

Section 1: Introduction

This section provides an introduction to the Region covered by this Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP), the Stakeholders participating in development of this IRWMP, and the Stakeholder process utilized as part of this IRWMP development.

1.1 Introduction to the Region

The Santa Clara River Watershed (Watershed), consisting of approximately 1,634 square miles, contains the largest natural river remaining in Southern California. Areas located in the Angeles National Forest portion of the Watershed are home to the California condor and other threatened, rare, and endangered species. The Santa Clara River travels through two counties: 1) Los Angeles and 2) Ventura; efforts are underway between entities in the two (2) counties to collaboratively address issues of mutual concern and benefit, such as water quality improvement. These collaborative efforts are further discussed in Section 5.1.2 (Institutional Structure for Plan Implementation) of this IRWMP.

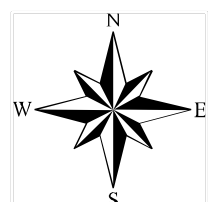
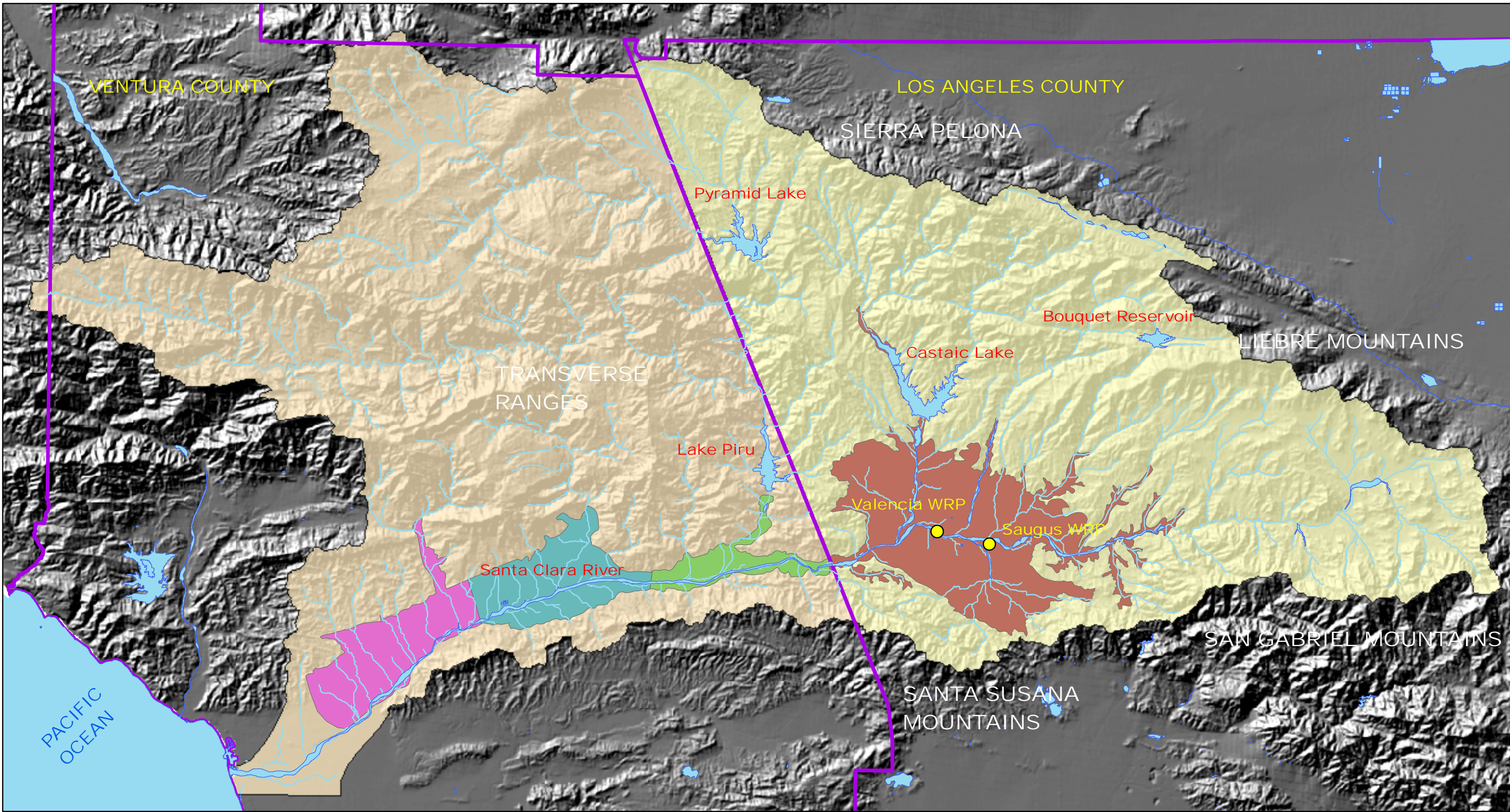
The Region included in this IRWMP is the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed (please see Figures 1.1-1 and 1.1-2). The Upper Basin of the Santa Clara River, as defined for the purposes of this IRWMP, is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains to the south and southeast, the Santa Susana Mountains to the southwest, the Liebre Mountains and Transverse Ranges to the northeast and northwest, and westward to the Ventura County Line. The Upper Santa Clara River Watershed is a logical region for integrated regional water management due to its history of cooperative water management, the topography and geography of the Region and the similarity of water issues facing agencies in the Region. There is no overlap of this Region with any other integrated water management planning region. The Regional Water Management Group (RWMG), made up of local agencies (please see Table 1.3-1), recognizes that watersheds are not defined by political boundaries and future efforts to protect and manage water and watersheds in the Region must include representatives of jurisdictions (e.g., other counties or municipalities) outside of the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed. Therefore, representatives of the Region are working with the Stakeholders and agencies in the lower reaches of the Watershed, which lie in Ventura County, to include them in the IRWMP planning process and to coordinate efforts to protect the Watershed.










