Technical Proposal: Opportunity #R23AS00362
WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative:

Cooperative planning to engage disadvantaged and Tribal communities, increase sustainable water supply, and mitigate impacts of climate change and invasive species

in Southern California's Santa Clara River Watershed
Image: Santa Clara River (Friends of the Santa Clara River)

To: Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation, Water Resources and Planning Office
WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program:
Phase I for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024

From: TreePeople
12601 Mulholland Dr. Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Water Equity Programs Project Manager, Amanda Begley
grants@treepeople.org

Table of Contents

Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative

I. Executive Summary

Date: September 3, 2024

Applicant Name: TreePeople / Beverly Hills, County of Los Angeles, California

Summary: The Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative (Collaborative) project will bring together diverse stakeholders in the creation of a strategic, comprehensive Watershed Restoration Plan, encompassing the river's waterways and tributaries. Restoration planning is urgently needed to address climate change issues as expressed by local partners, including: 1) flooding and fire risk stemming from Arundo donax invasion in the watershed; 2) Degradation of inland waterways that prevent recreational use and Tribal cultural practices; and 3) Appropriate resiliency measures to address native habitat restoration in and around waterways. Currently, numerous restoration projects from individual groups are spread throughout the river, each with their own planning. However, the scale of environmental hazard demands unified coordination – yet there are no local resources currently available to carry out a multi-partner, multidisciplinary program that efficiently serves the whole watershed. As a result, major activities in this project will support creation of a Watershed Restoration Plan to include: 1) Coordination of stakeholders to understand existing projects, resources, and gaps; 2) Creation of resource network matrices and mapping tools to coordinate and prioritize activities; 3) Procurement of technical analysis services as needed; 4) Ecosystem monitoring protocols to support planning and adaptive management; 5) Inclusive engagement of disadvantaged and Tribal communities; 6) Strategies for regulatory efficiency "Cutting the Green Tape;" and 7) Watershed Restoration Plan reporting and cost analysis for implementation. Major benefits to this coordinated planning approach will include cross-jurisdictional solutions to address drought, water quality and supply, wildfire risks, habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species, and improved access for disadvantaged and Tribal communities. This effort will also include significant outreach to expand working group partners among all interested parties and stakeholder groups across the watershed.

Estimated Completion: December 2027

Federal lands inclusion: Planning includes river tributaries, portions of which are included in US Forest Service lands of the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests.

II. Project Location

The Santa Clara River is one of the few natural river systems remaining in southern California. The River originates in the Angeles National Forest, near the community of Acton, and flows westward for approximately 84 miles to reach the Pacific Ocean, traveling through northern Los Angeles County and Ventura County (please see map next page). The HUC code for the Santa Clara River watershed area is 18070102. The Santa Clara watershed area encompasses 1,630 square miles, of which roughly 10,000 acres rest within the LA County 100-year floodplain, and another 15,000 acres are found within the Ventura County 100-year floodplain.

Supplying the entire region, groundwater from the Santa Clara watershed supplies reservoirs and underground aquifers, providing the City of Santa Clarita in Los Angeles County with up to 24,100-acre feet of drinking water each year – in Ventura County, the river annually provides up to 69,000-acre feet of drinking water for vital community and agricultural use. As home to both

rural agricultural and highly urbanized communities, this watershed is particularly vulnerable to climate change, experiencing significant impacts from drought, pollution, and repeat wildfire.

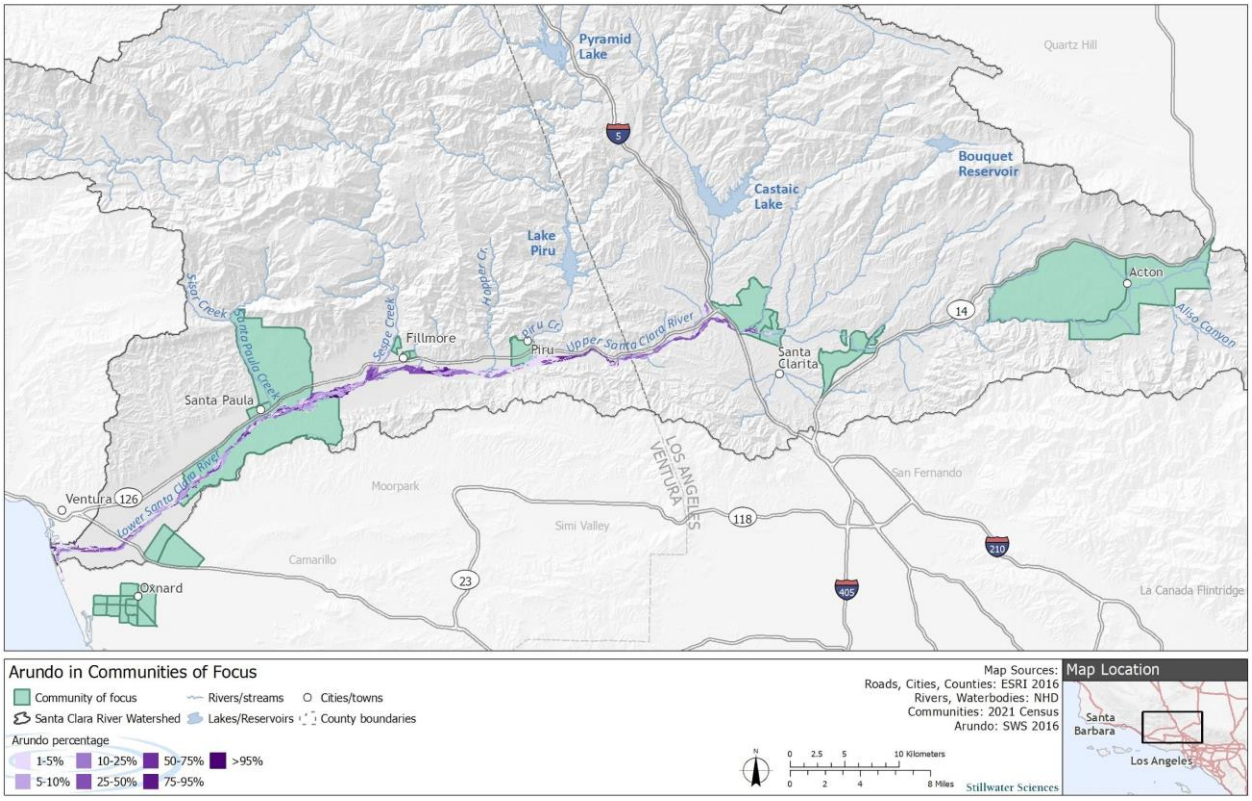


Diagram: Communities in the watershed (green) and Arundo infestation (purple). (Stillwater Sciences)

III. Applicant Category

TreePeople will function as lead 501(c)(3) applicant in this proposal as a sponsor member of the Watershed-Wide Arundo Management group (WWAM) for the Santa Clara region. As this evolving working group functions for information sharing and consensus-based participation on specific projects, but without formal incorporation or its own paid staff, we propose that the efforts of WWAM to build a formalized Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative comprise a **New Watershed Group**. In sponsoring the development of this New Watershed Group, TreePeople asserts that our work in water resiliency is significantly affected by water quality and supply issues across the watershed, and that our 50 years in community outreach across Southern California constitutes capacity in the promotion of sustainable water resources. Other WWAM members represented by TreePeople in this effort include:

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Chumash Band of Coastal Indians.
- **Municipal, County and Local Government agencies**: The City of Santa Clarita, City of Fillmore, Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water), United Water Conservation District (UWCD), Ventura County Resource Conservation District (RCD), Ventura County Planning Division, Ventura County Farm Bureau, Acton Town Council, California Rural Water Association, Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council, State Assembly District 38, State Senate District 19.

- **Academic Institutions:** University of California at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, Occidental College, CSU Northridge, University of California Cooperative Extension.
- **Recreational Organizations:** Steelhead Trout Coalition, Ventura Sierra Club.
- **Private Businesses and Landowners:** Stillwater Sciences, Limoneira Ranch, and Lloyd Butler Ranch, Restoration Science LLC.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations:** Santa Clarita Organization for Planning & the Environment, TreePeople, Santa Clara River Conservancy, Friends of the Santa Clara River, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, the Santa Clarita Eco Alliance.

The WWAM working group has met for approximately three years on an intermittent basis, to share evidence-based practices among interested parties for individual projects in native riparian restoration, and build regional support for joint projects – primarily centered on the removal of invasive *Arundo donax* (Giant reed) from inland waterways. This is because the need for efficiencies among working groups arose out of urgency to address catastrophic effects of Arundo on the watershed, through a variety of local projects for invasives removal, aligned with:

- *The USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan: FY 2015–2020* objectives to reduce impacts from invasive species, and restore and healthy watersheds and diverse habitats – with a *Weed Management Strategy appendix* that specifically names *Arundo donax*.
- California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's *California Vegetation Treatment Program* (CalVTP), which aims to reduce the risk of wildfires and protect natural resources, communities, and property stemming from invasive plants.
- The USDA Forest Service, *Southern California National Forests Vision*, stating some of the greatest riparian habitats threats are from invasive nonnative species, such as Arundo.
- The California Invasive Plant Council's listing of Arundo as of Highest Priority on its *Invasive Plants List.*
- *The Los Angeles County Water Plan*, in its Strategy 13: Managing invasive species in riparian areas.

While a number of regional intervention plans carry out these initiatives in Northern California – such as California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Arundo Control and Restoration Programs in Yolo, Madera, and Sacramento counties – in the absence of a similar unified plan for Southern California, inland waterways have suffered increasing effects of Arundo invasion due to warming and drying climate conditions. As a result, to protect drinking water and groundwater, reduce wildfire, restore riparian habitats, support native wildlife species, and sustain ecosystem services throughout the Santa Clara River watershed, WWAM's immediate goal is to manage and ultimately eradicate invasive Arundo based on its immediate threats. The WWAM mission is to:

- *Create a framework that facilitates collaboration between all stakeholders restoring the Santa Clara River watershed;*
- *Protect water quality, conserve local supply, and increase sustainability;*
- *Prepare for and adapting to climate change;*
- *Protect communities, properties, infrastructure, and the environment from climate change-related disasters, such as wildfire, landslides, and flooding;*
- *Sustain and restore natural ecosystem function to support native riparian and aquatic habitats, particularly for sensitive and special status species;*
- *Promote equitable access to nature, especially for underserved or Tribal communities;*

- *Engage with the public on education in ecology and biodiversity within the Santa Clara River Watershed.*
- *Develop an administrative structure that can develop and administer grants and contributions from funders and donors, and maintain an educational and agency outreach capacity that can sustain the organization for a minimum of 20 years.*

WWAM does not have a formalized membership structure – organizations meet monthly on a volunteer-basis, and all interested groups are welcome to attend and participate in consensus discussions on regional watershed issues. WWAM members seek planning funds to create a formalized Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, building shared capacity for a unified Arundo removal and riparian restoration strategy across the landscape.

IV. Eligibility of Applicant

Applicant Eligibility for New Watershed Groups: TreePeople is a California non-profit organization recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, and has participated in WWAM for 2 years, having joined as a representative of the CA DWR's Safe Clean Water Program (Measure W). TreePeople was asked by WWAM members to serve as lead applicant for the WaterSMART grant program, based on our 50-year history of urban, wildland, and riparian restoration projects, bridging both Los Angeles and Ventura counties. TreePeople also has a history of active support in the region, working with the Santa Clara River Conservancy and other groups, through the CA Proposition 1 Water Bond's (2014) *Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement (DACTI) grant program*, known locally as "WaterTalks." TreePeople led WaterTalks for 2019-2023, unifying community groups in Greater Los Angeles and Upper Santa Clara River areas, as the project lead for technical assistance. WWAM members have concluded that the unique program built by TreePeople for authentic engagement with underfunded communities in locally-driven project design for WaterTalks serves as an ideal functional model, in sponsoring the development of a New Watershed Group for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative.

