e, f, k, o
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Complete the design, permitting and construction of two miles of trail along the Carlton Oaks Golf Course in the City of Santee.

Strategies

1. Work with the City of Santee to complete trail design along San Diego River through the golf course.
2. Work with the City of Santee, Caltrans and City of San Diego to review design alternatives for connections east and west of the golf course.
3. Complete permitting and construction of San Diego River Park Trail through golf course.

Estimated Funding Need

$1,250,000

PROJECT 1.9 COMPLETE AT LEAST 3.5 MILES OF TRAIL THROUGH THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO REACHES

(ESTUARY, MISSION VALLEY, AND MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK REACHES)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1 (partial for trail segments not now conserved), 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, e, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Complete the design, permitting and construction of at least three and one half miles of the River Park Trail throughout the City of San Diego Reaches.

Strategies

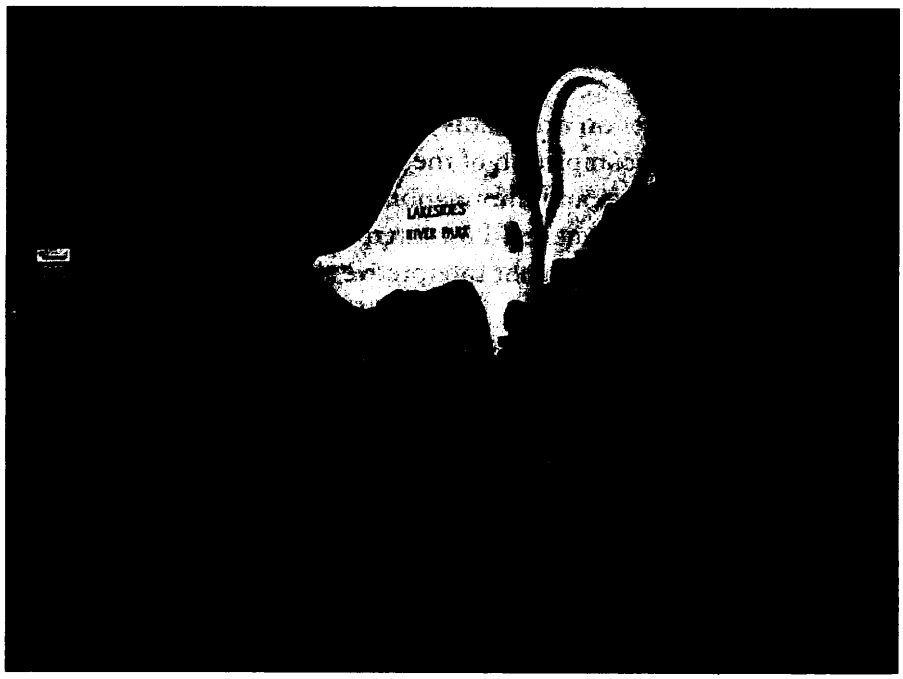
1. Work with the City of San Diego, San Diego River Park Foundation and other partners to define roles and responsibilities to complete the trail within the City of San Diego reaches.
2. Designate priority sections to accomplish greatest net gain in continuous trail.
3. Complete design, permitting and construction in areas already secured.
4. Negotiate easements or purchases in fee for segments not yet in public ownership.
5. Complete design, permitting and construction for areas brought into public ownership.

Estimated Funding Need

$15,000,000

Project 2. Make the River Park Real

This project supports initiatives to provide public visitor-serving amenities to make the River Park a reality. These include signage and interpretive elements, including cultural preservation and interpretation.



Gateway to the San Diego River in Lakeside by Artist James Hubbell
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Lakeside Conservancy

PROJECT 2.1 PROVIDE UNIFORM SIGNAGE AND OTHER AMENITIES THROUGHOUT ENTIRE RIVER PARK

(ALL REACHES)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, e, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

This project addresses the need to raise awareness and use of the River Park while simultaneously working to make it a reality. It may be many years until some of the River Park trail segments are completed. In the interim there is no "River Park" the public can see or appreciate. This project would advance signage and other means to raise public awareness of the trail throughout its length. Signage will be distinct, easily recognizable, and consistent throughout regular intervals along the entire length of the River Park.

Project Goal
Raise public awareness of the River Park while working to make it a reality.

Strategies
1. Establish and implement consistent **signage** for the River Park, River Trail, and River access within the Conservancy's Area.
2. Working with partners, design and implement a ***"temporary"* River trail alignment** for public use until permanent trail is complete.
3. Post River **trail maps,** including temporary trails, online and at key locations along the trail for public use.
4. Provide online updates on trail status efforts to encourage public participation in the development and completion of the trail.
5. Add interpretive features and information at key locations along the trail including historical and cultural elements. Post interpretive information online.
6. Work with SDRPF to implement interpretive signage program at the estuary.

Estimated Funding Need
The estuary signage (Strategy 6) is estimated at $75,000. Additional analysis is required to determine an estimated cost for this entire project.

PROJECT 2.2 LAKESIDE RIVER PARK AMENITIES
(RESERVOIR TO 67 FREEWAY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
Design, permit and construct park amenities in Lakeside including trail overlook, staging areas, dog park, heritage park, community garden, equestrian center, camping facilities and skate park.