Upper Santa Clara River

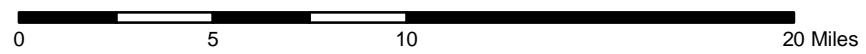
The Region represents an area of approximately 654 square miles. The Region is currently not included in the Lower Santa Clara Watershed Region as it was defined by the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC). The WCVC began its IRWMP planning effort in 2005, and that IRWMP region included public agencies and other entities wholly contained within Ventura County. Thus, the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed was not included as part of that IRWMP effort. During 2006, discussions took place between various parties located across all parts of the Santa Clara River Watershed to ascertain if the entire Watershed could be incorporated into the WCVC IRWMP.

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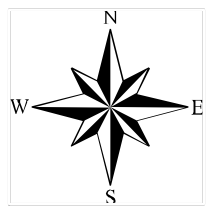
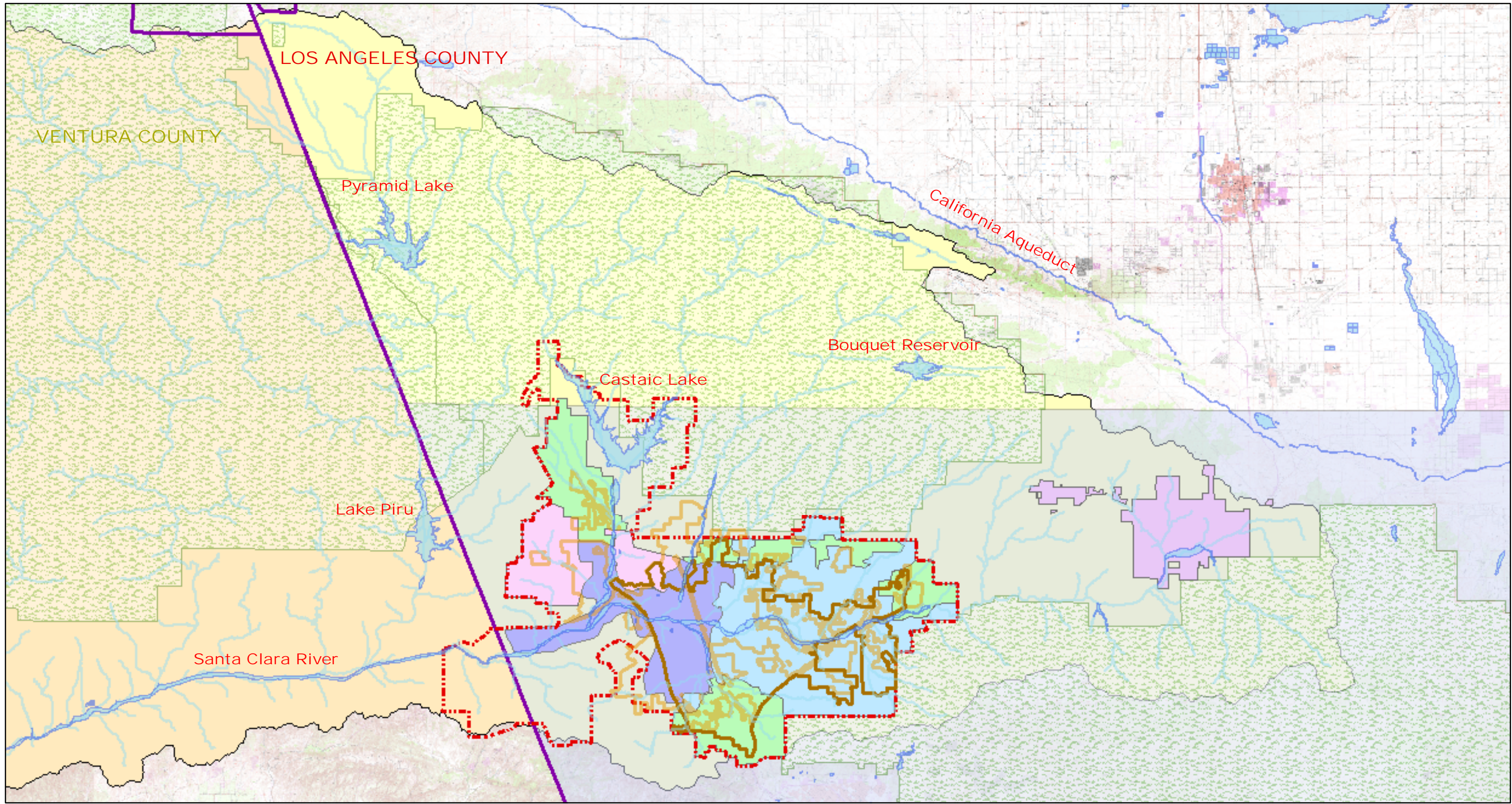


Legend

 Water Reclamation Plants	Watershed
Groundwater Basin	 Lower Santa Clara River
 EASTERN	 Upper Santa Clara River
 PIRU	
 FILLMORE	
 SANTA PAULA	



**Figure 1.1-1
Upper Santa Clara River Watershed
Hydrologic Features**



Legend			
Watershed	Valencia Water Company	US Forrest Service Boundary	LA County Flood Control Boundary
Upper Santa Clara River	LA County WaterWorks District 36	LA County Flood Control Boundary	Lower Santa Clara River
Santa Clarita	Santa Clarita Water Company		
Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District	Newhall County Water District		
CLWA	LA County WaterWorks District 37		



**Figure 1.1-2
Upper Santa Clara River
Watershed/IRWMP Region**

At the time of these discussions, the lower watershed entities were quite advanced in their IRWMP process, and the upper watershed entities had joined together to submit a “functional equivalent” IRWMP application. The WCVV determined it would continue its IRWMP process without including the upper watershed in order to be eligible for Proposition 50 Step 2 implementation grant funding. The upper watershed entities therefore initiated a separate IRWMP process for the Upper Santa Clara River Region.