During Prop 1 WaterTalks, TreePeople worked with a number of local water organizations across the watershed, on comprehensive collaborations for water quality and quantity. These efforts produced a Disadvantaged Community Needs Assessment for both Ventura County and Los Angeles County residents in Upper Santa Clara River areas, as well as a Tribal Perspective Needs Assessment for Ventura County, with significant insights into local community concerns, including water supply and water quality issues. After Prop 1 funding concluded, TreePeople has continued to serve as Watershed Coordinator for the Upper Santa Clara River through LA County's Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP), conducting outreach, education, and project development related to Santa Clara restoration projects. TreePeople's work to represent the needs of a variety of cross-jurisdictional watershed groups experiencing climate-related water issues have repeatedly revealed a unifying feature – the need to restore vital water quality and supply through restoration of the Santa Clara, particularly through invasive vegetation removal.

Further, TreePeople Water Equity Programs Project Manager Amanda Begley holds the role of LA County Safe, Clean Water Program Watershed Coordinator, having developed her environmental leadership in the region for over a decade, among organizations such as the Plastic Pollution Coalition, Climate Resolve, and the Climate Center. Since 2021, she has led

TreePeople's work in the SCWP for the Upper Santa Clara River watershed, through capacity building, coalition building, and technical support for community-based organizations and public agencies across the region. In coordinating the SCWP, TreePeople has connected project agencies with applicants who can lead and maintain the implementation of water resiliency projects, advise on project development scope and locations, and move water projects to completion. This process is central to our work, informing audiences on the steps to complete proposed water projects, raising awareness of regional issues in water quality and supply, and sharing knowledge of nature-based solutions for community resiliency. As lead applicant for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, TreePeople will expand this coordinator role, utilizing our experience and capability in promoting the sustainable use of water resources across a diverse group of stakeholders.

Since our founding in 1973, TreePeople has become a leader in developing and implementing nature-based solutions to the pressing environmental problems that impact people and ecosystems across Southern California. TreePeople unites communities to grow greener, cooler, and more water-secure homes, neighborhoods and schools, as well as to protect regional watersheds and wildlands. Over our 50 years, we have brought more than 3 million Southern California residents together to build tree canopy, restore open space, and focus resources to serve environmental justice. We specialize in equity-driven, community-led action, including robust volunteer engagement, through a slate of strategic programs including:

1. *Water Equity:* Engaging and educating under-served communities in wide-scale change, to identify, plan, and partner in water equity projects for community-wide benefits.
2. *Wildlands Restoration & Conservation:* Mobilizing efforts to restore and reforest wildland habitats and corridors depleted by climate change, drought, fire and encroachment by suburban development and commodity production within floodplains.
3. *Urban & Community Forestry:* Expanding tree canopy equity through widespread planting and tree distributions, powered by a community-led engagement model.
4. *Environmental Education & School Greening:* Implementing NextGen Standards-based curricula for Pre-K-College youth, including hands-on and online learning experiences, partnerships with educators, and outdoor trips for personal connections to nature.
5. *Advocacy, Policy & Research:* Driving multi-level policy and public support prioritizing nature-based solutions, as guided by scientific research led by TreePeople experts.

Regarding capacity, TreePeople is exceedingly well-positioned to deliver watershed planning resources in communities with the greatest need. Specifically, TreePeople brings:

- Organizational capacity – TreePeople conducts numerous planning and implementation initiatives within our water resource conservation, urban forestry, and wildland forestry departments, based on expertise of in-house scientists, certified arborists, and grant staff.
- Fiscal capacity – TreePeople's current annual operating budget is over $18M, currently managing over $12M in federal grants over multiple years. Unrestricted private funding as well as credit lines are in place to manage cash-flow in reimbursable contracts.
- Strong local government relationships – TreePeople has operated in Southern California for over 5 decades, supporting public agencies across the region in their efforts to build a greener, more climate-ready future for generations to come. TreePeople has earned the trust of a wide network of local government agencies at all levels in this work.
- Authentic community partnerships – TreePeople projects put people first to advance local-level inclusion and trust. Building long term community connections and local

partners in our most underserved communities is the cornerstone of our success, and is reinforced by TreePeople staff who are representative of the communities we serve.

In addition, TreePeople is capable of promoting the sustainable use of water resources in this proposal, serving as Project Manager and Point of Contact for the Bureau of Reclamation, in our capacity to carry out grant-related fiduciary and reporting responsibilities. With over five decades of experience managing local, state, and federal grants, including for the sustainable use of water resources, TreePeople has the administrative capacity and financial experience to comply with best management practices. TreePeople manages significant contracts with public agencies such as CAL FIRE, the California Strategic Growth Council, the California Natural Resources Agency, and the California State Coastal Conservancy, among others. TreePeople is well versed, and will maintain compliance with, federal, state and local financial regulations associated with receiving funding, including reporting standards for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). In accordance with nonprofit regulations, TreePeople annually contracts an independent auditor, including a single audit as of 2022, and has consistently received a positive audit report.

TreePeople also maintains basic property and liability insurance, a written conflict of interest policy, and a written procurement and property management policy, with inventory audits performed on a regular basis. TreePeople uses the software systems Sage Intacct and Salesforce to manage funds and deliverables for each project separately, ensuring each account is safeguarded. TreePeople maintains written accounting policies and procedures, with systems that allow organization expenses to be tracked to: a) a specific project, b) tasks within that project, and c) cost categories within that task; as well as a timekeeping system that allows staff labor to be tracked to each project, and to associated tasks within. Through these comprehensive risk management processes, TreePeople has remained in good standing with all agencies with which we contract, demonstrating capacity to carry out complex, simultaneous projects with funding plans from coordinated sources.

V. Project Description

TreePeople will serve the interests of current and future WWAM members and all stakeholders in building the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, specifically to create and develop **WaterSMART Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning**. Based on the need for unifying prioritizations in a strategic planning document, developed collaboratively by a diverse set of users to address water supply reliability and ecological value, the central output of this proposal will be the completion of a **Watershed Restoration Plan** for the Santa Clara River watershed. This product will be used to assist as a guiding document in joint intervention initiatives across local agencies. To best meet the needs of the watershed, focus will remain on communities in close proximity to inland waterways impacted by invasion of non-native vegetation – identified by community groups as the most urgent issue in local water quality and supply. The following WaterSMART objectives will be part of this comprehensive effort:

1. ***Support and coordination of watershed group members to better understand projects that improve the Santa Clara River:***
   At least a dozen restoration projects in various stages of development are currently taking place along the Santa Clara River, overseen and supported by diverse entities, including

WWAM members. Each project has its own studies, permitting, funding sources and implementation activities. However, the scale of environmental challenges in this region demand overarching coordination and planning, and there are no central agencies or resources currently coordinating this effort. Through WaterSMART support, TreePeople and WWAM will provide the following:

- Host and/or facilitate regular meetings of partners and new stakeholders.
- Provide meeting notes, recordings and other tracking elements, such as organization charting to understand the network of current and potential partners.
- Support the development and maintenance of relationships within the network.
- Carry out administration of the WaterSMART Grant including objectives, reporting, and financial processes.

2. ***Creation of digital mapping of current and potential projects on the River to identify and prioritize future watershed management projects:***
   A central goal of this project will include the creation of a matrix and digital map of current and potential projects on the watershed, as inclusive of all stakeholder groups in the watershed. This process will thoroughly research and review recent, current and planned projects – in order to unify these efforts – and can begin almost immediately, to identify gap areas. Grant products will include a story map or other visual expression of restoration initiatives along the Santa Clara River, with benefits for continued planning and coordination, to be publicly available and housed at the WWAM website or other open-source accessible platform.

3. ***Procurement of technical analysis services for watershed restoration planning:***
   TreePeople will obtain technical project services required to formulate the Watershed Restoration Plan. Elements of the process likely to require contractors include:
   - A Lead Planner for formal Watershed Restoration Plan design, research, facilitation and completion, regarding the written plan and related products.
   - Monitoring analysis and surveys (as described in Activity #4 below).
   - Community Engagement (as referenced in #2 above), the Collaborative anticipates 1-3 contracts with local organizations, such as for introductions to key leaders, conducting surveys, or marketing hosted local meetings.
   - Other technical support, such as preliminary implementation cost projections.

   TreePeople will oversee procurement, obtaining feedback from Collaborative partners. Subcontracting as supported by federal funding will be carried out by competitive proposals, as programming estimated to be part of this proposal will generally not support conditions appropriate for the use of sealed bids. Elements will include:
   - Proposals solicited from multiple qualified sources.
   - Publicized Requests for Proposals (RFP) released to identify evaluation factors and their relative importance, and all responses considered to the maximum extent practical – via a scoring matrix or similar tool for selecting recipients.
   - A fixed price or cost-reimbursement contract as awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the Collaborative, with price and other factors considered.
   - Consideration of noncompetitive proposals only when the item or service is so unique that it is only available from a single source, and the Federal entity

awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes the use of noncompetitive proposals.
- Other requirements or changes based on Bureau of Reclamation requirements.

4. ***Monitoring, research and surveying to support watershed restoration planning:***
As a baseline for the Collaborative's analytical efforts, at regular meetings WWAM collaborators have so far elevated primary public concerns from their constituent groups related to: 1) flooding, fire risk and drinking water quality stemming from Arundo invasion in the watershed; 2) degradation of inland waterways that prevent recreation and Tribal cultural practices, due to invasive vegetation blockages; and 3) climate resiliency measures to address regional extreme heat islands, through native habitat restoration and tree canopy expansion near waterways. Partners have developed a number of small, independent projects to address these primary needs, but no central plan or organization has so far been available to coordinate resources that pool these efforts comprehensively.

   To resolve this challenge, WWAM partners' research so far into strategic plan development for Arundo removal prioritization and practices will form the baseline of monitoring efforts for the Collaborative. This work has so far included beginning ecological and hydrological studies, CEQA documentation, and outreach to landowners, with limited funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board. However, a lack of more expansive data on additional watershed features impacted by Arundo and other climate issues will be important to a unified regional planning effort. Research to form a clearer picture of watershed function will need multiple avian, vegetation, and invertebrate surveys, as well as a review of 2023-24 flooding events – which impacted Arundo movement and changes to the course of the river. Through the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, TreePeople will coordinate monitoring activities needed to provide further information about the current condition and needs of the watershed, for broader watershed planning. This work will then help inform a more comprehensive approach to restoration for watershed-wide ecological and social benefits.

5. ***Collaboration with watershed group members for authentic engagement of disadvantaged and Tribal communities:***
Through the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, TreePeople and WWAM will ensure that community voices are embedded in long-term river restoration and management decisions and projects to improve the watershed. TreePeople will oversee engagement, with experienced staff dedicated to Community Organizing, working closely with Tribal partners and community-based organizations.