Strategies

1. Work with the Lakeside community to further refine specific amenity needs.
2. Identify interest groups who would be the natural locus of community support.
3. Integrate Lakeside's River Park Conservancy's tourism based efforts with those of local business community to maximize visibility and visitors.
4. Develop a series of special events to bring the community to the park.
5. Develop an educational program to ensure local students have a greater understanding of the functions of the river and the watershed.
6. Work with local trails groups to assist with the design of the trail, use volunteer labor to support trail development and trail maintenance and monitoring.
7. Apply for grants from local, state, federal, private foundations and community capital campaigns to support the development of park amenities.

8. Develop a feasibility analysis for each of the amenities outlined to refine costs of development, potential markets, and cost of on-going and long term operations.

Estimated Funding Need
$21,600,000

PROJECT 2.3 EL MONTE VALLEY PARK AMENITIES
(RESERVOIR TO 67 FREEWAY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, f, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
Design, permit and construct park amenities including trailhead, education, and camping facilities along the nine mile El Monte Valley loop trail.

Strategies
1. Work with the Helix Water District, the Endangered Habitats League and the community to further refine specific amenity needs.
2. Identify interest groups who would be the natural locus of community support.
3. Secure and improve trailhead and equestrian staging area on the Hanson site.
4. Design and construct .75 mile boardwalk/bridge near constructed wetland on Hanson/Helix site (designer James Hubbell, engineering USCD TIES program).
5. Design and construct three interpretative centers at the east, central, and west end of the valley.
6. Design and develop public camping facilities at the Hanson site.
7. Design and construct public viewing pier at the Hanson wetland site.
8. Seek private and public funds to implement amenities.
9. Complete design and permitting.
10. Install amenities.

Estimated Funding Need
$6,500,000

PROJECT 2.4 SANTEE INTERPRETIVE CENTER AND SIGNAGE
(SANTEE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	No: 2
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, e, d, f, g, o
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

This project would allow for the construction of a 1,200 square foot nature interpretive center and accompanying signage located along the south side of the San Diego River within the City of Santee's Town Center Specific Planning area. The center and signage will educate the public about the natural resources contained within and along the San Diego River corridor.

Strategies

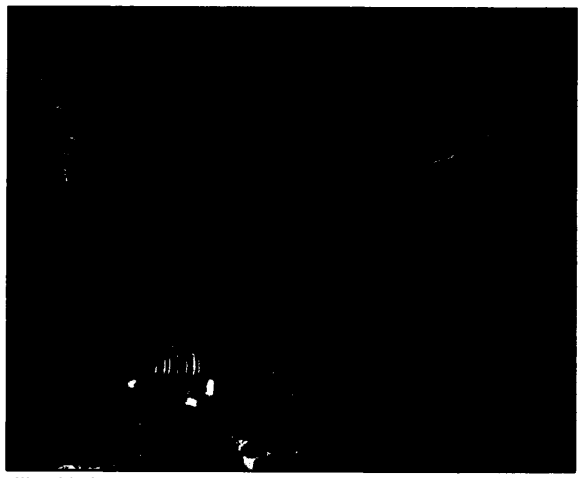
1. Working with the City of Santee, design a nature interpretive center and accompanying signage.
2. Construct interpretive center and implement signage.

Estimated Funding Need

$350,000

Project 3. Make it Safe and Make it Visible (All reaches)

The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) reports the existence of a significant criminal element in the San Diego Riverbed, especially in the lower reaches of the River. Criminal activities include illicit lodging, illegal drug trade, stolen merchandise trade and other related activities. This criminal component in the Riverbed is a serious problem that must be resolved if the San Diego River Park is to be a success.



Illegal lodging in the San Diego River
Photo Courtesy: City of San Diego

At the heart of the problem is the SDPD's lack of adequate funding and staff resources to patrol the Riverbed to the extent needed to eliminate current homeless encampments and prevent new ones from being established. The Conservancy is committed to partnering with SDPD, including the Homeless Outreach Team, City officials and the public to address this problem. To this end, the Conservancy intends to seek funding from various sources to help increase law enforcement and police presence in the Riverbed, to fund the purchase of necessary personal safety equipment for SDPD patrol teams and to support volunteer citizen patrols.

Obviously in addition to the important threat to public safety (perceived and/or real), homelessness is a complex social and political problem without simple answers. Solutions in the San Diego River must include a variety of strategies, the most important of which is to reduce the number of transient encampments in the Riverbed. A significant increase in police and trail user presence will, in itself, go a long ways towards increasing the public's perception of safety. It is also well known that criminals take advantage of the cover provided by the dense invasive non-native vegetation that infests the Riverbed. Furthermore concerns have also been expressed that some people using certain River Park trail segments in areas inhabited by transients do not feel safe due to the height and density of vegetation immediately adjacent to the trail. Accordingly the removal and management of invasive nonnative vegetation will be an important component of the overall strategy to reduce crime in the Riverbed. It should be noted however that the Conservancy does not support the wholesale removal of all vegetation (riparian habitat) in the vicinity of the River. Instead a conscious effort will be made to eliminate invasive exotic plants while preserving native vegetation to the maximum extent possible.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
Implement measures to make the San Diego River Park and River Trail safe and visible.

