

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Historically, the Santa Ana River Wash was a natural floodplain and alluvial fan that provided a place to convey frequently devastating floodwaters and deposit sediment. The alluvial deposit provided excellent conditions to establish settling basins for percolating surface water to the groundwater basin, providing a significant source of water supply for the local region. These same geologic conditions provided regionally significant deposits of aggregate (sand and gravel) used to support the building industry and local economy. In recent years, the value of the Wash as habitat for a variety of sensitive, threatened, and endangered species has become more apparent due to the decrease in this type of habitat throughout southern California. These important functions within the Wash, water conservation, aggregate extraction and processing, flood control, and wildlife habitat, have often been in direct competition for the same land.

Over the past ten years, representatives from numerous local, State, and Federal agencies have met to address local mining issues and other land functions in the Wash. In November 2002, an Agreement was signed to form the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Land Management and Habitat Conservation Task Force to develop a management plan for the Wash. Parties to this agreement include San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, Cemex Construction Materials, Robertson's Ready Mix, City of Highland, City of Redlands, County of San Bernardino, East Valley Water District, Redlands Municipal Utilities Department, San Bernardino County Flood Control District, and U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The Task Force contains both technical and governing representatives from each member, including elected officials from the public agencies. In addition, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish & Game, California Department of Water Resources, County of Orange, and Inland Valley Development Agency serve in an advisory capacity to the Task Force. After numerous meetings, a general consensus was reached to process a plan that accommodates existing ongoing activities and anticipated future activities in the Wash.

The Plan consolidates mining activities in one large area on land currently disturbed by mining or land adjacent to disturbed areas. Habitat conservation is located in large connected areas with intact natural habitat. Water conservation and flood control will continue in areas historically utilized for these activities. Additional Water Conservation may be added in suitable areas.

PROJECT PURPOSE & NEED

The Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan for the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Planning Area is necessary to maintain public services, to provide construction aggregate materials, and to preserve sensitive plant and wildlife habitats. The Plan provides a comprehensive land management strategy based on past, present, and future activities within the Wash Planning Area.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Plan is to allow the coordinated development and management of multiple resources in the Wash Planning Area. The Plan designates specific areas within the Wash Planning Area for public services and aggregate mining to balance ground-disturbing activities and habitat preservation.

Need:

The Plan is needed to coordinate and manage the present and future activities in the Wash Planning Area, which are under the jurisdiction of two cities, a county, and the Federal government in addition to local, State, and Federal agencies.

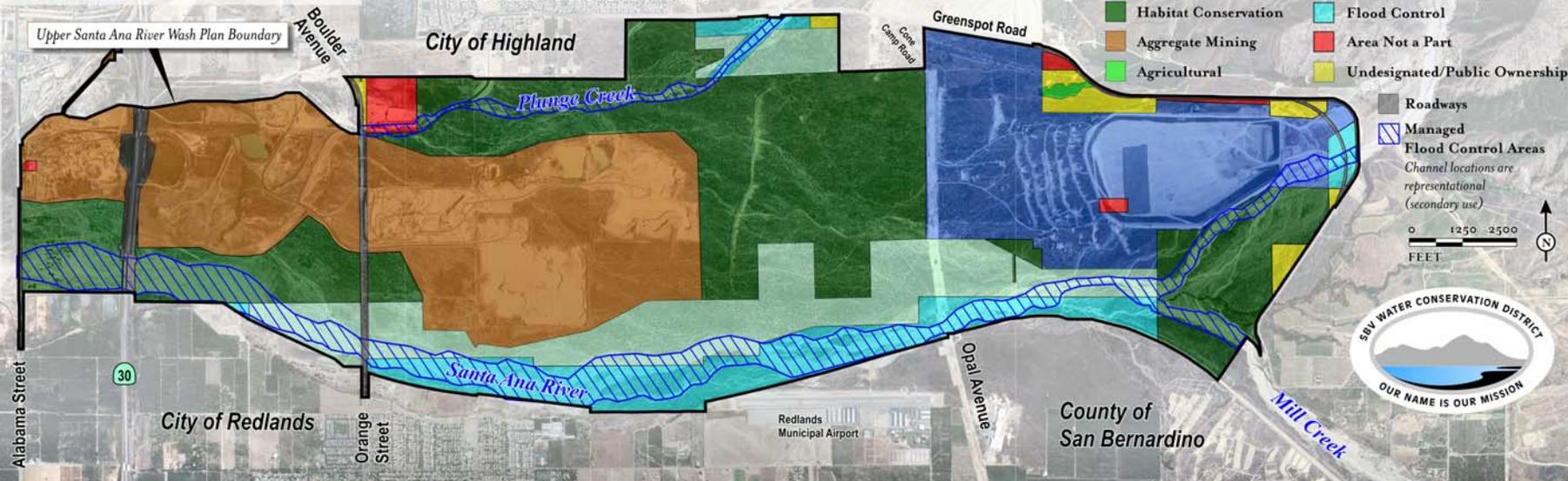
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan for the Upper Santa Ana River Wash area (Wash Plan). The Plan provides for the coordination and accommodation of existing and anticipated future activities in the Wash Planning Area. The Plan is a multifaceted, multiagency, and multiproperty owner project consisting of the following components:

- Continuation of existing water conservation facilities, expansion of new facilities when consistent with habitat conservation, and continuation of water supply production and maintenance activities by public water purveyors;
- Consolidation of mining ownership and leased area while permitting future expansion of two existing sand and gravel mining operations, and reclamation of mining facilities following extraction activities;
- Creation of a Habitat Conservation Plan that incorporates existing habitat conservation and preservation areas to ensure the preservation of endangered and threatened species while also allowing for water conservation;
- Continuation of a flood management program related to the Santa Ana River and its tributaries;
- Continuation and, in some cases, the expansion of utilities, road rights-of-way, water supply corridors, and facilities;
- Exchange of public land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with land owned by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation district, and an exchange between Robertson's Ready Mix and the San Bernardino County Flood Control District;
- Establishment of a designated trail system that provides a connected network of existing trails and access roads; and
- General Plan Amendments by the City of Highland, for land use and open space, and by the City of Redlands, for open space, that implement the land use components of the Wash Plan to meet state planning and zoning requirements.

PROPOSED LAND USES

Upper Santa Ana River Wash Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan



NECESSARY ACTIONS/PERMITS

AGENCY OR OPERATOR	ACTIONS OR PERMITS
Federal	Actions or Permits
Bureau of Land Management	Approve Land Transfer Amend Resource Management Plan Approve EIS (Record of Decision) Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Authorize right-of-way improvements for Orange Street Authorize water conservation facilities
Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act Review/Permit (Section 7 and 10a) Approve HCP Implementation Agreement
Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit
State of California	Actions or Permits
Regional Water Quality Control Board	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) (mining, construction of water conservation ponds, pipelines, canals, trails and roads)
Department of Fish and Game	California Endangered Species Act Review (Section 2081) 1602 Streambed Alteration (mining) Approve HCP Implementation Agreement
Regional	Actions or Permits
San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District	Certify EIR Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Amend leases with mining companies Grant rights-of-way easements for trails
East Valley Water District	Review Wash Plan for compatibility with Water Master Plan Approve HCP Implementation Agreement
San Bernardino Co.	Actions or Permits
San Bernardino County	Approve of HCP Implementation Agreement
San Bernardino County Flood Control District	Review for compatibility with SBCFCD Plans and Policies Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Approve land exchange with Robertson's Ready Mix
Cities	Actions or Permits
City of Highland	Consider Conditional Use Permits for Mining Operations and Reclamation Plans Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Adopt General Plan Amendments and corresponding zone changes. Increase right-of-way for Alabama Street, Greenspot Road, and Boulder Avenue
City of Redlands	Consider Conditional Use Permits for Mining Operations and Reclamation Plans Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Adopt a General Plan Amendment Increase right-of-way for Orange and Alabama Streets
Mining	Actions or Permits
Cemex Construction Materials, LLP	Obtain Conditional Use Permits and operating permits Approve HCP Implementation Agreement
Robertson's Ready Mix, Ltd.	Obtain Conditional Use Permits and operating permits Approve HCP Implementation Agreement Approve land exchange with SBCFCD

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Four interrelated land uses will take place to describe future land use within the Wash Planning Area. The uses are delineated in the table to the right.

In addition, a small portion (<5%) of the Planning Area provides for other miscellaneous uses such as the continuation of existing utility corridors, the widening of road rights-of-way within the project area, the designation of a recreational trail system, and two land transfers to implement the plan.