   Important communities who have not previously received engagement include low-income areas of Canyon Country and Newhall within the City of Santa Clarita (Los Angeles County). In Ventura County, due to a large farm worker population, disadvantaged communities line the Santa Clara River waterway along its path through Piru, Fillmore, Santa Paula, Ventura, and Oxnard. The watershed also rests on the unceded ancestral homelands of the Chumash and Tataviam peoples. This Collaborative will take multiple steps to uplift these communities' voices, including:
   - Assess where working, trusting relationships exist between current WWAM partners and community representatives. Create a networking analysis to

understand these relationships and where there are gaps. Review existing research on community needs to reduce duplication of effort.

- Where appropriate, contract with local organizations to facilitate engagement, such as introductions to key leaders, conducting local surveys or holding local meetings. Meet the community where they are; making use of existing organizations, gathering places and events.
- Host at least two meetings in each community group to discuss the Plan, potential projects, and local interests. Maintain staff and outreach materials that reflect the language and culture of the community. Provide for basic needs for participation in meetings and events, including refreshments, child care, translation and transportation, as needed and appropriate.
- Draw upon current relationships with Chumash and Tataviam leaders to invite participation at the beginning of the grant process, and keep leaders apprised of progress throughout, regardless of whether or how they choose to participate. As legal entities within the State of California, every effort is made to provide interview consulting fees or other remuneration as appropriate.

6. ***Reviewing watershed-specific practices as established by Federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as strategies for permitting and regulatory efficiency:*** An outcome of the planning process will include an understanding of all permitting and regulations needs that must be met for compliance with municipal, county, state, federal and other entities, as well as needed landowner engagement, especially for initial waterway restoration efforts to include removal and replacement of invasive Arundo with native habitat species. Additional information on permitting is found in section *D.2.2.5. Required Permits or Approvals* of this proposal. WWAM partners, with support of the Lead Planner and TreePeople, will work with appropriate agencies to determine estimates for how permitting can be carried out across the Plan area, to achieve efficiency and save valuable time for projected future implementation stages.

7. ***Design and completion of the Watershed Restoration Plan:***
   With support from TreePeople, the Collaborative will undertake the following activities:
   - Design of the plan process, including community and tribal engagement events embedded throughout.
   - Review of existing research, projects and matrices (as described in Activities #1 and #2, above), to produce updated public-facing matrix resources.
   - Assessment of existing studies and surveys, as well as additional new research.
   - Plan, host and facilitate meetings for all stakeholders to participate in the watershed planning process.
   - Draft of overarching plan document for Collaborative consensus, including project site identification, assessments, and prioritization, as well as future concept plans and cost projections.
   - Completion of the draft document, publication, grant reporting, and any additional related products as needed.

   Final plan documents will also include cost estimates for project designs and future implementation. TreePeople and technical support contractors will work with WWAM partners to conduct preliminary project costing to understand the potential costs

throughout the watershed. WWAM partners already at work on river restoration have struggled to find funding for individual, geographically isolated projects, and there is no existing capacity to coordinate these efforts among many stakeholders. Thus far, rough estimates are as high as $200M to comprehensively restore total acreage affected by invasive plants in the Santa Clara River. The Collaborative will also establish and nurture relationships with potential funders, in order to encourage interest in the project development process and to provide technical assistance to Collaborative members and agencies for development of further project funding.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion A. Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope:

The Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative will seek to engage, connect, plan and facilitate collaboration between new and existing constituents among Tribes, residents, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, academic institutions, landowners and businesses, and elected officials who strive to restore, and protect the Santa Clara River watershed.

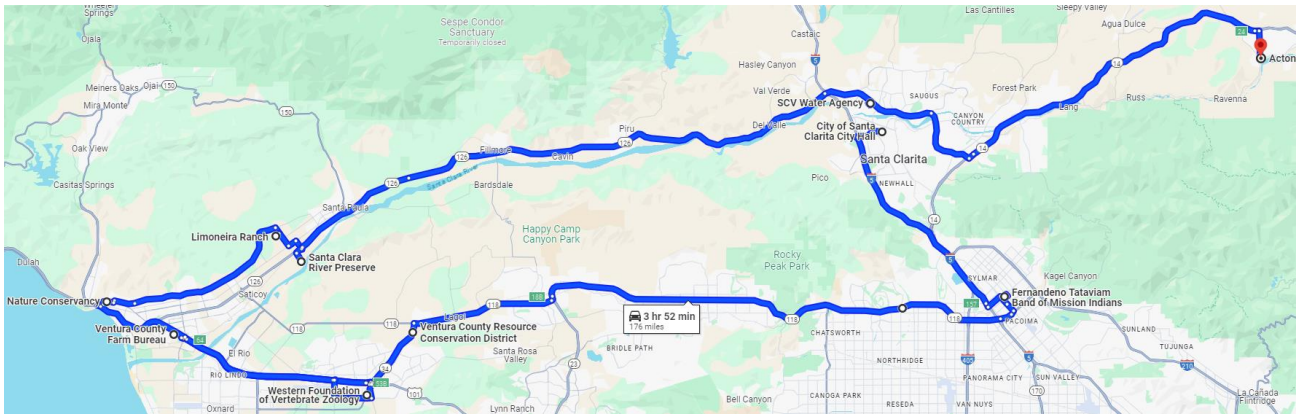


Diagram: Map of several Collaborative organization locations in the watershed (not inclusive of all current groups due to space), including: Tataviam Tribal offices, Ventura County RCD, Ventura County Farm Bureau, Limoneira Ranch, Santa Clara River Conservancy, City of Santa Clarita, SCV Water, and Acton Town Council (Google Maps)

Sub-criterion A.1. Watershed Group Diversity:

Groups that are affected by water quality and supply in the watershed:

This proposal seeks to elevate WWAM collaborators' primary concerns related to *1) flooding, fire risk and drinking water quality stemming from invasive plants in the watershed; 2) degradation of inland waterways that prevent recreation and Tribal cultural practices, due to invasive vegetation blockages; and 3) climate resiliency measures to address regional extreme heat islands, through native habitat restoration and tree canopy expansion near River waterways*. Accordingly, the removal of *Arundo donax* has emerged as a central, unifying call-to-action that best meets the needs of the watershed, from stakeholder groups active in WWAM to date. Their various interests in this collaborative effort include the following:

- **Residents:** TreePeople needs-assessment surveys (please see IV. Applicant Eligibility) conducted so far show that watershed area residents have a strong affinity for the open, natural state of the river, and seek to protect it. However, the current state of the river impacts water quality and supply, and prevents local recreational activity, making

thousands of acres inaccessible due to dense groves of Arundo. Resident concerns will have a larger voice through this Collaborative as proposed, with a seat at the table among policymakers, and amplification of their voices through partner CBOs. Public community engagement will be cultivated further at local events for hands-on education workshops provided to residents from the Santa Clara River Conservancy and TreePeople.

- **Tribes:** Tribal leaders and knowledge bearers carry invaluable indigenous understanding of the watershed. Yet, due to a colonial history in California that denies most Tribes federal recognition, their wisdom has been almost entirely erased. Based on mistrust of public agencies and past trauma, building relationships requires committed collaboration with non-traditional liaisons, as TreePeople has conducted to date primarily with Tataviam leaders, as Chumash leaders are in transition. The Tataviam's published *Tribal Climate Resiliency Plan 2024* also targets Arundo donax in habitat loss, wildfire, and aridification of riparian systems, in its Drought Impacts risk analysis for the region.
- **Municipal, County and Local Government agencies:** These organizations have expressed ongoing concerns in conserving water supply that is currently lost to invasive Arundo, as well as mitigating community wildfire threats that these plants cause, to build climate resilience for a growing population, including the City of Santa Clarita, Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, Ventura County Resource Conservation District, Ventura County Farm Bureau, Acton Town Council, California Rural Water Association, Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council, State Assembly District 38, and State Senate District 19.
- **Nonprofit conservation organizations:** Over 60 native species with federal or state protected status are threatened by the invasion of Arundo in riparian and floodplain habitats throughout the watershed, prompting an ongoing mobilization effort that includes active current projects from TreePeople, The Santa Clara River Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, and the Santa Clarita Eco Alliance.
- **Private ecology and agriculture businesses:** As dependent on water supply and quality, these interests recognize that restoration has become imperative to regional economic success, including for Stillwater Sciences, Limoneira Ranch, and Lloyd Butler Ranch.
- **Academic Institutions:** Both the Universities of California at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, as well as the University of California Cooperative Extension offices have partnered with WWAM in ongoing scientific research studying Arundo effects. UCSB has acquired high-resolution research grade LiDAR analysis for the full length of the River, in 2015 and repeated in summer of this year, for the purpose of documenting and quantifying trends in invasive vegetation extent and composition, with corresponding effects to erosion and sedimentation, channel modification, and habitat characteristics.

Stakeholders supporting the formation of the New Watershed Group:

Current WWAM partners have contributed the work products of current or recent funding efforts in watershed restoration, bringing added value to the creation of a central Collaborative planning initiative through the WaterSMART program, including:

- *Santa Clara River Conservancy and UC Santa Barbara*: Priority mapping using LIDAR and other tools, including a pilot Arundo removal project in one top priority area for the City of Santa Clarita (funded by CA Prop 1 Integrated Regional Water Management).
- *Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency*: $1M set aside in the 2023-24 state budget for "Arundo management and removal" through the CA DWR to SCV Water (funded by State of CA General Funds Budget).

- *Stillwater Sciences*: A decision support tool (geo-spatial database and map – please see section VI.A.2. Geographic Scope below), completed in 2023 to support strategic removal of invasive plants in areas most beneficial to at-risk communities (funded by CA DWR, Integrated Regional Water Management Program).
- *Stillwater Sciences*: Restoration feasibility study conducted to evaluate Best Management Practices for invasive plant infestations, as well as approximate costs of treatment and restoration actions (funded by the California State Coastal Conservancy).
- *Ventura County Resource Conservation District*: A report demonstrating and defining best practices for Arundo removal, including site assessments and necessary permitting (funded by the California State Coastal Conservancy).
- *Ventura County Resource Conservation District*: Initial planning for Arundo removal, including ecological and hydrological studies, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation, and outreach to landowners along the Santa Clara River (funded by the California Wildlife Conservation Board).
- *TreePeople*: Disadvantaged Community Needs Assessment for Ventura County and Los Angeles County residents in Upper Santa Clara River areas, as well as a Tribal Perspective Needs Assessment for Ventura County (funded by the CA Prop 1 Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement program, known as "WaterTalks").

Letters of support from stakeholders supporting the formation of the New Watershed Group have been provided as attached to this proposal. These include members of WWAM among Tribal organizations, public agencies, non-profit organizations, academia, and business entities. Of special note is the Santa Clarita Eco Alliance, which represents 16 regional nonprofit organizations who all ALL agreed – unanimously – to support TreePeople's request.

Engagement of additional stakeholders:

TreePeople engagement of new entities and community interests for the creation of a new Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative will be conducted as part of:

- *Project Objective 1*, support and coordination of watershed group members, to include:
    - *Hosting and facilitating regular meetings of new and existing partners in the Collaborative* – such as bi-monthly, online meeting scheduling, agendas, minutes, recordings, and other contact tracking elements.
    - *Supporting new group introductions and orientations* – to assess each individual organization's needs in participation and readiness.
    - *Community engagement events for recruiting of new organizations and capacity building* – initiated through attendance at public events and providing environmental educational workshops 1-2 times per year at libraries, community centers and other community gathering spaces in the project area.
- *Project Objective 2*, mapping of current and potential watershed projects, to include:
    - *Outreach to local organizations for the creation of digital mapping of current and potential projects* – to identify and prioritize restoration needs, inclusive of invasive vegetation removal, as well as all additional contributing interests.
    - *Encouraging ongoing public dialog that contributes to planning efforts* – such as collecting online comments and in-meeting comments on the digital mapping products as they reveal watershed needs.