Strategies
1. Work with partners, property owners, wildlife agencies and landscape maintenance companies to maintain an open view shed along the existing River Park Trail and to plan and implement new segments to emphasize public safety.
2. Work with the San Diego City Police Department and other partners to address patrol and policing issues along the river. Consider funding personal safety equipment for patrol officers.
3. Coordinate invasive plants removal activities to maximize public safety improvements (see Program 3).
4. Support installation of bike lockers along the River to promote safety patrols, including volunteer patrols.
5. Work with partners to coordinate and support ongoing volunteer cleanup efforts in the River.

Estimated Funding Need
Additional analysis is required to develop an estimated funding need for this project.

Project 4. Ask the Public to Help and Help them Help (All Reaches)

This project will develop and implement a public outreach program to reduce water pollution and the spread of invasive plants and animals within the San Diego River Area. The primary targets of this project will be those larger operations selling and planting invasive plants such as nurseries and landscape maintenance companies. Additional targets are larger commercial and residential structures within the Area.

California Invasive Plant Species Council Brochure (front page image)
http://www.cal-ipc.org/file_library/20589.pdf

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, g, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Develop and implement a public outreach program to reduce water pollution and the spread of invasive plants and animals within the San Diego River Area.

Strategies

1. Create programs with municipal and non-profit partners to educate the public about invasive plants and to discourage the use of invasive plants and the keeping and release of invasive animals.
2. Work with the Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden, the San Diego County Water Authority and other municipal and non-profit partners to encourage targeted reductions in water use, which in turn leads to subsequent reduction in water pollution and seed dispersal. Integrate programs into ongoing water conservation efforts.
3. Target nurseries, homeowner associations, rental managers, shopping centers, and other large holdings within the San Diego River Area for free water conservation and invasive plant audits as well as restoration advice.

Estimated Funding Need

Additional analysis is required to develop an estimated funding need for this project.

PROGRAM 3: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

The Conservancy's statutory objectives[8] include ***"to provide...wildlife habitat and species restoration and protection, wetlands protection and restoration.."*** The Conservancy's statute also includes references to the importance of preserving cultural and historic resources. Unfortunately, the San Diego River suffers from the dual ills of urban watersheds: loss of habitat and open space to urban development and loss of habitat as a result of the presence of invasive non-native species that over-compete with native species. Habitat loss is the number one threat to the conservation of biological diversity in the San Diego River Area. Similarly, cultural and historic resources and the landscapes where they are found are under threat.

Preservation and restoration of this region's rich biological diversity allows the native plants and wildlife to thrive, providing an opportunity for the people of San Diego County to witness and appreciate our natural heritage. Preservation and restoration also supports the goals of the Federal Endangered Species Act and State Natural Communities Conservation Plan through the local Multiple Species Conservation Program to preserve a network of native habitats that protect and promote biodiversity while supporting economic development and the region's quality of life.

As envisioned, habitat preservation projects will also include the protection of cultural resources located within those habitats. No projects to restore natural resources will result in the destruction of cultural resources. Projects must also be designed to be maintainable in perpetuity and sustainable, for example, so that invasive non-native species do not return to re-infest restored sites.

Removal of invasive non-native plants can also reduce the risk of flooding, and in some cases, of wildfires. In addition to degrading biological diversity, this dense invasive plant growth, which extends onto public as well as private lands, has created opportunities for criminal activities to take hold in some areas of the River. These activities are undermining the Conservancy's goal to encourage public access to and enjoyment of the River.

Statutory Objectives

Restore and protect wildlife habitat, including wetlands, to benefit native species. Preserve and protect cultural and historic resources.

Program Goal

Reduce, control, and where feasible, eradicate invasive non-native species while restoring Area habitats to native function. Restore 900 acres to native function. Preserve key cultural and historic sites.

[8] See Appendix 1, Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe) for details

Implementing Projects
One natural resources project that incorporates both removal and restoration components is presented. Three cultural resources projects are presented.

Outcome Measures
Acres of invasive plants mapped.
Acres of land cleared of invasive plants and animals.
Acres of land restored to native function.
Cultural or historic sites preserved or restored.

Monitoring and Tracking (for all reaches)
Update Conservancy GIS-based parcel inventory and maps.
Regular communication with partners.
Qualitative and quantitative monitoring results (invasive non-native plants removed and land restored)

Project 1. Remove Invasive Non-Native Plants, Restore and Manage the Land

This project will support initiatives that will restore native habitats and protect native species. It is impossible for the Conservancy and its partners to make a significant impact in the health of the River without a major effort to remove invasive non-native species, prevent their return, and restore lands to native function.

Invasive Non-Native Arundo in the San Diego River
Photo Courtesy City of San Diego

Within the 52-mile San Diego River Area, approximately 30 percent of the land area is developed into urban uses, leaving the 70% remaining in a more natural state. For that portion of the Area downstream of the El Capitan Dam, the percentages are 50% developed and 50% undeveloped. Unfortunately much of the land area that is in a more natural state is infested with invasive non-native species. Because the removal of invasive non-native species and the restoration of land subject to removal are so intertwined, this Plan has presented removal and restoration together as one integrated project. The long term management to prevent re-infestation is also a key project component.