Despite the separate planning efforts, agencies and other stakeholders from the Los Angeles County portion of the Watershed regularly attend and provide input to meetings of the WCVV; likewise agencies and other stakeholders from the Ventura County portion of the Watershed have been invited to, have attended, and have provided input to meetings of the Upper Santa Clara River IRWMP. So, although no formal decision has been made as to whether or not the two processes will eventually be joined, both parties are making an effort to be aware of each individual plan’s content, goals, objectives, and processes.

1.1.1 Relationship with Neighboring IRWMPs

There are three nearby areas that are currently represented by, or are in the process of developing IRWMPs. These consist of the Antelope Valley IRWMP in the Lahontan Hydrologic Region, the Greater Los Angeles County Region IRWMP in the Los Angeles-Ventura Hydrologic Region; and as described earlier, the WCVV IRWMP, also within the Los Angeles-Ventura Region. These three plan areas nearly surround the Region (Kern County areas to the north of the upper watershed are not currently covered by an IRWMP). Therefore, the Upper Santa Clara River IRWMP plays an integral role in completing watershed analyses for the Los Angeles-Ventura Hydrologic Region and providing an important link to the neighboring Lahontan Hydrologic Region. The collective efforts of these interconnected IRWMPs will not only benefit their respective regions, but each other and the watersheds of Southern California as a whole.

1.2 Purpose of the Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

This IRWMP is the product of a collaborative stakeholder process conducted under the direction of the RWMPG. This IRWMP reflects the unique needs of a diverse region, the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed. It encompasses the City of Santa Clarita, the towns of Castaic, Stevenson Ranch, West Ranch, Agua Dulce and Acton in unincorporated Los Angeles County, various other unincorporated community areas in Los Angeles County, open space areas of the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, and portions of the Angeles National Forest. As of the 2000 Census, the Watershed is home to more than 220,000 people.

This IRWMP effort is funded entirely by local participating agencies. A number of individuals have contributed to the development of this IRWMP, including representatives of local agencies, city and county staff, and consultants. This IRWMP is a comprehensive plan that primarily addresses Region-wide water management and related issues. This IRWMP complies with the State Guidelines for an IRWMP and provides for integration of project and program implementation strategies which best address the needs and objectives of the Region.

The purpose of this IRWMP is to integrate planning and implementation efforts and facilitate regional cooperation with the goals of reducing water demands, improving operational efficiency, increasing water supply, improving water quality, and promoting resource stewardship over the long term. An objective of this IRWMP is to build on a long-standing foundation of cooperation and existing efforts of the local entities and others such as the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Collaborative Process. The intention of this IRWMP is not to duplicate existing and ongoing plans, but to better integrate these efforts and utilize the results and findings of existing plans to put forward the projects needed to address local objectives.

This IRWMP complies with and incorporates relevant sections of Proposition 50, Proposition 84, and IRWMP principles and criteria for integrated water management planning as set forth in the guidelines for these propositions. In addition, development of this IRWMP includes the following:

- An inclusive and participatory public involvement process to ensure meaningful input (Section 1 and Appendix B)
- Appropriate level of scientific watershed assessment information (Section 2)
- Integration and coordination of planning with other agencies and entities (Sections 2 and 8)
- Identification of multiple issues and objectives and potential solutions (Sections 3 and 4)
- A process for ongoing decision-making (governance structure: Section 5)
- Phased implementation and staging of resources (Section 5)
- Ongoing monitoring of project and plan implementation (Section 5)
- A means for adaptive planning and management (Section 5)
- A long-term perspective (Sections 5, 6, and 7)

This IRWMP provides integration of projects that protect the natural resources of the Region. This IRWMP identifies additional projects that are critical to achieving Regional objectives.