Engagement of additional stakeholders is a key goal for WaterSMART program funding, which will allow TreePeople and WWAM members support for dedicated time and resources to further connect with the watershed and bring entities together in a unified restoration plan. A robust Collaborative will include additional targeted recruitment planning and outreach to new entities related to the following, among others:

- **Public agencies**: United Water Conservation District, Ventura Water, Ventura County Public Works, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office.
- **Private businesses and funders**: Agricultural landowners, family foundations, and corporate entities.
- **Community-based organizations**: CAUSE Ventura (Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy), Nyeland Promise, Ventura County Community Foundation.
- **Recreational Groups**: Santa Clarita Community Hiking Club, Ventura Audubon Society.
- **Academic institutions**: Ventura County Community College District, California State University Channel Islands.
- **California Native American Tribes**: Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians.

Description of the current structure of the watershed group:

The current WWAM group meets monthly to discuss current projects that may have joint interests, funding opportunities, and networking opportunities to build a wider effort. There is no incorporation or formal membership agreement in place, however the group has developed a mission statement, long-term objectives, and an ever-expanding body of research and pilot programs that can be leveraged for increased restoration work throughout the watershed. Decisions are reached on a consensus basis following discussion. For example, application to the WaterSMART program was discussed at multiple online meetings and via email, with group consensus asking TreePeople to take the lead. There is a strong need for a long-term management structure to support large scale fundraising and fund management, in order to conduct strategic coordination of watershed-wide restoration. As a result of this project's emergence as a goal of the WWAM group, included in the Watershed Restoration Plan will be a corresponding long-term management framework (for the new Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative) in order to implement the plan. Cross-jurisdictional concerns in order to protect the natural state of the Santa Clara River will be key, to encourage long term partnerships between communities and implementing agencies.

Sub-criterion A.2. Geographic Scope:

The Collaborative's focus is the watershed comprising portions of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties that form the path of the Santa Clara River (please see the map below inset box, lower right corner). The watershed is a small to medium sub-basin sized watershed with an 8-digit USGS HUC (18070102), therefore considered a priority for the WaterSMART program. The map provided illustrates an overview of the Santa Clara River watershed, developed by WWAM members, as part of a Decision Support Tool to help inform priority areas for removal of Arundo and restoration of native vegetation. Importantly, Arundo has become the focus of the working group's joint projects, among many other concerns in watershed restoration – as the result of member research that has identified more than 8,600 acres on the Santa Clara River with significant levels of Arundo invasion, more than 1,000 acres of which are infested by 50-100%. This level of degradation is a direct threat to the continual existence of the Santa Clara watershed as the largest river system in Southern California remaining in a natural state – if Arundo

infestations continue to spread, channeling or other interventions to prevent flooding and erosion may be required in the future, eliminating many ecosystem services of the River.

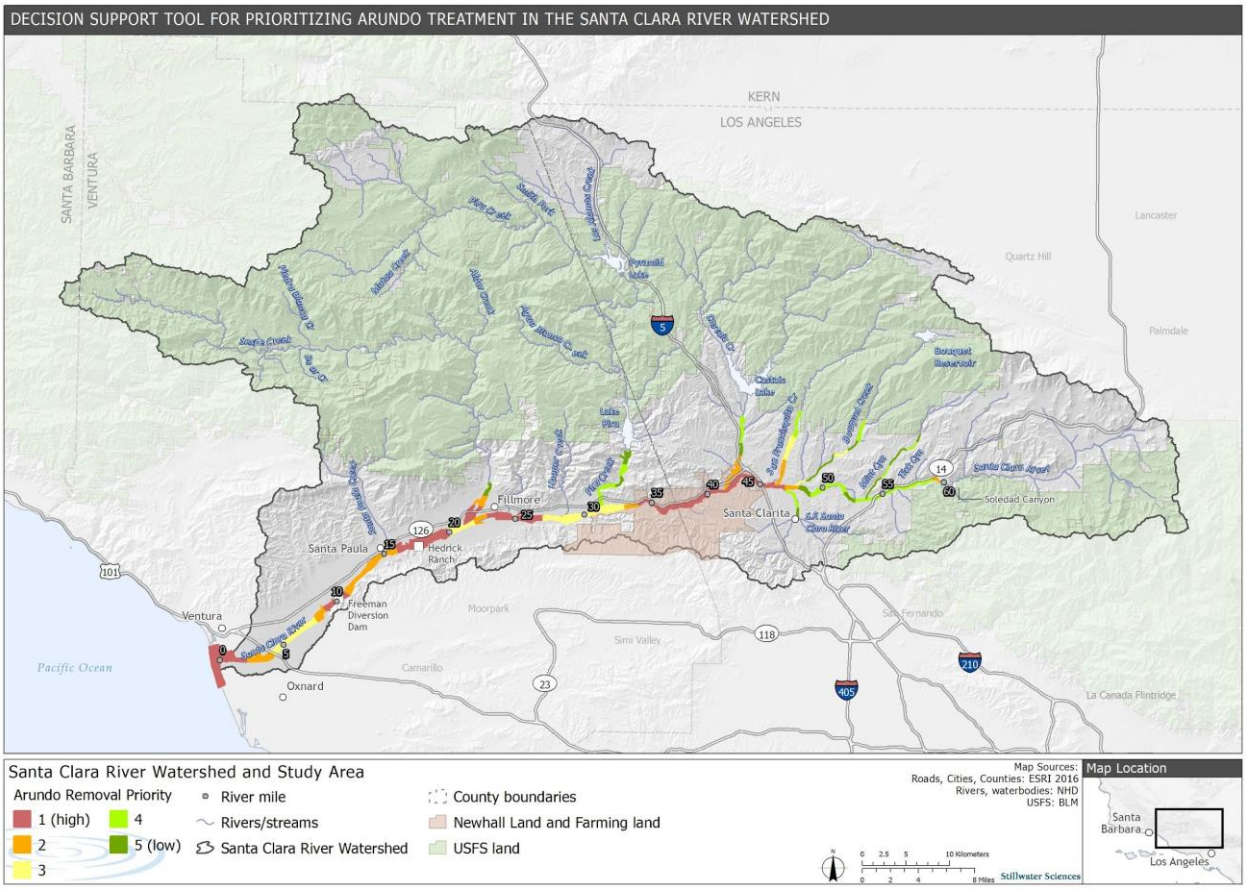


Diagram: Decision Support tool map showing areas of high Arundo infestation, combined with decision-making factors. (Stillwater Sciences)

The River covers 1,630 square miles, crossing Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Roughly 10,000 acres flow within the 100-year floodplain in LA County, with another 15,000 acres in Ventura. Groundwater in the upper watershed provides Los Angeles county communities with up to 24,000-acre feet each year. In Ventura County, the River provides up to 69,000-acre feet per year for community and agricultural use. The vertical line running at a diagonal through the map shown also highlights the logistical challenges of the county line. Watershed municipalities in Santa Clarita (LA County) and Oxnard/Ventura (Ventura County) serve as hubs for aerospace and medical industry, marketing software technology, and agricultural commerce, including timber. Rural areas of the watershed in the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru contain some of the most productive agricultural areas supplying the state of California and the nationwide food supply.

The entire watershed will be included in the Watershed Restoration Plan proposed here, with special attention to disadvantaged communities affected by invasive species, from the City of Santa Clarita to Ventura Harbor, as indicated on the map shown. These communities represent a range of populations and environmental justice concerns spanning the entire length of the River:

- **LA County:** Acton, located at the headwaters of the river, is a collection of small individual farms and horse properties. This community sits on the front lines of wildfire and drought issues in the region, with most properties dependent on private wells that are going dry, and a number of ranches lost to fire. Moreover, the nearby city of Santa Clarita is undergoing significant residential and commercial expansion, increasing strain on existing water supply. Residents surveyed are very concerned about climate change and sufficient water supplies. These communities are home to a number of low-income areas with limited transportation, as well as areas of serious Arundo infestation.
- **Ventura County:** The agricultural towns of Piru, Fillmore and Santa Paula consist of predominantly Latinx households (at 74-89%) with lower-than-average household incomes (MHI of $43K to $61K), many who provide labor for the agricultural vitality of the region. Environmental effects of drought and loss of agricultural water assets have a disproportionate impact on income mobility in these communities. These communities experience inequity in housing, food insecurity, job growth, and public health, and have also indicated on our surveys the desire for equitable recreational access to the River.
- **Indigenous Peoples:** Tribes who call the Santa Clara River watershed home experience a number of enfranchisement issues related to the lack of federal recognition that could support Tribal housing, public health, and workforce programs. The Collaborative will give the highest respect to Native peoples in this planning effort, especially regarding self determination to define their organizational identity and participation from a community and geographic perspective. In this region, the Tataviam Land Conservancy has expressed the need for movement toward a number of local Land Back and Water Back initiatives.

Criterion B. Develop Strategies to Address Critical Watershed Needs

Sub-criterion B.1. Critical Watershed Needs or Issues:

Despite a wide variety of unique missions and priorities among member organizations, the preponderance of projects planned and implemented independently by WWAM members to best meets the needs of the watershed highlight two very significant climate issues affecting the region in recent years – as assigned by the state and local offices funding these smaller efforts to date – **1) water quality and supply, and 2) catastrophic wildfire**. The unifying feature of both of these issues in the Santa Clara River watershed is the invasive *Arundo donax.* Arundo is a bamboo-like grass that can reach up to 30 feet tall – one of the fastest growing plants in the world – tolerating both drought and floods, and even surviving saline conditions. Arundo reproduces from rhizomes (underground stems) carried to new sites by high river flows, which spread rapidly to outcompete native riparian vegetation, whose reproductive cycles are typically more seasonally constrained.

Arundo degrades riparian habitat for many federally-listed wildlife species (Threatened or Endangered), including: Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), Southern steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) Unarmored three spined-stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*), Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), Red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), and Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*); as well as Species of Special Concern including Bigcone Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*), California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*), and Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), among others. Thick reed stands also lower water oxygen concentrations,

destroying fish populations and spawning areas, decreasing biodiversity in the watershed. Deposits of plant material rot at the bottom of waterways, interrupting natural river flow, exacerbating both erosion and sediment, and providing ideal breeding environments for West Nile virus-carrying mosquitoes. Shockingly, Arundo stands remain highly flammable even when wet, allowing embers to jump streambeds and contributing to a number of recent regional wildfires. As a result, this invasion impacts both water quality and supply, as well as drought and wildfire hazard – all as related to warming and drying climate conditions.

Critical Watershed Need #1: Water

The Santa Clara River is a significant water source for urban and agriculturally dependent communities. In its natural state, the River feeds groundwater basins, which provide a much higher percentage of water supply for Los Angeles County communities than in other LA-area watersheds – estimates approach 50% of groundwater for the City of Santa Clarita, and much more in the Acton area, where residents rely on hauled water if their groundwater wells run dry.

