



Challenges Facing the District

Groundwater Levels

Managing groundwater levels in the Bunker Hill Basin poses a particular challenge to the ***San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District***.

Groundwater in this basin tends to flow from the east to the west. During dry years, when recharge of the basin decreases, this flow magnifies the effects of pumping at the east end of the valley, and groundwater levels can drop precipitously. District recharge in this area becomes critical as a result of this outcome.

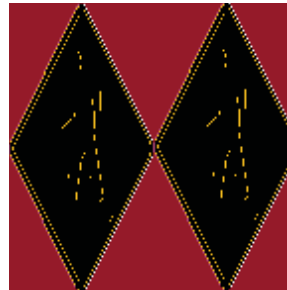
At the same time, groundwater pools behind the San Jacinto Fault to the west – a natural barrier to groundwater flow – and rises up beneath the City of San Bernardino in an area called the Pressure Zone. Sustainable groundwater levels in the basin require recharge in the east and additional pumping in the west.

The District is participating in a multi-agency program called the Pilot Dewatering Project, designed to pump low-quality water out of the Pressure Zone and send it downstream. Such efforts allow the District to continue recharging the basin with high-quality native water – benefiting both water supply and water quality in the region.

Endangered Species and the Environment

The Upper Santa Ana River Wash – the area in which the District operates – is home to several endangered species. The Endangered Species Act requires these species be protected from harm. Additionally, the California Environmental Quality Act requires the district to give “major consideration to preventing environmental damage.”

The District recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the environment. The District also recognizes similar obligations to the people of this region to continue its important water conservation duties.



These commitments meet in the District with relatively low-impact operations, in which the District’s facilities coexist with – and at times enhance – the surrounding habitat. Planning efforts are under way on a Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan designed to balance the various needs of the Wash, with a particular emphasis placed on habitat conservation.