1.3 Stakeholder Involvement

A broad stakeholder outreach process was crucial to ensure that this IRWMP identifies local issues, reflects local needs, promotes the formation of partnerships, and encourages coordination with State and Federal agencies. One of the benefits of this planning process is that it brings together a broad array of groups into a forum to discuss and better understand shared needs and opportunities. Residents of the Region are facing rapidly changing

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THIS IRWMP:

- Integrate water and watershed-related planning efforts
- Facilitate regional cooperation
- Reduce water demand
- Improve operational efficiency
- Enhance water supply
- Improve water quality
- Promote resource stewardship

conditions, mainly related to urban growth, that create challenges in water resources management and the stewardship of environmental resources. Agencies and planning jurisdictions must work closely together in order to assure the delivery of clean, reliable water supplies while maintaining the quality of life and environmental values in the Region. If sufficient planning is not undertaken, the consequences for the Region are likely to be serious.

This IRWMP benefits from active participation by a wide range of Stakeholders. Members of the RWMG and other Stakeholders have participated in periodic Stakeholder meetings, reviewed draft document materials, and provided extensive collaborative input to shape the formation of this IRWMP. By participating in Stakeholder meetings to develop this IRWMP, participants have created opportunities for establishing and developing mutually beneficial partnerships. Participating Stakeholders are listed below in Section 1.3.2.

1.3.1 Regional Water Management Group

As described earlier, agencies in the Region recognized the needs and benefits of regional cooperation and planning. The RWMG was initially established by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that prescribed the preliminary roles and responsibilities for the RWMG including complying with the IRWMP sections of the Water Code (Appendix A). The members of the “Inaugural” RWMG that signed the MOU in May 2007 are listed in Table 1.3-1 below. The RWMG members contributed funding to retain a consultant to prepare an IRWMP for the Upper Santa Clara River and a facilitation firm with no direct association or stake in the outcome of any actions considered within the IRWMP to ensure that meetings of both the RWMG and the Stakeholders were productive and collaborative efforts. As part of this approach, the RWMG was the governing body and invited Stakeholder involvement, beyond the MOU signatories, through frequently scheduled Stakeholder meetings. The purpose of the Stakeholder group is to identify regional objectives and strategies to meet the regional objectives as well as to provide advice and feedback to assist with the development of the IRWMP. The Stakeholder meetings were governed by a set of agreed-on ground rules and operating procedures to foster full participation (see Sections 1.3.3.1 and 1.3.3.2). The first Stakeholder meeting was held on February 20, 2007 and meetings have continued regularly since then.



Stakeholder Meeting

Hand out materials for the IRWMP used for discussion in the Stakeholder meetings were developed by a consultant team in cooperation with RWMG members and Stakeholders and made available for review and comment by the Stakeholders. They have also been made available to the public on the Upper Santa Clara River IRWMP website (www.scrwaterplan.org). This continuous feedback mechanism has been used to produce the IRWMP in an incremental fashion. This governance structure and approach has worked well to create the IRWMP.

The formation of the RWMG has strengthened the ability of the Region to address common needs and challenges. These participants' roles and responsibilities for managing water/natural resources and land use within the Region are summarized in Table 1.3-1.

**TABLE 1.3-1
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP**

Agency	Roles and Responsibility
Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA)	Wholesale water supplier
City of Santa Clarita	Municipal government that provides open space and land use planning as well as stormwater capture and treatment, and creek restoration within City borders
Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD)	Provides flood management services within the District's boundaries
Newhall County Water District (NCWD)	Provides groundwater and imported water to portions of the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County
Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (ex-officio member of the RWMG)	Acquires parks and open space, restores natural parks and open space, provides watershed improvements, and provides low impact recreation improvements within the conservancy area (1,600 square miles in Eastern Los Angeles County and Western Orange County)
Santa Clarita Water Division of CLWA (SCWD)	Provides groundwater and imported water to portions of the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County
Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County (SCVSD)	Provides wastewater treatment for the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County
Valencia Water Company (VWC)	Provides groundwater, imported water, and recycled water to portions of the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated communities in Los Angeles County

The Upper Santa Clara River RWMG has the participation of at least three public agencies, two of which have statutory authority over water management.