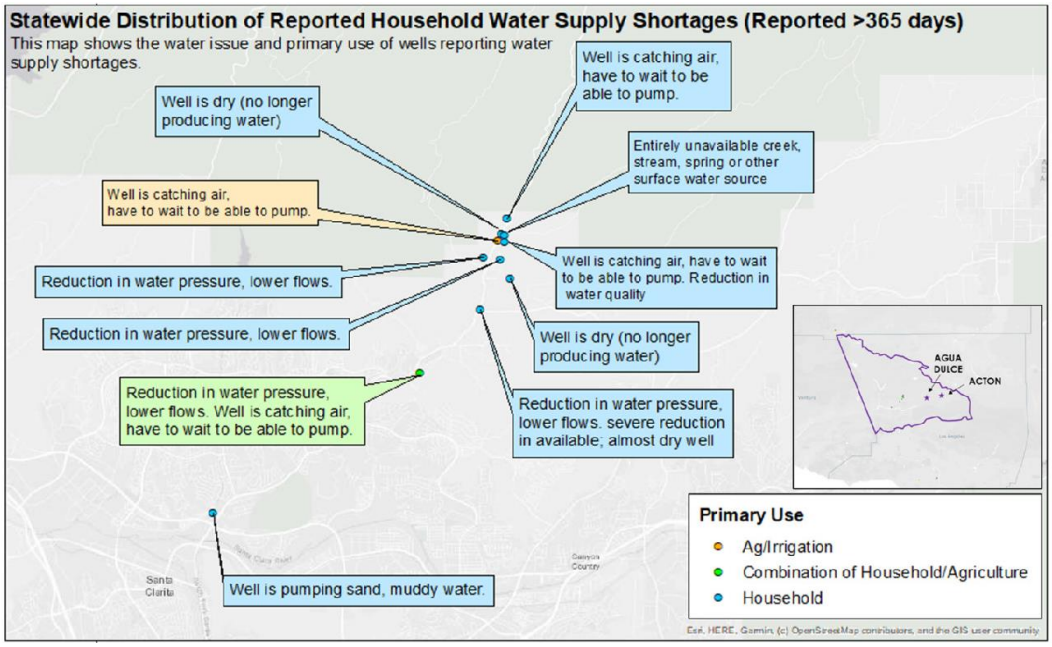


Diagram: CA DWR Household Water Supply Shortage Reporting System results for the Acton area (Stantec)

The population of the Santa Clara River watershed is increasing rapidly, particularly in the upper watershed, putting increasing strain on water and natural resources. Coordinated management of water and sediment resources will be critical to ensuring water availability for a growing population, to maintaining stable groundwater basins and resilient groundwater-dependent ecosystems benefitting natural habitats and agriculture, and to minimize climate-related impacts of drought, flooding, erosion, and sedimentation that occurs during seasonal storms and wildfire.

Arundo transpires water at a rate five times higher than that of native vegetation. Between communities in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, groundwater in the upper Santa Clara River provides up to 93,000-acre feet a year in total, across the watershed. Yet, large Arundo stands are estimated to draw up to 10,000 acre-feet of this groundwater annually. Further, Arundo is also known to release chemical compounds which are harmful to grazing animals and pollinator

insects, as well as prolific pollen that can cause harmful respiratory and skin reactions in humans. Addressing Arundo removal on a watershed scale will improve water quality through reduced sedimentation, chemical compounds, and pollen, and will decrease this plant's excessive strain on groundwater supply.

Critical Watershed Need #2: Wildfire

A critical impact of a warming and drying Southern California climate is increased frequency and severity of wildfire. Ventura County climate models predict a 3-5°F increase by 2040, plus a >5% increase in evapotranspiration demand for communities in the project area. Most regional precipitation models anticipate rain will fall on fewer days with greater intensity. This existing wildfire hazard is further amplified by the increasing prevalence of invasive, flashy fuel weeds along the Santa Clara, including Arundo. Numerous regional wildfires in recent years have burned into the riparian zone, often fueled by Arundo infestations, which then in turn spread further following each fire, when native riparian vegetation naturally declines owing to its intolerance to erratic, unseaseasonable fire as fueled by invasive weeds. The risk of future catastrophic mega-fires remains prevalent as climate change continues. The Santa Clara watershed, encompassing both rural and urban communities, is particularly vulnerable to climate change – especially due to extreme urban heat island effects and accelerated drying cycles on agricultural and open space landscapes.

Communities in the watershed have been imperiled by significant increases in wildfire over the past decade. The most recent include the infamous 2017 Thomas Fire, as well as the Rye, Lake, Sand and Placerita Fires – all fueled, in part, by invasive plants at the urban-wildland interface. This trend shows that Arundo and other flammable weed invasion of watershed areas has turned the River from a fire barrier into a virtual "wick" that carries fire along waterways into at-risk communities. Reducing stands will significantly reduce critical fire risk to support these communities, lower wildfire related air pollution, and prevent loss of life and property.

Image: 2022 Fillmore Arundo riverbed fire. (Fillmore Gazette)

<u>Sub-criterion B.2. Project Benefits</u>

In order to develop a restoration plan that best meets the needs of the watershed, a clear path to risk reduction for greater regional climate resiliency will be critical to restoring the Santa Clara River to a more functional state. The Collaborative proposed for a watershed-wide management effort here will improve environmental equity along the entire length of the River, by working with communities in a range of disadvantaged populations, mitigating a variety of climate justice concerns, and building capacity for fiscally responsible, sustainable change.

This planning will support long term project benefits that strengthen an entire ecological system, providing enhanced native biodiversity, reducing risks to wildfire and water supply, and creating healthy open space equity for local communities to enjoy. The planning process will restore benefits including wildlife habitat spaces and connectivity, while reducing the danger of future

fire and drought for millions of residents in the watershed's urban and rural communities. Restoration efforts in this area are exceedingly urgent for watershed species, such as those listed above, as well as many lesser-known riparian-using migrants, such as bat species and insects.

Planning to clear the Santa Clara River system of Arundo will greatly facilitate existing smaller local restoration efforts already underway, by coordinating regional resources. Individual collaborators already at work on restoration efforts have struggled to find funding for geographically isolated projects, with limited capacity to coordinate these efforts among many diverse stakeholders – yet many recognize the need to combine coordinated planning for these efforts. The new Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative, along with an associated Watershed Restoration Plan document, will formalize these relationships with a widening net of stakeholders, will invite further expertise into the project development process, and will provide technical assistance for all stakeholders seeking to develop supportive and sustainable partnerships for Santa Clara River restoration.

This process will not only centralize support coordination for the grant period, but will create capacity for a vital ongoing support structure following the grant term. Major partners in this Collaborative possess a variety of complementary skills that will help produce these benefits. The following chart is based on Objectives identified in the Project Description, in which partner organizations will contribute the expertise needed for Collaborative planning processes:

WWAM Expertise per Objective	Benefit	Tree People	UC SB	SCR Cons	Still water	VC RCD
Coordination of stakeholders	Unified watershed restoration activities	✓			✓	✓
Collaborative network matrices and digital map	Public resources for watershed restoration activities				✓	✓
Procurement of planning services	Evidence-based analysis for Collaborative decisions	✓	✓	✓		✓
Monitoring surveys and analysis	Assurance of effectiveness in project methodologies		✓	✓	✓	✓
DAC Community / Tribal engagement	Stronger representation of regional constituents	✓		✓		
Permitting strategies	Policy agreements across jurisdictions for activities		✓		✓	✓
Restoration document with cost estimates	Evidence-based rationale for future project implementation	✓	✓		✓	

Criterion C. Readiness to Proceed

The Project Description objectives as proposed will include the following timeline of activities:

Timeline	Activity
Objective 1: Support and coordination of watershed group members to better understand projects that improve the Santa Clara River	
Year 1 - Year 3	Facilitate monthly meetings of partners, develop and maintain Collaborative relationships and communications.
Quarter 1 2025	Conduct initial site visits, assessments, and coordination with public land management staff for grant related planning logistics.

Year 1 - Year 3	Carry out administration of the WaterSMART Grant including objectives, reporting, and financial processes.
Objective 2: Creation of digital mapping of current and potential projects on the River to identify and prioritize future watershed management projects	
Q1 2025 - Q2 2025	Network mapping to add current and potential project partners
Q1 2025 - Q4 2025	Quarterly field surveys for baseline data on existing projects
Q4 2025 - Q4 2027	Quarterly reports to Collaborative groups and continual map updates
Objective 3: Procurement of technical analysis services for watershed planning	
Q1 2025 - Q2 2025	Lead Planner selection for formal Watershed Plan design, research, facilitation and completion, including specialized services for monitoring analysis, and community engagement, such as Tribal liaisons.
Q1 2027 - Q2 2027	Technical analysis reporting products presented to the Collaborative, including preliminary implementation cost projections.
Objective 4: Monitoring, research and surveying to support watershed planning	
Q1 2026 - Q1 2027	Quarterly monitoring & data collection at target observation sites
Q1 2026 - Q4 2026	Specialized research services conducted in avian, vegetation, and invertebrate surveys, as well as review of 2023-24 flooding damage
Objective 5: Collaboration with watershed group members for authentic engagement of disadvantaged and Tribal communities	
Q1 2025 - Q2 2025	Create networking analysis to understand relationships and gaps. Review community needs to reduce duplication of effort.
Q3 2025 - Q4 2025	Outreach team prep and training, with initial community outreach events.
Q1 2026 - Q4 2027	Utilize existing organizations' gathering places and events to host at least two additional meetings in each community group to discuss the Watershed Plan. Translate or adapt outreach materials that reflect the language and culture of the community as needed.
Objective 6: Reviewing watershed specific practices as established by Federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as strategies for permitting and regulatory efficiency	
Q1 2025 - Q4 2026	Private landowner outreach and engagement, to include canvassing, community events, and public meetings related to restoration interest.
Q3 2027 - Q4 2027	Report on permitting strategies needed for state and federal agencies in future restoration implementation – to include potential Standard Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) through the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife "Cutting the Green Tape" initiative.
Objective 7: Design and completion of the Watershed Restoration Plan	
Q1 2025 - Q2 2025	Review of existing research, projects and matrices, to update public-facing Collaborative resources.
Q1 2027 - Q2 2027	Draft of overarching plan document with consensus participation from all stakeholders, including project site identification, assessments, and prioritization, as well as future concept plans and cost projections.
Q3 2027 - Q4 2027	Final Analysis and Report, with open source publication

Grant product partners in this project with TreePeople will primarily include the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, University of California Santa Barbara, and the Ventura County Resource Conservation District. These are all members of the Watershed Wide Arundo Management group which, even with a limited informal structure so far, has made real progress toward river Restoration. This working group is well positioned to carry out this project based on long-term commitments member organizations have already made in restoration work supporting

the River – in some cases comprising individual projects dating back 20 years or longer. During that time, these groups have built enduring relationships with diverse watershed stakeholders.

Criterion D. Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities

This proposal's Watershed Restoration Plan efforts align with the goals of the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP), in the following federal initiatives:

- *Presidential Executive Order (E.O.) 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*: This project builds on the centerpiece of the EO, "Recognizing that climate change affects a wide range of subjects, it will be a United States priority to press for enhanced climate ambition and integration of climate considerations."
- *E.O. 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*: This project supports the order to "allocate (federal) resources to address the historic failure to invest sufficiently, justly, and equally in underserved communities, as well as individuals from those communities."
- *The Biden-Harris Administration's Justice40 Initiative*: This project aligns with comprehensive reforms to change the delivery of federal programs, including 2021 Interim Implementation Guidance for all Federal agencies, supporting administration of benefits to communities that are marginalized and overburdened by pollution.
- *The Interagency Drought Relief Working Group*: This project aligns with the purpose of the Biden-Harris Administration-launched group to "address worsening drought conditions in the United States and to support farmers, ranchers, Tribes, and communities impacted by ongoing water shortages," as well as "working to improve communities' long-term resilience to drought, given that drought cycles are increasing in severity due to climate change."
- *The National Drought Resilience Partnership*: This project aligns with the federal partnership group's work to address the "growing need to help communities, agriculture, businesses, and individuals threatened by drought to plan accordingly" – "with a focus on building long-term drought resilience."
- *The US Department of the Interior Priority Statement*: This project aligns with the Department's priority to "restore and conserve at least 30% of our lands and waters by 2030," through collaborative restoration efforts that "protect biodiversity… and help leverage natural climate solutions."

