APPLICATION

WaterSMART Environmental Water Resources Projects for FY 2022

Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

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Proposal Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Appendices

List of Acronyms

AF	Acre-feet
AFY	Acre-feet per year
Alliance	Upper Santa River Sustainable Resources Alliance
BO	Biological Opinion
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
Conservation District	San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ESA	Endangered Species Act
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
IRWM Plan	Integrated Reginal Water Management Plan
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
MHI	Median Household Income
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OWOW	One Water One Watershed
RCA	Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
RCFC&WCD	Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
RCRCD	Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation

SARCCUP	Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program
SAWPA	Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority
SCC	California species of special concern
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
US	United States
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Valley District	San Bernardino Valley Water Municipal Water District
Western	Western Municipal Water District
WRC MSHCP	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

Technical Proposal and Evaluation Criteria

1.1 Executive Summary

Date:	December 9, 2021
Applicant:	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
Applicant City, County, State:	San Bernardino, San Bernardino County, California
Applicant Category:	Category A
Project Name:	Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

Executive Summary

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) is a water district (Category A applicant) working on behalf of the 11 cooperating agencies that are working to implement the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan. The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is the first habitat restoration project to be implemented in the framework of the multi-agency, watershed-wide cooperative venture. The Project will take place within the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed, in approximately 144 acres surrounding Anza Creek, a tributary of the Santa Ana River, bordered by the Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park to the west, the Santa Ana River floodplain to the north, the Santa Ana River Trail to the south, and Rubidoux Avenue to the east (see Figure 1 below). The project consists of the creation and restoration of habitat for benefit of the threatened Santa Ana sucker in Anza Creek, a tributary to the Santa Ana River. Work will include constructing 1,107 linear feet of new stream channel, enhancing 2,322 linear feet of the existing Anza Creek with gravel and habitat structures, creating 1.1 acres of new floodplain bench, non-native plant removal, and site revegetation. The project is ready to proceed once funding is secured. Valley District completed environmental analysis and review under the California Environmental Quality Act in November 2019. Final design plans and habitat improvement plans were completed in September 2021. All necessary permits have been applied for and are expected to be acquired by March 2022.

1.2 Project Location

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is a component of the Santa Ana River Conservation and Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). The Project will take place within the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed, along the Santa Ana River south floodplain, approximately 2 miles downstream of Mount Rubidoux in the City of Riverside and in unincorporated Riverside County, California. The project's latitude is 33° 57' 57.9594" and the project's longitude is -117° 25' 20.3088". The project area is approximately 144 acres surrounding Anza Creek, a tributary of the Santa Ana River. The area is bordered by the Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park to the west, the Santa Ana River floodplain to the north, the Santa Ana River Trail to the south, and Rubidoux Avenue to the east. Figure 1 provides a detail of the project location and vicinity, Figures 2 and 3 provide more detail on the location of Project actions.

1.3 Technical Project Description

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project (Project) will be one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader SARCCUP. SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for the benefit of native species populations. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole. SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP covers over 850,000 acres of the upper Santa Ana River watershed in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new water capture projects that would add 87,000 acre-feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with water capture projects. In an effort to speed up the HCP development and approval process, Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation even before the HCP was complete, a principle called "advanced mitigation". The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the Project is to increase the abundance of Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*; listed as Federally Threatened), increase the quantity and distribution of habitat suitable for Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), that the HCP's conservation strategies are biologically sound, can be implemented, and demonstrate measurable species benefits.

Figure 1 Project Location and Vicinity Map

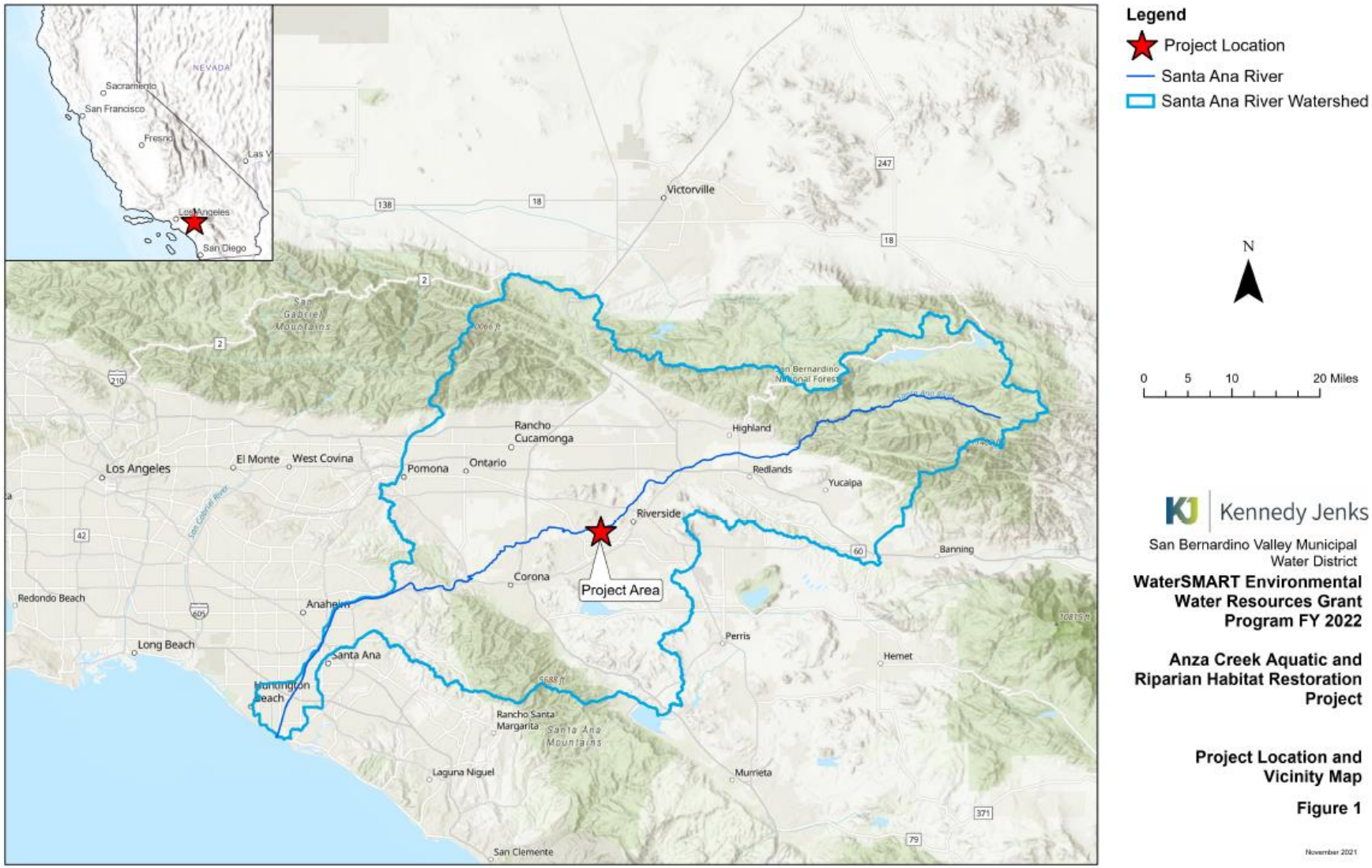
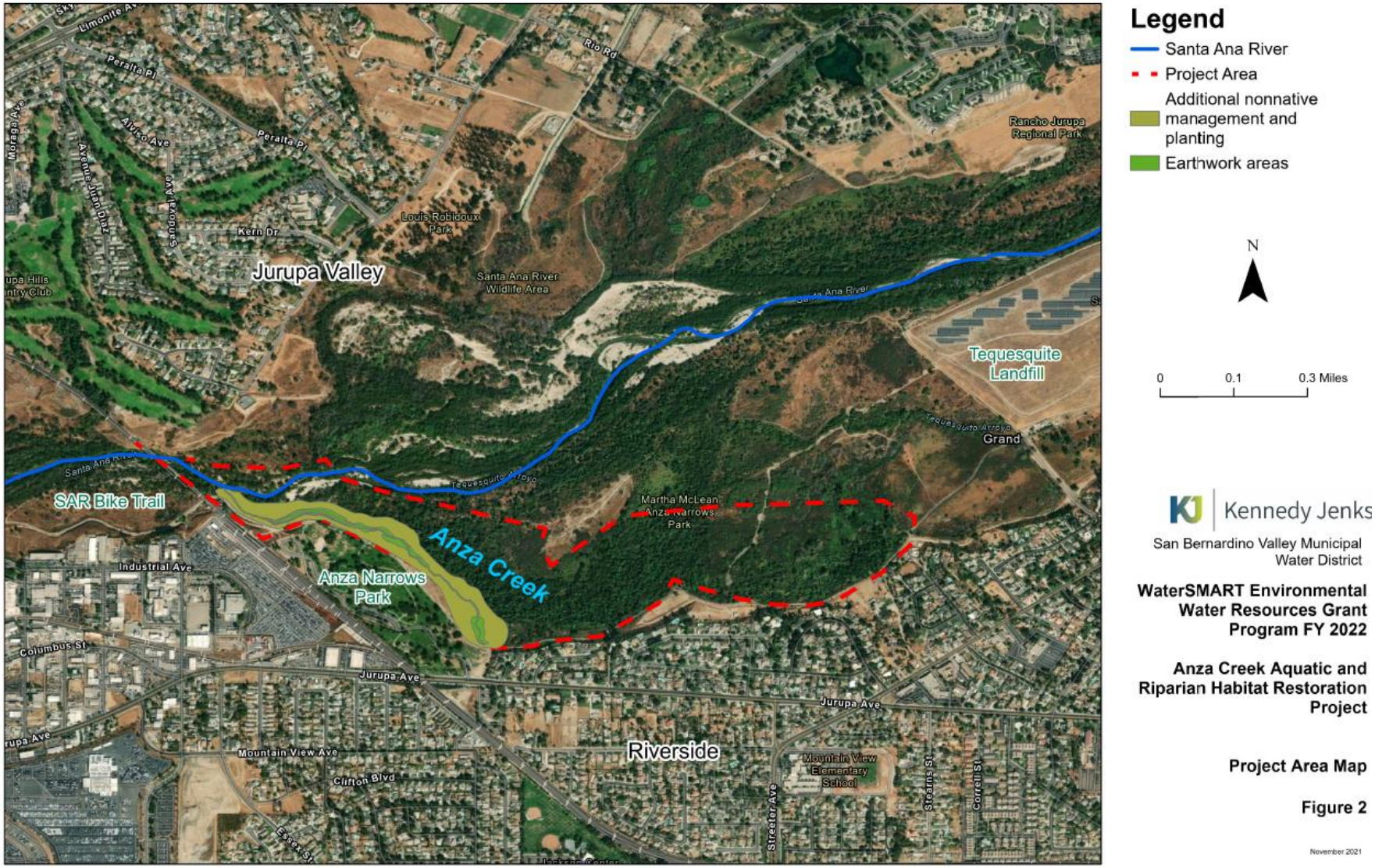


Figure 2 - Project Area Map



All activities, benefits, and cost described within this application focus only on the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

1.3.1 Completed Tasks

Site Characterization and Site Selection

Valley District, on behalf of the HCP, evaluated preliminary restoration designs for multiple tributaries in the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed. Sites were chosen through preliminary work performed by staff with the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District (RCRCD), who were directly familiar with the site's existing conditions and enhancement opportunities, and discussions amongst the RCRCD, Valley District, CDFW, and the USFWS. The Anza Creek site was selected because it had key attributes that made it a strong candidate for enhancement and for the potential to provide new Santa Ana sucker habitat, including large tracts of undeveloped land and tributaries with direct connections to the mainstem Santa Ana River. The Anza Creek site will provide opportunities for Santa Ana sucker migration from the mainstem river into new creek habitat where there is refugia and hydrology independent of mainstem river flows. An outcome of the site selection process was an initial description of site characteristics as well as preliminary designs and cost estimates for features that would restore, enhance, and/or establish Santa Ana sucker habitat. This is documented in the *Site Characteristics and Preliminary Design of Santa Ana River Tributary Restoration Projects (2015).*

Documentation of Existing Site Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

The *Opportunities and Constraints for Tributary Restoration Sites Report* (2018), documented the baseline conditions at four proposed project sites (including Anza Creek) and identified opportunities and constraints for restoring, enhancing and/or establishing ecological features that would benefit threatened/endangered species (in addition to Santa Ana sucker), as well as other aquatic resources. The identification of restoration opportunities utilized a top-down approach beginning with a high-level evaluation of ecological conditions to identify restoration opportunities within the existing land use constraints. Historical ecology and current site conditions were considered when identifying opportunities.