Because seeds, including those from invasive non-native plants, are transported from upstream areas to areas downstream, it is most cost effective to remove invasive plants from the upper reaches of a watershed and then work downstream. In the case of the San Diego River Area, the infestation of invasive exotics is most acute in the reaches below the El Capitan Dam. The reservoir above the dam serves to restrict much of the seed transport from the upper to lower watershed. Because of the high cost to remove the invasive plants along the 52-mile river, this project will focus on the areas downstream of the El Capitan Dam. The areas upstream of the dam are recommended for targeted removal as future funds become available.

PROJECT 1.1 COMPLETE MAPPING OF INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS
(ALL REACHES BELOW EL CAPITAN DAM)

It is critical to first map the invasive non-native cover before proceeding with removal. This project would complete the mapping of the invasive non-native cover in the San Diego River Area from the El Capitan Dam to the estuary.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, g, h, k
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
Map all invasive non-native vegetation occurring in all River reaches downstream of El Capitan Dam.

Strategies
1. Work with partners including the County of San Diego, the City of San Diego, the San Diego River Park Foundation, Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, Endangered Habitats League and Helix Water District to complete the mapping of invasive non-native plants in the river.
2. Make results of mapping available to the public and partners to help implement removal and long term management efforts consistent with mapping.

Estimated Funding Need
$165,652

PROJECT 1.2 REMOVE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND RESTORE 400 ACRES IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY
(RESERVOIR TO 67 REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, g, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Remove invasive non-native vegetation and restore 400 acres in the El Monte Valley and restore land to native function.

Strategies
1. Work with partners including Endangered Habitats League and the Helix Water District to define removal, restoration and long term management strategies.
2. Implement removal.
3. Implement restoration.
4. Implement long term management to prevent re-infestation.

Estimated Funding Need
Removal and restoration cost is estimated at $10,000,000.

PROJECT 1.3 REMOVE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND RESTORE 300 ACRES IN LAKESIDE
(LAKESIDE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, g, h
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Remove invasive non-native vegetation from 300 acres in the Lakeside Reach and restore land to natural function.

Strategies
1. Work with partners including the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy and Endangered Habitats League to define removal, restoration and long term management strategies.
2. Implement removal.
3. Implement restoration.
4. Implement long term management to prevent re-infestation.

Estimated Funding Need
Removal and restoration costs are estimated at $10,500,000.

PROJECT 1.4 REMOVE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND RESTORE 40 ACRES IN SANTEE
(SANTEE REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, c, d, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal
Remove invasive vegetation from 40 acres in the City of Santee within the Santee Reach and restore land to native function.

Strategies
1. Work with partners, including the City of Santee and others, to define removal, restoration and long term management strategies.
2. Implement removal.
3. Implement restoration.
4. Implement long term management to prevent re-infestation.

Estimated Funding Need
$1,000,000

PROJECT 1.5 REMOVE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND RESTORE 250 ACRES IN SAN DIEGO CITY REACHES

(ESTUARY, MISSION VALLEY, AND MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK REACHES)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, c, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Remove invasive vegetation from 250 acres in the City of San Diego Reaches.

Strategies

1. Work with partners, including the City of San Diego, the San Diego River Park Foundation, and others to define removal, restoration, and long term management strategies.
2. Implement removal.
3. Implement restoration.
4. Implement long term management to prevent re-infestation.

Estimated Funding Need

$6,250,000

Project 2. Protect and Preserve Cultural and Historic Resources

Old Mission Dam
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Park Foundation

When the California legislature created the San Diego River Conservancy, it recognized that the San Diego River, in addition to being an important local asset, is also of both statewide and even national significance. The River's significance is due in large part to its rich endowment of exceptional cultural, historical, and archeological resources. These resources reveal that humans have lived along the River for over ten thousand years. The presence of the River was the original attraction to the area and the reason that San Diego was settled at its present location.

The San Diego River boasts many California "firsts" including the State's first Mission and first dam and flume irrigation system, built by hand and engineered to transport water from the dam to the Padres' agricultural fields six miles away. Today these very same archeological treasures are deteriorating and threatened.

Although the enabling statute does not specifically direct the Conservancy to protect the River's historical and cultural resources in the same direct way that it requires habitat and wildlife protection, it does nevertheless clearly articulate that the River's cultural and historical resources are of value to both the State and the Nation.

Furthermore the statute indicates that it is the Legislature's intent for the Conservancy to consider the recommendations in the San Diego River Parkway Concept Plan when conducting its mission. The San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan, June 2002 (see Appendix 3a) specifically identifies three objectives that are mentioned and inferred in the Conservancy's statute, but not directly identified as statutory objectives. These three additional objectives are 1) build a River Park and Trail; 2) protect cultural and historical resources, and 3) provide public access to the River. These three additional Conceptual Plan objectives are fully consistent with the Conservancy's overall mission and statute and the Governing Board had decided, as a matter of policy, to incorporate them into the Conservancy's objectives. In addition to Governing Board support, there is also very strong public support for the Conservancy to actively participate in the protection of the River's historical and cultural resources.