In addition, activities in this project align with state-level climate legislative policy, including:

- *The California Climate Adaptation Strategy*: Consistent with Goal A to Increase the Pace and Scale of Nature-Based Climate Solutions, calling for Action 5 to "Increase green space and infrastructure across California's communities and prioritize tribal nations and climate vulnerable communities."
- *The California Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*: Consistent with Section 2 on Climate Action Potential and Priority Approaches, calling for efforts to "Advance multi-benefit, collaborative, landscape-level approaches that engage communities; Align, leverage, and scale resources, particularly through partnerships; (and to) Protect landscapes that deliver multiple ecosystem services (that) are resilient and likely to persist under future climate conditions."

Climate Change:

In Southern California, water supply is significantly at risk during drier La Niña years and periodic droughts, such as those experienced in 2012-2018, making invasive vegetation strain on an already limited groundwater supply a serious concern. La Niña periods alternate with episodes of storm-heavy El Niño years, which historically occur at 5-8 year intervals on average, yet have begun to carry heightened risk of extreme weather events causing flood and landslide damage. The River corridor itself is also thought to be periodically reset by large flood events that occur roughly every 10-20 years – yet these events are also increasing with the effects of climate change, posing further exacerbation of flooding caused by invasive vegetation. Intensive infestation areas of 50-100% will require human intervention to remove Arundo and restore natural, unimpeded watershed function.

Images: Arundo donax (Giant reed) stands before and after removal. (Santa Clara River Conservancy)

In this work, WWAM groups have found that the lack of a regional Watershed Restoration Plan for Arundo removal can result in costly repeat work that causes financial strain to water quality and supply projects. If disparate groups initiate uncoordinated efforts that do not address planned watershed-wide needs, Arundo stands can re-grow after smaller, limited efforts – wasting grant funds and public agency dollars. As one example, Arundo itself relies on storm conditions for rhizomes to spread downstream, but a coordinated Watershed Restoration Plan could allow for rapid deployment of cross-jurisdictional treatment plans after storms – "cutting the green tape."

This project has also been designed in consideration of best practices and lessons learned from similar case studies in the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Watershed Arundo Eradication Program, which represents headwaters from the mountains surrounding the San Fernando Valley downstream to the Los Angeles River – directly south of the Santa Clara watershed. Further regionally adjacent county areas have also been funded to address the Upper Tujunga Wash portion of the ULAR, where the National Forest Foundation has implemented a parallel Arundo eradication program. These projects' "top-down" rapid watershed treatment approach serves as a strategic model for activities proposed in this planning effort, whereby Arundo stands spreading from downstream rhizome dispersion can be stopped quickly, to produce an estimated net water savings of 1,600 acre-feet of water per year in affected areas, according to the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.

Benefits to Disadvantaged, Underserved, and Tribal Communities:

Disadvantaged and Underserved Community Benefits – Important communities who have not previously received engagement will be the focus of information gathering and new watershed group recruitment in this project, to specifically include low-income areas of Canyon Country and Newhall within the City of Santa Clarita (Los Angeles County), as well as agricultural landowners and farm worker populations in Piru, Newhall, Santa Paula, Ventura, and Oxnard (Ventura County). Community engagement events that include will include local residents and organizations in planning processes will focus on the following DAC census tracts:

- Ventura – 06111002400
- Oxnard – 06111003012, 06111005003
- Santa Paula – 06111000500, 06111000701, 06111000600, 06111000400
- Fillmore – 06111000304
- Piru – 06111000400
- Canyon Country – 06037920037
- Mint Canyon – 06037920026

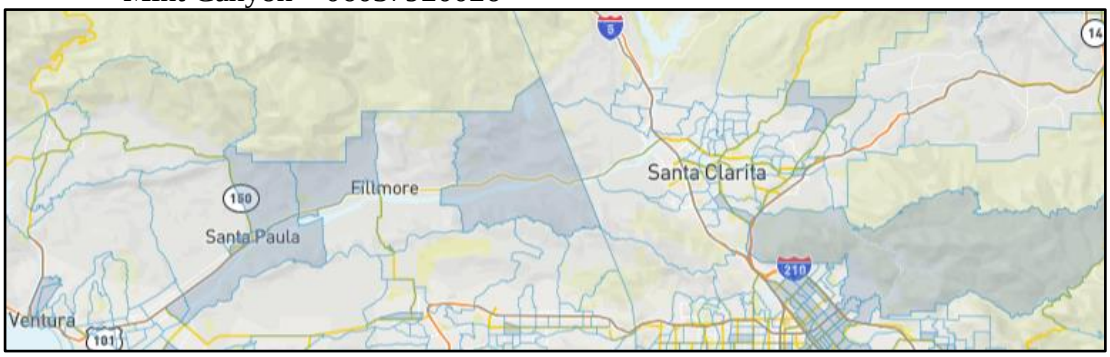


Diagram: Map of the Santa Clara River watershed region in which DAC census tracts are found (CEJST)

This map is taken from the White House Council on Environmental Quality's interactive Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, showing impacted areas in relation to the watershed. These communities will benefit in this project through long-term protection of water resources that prevent future, more costly burdens on taxpayers for expensive waterway remediation efforts or even possible channelization, resulting from invasive vegetation risks to public safety and property from flooding and fire. Wildfire spread related to Arundo embers, such as that of the 2017 Thomas Fire could have been limited, saving the loss of 1,063 community homes and structures, and over $2B in damage to homeowners and businesses. In 2024's atmospheric river storms, erosion to riverbanks that washed out roads, levees, and bridges was also aggravated by Arundo biomass, which trapped debris and slowed waterway movement in Fillmore and Ojai, causing at least $40M in flood damages.

Tribal Benefits – This project includes direct activities as stated above for recruitment of inclusive participation from Tribal organizations in all Watershed Restoration Planning, including demonstrations of respect for existing organizations, time-flexible liaisons with key leaders, and attending at gathering places and events that meet the community where they are. The Santa Clara River watershed rests on the unceded ancestral homelands of the Chumash, Barbareño/Ventureño, and Fernandeño Tataviam peoples, as illustrated below.

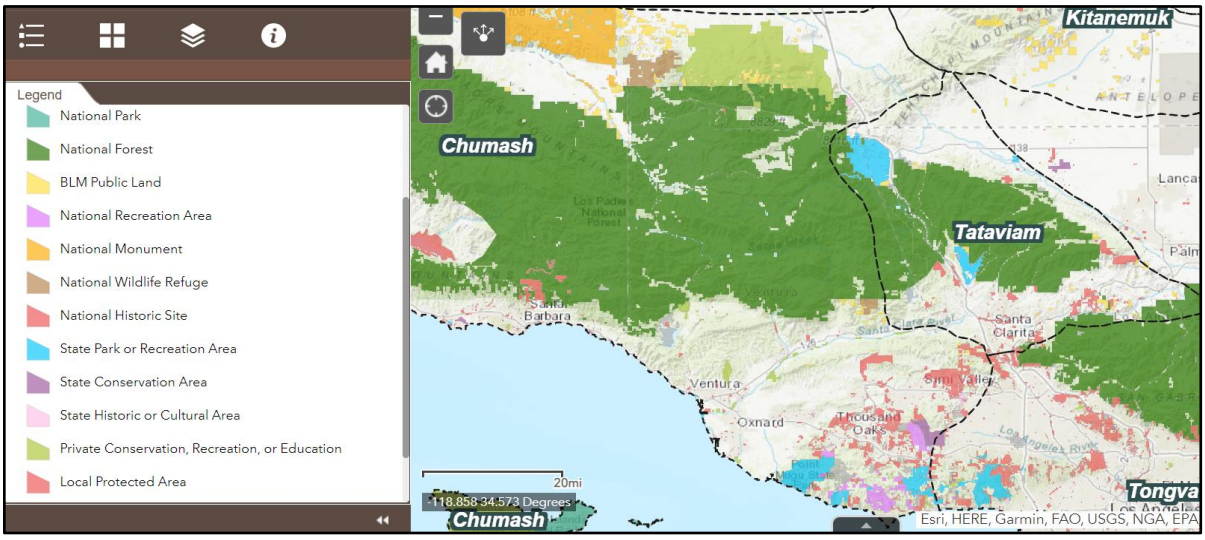


Diagram: Native American Ancestral Lands Map, showing Santa Clara watershed areas (Los Padres ForestWatch)

These relationships take significant time and resources to cultivate. Chumash leadership has stated repeatedly to WWAM that any restoration of the Santa Clara River aligns with their cultural needs (due to transitions in Tribal positions they are currently unable to provide letters of support as a matter of procedure). The Tataviam Land Conservancy is in the process of acquiring significant acreage in the watershed, in efforts to which TreePeople has been an instrumental partner in providing technical assistance to the Tribe, related to site assessments and early project development – including restoration activities with the Tiüvac'a'ai Tribal Conservation Corps (a letter from the Tataviam Land Conservancy is included in proposal attachments). Reliant on ongoing input from the Tataviam, the Watershed Restoration Plan as proposed here will include further development efforts and coordination for supportive public funding, to promote indigenous peoples' self-determination for community climate resilience measures – specifically as related to the introduction of invasive species by colonial populations. Benefits to improved watershed function center squarely in concerns for current Land Back and Water Back initiatives, in which the Collaborative for this project seeks to help return healthy waterways with more equitable access to traditional cultural practices to these Tribes. ###

<u>End of Application – Please see attachments for further Recommended Application Components:</u>

1. **Project Budget**
   - Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources
   - Project Budget Detail and Narrative Attachment (attached on Grants.gov)
2. **Compliance Documents**
   - Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance
   - Required Permits or Approvals
   - Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement
   - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement
   - Uniform Audit Reporting Statement
   - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
   - Official Resolution
   - Letters of Support
3. **Mandatory Federal Forms (attached on Grants.gov)**

Technical Proposal: Opportunity #R23AS00362
WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative:

Cooperative planning to engage disadvantaged and Tribal communities, increase sustainable water supply, and mitigate impacts of climate change and invasive species in Southern California's Santa Clara River Watershed

Section D: Recommended Application Components

Contents

D.2.2.3. Project Budget

Table 1. —Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

FUNDING SOURCES	AMOUNT
Non-Federal Entities	
1. Not applicable / no matching funds required	$ 0
Non-Federal Subtotal	$ 0
REQUESTED RECLAMATION FUNDING	$ 300,000*

** Please see the Budget Narrative Attachment Form submitted in Grants.gov for full budget proposal information, including the following:*

- *2023 TreePeople NICRA Provisional Agreement Letter*
- *2024 TreePeople Indirect Cost Estimate*

D.2.2.4. Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

To allow Reclamation to assess the probable environmental and cultural resources impacts and costs associated with each application, TreePeople presents the following information regarding NEPA, ESA, and NHPA requirements:

• 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 primary goal of this 'project' is to develop a current informal working group into a fully-functioning watershed protection organization able to plan, develop financially, and implement actions intended to reduce impacts of invasive species, promote native riparian vegetation and enhance populations of sensitive and other wildlife species in the Santa Clara River watershed (SCR). Future implementation of such projects (not a part of the current grant request) may result in modest amounts of soil disturbance and particle release to the air, but these will be highly localized, temporary and ameliorated or mitigated under regulatory compliance mandated for each field action.