Environmental Analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act

The potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts were evaluated in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Final EIR was adopted by the Valley District Board of Directors on November 19, 2019.

Permitting

Restoration of Anza Creek will require multiple permits. Applications for all needed permits have been completed and the following permits have been received:

- Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification – the project has received this from the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement – the project has received this permit from the CDFW
- Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation – A Biological Opinion (BO) has been issued for the Anza Creek Project (FWS-WRIV-21B0107-21F0423, issued May 5, 2021). The BO provides the necessary incidental take authorizations for the Project. The BO states that the Project may affect the federally endangered Least Bell's Vireo and federally threatened Santa Ana sucker but concluded that the project was "not likely to result in jeopardy" for either species.

Final Design and Habitat Improvement Plans

The restoration design for Anza Creek was completed in September 2021.

Prequalification of Bidders

In September 2021 Valley District released a Prequalification Package so as to prequalify bidders for the Anza Creek Project.

Permits that are still in progress are described in the section below.

1.3.2 Outstanding Project Tasks

Task 1: Project Management, Administration and Reporting

Project management will be provided by appropriate Valley District staff to ensure successful project implementation. Activities will include administrative project oversight, securing contracts, managing consultants, and conducting progress meetings to ensure appropriate progress and completion within budget and on schedule. Upon receipt of the grant award and for the duration of the grant agreement, grant administration will also be performed including activities to execute the grant agreement, ensure compliance with grant requirements, prepare, and submit regular invoice and performance report materials, and regular coordination with the grant manager, as necessary. A grant administration consultant will be considered for this task.

Task 2: Environmental Documentation - NEPA

It is understood that all projects being considered for award funding will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) before any ground-disturbing activity may begin. NEPA review will be completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) during Clean Water Act Section 404 permitting, which is anticipated to be complete by early 2022.

Task 3: Outstanding Permitting

This task includes acquisition of necessary permits for the project, which will be acquired prior to the start of construction by the selected contractor and Valley District. As described above many permits have already been acquired but the following permits are in progress:

- Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit from the USACE. This permit is anticipated by early 2022, no later than March 2022.
- National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Consultation – this is being handled by the USACE as part of the 404 permitting process.
- Approved Letter of FEMA Non-Rise Certification from the Federal Emergency Management Agency/local Agency, i.e., Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD). This certification will be issued once the Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit is issued by the USACE and is anticipated by early 2022.
- RCFC&WCD Encroachment Permit. This permit will be issued once the Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit is issued by the USACE and is anticipated by early 2022.

Task 4: Construction

Construction Contracting and Bidding

As described above Valley District has performed a pre-qualification of bidders for the Anza Creek Project. Upon completion of that process, and once funding is secured, Valley District will conduct a competitive bidding process among the pre-qualified contractors, in accordance with standard procedures and Public Contract Code. The selected contractor will perform construction according to final design plans and specifications.

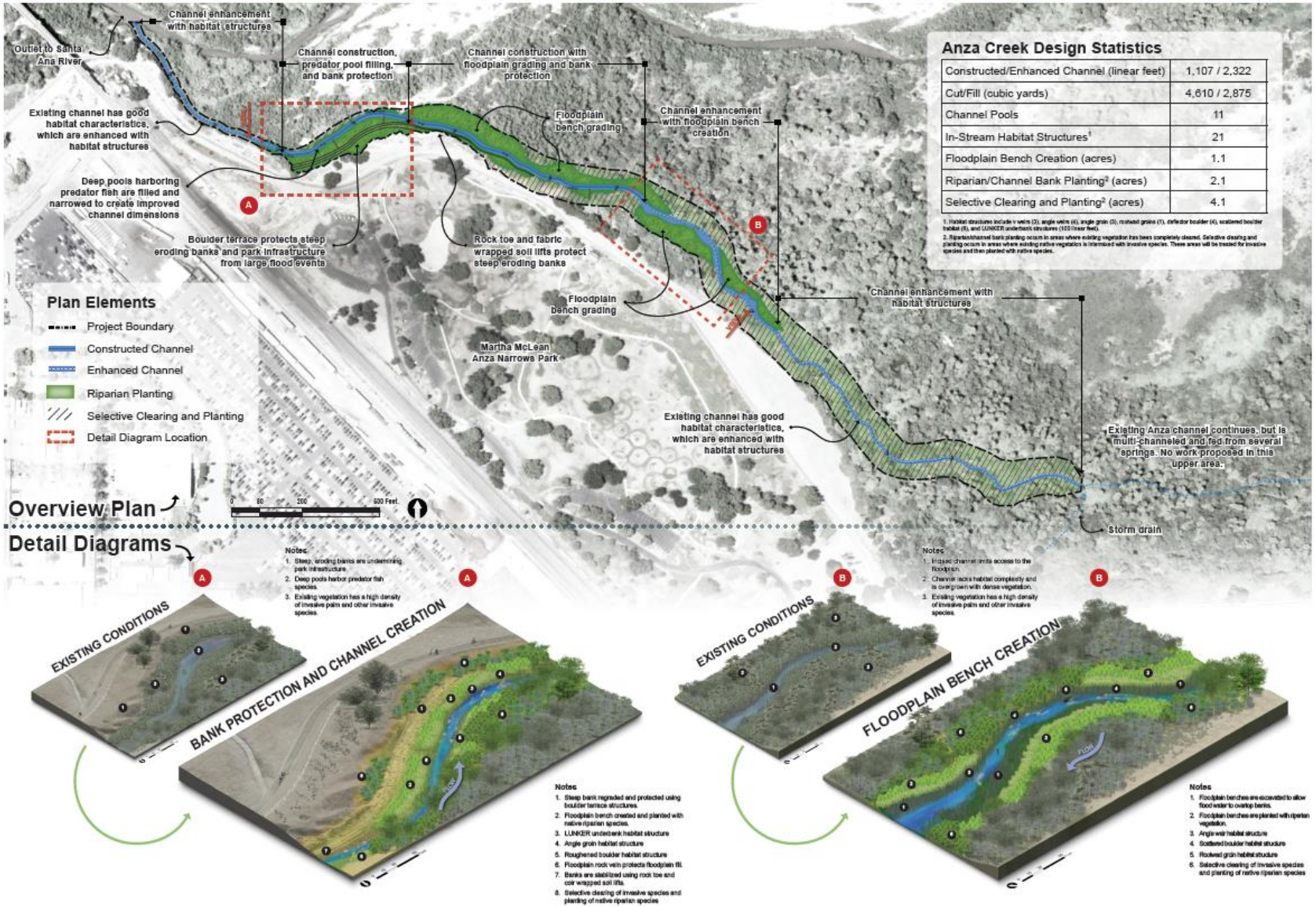
Site Preparation

Site preparation will consist of establishing site access, including a temporary bridge to allow construction equipment to cross Anza Creek, implementing a traffic control plan, preparing, and implementing the provisions of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). This will be followed by a tree survey and non-native plant removal, clearing, and grubbing, hazardous soil removal, and any water diversion needed ahead of construction. Some of the removed trees will be salvaged to create in-river habitat structures.

Earthwork

Earthwork will include channel and floodplain excavation, and placement of gravel and woody material. As shown in Figure 3, approximately 1,107 linear feet of new constructed channel and 2,322 liner feet of the existing Anza Creek channel would be enhanced by adding gravel to new riffle sections that would have sufficient

Figure 3 Anza Creek Restoration Detail



flow velocities to maintain suitable coarse substrate for Santa Ana sucker habitat. One instream rock and woody material habitat structure would be constructed approximately every 200 feet of channel to aid in diversifying hydraulic conditions that would create and sustain habitat complexity. The result of this earthwork will be 1.1 acres of stream channel creation and enhancement.

Anza Creek has several reaches where the channel is confined by steep and tall banks with little to no floodplain connectivity. Approximately 1.1 acres of new floodplain bench would be created, spread out over five different areas, by excavating the high ground adjacent to the low-flow channel. The typical width of the inset floodplain areas would be 20–40 feet, and the average excavation depth would be 2–3 feet.

The narrow and heavily vegetated reach of the Anza Creek channel near the confluence with the Santa Ana River will be enhanced by clearing out the cattails (Typha spp.) and reconfiguring the channel topography. This will be done to improve flow into the Santa Ana River to support sufficient flow velocities to maintain a coarse substrate suitable for Santa Ana sucker in the Anza Creek channel upstream of its confluence with the Santa Ana River. An existing deep pool, about 150 feet long and several feet deep, located at the base of the eroding bank, at the confluence of Anza Creek and the Santa Ana River, currently provides habitat for bass and other nonnative fishes that prey upon Santa Ana sucker attempting to migrate up Anza Creek. This pool will be re-contoured to reduce its width and depth to eliminate suitable habitat for nonnative predatory fishes and increase habitat for Santa Ana sucker.

A 580-foot-long section of Anza Creek's left bank adjacent to the bicycle trail at Martha-McLean-Anza Narrows Park is steep, unvegetated, up to 25 feet tall, and actively eroding into Anza Creek. The bank would be excavated to reduce its steepness, and 0.8 acres would be revegetated with a mixture of native riparian plants near the base and coastal scrub in the upland portion.

Creation of Habitat Structures

Several different types of in-channel structures will be constructed to create habitat for Santa Ana sucker and other native fish. Habitat structure construction will include both wood and rock materials. A key objective of the structures is to provide cover and diversify flow depths, flow velocities, and substrate texture to create different habitat types for all fish life stages.

Vegetation Restoration

Irrigation equipment will be added to support the revegetated areas. The area where the Anza Creek bank is contoured to avoid erosion will be revegetated with a mixture of riparian plants near the base and coastal scrub in the upland portion. An additional 2.1 acres of coastal scrub would be planted upstream of the eroding bank in an unvegetated and sloping area of the site between the bicycle trail and the Anza Creek channel. Approximately 4.1 acres of the land adjacent to the new and improved channel

will have selective clearing of non-native species and planting with appropriate native plants.

An additional 7.43 acres in the broader Anza Creek area (Figure 2), selective removal of nonnative plants will occur, followed by native riparian planting.

Prepare Site for In Perpetuity Management

Following construction, fencing (and potentially other barriers) will be installed at strategic locations to protect the restoration site and to prevent the establishment of homeless encampments in the restored area. Signage describing the project purpose and benefits will be added at the interface of the project site and the Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park and Santa Ana River Trail.

The period after "Prepare Site for In Perpetuity Management" is not a part of the requested grant project but is described herein to illustrate how the project will have long-term benefits. Valley District is already funding two Park Ranger positions to patrol the site and one Park Operation position to assist with land management. These positions will continue to be funded by Valley District after project construction. After construction, there will be a 5-year plant establishment period. During this interim management period, Valley District will monitor plant health and replace plantings that fail to thrive. After the 5-year plant establishment period, the site will be evaluated and approved by the resource agencies and the expectation is that the site will be maintained in its approved state for the 50-year term of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, at a minimum. The health of the Santa Ana sucker and the quality of the restored habitat will be a factor in the future permitting of water projects planned under the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. Maintaining the site and ensuring long-term conservation value is a requirement of the HCP and associated permitting. A conservation easement will be recorded over the Anza Creek restoration area.

