

February 14, 2002

Approved

Donald Wolfe

TO: Brian T. Sasaki

Concur 2/15/02

FROM: Tom Hoagland
Land Development Division

TWH

**NATURAL RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN ON PORTIONS OF
THE SANTA CLARA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES**

Recommendation

Approve the maintenance and design policies set forth in the attached report titled "Recommended Policies for Implementation of the Natural River Management Plan (NRMP) for a Portion of the Santa Clara River and its Tributaries".

Background

We have been working with the Valencia Company, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the State Department of Fish and Game to develop policies for a no-maintenance channel on a portion of the Santa Clara River and several tributaries in the vicinity of the I-5 freeway. The purpose of the NRMP is to arrive at a channel design concept that meets flood control requirements, while resolving the difficulties traditional channel designs present in obtaining the necessary permits from the regulatory agencies.

The segments of rivers covered under this plan are (1) the Santa Clara River from approximately 0.4 miles upstream of the California Aqueduct to approximately 0.5 miles upstream of the confluence with Castaic Creek; (2) the Santa Clara South Fork from Magic Mountain Parkway to the Santa Clara River; (3) the mouth of Bouquet Canyon Creek, and; (4) San Francisquito Creek from approximately 0.4 miles upstream of the Copper Hill Drive bridge to the Santa Clara River. (See attached map.)

The design and maintenance guidelines are set forth in the attached manual titled "Recommended Policies for Implementation" (Policies Manual). A Copy of Master 1603 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (Notification No. 5-502-97) is included in this manual detailing the California Department of Fish and Game's streambed conditions.

Design of Channels

Under the Plan, a Mannings "n" value of 0.085 is to be used for the design of channels, bridges and side drains. A Mannings value of 0.085 accommodates a design that allows for the growth of vegetation in the river. Therefore, routine maintenance is not necessary in the portion of the river between levees. UngROUTED rock rip rap is to be utilized in the design of levees where velocities and scour potential allow for their use. Adequate easements alongside the levees will be preserved for emergency repairs and to provide invert access to the sidedrains and bridges.

Maintenance of Levees and Side Drains

Routine maintenance of the levees and side drains will be performed in accordance with our existing practices and the Fish and Game Section 1600 agreement included in the "Policies Manual". The use of herbicides to control vegetation in the ungrouted rock rip rap is authorized with proper handling. It is intended that the areas in the river, where vegetation is allowed to grow, would be dedicated to a conservancy. An agreement between the conservancy and our Department is required prior to the dedication.

Maintenance of Bridges

The clearing of vegetation 50 feet upstream and downstream of bridges using D9 tractors, or equivalent, is authorized to maintain the hydraulic capacity of the bridges; however, whenever practicable, maintenance activities should be conducted from the bridge deck. In order to avoid disturbing nesting birds, maintenance is to be done between August 1 and March 15 for bridges on the Santa Clara River upstream of McBean Parkway, and on San Francisquito Creek, and between September 1 and March 15 for bridges on the Santa Clara River downstream of Mc Bean Parkway.

Maintenance of Water Quality Basins

To address the impact of urban pollution on the habitat in the river, certain water quality basins will be constructed upstream of major side drains and planted with wetlands plants. Maintenance of these facilities is to be done between August 1 and March 15. No further agreements are necessary for the maintenance of these facilities. Detailed design and maintenance guidelines of these basins are set forth in the "Policies Manual" and in the "Drainage Water Quality Management Plan," approved by Environmental Programs Division.

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Notification to the Regulating Agencies

A simplified notification procedure was developed to expedite the approval of the regulatory agencies for routine and emergency maintenance activities to allow the County to "piggyback" on Valencia Company's Master 1603 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement and the California Incidental Take Permit for our individual projects or activities. Samples of the necessary notification forms are included in the "Policies Manual."

Future Expansion

The new design and maintenance practices may also be applied to reaches of the Santa Clara River in the upcoming Newhall Ranch development and on Castaic Creek and its tributaries after a study of various site-specific conditions, provided that the proper approvals are obtained from the regulatory agencies. We are currently evaluating soil cement as a possible option in lieu of un-grouted rip rap.

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to Dennis Hunter at Extension 4995.

 DH:jmw
LD-DP:SUBDIVSNPKDINRMPS

Attach.

cc: Deputy Directors (Alexander, Hartley, Sasaki)
Design (Kumar)
Flood Maintenance (Cadena, Doudar)
Operational Services (Ondrozeck)
Road Maintenance (Higley)
Water Resources (Izadi)
Watershed Management (Kubomoto, Grant)
Land Development (Hoagland, Hunter)