1.3.2 Stakeholders

In an effort to reduce existing conflicts in the Region, this IRWMP has been prepared through a collaborative process of many agencies and organizations with an interest in improving water supply, water quality, flood management, and ecosystems in the Region. This subsection lists all of the Stakeholders grouped into several categories and describes their roles in the planning process. The broad array of participants includes the agencies that comprise the RWMG, as well as an extensive mix of town councils, regulatory, environmental, agricultural, and land use planning entities that represent all areas of the Region. A brief discussion of coordination efforts with local planning, State, and Federal agencies is also provided where appropriate.

Stakeholder meetings were held to allow for discussion of issues facing the Region, including those of this IRWMP. These meetings were open to the public and all other interested parties. Copies of the meeting minutes and presentations from these meetings are available on the project website (<http://www.scrwaterplan.org>) and are included in Appendix B. Table 1.3-2 provides a list of the stakeholders and their mission statements.

**TABLE 1.3-2
STAKEHOLDER GROUPS**

Stakeholder	Mission Statement
<i>Municipal and County Government Agencies</i>	
City of Santa Clarita	To deliver the best and most cost-efficient municipal service to the citizens and City Council of Santa Clarita.
County of Ventura	To provide public infrastructure, services, and support so that all residents have the opportunity to achieve a high quality of life and enjoy the benefits of a healthy economy.
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW)	Enhancing our communities through responsive and effective public works services.
Los Angeles County Supervisor's Office	To support the Board Of Supervisors in serving the people of Los Angeles County.
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning	To improve the quality of life through innovative and resourceful physical and environmental planning, balancing individual rights and community needs.
<i>Water Suppliers/Wastewater Management/Special Districts</i>	
CLWA	A public agency providing reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost to the Santa Clarita Valley.
LACFCD	Enhancing our communities through responsive and effective public works services.
SCWD	A public agency providing reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost to the Santa Clarita Valley.
SCVSD	To provide environmentally sound, cost-effective wastewater management, and in the process, convert wastewater into recycled water, a valuable water resource for the Santa Clarita Valley.
NCWD	To provide quality water service at a reasonable cost by practicing careful stewardship of natural resources, utilizing innovative measures, and providing a quality working environment.
Lake Elizabeth Mutual Water Company	(No mission statement available)
Sierra Pelona Mutual Water Company	(No mission statement available)
VWC	To deliver a dependable supply of safe reliable water to existing and future customers at a reasonable cost.

Stakeholder	Mission Statement
<i>Business Organizations</i>	
Building Industry Association	To promote and protect the industry to ensure our members' success in providing homes for all Southern Californians.
Newhall Land and Farming Company	To provide a better quality of life for those who live and work in the master planned communities of Valencia and Newhall Ranch.
Atkins Environmental	To be a resource for environmental, health & safety issues. To provide sparkling service with professionalism, honesty, integrity, trust, and respect. To seek to balance the demand for resources with the needs of the community.
Valley Crest Tree Company	(No mission statement available)
<i>Recreational and Open Space Entities</i>	
Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	To preserve open space and habitat in order to provide for low-impact recreation and educational uses, wildlife habitat restoration and protection, and watershed improvements within our jurisdiction.
Nature Conservancy	To preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.
Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation	To provide the residents and visitors of Los Angeles County with quality recreational opportunities that promote a healthy lifestyle and strengthen the community through diverse physical, educational, and cultural programming, and to enhance the community environment by acquiring, developing, and maintaining County parks, gardens, golf courses, trails, and open space areas.
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority	To acquire, develop, and conserve additional park and open space lands with special emphasis on recreation and conservation projects, the protection and conservation of watersheds, and the development of river parkways.
<i>Regulatory and Resource Agencies- State and Federal</i>	
California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)	To manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	Improve mobility across California.
California Department of Water Resources (DWR)	To manage the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the State's people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments.