PROJECT 2.1 KUMEYAAY LAKE AND BERM RESTORATION
(MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 2, 3
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, g, k
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

This project will rebuild the berm at lake 4 with rip rap, dredge lake 3 and 4 and provide required environmental mitigation.

Strategies

1. Work with partner the City of San Diego to continue to refine plans for the project.
2. Minimize environmental impacts and maximize the value of environmental mitigation.
3. Work with City of San Diego to complete project permitting and implementation.

Estimated Funding Need

$3,300,000

PROJECT 2.2 HISTORIC MISSION DAM DREDGING
(MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 2, 3
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, g, k
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

On April 8, 2005 the Governing Board adopted Resolution 05-06 supporting the preservation of the San Diego Mission flume and waterworks. Consistent with this resolution, this project will protect the historic Mission Dam by dredging and providing associated environmental mitigation. Construction plans have been completed but mitigation plans have not.

Strategies

1. Work with partner the City of San Diego to complete mitigation plans.
2. Work with partner the City of San Diego to obtain required permit and complete project implementation.

Estimated Funding Need

$1,200,000

PROJECT 2.3 PRESIDIO PARK SLOPE PRESERVATION
(MISSION VALLEY REACH)

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 2, 3
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: a, b, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal
This project would restore a large portion of the Presidio Park slope damaged during the heavy rains of 2004-2005. The slope failure is a potential direct threat to the San Diego Royal Presidio Archaeological Site (above the slope) which is identified as City of San Diego Historical Landmark No. 4 and No. 35, California Historical Landmark No. 59 and National Historic Landmark No. 66000226. The slope failure is also jeopardizing the structural integrity of the Junipero Serra Museum designed by William Templeton Johnson for George Marston (City of San Diego HRB No. 237) as well as the Marston Wall surrounding the Presidio Archaeological Site and associated walkways along the north slope.

Strategies
1. Work with partner City of San Diego to stabilize the slope to prevent further erosion of hillside and continued loss of the archaeological site and threats to the museum.
2. Minimize impact of retaining wall (proposed as high as 20 feet and as long as 1600 lineal feet.)
3. Prepare environmental documents.
4. Provide monitoring for historical/cultural as well as archeological resources during construction.
5. Complete construction.

Estimated Funding Need
$7,000,000 Note: The City of San Diego has provided an estimate of from $6,000,000-$8,000,000 million for this project. For planning purposes, a value of $7,000,000 is shown.

Presidio Slope - Photo Courtesy City of San Diego

PROGRAM 4: WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL FLOOD CONVEYANCE

The Conservancy's statutory legislation[9] includes ***"provide...protection and maintenance of the quality of the waters in the San Diego River for all beneficial uses,...and [provide] natural floodwater conveyance."*** A related objective states that the Conservancy shall ***"provide for the public's enjoyment....in a manner consistent with the protection of land and natural resources, as well as economic resources in the area."*** The anthropogenic degradation of water quality and alteration of the River's natural flow regime are both significant issues for the San Diego River, especially in its lower reaches. Consistent with its statute, the Conservancy will implement the water quality and natural flood conveyance objectives through projects that utilize a science-based approach.

The enabling legislation correctly recognizes that the fundamental resource value of the San Diego River, or any water body, is dependent on its water quality. This dependence occurs because it is the water quality that allows the River to support important beneficial uses such as habitat, wildlife, and recreation that the public uses, celebrates and wants to preserve. When water quality declines, so does the quality of habitat, abundance and diversity of wildlife, and the quality of recreational experiences.

The statute also correctly recognizes that the River's natural flow regime and natural flood conveyance is equally critical to a healthy functioning River system. In addition to the enormous environmental resource benefits (e.g., attenuates flood flows, removes pollutants, etc.), natural flood conveyance also helps to support the protection of the economic resources of the Area, consistent with the enabling statute. Restoring natural flood conveyance, in which the River system acts as a sponge to store and release flood flows more slowly and evenly, also helps to protect life and property, and other economic resources, from flood damage within the Conservancy's Area. Despite these advantages, the Conservancy acknowledges that the opportunities for restoring natural flood conveyance are limited in some areas due to extensive existing development. This is particularly true in the Mission Valley Reach.

Flooding in Mission Valley: 1980
Photo Courtesy National Weather Service

[9] See Appendix 1, Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe) for details

Statutory Objectives

Protect and maintain the quality of San Diego River water for all beneficial uses and provide for natural flood conveyance.

Program Goal

Promote and implement projects which maintain and improve the water quality and natural flood conveyance of the San Diego River.

