APPENDIX A- GLAC TECHNICAL MEMO- TASK 2 ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

TO: LA/Ventura Funding Area DACIP Task Force
% Leighanne Kirk, Principal Water Resources Planner
West Basin Municipal Water District
FROM: TreePeople / Council for Watershed Health
DATE: January 12, 2018

Task 2: Engagement Methodology

Methodology for determining the level of engagement in technical assistance and project development in each Disadvantaged Community (GLAC IRWM Region).

Engagement, as presented in this methodology, covers the activities of Outreach and Education, and seeks to make a lasting connection with and between community members and their water providers. It is a sensitive and compassionate process of understanding both audiences – community and provider – and building trust by approaching everyone with respect. Consistency is key to building trust; the longer that steady contact with a community runs, the more residents are willing to give their time to engagement. Sustaining those relationships is made in large part through repeated education – teaching water customers and water managers about each other, what each has to offer the other, and how things can change for the better.

The LA/Ventura Funding area has chosen to break down major activities into three task categories:

- Outreach and Education
- Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Technical Assistance/Project Development

Each of these Tasks will be issued separately as contracts to consultants, and the timeline for when this occurs is not yet known. The only contracts to be issued initially are for Outreach and Education (Engagement) tasks. As such, a major assumption in this methodology is that the structures put in place for Engagement will be held throughout the DACIP program, to help connect the Engagement process to Technical Assistance and Project Development.

Major components in our recommended Engagement approach include the following:

- Consistency of relationships through creation of a Leadership Group of CBOs
- Assessment and planning of target communities prior to launch
- Anchoring the program around the GLAC IRWM structure

This approach is rooted in best practices in working with disadvantaged communities including the DWR-sponsored *Disadvantaged Community Outreach Evaluation Study* (DAC Outreach

Study) and the LA County Parks Needs Assessment. Primarily, we will form a community network to address the "missing links" described in the DACIP LA/Ventura Funding Area Application to DWR. To help build these links, and especially to build consistency in community relationships over the course of the DACIP program, we recommend the following community outreach structure:

A Leadership Group will be made up of an estimated 16 community-based organizations or other community representatives, covering all four sub-regions. They will in turn work with their own networks of local organizations to provide existing audiences for outreach and education events. With support from TreePeople and CWH, they become the "core group" providing repeated outreach and education throughout the DACIP program. These Leadership Group members become paid subcontractors to TreePeople, trained in the DACIP program and other expertise as needed to help them educate and strengthen IRWM ties in their area. They will each organize at least 3 educational events and presentations and open doors to community audiences through their individual networks.

These subcontractors are not just hired to provide a single workshop, but rather are engaged as an ongoing resource, working with the community through multiple waves of education; the Leadership Group will ideally extend beyond the term of the DACIP grant program to support community connections to the IRWM system and local water managers. In addition to the Leadership Group, TreePeople and CWH can also directly support outreach in areas where these two organizations have active programs, including Upper LA River/NE San Fernando Valley; Lower LA River/Southeast LA Cities and the San Gabriel Valley. Specific communities include El Monte and South El Monte, Pacoima, Sun Valley, San Fernando, Koreatown, Baldwin Hills, Huntington Park, Cudahy and Gateway Cities.

Community Partners will be sought out by TreePeople and the Leadership Group - primarily less formal groups that possess established audiences of close-knit members, with regularly scheduled, attended gatherings and events (Neighborhood Councils, school/parent associations, churches, women's/ men's clubs) who allow the Leadership Group to join them to introduce local water issues, and invite participants to the Needs Assessment workshops. These are not paid subcontractors, but may be reimbursed for appropriate costs, such as venue rental.

RFQ Process: The Leadership Group will be chosen through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) carried out by TreePeople and CWH. Criteria for being selected for the Leadership Group includes the specific neighborhoods they serve in one or more IRWM sub-regions (based on the DACIP map and related zip codes or census tracts), evidence of current active programs in these

areas, number of active volunteers, members or other constituents in these areas, additional partners they have, cultural and language expertise, and social media platforms and reach. It is assumed organizations with local justice, advocacy and education programs will be desirable candidates.

It is not assumed that all Leadership Group members will be environmental organizations. Based on lessons from the DAC Outreach Study, organizations with experience in public planning processes are likely to be strong candidates. Advertising the RFQ will include sharing with all IRWM sub-region committees and Parks Needs Assessment participants. As a core leadership member of the Our Water LA coalition, TreePeople has access to 54 diverse member organizations who are prime targets to receive this RFQ, along with 100 Enviro-Ed providers we coordinate through the CREEC Network.

Readiness Analysis: At the time that the GLAC IRWM Region began to design the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program in 2016-17, there was a general and undefined message in the LA water-related non-profit sector that established, regional environmental organizations were very active serving disadvantaged communities. There was certainly truth to the idea that environmental CBOs (including TreePeople and CWH) served disadvantaged communities in the area. However, this general message could easily lead to an assumption that somehow *the non-profit sector was serving all disadvantaged communities*. It was important from the start to address the validity of this assumption. Therefore, the RFQ process will assess where CBOs are currently active, highlighting the geographic reach of local community-based organizations (CBOs) for all GLAC DAC communities. The output will assist the GLAC region in developing a decision matrix identifying both gaps and those "messengers" that can conduct engagement in each targeted community. It will also call out those that have strong connections into specific target neighborhoods. This assessment will provide transparency in selecting CBO partners for outreach and assigning CBO partners to specific communities of focus.

Addendum to Task 2 Engagement Methodology

FROM: TreePeople / Council for Watershed Health
DATE: March 13, 2024

Leadership Group of CBOs:

In 2018, TreePeople and Council for Watershed Health began work on the RFQ to create the Leadership Group of CBOs. The RFQ is attached as Exhibit A of this Addendum. It was approved by the LA/Ventura DACIP Task Force in August of 2018. The RFQ was issued in September of 2018. Desiring a wider selection, a second RFQ was issued in December. Outreach was made to more than 300 CBOs, faith-based orgs and businesses in the area, as well as through multiple distribution lists from agencies. A total of 21 applications were received.

Scoring criteria and weighing were established. The summary of scoring is included as Exhibit B of this Addendum. In the interest of transparency, initial scoring was not conducted by TreePeople or CWH staff members. Instead, applications were scored by a team of graduate level MSW candidates recruited from USC, and instructed in scoring criteria.

Scoring showed a pretty clear distinction between strong candidates who rose to the top, and other candidates who scored much lower. Interviews were conducted by TreePeople staff, joined by the MSW grad students for the higher scoring CBOs. Interviews were scored by each of the interviewers, compared and combined.

From this process a group of 11 CBOs was selected, approved by the Task Force on February 12, 2019. As was reported at that time, these 11 CBOs represent 75-80% of the 107 communities identified for the GLAC IRWM Region. Coverage per group ranged from 2 to 25 target areas. Following Rounds 1 and 2, it was determined that sufficient outreach had been conducted to recruit CBOs, and subsequent additions or changes to the list of CBOs could be recommended by the consultant team and approved by the DACIP Program Manager with LA County, rather than continue to carry out lengthy and expensive RFQ processes.

Areas not covered by other LG members became the responsibility of TreePeople and its team of Community Organizers. (Even though TreePeople is tasked with facilitating the Leadership Group, we have treated ourselves as an active member as well.) Research was done by TreePeople as to Community Partners and other resources to turn to in these “gap areas” – including City of LA Neighborhood Councils, churches, CBOs and field staff for agencies and elected officials.

As work began with the Leadership Group, TreePeople was introduced to other CBOs who had established relationships in the "gap areas" and could serve them for efficiently than TreePeople. They were invited to join the Leadership Group and approved by the Program Manager. Over the course of the WaterTalks program, the full list of CBO partners grew to 19 and include the following:

- Active San Gabriel Valley
- Asian Pacific Island Forward Movement
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Council of Mexican Federations in North America
- Day One
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
- Koreatown Youth and Community Center
- Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
- Mujeres de la tierra
- Promesa Boyle Heights
- Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples
- Social Eco Education
- Social Justice Learning Institute
- Tataviam Land Conservancy
- tongva taraxat paxaavxa conservancy
- TreePeople
- Trust South LA
- Ultimate Restoration Unlimited
- Watts Clean Air and Energy Committee

Analysis and Toolkits:

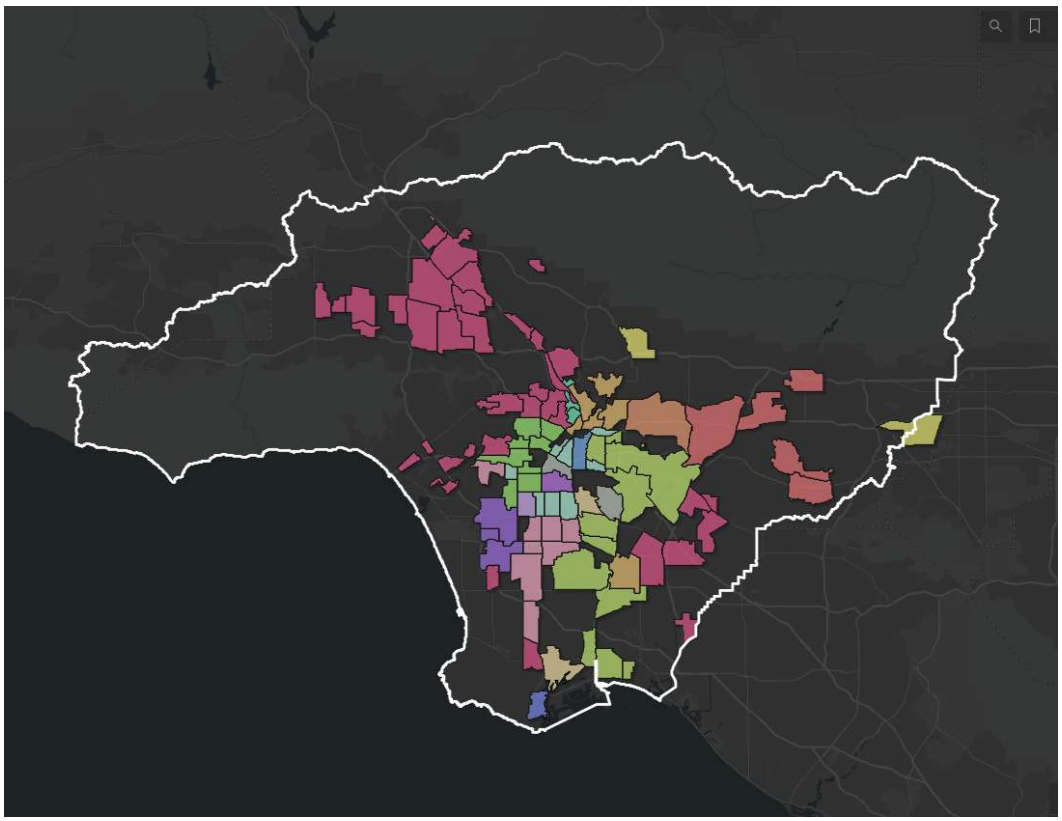
A matrix was created to show which WaterTalks communities were served by which organizations. Where there was overlap, TreePeople negotiated with the organizations so as only to assign one area to a group. This was necessary for both budget limitation as well as for efficient management of the program. The number of communities and outreach events were assigned as scope of work for LG members. Subconsultant contracts were developed for all the Leadership Group members during the spring of 2018.

Cal State San Bernardino had been selected to provide education materials for the entire Funding Area, and to tailor these tools as specifically as possible to distinct communities – including information on water providers, pollution data, resources, as well as presentation materials. However for the GLAC Region, funding did not allow for the creation of toolkits for all 104 communities.

TreePeople and CWH worked with CSU's toolkit provider (PlaceWorks) to consolidate communities to 50 total. This was done through data analysis, combined with feedback from LG members and ideas as to how to consolidate within the areas they were assigned. Once Toolkits were complete, training sessions were held in August and September of 2019, and outreach events began within a matter of weeks.

Mapping was used to help assign CBOs and create a layout of communities, and was eventually made interactive, showing where groups are assigned, with color coding. The interactive version is available at the URL address below.

Map: WaterTalks Leadership Group of CBOs
https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/581df3c94b004aca815a2ce5b18fdc7c



As was hoped, the Leadership Group CBOs continued working together through Task 3 for data collection in the Strengths and Needs Assessment, and were integral to determining which areas received Technical Assistance and Project Development resources *(see memo 3c Technical Memo - prioritize development of Task 4 projects).*

Capacity Building
From the kickoff meeting in August of 2019, through the final meeting in December of 2023, the Leadership Group CBOs underwent training, field experience, decision making and networking to build their organizational capacity related to water infrastructure in Los Angeles. Capacity building activities included:

- Aug 2019 - Training in WaterTalks, use of outreach toolkits, understanding baseline issues in the areas they serve, such as water providers and sources of water.

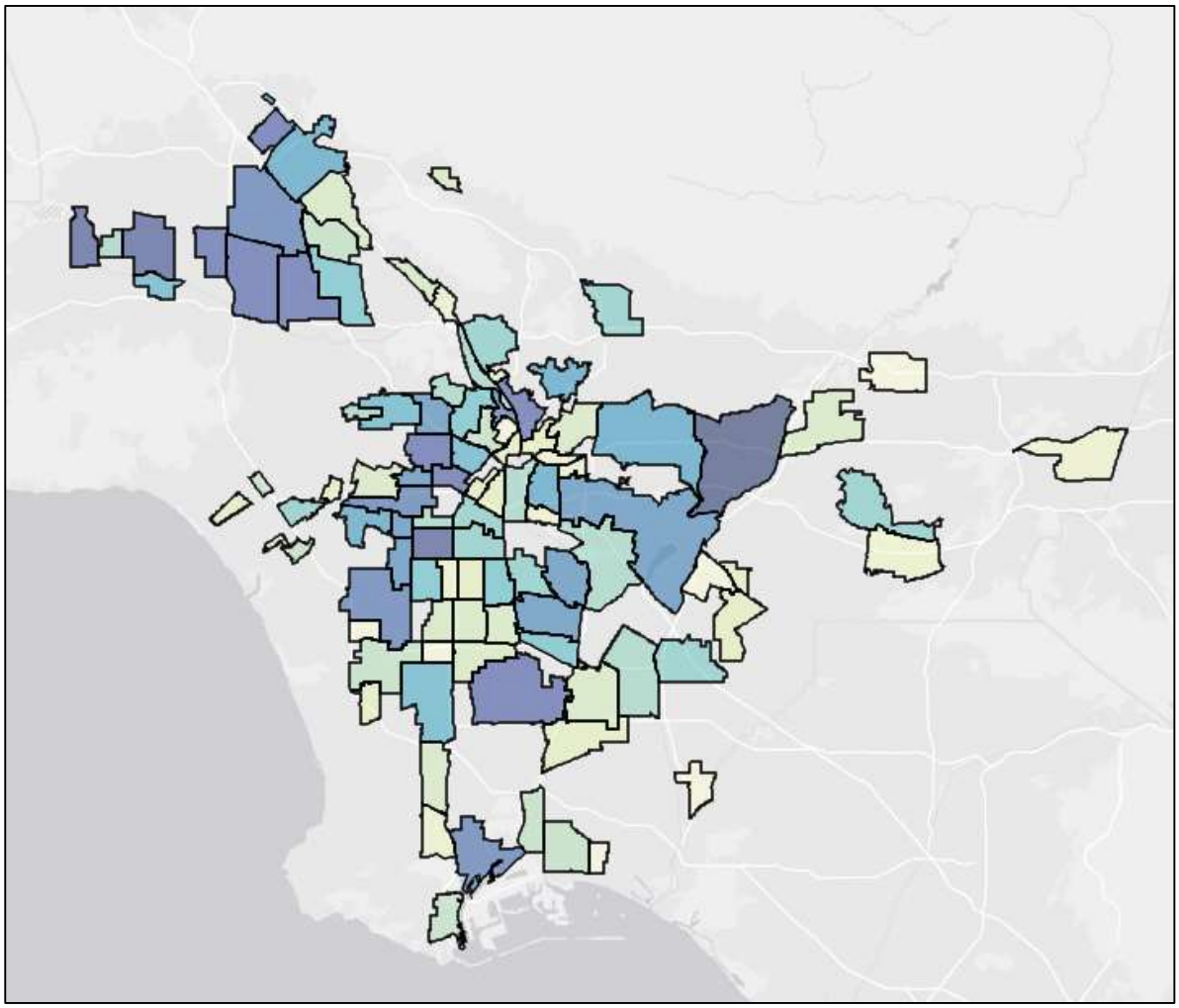
- Sept-Dec 2019 - Engagement events that they tailored to their communities to share information about WaterTalks and "warm up" the community for the Strengths and Needs Assessment yet to come. Events were varied, such as sharing information during bike tours, meeting after a Zumba class, meeting with soccer parents and coaches after a game, tapping into regular constituent meetings focused on environmental topics, and tabling at community events, to name a few.
- January 2020 – June 2021 - Training in data gathering as part of the Strengths and Needs Assessment, to collect surveys, help people with filling them out at events or through phone banking and creative ways to connect (during the worst of COVID) such as surveying people waiting in line at a vaccination center or food bank.
- July – Dec 2021 - Training for follow up data collection, tabling at local events post-COVID, to share and confirm the Needs Assessment findings.
- February – June 2022 - Decision-making experience through study and prioritization of initial project concepts for further development
- April – November 2022 - In-depth water-related training through 9 modules created for topics the group selected, which include and Overview of Water in LA, the Integrated Regional Water Management program, LA County's Safe Clean Water Program, Water Quality and Governance, Water Quality Advocacy and Organizing, two field trips and a Final Review of all modules.
- June 2022 – Dec 2023 - Participation in one or more projects as they were developed, understanding the components, steps, methods, funding, challenges and resolutions involved in developing water projects and programs.

In Closing: In the initial 2018 Methodology we shared there was potentially an initial potential assumption that "*somehow the non-profit sector was serving all disadvantaged communities. It was important from the start to address the validity of this assumption*."

Now, 6 years later, the WaterTalks program has provided a better understanding of how communities are being served in water-related issues, especially from the standpoint of having local non-profit organization partners to educate, support and advocate for needed program and infrastructure projects. One window into this understanding came with the Strengths and Needs Assessment, and tracking the number of surveys received in each of the communities of focus. Data for this is available through the DACIP WaterTalks Needs Assessments and Dashboards at https://www.redesign.la/dacip.

A snapshot of this dashboard map is shown below. The darker the color, the more surveys were received. This gives environmental advocates in the LA Region the opportunity to better understand where communities are being served and where there may still be need for further research, assessment and engagement.

Needs Assessment Survey Status - Greater LA County
https://healthywatershed.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=edfae9dc3af14057babfcf19e9ca7586



End of Report

APPENDIX B- NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT (WCVC)



Ventura County

Needs Assessment Report

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP)

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGST	Center for Geospatial Science and Technology
CSU	California State University
DACIP	Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
GLAC	Greater Los Angeles County
GUI	Graphic User Interface
IRWM	Integrated Regional Water Management
LA-V	Los Angeles - Ventura Funding Area
LACFCD	Los Angeles County Flood Control District
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
TMDL	total maximum daily loads (non-point source pollution)
USCR	Upper Santa Clara River
WCVC	Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County
WRPI	Water Resources and Policy Initiatives

Chapter 1 Los Angeles-Ventura Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) Background

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The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) allocated $98 million to the Los Angeles-Ventura (LA-V) Funding Area as part of the $510 million in funding authorized through the Proposition 1 IRWM grant. The LA-Ventura Funding Area "includes three independent Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning regions: Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC), Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC)"[1].

A **Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) Task Force** for the LA-V Funding Area was established with representatives from each of the three IRWM regions to "facilitate a consensus-based approach to implement a Funding Area-wide DACIP that meets the objectives of the Proposition 1 DACIP IRWM Grant Program"[1]. The LA-V Funding Area designated the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) as lead for the DACIP. The purpose of DWR's DACIP funding is to ensure "the involvement of disadvantaged communities (DACs), economically distressed areas (EDA), and underrepresented communities within regions' "[2] .

LACFCD proposed a budget of $9.8 million for the LA-V DACIP activities based on a three-part strategy to address the water management needs in the DACs identified across the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The strategies included local outreach, partnering, and local capacity building through technical assistance for project development. The Funding Area's DACIP Task Force incorporated the strategies in the proposed Tasks below.

- Task 1: Pre-Program & Administration
- Task 2: Community Outreach
- Task 3: Needs Assessment
- Task 4: Project Development

The **DAC Consultants**, TreePeople and California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI) in collaboration with Non-governmental organizations(NGOs) and Community-based organizations (CBOs), created the WaterTalks Program for the Community Outreach Task (Task 2), to engage the communities selected for focus throughout the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The WaterTalks Program details can be found on the public website, watertalks.csusb.edu. WaterTalks provides the community with access to LA-V DACIP information, information on water related topics for each of the 3 IRWM regions, and access to the Needs Assessment Task materials. This Report summarizes and addresses all aspects of the needs assessment task.

1.1 Needs Assessment Task Objectives

A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted across the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The objective of the needs assessment was to "identify and prioritize water management/infrastructure deficiencies and related community needs in ways that meet IRWM Region objectives to improve water supply and water quality, enhance open space, recreation and habitat, and improve flood management"[1].

A solicitation for Task 3, Task Order 3B Solicitation, was released by the DACIP Task Force.The **Needs Assessment Task, Task 3,** was proposed to be completed through the following 4 sub-tasks shown below:

3.1 Design Needs Assessment

3.2 Community Needs Assessment

3.3 Institutions Needs Assessment

3.4 Project Implementation & Reporting

Under Task 3.1, the needs assessment tools and materials were designed to:

1. Combine "the DWR Needs Assessment Template (community characteristics, drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, water rates and financing) with social, cultural and regional information and analysis gathered in Task 2.1, from the local DAC community-member perspective"[3].
2. Be customized for each region so that it could be utilized for future engagement.
3. Be used to conduct community and institutional needs assessments.
4. Be made available online via WaterTalks website

Under Task 3.2, the objective of the community needs assessment was to reach residents of local DACs using the partnerships with Non-governmental organization (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) established during the community outreach task and knowledge of the communities gathered from that task to gather specific data and feedback about their water related issues.

Under Task 3.3, The objectives of the institutional needs assessment were:

1. To facilitate "workshops and interviews with institutions that provide water and community services to DACs, including cities (officials, water departments), water agencies, agencies that manage parks or natural open spaces, water quality program managers, sanitation districts, flood management entities and mutual water companies."[1]
2. To gather data and address the institutions' knowledge for their DACs' needs and "also any challenges they are facing in serving those needs, participating in IRWM, and meeting water quality, water conservation and other regulatory mandates."[1]
3. To have outreach efforts include education on IRWM, Proposition 1, and the DACIP.
4. To use the data gathered to complete the DWR Needs Assessment Template[3] (see Appendix A).

Under Task 3.4, the Needs Assessment Report is to provide analysis of all data collected under Tasks 3.2 and 3.3. This report will provide analysis for all community and institutional needs assessment responses collected before **June 15th, 2021**.

The need to understand respondent geography (i.e. community or institution locations), similarities (i.e. connects) and differences (i.e. disconnects), especially as they occur in high DAC stress levels across

economic, social and environmental factors (i.e. high DAC Stress Levels), was a primary objective of reporting for the Needs Assessment Task.

To understand and illustrate the spatial context of survey responses, completed survey forms (i.e. ArchGIS Survey 123) were uploaded to an online mapping database tool that will later support the public online mapping database (i.e. Graphic User Interface (GUI), TAPPED App, see Chapter 4).

Illustrating the spatial context of community and institutional responses will further assist DAC Consultants and IRWM representatives(DACIP Task Force members) with determining potential project and technical funding needs to improve and sustain water resources.

To support this effort, a project descriptor template and prioritization criteria were developed using data from the Needs Assessment Task for describing and comparing technical assistance project types, identifying where needs are located and evaluation of different project descriptions using project comparison models. Project identification efforts and the online mapping tool will support IRWM representatives who will continue to use this data to inform the prioritization of IRWM activities.

Below are the Desired Outcomes and Deliverables proposed by the LA-V Task Force for Task 3:

Desired Outcomes:

- Inform and engage DACs and their community leaders in the WCVC Region in a conversation about their water management-related needs, preliminary needs assessment results, and a plan for continued community engagement and active involvement in decision making.
- Gain a better understanding of water management-related community needs to help direct resources and funding for project development.
- Build initial capacity within DACs to develop project concepts and engage technical support for design and project development.
- Increase participation of DAC community members, NGOs, and CBOs in IRWM planning and/or project development activities.

Deliverables:

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment Tool for the Region-specific information.
- All information developed through or collected during the Needs Assessment shall be included in the database.
- Final Needs Assessment Report with Region-specific data and narrative summary of identified community characteristics and specific community water management issues, and the resources required (technical, educational, managerial, and financial) to address the needs of DACs.
- A Technical Memo describing how to prioritize development of programs/projects identified under Task 4, Project Development and engage the community with the process for the Region to receive funding, after the Needs Assessment has been completed. The Region's leadership will decide which programs and projects will compete for future funds.
- Needs Assessment Results presented to communities and other stakeholders.
- Report on dissemination of findings of the Needs Assessment shared with communities and other stakeholders." [3]

1.2 Ventura County Needs Assessment Consultants

To assess community and institutional needs and opportunities across Ventura County, the California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI), was selected as the lead consultant in the USCR and WCVC IRWM planning regions for the Needs Assessment Task, Task 3. **WRPI sub consultants** included PlaceWorks and the Center for Geospatial Science and Technology (CGST) at CSU Northridge. PlaceWorks also contracted with local NGO/CBOs in Ventura County who were involved in the community outreach task, Task 2, to continue communications with the community. Each partner brought unique experiences and skill sets used to complete Task 3.

California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)

In addition to the Prop. 1 DACI grant, WRPI has been previously awarded funding through the State Water Resources Control Board, California Energy Commission, and Department of Water Resources (Santa Ana Watershed) to provide technical assistance and community engagement to disadvantaged communities across the state. These other grant funded efforts have included or resulted in income surveys, preliminary engineering, CEQA, Feasibility studies, and community engagement. The CSU also works with state agencies and DACs to submit State Revolving Fund construction applications through the FAAST system.

PlaceWorks

PlaceWorks assists both public- and private-sector clients throughout the state in the fields of comprehensive planning, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), urban design, landscape architecture, community outreach, graphic design and environmental review. PlaceWorks has completed numerous community planning, park, and open space projects in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, and frequently works with community organizations to develop and implement outreach and engagement components of projects.

Center for Geospatial Science & Technology at California State University, Northridge (CSUN)

The Center for Geospatial Science & Technology at California State University, Northridge (CGST) is an interdisciplinary research center focused on applications, education, and innovative solutions to real world problems using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). As part of its mission, CGST serves as a leader and catalyst for the advancement of GIS technology for academic institutions, private industry, and the public sector.

The Center has worked on over 50 projects with partners and clients in numerous sectors. A majority of CGST's clients are state, federal, and local public agencies such as CA Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, CalTrans, US Forest Service, LA County Department of Public Health, and LA Department of Water and Power. During the past 16 years, the Center has deepened its involvement in a variety of both locally focused and large, statewide projects related to water resources including the development of a statewide surface water dataset and a water quality geospatial database, among others. The Center has also been heavily involved in the earlier phases of the DAC Involvement Activities Program. Tasks included design and development of the web-based project evaluation tool (TAPPED), development of online needs assessment surveys, centralized database management, DAC modeling and identification, web map development, and implementation of a data/information dissemination hub.

Central Coast Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)

CAUSE is a base-building organization committed to social, economic, and environmental justice for working-class and immigrant communities in California's Central Coast. "We build grassroots power through community organizing, leadership development, coalition building, civic engagement, policy research, and advocacy." CAUSE's vision is that "together we can create a global community where we all contribute to, and benefit from, a sustainable economy that is just, prosperous and environmentally healthy."

Friends of the Santa Clara River (FSCR)

The mission of Friends of the Santa Clara River is to" protect and preserve the cultural and biological resources of the Santa Clara River Watershed."

Chapter 2 Methodology for Ventura County Needs Assessment

To assess the way and extent to which diverse communities and institutions interact with water resources, the DAC Consultants recommended to the Task Force an interdisciplinary and multi-tiered, phased approach. This included working with existing datasets, institutions, NGOs and CBOs to identify potential survey and interview participants, applying various outreach and communication strategies, creating surveys and interactive database tools (i.e. survey forms, maps) and ensuring the quality of data accurately represented participants' responses. These efforts resulted in the development of two survey tools, a community and institutional survey. The format of the surveys included closed and open ended questions that focused on community members and institutional (agency) needs, opportunities, and conditions. The two surveys were available online and as a hard copy.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, information was not gathered through workshops, door-to-door discussions and in-person one-on-one interviews as originally proposed. Different methods were used to gather information while meeting local public health safety guidelines and the needs of each DAC's members and institutions.

