



## 11. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

### 11.1. LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

The Plan was developed through a comprehensive stakeholder effort involving local and regional public agencies, environmental organizations, academic institutions, members of the public, and state and federal agencies. A formal organizational structure for stakeholder involvement has been in place for over a decade with active participation on regional watershed programs. This level of involvement and strong collaborative stakeholder relationships have made this Plan possible and will continue with Plan implementation and updates.

Opportunities to be involved occur at multiple levels:

- The Newport Bay Watershed Stakeholder Group will have opportunities to provide input to the Plan and will receive regular updates on the Plan and its implementation. This group will also consider the recommendations of the Newport Bay Management Committee.
- The Newport Bay Watershed Management Committee will meet to consider input from the Newport Bay Watershed Stakeholder Group, evaluate the Plan and project performance, make recommendations for changes where needed and finalize its recommendation to the Newport Bay Watershed Executive Committee.
- The Newport Bay Watershed Executive Committee will receive the Plan progress updates and recommendations, consider additional stakeholder recommendations, and make policy decisions for the Plan where necessary.

Although no obstacles to implementation have been identified at this point, policies, regulations, and watershed conditions will change and conflicts may arise in the future. The provision for stakeholder involvement at all levels during implementation is intended to address potential conflicts early on so that implementation is not hindered, and the highest level of benefit is received. Through this process, all stakeholders will be afforded the opportunity to participate in Plan implementation and provide input on water resource and watershed management decisions.

### 11.2 STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Effective coordination with state and federal agencies is equally important to the success of the Plan as coordination with local land use and water resource agencies, stakeholders, and disadvantaged communities. During the development of the Plan preparation, members of the Newport Bay Watershed Management group met with staff from the California Water Board, DWR, and the Santa Ana Regional Water Board. This coordination will continue and expand as the Plan is implemented and future updates are made.

Several state and federal agencies currently participate on the Newport Bay Watershed committees:

- Newport Bay Watershed Executive Committee: CDFG and the Santa Ana Regional Water Board
- Newport Bay Watershed Management Committee: the Corps' Los Angeles District, EPA, California Coastal Conservancy, CDFG, Santa Ana Regional Water Board, and the California Department of Transportation

The Newport Bay Watershed Management group also coordinates with California State Parks, the agency responsible for Crystal Cove State Park and Corona del Mar State Beach.

A number of the regional and local plans and proposed projects have been prepared by or in coordination with agencies such as the Corps, CDFG, and the California Coastal Commission. These and other state and federal agencies will be involved in Plan implementation as necessary for regulatory requirements, cooperation for collaborative projects, and communication between project proponents. The Newport Bay Watershed Management group will continue to involve state and federal agencies in planning meetings, implementation strategies, and actions to carry out projects.

### 11.3 INVOLVEMENT OF DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

The City of Santa Ana was chosen for targeted outreach to the disadvantaged communities because it is located in two of the three WMAs in Orange County. This outreach was conducted from 2008 through 2010 and specifically targeted the 92701 ZIP code of Santa Ana because there is only one half acre of open space for every thousand residents in this area. In addition, it has the second highest child obesity rate in California with cities of population over 100,000. The City of Santa Ana has neighborhood associations that are officially recognized by the City as citizen participation groups. These neighborhood associations hold monthly or quarterly meetings to address the particular needs of their neighborhood.

Targeted outreach efforts began in the Lyon Street Neighborhood Association located in Santa Ana. Residents in this neighborhood identified their main concern as the lack of parks in their community. The Lyon Street Neighborhood expressed interest in participating in the IRWMP process but there were other priorities that took precedence such as employment, housing, traffic safety and education. Although the identified stakeholders were unable to participate, engaging in this neighborhood forum was a success because a community need was identified. The County of Orange realized that this type of targeted outreach effort would help to involve other disadvantaged communities.