Implementing Projects

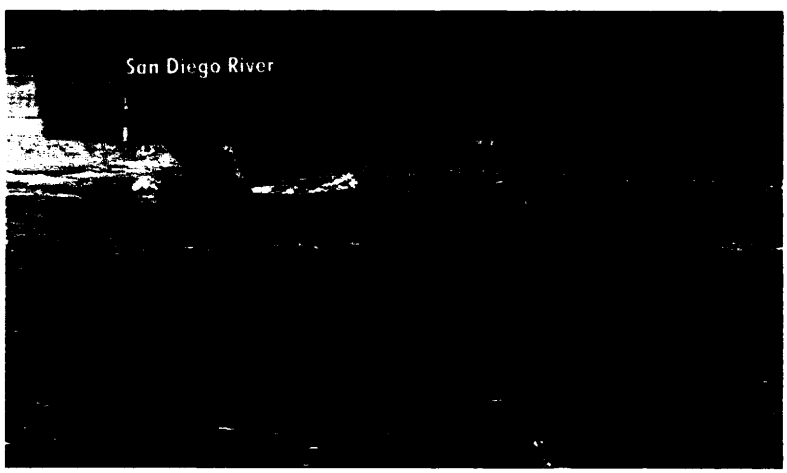
During the Conservancy's startup phases, one project is presented which applies to all River reaches. Future water quality and hydrology projects will be based on the recommendations in the initial Hydrology Assessment for the San Diego River watershed.

Outcome Measures (for all reaches)

1. Measurable improvements in water quality.
2. Measurable increase in natural flood conveyance.

Monitoring and Tracking (for all reaches)

1. Update Conservancy GIS-based inventory and maps.
2. Regular communication with partners.
3. Qualitative and quantitative monitoring results (water quality, flooding and natural flow regime).



Flooding in Mission Valley
Photo Courtesy San Diego River Park Foundation

Project 1. Complete Hydrology Assessment for San Diego River Watershed

This project would create a tool, or set of tools, to perform uniform system-wide hydrologic evaluations of the San Diego River Watershed. These include current base-line conditions; the predicted long-term consequences of an individual proposed project or build out scenario; and, most importantly, the overall cumulative water quality and hydrology impacts of the proposal which are often overlooked or inadequately assessed.

This information would be provided to decision-makers who are routinely asked to evaluate and approve various types of projects (e.g., development, redevelopment, maintenance, restoration, enhancement, and repair) along the San Diego River without sufficient information to accurately assess the potential impacts of the project. Currently, hydrological analyses, if conducted, are completed on a project-by-project basis. Because different models are used and because the analyses address only limited River segments, it is difficult or impossible, to compare individual project impacts or to accurately evaluate the overall cumulative impacts to the River and watershed. This comprehensive analysis will evaluate river hydrology, hydraulics, water quality, sediment transport, groundwater hydrology and groundwater quality. Armed with the results of this analysis, decision-makers will be able to make truly informed land use planning and project approval decisions. The analysis will help decision-makers to "see" the long term hydrology and water quality consequences of their decisions before the project is approved and built.

The models created from this Assessment will be available for use by the Conservancy and our partners in evaluating key River projects. Example projects include but are not limited to, the preservation of the Old San Diego Mission Flume and Waterworks (SDRC Resolution 05-06), possible replacement of Mission Valley culverts with bridges, and restoration of the estuary. Furthermore, the recommendations of this Analysis will be used to define future projects to improve water quality and natural flood conveyance.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Included in River Planning documents?	Yes: c, g
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Project Goal

Develop a set of tools to provide decision-makers with the information needed to make informed land use decisions and policy.

Strategies

1. Work with City of San Diego and other partners to define a detailed scope of work for the Hydrology Assessment.
2. Select a consulting team.
3. Conduct the Hydrology Assessment.

Estimated Funding Need

$400,000

PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

Programmatic issues apply to each of the Conservancy's four major programs. Addressing programmatic issues does not require new funding, rather, these projects can be implemented within the Conservancy's existing support budget.

Project 1. Remove Conservation Disincentives

While many people, including property owners, express an interest in voluntarily supporting the creation of the River Park, at times government rules and regulations actually make such support difficult. Government policies often work at cross purposes; generally encouraging voluntary land conservation while at times making it difficult, time-consuming and expensive. For example, the Conservancy is currently working with the SDRPF and a family trust to facilitate what should be a simple donation to the SDRPF. Unfortunately, the trust found that the donation would require compliance with the Subdivision Map Act, which would require substantial fee payments to San Diego County.

The Conservancy, working with its non-profit and municipal partners, has identified a variety of such conservation roadblocks that have been complicating and discouraging voluntary land and easement donations to the River Park. This project will continue this investigation and seek implementation of appropriate changes to local policies and regulations affecting land donations.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3, 4
Included in River Planning documents?	No
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	No

Goal

Remove conservation / donation disincentives within the San Diego River Area.

Strategies

1. Work with City of San Diego and other municipal partners to eliminate roadblocks and other disincentives to voluntary conservation / donation.

Estimated Funding Need

This project can be accomplished within Conservancy's support budget.

Project 2. Implement Landowner Incentives to Encourage Voluntary Donations

The Conservancy, working with the changes instituted as a result of Programmatic Issues, Project 1.0 above, will implement a project to seek voluntary donations of land and easements to the River Park. The primary focus will be on properties that contain both developed land and undeveloped water or riparian acreage.

Historic property parcelization along the River has created many parcels that include land area and water/riparian area. In the more urbanized parts of the River, such as within the City of San Diego, many of these properties (the land area) are already developed but the property ownership extends into the River (the water/riparian area). See Map 2.