2.1 Design of Needs Assessment

2.1.1 Development of Survey Questions

The DAC consultants collaborated on the development of one community survey form and one institutional survey form for all 3 IRWM planning regions, GLAC, USCR, and WCVC.

Community Survey

The community survey was developed to collect feedback from people living in DAC's identified in each region. The questions included in the community survey were designed to address the required information in the DWR Needs Assessment Template (see Appendix A) for all three IRWM regions,

while also incorporating the specific needs of each region. The community survey language was reviewed by community groups to ensure that it was comprehensible for the targeted audience.

An additional goal of this survey was to include survey questions that would allow the issues and project ideas to be mapped using an online ArcGIS mapping interface. This allows DAC Consultants to map approximate locations of survey responses to identify locations of water related issues and needs as well as what the community sees as potential solutions.

TreePeople served as the lead on creating the first draft of the community survey questions and the format. The first draft of the community survey was shared with the Task Force in June 2020. The draft community survey was then presented to the GLAC NGOs, WCVC DAC Committee members and other stakeholders for their review and comments.

Institutional Survey

The WRPI team took the lead on developing the institutional survey. The WRPI team used the California RuralWater Association (Cal Rural) survey questions used during SAWPA DACIP Needs Assessment as a template. This template was compared to the DWR Needs Assessment requirements and the draft community survey developed by TreePeople. The draft institutional survey was presented to the Task Force, Consultants, GLAC NGOs, WCVC DAC Committee members and other stakeholders for their review and comments. The WRPI team worked with Stantec and the CSUN CGST team to finalize the institutional survey questions and format. The institutional survey was used to conduct interviews with institutions through virtual meetings, further referred to as institutional interviews, where responses were taken by notetakers. The institutional survey was also available as an excel sheet for institutions who could not meet virtually.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements

Research conducted by Faculty or Staff involving human subjects at a CSUcampus requires an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application to be submitted to the CSUSB's Institutional Review Board Committee for review and approval. The IRB process ensures that when CSUSB faculty and staff are collecting data from individuals that the individual is presented with enough information about the survey they are participating in as well as how responses will be stored and shared with the public. a This process requires that participating individuals acknowledge that they consent to taking the survey, by agreeing to a statement that outlines how their responses will be utilized within the research design and implementation (i.e. informed consent). To decrease any form of risk to the community and institutions participating in the survey, direct identifiers were not collected from the community, and were scrubbed from institutional interview notes. The introduction and informed consent presented to the survey respondents before taking the community survey online, as a hard copy, or on the phone is shown below:

Introduction: "Participation in our WaterTalks community survey will help ensure that communities' needs, concerns, questions, and insights can be considered to become part of the State's future water projects. By identifying community needs and priorities, your input will help identify and prioritize projects within the LA-Ventura IRWM region for Prop 1 technical assistance funding as well as ongoing and future funding decisions. This Survey will take approximately 10 minutes."

Informed consent: "Your identity and your responses will remain confidential and, of course, you are free to decline to answer any particular survey question. By clicking below, you acknowledge that you have been informed of, and understand, the purpose of the study, and freely consent to participate.

Further, you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older. Please indicate this acknowledgement by selecting "Agree and Continue." Selecting "Disagree" will end the survey."

Once individuals complete the survey, they are directed to contact information if they have any questions. The CSUSB IRB leadership approved the information and survey questions presented to the community, as well as the process for maintaining the responses in a secure database and the use of the responses.

2.1.2 Designing the Needs Assessment Tool

Community Survey Tool

The **Needs Assessment Task** required that the DAC Consultants implement a survey platform that was capable of housing a variety of data (both spatial and nonspatial) from various sources in an organized format. The tool needed to offer options for both open-ended (i.e., write-in) and predefined/standardized responses to user input as well as the ability to identify geographic locations. Furthermore, CGST's LA-Ventura DAC Involvement Program Data Hub (Data Hub) already housed data and reference material on an ESRI ArcGIS Hub site (https://dacip-hub-csungis.hub.arcgis.com) and required a platform which allowed responses to be integrated into the same framework for analysis. The Data Hub serves as a central repository for data and data-related products supporting DACIP through the WaterTalks effort. ESRI's Survey 123 software was selected for its survey design capabilities, database management functionality and compatibility with other project components.

PlaceWorks used the approved community survey language to create an ArcGIS Survey 123 form for online use, and a hard copy form for printing and distributing. The ArcGIS Survey 123 form was tested prior to being public facing on the WaterTalks website. The ArcGIS Survey 123 form for the community survey, was posted to the WaterTalks website on September 11th 2020 as the WaterTalks Survey. The introduction and informed consent in Chapter 2.1.1 were presented on the website before the link to the WaterTalks Survey.

PlaceWorks created a separate ArcGIS Survey 123 form for NGOs conducting phone banking and for the WRPI team to enter any surveys submitted by mail.

The community survey was translated to Spanish, Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi to meet the language needs of all three IRWM regions. WRPI led the translation of the community survey language in Spanish, with the help of GLAC NGOs. The GLAC NGOs led translations of the survey language in Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi. PlaceWorks and CSU created survey forms for each language and posted each of them with the appropriate translated introduction and informed consent.

Institutional Survey Tool

Survey Platform

The Needs Assessment Task required that the DAC Consultants implement a survey platform that was capable of housing a variety of data (both spatial and nonspatial) from various sources in an organized format. The tool needed to offer options for both open-ended (i.e. write-in) and predefined/standardized responses to user input as well as the ability to identify geographic locations. Furthermore, the Data Hub already housed data and reference material on an ESRI ArcGIS Hub site (https://dacip-hub-csungis.hub.arcgis.com) and required a platform which allowed responses to be integrated into the same framework for analysis. ESRI's Survey 123 software was selected for its survey design capabilities, database management functionality and compatibility with other project components.

Creating the Database and Forms

ArcGIS Survey 123 forms were designed for the institutional needs assessment data entry and compilation process. The forms allowed participating DAC consultants to enter interview responses from candidate institutions in an accessible and intuitive interface. The participating team members met several times to develop the list of interview questions based on identifying critical needs components and other pieces of information to be collected during the institutional interview effort. Once a list of questions was finalized, a data table schema was developed. This built out the design of the backend database that would eventually hold the data to be collected. Each question was reviewed and where possible, predetermined, standardized responses were developed and associated with the appropriate questions. This was an effort to make the data more streamlined, consistent, and analysis-ready. Further, developing each question and determining access to the institutional interview data required adherence to IRB requirements for confidentiality. The data table schema underwent review by the participating team members to allow for additional comments and modification.

Once the database and table schema were finalized, draft survey forms were designed in MS Excel and translated to Survey 123. Additional review by the DAC Consultants was held. Specifically, design elements, such as color schemes, font sizes, and collapsible sections were addressed and updated. Finally, a production-ready form was developed and tied to the backend database to house the data to be entered. Static, offline versions of the survey form were generated to allow the note takers participating in institutional interviews more flexibility and to account for potential unreliable internet or absence of internet during the interviews. MS Excel and MS Word versions of the survey were generated for this purpose. When static versions of the form were used, data entry into the Survey 123 form was later carried out, ensuring all data was eventually entered into the standardized Survey 123 form and compiled in the backend database.

Data Entry Process

After the production-ready versions of the Survey 123 form and the backend database were developed, the CSUN Team developed a data entry process. The institutional needs assessment form and data was not public facing as WRPI and Stantec were facilitating interviews and note takers were summarizing notes to enter into database, making sure to remove direct identifiers, to comply with the IRB requirements in Chapter 2.1.1. The respondents were referred to by their job title. This was considered in all steps of the workflow process. First, a shared ArcGIS Online (AGOL) account was created and provided only to the participating interviewers and note takers. This account gave them access to the online form for data entry and also allowed them to retrieve partially filled out forms to resume data entry or to update data that had been previously entered.

Next, a private Google Sheet was established and shared only with approved interviewers and note takers. This sheet had two main purposes. First, it served as a tracker, listing various tracking information such as the different institutions to be interviewed, the interviewing party, date of interview, status of data entry, etc. Secondly, this sheet served as a gateway to the data entry form for each institution to be interviewed. The CSUN Team prepopulated a data form for each institution to be interviewed with basic information (i.e. name of the institution) and then generated a unique URL for each form. The URLs were stored in the Google Sheet, making those forms available only to the approved interviewers and note takers for later data entry. The Google Sheet was updated by multiple parties as the interview and data entry process was constructed and was critical for status updates and assessments.

The CSUN team developed a detailed instruction document for note takers and interviewers (Figure 2.1). This document contained all necessary steps and information needed to carry out the data entry and

tracking process. It also ensured the multiple people accessing the database and entering data would perform the work in a consistent and controlled fashion. Select note takers and interviewers participated in beta testing the data entry process for a sample institution in order to identify any issues before moving on to production/live data entry. Minor improvements were made after testing, after which, the process was fully moved into production mode and used throughout the institutional needs assessment.

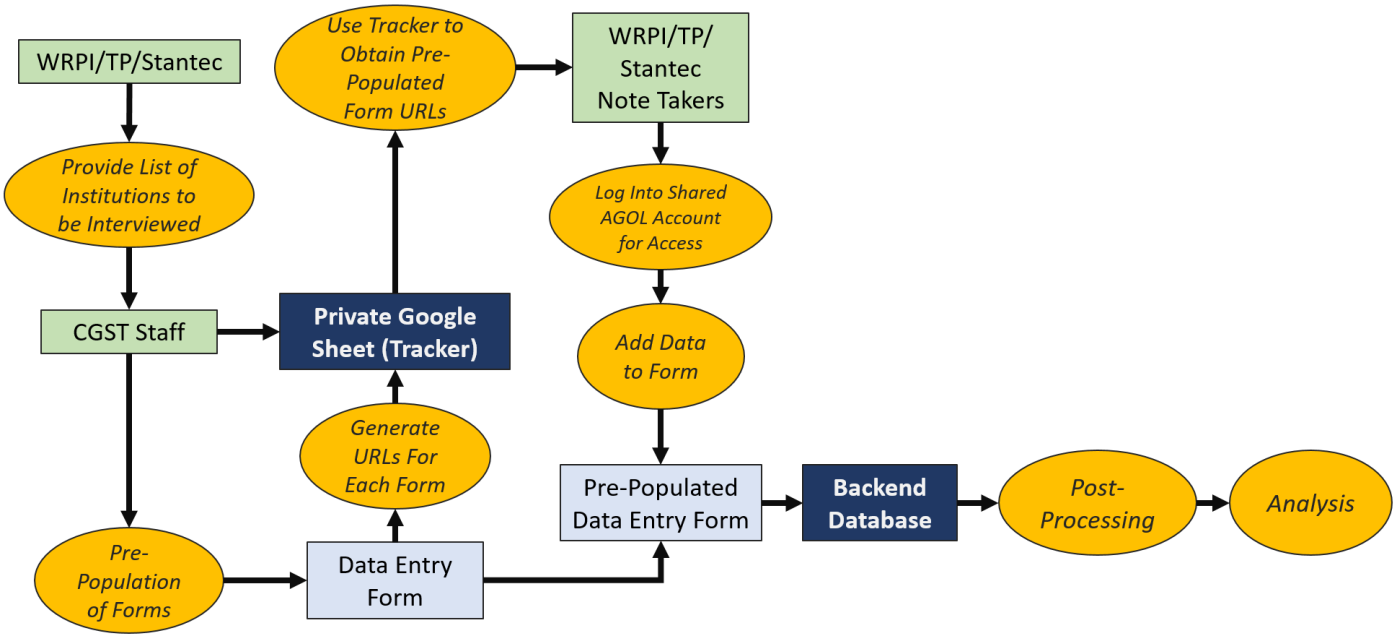


Figure 2.1: Institutional Needs Assessment Data Entry Workflow

2.2 Conducting Community Needs Assessment

2.2.1 Determine Audience

PlaceWorks took the lead on tasks directly involving community members, including community survey development, community outreach, distribution of the survey, and working with partner NGOs in the WCVC and USCR IRWM regions.

The DACs in Ventura County identified as **priority areas** chosen for targeted outreach in the LA-V DACIP Proposal[1] include the following 9 areas:

- Casitas Springs
- portions of Oxnard and Ventura,
- El Rio
- Nyeland Acres
- Saticoy
- Santa Paula
- Fillmore
- Piru

The following information was gathered to identify different forms of outreach and identify the best method of delivering the community survey to community members:

- Zip Codes within the WCVC DAC ‘s boundaries

- regions without access to internet
- average age of community members in DACs
- primary languages in the community

2.2.2 Outreach Methods

The WaterTalks campaign strategically sought to engage communities and people through a variety of outreach strategies. The outreach engagement plan for the Needs Assessment Task began in November 2020 and ended on April 30, 2021.

Due to the COVID 19 global pandemic, the outreach strategy was revised to follow COVID 19 safety guidelines. In March of 2020, the Community Outreach Task strategy transitioned from in-person engagement to virtual meetings and online engagement. The Water Talks Survey was key to the COVID-19 outreach strategy. All engagement materials encouraged participants to give input by taking the WaterTalks Survey. Participants had the opportunity to win a $100 gift card to incentivize community members to take the WaterTalks Survey. The WaterTalks Survey was originally scheduled to close in March 2021 but was later extended to April 30th, 2021.

Outreach strategies to circulate the WaterTalks Survey and education information to communities included the following:

- Virtual Events
- Mailing of printed WaterTalks newspaper and WaterTalks Surveys mailed to residences in communities
- Distribution of WaterTalks bookmarks to local libraries. Social media posts
- Paid online and newsletter advertisements
- Email blasts (E-blasts) to community partners, institution, and agency outreach
- Phone banking to residents
- Institutional and school outreach

Outreach efforts were coordinated and facilitated by PlaceWorks staff with support from outreach project partners and Task Force members. Ventura County **outreach project partners** included Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC), Ventura Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), and Friends of the Santa Clara River (FSCR).

Virtual Events

Due to delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic, several engagement events from the Community Outreach Task were delayed in Ventura County. They were conducted as virtual events and were an opportunity to announce and invite participation in the Survey. A summary of those events in included below:

- 6:00 pm, August 25, 2020 - Casitas Springs WaterTalks
- 6:00 pm, October 21, 2020 - Fillmore WaterTalks
- 7:00 pm, October 22, 2020 - El Rio/Nyeland Acres WaterTalks

Ventura County Newspaper and Printed Surveys

Approximately 29,000 bilingual (English and Spanish) newspapers were printed and distributed by mail or dropped off at local businesses, libraries, and local agencies and community organizations in Ventura County between January 2020 and April 2021 (**Tables 2.1 to 2.4**). The newspaper included educational

information about local water issues and resources as well as the WaterTalks Survey and prepaid postmarked envelope.

Table 2.1. Ventura County newspapers distributed by mail

Priority Area	# of Newspaper Distributed
Oxnard	12,132
Nyeland Acres	204
Saticoy	5087
Fillmore	4,143
Casitas Springs	247
West Ventura	2,971
TOTAL	24,784 Newspapers

Table 2.2.Ventura County newspapers distributed to local institutions, agencies, and organizations

Local agency/institution/organization	# of Newspaper Distributed
Cabrillo Economic Development Center	900
Fillmore Active Adult Center, Fillmore	200
Fillmore City Hall/Fillmore and Piru Basins Groundwater Sustainability Agency Meetings, Fillmore	100
Fillmore Heritage Valley, Fillmore	250
Garden Acres Mutual Water Company, Nyeland Acres	12+ 30
Piru Community Center, Piru	100
Piru Neighborhood Council, Piru	250

Local agency/institution/organization	# of Newspaper Distributed
San Salvador Mission, Piru	100
Seniors and Farm Worker Apartments, Piru	250
St. Francis of Assisi, Piru	100
Ventura County Library Headquarters, Ventura Area Wide	250
Ventura County Supervisors Office, Ventura Area-Wide	125
WRI (c/o Boykin)	50
TOTAL	**2,587 Newspapers**

Table 2.3.Ventura County newspapers distributed to local Ventura County libraries

Library	# of Newspaper Distributed
El Rio Library	200
Saticoy Library	200
Fillmore Library	250
Piru Library	200
Avenue Library (Ventura)	75
Mobile Library (various stops throughout County)	75
TOTAL	**1,000 Newspapers**

Table 2.4.Ventura County newspapers distributed to local business:

Local Business	# of Newspaper Distributed
4 Way Meat Market, El Rio	25
B&J Drive In, Ventura	25
Bell Arts Factory, Ventura	25
BGs Café, Ventura	25
Bindi Food Mart, Ventura	25
Coin Laundry, Fillmore	30
El Rio Produce, El Rio	50
Ely and J's 99C, Fillmore	50
Fred's Fruit Stand, Piru	100
Garden Market Meats, Santa Paula	25
Heritage Valley Lavanderia, West Ventura	15
Imela's Beauty Salon, West Ventura	15
Lizette's Market, Piru	100
Nancy's Bakery, Nyeland Acres	25
Panaderia Lupita, Oxnard	25
Rabalais Bistro, Santa Paula	25
Ralphs Supermarket, Oxnard	25
Red Barn Liquor Market, Oxnard	25

Red Barn Market, Ventura	25
Roan Mills Bakery, Sun Valley	100
Russel's Donuts, Ventura	25
The Lab, Ventura	25
Taco Llama, Fillmore	15
Tresierras Supermarket, Santa Paula	25
Vaca Flower Shop, El Rio	50
Vallarta Supermarket, Oxnard	25
Vons Supermarket, Ventura	25
TOTAL	**950** **Newspapers**

Library Bookmarks

Bookmarks were created to provide community members with information about the WaterTalks program and Survey opportunity. 4,500 outreach bookmarks were printed and distributed to libraries throughout Ventura County.

Newsletters/Outreach Materials

WaterTalks partners advertised the WaterTalks campaign on the Santa Clara River Watershed Committee Newsletter.

Paid Advertisements

Paid advertisements were used to target community members through printed and digital media.

1. **Paid Digital Marketing**. Digital marketing services, Signal and Spectrum Online, were used to promote the WaterTalks campaign and survey by targeting priority areas in the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), Ventura County, and Greater Los Angeles (GLAC).
    i. Signal posted web banners to promote the WaterTalks program and Survey. This advertisement campaign ran from November 23, 2020 to December 22, 2020. Metrics were not collected for this effort.

    ii. Spectrum online posted digital advertisements about the WaterTalks program and Survey. Priority areas in Ventura County had 128 total clicks (83 mobile clicks, 44 desktop clicks, 1 tablet click).

Project Website

1. **Online WaterTalks Survey**. The WaterTalks Survey was a 23-question survey that asked participants questions relating to local water concerns and community water planning efforts. Participants that took the survey were informed that the Survey results would be used to help inform the use of Proposition 1 technical assistance funding and on-going and future water-related project funding decisions. The WaterTalks survey was available through the WaterTalks website (https://watertalks.csusb.edu/) in five languages: English, Spanish, Cantonese, Korean, and Farsi.

2. **Story Maps.** Interactive online story maps were created for selected priority areas in Ventura County, USCR and GLAC regions. These maps were an online tool for people to learn about the water in their environment, their tap water and water consumption.

3. **WaterTalks Information Factsheets and Newspaper.** WaterTalks materials were available for community members to download factsheets and the WaterTalks Ventura County and USCR newspaper. There were three WaterTalks educational factsheets: (1) WaterTalks overview factsheet (2) WaterTalks Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) funding factsheet and (3) water safety relating to COVID-19 factsheet.

4. **Meeting Materials.** The website includes WaterTalks meeting schedules and post meeting summaries.

Social Media Outreach.

The WaterTalks social media platform actively posted consistent program information and water related resources on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Social media posts were used to engage followers about the program and encouraged community members to take the WaterTalks Survey. Posts were made throughout the duration of the WaterTalks program by the DAC Consultants and subconsultants,as well as community partners and local agencies.

Facebook and Instagram

- 18 posts were posted onto the WaterTalks Facebook page and Instagram account between January 2021 to April 2021.
- 7 posts were posted on the CAUSE Facebook and Instagram page January 2021 to April 2021.
- 12 posts were posted on the FSCR Facebook page January 2021 to April 2021.

WaterTalks animations. WaterTalks animations were created as fun and interactive resources about the program. Animations were posted on all WaterTalks social media platforms.

Twitter

- 56 posts were posted onto the WaterTalks twitter account between October 2019 to March 2021.
- 5 posts were posted by the CAUSE twitter account in February 2021.

E-blasts

A series of three e-blasts were created to engage existing and potential community partners. E-blasts were sent out in November 2020, February 2021, and March 2021. E-blast #1 introduced the WaterTalks program to communities. E-blast #2 reminded communities to participate in the WaterTalks Survey. E-blast #3 served as another reminder and announced the closing date of the survey.

E-blasts to Existing Community Partners. WaterTalks e-blasts were created to inform existing WaterTalks partners about the WaterTalks program and Survey. The E-blast to existing community partners provided instructions about how community groups can get involved as well as provided graphic materials for partners to use and asked to share information with their community networks. Over 43 community partners received this e-blast.

E-blasts to Potential Community Partners. Attached to the existing community partner e-blast included an e-blast to potential community partners. This e-blast was forwarded by existing community partners to engage and inform other community partners about the program. This E-blast provided information about the WaterTalks program as well as links to the website and Survey. Over 200 recipients received this e-blast.

Phone Banking

WaterTalks engaged community members to participate in the Survey by calling residents in the Ventura County and USCR regions. Phone banking efforts were made by the CAUSE between January 2021 and April 2021.

CAUSE Phone Banking. CAUSE called a total of 1,412 residents. Below are the outcomes of results:

- Oxnard: 370 calls, 46 completed surveys (9 in English, 37 in Spanish)
- El Rio: 320 calls, 26 completed surveys (15 in English, 11 in Spanish)
- Ventura: 299 calls, 10 completed surveys (9 in English, 1 in Spanish)
- Santa Paula: 333 calls, 25 completed surveys (10 in English, 15 in Spanish)

PlaceWorks Phone Banking. PlaceWorks called a total of 128 residents in Ventura County. Below are the numbers of calls made to residents in Ventura County priority areas:

- Saticoy: 11 calls
- Casitas Springs: 5 calls
- West Ventura: 16 calls
- El Rio: 49 calls
- Santa Paula: 33 calls
- Piru: 14 calls

School Outreach

School districts across Ventura County priority areas were emailed and called in March 2021. School districts were asked to participate in the WaterTalks program by sharing the WaterTalks Survey with their staff, teachers, and parents. PlaceWorks called 9 school districts in Ventura County.

Institutional Outreach

WaterTalks reached out to water agencies and relevant institutions for program support. Institutions targeted in Ventura County included the City of Ventura Water Department, City of Oxnard Water Department, City of Fillmore Water Department, Nyeland Acres Mutual Water Company, County Watershed Protection District and the Continuum of Care Homeless Company.

2.2.3 WaterTalks Survey Outcomes

Tables 2.5 and 2.6 show the quantity of responses by type of survey response and by each of the five languages throughout all three IRWM planning regions. The WRPI team led the data entry effort for WaterTalks Surveys returned through the mail to Cal State San Bernardino.

The DAC Consultants agreed to include an opportunity drawing in all three IRWM planning regions for community members that completed the WaterTalks Survey. "A way to incorporate more incentives for people who participated in the survey was to give those who chose the opportunity to enter in a drawing to win a $100 VISA gift card. TreePeople donated these gift cards (as they are ineligible for reimbursement through Proposition 1 and DWR), and every week, a winner from a WaterTalks community was selected. At the end of the needs assessment, 19 gift cards were distributed throughout the funding area."4 (Greater Los Angeles County Community Strengths and Needs Assessment- A Water Perspective Draft - v9.7.21 11, pg.10). A link to a separate website for the Opportunity Drawing is displayed after the WaterTalks Survey is completed online. TreePeople carried out the distribution of gift cards to winners of the opportunity drawing for community members in all three IRWM planning regions, shown in **Table 2.7.**

Table 2.5 Total Summary of Surveys by Response Type

Survey Response Type	GLAC	Ventura County	USCR	Total
Phone/Mail-in/In Person	952	378	97	1427
Online	2732	240	210	3182
Total	3684	618	307	4609

Table 2.6 Total Summary of Surveys by Language

Language	GLAC	Ventura County	USCR	Total
English	3235	502	302	4039
Spanish	415	116	2	533
Korean	34	0	3	37
Cantonese	0	0	0	0
Total	3684	618	307	4609

Table 2.7 Opportunity Drawing Outcome

Number	Zip Code	DAC
1	90011	Adams/Central
2	91733	South El Monte
3	91732	Greater El Monte
4	91731	Greater El Monte
5	91042	Tujunga
6	91350	USCR
7	91606	Greater North Hollywood
8	90004	Koreatown
9	93033	Oxnard
10	91335	Central Reseda/Southern Northridge
11	90008	Leimert Park
12	91350	New Hall Bouquet
13	93015	Piru/Fillmore
14	90065	Cypress/Glassell Park
15	90023	Boyle Heights
16	91748	Rowland/Industry
17	91101	Northeast Pasadena
18	90222	Greater Compton
19	90810	West Long Beach

2.3 Conducting Institutional Needs Assessment

The WRPI team took the lead on the institutional needs assessment survey development, outreach, facilitating and general project management.

2.3.1 Determining the Audience

Determining the first batch of institutions to interview was done through an analysis of existing Median Household Income (MHI) data within Water Service Providers (WSPs) (**Table 2.8**) serving the chosen DACs in Ventura County as well as recommendations from the WCVC IRWM representatives.

WRPI first sent a list of WSPs recommended for interviews based on percentage of DAC and SDAC population within the WSP's service area to the WCVC IRWM representatives. This was determined using the existing data from the Data Hub.

Meetings with the WCVC IRWM representatives led to the recommended list of institutions to outreach to shown in the table below. Once several outreach attempts were done for 1st priority institutions, additional institutions were added. The tables below summarize the institutions chosen for the institutional needs assessment in Ventura County.

Table 2.8 Institutions Identified for DACIP Needs Assessment in Ventura County

Interview Priority List	DAC Priority Areas	Type	Institution
1st list	Santa Paula	Mutual	Sisar Mutual Water Co
1st list	Nyeland Acres	Mutual	Nyeland Acres Mutual Water Co
1st list	Fillmore	Government	Fillmore Water Dept
1st list	Nyeland Acres	Mutual	Garden Acres Mutual Water Co
1st list	South Oxnard	Mutual	Cypress Mutual Water Co Inc
1st list	El Rio	Mutual	Cloverdale Mutual Water Co.
1st list	Casitas Springs	Mutual	Casitas Mutual Water Company
1st list	Not in list of DACs but has high percentage of DAC	Mutual	South Mountain Mutual Water Co
1st list	El Rio	WSP	Vineyard Avenue Acres MWC or Vineyard Ave Estates
1st list	Piru	WSP	Warring Water Service Inc (CAL American Water Co.)
1st list	Piru	WSP	Rancho Sespe Workers Imp Assoc
1st list	Santa Paula	WSP	City of Santa Paula Public Works- Water Service Division's/ wastewater/ stormwater
2nd list	South Oxnard	Government	Oxnard Water Department
2nd list	Homeless Population	Community Partner	Ventura County Continuum of Care (working with homeless support services)

2nd list	West Ventura, Saticoy	Government	Ventura Water Department
2nd list	El Rio, Piru, South Oxnard, Unincorporated areas	Government	Ventura County Watershed Protection
2nd list	El Rio, Piru, South Oxnard, Unincorporated areas	Government	Ventura County Watershed Protection

2.3.2 Outreach Strategies

WPRI led outreach efforts to institutions through direct emails and phone correspondence to inform institutions about the WaterTalks program, the LA-V Funding Area DACIP, their local IRWM group, and requesting their participation in the institutional needs assessment (**Table 2.9**). The WCVC IRWM representative and the Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator conducted additional outreach and coordination with institutional contacts to solicit participation in the institutional needs assessment. The following table summarizes outreach efforts in Ventura County. The email language sent to the prioritized institutions is included in Appendix C.