Armed with this new insight, an outreach plan was developed and implemented to ensure that these targeted stakeholders would get involved and stay involved. The County of Orange researched other IRWM groups that were successful in outreach to disadvantaged communities in California. County staff then identified and contacted organizations that were already engaged in

this type of targeted outreach in other parts of the state: the Environmental Justice Coalition, Urban Semillas, the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Staff gathered information from these organizations to determine the methods that were being used to conduct targeted outreach. This research proved that successful outreach was tied to partnering with existing community outreach groups. Community groups are an important connection because the members are a part of the community and understand the needs.

### 11.3.1 Latino Health Access

The County of Orange began its targeted outreach with Latino Health Access (LHA), which is a nonprofit organization founded in 1993 to help meet the multiple health needs of the Latino community. LHA assists in improving the quality of health and life of uninsured, under-served people by providing them with high-quality preventive care services and educational programs. LHA emphasizes full patient participation in health-related decisions. LHA lacks a direct connection to water resource issues; however its in-depth community involvement, specifically through a program called Pasa La Voz (which in English means Pass on the Voice). This program focuses on civic engagement and increased political participation by actively involving community members to help them become a valuable networking resource.

On February 7, 2009, County of Orange staff provided an informational presentation at an all-day workshop with members of the community park board. The presentation was conducted in Spanish and included information on Measure M2 and Proposition 84 IRWM grant opportunities, examples of regional water projects completed in other areas with disadvantaged communities in California, and fund raising ideas. A brain-storming session ensued, and community outreach opportunities were discussed.

As a result of the County of Orange's targeted outreach, LHA submitted a project for inclusion in this IRWMP. The project involves the development of a pocket park in the 92701 ZIP code of Santa Ana, the most park-poor area of the city. The park will include a basketball court, a playground, a community center with a multipurpose room, a full industrial kitchen, a small office space, and a walking path. Located two blocks from downtown Santa Ana and next to Spectrum condominiums, the LHA park and community center will be within walking distance for most residents. In addition, LHA plans to offer nutrition education and physical activities, English as a Second Language instruction, and mental health support programs at the community center. The community center will be seeking Silver Certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, which means that the construction will have to include water-use efficiency among other environmentally responsible measures.

On April 11, 2009, County of Orange staff participated in a site cleanup event and brought in-kind assistance in the form of tools such as shovels, rakes, hoes, and trash bags. About 20 volunteers showed up to help with the cleanup. Previous cleanup efforts had been successful due to the lack of tools. Support for this project has continued through the provision of in-kind services, such as

assistance from County of Orange LEED-certified staff and support for local fundraising events. The development of this pocket park will help fulfill the need for a park that was originally identified by the Lyon Street neighborhood.

### 11.3.2 California Latino Water Coalition

In an attempt to further connect with disadvantaged communities and the organizations that serve them, Orange County staff recently attended an event held by the California Latino Water Coalition (CLWC) at the OCWD offices. The CLWC advocates improving California's water supply today to ensure economic prosperity for tomorrow. The group believes that additional water resources are directly linked to the creation of jobs, stability, and opportunity throughout California. The CLWC engages in public education, outreach, and events designed to generate support and understanding of water-related issues. The CLWC is a statewide coalition of influential Latino leaders that supports the development of the San Joaquin–Sacramento Delta environmental, conveyance and sustainability solutions along with additional water resources in California. With actor-comedian Paul Rodriguez as chairperson, the organization's goal is to demonstrate the need for a comprehensive statewide water infrastructure plan, a program that includes groundwater and surface water storage capabilities, conservation and water resources stewardship, water recycling, and desalinization.

In the future, OC Watersheds also plans to provide outreach to disadvantaged communities about drinking water quality standards. The quality of drinking water throughout Orange County is good. However, Orange County residents who have emigrated from areas with poor water quality where bottled water was a necessity may have concerns about drinking water that comes straight from the tap. In response to this concern, OC Watersheds staff will design a program to educate disadvantaged communities about the safety of the drinking water in Orange County with the goal of reducing the consumption of bottled water in DACs and the detrimental effects of bottled water production and consumption on the watershed.