• 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?

There are approximately 24 T&E species present in the SCR watershed, many of which are riparian-dependent species (e.g. least Bells vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, western pond turtle, arroyo toad, Thompsons big-eared bat and many more), and much of the post-grant restoration actions to be proposed and implemented are designed specifically to 'affect' sensitive species, but in a positive way to enhance their populations by promoting native riparian plants and ecosystem services. Each future project will be planned for minimizing potential disruptions, e.g. active weed control or tree planting out of the reproductive season, avoiding identified nesting sites of sensitive species, etc. and will be attended by agency-approved environmental specialists to monitor field situations.

• *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.*

The entire riparian network is considered Waters of the U.S. and the SCR is the most hydrologically intact watershed in all of southern California. Future actions are designed to enhance retention of water resources in the surface and ground-waters (by reducing evapotranspiration by invasive plants) and particularly to restore Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) that sustain the highest productivity and biodiverse ecosystems within this watershed landscape.

• *When was the water delivery system constructed?*

The SCR mainstream and major tributaries have experienced many diversions and water retention devices since the time of European colonization, according to the Historical Ecology Study of the SCR (Beller et al.) conducted by some of this current programs proponents. Major disruptions were associated with dams for water storage or flood control (Piru Creek: Santa Felicia Dam - 1954, Pyramid Lake - 1968), Lake Castaic - 1967 (for conveyance of water from the State Water Project), Bouquet Reservoir - 1934, San Francisquito Dam - 1924 (failed catastrophically in 1928 with at least 431 people killed), and several smaller facilities, including the Freeman Diversion facility (1991) in Saticoy to recharge aquifers of the Oxnard Plain to resist saltwater intrusion. Currently the primary water purveyors in the SCR are United Water Conservation District for Ventura Co., and Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency for Los Angeles Co., both of which are partners in this program.

• *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.*

This program is not intended to modify existing irrigation system features, unless futures plans are developed to remove or set back abandoned levee structures in some reaches to allow recovery of river meanders (and associated riparian woodlands) and reduce the energy of periodic high flows that might otherwise pose risk to infrastructure and agricultural or residential areas.

• *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.*

None are known.

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

While we routinely communicate with tribal organizations in the SCR watershed to discuss restoration and recreational projects, and past projects have had archeological assessments conducted in associations with such projects, there are few, if any, archeological sites within the floodplain and active channel, particularly owing to the massive erosion and sedimentation associated with the collapse of the St. Francis Dam on San Francisquito Creek in 1928 that obliterated any archeological sites that may have remained at the time.

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

The 'project', and the informal working group that is proposing this program, work closely with agencies that support Disadvantaged Communities, of which there are several DAC communities identified using standards created by the State of California. One socioeconomic factor of great concern is the large numbers of homeless encampments in the river channel; wildfires are common that threaten surrounding communities as well as the inhabitants themselves owing to the high flammability of invasive Arundo. County programs are in place to find alternative housing and services, and we coordinate routinely with the responsible agencies to ensure restoration actions improve safety and do not have serious impacts to the people themselves.

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

There are no known ceremonial sites or federally-recognized tribal lands in the river floodplain, however we cooperate with local Chumash and Tataviam peoples, whose ancestral homelands in this watershed are recognized by the state of California, to incorporate tribal interests in planning and management, including indigenous use of native plants and cultural practices.

• *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?*

A primary objective of this program is to REMOVE invasive species, particularly *Arundo donax* (giant reed) which threatens ecosystem functions, biodiversity and community use of the SCR watershed.

D.2.2.5. Required Permits or Approvals

As this is a planning project, there will be no immediate permits or approvals required. The planning process may include strategies for multi-site or even watershed-wide permitting with state and federal agencies wherever possible. For example, the WWAM consortium is currently engaged in developing a Standard Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) through the California Department of Fish & Wildlife's 'Cutting the Green Tape' initiative which will streamline the process of regulatory compliance for truly beneficial actions to remove invasive species from the SCR floodplain in both counties.

Federal land (Angeles National Forest / USFS) is included in the upper tributaries of the Santa Clara River watershed, where TreePeople works in partnership with the Forest Service on active restoration projects. The watershed area project development sites in this project comply with NEPA assessments conducted by the US Forest Service (USFS). With fire prevention outcomes, SB-901 certification applies, which allows for NEPA to cover California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. Further, TreePeople obtains state clearance through CEQA categorical exemptions for restoration activities. TreePeople and USFS maintain a Memoranda of Understanding for ongoing work on public lands.

D.2.2.6. Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

TreePeople confirms that, at the time of submission of this request to the Bureau of Reclamation, there is no overlap between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated proposals or projects in terms of activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel. This proposal references multiple, funded efforts taking place, but they are complementary to the proposed planning activities, rather than being duplicative and provide no overlap in TreePeople activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel.

The proposal submitted for consideration under this program does not in any way duplicate any TreePeople proposal or project that has been submitted for funding consideration to any other potential funding source, Federal or otherwise. There is no plan as of the time of this grant submission to duplicate this proposal for another funding source, Federal or otherwise.

D.2.2.7. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement

TreePeople staff, contractors, volunteers, and associated watershed group members possess no known actual or potential conflict of interest with the Bureau of Reclamation at the time of this submission. TreePeople takes all appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in its responsibilities with respect to all Federal financial assistance agreements, as well as in the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and subrecipients, as related to all Federal financial assistance agreements. In addition, funds potentially awarded by this grant from the Bureau of Reclamation will not be used for lobbying activities.

TreePeople shall disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the Bureau of Reclamation, should such a conflict arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients. TreePeople also has established internal controls that include procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate possible conflicts of interest. TreePeople shall work

with the Financial Assistance Officer to develop an appropriate means for resolving any potential conflict-of-interest disclosure, should such arise during the life of the award.

D.2.2.8. Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

TreePeople has submitted a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, 2022, under the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Employer Identification Number (EIN) 23-7314838, which is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

D.2.2.9. SF-LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if Applicable)

At the time of submission of the WaterSMART grant request, TreePeople is unaware that a SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities is applicable. Should a grant award be made, TreePeople will review if a Disclosure is applicable, and will provide a completed document to the Bureau of Reclamation during the contracting period.

D.2.2.10. Letters of Support

Please see the Attachments Form submitted in Grants.gov for TreePeople signed documents.

Letters of Support follow, are provided by the following entities:

Citizens Climate Lobby	non profit organization
California Native Plant Society	non-profit organization
Santa Clara River Conservancy	non-profit organization
SCV Eco Alliance	non-profit consortium
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	water supply agency
Stillwater Sciences	watershed science services provider
Tataviam Land Conservancy	tribal landowner
The Nature Conservancy	non-profit landowner
Ventura County Public Works Department	water agency
Ventura County Resource Conservation District	special district
Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology	bird museum and research center

D.2.2.11. Official Resolution -

Please see the Attachments Form submitted in Grants.gov for TreePeople signed documents.

~ The Resolution completes this document. ~

TREEPEOPLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION

Resolution No.:_____

RESOLUTION OF THE Board of Directors (**Title of Governing Body**) OF TreePeople (**non profit**), FOR FUNDING FROM THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, WATER RESOURCES AND PLANNING OFFICE, NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE WATERSMART COOPERATIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, PHASE I.

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Reclamation has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this program within the Department of the Interior, setting up necessary procedures governing application by local agencies, non-profit organizations, and others under the program, and

WHEREAS, the applicant will enter into an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation to carry out the project *TreePeople WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management*;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the TREEPEOPLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

1. Approved the filing of an application for the WATERSMART COOPERATIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT Program; and

2. Certifies that said applicant has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project; and,

3. Certifies that funds under the jurisdiction of TREEPEOPLE are available to begin the project; and

4. Certifies that said applicant will expend work with the Bureau of Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a grant and cooperative agreement, as well as timely expenditure of funds.

5. Appoints DANIEL BERGER or a designee, to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

Approved and adopted the 17 day of Nov, 2023. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution, number_____ was duly adopted by the following roll call vote of the TREEPEOPLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Ayes: ALL Noes: _____ Absent: _____ Abstain: _____

ATTEST:

Signed: _____
Philip Boesch, Esq.
TreePeople Board of Directors, Chair

TATAVIAM
LAND CONSERVANCY
HERITAGE PRESERVATION EDUCATION

08/30/2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

The Tataviam Land Conservancy commits to participate in the Collaborative and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We have been actively involved in pursuing restoration efforts as we believe removal of invasive plants, including *Arundo donax*, can help build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

The Tataviam Land Conservancy supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Luis Cervantes
Executive Director, Tataviam Land Conservancy

PUBLIC WORKS VENTURA COUNTY

COUNTY of VENTURA

Jeff Pratt
Agency Director

David Fleisch
Assistant Director

Central Services
Joan Araujo, Director

Engineering Services
James O'Tousa, Director

Roads & Transportation
Anitha Balan, Director

Water & Sanitation
Joseph Pope, Director

Watershed Protection
Glenn Shephard, Director

December 1, 2023

Ms. Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for TreePeople WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program for Santa Clara River Watershed

Dear Ms. Munoz:

On behalf of the Ventura County Public Works Agency – Watershed Protection (VCPWA-WP), we urge you to support the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program - Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023 - for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative (Collaborative). This request is submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative. We support the application and effort to build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River. Ventura County produced a guidebook on restoration and invasive plants in the Santa Clara River. The Guide to Native and Invasive Streamside Plants: Restoring Riparian Habitats in Ventura County & Along The Santa Clara River in Los Angeles County shows our long term support for education and collaboration on this issue the Santa Clara River.

Consistent with the Ventura County Strategic Plan, the Collaborative could promote community resilience and strengthen our ability to withstand and recover from disaster or adversity in the Santa Clara River watershed. If funded, this Collaborative will support the Ventura County General Plan and Climate Action Plan policies that seek to enable vibrant and sustainable communities that depend upon the Santa Clara River. This proposed program also supports VCPWA-WP mission to develop programs to meet current and future needs in wildfire safety, improved groundwater sustainability and flood control, and improve service to the public through hazard reduction. Also, through watershed wide coordination with government, private sector and nonprofit entities that share in the effort, this program supports our important mission of responsible and efficient use of public funds.

Ventura County has coordinated integrated water management in the Santa Clara River for decades. Removing giant reed (*Arundo donax*) from the Santa Clara River builds climate change resilience and improves quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities along the river. The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with increased climate change induced ecosystem variability. The giant reed infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. This Collaborative, if funded, will help improve watershed conditions.

VCPWA-WP commits to participate in the Collaborative process. VCPWA-WP mission and Ventura County General Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Strategic Plan support the long-term vision of the co-applicants.