Table 2.9 Outreach to Institutions in Ventura County

Institution	First Outreach	Second Outreach	Response
Sisar Mutual Water Co	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent a follow up email 1/5/21.	Interview 1/12/2021
Nyeland Acres Mutual Water Co	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	None needed	Interview 2/9/2021
Fillmore Water Dept	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	WRPI sent introductory email 2/5/21	Interview 2/23/2021
Garden Acres Mutual Water Co	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Garden Acres MWC submitted responses on excel sheet	Interview 3/16/2021
Cypress Mutual Water Co Inc	WRPI sent introductory email 2/5/21	phone number not in service	No response
Cloverdale Mutual Water Co.	WRPI sent introductory email 2/5/21	VM left on 3/17	No response
Casitas Mutual Water Company	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	VM left on 3/17	Response was submitted after the 6/15/21 so it was not included in this report analysis

South Mountain Mutual Water Co	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent a follow up email 1/7/21. VM left on 3/17/21 WRPI sent reminder email 3/29/21	No response
Vineyard Avenue Acres MWC or Vineyard Ave Estates	WRPI sent introductory email 2/5/21	WRPI spoke with Jeff Densmore (regulator)	No response
Warring Water Service Inc (Now operated by Cal American Water Co.)	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent a follow up email 1/7/21. WRPI sent email 4/6/21 with interview attachment	No response
Rancho Sespe Workers Imp Assoc	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent a follow up email 1/5/21. WRPI sent email 2/5/21 to rsassistant@pshhc.org and received error message in response so sent email to rsa@pshhc.org, no response	No response
City of Santa Paula Public Works	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent follow up emails 1/5/21, 2/25/21, 5/13/21, 6/29/21	No response
Oxnard Water Department	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator sent a follow up email 1/12/21.	Interview 1/19/2021
Ventura County Continuum of Care (working with homeless support services)	WRPI sent introductory email 2/5/21	WCVC sent follow up email 2/10/21	Interview 3/3/2021
Ventura Water Department	WCVC sent introductory email requesting interview	None needed	Interview 3/8/2021
Ventura County Watershed Protection (incorporated areas)	Santa Clara River Watershed Coordinator scheduling of interview	None needed	Interview 3/22/2021
Ventura County Watershed Protection (unincorporated areas)	WCVC coordinated scheduling of interview	None needed	Interview 3/22/2021

2.3.3 Interview Process and Outcomes

Due to COVID-19 regulations from the CSU, WRPI was unable to conduct in person interviews. Interviews were done through Zoom. The institutional needs assessment was available as a digital form using Excel to be filled out by institutions if a Zoom call was not possible or not preferred. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Each was recorded with the permission of the interviewee. The following paragraph was read to the interviewee before the interview began introducing the program and assuring informed consent as part of the IRB requirement.

"Thanks for meeting with us. We are here as a part of the Ventura County Integrated Regional Water Management planning effort to learn from you and document the strengths and needs of your community. The planning effort wants to benefit from your experience and include your perspective about your community and your local water. We anticipate that this interview will take between 60 and 75 minutes. We want to be respectful of your time, so we may steer the conversation to be able to stay within that time frame. We will be taking detailed notes because we want to make sure we capture what you say. We may occasionally pause to write things down or ask you to repeat something. Your participation with us today will be kept anonymous. Our notes will not be delivered to the Program, only our report. In the report we will refer to people generally, for instance, as "a city council member" or "a water supply agency staff member." We have broad, open-ended questions prepared for you. There are no right or wrong answers, so please respond however you would like. We may ask some follow-up or clarifying questions. Before we begin, do you have any questions?"

Table 2.10 lists the institutions that completed the needs assessment in Ventura County, either through a virtual interview, or by submitting their responses through an Excel form of the institutional needs assessment. Their responses or interview notes were then input into an ArcGIS Survey 123 form created for the institutional needs assessment.

Table 2.10 Institutions Interviewed In Ventura County

DAC Priority Area Served	Institution Type	Institution Name
Santa Paula	Mutual	Sisar Mutual Water Co
South Oxnard	Government	Oxnard Water Department
Fillmore	Government	Fillmore Water Dept.
Nyeland Acres	Mutual	Nyeland Acres Mutual Water Co
Nyeland Acres	Mutual	Garden Acres Mutual Water Co
Homeless Population	Community Partner	Ventura County Continuum of Care (working with homeless support services)
West Ventura, Saticoy	Government	Ventura Water Department
El Rio, Piru, South Oxnard, Unincorporated areas	Government	Ventura County Watershed Protection

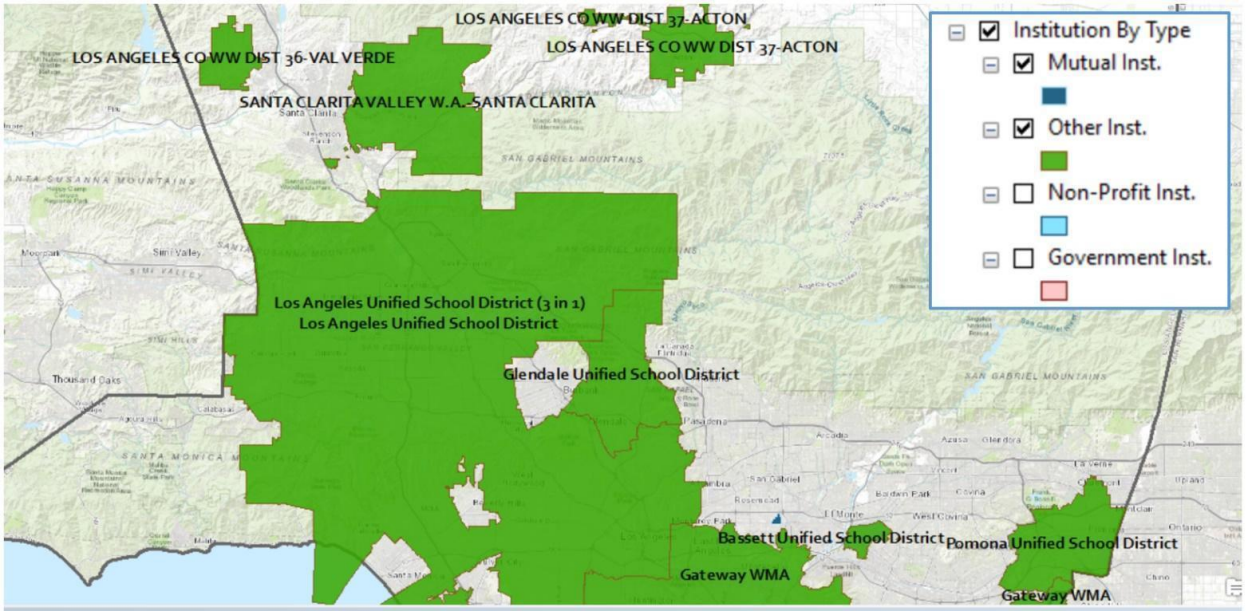
Ventura County	Community Partner	NAACP Ventura Chapter

2.3.4 Institutional Needs Data Geographies

Institutional responses collected during interviews (i.e. Survey 123 tool) were exported from the ArcGIS Online (AGOL) environment and underwent several rounds of cleanup (**Figure 2.2**). Since the data was collected through ArcGIS Survey 123 and due to the number of free-response (write-in) questions, much of the data contained extra characters or was in a format that was not usable for analysis (i.e. containing extra carriage returns, extra underscores, etc.). Data cleanup processes were automated where possible to ensure consistency and completeness in the corrections.

Additionally, the data was inherently tabular, meaning it did not have a spatial component after being extracted from AGOL. Since this data will be used as project evaluation criteria, it was important to provide some kind of spatial reference. It was agreed that it would be best to spatially represent each institution that was interviewed by using their area of influence boundary. In many cases, such as with school districts, assigning a spatial reference was straightforward as it was clear which preexisting boundaries should be used. However, there were several institutions whose area of influence was not obvious. In these cases, a request for feedback was sent out to those that interviewed the target institutions. Feedback was collected and boundaries were determined.

The resulting institutional data contained cleaned up tabular data along with geographies representing each institution. This data was contained in an ESRI file geodatabase and shared with LA-V DACIP DAC Consultants, TreePeople's team and WRPI, who were part of the institutional needs assessment interviews via a private (non-public facing) AGOL group and a set of private web maps to aid in reporting. The data will later be used to identify similarities (i.e. connects) differences (i.e. disconnects) between stakeholders as well as serving as the primary tool to identify and develop project evaluation criteria within Task 4.



Table

Other Inst.

Institution_Name	Q3_County	Q4_IRWM	Q6_Writein
LOS ANGELES CO WW DIST 36-VAL VERDE	Los Angeles County	Upper Santa Clara River	County Waterworks District
LOS ANGELES CO WW DIST 37-ACTON	Los Angeles County	Upper Santa Clara River	County Waterworks District
Bassett Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Glendale Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Los Angeles Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Lynwood Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District

Figure 2.2: Snapshot of the institutional needs data showing “other” institution types (i.e. school districts).

Chapter 3 Community-Institutional Characteristics and Survey Response Assessment

To determine the type of stress communities may be experiencing related to social, environmental and economic factors, a disadvantaged community Stress Model (i.e. DAC Stress Model) was developed utilizing an index composed of three data sources to demonstrate what census tracts indicate a high level of stress. These data sources provide an index of scores that are compiled using multiple variables as described in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1 DAC Stress Model Data Sources, Description and Application

Data Source	Variable Description	Application
Enviroscreen 3.0 Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), on behalf of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)	CalEnviroScreen identifies California communities by census tract that are disproportionately burdened by, and vulnerable to, multiple sources of pollution. https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30	Higher numbers indicate higher stress
Median Household Income (MHI) United States Census	MHI includes the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Applied California Poverty Level of $31,000 as the MHI threshold for poverty. https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html	Lower numbers indicate higher stress.
Social Vulnerability Index Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	Natural disasters and infectious disease outbreaks can pose a threat to a community's health. Socially vulnerable populations are especially at risk during public health emergencies because of factors like socioeconomic status, household composition, minority status, or housing type and transportation. CDC/ATSDR SVI Data and Documentation Download | Place and Health | ATSDR	Higher numbers indicate higher stress

Additionally, **Appendix E** outlines the steps that were applied to develop the DAC Stress Model Levels. The stress model was applied to census tracts to determine where high and low levels of DAC stress communities were present across Ventura County. Applying this model, specific community

characteristics can be identified utilizing the individual indices scores (i.e. enviroscreen), as well as the composite score that reveals that DAC stress level. This will assist with identifying the types and overarching themes of participant responses and how they spatially align with levels of DAC stress across community and institutional boundaries.

Aligning survey responses with DAC stress model results required WRPI and CGST to observe survey questions that identified stakeholders needs, strengths, and potential solutions related to drinking water, agricultural production, industrial uses and to support high quality environmental resources. Developing community survey and institutional interview questionnaires resulted in variability in the types of questions and subsequently the information gathered as some questions were community centric (i.e. relationship with government and agencies), while others were institutional specific (i.e. technical capacity needs). Where similar community and institutional questions aligned, broad themes such as "availability and quality of water resources" and "engagement" were developed to determine relationships in responses across stakeholder types (i.e. Sections 3.2, 3.3).

Utilizing these overarching themes, WRPI and CGST observed trends in community stakeholder responses by determining high frequency responses for a given survey question across Ventura County with a specific focus on high stress DAC areas (Section 3.2). Trends in institutional themes were similarly identified by reviewing interview responses from institutional staff or volunteers. Common themes across institutions (e.g. infrastructure, water rates) are associated with specific examples that highlight how the various institutional types (e.g. water mutuals vs. city water departments) responded (Section 3.3). This process also assisted with understanding the extent to which community and institutional stakeholders aligned (i.e. connect) or not (i.e. disconnected) in their perceptions of water resource issues and related community needs. WRPI and CGST also noted when project needs or examples of successful programs and collaborations were shared (Chapter 4).

3.1 Characterizing the Ventura Region

The environmental (e.g. climate, terrain) and socio-economic (e.g. demographics, household income) landscapes of the **Ventura County priority areas, (i.e. Ventura region)** are very diverse (**Figure 3.1**). For example, the cities of Oxnard and Ventura are located along the coast and river-ocean interface, where the built environment includes high densities of impervious surface types (i.e. roads, sidewalks) and structural types (i.e. residential, commercial and industrial). In contrast, communities such as the cities of Santa Paula and Fillmore are located inland encompassing more dispersed development (i.e. small townships, large lot sizes) and are inclusive of or surrounded by rural and agricultural settings.

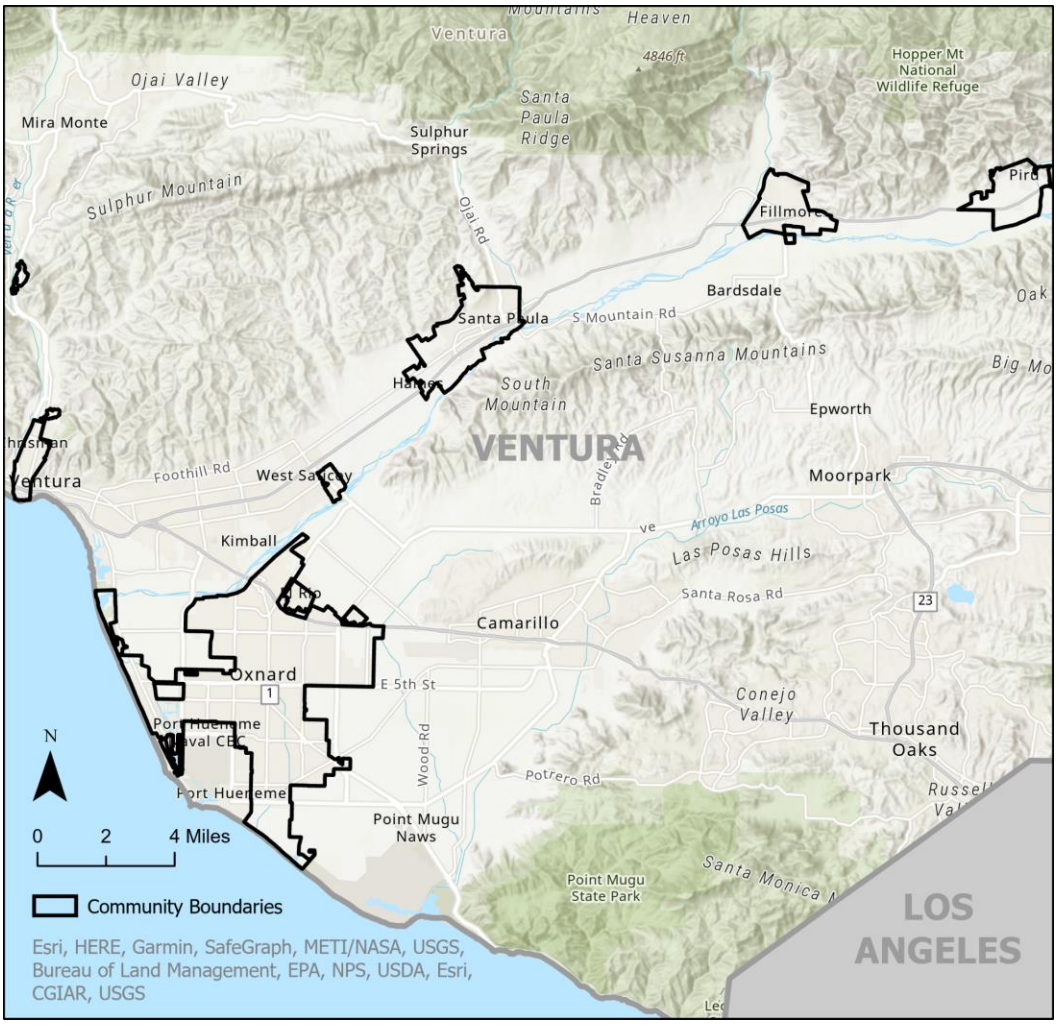


Figure 3.1. Ventura County terrain map highlighting the priority areas where communities and institutions were surveyed.

Table 3.2 describes the broad types of community and institutional survey participants. Community participants across the Ventura region were primarily represented by homeowners, while those representing institutions were primarily from government agencies representing a city or county department with slightly less representation from mutual water agencies. The majority of participating institutions have objectives directly related to providing drinking water resources, treatment of wastewater or ensuring surface and groundwater resources are protected for various human and environmental uses. This study also included institutions with more broad objectives that included water related issues such as ensuring water resources are available for homeless or unsheltered community members or organizations providing a variety of watershed protection measures including stormwater and flood control management and other related activities that adversely impact the quality or quantity of water resources.

Table 3.2 Stakeholder Respondent Types for the Ventura Region

Community Member Types	Institutional Types
Homeowner An individual who lives in the Ventura region and owns a house, apartment or similar dwelling. n=362 respondents	**Mutual Water Providers (Volunteer staff)** Smaller water mutual agency represented by community volunteers who typically have prior knowledge or have been trained to support and manage various water operations, maintenance and regulatory activities. n=1 respondent
Renter An individual or family who does not own the property they reside in (i.e. house, apartment, mobile home). Although they utilize and interact with water resources in the region, they may be limited in their ability to manage water use in their residence. n=241 respondents	**Mutual Water Providers (Paid staff)** Smaller to larger water mutual agency represented by paid full time staff with expertise in water issues including various water operations, maintenance and regulatory activities. n= 2 respondents
Community Advocate An individual volunteerings or a paid staff member of an organization working in the Ventura region. Organization representation may vary in issues resulting in varying interaction with water issues. n=10 respondents	**City Water Departments (Government)** Respondent type represents coastal and inland water departments that work on a variety of water issues including meeting regulations, infrastructure, stormwater, quality and quantity, identification of funding sources and public education and outreach. n= 3 respondents
Business Owner An individual who owns a business in the Ventura region. Their relationship to water use and related issues may vary based on business type.	**Watershed Agency (Government; Unincorporated Areas)** Respondent types included staff representing a government agency who assist with stormwater and flood management, protection of property and other watershed related activities in unincorporated areas of the Ventura region.

n=5 respondents	n = 1 respondent
Work/Employed in the Area Community participants who work for an organization in the Ventura region, but who do not reside in the area as a resident. n=2 respondents	**Watershed Agency (Government; Incorporated Areas)** Respondent types included staff representing a government agency who assist with stormwater and flood management, protection of property and other watershed related activities in incorporated areas of the Ventura region. n= 3 respondents
Unsheltered/Homeless n=1 respondent	**Community Organizations (Representing Unsheltered and Homeless Population)** Respondent types include those working for organizations dedicated to promoting a safe, desirable and thriving community by ending homelessness in Ventura County. n = 1 respondent

3.1.1 The Geography of Disadvantaged Communities and Institutions

Central to the Needs Assessment Task is identifying the current needs and or emerging issues that impact water resources in the Ventura region with a specific focus on DACs. Applying the DAC Stress Model (**Figure 3.2, Appendix E**) to the Ventura region, it was observed that community and institutional boundaries often bridge multiple DACs stress levels across both small and large urban and rural areas. Communities with diverse DAC stress levels primarily occurred within the City of Oxnard, the largest urban landscape within the study area. For example, within the City of Oxnard, community and institutional boundaries straddle DAC stress levels 3 to 6. Spatially, communities in western Oxnard are classified as DAC stress level 3 indicating that there are low levels of stress related to household incomes, environmental health conditions and social vulnerability factors such as natural hazards and public health emergencies. Moving towards the central portions of the city, DAC stress levels include levels 4 to 6. In areas represented by DAC levels 4 and 5, communities experience higher stress associated with social vulnerability, while in areas represented by DAC stress level 6, communities are more susceptible to both social vulnerability and environmental stresses that impact human health. The eastern portions of the city are primarily DAC stress level 6 mimicking similar issues noted in DAC 6 stress levels found in the central part of Oxnard.

Inland DAC stress level trends are far less diverse, likely associated with less population densities, however, some smaller cities, townships and water provider service areas encompass diverse DAC stress levels. The City of Fillmore and the Fillmore Water District boundaries, for example, are inclusive of DAC stress levels 4 to 6. Within the City of Fillmore, the eastern portion of the city is represented by DAC stress level 6 with higher stresses associated with social vulnerability and environmental health. In

contrast, the DAC stresses observed in the northern (i.e. DAC stress level 5) and western (i.e. DAC stress level 4) portions of the city are associated with higher levels of social vulnerability with lower stress levels associated with household income and environmental health factors. When observing **Figure 3.2** it should be noted that in the more rural, inland areas of the Ventura region, less population density and lower DAC stress levels should not mask individuals living within these communities that experience similar issues as those residing within higher stress DACs.

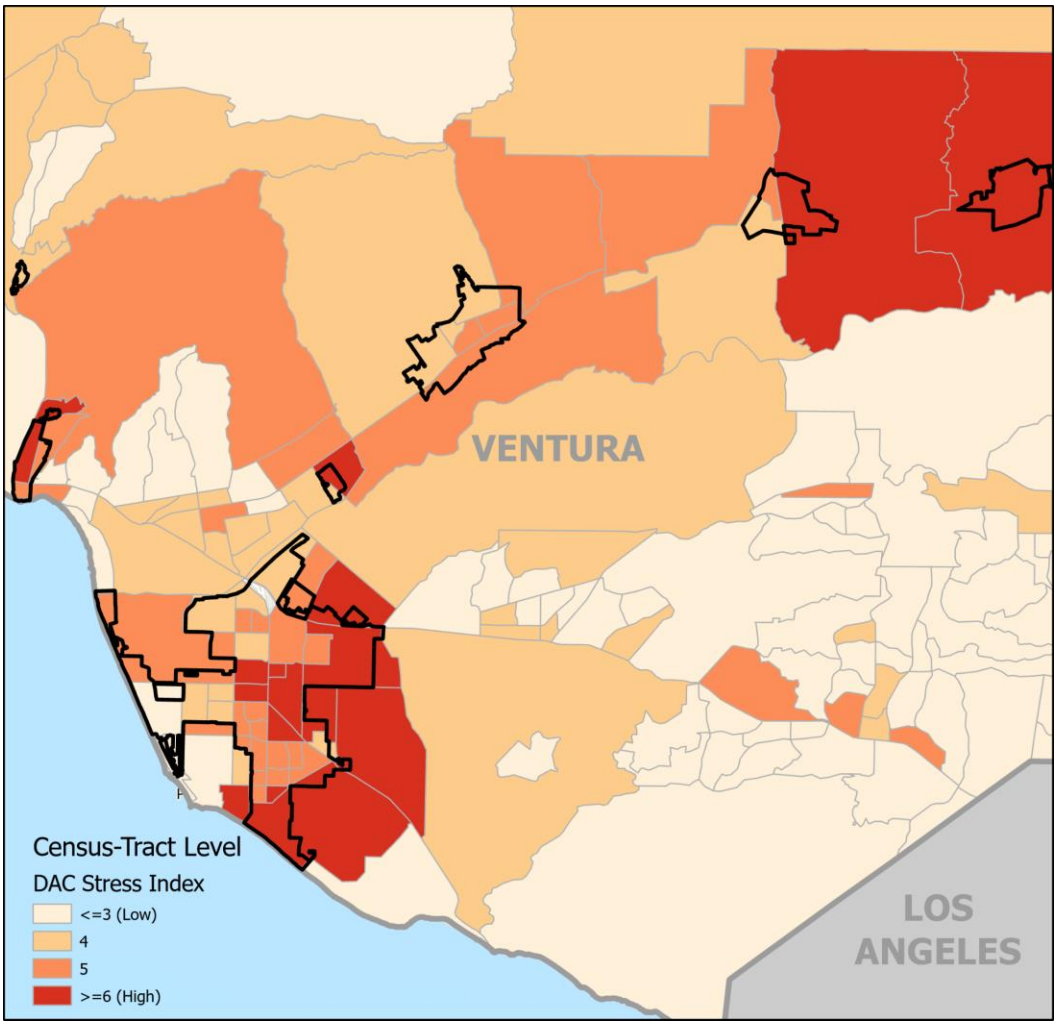


Figure 3.2 Ventura region community boundaries and DAC stress model classifications

When considering survey participation by those representing or residing in high stress DACs across IRWM boundaries, there were differences found when comparing the Ventura IRWM study region to those participating in the Greater Los Angeles and Upper Santa Clara IRWM region's survey efforts. Community members participating in the survey residing within "High Stress" DACs across all study areas including the Greater Los Angeles Area, the Upper Santa Clara and Ventura Basins primarily represented renters (55.6%), and homeowners (32.3%) (**Figure 3.3**). In contrast, community survey respondents across the Ventura region were primarily represented by homeowners (63.1%) followed by renter participation (33.8%). These examples demonstrate the diverse DAC stress level not only across

the Ventura region but also within a given political boundary highlighting the need to identify and address localized water issues.

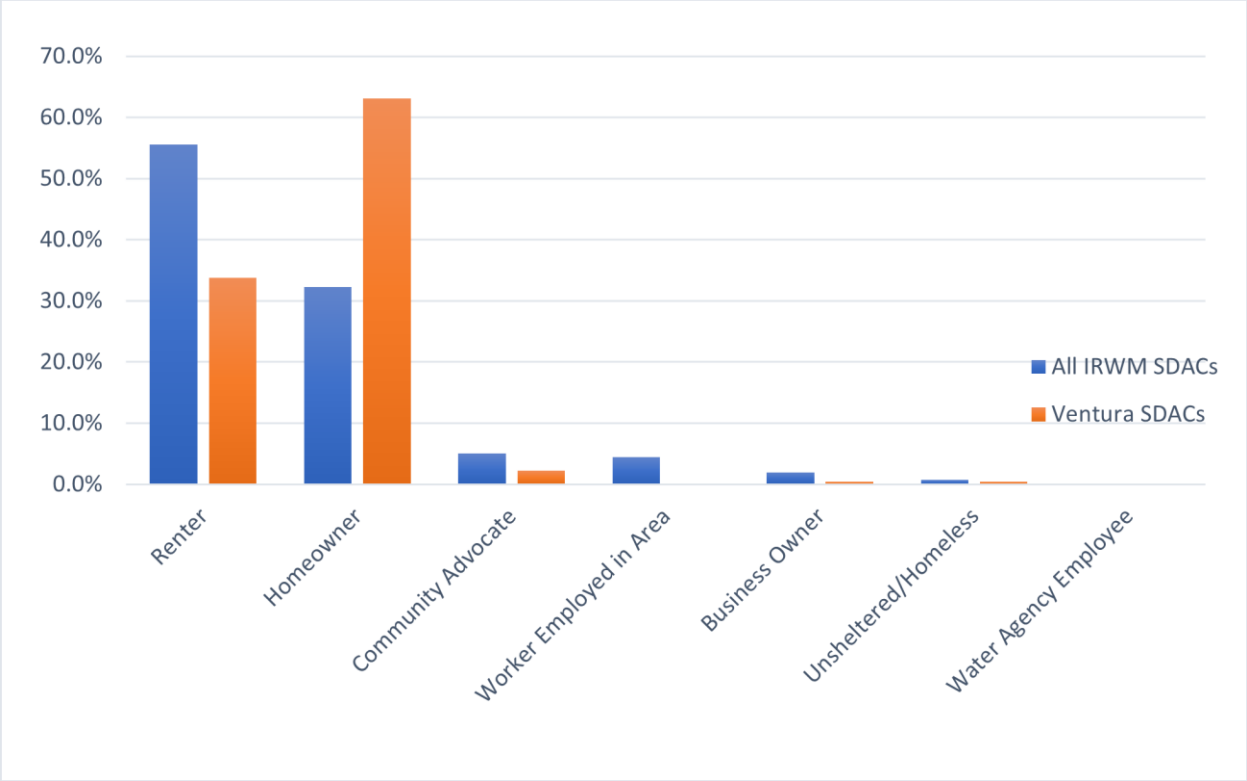


Figure 3.3: Profile of Community Survey Respondents across the entire LA-Ventura IRWM region, versus the Ventura IRWM region alone, in High Stress DACs.

3.1.2 Ventura Region Community Survey Participant Responses Graphical Representation

PlaceWorks and CSUN CGST team processed the WaterTalks Survey responses that were entered as of June 15th, 2021. The WaterTalks Survey responses collected in Ventura County are summarized in graphs and word clouds under the respective survey question. The WaterTalks Survey responses to questions that have a predefined/standardized response were summarized using Excel's pivot table feature to tally the results and generate graphs.

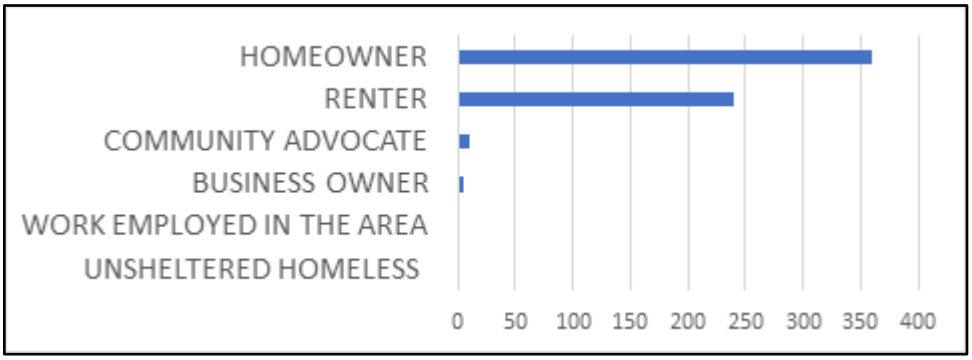
The responses to open-ended (i.e. write-in) questions were summarized using word clouds that highlight repeating words in responses. The size of the words is determined by the frequency, or how many times the word was used in the responses. The larger words had a higher frequency. PlaceWorks used the following website, https://www.freewordcloudgenerator.com/generatewordcloud, and limited the number of words shown to the top 30.