In summary, construction/restoration will result in:

- 1,107 linear feet of constructed channel
- 2,322 linear feet of existing channel enhanced
- 1.1 acres of stream channel creation and enhancement
- 1.1 acres new floodplain bench created
- 580 feet of bank recontoured and revegetated to avoid erosion
- 4.1 acres nonnative riparian plant management and native riparian planting adjacent to the construction area (see Figure 3)
- 7.43 acres nonnative riparian plant management and native riparian planting in the Anza Creek area (see Figure 2)

The restored sections of creek will, when combined, create a wetted tributary of 6,850 linear feet supporting habitat suitable for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker.

1.4 Performance Measures

Performance measures that will be used to quantify actual benefits upon completion of the project is described in Section 1.5.5 of this application:

1.5 Evaluation Criteria

1.5.1 Evaluation Criterion A – Project Benefits

1.5.1.1 Sub-Criterion A.1 – Benefits to Ecological Values

- *Please explain how the project will **benefit ecological values that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management**, including benefits to plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems that are supported by rivers, streams, and other water sources, or that are directly influenced by water resources management.*
    - *In your response, please identify the specific ecological values benefitted and how those ecological values depend on, or are influenced by, water resources or water resources management.*
    - *Please also explain whether the project will increase water supply reliability for ecological values by improving the timing or quantity of water available; improving water quality and temperature; or improving stream or riparian conditions for the benefit of plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems, or through similar approaches.*

The project will create an additional 3,429 linear feet of stream channel supporting suitable habitat for the Santa Ana sucker, a fish listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act. Additional benefits to state and federally listed and sensitive wildlife species will be realized through the creation and native planting of 1.1 acres of new floodplain habitat, and the rehabilitation of approximately 114 acres of riparian habitat (achieved via removal and management of nonnative plant species and planting with native riparian plant species). The habitat creation and restoration actions will provide additional suitable nesting and foraging habitat for riparian bird species including the least Bell's vireo (state and federally threatened), and yellow-breasted chat, and yellow warbler (both California species of special concern). The benefits of the Project have been quantified based on current site mapping, including evaluation of suitable habitat by qualified biologists compared to the conditions that will exist post-construction. The benefits have been reviewed and confirmed in coordination with the USFWS and CDFW during consultation for the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan and associated permitting. Additional details on the ecological benefits are detailed in the response to Evaluation Criteria A.2.

- *If the project will benefit multiple water uses (i.e., benefits to ecological values AND benefits to other water uses, e.g., municipal, agricultural, or tribal water uses), please explain how the project benefits other water uses.*

As described earlier, the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader SARCCUP. The Project is being done ahead of implementation of the Upper

Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan which covers over 850,000 acres of the upper Santa Ana River Watershed in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new water capture projects that would add 87,000 acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies. The 11 cooperating agencies include:

- City of Rialto
- City of Riverside Public Utilities
- East Valley Water District
- Inland Empire Utilities Agency
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- Orange County Water District
- San Bernardino Municipal Water District
- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
- San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
- West Valley Water District
- Western Municipal Water District

1.6.1.2 Sub-Criterion A.2 – Quantification of Specific Project Benefits by Project Type

Explain the extent of project benefits. Please respond to the following questions for each project type included in your application (i.e., please only respond to the section(s) of this subcriterion that are relevant to your project).

Project benefits for water efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings or improved water management – and which increase water supply reliability for ecological values.

The project is not a water efficiency project.

Project Benefits for Drought Resiliency Projects Related to Fish and Wildlife

The Climate Change Analysis for the Santa Ana River Watershed, prepared as part of the Santa Ana Watershed Basin Study, highlights potential implications of climate change, including prolonged drought conditions, for the Santa Ana River Watershed, which is where Anza Creek is located. The Basin Study concluded that under projected future climate conditions, warmer temperatures will likely cause a decrease in riparian habitat. Drought in the portion of the Santa Ana Watershed benefited by the project means decreased wetted stream area, which leads to isolated and fragmented habitat for the Santa Ana sucker. The project will create new stream channel and floodplain habitat beyond that which currently exists, as well as hydraulic connection between Anza Creek and the Santa Ana River. The newly created stream habitat will provide important refuge for native fish species (including Santa Ana sucker and arroyo chub, a

California species of special concern [SSC]) during periods of drought. With the connection between Anza Creek and the Santa Ana River, drought is less likely to lead to isolated and fragmented habitat. The created aquatic habitat will also benefit semi-aquatic species, such as the southwestern pond turtle and south coast garter snake (both SSC), and the enhancement of riparian habitat will benefit state and federally listed and SSC riparian bird species including least Bell's vireo, and yellow-breasted chat and yellow warbler.

Project Benefits for Watershed Management Projects

- *If the project will result in long-term improvements to water quality (e.g., decrease sediment or nutrient pollution, improve water temperature, or mitigate impacts from floods or droughts) please explain the extent of those benefits (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent). Please estimate expected project benefits to water quality and provide documentation and support for the estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined.*

Water quality benefits have not been explicitly quantified but are expected given current site conditions. The lowermost 600 feet of the Anza Creeks channel's bank are lined with rip-rap, with some sections grouted in concrete. This section of bank parallels the Santa Ana River Trail Bike Path and was constructed to protect against future erosion from the Santa Ana River. Approximately 800 feet upstream of the confluence with the Santa Ana River, Anza Creek's bank that adjoins Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park exhibits extensive erosion. The section of fine-grained eroding and largely unvegetated bank is about 580 feet long with typical bank heights of 10 feet. A deep pool about 150 feet long and several feet deep is located at the base of the eroding bank. The tall, steep, and eroding bank would be recontoured as part of the Project to reduce the bank steepness and its susceptibility to continued erosion. The large and deep pool would be recontoured to provide habitat conditions to support Santa Ana sucker and reduce habitat for nonnative aquatic predators. Additional areas of floodplain would be created along sections of Anza Creek that would further increase floodplain connectivity and opportunities for flood flow to spread out rather than being confined to the channel and resulting in erosion. The addition of fencing at select locations will exclude homeless encampments and limit the trash and human refuse that currently enters the waterway and impairs habitat. Long-term management of the Project site will also include in-perpetuity management of trash and debris, and protection of the site against unauthorized activities to ensure the long-term conservation value of Anza Creek for the benefit of native species, in particular Santa Ana sucker.

- *If the project will benefit aquatic or riparian ecosystems within the watershed (e.g., by reducing flood risk, reducing bank erosion, increasing biodiversity, or preserving native species), please explain the extent of those benefits (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent). Please estimate expected project benefits to ecosystems and provide documentation and support for this estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined.*

The project will create an additional 3,429 linear feet of stream channel supporting suitable habitat for Santa Ana sucker, a fish listed as threatened under the Federal

Endangered Species Act. In addition to proving habitat benefits to Santa Ana sucker the project will provide habitat for other native aquatic and semi-aquatic species including the arroyo chub (a native fish), and the southwestern pond turtle, and south coast garter snake (all California SSCs). The creation of 1.1 acres of new floodplain habitat, and the restoration of approximately 11.4 acres of riparian habitat will benefit the state and federally-list as endangered least Bell's vireo and California SSC yellow-breasted chat and yellow warbler. In-perpetuity monitoring and management, as well as permanent preservation of the site (via the recordation of a conservation easement) will ensure that the long-term conservation values of the created and enhanced habitat will be maintained.

The anticipated benefits of the project have been quantified based on current site mapping, including evaluation of suitable habitat by qualified biologists compared to the conditions that will exist post-construction. These benefits have been reviewed and confirmed in coordination with the USFWS and CDFW during consultation for the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan and associated permitting.

- *If the project will benefit species and habitats, please describe the species and/or type of habitat that will benefit and the status of the species or habitat (e.g., native species, game species, federally threatened or endangered, state listed, or designated critical habitat). Please describe the extent (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent) to which the project will benefit the species or habitat, including an estimate of expected project benefits and documentation and support for the estimate.*

To understand project benefits it is necessary to understand the habitat needs of the Santa Ana sucker. In the 1970s the Santa Ana sucker was considered a common fish, but since that time the species has lost almost 95% of its historic habitat. The Santa Ana sucker is native to the Los Angeles and Santa Ana River basins in southern California. Today the species is restricted to three geographically separate populations in three different stream systems: the lower and middle Santa Ana River; east, west, and north forks of the San Gabriel River; and the lower Big Tujunga Creek. Santa Ana sucker was listed as a threatened species by the USFWS in 2014. Within the *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for the Santa Ana Sucker (Catostomus santaanae)* (2005), the USFWS determined that the conservation of the Santa Ana sucker was dependent on the conservation and management of habitat, including the following necessary habitat elements:

1. A functioning hydrological system that experiences peaks and ebbs in the water volume reflecting seasonal variation in precipitation throughout the year;
2. A mosaic of loose sand, gravel, cobble, and boulder substrates in a series of riffles, runs, pools, and shallow sandy stream margins;
3. Water depths greater than 3 cm and bottom water velocities greater than 0.03 m per second;
4. Non-turbid water or only seasonally turbid water;

5. Water temperatures less than 30 degrees C (86 degrees F); and
6. Stream habitat that includes algae, aquatic emergent vegetation, macroinvertebrates, and riparian vegetation.

Santa Ana suckers live in the shallow portions of flashy rivers and streams where currents range from swift in the canyons to sluggish in the bottomlands. During times of deluge and flooding, the fish seek refuge in backwater eddies and other less turbulent areas. Once flooding recedes, they move back into the mainstem of these mostly quiet rivers. Preferred substrates are generally coarse and consist of gravel, rubble, and boulders with growths of algae. The Santa Ana sucker feeds almost entirely on algae, eating only a very small amount of insect larvae and detritus.

As currently configured, Anza Creek consists of fragmented stream reaches hydrologically disconnected to the Santa Ana River, and the channel lacks the requisite geometry, substrate, and shading needed to facilitate cool water temperatures and in-stream habitat conditions preferred by the species. The proposed project will create a continuous wetted tributary of 6,850 linear feet, hydrologically connected to the Santa Ana River, that includes the requisite habitat elements required to support the species, thereby increasing the quantity, and quality, of habitat suitable for the species within the Santa Ana River.

The specific actions proposed in this Project to benefit the Santa Ana sucker will also benefit other native aquatic, semi-aquatic, and riparian species, including the Arroyo Chub (SSC), Southwestern Pond Turtle (SSC), Two-Striped Garter Snake (SSC), South Coast Garter Snake (SSC), Least Bell's Vireo (state and federally listed as Endangered), Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (state and federally listed as Endangered), Yellow-Breasted Chat (SSC), and Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo (federally threatened and state endangered), see table below.

- *Are there project benefits not addressed in the preceding questions? If so, what are these benefits?*

As described above one of the benefits of the Project is to prove the value of coordinating water resources and environmental protection. The Project is the result of extensive regional planning and has broad benefits in addition to the water supply and habitat creation described above. The Project will result in the following direct benefits:

- Reduced risk of wildfire. The Project will reduce the risk of wildfire through the reduction of hazardous fuels, such as non-native trees and dead trees. The non-native species and dry brush alter fuel bed characteristics and increase the susceptibility of wildfire in the Santa Ana River floodplain. Removing the non-native vegetation helps decrease the risk of wildfire.