Wash Planning Area Land Management Designations:	Estimated Acres:
Aggregate Mining <i>(End Use Potentially Recreation and/or Open Space)</i>	1,195
Habitat Conservation including Woollystar Preservation Area	1,947
Water Conservation <i>(groundwater recharge)</i>	749
Flood Control	408
Misc.	168
TOTAL AREA:	4,467

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact:

San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
1630 W. Redlands Boulevard, Suite A
Redlands, California 92373
(909) 793-2503
info@sbvwcd.dst.ca.us



UPPER SANTA ANA RIVER WASH LAND MANAGEMENT AND HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

INFORMATION BROCHURE

Prepared For:

San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
City of Highland
City of Redlands
City of Redlands Municipal Utilities Department
County of San Bernardino
United States Bureau of Land Management
San Bernardino County Flood Control District
East Valley Water District
Cemex Construction Materials, LLP
Robertson's Ready Mix, Ltd.

Prepared By:

LSA

ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notice of Preparation (NOP)</i> • <i>Notice in Local Newspaper</i> 	<p><i>30-day response period.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scoping</i> 	<p><i>Formal scoping meeting required if project is regionally significant.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)</i> 	<p><i>No time limits for completion.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notice of Completion Filed</i> • <i>Public and Agency Review</i> • <i>State Clearinghouse Review</i> • <i>Public hearing on Draft EIR</i> 	<p><i>Minimum 45-day public review period.</i></p> <p><i>Optional</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Response to Comments on Draft EIR</i> • <i>Review of Responses by Commenting Agencies</i> 	<p><i>No review period of Final EIR required.</i></p> <p><i>Responses sent to commenting agencies 10 days before decision.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notice of Determination (NOD)</i> • <i>Findings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mitigated Impacts</i> - <i>Statement of Overriding Considerations</i> • <i>Mitigation Reporting and Monitoring Program adopted</i> 	<p><i>Notice of Determination filed within 5 days after certification.</i></p> <p><i>Findings must explain whether each impact has been mitigated and, if not, a Statement of Overriding Considerations must be prepared.</i></p>

Public Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report

Where do I fit into the environmental process on the Upper Santa Ana River Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan and how can I make my concerns known?

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There are many steps in the environmental process that allow for public input. Below is a list of steps that you can take to become active in the environmental process. This is a public process and everyone is encouraged to participate.

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Step 1	NOP	<p>The Notice of Preparation (NOP) to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was issued by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (Water District) on April 26, 2004.</p> <p>This is the time the Water District seeks public input as to what issues should be analyzed in the EIR as they pertain to the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan. Comments on the NOP were accepted until June 11, 2004.</p>
Step 2	Public Scoping Meeting	<p>During the public review period on the NOP, the Water District hosted two Public Scoping Meetings on May 12 and May 19, 2004. A copy of the NOP was available at these meetings. These meetings provided an opportunity to learn more about the Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan.</p>
Step 3	Draft EIR	<p>After the public scoping period is complete on the EIR, the Water District began the preparation of the Draft EIR. In preparing the Draft EIR, all written public comments on the NOP were taken into account. If you prepared a written comment, it will appear in the appendices to the EIR.</p> <p>The Draft EIR will be circulated for a 60-day public review period. During this time period, the documents are available for the public and agencies to review and provide written comment. This public review period will in mid-March to mid-May 2008. A Notice of Availability (NOA) will be published in the local newspaper identifying where the document can be viewed, the timeframe for the public review period, and where written comments are to be sent. This is another opportunity for you to provide the Water District with written comments on the content of the Draft EIR.</p>
Step 4	Additional Public Information	<p>During the public review period on the Draft EIR, requests for additional public information on the Wash Plan and Draft EIR can be made by contacting the Water District via the internet at www.info@sbvwcd.dst.ca.us or by telephone at (909) 793-2503.</p>
Step 5	Final EIR	<p>After the close of the public comment period on the Draft EIR, the Water District will compile all the written comments received during the public review of the Draft EIR and respond to those comments in writing. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not require public notice and review of the Final EIR. CEQA requires that those public agencies who responded to the Draft EIR receive a copy of the responses to their comments 10 days prior to the certification of the EIR. In the case of the Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan EIR, the final environmental document will be circulated to the public for 30 days prior to certification.</p>