- There is support for coordinating watershed-wide stakeholders to develop a long-term management structure by providing data and staff resources to support collaboration on climate change and sustainability, and for planning and implementing projects that address local and regional water issues.
- Ventura County monitors projected climate change impacts; coordinates with local, regional, state, and federal agencies to identify existing and potential projected impacts; and develops strategies to maintain and improve facilities. This supports the vision of developing cross-sectoral partnerships with community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture, and County governments.
- The VCPWA-WP supports building climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River. As the agency responsible for emergency response, VCPWA-WP continuously monitors the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Staff make adaptive improvements and upgrades to public facilities and services, including those resulting from giant reed infestation.
- Ventura County places a high priority on preserving open space lands for recreation, habitat protection, wildlife movement, flood hazard management, public safety, water resource protection, and overall community benefit. This also means preserving our agricultural land and natural environment while ensuring housing availability for all residents. These policies support the vision to engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding integrated river restoration projects – restoration, access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Developing funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts is consistent with County policy that encourages applying for grant funding for climate change adaptation efforts.

The Collaborative will improve and support coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier Santa Clara River watershed for many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits, and stakeholders seeking to remove and manage invasive giant reed from the Santa Clara River. Ventura County continues to invest in sustainable infrastructure and preservation of our natural resources. VCPWA-WP mission to act as a regional leader, providing effective, innovative, and sustainable public works services is consistent with the Collaborative support. We encourage you to fund the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program for Santa Clara River Watershed Collaborative application.

Sincerely,

Glenn Shephard, P.E.
Director,
Watershed Protection

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

BERKELEY · DAVIS · IRVINE · LOS ANGELES · RIVERSIDE · SAN DIEGO · SAN FRANCISCO

SANTA BARBARA · SANTA CRUZ

MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106-6150
PHONE: (805) 893-2911
FAX: (805) 893-8062

http://RIVRLab.msi.ucsb.edu

30 August 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I wish to provide a statement in support of the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative. TreePeople is submitting this proposal in close cooperation with UC Santa Barbara and many other partners including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and regional water agencies.

Our Riparian InVasion Research lab (RIVRLab) at UCSB commits to participate in the Collaborative, following from many years of involvement in restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem function for the Santa Clara River, and recognizing the need for coordination and capacity-building for this watershed. Our work has focused on the impacts and control of invasive plants, particularly giant reed (*Arundo donax*), and we believe comprehensive management of such stressors can help build climate change resilience and improved quality of life for our communities.

The UCSB RIVRLab supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants to:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure;
- Develop multidisciplinary partnerships of NGOs, water purveyors, private landowners, tribal groups, resource agencies, educators and researchers to achieve these goals;
- Build climate change resilience through invasive plant removal and restoration of this River;
- Engage communities in building capacity to plan and finance river restoration projects – invasive species removal and native plant restoration, along with developing access trails, new parks and other open space:
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Tom Dudley
Research Faculty, Marine Science Institute, UC Santa Barbara

August 27, 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

SCV Water commits to participate in the Collaborative and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We have been actively involved in pursuing restoration efforts as we believe removal of invasive plants including *Arundo donax*, can help build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

SCV Water supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will

greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Cole
Assistant General Manager
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency

RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Ventura County

December 4, 2023

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing in support of TreePeople's proposal to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative on behalf of multiple Collaborative partners including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, and many others.

In keeping with our mission and strategic priorities, the Ventura County Resource Conservation District commits to participate in the Collaborative and support restoration-focused coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River. We have actively engaged in restoration efforts for over 25 years because we believe removal of invasive plants, including *Arundo donax*, can help build climate change resilience and improve quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

The Ventura County Resource Conservation District supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

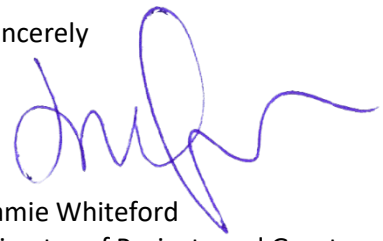
- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture, and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks, and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing and impacts from climate change, such as increased wildfires and flooding, are worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa

Clara River significantly amplifies these strains by exacerbating fires, erosion, and habitat loss within the river. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and these efforts will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement, and capacity building.

Please join us in supporting this application to help TreePeople, their conservation partners, and the Santa Clara River communities, create a healthy and inclusive river ecosystem.

Sincerely



Jamie Whiteford
Director of Projects and Grants
Ventura County Resource Conservation District

California Native Plant Society

Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mntns Chapter
15811 Leadwell St., Van Nuys, CA 91406

Nov. 20, 2023

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

On behalf of the Calif. Native Plant Society (CNPS), Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mntns Chapter, I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others. Our CNPS Chapter supports the Collaborative and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We believe that these restoration efforts to remove invasive plants including *Arundo donax*, will help build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

We fully support the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture, and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, non-profits, and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely
Snowdy Dodson, Chapter Vice President

Dedicated to the preservation of California native flora

Citizens' Climate Lobby
Citizens' Climate Education

August 30, 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

The Santa Clarita chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby commits to participate in the Collaborative, and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We believe removal of invasive plants helps build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

Citizens' Climate Lobby supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not only invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Cher Gilmore

Cher Gilmore
Group Leader, Santa Clarita chapter

August 30, 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

The SCV Eco Alliance commits to participate in the Collaborative, and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We believe removal of invasive plants helps build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

The SCV Eco Alliance supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not only invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Cher Gilmore

Cher Gilmore
Facilitator

Eco Alliance Member Organizations

California Native Plant Society

Cal Trout

Citizens Climate Lobby

College of the Canyons / Hands on Earth

College of the Canyons / Sustainable Development Committee

Eco Chicos Canyon High School

Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area / CA State Parks

Saint Francis Dam National Memorial Foundation

Santa Clara River Conservancy

Santa Clarita Community Hiking Club

Santa Clarita Environmental Education Consortium

Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment (SCOPE)

Sierra Club

Southern Steelhead Coalition

Tiüvac'a'ai Tribal Conservation Corps

TreePeople

August 30, 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to support the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy (my organization), Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and others.

The Santa Clara River Conservancy (SCRC) is excited about the potential represented in the application and will enthusiastically participate in the Collaborative. SCRC has been keenly aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in the context of historically disparate and under resourced efforts to restore this magnificent southern California watershed. We have been actively involved in invasive plant removal and habitat restoration efforts. The removal of invasive plants such as the highly impactful *Arundo donax* (Arundo), can help build climate change resilience and improve critical habitat and ultimately quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

The SCRC supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and active habitat restoration.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning and funding for riparian restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also public access trails and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, riparian habitat restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands and impacts on the Santa Clara River watershed are ever-increasing, with population pressure and worsening climate change impacts. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these stressors. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement, and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Shawn W. Kelly, Executive Director

Stillwater Sciences

2855 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 400, Berkeley, CA 94705

phone 510.848.8098

August 30, 2024

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

Stllwater Sciences commits to participate in the Collaborative, and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We have been actively involved in pursuing restoration efforts as we believe removal of invasive plants including *Arundo donax*, can help build climate change resilience and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

Stillwater Sciences supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

Berkeley, CA
510.848.8098

Arcata, CA
707.822.9607

Davis, CA
530.756.7550

Morro Bay, CA
805.570.7499

Los Angeles, CA
213.336.0001

Ventura, CA
213.336.0001

Portland, OR
503.267.9006

Boulder, CO
720.656.2330

Fort Collins, CO
720.656.2330

www.stillwatersci.com

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Bruce K. Orr, PhD
Senior Ecologist/Principal

WESTERN FOUNDATION OF VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY

439 CALLE SAN PABLO, CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA 93012

TEL: (805) 388-9944 FAX: (805) 388-8663
e-mail: wfvz@wfvz.org
http://www.wfvz.org

29 November 2023

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to support the application to the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the *Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative* submitted by TreePeople. This proposal is being submitted on behalf of multiple partners including our organization, the WFVZ Bird Museum and Research Center (WFVZ).

The WFVZ commits to participate in the Collaborative, and has been involved in working on the Santa Clara River since 2010. Thus, we have long been aware of the need for improved coordination and capacity-building along the length of the river to fully restore the watershed. My organization has conducted annual monitoring of bird populations on the entire river, and especially birds' responses to restoration through removal of invasive plants (especially *Arundo donax*). These efforts have already improved bird species richness and densities where native plants have become reestablished following Arundo removal, and we are also finding that new plantings can be done in a way to add climate change resilience to the river, and improve quality of life for local people through improved access to the river. We know that further Arundo removal would greatly assist with providing trails, parks and other natural spaces for under-resourced communities living along the river, and could eventually contribute to the reestablishment of a historic native salmonid fishery, which would benefit fish-dependent wildlife as well as indigenous tribe members still using the watershed.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANT RECIPIENT!

The WFVZ thus supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants to:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the
  Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.
- And develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The dominating growth of Arundo along the river greatly impacts the watershed, and prevents its full, healthy use. Our organization has seen first-hand – and collected and published data on – the remarkable resurgence of biodiversity that comes with its removal. We also have witnessed the desire and excitement that local human communities feel when they have improved access to their river. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Thank you for supporting this proposal!

Sincerely,

Linnea Hall

Linnea S. Hall, Ph.D.
Executive Director and Avian Conservation Biologist

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Santa Clara River and Coast Project
Ventura Field Office
1094 E. Main Street, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93001

tel [805 642-0345]
nature.org
nature.org/california

November 20, 2023

Christina Munoz
Bureau of Reclamation
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Munoz:

I am writing to lend support for the application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (Phase I for Fiscal Year 2023) for the Santa Clara River Watershed Regional Climate Collaborative submitted by TreePeople on behalf of multiple partners in the Collaborative including the Santa Clara River Conservancy, Stillwater Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, Ventura County Resource Conservation District and many others.

The Nature Conservancy commits to participate in the Collaborative and has been aware for many years of the need for coordination and capacity-building along all 116 miles of the Santa Clara River in efforts to restore the watershed. We have been actively involved in pursuing restoration efforts as we believe removal of invasive plants including *Arundo donax*, can help build climate change resilience, facilitate species recovery, improve instream flows, reduce wildfire risk and improved quality of life, especially for under-resourced communities that live along the river.

The Nature Conservancy has conserved over 4,707 acres, about 21 river miles, within the Santa Clara River floodplain through fee acquisitions and conservation easements. Over 1500 acres of the floodplain are being actively restored within the lower watershed. These multi-benefit restoration investments are only durable if we are able to leverage the collaborative effort of multiple partners across jurisdictions as proposed in this grant.

The Nature Conservancy supports the long-term vision of the co-applicants:

- Coordinate watershed-wide stakeholders and develop a long-term management structure.
- Develop cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve these goals – between community-based organizations, municipalities, town councils, water providers, special districts, small business, academia, Tribes, private landowners, agriculture and County governments.
- Build climate change resilience through removal of invasive plants and restoration of the Santa Clara River.
- Engage vulnerable communities to build capacity in planning for and funding river restoration projects - not just invasive species removal and native plant restoration but also access trails, new parks and other open space development.

- Develop funding strategies and funder cultivation for large-scale invasive plant removal, river restoration and other project development efforts.

The demands on the Santa Clara River system are increasing, with climate change worsening conditions. The Arundo infestation plaguing the Santa Clara River significantly amplifies these strains. Many watershed groups, water agencies, local governments, growers, nonprofits and stakeholders seek to remove and manage invasive Arundo in the Santa Clara River and will greatly benefit from additional coordination, community engagement and capacity building to create a healthier river ecosystem.

Peter Dixon
Restoration Project Manager, Santa Clara River and Coast Project
The Nature Conservancy
Peter.dixon@tnc.org