- Carbon sequestration (detailed below). Restoration of riparian and stream areas will facilitate the sequestration of carbon. Revegetation of riparian plant species and woody plant species will sequester carbon and nitrogen in the soil and woody biomass. As plants mature carbon sequestration also improves.

- Improve the ability to meet Western Riverside County Multispecies HCP (WRC MSHCP) objectives. The WRC MSHCP was developed over 20 years ago and encompasses an area of approximately 1.26 million acres. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP overlaps with the Planning Area of the WRC MSHCP. All of the Covered Species of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP are a Covered Species under the WRC MSHCP, consequently, habitat improvement projects implemented under the Upper Santa Ana River HCP will benefit the WRC MSHCP. Furthermore, work done for the Project on existing conditions and the habitat conditions needed for Santa Ana sucker and other species, will improve the science in the WRC MSHCP. In addition, the preservation of species by the Project will help achieve the conservation goals of both the Upper Santa Ana River HCP and WRC MSHCP, specifically goals for:
    - Wetland habitat
    - Riparian habitat
    - Non-native plant management
    - Santa Ana sucker
    - Arroyo chub
    - Least Bell's vireo
    - Southwestern willow flycatcher
    - Western yellow-billed cuckoo
    - Western pond turtle

Restoration Opportunities	Santa Ana Sucker	Arroyo Chub	Western Pond Turtle	Two-Striped Garter Snake	Least Bell's Vireo	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Yellow-Breasted Chat	Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo
Benefits to Santa Ana sucker and Associated Resources	x	x	x	x				
Rehabilitate Existing Channel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establish New Floodplain	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Reconfigure Channel near Confluence with Santa Ana River	x	x	x	x				
Construct Rock and Woody Debris Structures	x	x	x	x				
Recontour Deep Pool	x	x	x	x				

Source: Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration and Mitigation Reserve Program Draft Environmental Impact Report, updated by Valley District Biological Resources Department, 2021.

Project benefits for multi-benefits projects: If applicable, please describe the extent to which the project will benefit multiple water uses. Please do not repeat information included in your prior responses.

- *Please describe the extent to which the project will benefit agricultural, municipal, tribal, or recreation uses? Please explain how your estimate of benefits to multiple uses was calculated and provide support for your response.*
- *Will the project reduce water conflicts within the watershed?*

The Project will not directly benefit agricultural, municipal, or tribal uses, but does have substantial water supply benefits. The Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader SARCCUP. As described earlier, SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for the benefit of native species. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole. The Project is being done in support of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. The HCP covers over 850,000 acres of the upper Santa Ana River watershed in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new water capture projects that would add 87,000 acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies. The 11 cooperating agencies include:

- City of Rialto
- City of Riverside Public Utilities
- East Valley Water District
- Inland Empire Utilities Agency
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- Orange County Water District
- San Bernardino Municipal Water Department
- San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
- San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
- West Valley Water District
- Western Municipal Water District

These entities are primarily municipal water districts. The San Manual Band of Mission Indians reservation would benefit from the water supply protected by the project. The Tribe does not operate their own water system, but does receive water through East Valley Water District, a retail water agency within Valley District's service area, and a cooperating agency of the HCP.

The Upper Santa Ana River HCP is an effort by the 11 agencies to avoid water conflicts and to combine efforts to benefit water supply and ecologic values.

- *Will the project provide benefits to other water uses not mentioned above? If so, how and to what extent?*

The project will benefit recreational users of the Santa Ana River, including patrons of Martha McLean-Anza Narrows Park and the Santa Ana Bike Trail by creating a more natural environment that can be experienced within an otherwise heavily urbanized area. The Project will create scenic views of a wetted and shaded stream channel, views of native plants, provide the opportunity to not only learn about native species but to also see the native birds, fish, and turtles in their habitats. The 3,429 feet of created and improved stream channel will provide the sounds and quiet movements of nature as well as a visual break from the adjacent urban noise and stressors.

The Project will benefit long-term water quality. Interim and long-term management and monitoring of the site will include trash and debris removal that will benefit the downstream environment, including downstream users of Santa Ana River water (i.e., Orange County). Benefits will also be realized to the Pacific Ocean.

The Project also reduces fire risk, a benefit to the adjacent homes and businesses, and provides a benefit to downstream water quality (from reduced ash and sedimentation). Removal of nonnative plant species, in particular, the hundreds of nonnative palm trees within the project site will reduce fuel loads and fire risk, benefiting not only adjacent residences but also native plants and wildlife.

1.5.2 Evaluation Criterion B – Collaborative Project Planning

- *Was the proposed project described in your application developed as part of a collaborative process by:*
  - *A watershed group, as defined in Section 6001 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act?*

    Or
  - *A water user and one or more stakeholders with diverse interests (i.e., stakeholders representing different water use sectors such as agriculture, municipal, tribal, recreational, or environmental)?*

The Project was developed as part of a collaborative process between multiple water users and stakeholders with diverse interests in serving municipal, agricultural, tribal, recreational, and environmental water use sectors. The proposed project was developed as part of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, a regional comprehensive program that provides a framework to protect, enhance, and restore habitat for Covered Species in the Upper Santa River Watershed in compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The HCP streamlines planning and permitting for anticipated water resource management projects to serve the needs of the public.

The HCP and its projects were developed by 11 water agencies in the Santa Ana River Watershed. The HCP is supported by Federal, State, and Local agencies, and various local stakeholder groups.

- *Describe the strategy or plan that supports your proposed project.*
    - *When was the plan or strategy prepared and for what purpose?*

The Upper Santa Ana River HCP is a regional, species conservation plan that provides a habitat conservation and restoration framework to improve environmental conditions for plant and wildlife species in the Santa Ana River watershed. Development of the plan began in 2014, in response to legal and environmental issues that prevented local water agencies from taking additional water from the Santa Ana River based on the additional water rights that agencies obtained from the State Water Resources Control Board in 2009. The USFWS concluded that continued water management activities affecting the Upper Santa Ana River and its tributaries by regional water resource agencies would result in the "incidental take" of a listed wildlife species. Therefore, in order to make use of the additional water rights, the water agencies proposed the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan as part of the application for an incidental take permit. The agencies came together to develop a comprehensive water resource management and environmental protection plan to minimize and mitigate habitat loss for 20 species (9 of which are threatened or endangered, and 11 are unlisted) (Covered Species) in the Santa Ana River Watershed. The HCP provides analysis to inform decisions for regulatory agencies to issue incidental take permits through the Federal Endangered Species Act for species that may be affected by projects in a specified permit area. The HCP includes conservation strategies to be implemented within a habitat preserve system to offset adverse effects on the Covered Species and their habitats. The HCP identifies the best ways to avoid, minimize, and offset the impacts of current and proposed water conservation and groundwater recharge projects along the Santa Ana River and its tributaries to protect threatened and endangered species. The HCP identifies multiple habitat restoration and conservation projects to protect the Covered Species, and planning and permitting guidance to implement long-term local water supply resilience for the region.

- *What types of issues are addressed in the plan? For example, does the plan address water quantity issues, water quality issues, and/or issues related to ecosystem health or the health of species and habitat within the watershed?*

The HCP addresses multiple challenges in the Upper Santa River Watershed, including the ongoing modification of the Santa Ana River hydrogeomorphology, reduction of river flows due to water conservation and climate change impacts, alteration of natural habitats, and the long-term effects of these changes on the functional ecology of the watershed, and the native species of the Santa Ana River. The HCP addresses water quantity, water quality, and issues related to ecosystem health of species and habitat within the watershed. Development of the HCP was initiated to help resolve some of these issues through regional collaboration and the identification of projects and actions to offset impacts to species and habitat. The Plan proposes measures to improve

regional water supply reliability, and the partner agencies have committed to conserving, monitoring, and managing species and their habitats in perpetuity.

- *Is one of the purposes of the strategy or plan to increase the reliability of water supply for ecological values?*

Yes. The purpose of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP is to provide a framework to protect, enhance, and restore habitat for Covered Species while streamlining permitting for Covered Activities. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP would achieve conservation goals and objectives of the Endangered Species Act while managing water resource needs for the region. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP identifies Covered Activities that include public infrastructure projects to increase regional water supply reliability. The Permittee Agencies implementing the Covered Activities, have made long-term commitments to conserve, monitor, and manage Covered Species and their habitats. The HCP includes restoration activities and the provision of long-term water supply to restoration sites to safeguard against decreasing mainstem river flows due to regional water conservation efforts, climate change, and drought conditions.

- *Does the project address an adaptation strategy specifically identified in a completed WaterSMART Basin Study or Water Management Options Pilot (e.g., a strategy to mitigate the impacts of water shortages resulting from climate change, drought, increased demands, or other causes)?*

The Climate Change Analysis for the Santa Ana River Watershed, prepared as part of the Santa Ana Watershed Basin Study, highlights potential implications of climate change, including prolonged drought conditions, for the Santa Ana River Watershed, which is where Anza Creek is located. The Basin Study concluded that under projected future climate conditions, warmer temperatures will likely cause a decrease in riparian habitat. The Project is a strategy to mitigate the impacts of climate change on species by protecting, restoring, and enhancing habitat in the Anza Creek stretch of the Santa Ana River floodplain.

- *Was your strategy or plan developed collaboratively?*

Yes. The HCP is being developed collaboratively between 11 water agencies and will be implemented by a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), the Upper Santa River Sustainable Resources Alliance (Alliance). The JPA Agreement is in development by the 11 water agencies and is anticipated to be formed by mid-2022.

- *Who was involved in preparing the plan? Was the plan prepared with input from stakeholders with diverse interests (e.g., water, land, or forest management interests; and agricultural, municipal, tribal, environmental, recreation users)? What was the process used for interested stakeholders to provide input during the planning process?*

The HCP has been developed through a highly collaborative and transparent process involving Federal, State, and local agencies and stakeholder groups. Eleven water agencies that serve diverse interests, including agricultural, municipal, tribal, environmental, and recreation uses within the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties are Permittees to the HCP. Since 2014, the

Permittees, regulatory agencies, and interested stakeholder groups and members of the public have met on a regular basis to share knowledge and expertise and inform development of the HCP. HCP contributors included biological resources, water resources, and engineering staff from each of the permittee agencies, as well as consultants with diverse expertise in Conservation Planning, Fisheries Biology, Wildlife Biology, Botany, Habitat Restoration, Aquatic Resources Permitting, Geographic Information Systems, Technical Editing and Publications Production, Public Communications and Outreach, Graphic Design, and Program Administration. The Plan was prepared with input from outside subject matter experts from public and private sectors with expertise in Native fish rearing and translocation, economists, wetland ecology, fluvial geomorphology, watershed and ecosystem restoration, sediment transport, computational hydrology, hydrology modelling, geology, groundwater and groundwater modeling, biology, aquifer storage and recovery, native species habitats, fire ecology, climate change, and land use and natural resources law. The HCP received additional technical assistance from the USFWS, CDFW, United States Geological Survey Western Ecological Research Center and Water Science Center, the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, the USACE, and the United States Forest Service.

These agencies formed several Advisory Committees to provide input. The Biological Technical Advisory Committee and the Hydrologic Technical Advisory Committee helped inform the foundation of the plan. The Biological Technical Advisory Committee identified the Covered Species for the Plan, provided input on conceptual species models, identified threats and stressors to the species, and developed conservation targets to meet biological goals and objectives. The Hydrologic Technical Advisory Committee provided input for hydrological modeling for the Upper Santa Ana River and its tributary system to estimate the effects of flows on habitats.

In addition, members of the public and other interested agencies helped inform the plan. The HCP implemented a robust public outreach and public participation program. Information and access to the HCP development process was provided through the HCP website (www.uppersarhcp.com). Stakeholders and interested members of the public were invited to participate in public meetings and participate in the Technical Advisory and Stakeholder Committee, provide public comment on draft documents, or to discuss the Upper Santa Ana River HCP.

