



# SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED

## What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land on which rain and snow falls and ultimately collects and drains into a single larger body of water, such as a river, lake, or ocean. Watersheds come in all sizes and are separated by ridges and hills that are called the drainage divide. These drainage basins consist of all surface water including rivers, lakes, streams, reservoirs and wetlands as well as all the underlying groundwater. Watersheds supply us with water for drinking, agriculture, industry, power generation, recreation, and habitat for fish and wildlife. The Santa Ana River Watershed drains a 2,650 square-mile area and includes portions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles counties. It is home to more than 6 million people. The Santa Ana River flows more than 100 miles and drains the largest coastal stream system in Southern California.



## Five Easy Ways To Help

- Conserve water** Find out what your water footprint is. Are there simple ways you could use less water through life-style changes?
- Use yard care products sparingly** Excess fertilizers and pesticides can drain into the waterways and cause harm.
- Get involved - volunteer** Find volunteer events and help restore a waterway. Join your local watershed group.
- Maintain your car** Leaking oil, gasoline, coolants & antifreeze end up in storm drains going untreated to nearby lakes and streams.
- Scoop your dog's poop** Harmful bacteria from dog poop contaminates waterways and makes water unsafe for swimming.

## One Water One Watershed

The Santa Ana River Watershed is home to the concept and plan called "One Water One Watershed" or OWOW. OWOW reflects a comprehensive view of the watershed and water resources. It is an integral view encompassing all agencies and organizations in the watershed that looks at all types of water (local surface and groundwater, imported, storm water, wastewater) as components of a single water resource, inextricably linked to land use and habitat, and a part of the watershed's natural hydrology. By this view, new water solutions can be developed that are integrated, multi-beneficial and collaborative.



## Endangered Species

Water provides a home to one third of all threatened and endangered species. Many species live in the watershed or rely on it as a source water. Being aware of water conservation and preventing pollution can protect habitat and help these endangered species survive. By protecting the watershed these endangered species may be able to survive for future generations to see.

MOJAVE DESERT

## Groundwater Recharge

The Santa Ana River and its tributaries provide winter stream flows which are diverted to percolation basins to recharge the groundwater and aquifers throughout the watershed. This water, stored underground, serves as a major source of drinking water and other urban needs. These critical recharge facilities have improved water levels and water quality for more than 100 years. Imported water, piped in from outside the watershed, is also used to recharge our local aquifers.

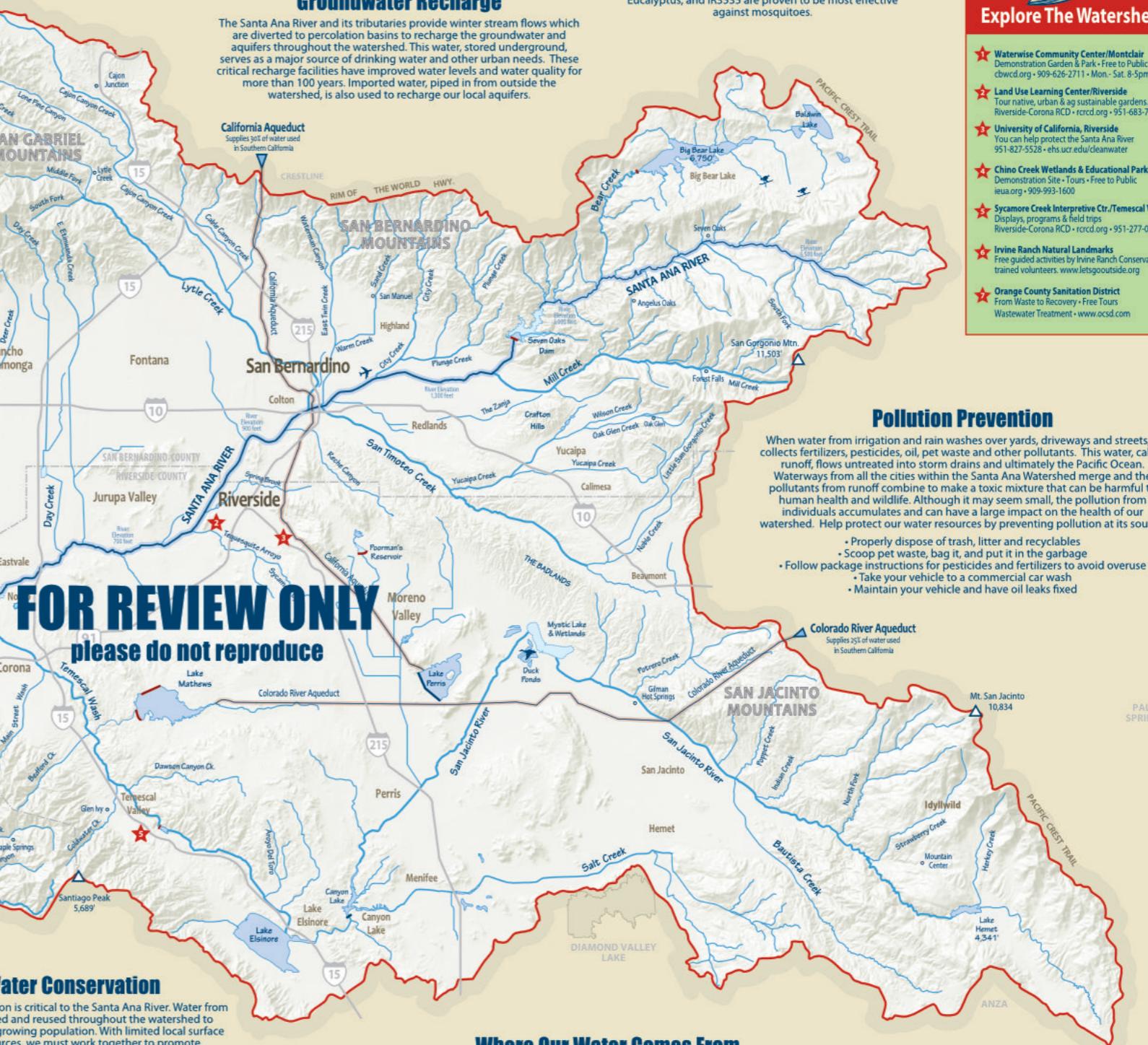
## Protect Yourself from Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes are especially active in summer months. Larvae develop in standing and slow-moving water. It takes as little as five days for eggs to develop into biting adults. Wear light colored long-sleeve shirts/pants. Avoid areas with heavy vegetation and remember the peak biting times are dusk and dawn. Repellents with DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and IR3535 are proven to be most effective against mosquitoes.