Map 2: Aerial Map showing parcel lines extending into the River

For the most part, owners of these properties are not using the water/riparian portion of their land, most of which is fenced off and not actively managed. Unfortunately, this lack of active management has resulted in these areas being overrun by invasive plant species which are choking the biological life of the river. As previously mentioned, there are also public safety concerns associated with this dense overgrowth. Even if an individual property owner were to actively manage their land, since seed sources move downstream, one property owner's good management efforts would quickly be overrun by invasive plants and animals migrating from upstream properties. Current environmental regulations make these areas difficult to develop so their current status as generally unmanaged areas will likely continue without intervention.

Because restoration of these lands is critical to meet the Conservancy's statutory objectives and program goals, and because funding is limited, incentives must be implemented to encourage the preservation of these areas. Some property owners have expressed concern that criminal activities along the River have increased their liability associated with these water/riparian areas. Some of these owners have indicated an interest in entertaining a donation of these lands if their liabilities were severed and their entitlements retained. With this in mind, the Conservancy proposes to implement a project to seek voluntary donations of these properties so that they can be restored and added to the River Park.

Addresses Multiple Programs?	Yes: 1, 2, 3, 4
Included in River Planning documents?	No
Entirely within San Diego River Area?	Yes

Project Goal

Create conservation incentives to encourage the donation of water/riparian areas within the San Diego River Area.

Strategies

1. Seek voluntary donations of water/riparian areas within the San Diego River Area.

Estimated Funding Need

Can be accomplished within the Conservancy's support budget.

SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY FIVE YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The table below includes all the programs and associated projects described elsewhere in this document with the proposed funding amounts over the five year period. The proposal is for an aggregate funding baseline of approximately $41.1 million per year over the five years. A breakdown of estimated costs by Program is provided in Appendix 6.

Summary of Capital Funding Needs 2006-2011

Conservancy Programs	DoF	FY 05-06[10]	FY 06-07	FY 07-08	FY 08-09	FY 09-10[11]	FY 10-11[12]
1. Land Conservation	7	$9.2	$18.3	$18.3	$18.3	$9.2	$0.0
2. Recreation and Education	8	$6.5	$12.9	$12.9	$12.9	$6.5	$0.0
3. Natural and Cultural Resources Preservation and Restoration	7	$4.9	$9.9	$9.9	$9.9	$4.9	$0.0
4. Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance[13]	7	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0
Programmatic Issues	7,8	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0	$0.0
Yearly Total	NA	$20.60	$41.10	$41.10	$41.10	$20.60	$0.0

Annual Total: $41.1 million
Five Year Total: $164.5 million

Additional analysis is necessary to further refine these estimates and to further investigate possible funding sources. The Conservancy has identified these potential funding sources to date: Proposition 40, River Parkways (*p40.sd*) funds designated for the San Diego River; Transnet (*tn*), the County's 2005 half cent sales tax; and future bond funds (*fbf*). $5.1 million remains undesignated in *p40.sd*, however, the Conservancy is currently preparing a grant application that will deplete those remaining funds, once awarded. The funding allocation process for the *tn* funds is still being defined. It is likely the Conservancy and its partners will receive *tn* funds, both for some portion of the proposed trail where it serves bicyclists and funds to purchase habitat to mitigate for transportation projects. That amount cannot be determined at this time. Future bond funds offer the best opportunity to accomplish the goals presented in this Plan.

[10] This represents one half fiscal year.

[11] This represents funding for one half year as the Conservancy's enabling statue, AB 2156, establishes a sunset at January 1, 2010.

[12] This column is zero as the Conservancy's enabling statue establishes a sunset as of 2010.

[13] The cost for Project 1, Hydrology Assessment, will be paid for out of the Conservancy's support budget or with other support funds available to the Conservancy. Follow-up projects will require Capital Outlay and will be developed and estimated after the Hydrology Assessment is completed.

Legend:
DoF - California Department of Finance Funding Category
FY - State Fiscal year, from July 1 to June 31.

Historical Funding Levels of the San Diego River Conservancy

	FY 03/04	FY 04/05 Past Year	FY 05/06 Current Year	FY 06/07 Proposed Year
Baseline Support Budget (ELPF)	$265,000	$269,000	$274,000	$292,000
One-time Reappropriation of FY 03/04 Support Budget (for Strategic Planning)	$0	$221,000[14] [15]	$0	$0
Capital Outlay Appropriation (ELPF)	-	-	$0	$0
Capital Outlay Reimbursement Authority	-	-	-$500,000[16]	$0
Total	$265,000	$490,000	$274,000	$292,000

Support Budget (Operations)
The Conservancy's state budget consists entirely of support dollars from the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF), a state Special Fund. These monies are for Conservancy operations only and cannot be used for capital outlay purposes. The Conservancy's annual baseline Support Budget has received small incremental increases since its first appropriation in FY 03/04.

Capital Outlay Budget (Acquisitions) / Reimbursement Authority
The Conservancy has never had a Capital Outlay appropriation from ELPF or other source. In FY 05/06 the Conservancy requested and was awarded Capital Outlay "Reimbursement Authority" of $500,000[17]. Establishment of a Capital Outlay line item was necessary to allow the Conservancy to receive Capital Outlay funding in the future. The "Reimbursement Authority" of $500,000 allows the Conservancy to receive and spend grant funds. The Conservancy receives no state General Fund support.