- *If the plan was prepared by an entity other than the applicant, explain why it is applicable.*

The HCP was prepared by the applicant, who is the Lead Program Agency for the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, along with 10 other water agencies, all Permittees to the HCP, with the assistance of a wide range of consultants. The 11 water agencies are currently developing a JPA the Upper Santa Ana River Sustainable Resources Alliance, that will be responsible for implementation of the HCP. It is anticipated that the JPA will be formed by mid-2022.

- *Describe how the plan or strategy provides support for your proposed project.*

- *Does the proposed project implement a goal or need identified in the plan?*

Yes. The proposed project meets the following goals identified in the plan:

1. Conserve Covered Species and their habitats to contribute to the recovery of listed species or those that may become listed under the ESA;
2. Sustain the ecological processes necessary to maintain the functionality of the natural communities and habitats upon which the Covered Species depend;
3. Maintain and improve habitat connectivity in the HCP Preserve System and to adjacent protected habitat areas to facilitate movement and genetic exchange between populations of Covered Species; and
4. Actively manage lands within the HCP Preserve System to maintain or improve conditions for the benefit of Covered Species.

The Project is designed to mitigate impacts to Covered Species and jurisdictional aquatic resources identified by the Upper Santa Ana River HCP by implementing restoration activities in the Anza Creek Project Area. The project will modify and augment surface flows with the construction of a well-defined channel in the uppermost portion of Anza Creek, to support the Santa Ana sucker, a Covered Species of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. By implementing these restoration activities, Valley District aims to contribute to the recovery of the Santa Ana sucker and restore the ecological processes necessary to improve and maintain its habitat conditions and connectivity.

- *Describe how the proposed project is prioritized in the referenced plan or strategy.*

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is a primary component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP) Tributaries Restoration Project.

The Upper Santa Ana River HCP covers six types of Covered Activities, including habitat enhancement, management, and monitoring that support the restoration and maintenance of habitat values in the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP prioritizes new restoration projects, including Tributary Stream Restoration projects, which includes SARCCUP and the Project. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP considers and prioritizes habitat restoration activities in Anza Creek as a component of the Conservation Strategy that would result in beneficial effects for Covered Species under the HCP, in particular the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker.

1.5.3 Evaluation Criterion C – Stakeholder Support

- *Please describe the level of stakeholder support for the proposed project. Are letters of support from stakeholders provided? Are any stakeholders providing support the project through cost-share contributions, or through other types of contributions to the project?*

The project is supported by and a congruent part of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP has the support of several regional water resources agencies in the Santa Ana River Watershed, with partnership from the USFWS, CDFW, and several other government agencies and stakeholder organizations. Valley District has received support letters from the state, federal, local, and institutional agencies. Letters of support are provided in Appendix A.

- *Please explain whether the project is supported by a diverse set of stakeholders (appropriate given the types of interested stakeholders within the project area and the scale, type, and complexity of the proposed project). For example, is the project supported by entities representing agricultural, municipal, tribal, environmental, or recreation uses?*

The project is supported by a diverse range of stakeholders, many of whom have actively participated in the development of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. As a project identified in the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, the Anza Creek Project was developed with input from multiple stakeholder agencies representing diverse interests that worked together to find habitat management solutions in the Santa Ana River Watershed. Projects included in the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, including the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration Project, were carefully planned, and selected by the stakeholders of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP, and Committee members, who have extensive knowledge of the Watershed's hydrology, ecology, and biology.

- *Is the project supported by entities responsible for the management of land, water, fish and wildlife, recreation, or forestry within the project area? Is the project consistent with the policies of those agencies?*

Yes. The project is supported by entities responsible for the management of land, water, fish and wildlife, recreation, and forestry within the project area. Supporting agencies include the CDFW, USFWS, US Forest Service, United States Geological Survey, and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (the implementing entity for the WRC MSHCP), as well as the 11 water resources agencies, all of whom are Permittees to the HCP. The project is consistent with the policies of those agencies. Letters of support for the Project have been received from CDFW, USFWS, and Western Riverside Regional Conservation Authority (see Appendix A).

- *Will the proposed project complement other ongoing water management activities by state, Federal, or local government entities, non-profits, or individual landowners within the project area? Please describe other relevant efforts, including who is undertaking these efforts and whether they support the proposed project. Explain how the proposed project will avoid duplication of complications of other ongoing efforts.*

Yes. The proposed project will complement other ongoing water management activities by local government entities within the project area under the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project (Project) is the first habitat restoration component to be implemented as part of the broader SARCCUP. SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to

improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species populations. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole. Permitting for SARCCUP necessitated taking a regional approach to protection of species in the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed, particularly aquatic and riparian species, including the threatened Santa Ana sucker. The outcome of the permitting is the Upper Santa Ana HCP. In addition to the agencies participating in SARCCUP, six additional water agencies participated in the Upper Santa Ana HCP. The HCP is in public review and will be finalized in the next several months. The HCP evaluates and provides permitting for 85 new water capture projects that would add 87,000 acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies. The cooperation of the agencies in the Upper Santa Ana River HCP will result in a cooperative effort rather than a duplicative effort to protect aquatic and riparian resources as water resources projects are implemented. Many of the Upper Santa Ana HCP cooperating agencies had an opportunity to prepare a letter of support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, including the City of Riverside Public Utilities, San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, and Western Municipal Water District (see Appendix A).

- *Is the project completely or partially located on Federal land or at a Federal facility? If so, explain whether the agency supports the project, whether the agency will contribute toward the project, and why the Federal agency is not completing the project.*

The project is not located on Federal land or at a Federal facility.

- *Is there opposition to the proposed project? If so, describe the opposition and explain how it will be addressed. Opposition will not necessarily result in fewer points.*

Valley District is not aware of opposition to the proposed project.

1.5.4 Evaluation Criterion D – Readiness to Proceed

- *Describe the implementation plan for the proposed project. Please include an estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates. This may include, but is not limited to, design, environmental and cultural resources compliance, permitting and construction/installation.*

The implementation plan for the proposed project is shown in the schedule below.

Task/Activity Name	Start	Finish
Completed Tasks		
Site Characterization and Site Selection	Complete	
Documenting Site Conditions/Opportunities and Constraints Analysis		
California Environmental Quality Act		
Permitting		
Clean Water Act Section 401		
Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement		
Endangered Species Act Section 7		
Final Design and Habitat Improvement Plans		
Prequalification of Bidders		
Outstanding Tasks		
Grant Award Notification (Assumed Date)	March 2022	March 2022
Task 1. Project Management, Administration and Reporting	March 2022	March 2025
Task 2. NEPA	March 2022	June 2022
Task 3. Outstanding Permitting		
Clean Water Act Section 404	October 2020	March 2022
National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 (part of the Section 404 Permit)	October 2020	March 2022
FEMA Floodplain No-Rise Certification	October 2020	March 2022
Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Encroachment Permit	October 2020	March 2022
Task 4. Construction		
Construction Contracting and Bidding	April 2022	May 2022
Site Preparation*	October 2022	December 2022
Earthwork	January 2023	June 2024
Creation of Habitat Structures	April 2023	August 2024
Vegetation Restoration	July 2023	October 2024
Prepare Site for In-Perpetuity Management	October 2024	December 2024

*To avoid bird nesting season, ground disturbing construction would not start any earlier than October 2022. Ground disturbing activities would also wait until Reclamation completes necessary NEPA reviews.

- *The project budget outlining costs for specific tasks should identify costs associated with the tasks in your project schedule, and all contractor costs should be broken out to identify the specific tasks include in those costs.*

As shown in Section 2, a project budget has been developed for the outstanding tasks and subtasks in the project schedule. Contractor costs are broken out in the schedule.

- *Describe any permits and agency approvals that will be required, along with the process and timeframe for obtaining such permits or approvals.*

The proposed project will require several permits. Applications for all permits have been submitted to the relevant agencies and all permits are anticipated to be acquired by March 2022.

Acquired permits include:

- Clean Water Act Section 401
- Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Endangered Species Action Section 7

Outstanding permits anticipated to be acquired by January 2022:

- Clean Water Act Section 404
- FEMA No-Rise Certification
- Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Encroachment Permit

- *Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project, or that will be performed as part of the project. Priority will be given to projects that are further along in the design process and ready for implementation.*

As shown in the schedule above, final design and habitat improvement plans have been completed for the project.

- *Does the applicant have access to the land and water source where the project is located? Has the application obtained any easements that are required for the project? If so, please provide documentation. If the applicant does not yet have permission to access the project location, please describe the process and timeframe for obtaining such permission.*

The City of Riverside owns a portion of the project site and is a cooperating entity within the Santa Ana River Conservation and Conjunctive Use Program and the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan. The County of Riverside also owns land within the Project boundary. Valley District is implementing the Project on behalf of the City of Riverside and others and is in the process of obtaining access agreements to access the project site. The City of Riverside has provided a letter of support for the project (see Appendix A).

- *Identify whether the applicant has contacted the local Reclamation office to discuss the potential environmental and cultural resource compliance requirements for the project and the associated costs. Has a line item been included in the budget for costs associated with compliance? If a contractor will need to complete some of the compliance activities, separate line items should be included in the budget for Reclamation's costs and the contractors' costs. Describe any new policies or administrative actions required to implement the project.*

No new policies or administrative actions will be needed to implement the project.

NEPA is being completed by the USACE as part of the Section 404 permitting process. The USACE's consultation with the USFWS has been completed, and Section 106 consultation is near completion. It is anticipated that the Section 404 Permit will be issued in early 2022 (the application was submitted to USACE in 2019). It is anticipated that all necessary coordination and information needed for Reclamation to perform necessary NEPA reviews will be complete prior to grant award. Ten thousand dollars has been budgeted to coordinate with Reclamation to complete NEPA responsibilities.

1.5.5 Evaluation Criterion E – Performance Measures

- *Please describe the performance measures that will be used to quantitatively or qualitatively define actual project benefits upon completion of the project. Include support for why the specific performance measures were chosen.*
- *All applicants are required to include information about plans to monitor improved streamflows, aquatic habitat, or other expected project benefits. Please describe the plan to monitor the benefits over a five-year period once the project has been completed. Provide detail on the steps to be taken to carry out the plan.*

The project benefits will be measured using the quantifiable performance measures shown in Table 1 below. The measures in Table 1 were selected as they closely align with the six habitat elements needed by Santa Ana sucker as defined in the *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Rule To Designate Critical Habitat for the Santa Ana Sucker (Catostomus santaanae)* (US Fish and Wildlife 2005).

Pre-construction surveys of existing habitat conditions along Anza Creek have already been completed. Following construction, verification and documentation of improved habitat will performed by biological field personnel using a handheld global position satellite device.

As described earlier, the health of the Santa Ana sucker and the quality of the restored habitat will be a factor in the future permitting of water projects planned under the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. The term of the Upper Santa Ana River HCP is 50 years. There are actual consequences and actual repercussions for not ensuring the Project has long-term benefits.

Table 1 Benefits and Related Performance Measures

Benefit Type	Description	Method of Performance Measurement
Habitat Improved	Linear feet creek channel suitable Santa Ana sucker	Evaluation of linear feet of channel with flow velocity and substrate materials of suitable quality for Santa Ana Sucker, accessible to Santa Ana sucker before and post-construction
Habitat Improved	Removal of habitat supporting non-native fish that prey on endangered species	Number of deep pools supporting bass and other non-native fish before and post-construction
Habitat Improved	Riparian habitat created	Based on vegetation mapping, riparian habitat in square feet will be estimated before and post-construction.