Lists of open-ended (i.e. write-in) responses are provided for questions that called for longer responses from participants that weren't as useful using the word cloud presentation. These responses are listed in Appendix G along with tables summarizing responses to predefined/standardized responses

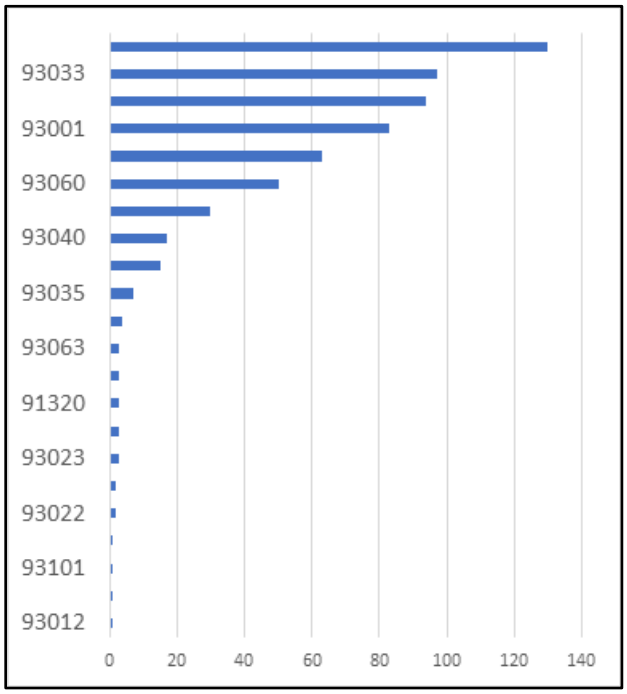
corresponding to the graphs shown in this chapter.

Community Characteristics

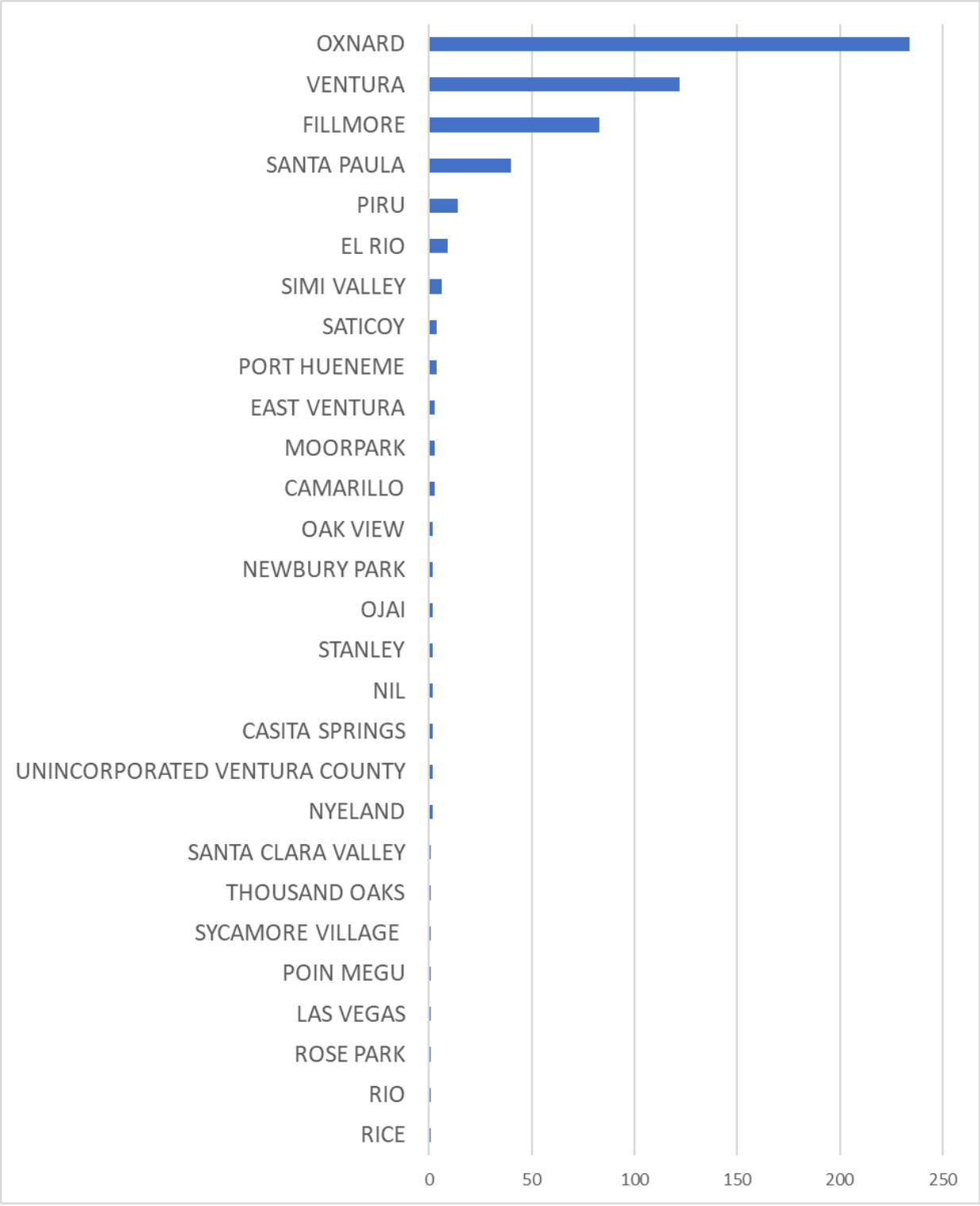
1. Are you responding to this survey as a resident or other community member?

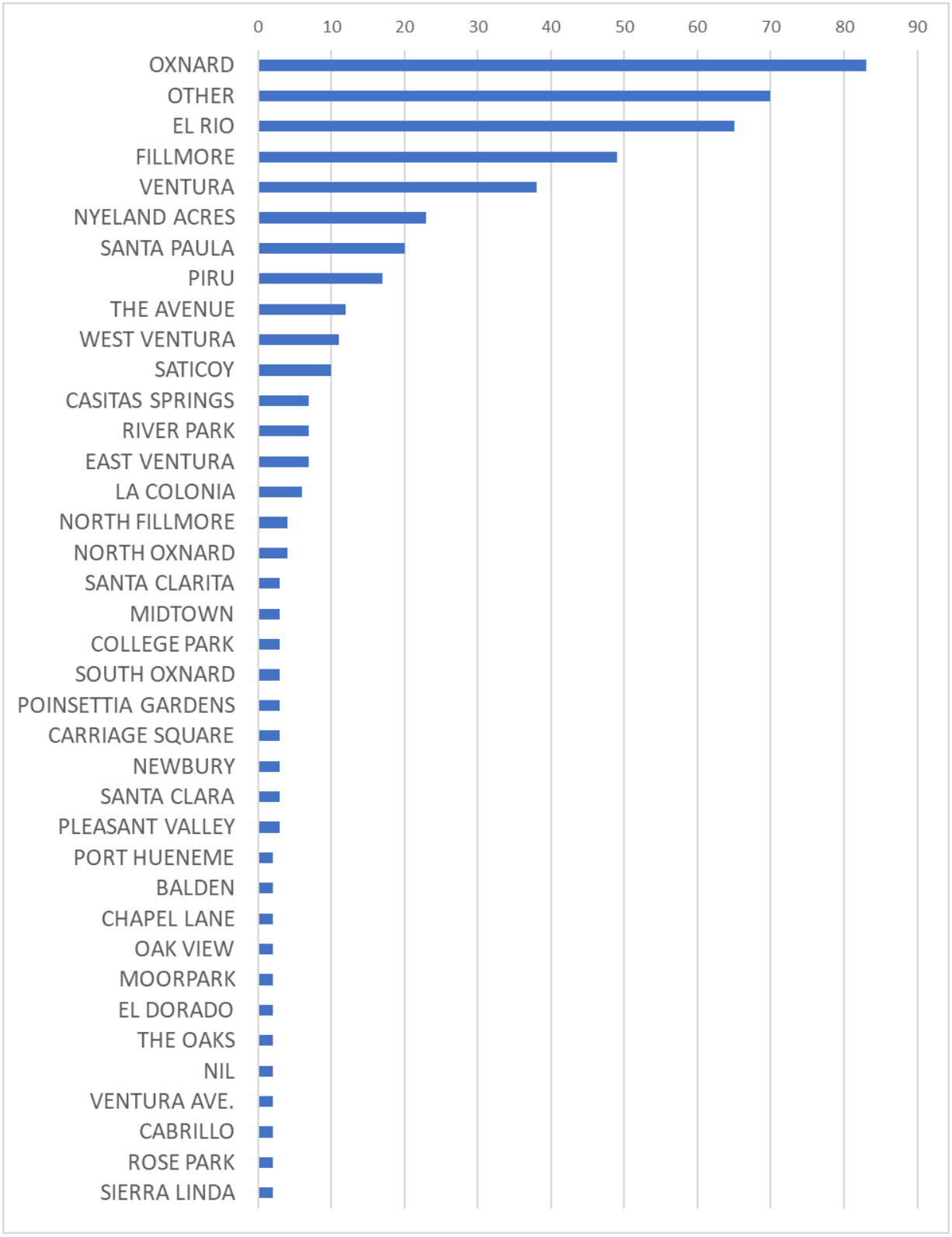


2. Please provide the zip code of the community for which you are responding.



2b. What City is this community located in?




0
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60
70
80
90
OXNARD
OTHER
EL RIO
FILLMORE
VENTURA
NYELAND ACRES
SANTA PAULA
PIRU
THE AVENUE
WEST VENTURA
SATICOY
CASITAS SPRINGS
RIVER PARK
EAST VENTURA
LA COLONIA
NORTH FILLMORE
NORTH OXNARD
SANTA CLARITA
MIDTOWN
COLLEGE PARK
SOUTH OXNARD
POINSETTIA GARDENS
CARRIAGE SQUARE
NEWBURY
SANTA CLARA
PLEASANT VALLEY
PORT HUENEME
BALDEN
CHAPEL LANE
OAK VIEW
MOORPARK
EL DORADO
THE OAKS
NIL
VENTURA AVE.
CABRILLO
ROSE PARK
SIERRA LINDA

4. List three things you like about your community.

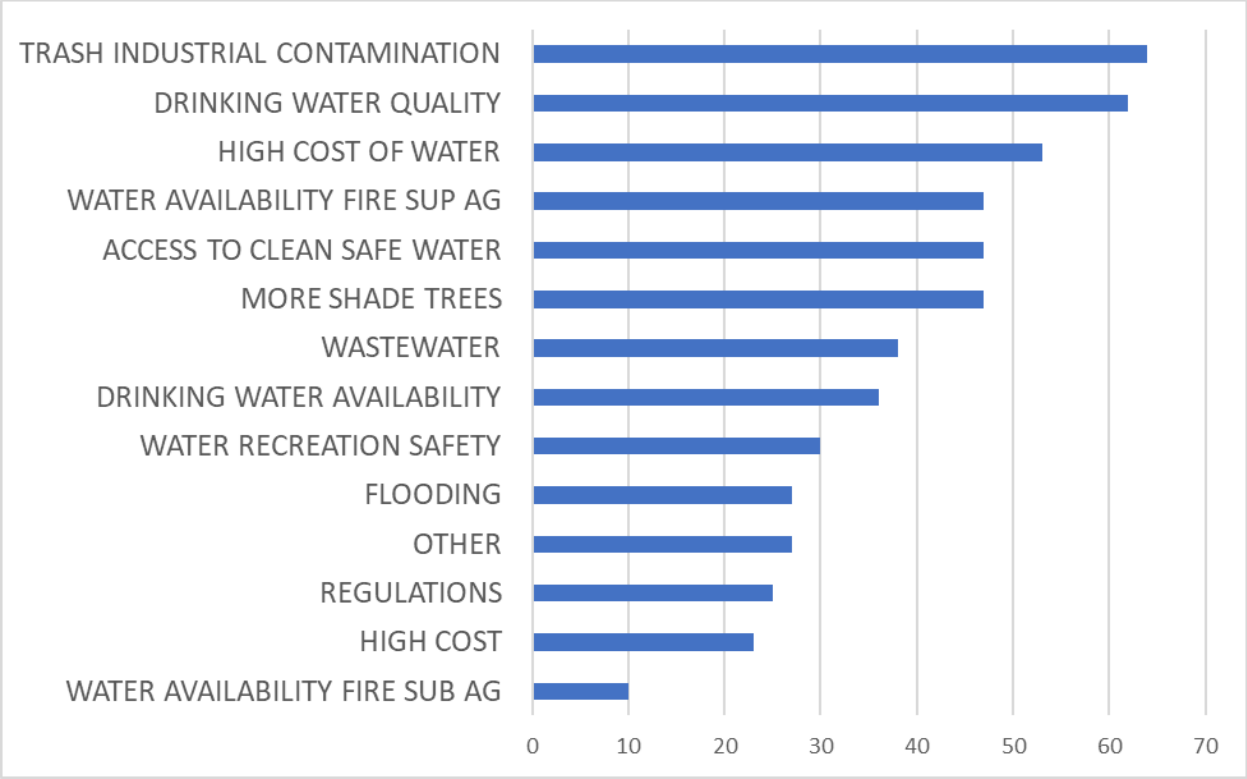


5. What are the three things your community needs the most?

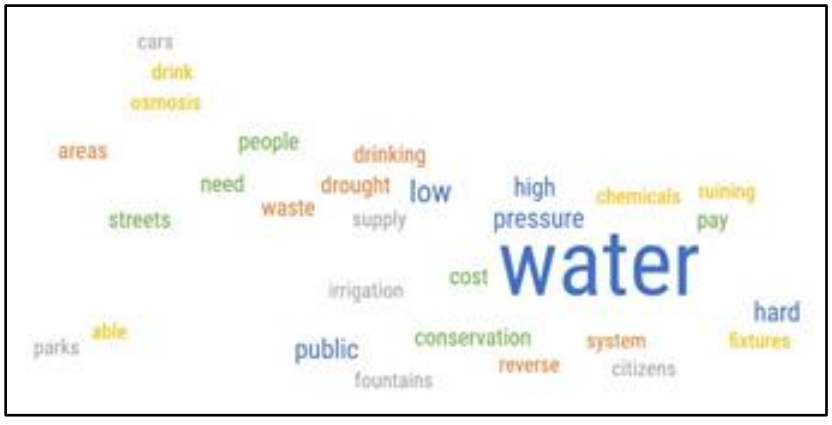


Water Related Issues and Opportunities

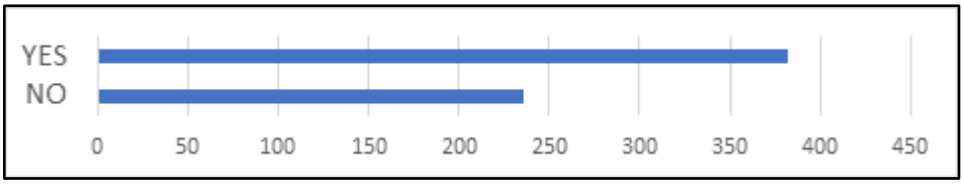
6. What water related issues are of greatest concern in your community?



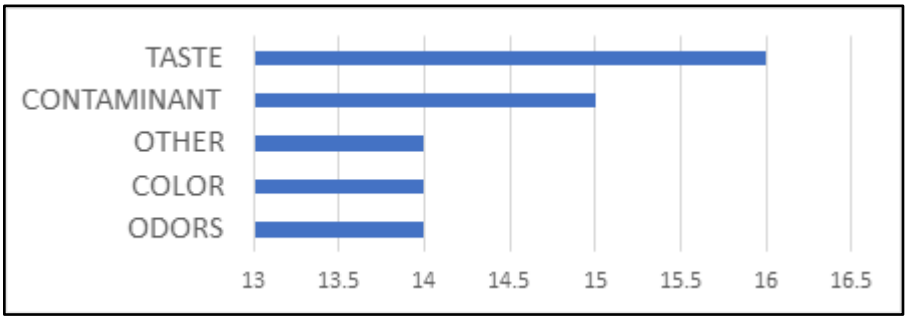
6 Other. Other water related concerns?



7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home neighborhood or community you serve?



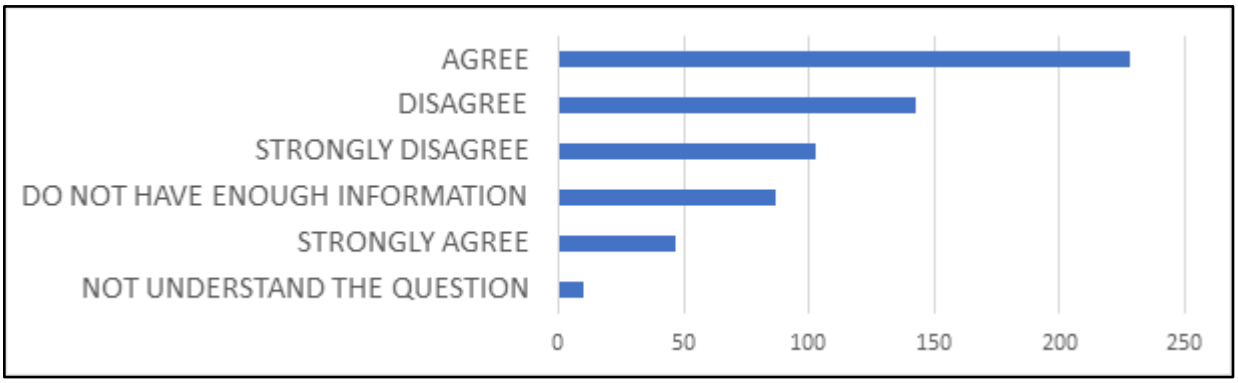
7a. If yes, select all of the concerns that apply.



7a Other. Other water related concerns?

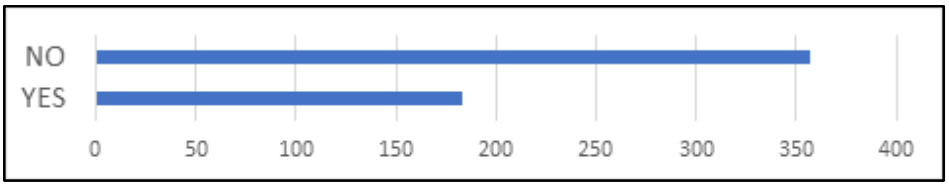


8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.

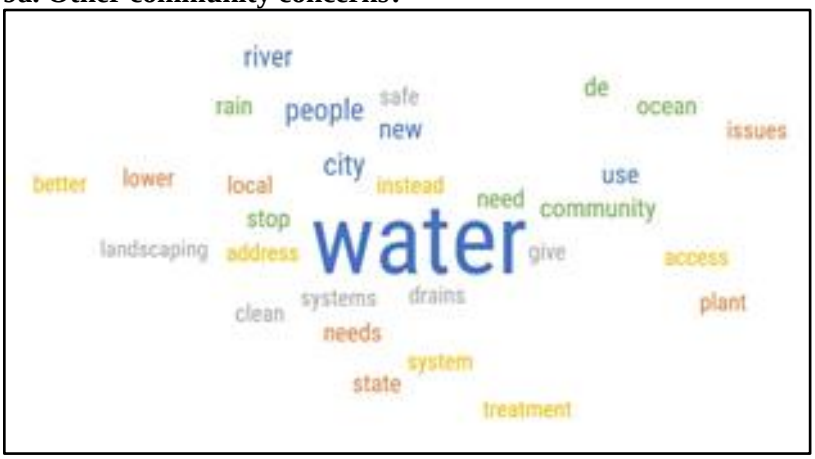


Those who responded were able to write in their reasons for their response (See Appendix G).

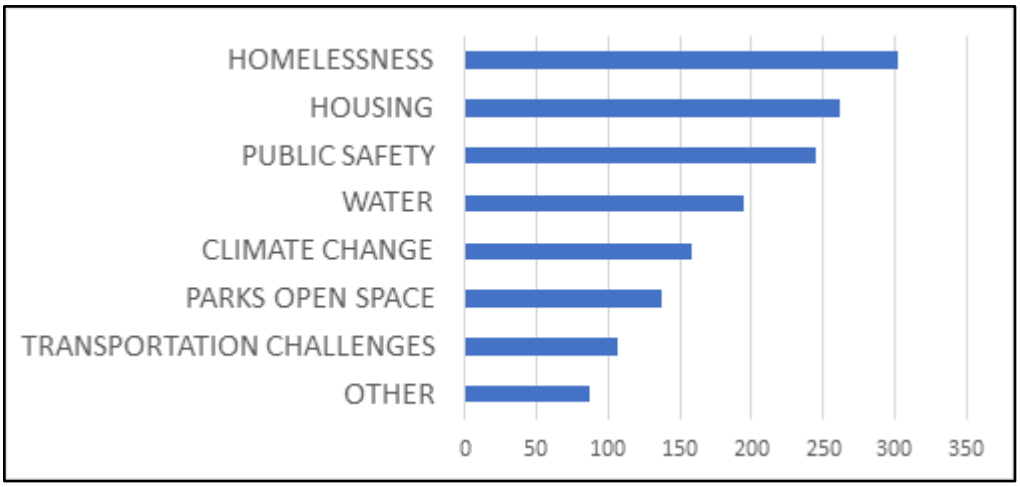
9. Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?



9a. Other community concerns?



10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

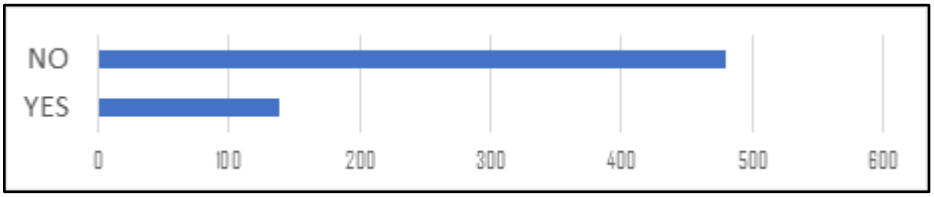


10 Other. Other community concerns?



Community Engagement

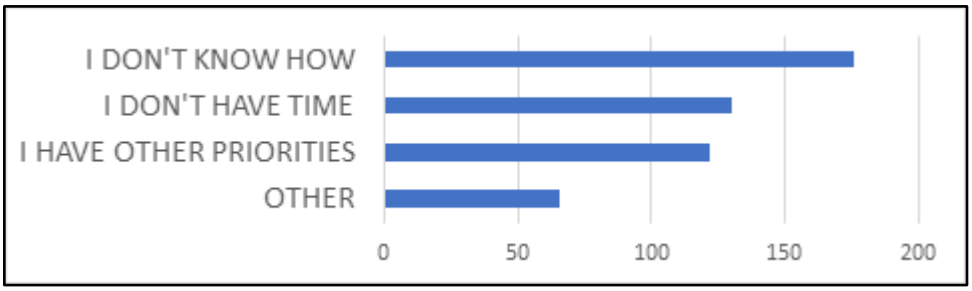
11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?



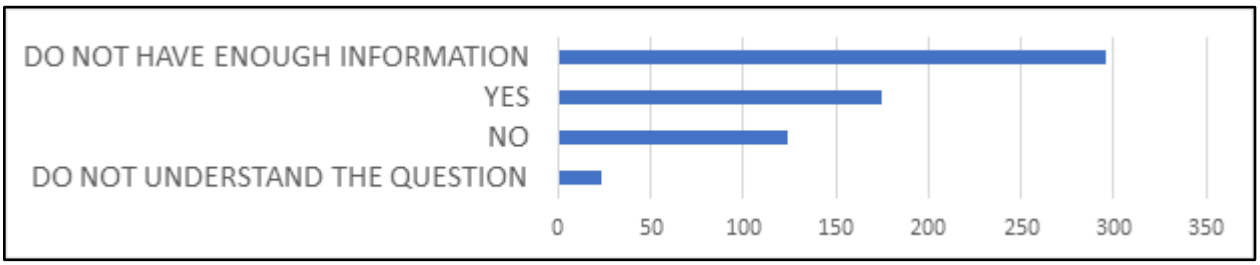
11a. If yes, what efforts do you participate in?

Those who responded with the option, “YES”, were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

11b. If not, Select all of the reasons that apply.



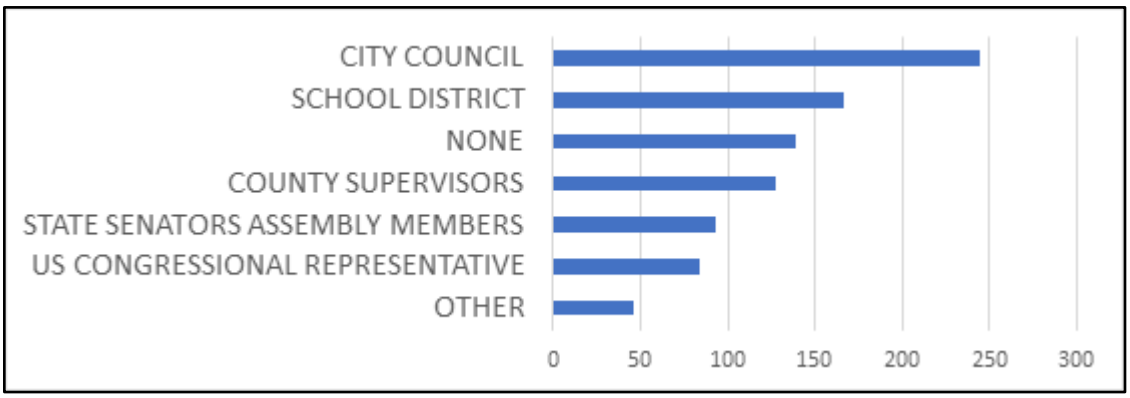
12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?



12a. If yes, are there specific people or groups you would like to share?

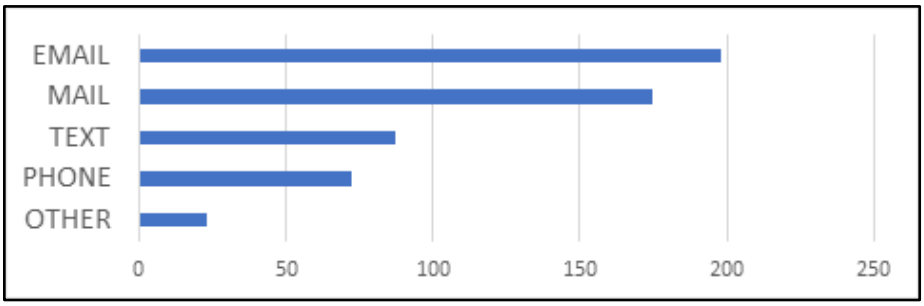
Those who responded with the option, "YES", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or receive information from?

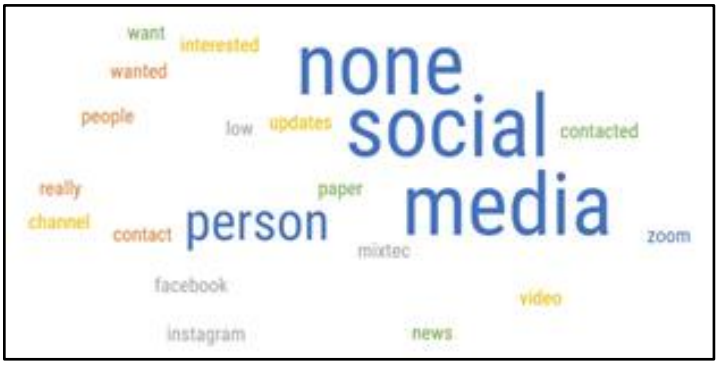


Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

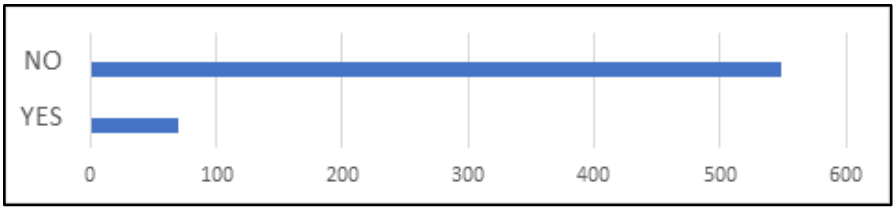
14. What is your preferred way to be contacted by community organizations and governing bodies?



14 Other.



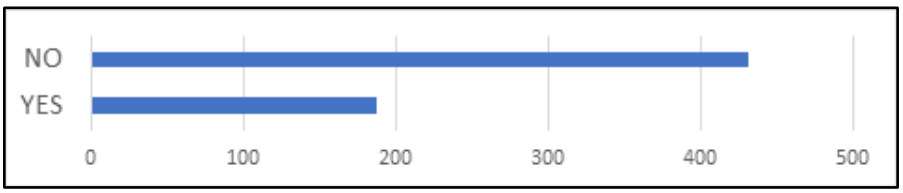
15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?