Stakeholder	Mission Statement
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	To preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	"Helping People Help the Land," by providing products and services that enable people to be good stewards of the Nation's soil, water, and related natural resources on non-Federal lands.
US Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE)	To provide quality, responsive engineering services to the nation including: planning, designing, building, and operating water resources and other civil works projects (Navigation, Flood Control, Environmental Protection, Disaster Response, etc.); designing and managing the construction of military facilities for the Army and Air Force (Military Construction); providing design and construction management support for other Defense and federal agencies (Support for Others).
US Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS)	To work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.
US Forest Service- Angeles National Forest	To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.
<i>Non-Profit Organizations and Other Stakeholders</i>	
Acton Town Council	To provide a stronger local voice in community development, and to try to ensure the continuation of Acton's country lifestyle.
Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County	To develop and encourage cooperation among entities for the development, protection, conservation and improvement of the total water resources for Ventura County.
Agua Dulce/Acton Country Journal	To be a resource for existing, new, and future residents of the Agua Dulce/Acton community.
Agua Dulce Town Council	To serve as a common meeting place for the free expression of all views and for the coming together of diverse opinions into a consensus; to discuss issues concerning Agua Dulce, to invite participation by the public, civic, and private organizations; to serve as Agua Dulce's representatives and to speak on behalf of the community; to review public and private proposals that may affect the community; to neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate.
Castaic Area Town Council	To act as an advisory board presenting community points of view to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and various County departments such as Regional Planning, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation.

Stakeholder	Mission Statement
Santa Clarita Valley Environmental Coalition	(No mission statement available)
Santa Clarita Organization for Planning the Environment	To promote, protect, and preserve the environment, ecology, and quality of life in the Santa Clarita Valley.
Santa Clarita Valley Well Owners Association	Preserve our present and future water supply by working together to promote sustainable water consumption by all stakeholders in the aquifer's resource; protect our rights as private well owners and our collective parity as stakeholders in the management of the areas' subterranean water resources; educate our members in matters relative to water rights, quality, resources, historical data and any other information relevant to owning and maintaining a private water well system; advocate on behalf of the rights of private well owners collectively and individually.
University of California Cooperative Extension	The welfare, development, and protection of California agriculture, natural resources, and people.
Ventura County Resource Conservation District (VCRCD)	To provide assistance to help both rural and urban communities to conserve, protect, and restore natural resources.
West Ranch Town Council	(No mission statement available)

1.3.2.1 Municipal and County Government Agencies

Municipal and county government agencies include local jurisdictions and land use planning agencies that have been involved in the identification of issues, formation of objectives, and development of projects of this IRWMP. Their participation provides a link between local planning agencies and this IRWMP by offering discussion in meetings, providing accurate, consistent land use planning information, and incorporating local planning documents and goals into the project objectives. The City of Santa Clarita, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, the County of Ventura, LACDPW, and the Los Angeles County Supervisor's Office are examples of land use agencies and entities participating in the meetings.

1.3.2.2 Water Suppliers/Wastewater Management/Special Districts

The water suppliers, wastewater management agencies, and special districts of the Region have been involved in the development and implementation of the objectives and projects for this IRWMP. Their participation has focused particularly on the water supply issues pertaining to the Region. These agencies include CLWA, LACFCD, SCWD, SCVSD, NCWD and VWC.

Additionally, the Sierra Pelona Mutual Water Company and the Lake Elizabeth Mutual Water Company have been invited to participate in the process.