1.5.6 Evaluation Criterion F – Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities

Climate Change

- *How will the project build long-term resilience to drought? How many years will the project continue to provide benefits? Please estimate the extent to which the project will build resilience to drought and provide support for your estimate.*

The Project will help meet the requirements for an incidental take permit to implement the groundwater recharge projects necessary to provide water for storage and to meet long-term increased water demands during drought. The implementation of the broader SARCCUP projects will increase local water supply reliability and reduce the need for imported water that is increasingly unreliable due to climate change and drought impacts. The project will allow the region to provide capacity to store during wet years and the extraction facilities to draw groundwater during dry years. The five regional agencies participating in SARCCUP have collaborated with the local water retailers by planning water supply projects that are mutually beneficial to the retailers and wholesalers. Furthermore, SARCCUP will conjunctively manage these local water supplies such that the aggregate yield and water supply reliability generated is greater than the independent management of these resources. By way of a five-way agreement between the five agencies, the conjunctive use program will take advantage of economies of scale, watershed-wide groundwater storage opportunities and regional transmission and distribution systems to establish a dry-year yield supply.

In addition to drought resiliency measures, does the proposed project include other natural hazard risk reductions for hazards such as wildfires or floods?

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project could reduce the risk of natural hazards such as wildfires or floods through several mechanisms. The Project could reduce the risk of wildfire through the reduction of hazardous fuels, such as non-native trees and dead trees. The non-native species and dry brush could alter fuel bed characteristics and increase the susceptibility of wildfire in the Santa Ana River floodplain. Removing the non-native vegetation could help decrease the risk of wildfire. In addition, by reconfiguring the channel topography in the Anza Creek drainage area, streamflow will be improved in the Santa Ana River, which may reduce the risk of flooding.

- *Will the proposed project establish and use a renewable energy source?*

The Project will not establish or use a renewable energy source.

- *Will the proposed project reduce greenhouse gas emissions by sequestering carbon in soil, grasses, trees, and other vegetation?*

Restoration of riparian and stream areas facilitates the sequestration of carbon. Through planting and revegetation of riparian plant species, woody plant species have the potential to sequester carbon and nitrogen in the soil and woody biomass. As plants mature over time, they may provide more sequestration potential, leading to a potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

- *Does the proposed project include green or sustainable infrastructure to improve community climate resilience such as reducing the urban heat island effect, lowering building energy demands, or reducing the energy needed to manage water? Does this infrastructure complement other green solutions being implemented throughout the region or watershed?*

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration Project uses natural mechanisms to restore degraded habitat in Anza Creek. Revegetation and restoration of riparian areas will provide shading and thermal control for the creek, benefiting habitat conditions for the threatened Santa Ana sucker, the primary focal species to benefit from this Project.

- *Does the proposed project seek to reduce or mitigate climate pollutions such as air or water pollution?*

The project may help to mitigate climate pollutions such as air and water pollution. With the removal of non-native vegetation, the project could help native species recover in areas where nonnative invasive vegetation has established. Restoration to riparian species has the potential to result in the sequestration of carbon and nitrogen in woody riparian biomass over time. The sequestration of carbon in revegetated areas could improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A component of the project will include trash removal throughout the project area that would otherwise create water quality issues for plant and animal species found downstream in the river, and ultimately the Pacific Ocean. The project has the potential to improve water quality for plant and animal species throughout the Watershed.

- *Does the proposed project have a conservation or management component that will promote healthy lands and soils or serve to protect water supplies and its associated uses?*

Restoration of riparian habitat results in less erosion and protection of riverbanks. The project will provide critical riparian habitat restoration and improvement of existing channels to sustain flows in the Santa Ana River for aquatic and riparian species.

- *Does the proposed project contribute to climate change resiliency in other ways not described above?*

The overall Project, as a component of SARCCUP and the Upper Santa Ana River HCP is considered an adaptation to ongoing drought and climate change. The proposed Project provides ecosystem restoration for mitigation of habitat loss for threatened and endangered species. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP conservation strategy protects and enhances native plant and wildlife populations through habitat restoration and management, and through the maintenance of the habitat connectivity in the region. Protection of habitat connectivity, especially along ecological gradients such as elevational gradients and along natural hydrologic features, provides the opportunity for species to shift their range and area of occupied habitat in response to climate change. The project will provide adaptive management to enhance connectivity where existing barriers to species, such as the Santa Ana sucker, currently exist, resulting in additional protection and an increase in aquatic and riparian habitat for species that would otherwise experience declining stream flows. In addition, SARCCUP would diversify water supplies, reduce reliance on imported water from Northern California, and increase opportunities for regional water transfers; all of which help to address the impacts of climate change on local water supplies.

Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities:

- *Does the proposed project contribute to climate change resiliency in other ways not described above? Will the proposed project serve or benefit a disadvantaged or historically underserved community? Benefits can include, but are not limited to, public health and safety through water quality improvements, new water supplies, or economic growth opportunities.*

The project provides benefits to neighboring disadvantaged communities. The project improves and modifies surface flow and enhances the existing channel to create suitable habitat for the Santa Ana sucker. In addition, the project aims to establish a native riparian buffer and floodplain, which could help reduce the risk of floods to neighboring disadvantaged communities and protect water quality. The SARCCUP project helps water infrastructure systems adapt to climate change by addressing the future uncertainty of water supply through increasing local groundwater supplies for drought protection. The project reduces flood risk associated with climate change due to anticipated changes in rain patterns and intensity by providing additional stormwater diversion and storage.

- *If the proposed project is providing benefits to a disadvantaged community, provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the community meets the applicable state criteria or meets the definition in Section 1015 of the Cooperative Watershed Act, (i.e., defined as a community with an annual median household income that is less than 100 percent of the statewide annual median household income for the state).*

The service area of Valley District, the area that will receive the benefit from the project, qualifies as a disadvantaged community as defined by Section 1015 of the Cooperative Watershed Act (defined as a community with an annual median household income [MHI] that is less than 100 percent of the statewide annual median household income for the state). According to the US Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate the median California MHI is $75,235. Based on 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimate the MHI of San Bernardino County is $63,362. Specific urban areas within San Bernardino County served by Valley District include:

City/Urban Area	MHI	City/Urban Area	MHI
City of San Bernardino	$70,188	City of Redlands	$72,410
City of Colton	$53,838	City of Rialto	$70,188
City of Loma Linda	$55,607	City of Yucaipa	$69,104
City of Highland	$64,868	Mentone (Census Designated Place)	$68,650
City of Grand Terrace	$71,788		

All data from 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. Data for City of Bloomington is not available.

Entities in Riverside County will also benefit from the project and the actual project site is in the City of Riverside. The City of Riverside qualifies as a disadvantaged community. According to the US Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, the MHI in the City of Riverside is $67,005.

- *If the proposed project is providing benefits to an underserved community, provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the community meets the underserved definition in E.O. 13985, which includes populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.*

As documented in the data above, the population that will benefit from water supply, as well as the population in the immediate vicinity of the Project qualify as a disadvantaged community. Hence, the proposed project provides benefits to an underserved community.

Tribal Benefits:

- *Does the proposed project support Tribal resilience to climate change and drought impacts or provide other Tribal benefits such as improved public health and safety through water quality improvements, new water supplies, or economic growth opportunities?*

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (Yuhaaviatam) reservation overlies the Santa Ana River Watershed. The Tribe does not operate their own water system but does receive groundwater through the East Valley Water District, a retail water agency within Valley District's service area that is a member agency of SAWPA and an implementing agency of the SARCCUP program. East Valley Water District is also a Permittee to the Upper Santa Ana River HCP. The tribe benefits from the creation of new water supplies as a retail customer of East Valley Water District.

- *Does the proposed project support Reclamation's Tribal trust responsibilities or a Reclamation activity with a Tribe?*

The proposed project does not directly support Reclamation's Tribal trust responsibilities.

Project Budget

1.6 Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

- *Describe how the non-Federal share of project costs will be obtained. Please identify the sources of the non-Federal cost share contribution for the project.*

Valley District is requesting the maximum grant request of $2,000,000 for the Construction/Implementation category. Valley District has general reserve funds available to provide a local match of $470,154. Valley District has received $1,084,070 from a third-party grant contribution from the State of California, Department of Water Resources (DWR) Proposition 84 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Implementation Grant (executed agreement 4600011515). The funding agreement is provided in Appendix C.

The total non-federal share is approximately $1,554,224. Combined, the federal share and non-federal share contributions will cover the total estimated project costs of $3,554,224. There are no other outstanding funds requests.

- *Identify whether the budget proposal includes any project costs that have been or may be incurred prior to award.*

The budget proposal does not include any project costs that have been or are anticipated to be incurred prior to award. The budget proposal in this application is to cover construction and environmental compliance for NEPA, which will occur after award as indicated in Section 1.8.

1.7 Budget Proposal

Table 2. Total Project Cost Table

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Costs to be reimbursed with the requested Federal funding	$2,000,000
Costs to be paid by the applicant	$470,154
Value of third-party contributions	$1,084,070
TOTAL PROJECT COST	**$3,554,224**

Table 3. Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

FUNDING SOURCES	AMOUNT
Non-Federal Entities	
1. San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District	$470,154
2. California Department of Water Resources	$1,084,070
Non-Federal Subtotal	**$1,554,224**
REQUESTED RECLAMATION FUNDING	**$2,000,000**

The budget proposal consists of costs associated with implementation of the proposed Project which fall under the Contractual/Implementation and Other categories. The budget proposal is provided in Table 5 and is described in more detail in the following Budget Narrative.

Table 4. Budget Proposal

Budget Item Description	Computation		Quantity Type	Total Cost
	$/Unit	Quantity		
Salaries and Wages (a)				
Not Applicable				
Fringe Benefits				
Not Applicable	-	-	-	
Travel				
Not Applicable	-	-	-	
Equipment				
Not Applicable	-	-		
Supplies and Materials				
Not Applicable	-	-		
Contractual/Implementation				
Construction – Site Preparation	Engineers Estimate at 100 Percent Design			$2,368,291
Construction – Earthwork				$697,596
Construction – Creation of Habitat Structures				$21,247
Construction – Vegetation Restoration				$218,710
Construction – Prepare Site for In-Perpetuity Management				$238,380
Other – Environmental and Regulatory Compliance				
CEQA/NEPA	Estimate Based on Similar Projects			$10,000
Permitting	Pre-award and Not Included			N/A
			TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	**$3,554,224**
Indirect Costs				
Not Applicable				
			TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS	**$3,554,224**

1.8 Budget Narrative

Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits

Valley district will be involved in construction contracting and bidding. With this exception project implementation will primarily be conducted by specialized contractors whose costs are further detailed below. Valley District will not seek reimbursement for staff time spent on the Project, such as construction contracting, project management

activities, as these are considered to fall under normal staff activity. Fringe benefits are not included in the overall project budget.

Travel

Valley District anticipates visiting the project site periodically during construction, but travel to Valley District facilities is a part of normal staff activity and no reimbursement or match for staff travel is being sought. It is not known at this time whether consultant costs for travel will be required. If so, they would be included under contractual costs.

Equipment

The purchase of related equipment needs will be included in the construction contract and related costs are accounted for under the contractual cost estimate.

Materials, and Supplies

No materials or supplies are anticipated to be purchased for this Project.

Contractual

Contractual/Construction work to be performed for this Project includes construction management during construction, tree removal, earthwork, grading, channel and floodplain construction, erosion control, terracing, and construction of habitat structures, planting, irrigation, and road/trail crossings. All procurements with an anticipated aggregate value that exceeds the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (currently $10,000) will use a competitive procurement method. All estimates are considered fair and reasonable.