15a. If yes, was the planning process responsive to your needs?

Those who responded with the option, "YES", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

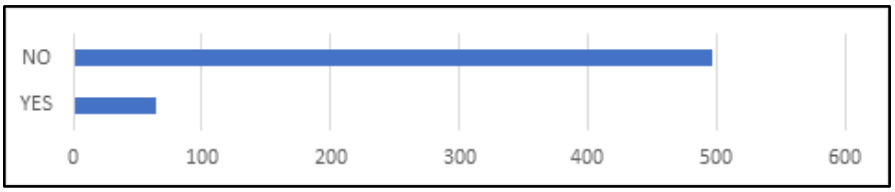
16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by government or the public at large?



16a. Use the space below to identify which voices or groups are being heard and which still need to be heard.

Respondents were able to write in their response for question 16a. (See Appendix G).

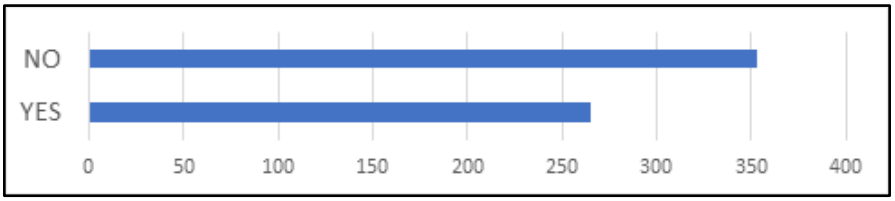
17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?



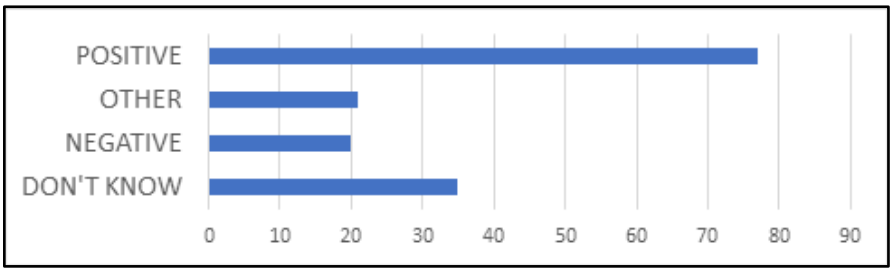
17a. If yes, in what context?

Those who responded with the option, "YES", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides you water?

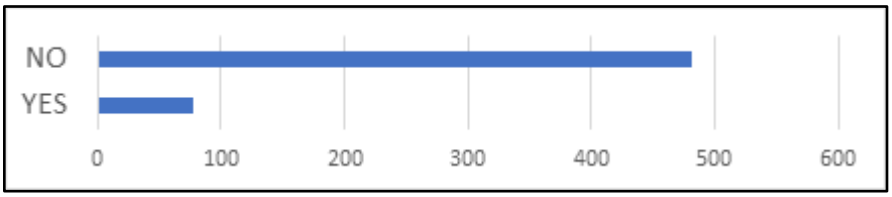


18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?



Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?



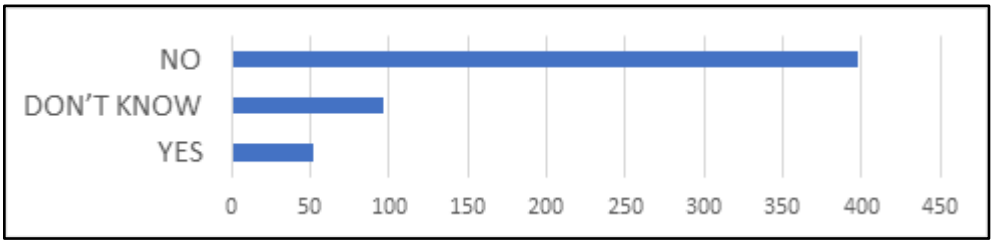
19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

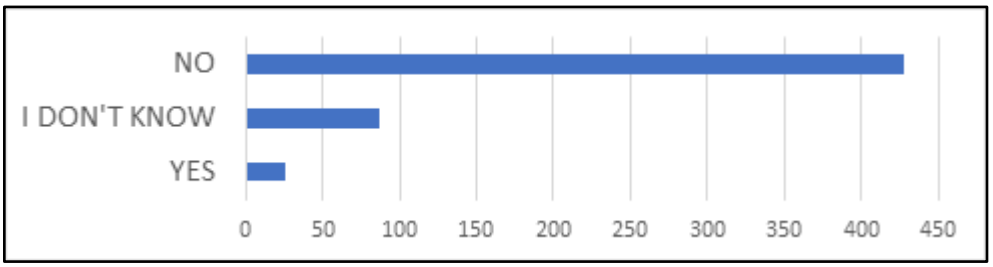
Water Usage Types

Questions #20 and #21 were meant only for respondents who answered as a Renter, Homeowner, or Business Owner in question #1.

20. Is your home or business on a septic system?

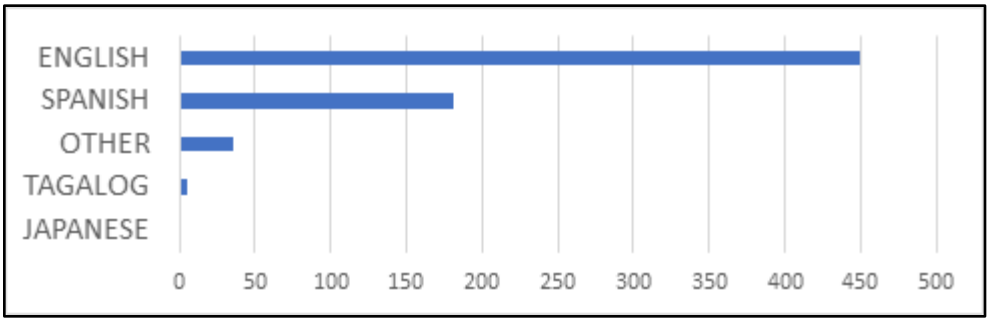


21. Is your home or business on a private well?

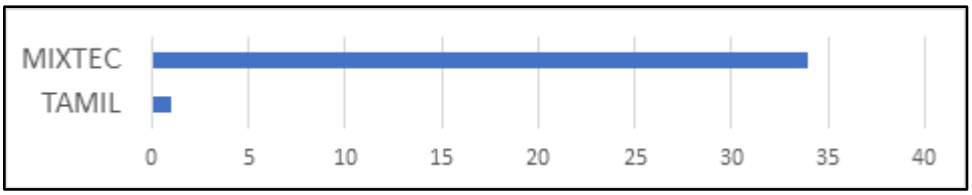


Respondent Primary Language

22. Primary language spoken at home?

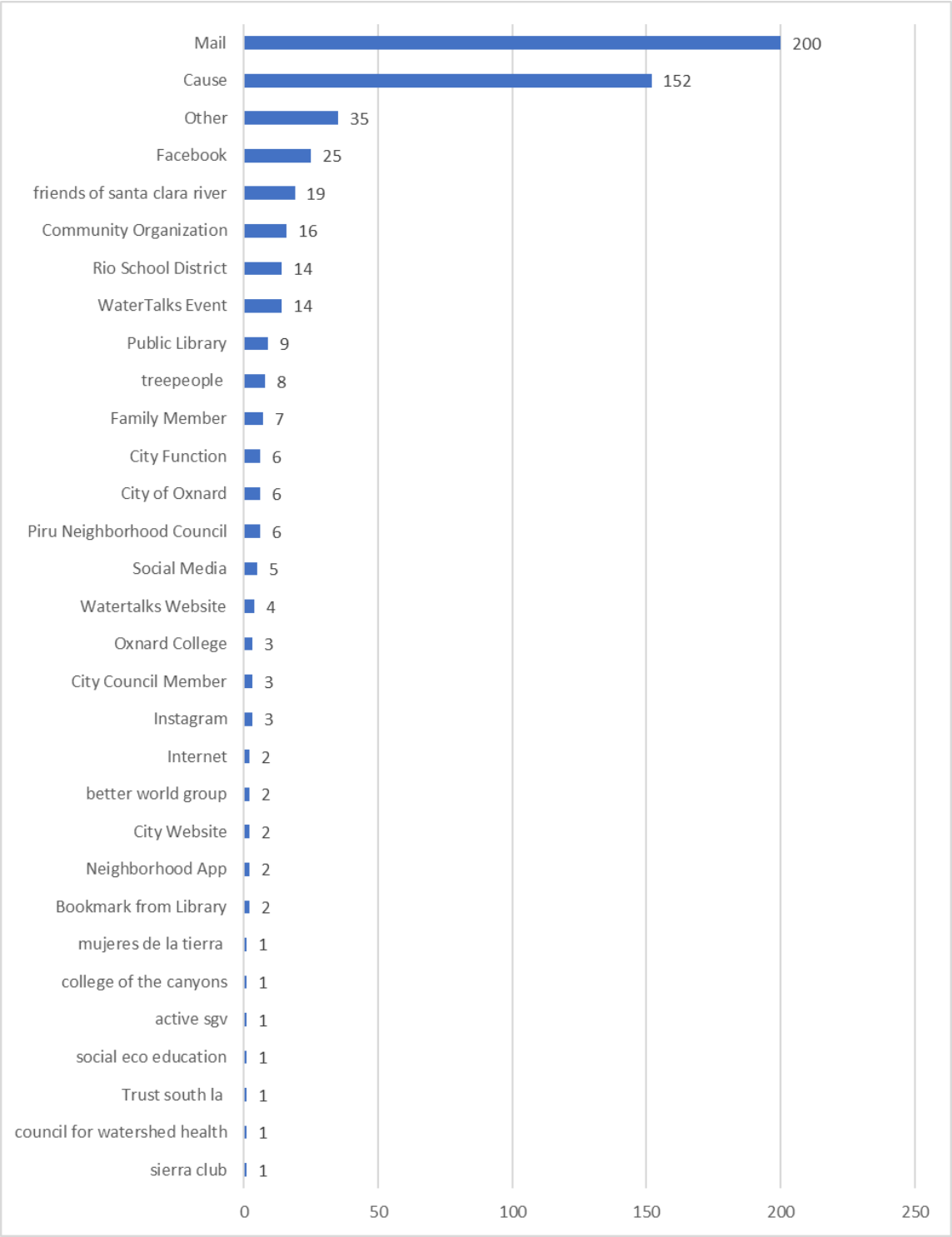


22 Other. Primary language spoken at home:



How did Respondent hear about WaterTalks Survey

23. How did you hear about this survey?



Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

3.2 Community and Institutional Survey Responses: Connect, Disconnects and Opportunities

3.2.1 Needs and Strengths

Community Survey Questions
Q4 List three things you like about your community.
Q5 What are the three things your community needs the most?
Q10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

Institutional Survey Questions
Q17: Will you please tell us about your community's strengths, and what it needs.
Q38: What other concerns do you have for your community now and into the future? (Circle One) under needs.

Summary:
Community respondents across the Ventura region emphasized the overall need and concern related to water resources with a small sense of community ranking as the most prominent response related to community strengths. Within (i.e. DAC stress levels 5 and 6), high frequency terms associated with community strengths included recreational areas and greenspaces, clean beaches, the weather, social service programs, and local businesses (**Figure 3.4**). These communities also shared the need to **increase greenspace and recreational opportunities**, provide adequate assistance to unsheltered and homeless community members, increase **affordable housing,** and support **higher paying jobs** (**Figures 3.5, 3.6**). Furthermore, it was noted by respondents in high stress DACs that **low wage jobs coupled with high and increasing housing, utility and water prices** often results in an increase in communities classified as DACs over time. Concerns with homeless communities related to public safety and emerging issues related to climate change (i.e. sea level rise, flooding, fires, droughts) were also shared. In inland high stress DACs, respondents suggested that roadways to more isolated communities are increasingly closed due to **increasing flooding and fire conditions,** highlighting a need to ensure adequate transportation routes during hazardous conditions.



Figure 3.4 Word Cloud Example from Chapter 3 (3.1.2) Community Survey Question 4 “List three things you like about your community.”



Figure 3.5 Word Cloud Example from Chapter 3 (3.1.2) Community Survey Question 5 "What are the three things your community needs the most?"

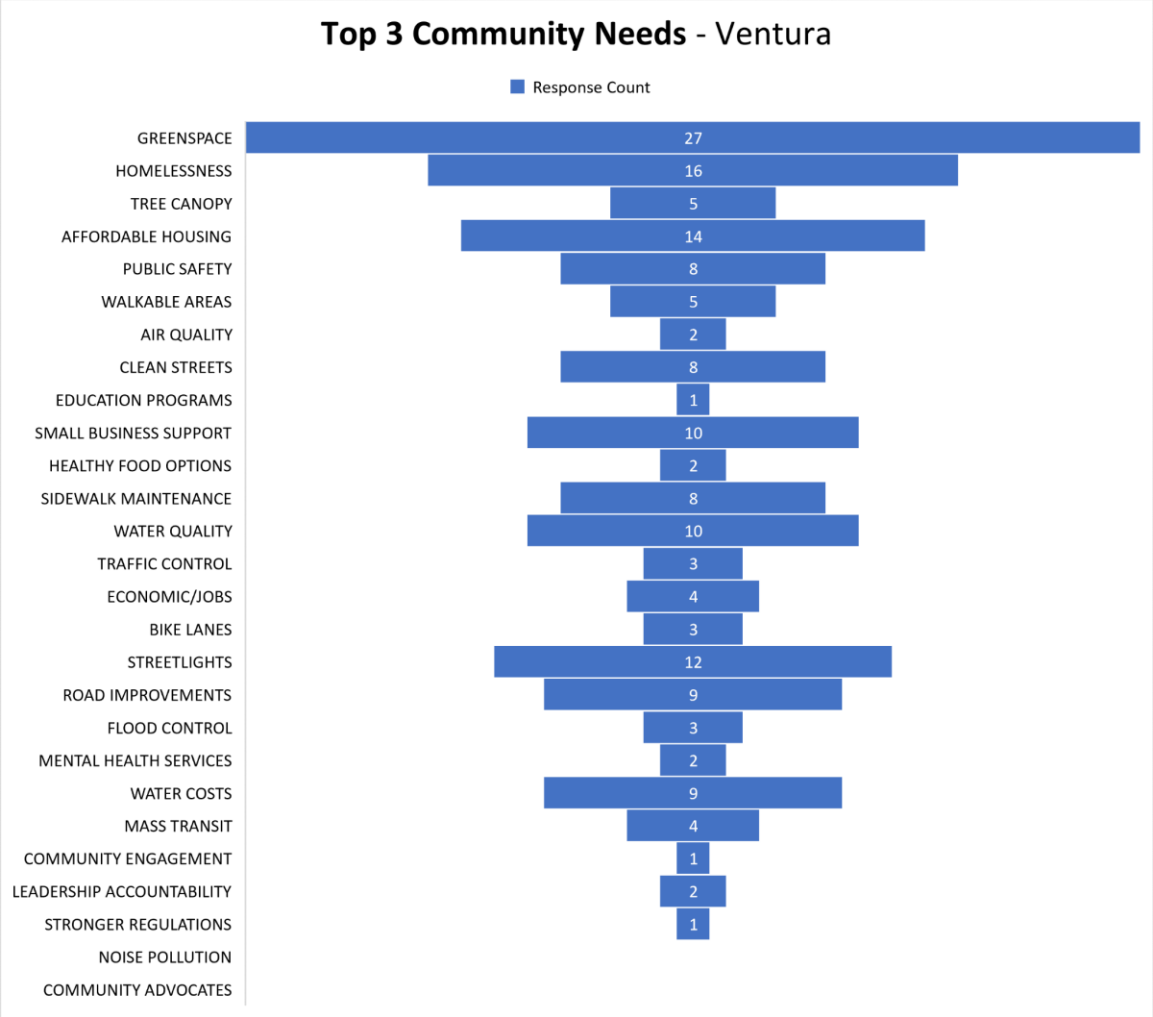


Figure 3.6 Analysis of high stress DAC community survey respondents. Community Survey Question, 5 "What are the three things your community needs the most".

Institutions shared various needs associated with improving the physical and emergency **infrastructure** primarily related to providing customers with adequate and sustainable water resources.. **Aging infrastructure**, **changing regulatory requirements** and **increasing development pressures** often result in increases in utility rates. For example, smaller mutual water providers find barriers to meeting regulations associated with providing **above ground storage** because wells often have water quality impairments (i.e. magnesium, iron and boron) that exceed regulatory standards limiting providers ability to store water. This is particularly difficult for smaller communities and water providers who do not have a tax base to address **increasing costs** and residents that cannot afford to continue paying higher rates. Respondents also suggested **a survey of the physical infrastructure** and **increasing bacteria monitoring** in the winter wet season would be essential to identifying and resolving many of the issues identified by institutional survey questions 17 and 38. When **droughts** occur, both city and mutual water providers noted they often **drill new wells** which reduces surface and groundwater water resources across the aquifer. These **limiting factors** also impact a community's ability to promote development to increase the tax base. Recognizing that water is finite, institutions are working to protect current resources from overuse through multiple mitigation strategies including **stormwater BMP implementation**, **conservation education** and **groundwater recharge**. In relation to **homelessness** within the Ventura region, institutions working with homeless and unsheltered populations noted that the county has worked with multi-agencies to provide **"Project Room Key"** where some unsheltered and homeless community members (i.e 65+ and those with health concerns) can be relocated to hotels, however, funding is limited and not sustainable. Sustaining this program is beneficial to many water institutions because the increase in homeless **encampments in riverbeds** creates both **public safety hazards and health issues**, while also making it difficult for institutions to meet surface water quality TMDL requirements.

Engagement with the community was also an identified need for several participating water institutions. Many shared that engagement can be difficult with **working populations** that do not have time to attend education and outreach programs. Even when engagement is successful, it is often hard to sustain in this context. The lack of **affordable and stable internet** was cited as a primary need because it slows the lines of communication and subsequent participation in decision making processes related to water. In relation to Tribal and Indigenous community engagement, the Mixtec and Chumash communities were identified as a point of engagement with most engagement only occurring related to meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Several city and mutual water institutions serving high stress DACs noted **language barriers** as a need to communicate water issues including flooding threats. Watershed organizations, mutual and city water institutions all shared the need to provide homeless and unsheltered populations with access to **adequate water** to reduce water theft and the use of water in rivers, which can impact both human and ecological health. These institutions also shared those areas utilized by residents residing in DACs (i.e. recreational parks and beaches) often have **water quality issues** (i.e. TMDLs) but these areas are not within DACs so funding can be limited to resolve issues.

Other barriers to engagement for city and mutual water providers include the renter owner dynamic where renters may be paying water bills directly to landlords making outreach difficult to communicating with direct users. Landlords may also be reluctant to participate in programs and or fix leaks and other water related issues within rental units. As a result, identifying who and how many people live within a dwelling in general is difficult. In relation to institutional collaborations, many **mutual water providers/systems** do not feel that **IRWM is interested** in working with them and outreach by IRWMs has been limited.

Institutions indicated that their primary strengths included **shared interconnections** and their ability to **collaborate** with multi agencies and nonprofits. Institutions shared that both of these factors have been an

asset to providing reliable, resilient water resources to residents. Furthermore, effective collaborations enable agencies to identify **resource needs** so they can be quickly addressed. These relationships are also helpful in **sharing information with the community** to inform decision making. City water departments and watershed institutions suggested that larger water providers have benefited from **IRWM participation** enabling them to obtain grants and funding for water needs. Additionally, several water institutions noted that **water infrastructure needs** are also prioritized in master planning, however, agencies **vary in their ability to pay** for and or **find funding** for projects. It was shared that when water projects are implemented in **DACs**, community members are often very appreciative of the assistance, but typically do not participate in water issues unless they directly impact their communities.

Across the Ventura region water institutions suggested that the **implementation of best management practices** have been successful in addressing flooding, stormwater and improving water quality. Points of community pride shared by water providers and watershed organizations include **greenspace between cities**, where many DAC communities tend to recreate, and the **variety of resources,** collaborations and **strategies for addressing homelessness**, especially as it relates to encampments in riverbed and near waterways. Institutions also felt an emerging community strength related to recent fires includes the community's ability to collaborate through public-private partnerships to improve utilities and internet services. Where implemented, this has enabled water and watershed based institutions to provide better public services as well as increasing opportunities for communication and engagement.

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

Institutions and community responses from high stress DACs connected in their responses related to **greenspaces**. Institutions see these as viable ways to link the need for recreational spaces, especially in DACs, with their goals of meeting non-point pollution **Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) requirements** in waterways through the implementation of stormwater BMPs. Both stakeholder groups also expressed the need to address **homelessness.** Water providers and community organizations working with homeless or un-sheltered populations would like to increase efforts to deter encampments in waterways which would also assist with improving surface water resources in the region. One such example is the collaboration between the **Watershed Coalition of Ventura County** with a focus on improving watershed health through agency and non-profit collaborations and the **Ventura County Continuum of Care**, which works directly to assist homeless related issues. Both organizations work to identify encampments within riverbeds and assist with encampment removal by providing access to shelter, healthcare and other related resources. Expanding this type of collaborative framework would further support agencies with meeting TMDL requirements, while also providing reliable and adequate services to unsheltered and homeless community members.

Housing was also a concern for both stakeholder groups, however, there is a disconnect in responses. Water institutions expressed an imbalance with the need for **new housing and higher paying jobs** to increase the tax base to pay for existing and emerging infrastructure and regulatory compliance needs, however, they also noted the limited water resources available to meet development needs. In contrast, many community members expressed the need to reduce and control development because it increases water demand in a region increasingly struggling to provide water to support current residents and environmental needs. There is also the expressed fear from the community that **increasing development** will **increase the need** for **infrastructure, hauled water** and other supplementary sources of water leading to **increases in water rates.**

3.2.2 Availability and Quality of Water Resources

Community Survey Questions:
Q6. What water-related issues are of greatest concern in your community?
Q7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home, neighborhood, or community you serve?
Q9 Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q19: Is safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking accessible to all members of your community? (Circle One)

Summary:
Community respondents across the Ventura region generally expressed a high degree of concern about drinking water quality. Over half (52.7%) of the respondents in high stress DACs noted issues with **drinking water quality**. Of the various water quality issues, a majority of the respondents (50.9%) noted **taste** as the area in greatest need of assistance (**Figure 3.7**). Similarly, a large number of respondents (28.4%) were concerned with possible contamination in their water, including from trash and industrial sources. The **high costs** of water services were also of great concern to nearly half (42.8%) of community members residing in high stress DACs. Other water related concerns noted, but less frequent, include adequate water for **fire and agricultural uses** and emerging issues related to **access to clean water** in the face of **prolonged drought** and fire conditions as well as pressures from **new development**. Potential solutions suggested by those residing in high stress DACs include **increasing stormwater BMPs** to **recharge groundwater** and **improve surface water quality**, **water conservation incentive program**, providing in-home **water infiltration** systems and **testing kits** as well as increasing environmental education programs.

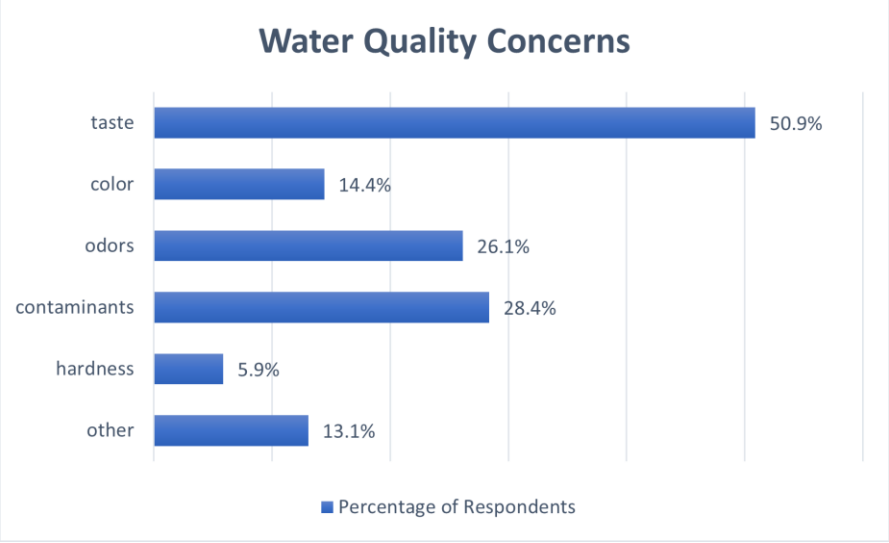


Figure 3.7. Summary of high stress DAC community survey percentage responses in Ventura region for Question 7 "What are the drinking water quality concerns in your neighborhood or community?".

A majority of mutual and city water institutions surveyed stated they **have adequate and affordable**

water for multiple uses. Although institutions see that it is affordable in relation to their ability to maintain and improve infrastructure and meet regulatory standards, residents have expressed that **water rates are too high**, often taking legal measures to stop rate increases. **Where rates are lower,** communities and systems are small with limited treatment and staffing. The **variability in affordability of water** creates barriers and institutions have devised programs that enable bill forgiveness or assistance that are often linked with other **utility forgiveness programs** such as the **SoCal Edison CARE?FERA Discount Program**. Late fees are also a source to support these programs. Community, mutual, and watershed institutions interviewed shared that sources of water present **multiple challenges** for people facing **homelessness.** Many **encampments** are in **riverbeds and beaches** that create both human and ecological health issues. This arises because there are not **formal and sustained** and **watering sanitation stations** often leading to water theft from agricultural land, fire hydrants and direct takings from rivers. Community and watershed institutions interviewed shared that efforts to provide **showering and bathroom pods** helped to alleviate these issues but they are not sustained and they do not address ongoing water insecurities.

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

Water institutions and community respondents representing high stress DACs connected in their response related to **water quality concerns**. Community members expressed concern with the **quality of drinking water** citing the need to improve drinking water taste, while water providers noted water quality issues related to their **ability to treat potable and wastewater** resources to meet customer needs. One primary disconnect between stakeholder groups is related to **water rates and cost**. For example, water providers expressed they felt water was affordable, while community stakeholders cited high water rates as an existing concern.

3.2.3 Institutional-Community Engagement

Community Survey Questions:

Q8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs (streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.).
Q11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?
Q12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?
Q15. Have you participated in water-related planning in your community?
Q16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large?
Q18 Do you know what drinking water agency provides your water?

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q28: How engaged are members of your community in decisions about water?
Q29: What strategies do you use to engage with community members?
Q30: What barriers do you see in engaging with members of your community?

Summary:

Perceptions about the levels of engagement between water institutions and the community vary greatly across the Ventura region. Nearly half of the Ventura region community members and those residing in high stress DACs agreed that their **local government was addressing infrastructure and beautification** issues in the area (**Figure 3.8**). Additionally, 138 (22%) of all the Ventura region respondents said they were **engaged** in some way with organizations or planning issues in their community. This rate was similar for those individuals living in the Ventura region's overall disadvantaged communities (21%),

however, slightly more community member respondents in high stress DACs stated they were engaged in the community (27%). **Water planning-related engagement** was marginally lower amongst high stress DAC respondents (9%) than for all the Ventura region respondents (11%) (**Figure 3.9)**. Regardless of DAC stress level, less than a third (30%) of resident respondents in the Ventura region felt their voices were being heard in community planning.

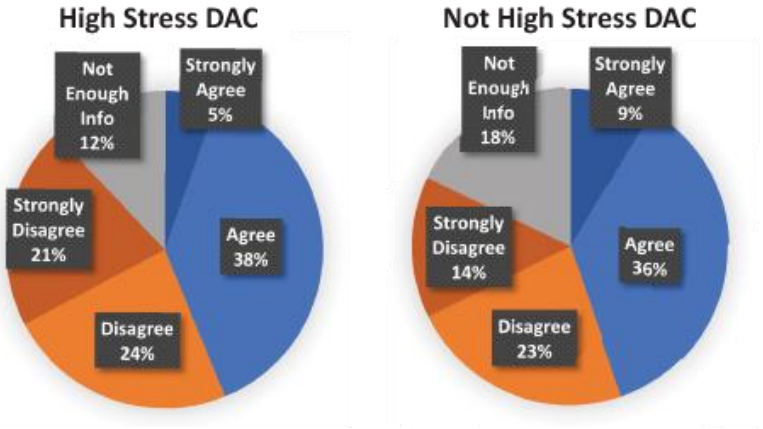


Figure 3.8. High stress DAC versus not high stress DAC community survey responses in the Ventura region for question #8 "My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.".