1.3.2.3 Business Organizations

The Building Industry Association's interest is in land-use planning and growth management within the Region. The building industry entities involved include the Greater Los Angeles/Ventura Chapter. Agricultural and farm interests for the Region have been represented by the Newhall Land and Farming Company. Their role is to ensure that agricultural and farm interests are incorporated in this IRWMP. Input was also solicited from the broader business community at the start of the Stakeholder process.

1.3.2.4 Recreational and Open Space Entities

The role and responsibility of the recreational and open space entities is to ensure that issues and goals related to conservation and protection of the natural resources and habitat within the Region are incorporated in this IRWMP. Those involved include the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy. Input was also solicited from the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

1.3.2.5 Regulatory and Resource Agencies - State and Federal

Several State and Federal regulatory agencies have been involved in the identification of issues, formation of objectives, and development of projects for this IRWMP. Coordination with these regulatory agencies is essential to the development and implementation of all recommended projects due to the need for regulatory and environmental approval prior to implementation. Furthermore, these agencies have had the chance to address items of concern on these projects at the Stakeholder meetings. Their roles and responsibilities are to ensure that regulatory compliance standards and goals are incorporated in this IRWMP. The agencies include: CDFG, Caltrans, DWR, Los Angeles RWQCB, NRCS, US ACE, US FWS, and US Forest Service - Angeles National Forest.

1.3.2.6 Other Stakeholders/Non-Profit Organizations

Other Stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of the objectives for this IRWMP include the following: Agua Dulce/Acton Country Journal, Agua Dulce Town Council, Atkins Environmental, Castaic Area Town Council, Foothills Associates, Santa Clarita Valley Environmental Coalition, Santa Clarita Organization for Planning for the Environment, Santa Clarita Valley Well Owners Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, Town Councils of Acton and West Ranch, Valley Crest Tree Company, and the VCRC.

1.3.3 Ground Rules and Operating Procedures

This IRWMP was created using the advice, feedback, and assistance of multiple Stakeholders. In order to guarantee a fruitful process, Stakeholder meetings were facilitated by a facilitation consultant team. The Stakeholder process was also governed by a set of "ground rules" and "operating procedures" developed by the facilitation consultant team as listed below.

1.3.3.1 Ground Rules for Participation

1. Cooperate with the process, including the scope and intent of our planning effort together and specific agenda topics.
2. Work toward shared goals, proposing strategies that relate to the goals and that may be acceptable to all stakeholders.
3. Base your opinions, ideas and comments on facts and experience rather than on perception.
4. Wait to be recognized by the facilitator before you speak.
5. Participate fully in the group discussion.
6. Keep your comments brief and constructive.
7. Focus on issues instead of people or personalities.
8. Reference the past if needed, but look to the future.
9. Be respectful of differing perspectives and opinions.
10. Stay with the topic at hand or hold your comment and yield to someone who has a comment on the topic at hand.
11. Be open to new ideas and be expansive in your thinking.

1.3.3.2 Operating Procedures

1. Stakeholders will abide by the agreed upon participation ground rules and operating procedures during this process.
2. We will strive for mutual agreement but note when we have a minority opinion.
3. Stakeholders are encouraged to participate consistently and attend all meetings. If unable to attend, a Stakeholder may send an alternate to ensure the organization's consistent participation.
4. Stakeholders who are participating based on their organizational affiliation represent the organization; their opinions should be consistent with and as authorized by the organization.
5. Meeting summaries will be prepared by the facilitators, and will include major points of discussion, agreements, and areas of disagreement.
6. Stakeholders will receive meeting materials ten days before the meeting to allow for advance review.
7. Stakeholders will provide review and comment during the timeframes requested.

As described in the following sections, through the facilitated Stakeholder process, participants in the Upper Santa Clara River IRWMP have been able to address, discuss and recommend regional objectives and strategies, and propose projects to meet those objectives.

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