Third-Party In-Kind Contributions

The Santa Ana Watershed Protection Agency (SAWPA) secured a grant from the California Department of Water Resources' Proposition 84 Integrated Water Resources Grant Program for the Santa Ana River Conservation and Conjunctive Use Program. A portion of the grant was allocated for construction of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, in the amount of $1,084,070. The grant agreement has been executed and Valley District and SAWPA have an executed subgrant agreement for use of the funds.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

CEQA costs were previously incurred and are not included in project costs. Costs to complete NEPA compliance are included in the budget estimate. Valley District will allocate $10,000 for NEPA review to be performed by Reclamation after the grant award date and prior to start of construction.

Other Expenses

No other expenses are anticipated that are not captured under the above categories.

Indirect Costs

No indirect costs are included in the proposed budget.

Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

To allow Reclamation to assess the probable environmental and cultural resources impacts and costs associated with each application, responses (in black) to the following questions (in blue) are provided.

- *Will the proposed project impact the surrounding environment (e.g., soil [dust], air, water [quality and quantity], animal habitat)? Please briefly describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area. Please also explain the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.*

The proposed project will impact the surrounding environment. The potential environmental impacts were evaluated in detail in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (April 2019). In summary the project will include channel and floodplain excavation, and placement of gravel and woody material. Approximately 1,107 linear feet of constructed channel and 2,322 liner feet of the existing Anza Creek channel will be affected. Approximately 1.1 acres of new floodplain bench will be created. Nonnative plant species management and native riparian planting will occur within 11.4 acres surrounding the stream creation/enhancement areas.

Based on the analysis in the EIR, the project will not have significant air quality impacts, would not conflict with, or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or violate any air quality standards, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration, or generate objectionable odors.

The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact to water resources. The project would not lead to depletion of groundwater or interfere with groundwater recharge would not result in substantial alteration of existing drainage patterns that would result in flooding or erosion, nor conflict with or hinder implementation of a water quality control plan or groundwater management plan.

The ultimate intent of the project is to benefit habitat; however, the project could temporarily impact biological resources during construction, and mitigation measures have been developed to avoid or minimize potential impacts. During construction the project could directly or through habitat modification affect species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special-status. To avoid direct impacts on species during construction preconstruction clearance surveys will be conducted, Prior to construction each day, biological construction monitors will sweep survey areas scheduled for construction to confirm special-status species are not present. Any species found will be captured and relocated to a location pre-approved by the CDFW and/or the USFWS. Vegetation clearing will be completed prior to bird nesting season to the extent possible. In addition, preconstruction nesting bird surveys will be performed within 300 feet of the limits of disturbance by a biologist no more than 3 days prior to initiation of construction activities. If active nests are confirmed, a conservation buffer shall be established

around the nest. Prior to construction, biologists will take steps to discourage nesting in the project site (moving equipment and materials daily, covering material with tarps and securing open pipes). Preconstruction surveys within 500 feet of the limits of disturbance will be conducted within 7 days prior to ground disturbing activities between March 15 and August 31 with the intent of establishing buffers from any nests of the Least Bell's Vireo and between February 1 and August 31 with the intent of establishing buffers for any burrowing owl nests.

Preconstruction surveys will also be performed for aquatic species. Prior to construction biologists shall conduct a preliminary survey of the affected water body and surrounding suitable habitat and if any special-status species are present, the species will be captured and relocated per a capture and relocation plan.

Following construction, the project will restore riparian habitat and natural communities following a site-specific restoration plan.

Besides air, water, and biological impacts, the following impacts were also examined:

- Soils and Geology, less than significant impacts with implementation of mitigation measures
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions, less than significant
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials, less than significant
- Nosie, less than significant impacts with implementation of mitigation measures
- Population and Housing, less than significant
- Tribal and Cultural Resources, less than significant impacts with implementation of mitigation measures
- Utilities and Service Systems, less than significant
- *Are you aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat in the project area? If so, would they be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project?*

The following sensitive species are anticipated in the project area:

- Santa Ana sucker. Federally listed as Threatened, suitable habitat exists in the Project area.
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). Federally listed as Endangered, suitable habitat exists in the project area and the species has been confirmed at the Project site.

- Santa Ana River woolly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium ssp sanctorum*). Federally listed as Endangered, suitable habitat exists in the project area and the species has been confirmed adjacent to the Project site.

These sensitive species could be affected during project construction, but as described above mitigation measures will be implemented to limit and avoid impacts to these sensitive species. Ultimately the Project will benefit sensitive species.

- *Are there wetlands or other surface waters inside the project boundaries that potentially fall under CWA jurisdiction as "Waters of the United States?" If so, please describe and estimate any impacts the proposed project may have.*

Mapping indicates that there is 45.23 acres of wetland habitat that qualifies as "Waters of the United States" in the project area. It is anticipated that here will be temporary impacts to 11.89 acres. A temporary impact occurs when an existing wetland temporarily loses function. The Project is expected to have permanent impacts, such as direct loss of the wetland feature, of 0.12 acres. The Project includes the installation of substrate such as gravel or cobble in the channel to support the necessary hydrology, substrate, and microhabitat for the Santa Ana sucker, which may result in the wetland areas becoming non-wetlands. However, these wetlands would be relocated on site through the creation of new floodplain benches by excavating the high ground adjacent to the low-flow channel, the creation of new channel lengths, and a greater distribution of hydrology through the site. In addition, fringe wetlands are expected to establish along the channels. With project implementation, the resulting wetlands would be more hydrologically connected through riverine flows and flooding, would be surrounded by more natural topography, would support native emergent and alkali marsh, and would be adjacent to native riparian vegetation, providing a net increase in aquatic resource functions and services at the site.

- *When was the water delivery system constructed?*

The project does not involve modifications to an existing water delivery system.

- *Will the proposed project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., headgates, canals, or flumes)? If so, state when those features were constructed and describe the nature and timing of any extensive alterations or modifications to those features completed previously.*

No modifications to an existing irrigation system are proposed.

- *Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places? A cultural resources specialist at your local Reclamation office or the State Historic Preservation Office can assist in answering this question.*

Not applicable, no modifications to an existing irrigation district are proposed. In addition, review performed for CEQA found no features listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- *Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?*

Seven previously recorded archaeological sites are located within the Project area and would be affected by ground disturbance associated with the project. Mitigation measures have been adopted that will avoid these resources and property preserve these resources if avoidance is not possible.

- *Will the proposed project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations?*

The project will not have a high or disproportionately high or adverse effect on an established low-income or minority population. The project in general will benefit the environment surrounding the City of Riverside which has a significant minority population and of which 17.8 percent is below the poverty level. However, homelessness and homeless people living in the public rights of way, parks, and in natural open space is a concern in the City of Riverside, including the Anza Creek site. Homeless persons will be directed to public assistance programs following protocols developed by the City of Riverside prior to commencement of project activities. Fencing will be used to deter establishment of homeless encampments after construction.

- *Will the proposed project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on tribal lands?*

As part of the California Environmental Quality Act review of the project outreach was performed to local Native American Tribes. No tribal cultural resources were identified through this consultation.

- *Will the proposed project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?*

The project is not anticipated to contribute to the introduction or continued existence or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.

Other

1.9 Required Permits and Approvals

Valley District certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program in November 2019. The Army Corps of Engineers is undertaking a NEPA review as part of its Clean Water Act Section 404 permitting. As part of design and CEQA and NEPA compliance activities Valley District identified the permits needed to implement the project. Valley District has acquired the following necessary permits:

- Clean Water Action Section 401
- Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Endangered Species Act Section 7

Valley District has applied for and anticipates receiving the following permits in early 2022:

- Clean Water Action Section 404
- FEMA Floodplain No-Rise Certification
- Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Encroachment Permit

1.10 Letters of Support and Partnership

Letters of support from the following agencies are included in Appendix A:

- California State Coastal Conservancy
- CDFW
- California State University San Bernardino - Water Resources Institute/Dept of Geography & Environmental Studies
- California State University San Bernardino - Water Resources Policy Initiatives
- City of Riverside
- Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
- San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
- USFWS
- Western Municipal Water District

1.11 Official Resolution

A resolution from Valley District's Board of Directors to submit this grant application, commit to the financial and legal obligations, and negotiate and execute the grant agreement, is provided in Appendix B.

1.12 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

Valley District is registered in the System for Award Management as evidenced by the screenshot provided below. Valley District's Unique Entity ID is MCFHQJTK3WH8. Valley District will maintain an active SAM registration during any period in which the District has an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal entity.

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SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

ALERT! This entity is only available FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

DUNS Unique Entity ID	SAM Unique Entity ID	CAGE / NCAGE
054797683	**MCFHQJTK3WH8**	**5GYL2**
Purpose of Registration	Expiration Date	Registration Status
Federal Assistance Awards Only	**Mar 4, 2022**	**Active**
Physical Address	Mailing Address	
380 E Vanderbuilt WAY **San Bernardino, California 92408-3593** **United States**	**380 E Vanderbilt WAY** **San Bernardino, California 92408** **United States**	

References

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Martinson, Erik. 2008. Effects of Fuel and Vegetation Management activities on Nonnative Invasive Plants. USDA Forest Service General Technical Report RMRS-GTR-42-Volume 6.

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; ICF. 2021. Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan. May, 2021. https://www.sbvmwd.com/home/showpublisheddocument/8830/637394728499030000

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San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; ICF. 2019. Draft Final Environmental Impact Report for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program. November.

US Bureau of Reclamation. 2013. Climate Change Analysis for the Santa Ana River Watershed. August.

APPENDIX A

Letters of Support and Partnership

Coastal Conservancy

November 30, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Santa Ana River Conservancy program of the State Coastal Conservancy, we would like to express our strong support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding.

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species population. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat

1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, California 94612-1401
510•286•1015

Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP covers approximately 863,000 acres of the Santa Ana River and riparian habitat in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new/expanded water capture projects that would add 87,000-acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with the water capture projects. In an effort to speed up the HCP development and approval process, Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation even before the HCP was complete, a principle called "advanced mitigation". The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that the water district's conservation strategies are not only implementable, but also provide direct and measurable species benefits.

Implementation of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project will represent a major milestone in moving toward balancing the various needs of water from the Santa Ana River.

The goals of the project are consistent with and complimentary to the Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan developed and adopted by the State Coastal Conservancy in 2018.

We strongly urge your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Greg Gauthier

Greg Gauthier
Santa Ana River Conservancy Program Manager and
Project Development Specialist
State Coastal Conservancy

State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

November 30, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) would like to express our support for San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District's (Valley District) application for WaterSMART grant funding for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species population. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale. This concept has been memorialized in the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report which covers approximately 863,000 acres of the Santa Ana River and riparian habitat in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides federal take coverage for 85 new/expanded water capture projects that would add 87,000-acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The purpose of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come. Although focused on the federally listed Santa Ana sucker, CDFW anticipates the

project will also benefit state-listed species and species of special concern within and adjacent to Anza Creek.

CDFW requests your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Scott Wilson
8091B1A9242F49C...

Scott Wilson
Environmental Program Manager

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN BERNARDINO

December 1, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to convey my support and enthusiasm for the for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding.

My research, teaching and service at California State University San Bernadino, centers on water resource quality and equity across disadvantaged communities within the Santa Ana River Basin. The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). This effort represents an interdisciplinary, multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability. Goals of collaborative include implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species population. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole. Additionally, this effort will support my ongoing water quality research and community engagement by ensuring that a systems approach to watershed management is implemented across the diverse cultural and environmental landscapes of the Santa Ana River Basin.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP covers approximately 863,000 acres of the Santa Ana River and riparian habitat in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new/expanded water capture projects that would add 87,000-acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with the water capture projects. In an effort to speed up the HCP development and approval process, Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation even before the HCP was complete, a principle called "advanced mitigation".