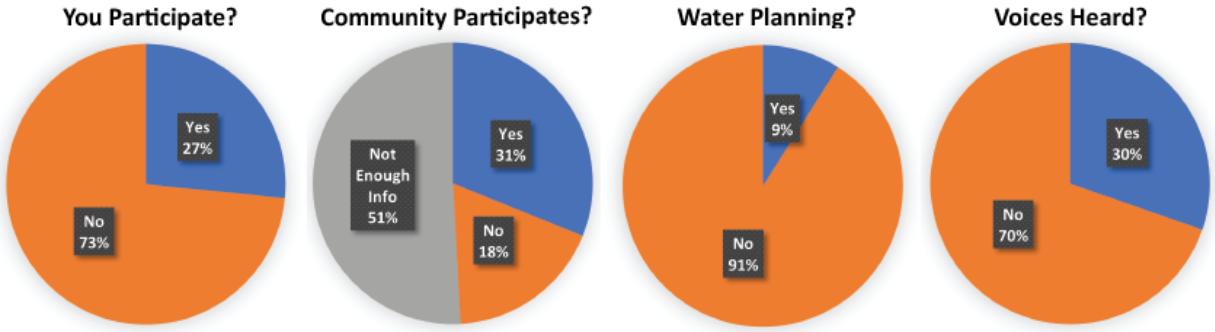


Figure 3.9 Responses to the series of engagement questions for community member participants in high stress DAC communities in the Ventura region (Questions 11-12 and 15-16).

Institutions shared that they prioritize community involvement in decision making, and responses indicate that community members **only engage** with them **when** there is an **issue** including water security during droughts, rate structure changes, new regulatory compliance needs and large scale projects that impact their communities (i.e. stormwater). **NGO**s are often present at community meetings to represent community interests in water issues. **Board members** and **staff** often play the role of **informing the community** about changes, however, they note that the lack of involvement may be related to **lack of time** to attend meetings, high rate of **renters**, distrust with water agencies (i.e. tap water quality), and **language barriers** (i.e. Spanish) especially in DACs. When projects are implemented in DACs, community members are very appreciative of institutions addressing water related issues. **Internal institutional barriers** include **lack of adequate staff** focused on engagement, **language barriers** between staff and community members, difficulty communicating with school districts (i.e. lack of teacher time or direct messaging to teachers) and restrictions on engagement due to COVID.

Strategies for engagement including **newsletters** in billing information, **office hours** to meet with the public, holding **community meetings,** attending **community events** (e.g. coastal cleanup days, public works week), **websites** and **social media**, **emergency notices**, **CEQA** engagement, and **K-12** education programs. One striking **example of a robust education and outreach program** includes adequate staff focused on outreach programs, partnering with foundations (i.e. **MERITO and Environmental Literacy Council**) and direct partnerships with school districts. Educational programs center on sustainability and green school initiatives that provide classroom presentations on a range of environmental topics including water. Many programs **target Title 1 school engagement** through student-based project learning and wastewater treatment facility tours. During COVID, videos were developed for educators in both English and Spanish and giveaways supplemented these programs such as shower timers for students to monitor water use.

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

Although most water providers felt they were meeting the needs of the community, community respondents representing high stress DACs were variable in their perceptions **that governmental entities are addressing infrastructure and beautification needs**. Additionally, perceptions about the **level and consistency of engagement** led to several disconnects. For example, water providers expressed that community members primarily engage when issues impact them directly and community issues are often represented at public meetings by local non-profits not individual community members. In contrast, community stakeholders felt they were very engaged in a variety of community issues including water planning. Despite their involvement, many community members representing high stress DACs did not feel that governmental agencies were listening to their consents offering opportunities for water providers to develop avenues of transparency and more inclusion in decision making processes.

3.2.4 Institutional-Community Collaborations

Community Survey Questions:

Q17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?
Q18 Do you know what drinking water agency provides you with water?
    Other - 18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?
Q19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?
    Q19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q34: Please describe any collaborative efforts between multiple agencies or institutions in your community?
Q35(1): What is the system's or community's involvement in the local IRWM group?
Q36: Does your agency have any involvement through other regional programs?
Q37: Do you see any barriers to engagement in regional efforts?

Summary:

Less than half of the community respondents representing the Ventura region **were aware of their provider water agency** (42%). Additionally, very few of the respondents in the community were **aware of the IRWM program** (10%) or any **water-related educational programs** (11%). Within high stress DAC areas, these percentages increased to 79 percent of respondents expressing no knowledge about regional IRWM, 58 percent not knowing what water agency provides their drinking water and 82 percent

of respondents expressing no knowledge about water related educational opportunities occurring in their community (**Figure 3.10**).

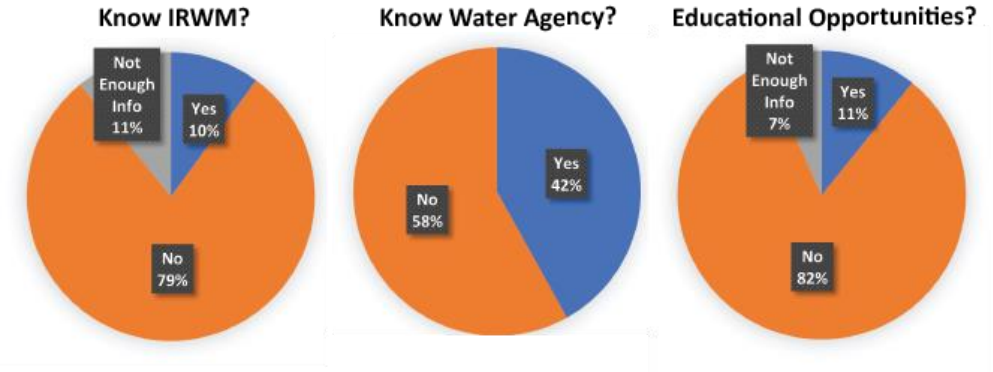


Figure 3.10 Responses to the series of community collaboration questions for community member participants in high stress DAC communities in the Ventura region (Questions 17-19).

Water institutions **vary greatly** in their involvement in **regional efforts** including IRWM and SGMA groups. Many institutions noted that they are involved in multiple SGMA and IRWM groups across the upper and lower watershed, suggesting that their involvement has assisted them with **procuring funding** to meet emerging regulations (i.e. NPDES, MS4 permits). Others note that **collaborations with local organizations** such as nearby water districts, fire department, nonprofits and county departments was more productive in procuring funding (i.e. Proposition 84) than participating in larger organizations such as IRWM groups (**Table 3.3**). Some of these collaborations are presented at IRWM meetings, however, individual **representation of smaller systems** is very **limited**. Smaller districts also felt that they are **not adequately represented** in regional organizations with most representation focused on urban and agricultural communities. Several smaller agencies noted that they are **not informed about IRWM meetings** and feel that they are not supported because IRWM focuses on assisting larger systems. Other barriers to participation include **limited staff** and **volunteer run organizations** that limit the time and resources to attend meetings. Competing interests, limited supplies and affordability also create barriers to effective cooperation and collaboration. There can also be **jurisdictional challenges** when different cities and counties are on different pages about water resources management and planning.

Table 3.3 Institutional Collaborations Identified from Institutional Questions 34 to 37

Existing Collaborations
• Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency • Santa Clara River Valley –Oxnard GSA, • Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency, • Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) • Ventura River Watershed Council • Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program • Santa Clara Watershed committee • State Water Interconnection Project

- Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County
- Purveyors group from Calleguas Water District

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

Water providers and community members representing high stress DACs connected in their perspectives about the **barriers to community engagement. Lack of time and resources** from both stakeholder groups were identified as the greatest barriers to engagement. Stakeholders disconnected greatly from their **knowledge about IRWM and other water organizations or collaboration**s. All water providers shared that they know about IRWM, but engagement was largely associated with their ability to obtain fundings through participation. A majority of **water provider community collaborations** happen at a **local scale** between diverse groups representing fire, water, and social services agencies and nonprofits. Community stakeholders expressed little knowledge about IRWM, local water agencies and related educational opportunities, illustrating an **opportunity for IRWMs to increase outreach** and awareness of the resources they can provide to support community water needs.

3.3 Institutional Technical Needs and Emerging Issues

As previously noted, some of the survey questions only apply to institutions such as questions about institutional capacity, infrastructure, ability to meet regulatory requirements, staffing and operation and maintenance cost. Findings related to survey questions that only apply to institutions are outlined and summarized below.

3.3.1 Barriers to Accessing Water Resources

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q18: What do you see as barriers to access the benefits of drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure in your community?

Summary:

Water institutions highlighted their ability to work with other agencies through **interconnections between systems** and providing **multiple sources of water** (i.e. surface, wells, recycled water), across the region, however, respondents noted that many community members **do not trust** their water sources. A concern for water institutions is this process creating **misinformation** in the community that results in individuals purchasing bottled water which is often more expensive. The lack of **affordable internet** creates barriers to communication to clarify misconceptions about water as well as during emergencies. Improved communication would enable more effective dissemination of information from water providers to the public.

The regional high demand for water from the agricultural sector, increasing cost to **maintain infrastructure**, projected **population** growth, **stormwater** issues, **competing interests** of both water consumers (i.e. agricultural, residential, industrial) and agencies were cited as existing or emerging barriers to providing adequate water supplies. This is particularly concerning in unincorporated areas where the **tax base** is lower due to smaller populations. Collectively, varied water results in the need for **higher rates** to cover operations and maintenance and emerging water supply needs impacting multiple communities. Of increasing concern to water providers is how emerging changes (i.e. climatic, water cost) will impact **DACs.** Water bill and utility **forgiveness programs** have been implemented to alleviate high water rates, but the need to address water supply resiliency will still result in increasing costs. Other

barriers include **federal laws** that prohibit homeless individuals from being criminalized for being outdoors and on public land if they do not have alternative shelter. Respondents representing community organizations working with un-sheltered populations as well as several water agencies noted that large and expansive homeless encampments reside in riverbeds producing waste and litter within waterways. The **activities in the riverbed** also create dangers to these communities during flooding events as well as water quality impacts to community water resources.

3.3.2 Water Resources Infrastructure and Regulations

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q12: Do any of your water sources exceed any primary or secondary drinking water standards? (YES/NO)
Q20(2): Are there any issues with drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations that impact your community? (Circle One)
Q21: Are parts of the community impacted by storm water quality issues or flooding? (Circle One)
Q41: Are there current or upcoming regulations that might impact your community? (Circle One)

Summary:
There are numerous factors that contribute to water limitations in the region. Limitations to water often **impact development** (i.e. fire flow requirements) and existing structures cannot meet their required **above ground storage** needs**.** Additionally, **diverse regulations** include National Permit Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Consent Decree, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and regulations associated with **nitrates,** in well based drinking water. In cases where there is adequate well water, nitrates are often a limiting factor in meeting drinking water standards. Reclaimed water (i.e.. non-potable uses) has been noted as an issue in wells related to naturally occurring **chloride and boron**. Some new wells had problems with **high magnesium**, but that has been resolved. Cities in the region are working to meet secondary drinking water standards for **total dissolved solids and sulfate**. These standards address aesthetic water characteristics (i.e. odor, taste, etc.) rather than the protection of public health. **Changing regulations** (i.e thresholds) coupled with **aging infrastructure** are increasingly leading to higher operation and maintenance cost and the need to retrofit or upgrade existing water infrastructure. Another emerging concern of institutions are the emerging **water conservation regulations** resulting in the need to hire staff to help implement requirements and submit reporting.

When considering community impacts to stormwater quality issues and or flooding, institutions noted that several **diversion and levee systems** have been developed to manage stormwater and flooding. Many older **developments** are in the **floodplains** posing risk, however, regulations now require new development to be built away from these areas. In waterways within in or surrounding **DAC communities**, increasing **nitrogen loads** from urban areas cause widespread algal blooms which impacts both public and ecological health. Water agencies are **unable to meet** TMDLs and other **regulations** due to these **excessive loads.** There is an increasing need to **educate** the community about ways to reduce nitrogen inputs as well as working with wastewater districts to identify treatment solutions for nitrogen. Other solutions include developing **linear greenway**s and **recreational areas** along waterways and through DACs to assist with improving water quality, quantity and riparian habitats with appropriate funding. **Homeless encampments** increasingly cause water quality issues both in the river and closer to the beaches. Along beaches sand being pushed into or **blocking stormwater outlets** is a concern and these areas are leveled before major storm events to allow storm runoff to reach the ocean. Wastewater plants along the coast are increasingly under pressure to **move inland** to prevent waste from entering

waterways.

Emerging regulations of concern for water institutions surveyed in the Ventura region include meeting **TMDL compliance** for dry and wet weather, SGMA, Long-Term Water Conservation (SB 606 & AB 1668), and the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. The state Direct Potable Reuse (DRP) regulations could have an impact on operations for the **proposed Advanced Purification Facility**. **The Ventura Pure Project** which is one example of addressing wastewater not reclaimed and diverted to estuaries, which will be prevented by regulations in the future. This aims to address regulatory compliance while also providing an additional water supply. Emerging **jurisdictional issues** where areas are annexed but still pulling water from previous water districts creates barriers to understanding system capacity needs. Many cited costs associated with aging infrastructure as a limitation to meeting emerging regulations.

3.3.3 Agency Capacity and Technical Needs to Serve Community

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q25: Does your water system have enough funding to handle operations and maintenance needs? (Circle One)
Q39: Are there technical and managerial capacity needs within water agencies that need to be met so the community can be served? (Circle One)

Summary:
Institutions varied on their expressed needs for technical or managerial capacity. **Emerging regulations** increase operation and management costs that lead to **higher water rates.** Limitations to funding also result in the lack of adequate and **trained staff** to assist with implementing regulations, sustaining community outreach and meeting other operational needs. Agencies that have adequate funding cite that they have the ability to apply for **grants** to meet growing costs of providing water and replacing or repairing aging infrastructure. **Funding resources** identified include USDA or DWR grants for **capital improvement projects** and the Resources Legacy Fund who provide funding through the Hewlett Foundation and support for the Open Rivers Fund. To address **homelessness,** state funding has increased from $2 to $12 million dollars, however, there are strict limitations to how this funding can be applied causing barriers to sustaining programs.

A majority of institutions representing water systems across the Ventura region indicated that they had adequate funding for operations and maintenance needs. When seeking construction grants, institutions noted that they work with their governing boards to **secure long-term financial support** for operations and maintenance (O&M) before accepting grants. Others highlighted the use of rate structures as a mechanism to cover O&M as well as **hiring staff** to operate water systems. A system identifying inadequate **funding** for O&M suggested that they are spending nearly twice as much on O&M as they collect from rate fees resulting in "bare bones" operations. This creates barriers to addressing larger scale projects that are needed such as addressing aging infrastructure and expanding existing systems.

3.3.4 Tribal and Indigenous Engagement

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q31: This state program considers members of tribal or indigenous communities as underrepresented in water planning. The program requires regions to consider the strengths and needs of tribal and indigenous communities.

Are you aware that your service area is in the ancestral homeland of _____?

Q32: How does your agency engage with indigenous people or tribal communities that you serve?

Summary:

A **majority** of water institutions indicated that they **do not interact** with tribal or indigenous communities. When there are issues or concerns about **preserving cultural resources** and **ceremonial grounds**, the Chumash Tribe is often involved in assisting institutions with meeting CEQA requirements. When areas are **impacted by fires**, water institutions often reach out to the Chumash Tribe, MICOP, and Mixteco communities to ensure impacted areas do not contain cultural resources before restoration efforts begin. The Wishtoyo Foundation was identified as an organization involved in regional wastewater estuary issues.

3.3.5 Homeless Population Engagement

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q33: This program considers people experiencing homelessness as members of an underrepresented community. Does your work engage with homelessness at all?

Summary:

At the **county level,** there are **organizations and collaborations and activities** that directly assist homeless populations. Encampments are often located in or near riverbeds **complicating** efforts to **improve and protect water resources** to meet TMDL requirements. These communities are also limited in their ability to **secure reliable water resources** leading to **water theft** from agricultural land, fire hydrants and direct takings from surface water resources. Organizations working with homeless communities **apply for federal and state grants** to support municipal efforts leading to the implementation of portable shower pods, temporary housing, and other health-based services for these communities. **Collaborations** between nonprofits, county and municipal groups were highlighted as a key to successfully addressing homelessness, but stable funding is needed to sustain these programs.

3.3.6 Climate Change

Institutional Survey Questions:

Q40: Are there any impacts of climate change the community is unprepared for?

Summary:

Climate change was a point of concern for all institutions surveyed. **Prolonged droughts** have presented various barriers to ensuring adequate water resources are available to meet the growing needs of communities served. In relation to surface waters, there is **less river discharge** and **lower surface water levels** mean that **groundwater recharge is limited** as well as higher concentrations of nutrients in waterways. As a result of the reduction in surface to groundwater interface, water providers are having to **dig deeper wells** and are increasingly concerned that pumps will run dry causing **water shortages**, **higher water rates and related cost** and **damage to infrastructure**. Along the coastal areas, increased saltwater intrusion into freshwater resources was of concern as well as **impacts to projects and**

infrastructure (i.e. wastewater treatment plants). Rising sea level and storms have pushed sand inland blocking stormwater runoff from reaching the coastline, causing inland flooding during storm events. **Flooding** was also a point of concern related to both short, but intense rain events as well as run off from landscapes impacted by **fires. Unsheltered people** living in rivers and near waterways and inland flooding present growing **safety concerns** during rain events. The **lack of data** and **unpredictability** of short-term weather and long-term climatic trends presents a lot of uncertainty about how to best prepare and manage water resources.

Chapter 4 Applications and Project Identification

A primary task of this process was to identify project and technical assistance needs from survey responses. Activities that supported the identification of projects and technical assistance was completed in tandem with the development of the Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (i.e. TAPPED application). WRPI and CGST reviewed individual surveys from the community and institutional responses in the Ventura region to develop a list of project and technical assistance needs (Section 4.1 below). To further determine the general location of these responses, survey respondents were asked to identify the nearest road intersection and their zip code. This process is very time consuming and as such, the TAPPED application offers a streamlined online interface that enables the public and resource agencies to quickly identify project needs, their location and how it aligns with DAC stress model levels and water provider boundaries.

4.1 Project Identification and Technical Assistance Needs

4.1.1 Community Project Identification

- Programs that enable local water communities to access state **water-saving programs.**
- Improve **resident education and policies that promote water conservation** and more ground cover as an alternative to impervious surfaces.
- Consider **alternative housing** to large apartment complexes.
- Develop and promote **in-home water filter incentive and tap water testing programs**.
- Work with state agencies to provide **financial assistance** to meet new sewer regulations.
- Develop, adopt and implement more **stormwater BMPs**
    - Require builders and developers to include stormwater BMPs in their development plans to promote groundwater recharge and higher ground and surface water quality.
    - Implement restrictions on artificial turf. and encourage BMPs that promote healthy soils and soil moisture.
    - Replace sidewalks with previous concrete.
    - Develop seasonal management plans that include soil moisture monitoring for watering of public green spaces to reduce water usage in the wet season.
    - Utilize public areas to promote water conservation education and BMP demonstration sites.
    - Promote individual landowner and public land space rainwater harvesting systems.
    - Allow and encourage gray water systems in homes and for irrigation.
    - Cover storm drains with trash filters.
    - Programs that support conversion of landscape to more drought tolerant alternatives.
    - Develop more opportunities to recycle wastewater.

- Dedicate city staff to **clean river beds** more frequently.
- Develop and promote programs for **affordable septic to sewer conversion**.
- Utilize **diverse outreach methods** (i.e. inserts in water bills, social media, outreach to residents through K-12)..
- Support public **meeting environments that are collaborative and accessible** to the entire community.
- Provide more **frequent and detailed updates** to the public related to **water quantity and quality** issues.
    - Utilize scientific-based evaluation of water quality and quantity on a more regular basis and share information more frequently with the public.
    - Focus on how upstream water quality issues are impacting downstream water resources.
- **Adjust rates** as the community grows to make costs more equitable.
- **Reduce fracking** for natural gas - it adversely impacts water resources and public/environmental health.
- Promote **more infill development** and reduce new development.
- Require **water efficiency technology** in new developments.
- Utilize non-governmental entities to **fairly evaluate water resources:** conditions and needs.
- Provide assistance to **identify and fix leaks** within buildings and external infrastructure.
- Assess how **historic land uses are impacting current water resources**.
- Create **separate metering methods** for landscape water uses versus building water uses to identify the types and frequency of uses and to promote conservation.
- **Utilize old parking lots** for more green and habitat spaces.
- Promote **more hemp businesses to increase tax base** that can be utilized to reduce water rates and related costs.
- Increase **frequency of "Water Talks" events.**

4.1.2 Institutional Project and Technical Assistance Identification

- Assistance needed to **address language barriers**..
- Need for **engagement with renters vs landowners**.
- Need to **increase greenspace and recreational opportunities.**
- **IRWM engagement** needed for smaller systems.
- **Improve water capacity** to enable new developments ability to meet fire flow requirements, water institutions to meet current and emerging water quality regulations. Multiple water institutions noted the need to drill new wells to meet these requirements.
- Strategies needed for **treatment and prevention for nutrients** in ground and surface waters
- Ensure through monitoring and public communication that **recreational waters are safe** where DAC residents recreate.
- Addressing **homelessness and unsheltered community encampments in waterway**s by providing alternative housing, sustainable water sources and social services (i.e. Project Room Key)
- Construct **linear greenways** to support water quality improvement
- Implement effective **Tribal and Indigenous engagement** strategies.

- Develop **diverse strategies for community participation**.
- Need to **address lack of adequate staff** to meet community and regulatory needs including stormwater TMDLs permits, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGWA), SB 606, AB 1668, the California state Delta Plan, and related local, regional and state water conservation requirements.
- Long term and stable **funding for operation and maintenance** needed to address aging infrastructure, especially for mutual water providers with small tax bases.
- Institutions with infrastructure along the beach shared that sand along beaches **blocking stormwater flows** creating the need to find opportunities to prevent inland flooding.
    - Several institutions expressed **concerns related to climatic changes** including inland flooding, impacts on water infrastructure along coastal areas where sea level rise is occurring and the need for more innovative ways to provide adequate water during drought and fire conditions.
- All water institutions expressed some level of need related to monitoring water quality:
    - Need to **address the impact of nutrient loads** from urban areas that prevent the ability to achieve regulatory compliance.
    - County based water institutions shared the desire to increase stormwater BMPs to meet current and emerging regulations and TMDL permits.
    - High bacterial counts in the wet season prevents meeting regulatory standards.
- Several mutual agencies noted the need for **more options to meet above groundwater storage** requirements due to groundwater human and natural based water contamination issues.
- Multiple water institutions noted the **need for studies** to better determine groundwater quality/water supply quality and where historical, present and emerging water contamination sources are located.
- Mutual water providers noted the need for **funding to survey water provider boundaries**.
- Multiple responses expressed the need for financial assistance programs because water and sewer bills are too high.
- Community and watershed based agencies working within river beds and or with homeless/ unsheltered populations noted the **need for stable water resources to prevent water theft and drinking and bathing in rivers**. Stable water and sanitation services (i.e. bathrooms, drinking water)
- Several institutions noted the need for **stable, affordable internet** in rural and DAC communities to effectively communicate with community members.

4.1.3 Institutional Solution Examples

- City of Oxnard Water Department - SoCal Edison CARE/FERA bill assistance program
- Ventura County Public Works (Water) - Stormwater Programs
- City of Oxnard Water Department - Multiples Water Source Management
- Ventura Water Department - Education and Outreach programs
- Ventura Water Pure Project. This project aims to address regulatory compliance while also providing another water supply.

- Ventura County Office of Education - Central Coast Environmental Education Partnership Resources (i.e MERITO and California Environmental Literacy Council Initiative)
- California Department of Social Services Project Room Key

4.2 Development of Project Evaluation Criteria, Project Description Form, and Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED)

The Project Development Task, Task 4, of the LA-V DACIP will require an online mechanism to collect data about projects that are conceived and eventually, evaluated for potential funding and implementation. Before developing this data collection mechanism, it was critical to develop a project description template. This template stores and organizes the specific attributes that make up a project's description. The template also will support the development of the online data collection form.

4.2.1 Project Description Form Development

During Task 3, an initial draft project description form was developed using existing materials in **Table 4.1**. Relevant project description attributes were taken from these materials and added to the draft template. Multiple, comprehensive and exhaustive review sessions were held with all LA-V DACIP DAC Consultants to improve the draft template. This level of review allowed the template to be consolidated where needed, ensured key attributes were not missed, transformed language and terminology to be used that were eventually used in the online data collection form, and allowed for an efficient and organized structure. After these rounds of review and revision, the template was presented to the DACIP Task Force for review. Their feedback was collected, reviewed, and additional changes were made to the template.

Table 4.1: Materials used to develop the DACIP project description template.

Material Name	Source	Components Used				
		Proj Description	Proj Benefits	Project Types	Proj Budget	Proj Timeline/ Milestones
SAWPA DACIP Project Submission and Evaluation Process	SAWPA	X	X	X	X	X
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Technical Assistance Project Submission Form: Robidoux Nature Consortium	WRPI	X	X	X	X	X
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Technical Assistance Project Submission Form: Bohnert/Banyon Sewer Project (Rialto, CA)	WRPI	X	X	X	X	X
DAC Involvement Activities Table	DWR		X			
GLAC IRWM Opti Criteria	GLAC IRWM	X	X		X	X
Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSR) Engineering Project Data Template	WRPI	X			X	X
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSR) Engineering Project Data Template	WRPI	X			X	X
Safe Clean Water Program: Technical Resources Project Module	LA County	X				X

The project description template, shown in Appendix D, contains three main sections:

1) The main list of project description attributes;
2) A list of agreed upon project types; and
3) A list of agreed upon project benefits.

The main project description template comprises over 30 description attributes and is organized into thematic categories, including project overview information, location information, and budget/cost information. The list of project types are mainly derived from the SAWPA DACIP and DWR DACIP material, reflecting the official DWR Eligible DAC Involvement Activities list,[5] shown in Appendix A. There are 11 project types with corresponding example activities. The list of project benefits is based on previous SAWPA and DWR DACIP material in addition to the Opti Criteria from the GLAC IRWM Region. The combination of using relevant existing material and an exhaustive review and revision process resulted in a comprehensive project description template.

In addition to the project description template, two attachment templates were also developed. The first attachment template focuses on *project deliverables and budget*. It allows data about these items to be collected in a structured manner and associated with the project's description, enabling use in analysis and reporting. Similarly, an attachment template to collect *project milestones and timeline information* was also developed. These two attachments will exist parallel to the main project description information within the DACIP project database.

In Task 4, the project description template and the two attachment templates will be used to develop an

online data collection form. The form will be developed using Survey 123 on the front end and ESRI's ArcGIS Online components on the back end to manage data and data infrastructure. The online form will ensure data about each project is captured in a consistent manner and stored in a centralized database. The data will later be put through post-processing methods and integrated into the Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED) Application allowing IRWM representatives to explore the data as well as rank and evaluate projects.

4.2.2 Project Evaluation Criteria Development

In Task 4, projects will undergo a data-driven evaluation and selection process via the TAPPED Application. To successfully enable this functionality, it was necessary to identify which variables would be made available to decision makers during that process. These variables are termed *project evaluation criteria* and identifying them within Task 3 helped set up the framework and programming of the TAPPED Application as well as expectations for additional data processing within Task 4.

Similar to the project description template, the project evaluation criteria list was initially produced by pulling criteria from existing material and then having the list undergo a robust review and revision process. Initially, many different criteria were added to the draft list. However, in order to keep the project ranking and evaluation process as streamlined as possible and to avoid overwhelming decision makers, it was decided that only the most valuable and useful criteria should be included and prioritized through Task 3 and Task 4 work. This set of criteria is called *Tier 1 criteria*.

As the list of Tier 1 criteria was refined, discussions were held on how the criteria would need to be processed for each project in the database. This step will primarily involve geospatial data processing using each project's sphere of influence in conjunction with data containing the evaluation criteria information. Initial examples of data processing and components to aid in the processing were discussed. This included the use of data crosswalks, software to extract common keywords from textual data, and statistical processing and summarization techniques.
The list of project evaluation criteria, shown in Appendix D, contains over 40 criteria. These are organized into thematic groups, which include:

- Project Description Criteria;
- General Reference Criteria;
- DAC Socioeconomic Criteria;
- Task 3 DACIP Community Needs Assessment Criteria; and
- Task 3 DACIP Institutional Needs Assessment Criteria.

Much of the community and institutional needs assessment data will be made available to decision makers during the project evaluation process. As described above, the needs data will be processed and summarized for each project so that key information from the needs assessment can be taken into consideration when evaluating projects. Criteria from the needs assessment cover topics such as water resource issues, participation in community planning, and water accessibility.

4.2.3 TAPPED Application Development

The Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED) Application is an interactive online application that will facilitate TA project evaluation. TAPPED allows for project data exploration, project ranking, and project evaluation. It brings together project description data, including evaluation criteria, and reference data. The application contains hosted data on the back end, a multi-

criteria decision analysis (MCDA) core to facilitate project evaluation and ranking, and a user-friendly front-end interface (Figure 4.1). During Task 3, the requirements and design of the TAPPED Application were discussed, developed, and finalized via extensive discussion and planning.