## Explore The Watershed

- Waterwise Community Center/Montclair Demonstration Garden & Park • Free to Public cbwcd.org • 909-626-2711 • Mon. - Sat. 8-5pm
- Land Use Learning Center/Riverside Tour native, urban & ag sustainable gardens. Riverside-Corona RCD • rccrd.org • 951-683-7691
- University of California, Riverside You can help protect the Santa Ana River 951-827-5528 • ehs.ucr.edu/cleanwater
- Chino Creek Wetlands & Educational Park Demonstration Site • Tours • Free to Public ieua.org • 909-993-1600
- Sycamore Creek Interpretive Ctr./Temescal Valley Displays, programs & field trips Riverside-Corona RCD • rccrd.org • 951-277-0219
- Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks Free guided activities by Irvine Ranch Conservancy trained volunteers www.letsgetoutside.org
- Orange County Sanitation District From Waste to Recovery • Free Tours Wastewater Treatment • www.ocsd.com



## Water Conservation

Water conservation is critical to the Santa Ana River. Water from the river is used and reused throughout the watershed to supply an ever-growing population. With limited local surface water resources, we must work together to promote responsibility and eliminate water-waste. Help ensure the availability of water for our children by considering your water footprint and finding new ways to use water more efficiently.

## Wastewater Management

Sewer systems that collect and treat wastewater are essential to the health of our watershed. These systems protect public health, the environment, and wildlife found in creeks and rivers. More and more wastewater is now being recycled and turned into a valuable water resource.

- Don't flush unused medications – instead find a collection site or take back event.
- Avoid sewer backups - keep fats, oils and grease out of the kitchen drain.
- "Flushable wipes" don't break down like toilet paper — only pee, poop and paper down the toilet!

## Where Our Water Comes From

Southern California imports a little more than half its water from hundreds of miles away. About 25 percent of the region's water comes via the 242-mile Colorado River Aqueduct which travels from Lake Havasu on the California-Arizona border, to Lake Mathews near Riverside. Water supplies from Northern California are drawn from the crossroads of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and transported south through the 444-mile California Aqueduct. Local water agencies supplement imported supplies by supporting local resource development with programs like conservation, water recycling and groundwater recovery, which make up about 45 percent of the Southland's supply.

## Sustainable Landscaping

The decisions we make in our gardens can contribute to the health of our watershed. Anyone with access to a bit of land can help protect our waterways and sustain our water supply.

- Allow gardens to capture, hold, and infiltrate rainwater
- Prevent pollution by diverting, slowing, and filtering stormwater through mulch and appropriate plantings
- Use locally adapted plants that need little irrigation, bloom beautifully, and provide habitat for birds and pollinators



Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority  
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City of Santa Ana  
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Southern Region Vector Control Districts  
northwestvcd.org • ovector.org • wmvcd.org