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that the water district's conservation strategies are not only implementable, but also provide direct and measurable species benefits.

Implementation of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project will represent a major milestone in moving toward balancing the various needs of water from the Santa Ana River.

Funding the Valley District's proposal would support water quality and habitat monitoring to be conducted prior to, during and post restoration efforts. As such, this proposal lends itself to developing numerous interdisciplinary collaborations with CSUSB students, faculty and the public that seek to promote civic engagement through ongoing environmental stewardship activities. It will simultaneously provide essential greenspace in a landscape increasingly characterized by impervious surfaces void of habitat and surface water features. By supporting the Valley District's proposal, the Bureau of Reclamation (BLM) will be playing a vital role in developing a community centric cross generational framework that seeks to reconnect people with nature and protect environmental resources across the basin for current and future generations.

As both a resident and professional living and working in the Santa Ana River Basin, I strongly encourage your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

If you have any questions regarding how funding the Valley District's proposal would enhance human-environmental communities within the Santa Ana River Basin, please contact feel free to contact me at Jennifer.alford@csusb.edu or (910) 547-4245.

Sincerely,

Jennifer B. Alford

Associate Professor
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Faculty Associate, Office of Community Engagement
Chair, CSU Water Resources Institute Faculty Advisory Committee
California Certified Environmental Educator
CSU San Bernardino 5500 University Parkway
jennifer.alford@csusb.edu

CSU The California State University
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

CSU The California State University
WRPI
WATER RESOURCES & POLICY INITIATIVES

wri
WATER RESOURCES INSTITUTE

5500 University Pkwy, San Bernardino, CA 92407 • 909-537-7681 • fax 909-537-7682 • www.calstate.edu/water

December 2, 2021
Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI) and the California State University at San Bernardino Water Resources Institute (WRI), we would like to express our support for the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District's (Valley District) Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by Valley District for WaterSMART grant funding.

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project site represents one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). Aligning with the goals and objectives of the WRPI and WRI, the SARCCUP embodies a collaborative and innovative approach to water resource protection and management in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance.

Evidence of Valley District' commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. The WRPI and WRI feel these efforts are essential to serving water needs across diverse human-environmental landscapes including the disadvantaged, Tribal and Indigenous communities in our region. As a result, the HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with the water capture projects.

Additionally, this collaborative and advanced mitigation approach offers synergistic benefits to the region, including:

Improved Water Quality & Quantity: With a focus on habitat restoration and activities that support native species population, the Valley Districts proposal offers numerous opportunities to restore riparian areas that protect water resources while also providing essential habitat and recreational opportunities for the region.

Education and Outreach in Disadvantaged Communities: Funding for the proposal lends itself to developing numerous interdisciplinary collaborations with CSUSB students, faculty and the public that collectively seek to promote civic engagement through ongoing environmental stewardship activities. Utilizing multi-tiered community-centric best practices at the project site, students and the public can become more knowledgeable about the benefit of habitat restoration in improving water resiliency.

As a result of the highly diverse and impactful activities your funding opportunity would support for our region, we ask for your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project grant application submitted by the Valley District. In funding this effort, you will play an essential role in supporting regional habitat and water resource resiliency and sustainability across the Santa Ana River Basin.

Sincerely,

Boykin Witherspoon III
Executive Director
CSU Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)
California State University San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
909-537-7681
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Suzie Earp
Director and Archivist
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City of Riverside, California
Office of the Mayor
PATRICIA LOCK DAWSON

December 1, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The City of Riverside Public Utilities, we would like to express our strong support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding.

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species population. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP covers approximately 863,000 acres of the Santa Ana River and riparian habitat in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and provides coverage for 85 new/expanded water

capture projects that would add 87,000-acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with the water capture projects. In an effort to speed up the HCP development and approval process, Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation even before the HCP was complete, a principle called "advanced mitigation". The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, that the water district's conservation strategies are not only implementable, but also provide direct and measurable species benefits.

Implementation of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project will represent a major milestone in moving toward balancing the various needs of water from the Santa Ana River.

As a partner in the HCP effort, the City of Riverside Public Utilities values the advanced mitigation efforts being pursued at Anza Creek by the HCP which will ultimately be one of many restoration projects that are necessary to construct and secure future water supplies for the City in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner. In addition, the City's Martha Mclean Park is adjacent to Anza Creek and the Santa Ana River, and any improvements to Anza Creek ultimately adds to the aesthetics and natural beauty of the Park.

We strongly urge your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Patricia Lock Dawson
Mayor, City of Riverside

Regional Conservation Authority
Western Riverside County

4080 Lemon St. 3rd Fl. Riverside, CA 92502
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 12008 Riverside, CA 92502-2208
951.787.7141 • wrc-rca.org

December 2, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

The Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) expresses our strong support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding. The RCA supports the proposal, because of the ecological significance of the Santa Ana River and because the project provides support to meeting the goals of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), of which we are Permittee of.

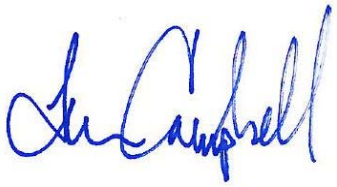
The RCA was established in 2004 by the County of Riverside and the Cities of western Riverside County to provide policy direction for implementation of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). In this role, the RCA provides implementation guidance and direction to the County and 18 Cities on MSHCP policies, acquires land for reserve assembly, and manages and monitors for 146 special-status species on over 63,000 acres of MSHCP additional reserve lands. The MSHCP not only manages at the species-level but also at the landscape level, which includes protecting watersheds, of which the Santa Ana River is the largest within the MSHCP plan area.

We understand the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability, while improving habitat for sustainable native species population.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance.

Once again, the RCA strongly supposed the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding. We are confident the proposal will have dramatic long-term effects to furthering ecological sustainability of the Santa Ana River.

Sincerely



Tricia A. Campbell
RCA Reserve Management and Monitoring Manager
(951) 787-7141
tcampbell@rctc.org

San Bernardino Valley
Water Conservation District
Helping Nature Store Our Water

December 3, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (Water Conservation District), we would like to express our strong support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding.

As an agency focused on groundwater recharge, we are excited to see the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program, move forward. And as a Participating Entity in Valley District's draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan, and the Permittee for the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan, the Water Conservation District strongly supports projects that restore and expand the values of natural habitats within our region.

With these demonstrated benefits to both water reliability and habitat within the region, we strongly urge your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Daniel B. Cozad
General Manager

1630 W. Redlands Blvd, Suite A
Redlands, CA 92373
Phone: 909.793.2503
Fax: 909.793.0188
www.sbvwcd.org Email: info@sbvwcd.org

United States Department of the Interior
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ecological Services
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250
Carlsbad, California 92008

In Reply Refer to:
17B09974-21TA0208

December 6, 2021
Sent Electronically

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
PO Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, I am writing to express my support for WaterSMART grant funding for projects that seek to improve and restore degraded riparian areas for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, such as San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District's (Valley District) project entitled "Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project." The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service has been working in partnership with Valley District to restore habitat quality in and along the Santa Ana River to improve the watershed's water supply and to aid in the recovery of the threatened Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*).

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species populations. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed as a whole.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and the environment is the development of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP proposes conservation for 20 species, 9 listed of which are listed, and 85 new or expanded water

capture projects that would add 87,000-acre feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation before the HCP was complete, a principle called “advanced mitigation” to minimize effects to covered species. The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a “pilot” project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that Valley District’s conservation strategies are not only implementable, but also provide direct and measurable species benefits. Implementation of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project will represent a major milestone in moving toward balancing the municipal supply and wildlife conservation needs of water from the Santa Ana River.

The Service supports efforts to restore native habitats along the Santa Ana River for the benefit of the Santa Ana river watershed and the federally threatened Santa Ana sucker such as Valley District’s Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Sobiech
Field Supervisor

December 1, 2021

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, a Component of the Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Western Municipal Water District (Western), we would like to express our strong support for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, and the application by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) for WaterSMART grant funding.

The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is one of the first habitat restoration components to be implemented as part of the broader Santa Ana River Conservation & Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP). SARCCUP is a multi-agency, watershed-wide collaborative program designed to improve the Santa Ana River watershed's water supply resiliency and reliability by implementing various watershed-wide projects for development of additional dry-year yield, reduction of water use, and habitat improvement for sustainable native species population. As a watershed-wide cooperative venture, SARCCUP will allow the regional water managers to combine groundwater resources and water conveyance infrastructure for the benefit of the watershed.

SARCCUP embodies a new approach to water resources in the Santa Ana River Region, where water supply and environmental needs for water are planned concurrently, on a regional scale, and given equal importance. Evidence of the commitment to collaboration for water supply and environment is the completion of the Draft Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Environmental Impact Report. Eight years in the making, the HCP covers approximately 863,000 acres of the Santa Ana River and riparian habitat in Riverside and San Bernardino counties and provides coverage for 85 new/expanded water capture projects that would add 87,000 acre-feet of water on average to the supplies of the 11 cooperating agencies.

The HCP will ultimately provide the amount of mitigation that is deemed appropriate to offset the environmental impacts associated with the water capture projects. To speed up the HCP development and approval process, Valley District and its partners decided early on to construct mitigation even before the HCP was complete, a principle called "advanced mitigation". The Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project is part of this advanced mitigation strategy. The purpose of the project is to increase the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitat for the federally listed as threatened Santa Ana sucker, and act as a "pilot" project for the many restoration efforts to come, and to assure the partners, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, that the water district's conservation strategies are not only implementable, but also provide direct and measurable species benefits.

Implementation of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project will represent a major milestone in moving toward balancing the various needs of water from the Santa Ana River.

The Anza Creek Project is in Western's general service area and has many advantages to the health of native fish species. Western supports this project because of the multiple benefits to the aquatic and riparian habitats, and the potential to offset impacts of the HCP covered activities.

We strongly urge your thoughtful consideration of the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Ryan Shaw
Director of Water Resources

APPENDIX B

Official Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 1138

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT AUTHORIZING VALLEY DISTRICT'S GRANT APPLICATION AND APPROVING NEGOTIATION AND EXECUTION OF A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF RECLAMATION FOR A WATERSMART ENVIRONMENTAL WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS GRANT (FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO. 22AS00026) FOR THE ANZA CREEK AQUATIC AND RIPARIAN HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

WHEREAS, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District ("***Valley District***") is a municipal water district organized and operating pursuant to the Municipal Water District Law of 1911 (Water Code § 71000 *et seq.*); and

WHEREAS, Valley District seeks to match local funds with federal funds provided by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, through the WaterSMART Environmental Water Resources Projects grant program ("***WaterSMART Grant Program***") to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of Valley District has determined that the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project exemplifies the objectives of the WaterSMART Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, Valley District agrees to the administration and cost sharing requirements of the WaterSMART Grant Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT, as follows:

Section 1: The Board of Directors has reviewed and supports the grant application for the Anza Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project (Funding Opportunity No. 22AS00026) to be submitted to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Grant Program in the amount of $2,000,000.

Section 2: This Resolution officially shall become a component part of Valley District's grant application.

Section 3: Valley District is capable of providing the amount of funding and/or in-kind contributions specified in the grant application funding plan.

Section 4: Valley District is hereby authorized to receive, if awarded, the WaterSMART Grant Program funding in the amount of $2,000,000 and to negotiate in good faith and enter into a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation for the receipt and administration of said grant funds.

Section 5: The Chief Executive Officer/General Manager, or designee, is hereby authorized and directed to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution, including the negotiation, completion, and execution of a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation and

the receipt and administration of the WaterSMART Grant Program funding in accordance with the requirements of the Bureau of Reclamation.

ADOPTED this 7th day of December 2021.

AYES: 5
NOES: 0
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

Paul R Kielhold
President

Heather P. Dyer
Secretary