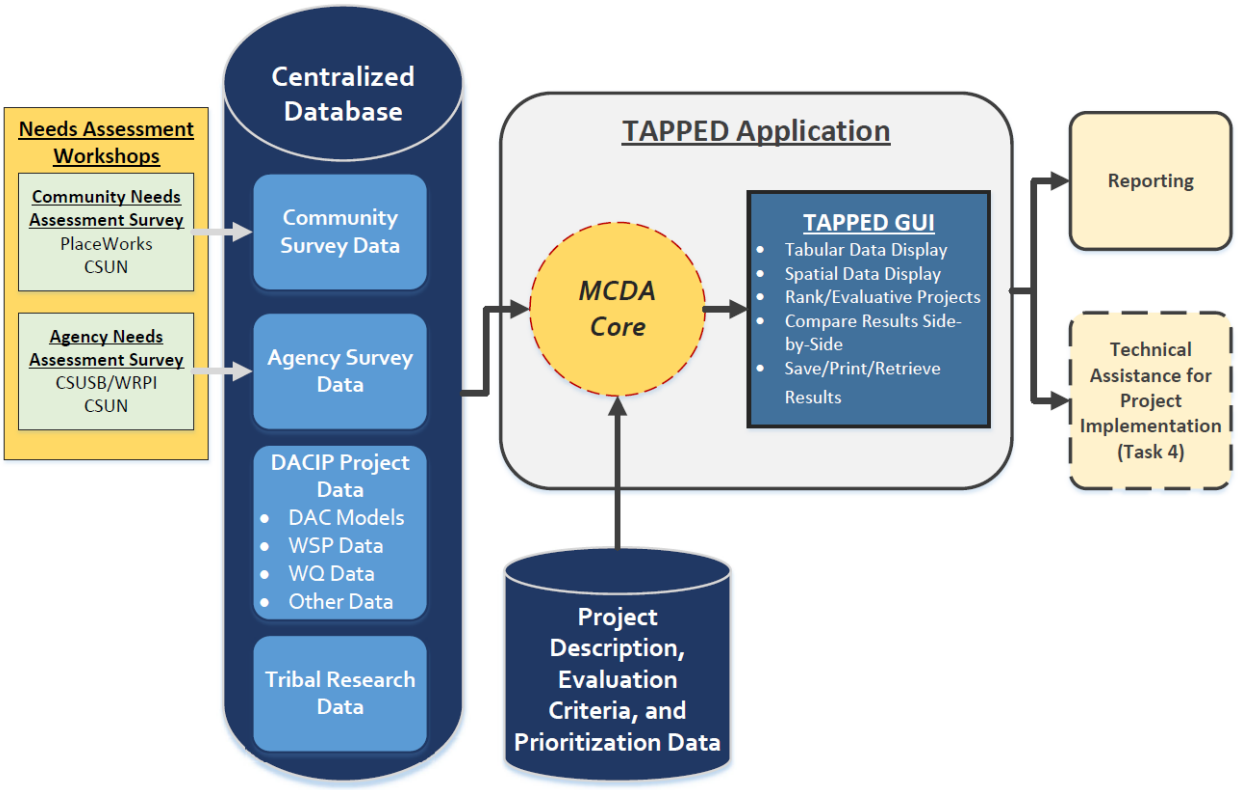


Figure 4.1: Components, structure, and flow of project ranking and evaluation process via the TAPPED Application.

Initially, WRPI's SAWPA DACIP Criteria Workflow (**Figure 4.2**) was used as a rough concept of how a project sorting and selection workflow could be constructed. DACIP project evaluation concepts and processes were then discussed and developed, including how to best encourage decision makers to explore project data, build an evaluation, and interact with the results of an evaluation. Several meetings were held to discuss the TAPPED Application and its many different components.

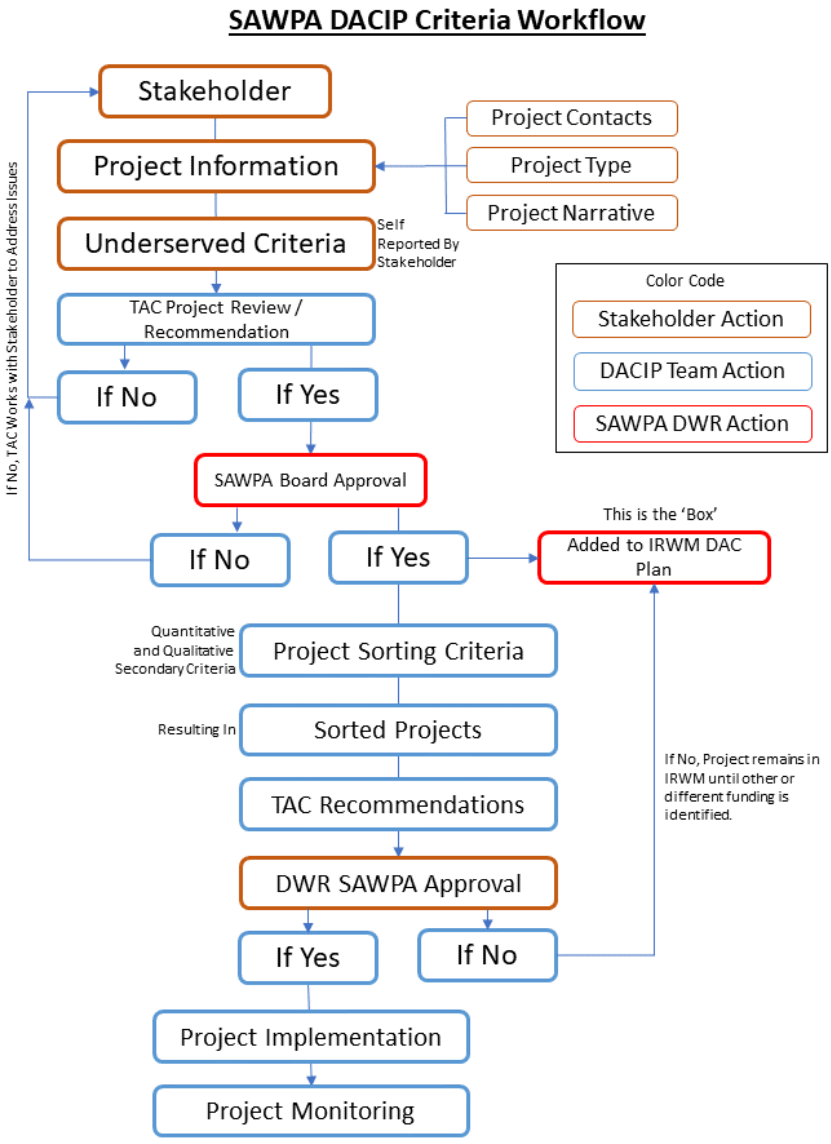


Figure 4.2: WRPI's SAWPA DACIP Criteria Workflow.

An interactive sample wireframe (blueprint), **Figures 4.3 through 4.6,** was developed to showcase the main components and functionality of the application. This allowed for DAC Consultants to better understand and visualize how the application would eventually be developed.

TAPPED will offer the following tools and features:

1. Users will be required to have an account and log in to access the application.
2. Users can view all projects that are classified as a certain Project Type (e.g., needs assessment projects, community outreach projects) (see **Figure 4.3**).
3. Users can evaluate and rank projects by selected Project Type (see **Figure 4.4**). Optional parameters for evaluation include:

a. Manually selecting criteria to use in the evaluation (e.g., project cost, DAC %, affected population)
b. Weighting the selected criteria to indicate relative importance/influence of that criteria in the evaluation.

4. After the evaluation is run, the user will be presented with a ranked list of projects and an interactive map showing the location of those projects (see **Figure 4.4**).
5. Users can click on a project of interest to view all project details (see **Figure 4.5**).
6. Users can manually select and view projects of interest and compare details (see **Figure 4.6**).
7. Users will be able to save, retrieve, print, and export a project evaluation (to retain selected criteria and weighting for future viewing).
8. Users also can adjust an existing evaluation as needed.

Other additional minor functionality will be available and will be further developed and documented in Task 4.

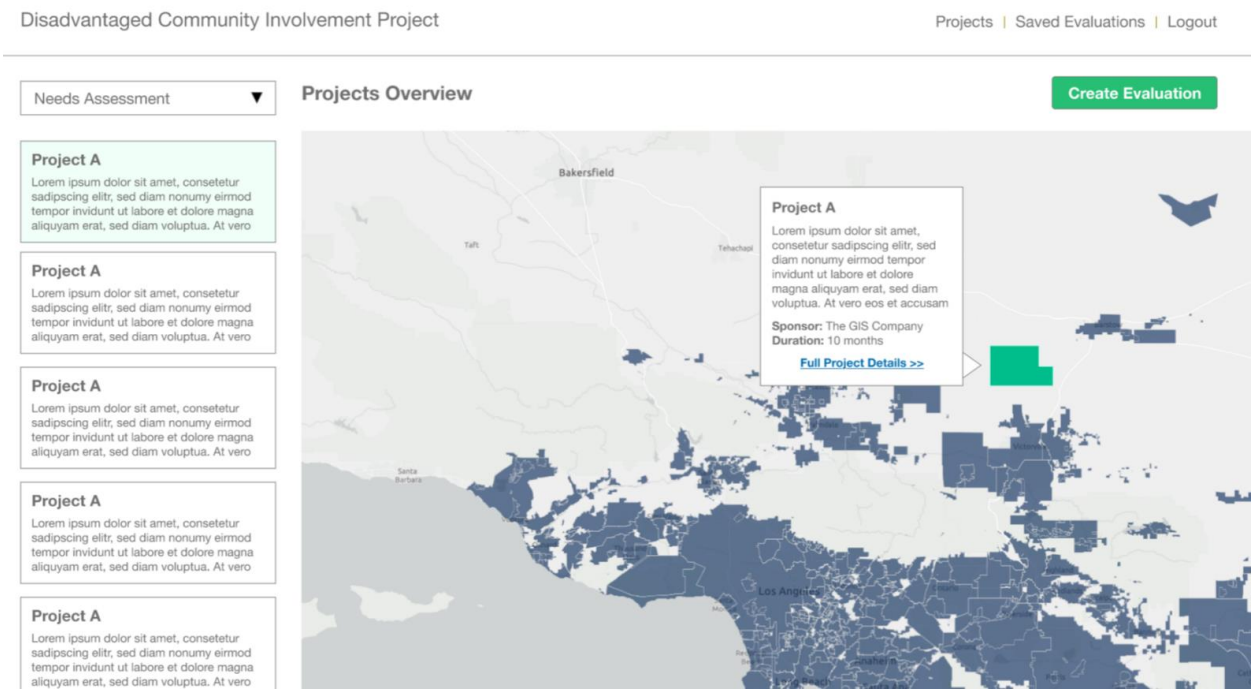


Figure 4.3: Concept project overview page and interactive map within the TAPPED Application.

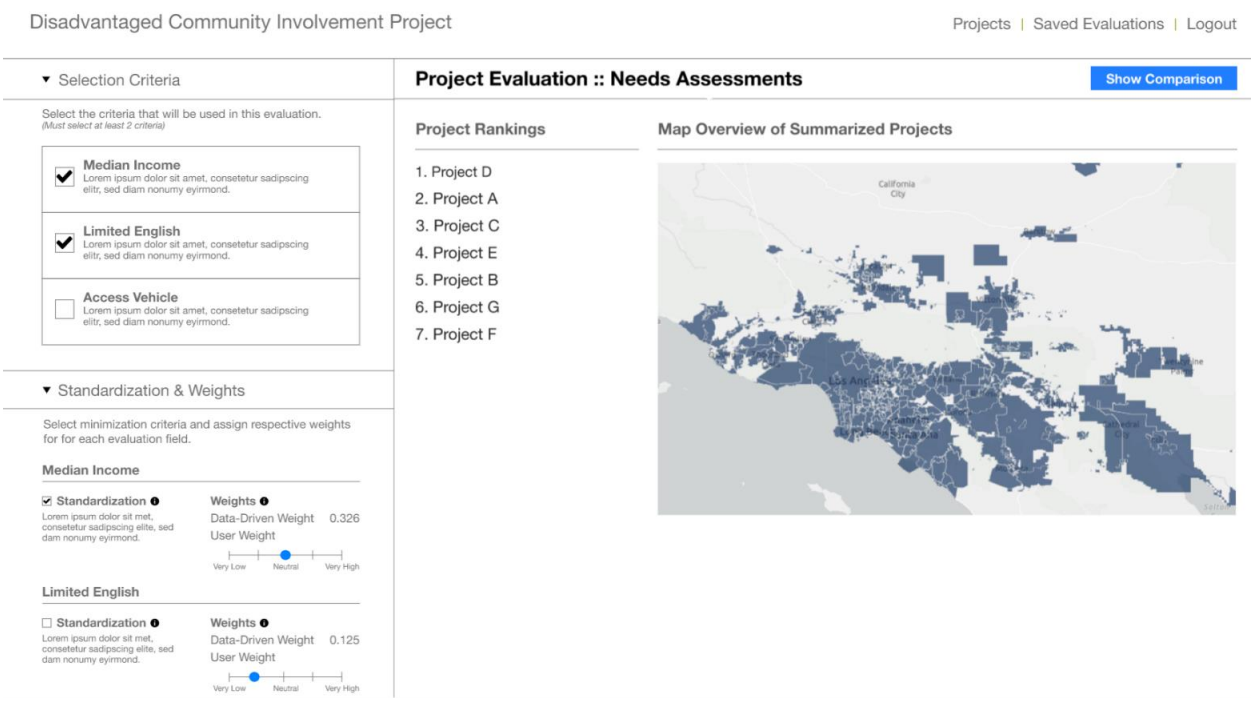


Figure 4.4: Concept page within the TAPPED Application that allows users to conduct their project evaluation by selecting evaluation criteria and assigning weights of importance.

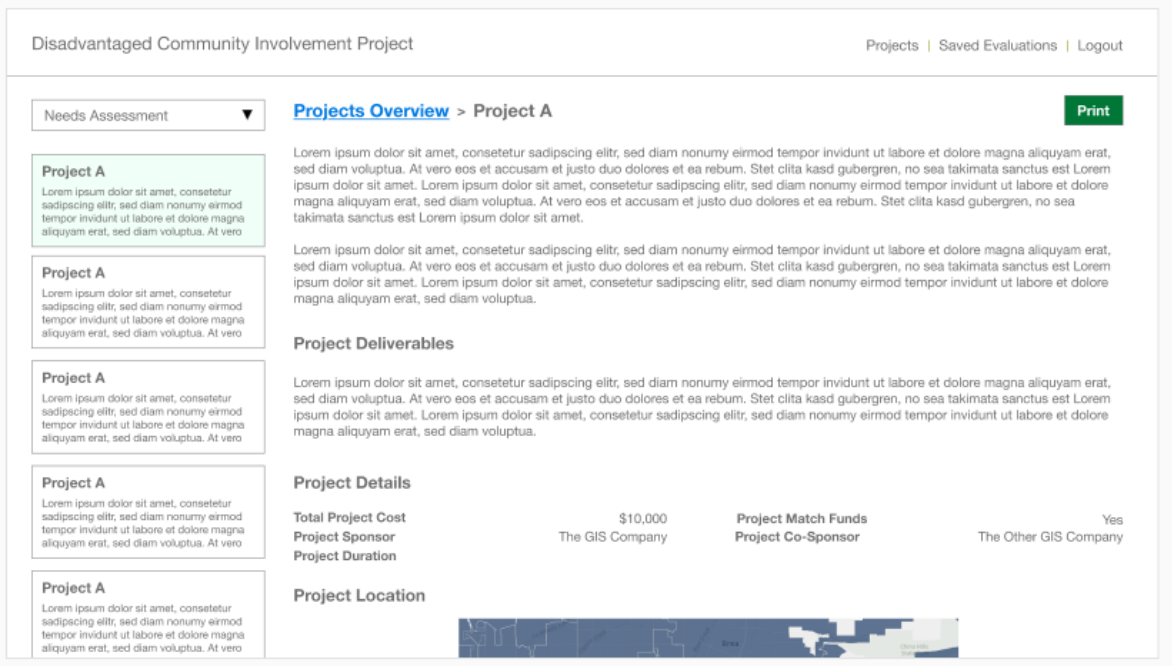


Figure 4.5: Concept page showing project details within the TAPPED Application.

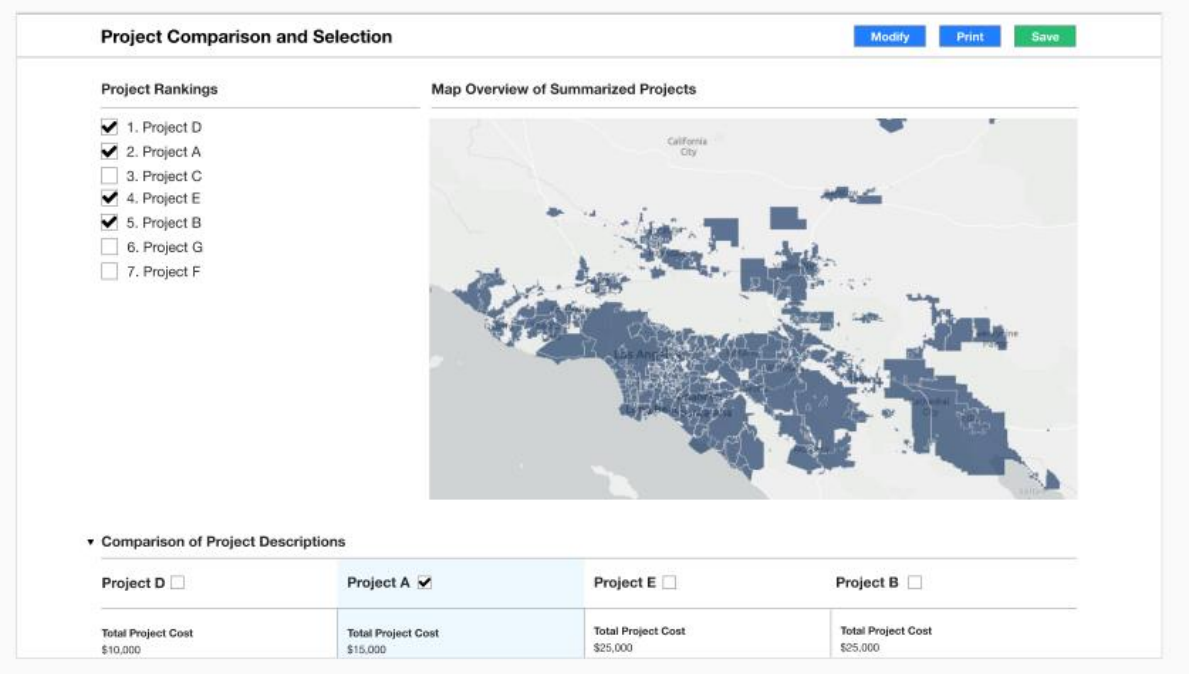


Figure 4.6: Concept project comparison and selection page and interactive map within the TAPPED Application.

The objective of this GUI, TAPPED, is to allow users to interact with multiple database variables to compare and prioritize potential technical assistance projects. Multivariable modeling/comparisons allow the user to identify important variables to consider when evaluating individual projects, such as number of connections, percent of the population meeting the MHI, type and cost of proposed project, multiple benefits, etc. The objective for developing a project descriptor template and prioritization criteria is to allow the LA-Ventura Funding Area DACIP IRWM representatives to make data-driven choices about what proposed projects to select for funding, under the Project Development task, Task 4, with a clearly documentable and transparent process.

References

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2. 2019 IRWM Grant Program Guidelines, https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grants/Files/P1-Guidelines/2019-IRWM-Grant-Program-Guidelines122319ay19.pdf)

3. Task Order 3B Solicitation, Exhibit A

4. Greater Los Angeles County Community Strengths and Needs Assessment- A Water Perspective Draft - v9.7.21 11

5. 2016 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Request for Proposals, http://wcvc.ventura.org/dcip/docs/Prop1_DACI_GrantProgram-Final_RFP_2016.pdf

6.Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), on behalf of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) **Enviroscreen 3.0,** https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30

7.United States Census **Median Household Income (MHI),** https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html

8.Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry **Social Vulnerability Index,** CDC/ATSDR SVI Data and Documentation Download | Place and Health | ATSDR

Appendix A | Needs Assessment Materials

DWR Needs Assessment Template

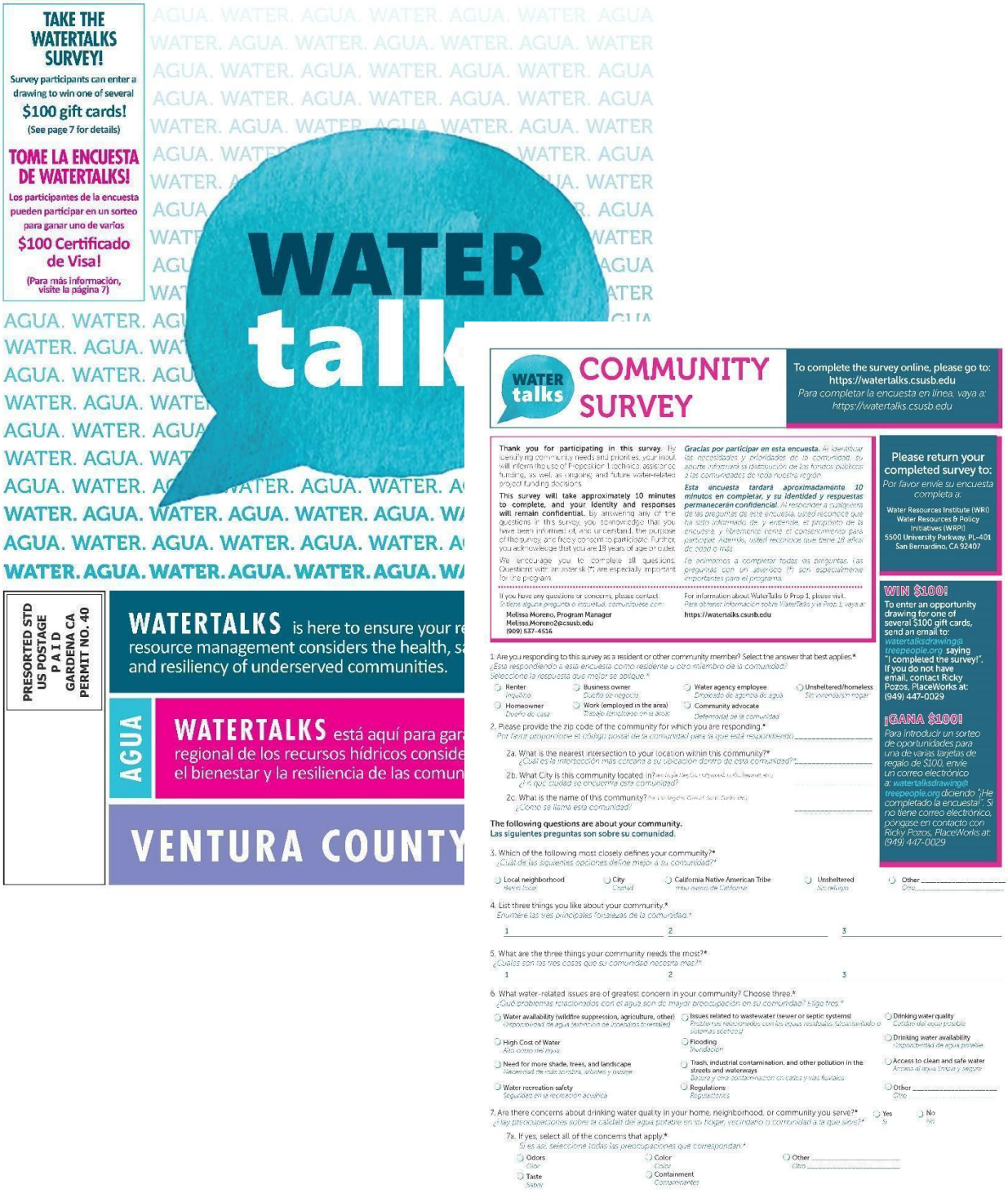
See page 8 of the 2016 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Request for Proposals using the following link:
https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/irwmp/Docs/Prop1/2016Prop1IRWM_DACIRFP_Final.pdf.

Table 3 – Eligible DAC Involvement Activities

Table 3 – Eligible DAC Involvement Activities		
General Activity	**Examples of Activity**	**Desired Outcome**
Needs Assessments **(required)**	Surveys or meetings with community members to identify water management needs	Needs Assessments provide better understanding of water management needs to help direct resources and funding
Education	Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, RWMGs education on DAC needs	Education and interpretive services provide better understanding by community members or RWMGs of water management needs
Community Outreach	Public meetings open to DAC community members, door-to-door outreach	Outreach increases participation in IRWM planning or project development activities
Engagement in IRWM Efforts	DAC regional engagement coordinator role, DAC Advisory Committee to RWMG, DAC representatives in governance	Engagement activities increases activity and roles of DACs in RWMG decision making and increased participation in IRWM efforts
Facilitation	Facilitated RWMG meetings, facilitated project development meetings	Facilitation services encourage participation and stakeholders resolving or overcoming obstacles in communicating needs
Technical Assistance	Service provider trainings, local circuit rider programs to train water and wastewater staff	Technical, financial, or managerial assistance results in community staff able to support local decision making, knowledge, and skills
Governance Structure	Evaluation of governance structures and related plan financing, assessment of DAC involvement in decision making processes	Evaluation of RWMG governance to ensure DAC participation in IRWM regardless of ability to contribute financially
Site Assessment	Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities	Site assessment results in knowledge gained by community staff on water management needs and data for project development
Enhancement of DAC aspects in IRWM plans	Development of Funding Area-wide DAC plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all IRWM plans	IRWM plan DAC-related changes result in IRWM plan updates that support the RWMG's understanding of DAC needs
Project Development Activities or Construction	Planning activities, environmental compliance, pre-construction engineering/design activities, or construction activities	Project development activities for future implementation/construction funding or construction activities