With no Capital Outlay dollars, the San Diego River Conservancy currently has no funding in its budget for acquisitions. It is however able to apply to the Resources Agency for Proposition 40 River Parkways funding that was set aside for the San Diego River at the time the Conservancy was established. Three project proposals (one acquisition, one

14 FY 03/04 Support Budget of $265,000 minus $44,000 total FY 03/04 expenditures.
15 This amount also supplemented with the unspent balance of the FY 04/05 support budget.
16 FY 05/06 Reimbursement Authority is available for three years (encumber by June 30, 2008).
17 Pursuant to the Finance Letter Budget Year 05/06.

restoration, and one improvement) for this funding have been approved by the Conservancy Governing Board, submitted by the Conservancy partners, and are currently under review. The Conservancy has also submitted several separate grant proposals and requests for federal appropriations, and will continue to aggressively seek multiple sources of non-state funding.

In order to accomplish its statutory purpose of acquiring public lands, it is important for the Conservancy to participate equitably in any future state General Obligation bond funds. In addition, it will submit a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) through the budget process to request future Capital Outlay funding.

Consequences

The Consequences of not funding needed infrastructure of course differs with each category and program of proposed expenditure. Consequences are as follows:

Program	Consequence
1. Land Conservation	Lands not protected could be lost to development which would preclude opportunities to protect the River for the benefit of future generations.
2. Recreation and Education	Recreation and education opportunities would be lost, limited or curtailed as access to the River is restricted due to future development.
3. Natural and Cultural Resources Preservation and Restoration	Loss of habitat and loss of biodiversity would occur as lands are converted to urban uses. Native species would decline as invasive non-native species continue to over compete with native species. Cultural and historic sites would be lost or degraded.
4. Water Quality and Natural Flood Conveyance	Water quality improvements would not occur and water quality could continue to decline. Opportunities to comprehensively address flooding in the River valley would not occur. Potential loss of life and property.

APPENDICES/REFERENCES

1. **Public Resources Code, Division 22.9, Section 32630 (AB 2156, Kehoe)** *
   (Hard copy attached)
2. **Key Partners of the San Diego River Conservancy**
   a. San Diego River Coalition
   b. San Diego River Park Foundation
   c. Lakeside's River Park Conservancy
   d. County of San Diego
   e. City of San Diego
   f. City of Santee
   g. Helix Water District
   h. Endangered Habitats League
   i. San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
   j. Aquatic Adventures
3. **San Diego River Planning Documents**
   a. San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan: June 2002*
   b. San Diego River Park – City of San Diego Draft Master Plan: June 2005*
      http://www.sandiegoriver.org/MasterPlan-CityofSanDiego.html
   c. San Diego River Watershed Management Plan: March 2005*
      http://www.projectcleanwater.org/pdf/sdr/sdr_management_plan-final.pdf
   d. Santee Town Center Specific Plan Amendment: September 2005
   e. California State Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan: 2003*
      http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/Programs/Strategic_Plan.pdf
   f. San Diego County Trails Master Plan: 2005
      http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/parks/docs/CTMP-pdf/tocrev.pdf
   g. San Diego River Two Year Work Plan, San Diego River Coalition: January 2006
      http://www.sandiegoriver.org/documents/WorkPlan2006Final.pdf
   h. Conceptual Design Plan for Lakeside's River Park: 2005*
   i. San Diego River Natural Resources Management Plan, City of San Diego
   j. City of San Diego Community Plans for River Area
   k. Mission Trails Regional Park Master Plan

* This document is included on the CD in the binder pocket

l. San Diego River Invasive Exotic Weed Eradication Master Plan, 2002

m. City of San Diego General Plan
http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan/pdf/generalplan/gpfullversion.pdf

n. County of San Diego General Plan
http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/cntydepts/landuse/planning/GP2020/index.html

o. City of Santee General Plan

p. California Coastal Trail Plan, State Coastal Conservancy*
http://www.coastal.ca.gov/access/coastal-trail-report.pdf

q. MSCP Program and Sub-area Plans*
http://cosda102.co.san-diego.ca.us//2_bmo/2FinalMSCPProgramPlan.pdf
http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/mscp/pdf/subarea.pdf

r. First San Diego River Improvement Project (FSDRIP)

s. Upper San Diego Improvement Project (USDRIP)

t. Trans County Trail Master Plan, County of San Diego, 2005

u. Mission Bay Master Plan, City of San Diego, 1994

v. Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Regional Strategy

4. **San Diego River Watershed detailed maps**

5. **Other Documents Generally applicable to this Strategic and Infrastructure Plan**

a. Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan)
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/basinplan.html

b. RWQCB Municipal Storm Water (MS4) Permit
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/sd_stormwater.html

c. San Diego River Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plan
http://www.projectcleanwater.org/pdf/wurmp/sdr_2002_wurmp.pdf

d. RWQCB Draft TMDL for Bacteria Impaired Waters
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/tmdls/bacteria.html

e. Cleveland National Forest Management Plan*
http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr/projects/lmp

6. **Summary of Estimated Costs by Program**

7. **Summary of Public Comments and Responses on the Interim Draft Strategic and Infrastructure Plan**

* This document is included on the CD in the binder pocket