Appendix B | Images of Outreach Materials

Ventura County **Newspaper and Survey**



Library Bookmarks

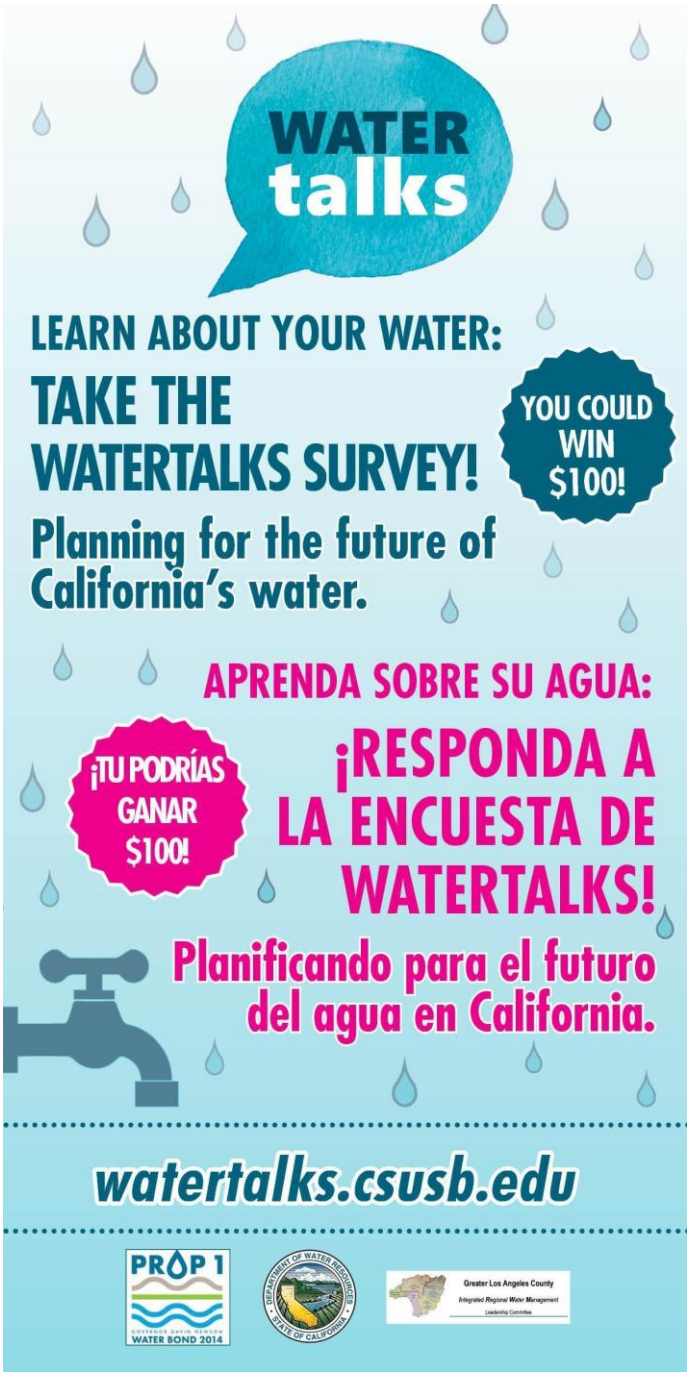


Paid Printed Marketing

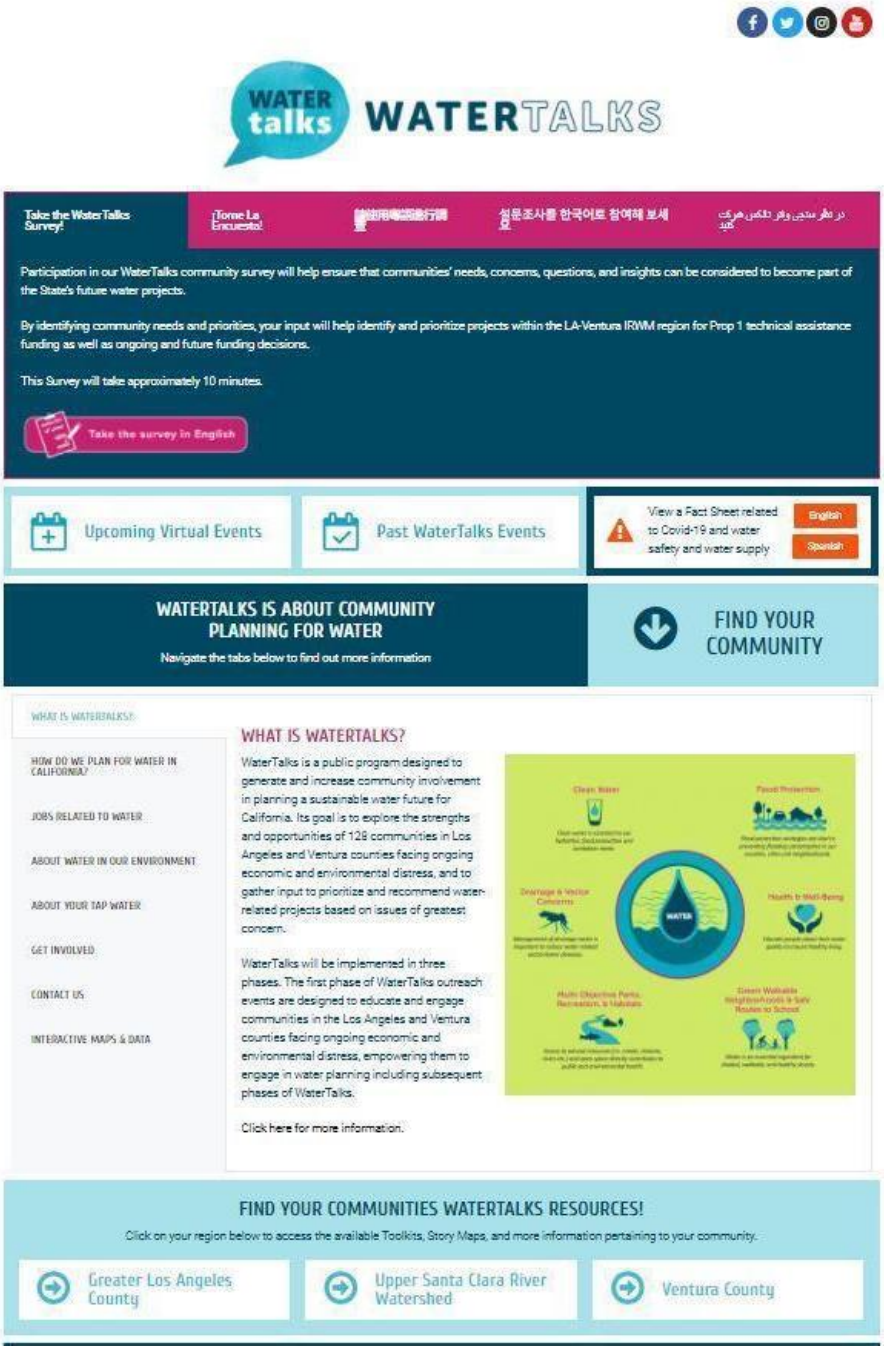
Country Journal Advertising



Paid Advertisements

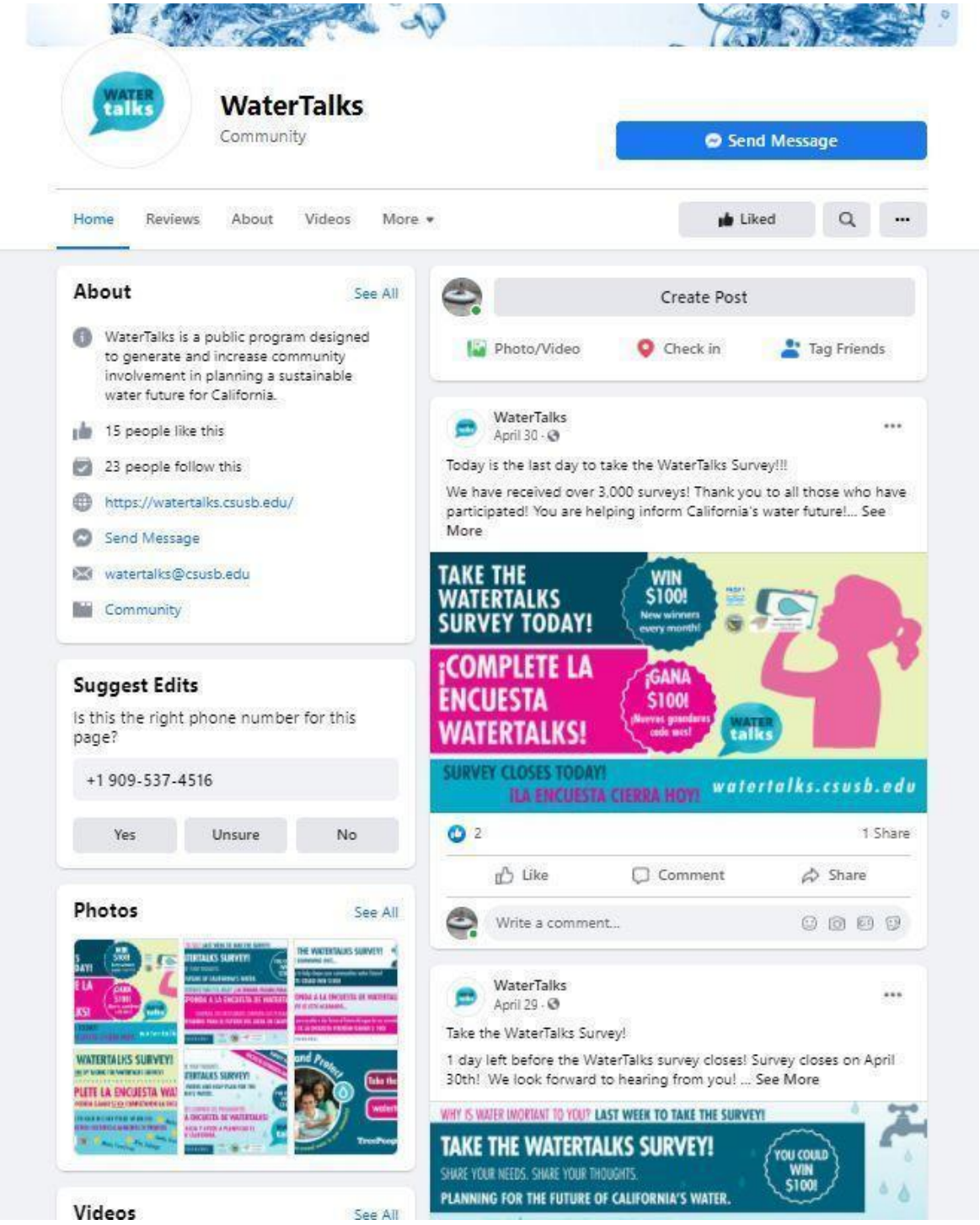


WaterTalks Website Home Page



Social Media Outreach

Facebook Page

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By identifying community needs and priorities, your input will inform how public funds will be distributed to communities across our region.
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Win one of several $100 gift cards!
SURVEY
After completing the survey, you will be invited to enter an opportunity drawing to win one of several $100 gift cards!
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LA-Ventura WaterTalks
Published by Lav WaterTalks · Just now ·
Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
Tome la encuesta hoy: https://watertalks.csusb.edu
Gana una tarjeta de regalo de $100!
SURVEY
Después de completer la encuesta, se le invitará a participar en un sorteo de oportunidades para ganar una de varias tarjetas de regalo de $ 100
Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
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lav_watertalks
Gana una tarjeta de regalo de $100!
Después de completer la encuesta, se le invitará a participar en un sorteo de oportunidades para ganar una de varias tarjetas de regalo de $ 100
lav_watertalks Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
Visite nuestro sitio web para tomar la encuesta hoy: watertalks.csusb.edu

E-Blasts



WaterTalks is a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Our goal is to hear from as many community members from Los Angeles and Ventura Counties as possible!

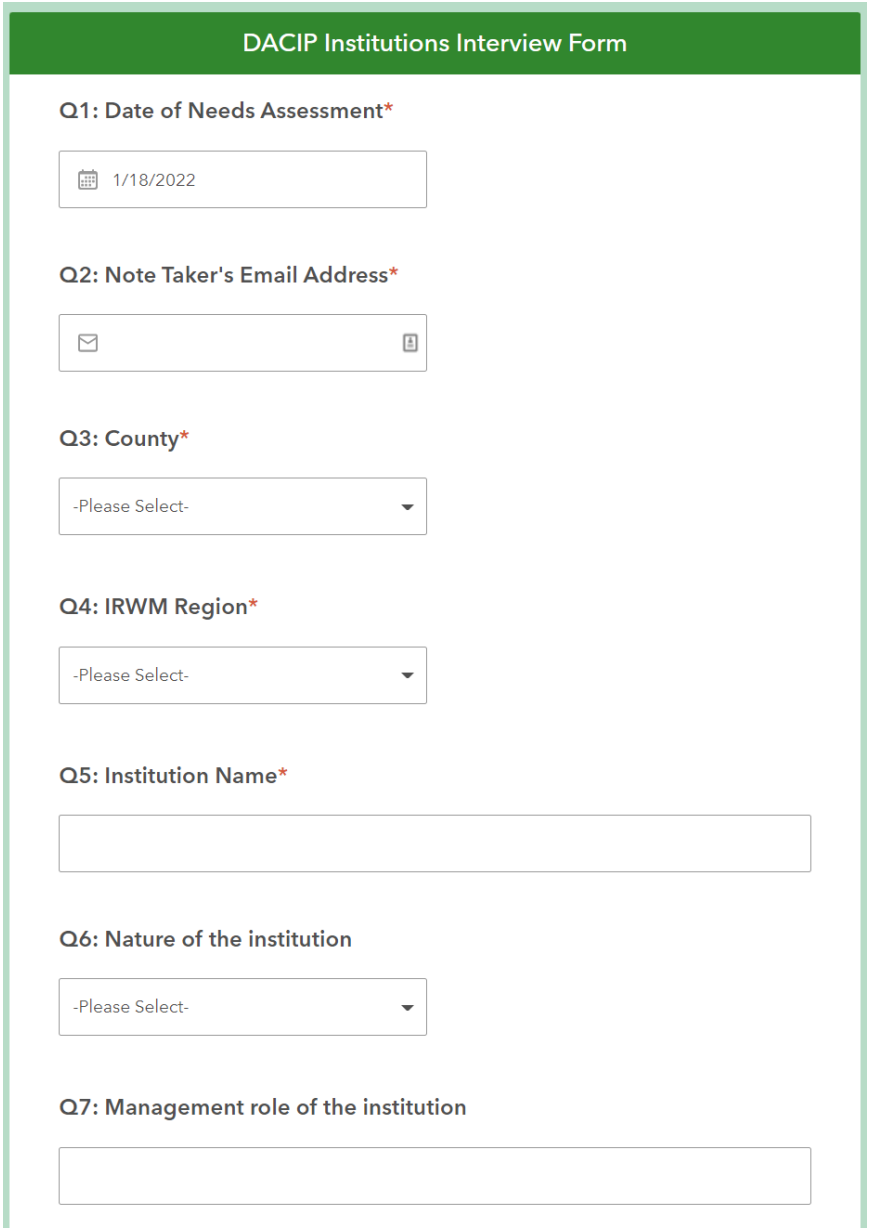
WaterTalks es un programa público diseñado para generar y aumentar la participación de la comunidad en la planificación de un futuro sostenible del agua para California. ¡Nuestro objetivo es escuchar a tantos miembros de la comunidad de los condados de Los Ángeles y Ventura como sea posible!



The WaterTalks Survey is offered in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Korean and Farsi. This survey is an opportunity for individuals to help plan for their community's water future. **So far, over 2,000 participants have taken the survey. Survey participants are eligible to win a $100 gift card! The survey is open until April 30, 2021.**

Appendix C | Community and Institutional Needs Assessment Materials

Institutional Interview Survey 123 Form



Q9: This survey is collecting responses from ____?

-Please Select-

Number of people interviewed:

123

SYSTEMS

Q10: What are the water sources for your system? Check all that apply:

- [ ] Groundwater from well
- [ ] Groundwater from a spring
- [ ] Surface water
- [ ] Purchased water requiring treatment
- [ ] Purchased water already treated
- [ ] Do not know
- [ ] Not qualified to know
- [ ] Does not apply
- [ ] Other (please specify)

Q11: What are the objectives of the system? Check all that apply:

- [x] Drinking water
- [ ] Irrigation
- [ ] Wastewater
- [ ] Do not know
- [ ] Not qualified to know
- [ ] Does not apply
- [ ] Other (please specify)

Q12: Do any of your water sources exceed any primary or secondary drinking water standards?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

Please explain.

8000

Q13 (1): How many residential service connections?

123

Q13 (2): What percent of them are rental units?

-Please Select-

Q14: How many non-residential service connection are provided in the community?

123

Q15: Population variability (seasonal or stable)

- ○ Seasonal
- ○ Stable

Q16: Before we begin, do you have any questions?

8000

COMMUNITY - General

[PROMPT] Today, we'd like to focus on the community you serve through your role at [agency]. We'd like to start out by asking you to describe some aspects of your community in general. Will you please tell us about your community's strengths, and what it needs?

Q17 (1): Strengths:

8000

Q17 (2): Needs:

8000

COMMUNITY - Issues and Challenges

[PROMPT] Q18: What do you see as barriers to access the benefits of drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure in your community?

8000

(PROBE) Q19: Is safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking accessible to all members of your community?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

Q20 (1): What types of drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations impact your community?

8000

Q20 (2): Are there any issues with drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations that impact your community?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q21: Are parts of the community impacted by storm water quality issues or flooding?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q22: Are other water access needs in your community met, such as water for ceremonial purposes or for recreation?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q23: Are there any regulatory/compliance issues that impact your community?

-Please Select-

Please Explain.

8000

Institutional Email Blast

Hello,

WaterTalks, a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California is a component of the Department of Water Resources Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DACI) Program funded by a Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant. WaterTalks was specifically developed for the Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area, which covers the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) IRWM Region. In Ventura County, community engagement is led by the California State University's Water Resources and Policies Initiative (WRPI).

Late last year, WaterTalks launched the WaterTalks Community Survey (Survey) for the LA-Ventura region to gather community input about their water-related needs and priorities. **WaterTalks is also conducting interviews with selected institutions within these communities**. **Both the community surveys and institutional interviews will be used to inform the distribution of Prop 1 grant funding and to involve disadvantaged communities and economically distressed areas in the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning process.** WaterTalks representatives will be gathering input from selected institutions and community members until **April 30th, 2021**.

We anticipate that the virtual interview will take about 60 minutes. I have also provided you with a copy of the interview form to fill out as an alternative to the virtual interview.

Please reply to this email if you are interested in scheduling an interview as soon as possible or please send us back the filled-out spreadsheet and any questions you may have.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the WaterTalks program. We look forward to your participation.

Thank you,

Melissa Moreno
Program Manager
Water Resources Institute (WRI)
Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)
5500 University Parkway, PL-401
San Bernardino, CA 92407
909-537-4516
Melissa.Moreno2@csusb.edu

Appendix D | Project Description Template and Evaluation Criteria

Project Attributes

Section	Field/Attribute	Categories/Domains (if applicable)	Definition
Project Overview Information	Project Title		
	Project Website		
	Project Concept Abstract (briefly describe ~750 words)		
	Project Type	See **Project Types** worksheet	Select ONE Project Type that best describes the project. (e.g. Needs Assessments, K-12 Activities, Tech Assistance, etc.)
	Project Description (8000 Words)		
	Upload additional attachments as needed		Upload additional relevant project documents (resumes, photos, and other materials).
	Project Benefits	See **Project Benefits** worksheet	Identify *one or more* benefits that apply to the project.
	Project Deliverables		List proposed project deliverables (e.g. Property Acquisition, Plan Development, Study, Non-Construction Implementation, Permits, Project Design, Trainings, Permits.)
Applying/Implementing Entity	Entity Name		Name of organization/agency, etc.
	Address		
	Contact Name		Identify an individual point-of-contact.
	Contact Title		
	Contact Email		
	Contact Phone Number		
Other Partners/Collaborators (may replicate this section)	Entity Name		Name of other organizations/agencies
	Address		
	Contact Name		Identify an individual point-of-contact
	Contact Title		
	Contact Email		
	Contact Phone Number		
	Other Stakeholders		Names of project stakeholders *not* identified above as official partners.
Location	Project Geographic Location/Address		
	Sphere of Influence		Identify the sphere of influence of the project. If assistance is needed to determine sphere of influence, please contact DACIP Team. [Enable hyperlink that takes the user to contact info.]
Budget/Cost	Total Project Cost: Known/Unknown	Amount known, Amount unknown, Need help in determining	
	Total Project Cost		Enter *total* project cost. Can be $0. If budget development assistance is needed, please contact DACIP Team. [Enable hyperlink that takes the user to contact info.]
	Matching Resources: Entity Name		Agency or resource providing matching
	Matching Resources: Amount		Amount of matching resources
	Matching Resources: Level of Commitment	Received, Pledged, Planned, Need Help/Assistance	
	Post Grant Funding: Entity Name		Agency or resource providing post grant
	Post Grant Funding: Amount		Amount of post grant funding
	Post Grant Funding: Level of Commitment	Received, Pledged, Planned, Need Help/Assistance	
	Estimated O&M Expenses		
	Cost Breakdown by Deliverable		Identify the cost per deliverable for each task or outcome in this project.
Schedule/Deliverables	Project Duration (# of Months)		Enter the estimated project duration in number of months.
	Schedule of deliverable milestones		Provide an estimated schedule of deliverable milestones.

Project Types

4. Project Type

[REQUIRED] Select the project type that best describes the project based on the below examples.

(1) **Needs Assessments:** Survey community members or water providers, facilitate meetings or workshops

(2) **Education:** Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, regional water management groups education on disadvantaged communities needs

(3) **Community Outreach:** Public meetings open to disadvantaged communities community members, door-to-door outreach

(4) **Engagement with Integrated Regional Water Management Efforts:** Disadvantaged Communities regional engagement coordinator role, disadvantaged communities advisory committee to regional water management group, disadvantaged communities representatives in governance

(5) **Facilitation:** Facilitated regional water management group meetings, facilitated project development meetings

(6) **Technical Assistance:** Public agency/elected official capacity building, agency staff training, assess water charges/rate plans, and assess consolidation of water providers

(7) **Governance Structure:** Increase disadvantaged communities involvement in decision making

(8) **Site Assessment:** Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities

(9) **Enhancement of Disadvantaged Communities Aspects in Integrated Regional Water Management Plans:** Development of funding area-wide disadvantaged communities plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all integrated regional water management plans

(10) **Project Development Activities or Construction:** Environmental compliance, pre-construction activities, grant writing, project development

(11) **Financial Strategy:** Provides aid with financial aspects of grant applications or similar

-Please Select-

Project Benefits

8. Project Benefits

[REQUIRED] Select **one or more** benefits that apply to the project.

Examples:
(1) **Improved Climate Adaptation or Carbon Sequestration:** Uses green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, natural materials/processes

(2) **Adherence to Water Plan(s):** May include adherence to Urban Water Management Plan, Integrated Regional Water Management, Enhanced Watershed Management Program, Groundwater Quality Management Area, Stormwater Resources plan, Measure W Stormwater Investment Plan

(3) **Water Quality:** Improves water quality of drinking water and surface runoff, addresses primary pollutants of concern

(4) **Water Supply Resilience:** Improves drought response

(5) **Habitat Improvement:** Supports specific endangered or at-risk species, increases biodiversity, increases habitat corridors that connect larger open spaces, practives resources stewardship

(6) **Water Conservation:** Reduces water demand, captures runoff/rain

(7) **Recycled Water:** Integrates purple pipe, gray/black water systems

(8) **Improves Groundwater Quality and/or Quantity:** Stormwater filtration, ground water injection, revives dry wells, enhances dry weather runoff treatment

(9) **Reduces Flood Hazards:** Reduces localized street and sidewalk flooding, enhances floodplain protection

(10) **Provides Recreational/Ceremonial Access/Use:** Increases public open space, access to public open space

(11) **Improves Community/Agency Capacity:** Increases community awareness and education, increases community/tribal involvement in project development, improves operational efficiency

Project Evaluation Criteria

TARGET TIER 1 VARIABLES			TAPPED APPLICATION USAGE		
Ref ID	Variable Description	Source Dataset Name	TAPPED Dataset Grouping	Tier 1 Project Evaluation/ Ranking Use	Tier 1 Proj Attribute Display Use
1	Project Title	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
2	Project Type	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
3	Project Abstract	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
4	Project Deliverables	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
5	Total Project Cost	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
6	Project Match Funds	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
7	Project Sponsor	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
8	Project Co-Sponsor	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
9	Project Duration (months)	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
10	Project Geography	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
11	Project Benefits	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
12	IRWM Region	IRWM Regions	General Reference	No	Yes
13	County	CA Counties	General Reference	No	Yes
14	WSPs	WSP Boundaries	General Reference	No	Yes
15	MHI	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
16	Average Est. DAC % HH	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
17	Average Est. SDAC % HH	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
18	Total Number of Households	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
19	Population	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	No	Yes
20	Population Density	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
21	Top Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
22	Percentage of Responses that Include Top Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
23	Second Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
24	Percentage of Responses that Include Second Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
25	Third Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
26	Percentage of Responses that Include Third Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
27	Community Water Related Issues Resolved by Project (%)	Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
28	Community Water Related Issues Resolved by Project (Margin of Error)	Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
29	Are There Concerns About Drinking Water Quality?	Comm Survey (Q7)	Community Needs	No	Yes
30	Top Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
31	Percentage of Responses that Include Top Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes

32	Second Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
33	Percentage of Responses that Include Second Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
34	Third Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
35	Percentage of Responses that Include Third Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
36	Community Concerns Resolved by Project (%)	Comm Survey (Q10) X PIO Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
37	Community Concerns Resolved by Project (Margin of Error)	Comm Survey (Q10) X PIO Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
38	Do You Participate in Community Planning Efforts?	Comm Survey (Q11)	Community Needs	No	Yes
39	Community Needs Survey Sample Size	Comm Survey	Community Needs	No	Yes
40	Barriers to Access of Clean Water	Inst Survey (Q18)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
41	Is Safe, Affordable Water Accessible in Community?	Inst Survey (Q19)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
42	Any Drinking Water or Wastewater Infrastructure/Regulatory Issues That Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q20 (2))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
43	Do Stormwater Quality/Flooding Issues Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q21 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
44	Are Other Water Access Needs in Community Met?	Inst Survey (Q22 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
45	Any Regulatory/Compliance Issues Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q23 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
46	Does Community Have Enough Funding for Operations and Maintenance Needs?	Inst Survey (Q25)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
47	Awareness of Service Area on Ancestral Homeland of A Tribe?	Inst Survey (Q31)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
48	Any Stalled Projects?	Inst Survey (Q45 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
49	Institutional Needs Survey Sample Size	Inst Survey	Institutional Needs	No	Yes

Appendix E | DAC-Stress Model Methodology

LA-VEN DAC Involvement Project Interim DAC-Stress Model Methodology Outline Last Update: 12/10/20

1. Goal: Develop a DAC index composed of three data sources to demonstrate what census tracks indicate a high level of stress.

2. Data Sources/Collection:

a) Enviroscreen 3.0: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30

b) Median Household Income (MHI): US Census

c) Social Vulnerability Index (Susan Cutter):

https://svi.cdc.gov/SVIDataToolsDownload.html

3. Date of Production: September, 2018

4. Model Extent: Covered the following counties:

a) LA County

b) Ventura County

c) Orange County

d) San Bernardino County

e) Riverside County

5. Final Model Resolution/Scale: Census Tract

6. Methodology Summary:

a) Created a single functional census tract layer with key attribution via attribute joins:

i. Enviroscreen: Utilized the continuous numeric composite index attribute: higher number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: Clscore

ii. MHI: Utilized the continuous numeric MHI attribute: lower number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: MHI

iii. SVI: Utilize the continuous numeric composite index attribute: higher number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: RPL_Themes

b) Developed a Scoring Index per Dataset and Reclassified Key Attribution: DAC Stress Model Methodology Outline 2

i. Enviroscreen Data: Broke the continuous numeric composite index attribute (CIscore) into three categories and assign scores:

1. High 1/3: Score of 3

2. Middle 1/3: Score of 2

3. Low 1/3: Score of 1

ii. MHI: Broke the MHI attribute (MHI) into three categories:

1. Tracts with MHI in the bottom 50% (using median value) of the portion below the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 3

2. Tracts with MHI in the top 50% (using median value) of the portion below the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 2

3. Scores over the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 1

4. Used CA Poverty Level of $31,000 as the MHI threshold for poverty.

a) Good baseline approach considering CA cost of living, wage rate, etc. is proportionally higher than less urbanized areas, like the Midwest and areas of the East Coast.

b) California Poverty Measure – PPIC/SCPI: http://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/ iii. SVI: Broke the continuous numeric composite index attribute (RPL_Themes) into three categories and assigned scores:

1. High 1/3: Score of 3

2. Middle 1/3: Score of 2

3. Low 1/3: Score of 1

c) Aggregated Scores to Produce Stress Index:

i. Add the scores for each of the three key attributes and produced a field with their sum per tract. Relevant fields/attributes:

1. EnvScrn_Class: Enviroscreen Score

2. MHI_Class: MHI Score

3. SVI Class: SVI Score

4. DAC_Index: Aggregated DAC Stress Index

a) Used this as the stress index and used in mapping/visualization (see below for more info).

b) Null values indicate lack of census data. DAC Stress Model Methodology Outline 3

7. Deliverables:

a) GDB Containing:

i. Final model layer (census tract level)

ii. Clipped versions of final model for the following areas:

1. LA County

2. Ventura County

3. Orange County

4. San Bernardino County

5. Riverside County

6. Santa Ana Watershed

iii. Ingredient data layers

iv. Reference data layers

b) PDF Maps:

i. One map per county

ii. Use the stress index for symbolization:

1. Use a light, medium, and dark red symbolization scheme to indicate stress per tract.

8. Contact Information:

a) Center for Geospatial Science and Technology California State University, Northridge Website: https://csun.edu/cgst Email: cgst@csun.edu California State University Northridge 18111 Nordhoff Street Northridge, CA

b) Water Resources Policy Initiatives California State University San Bernardino Websites: https://www.csusb.edu/water-resources-institute/wrpi Email: WRPI.Comm@csusb.edu 5500 University Parkway San Bernardino CA 92407 Note: The data produced from this methodology is served up through the DACIP Hub site and is available to the public, but we ask that users cite WaterTalks LA-VEN DACIP as developers of this dataset.

Appendix F | Example Needs Assessment Analysis- Fillmore

One example of a smaller water provider and community within the Ventura County priority areas is the Town of Fillmore, which is serviced by the Fillmore Water District. This community is located inland and upstream east of the cities of Ventura and Oxnard. As noted in Figure F.1 below, the water provider boundaries (i.e. service area), multiple DACs that represent High Stress model levels 6, 5, and 4 occur within the Fillmore Water Districts, with a majority of this area represented by DAC Stress Model level 6 in the eastern portion of the community. This is one of many examples within the study area where a single agency serves a community that has diverse levels of DAC Stress leading to numerous needs and strengths even within a relatively small geographical scope. Specific question responses are illustrated below as an example of how the survey data and mapping tool can be effective in identifying and resolving community and institutional needs. Respondents to the community survey were represented by a majority of respondents who were homeowners, with fewer respondents representing renters and business owners.

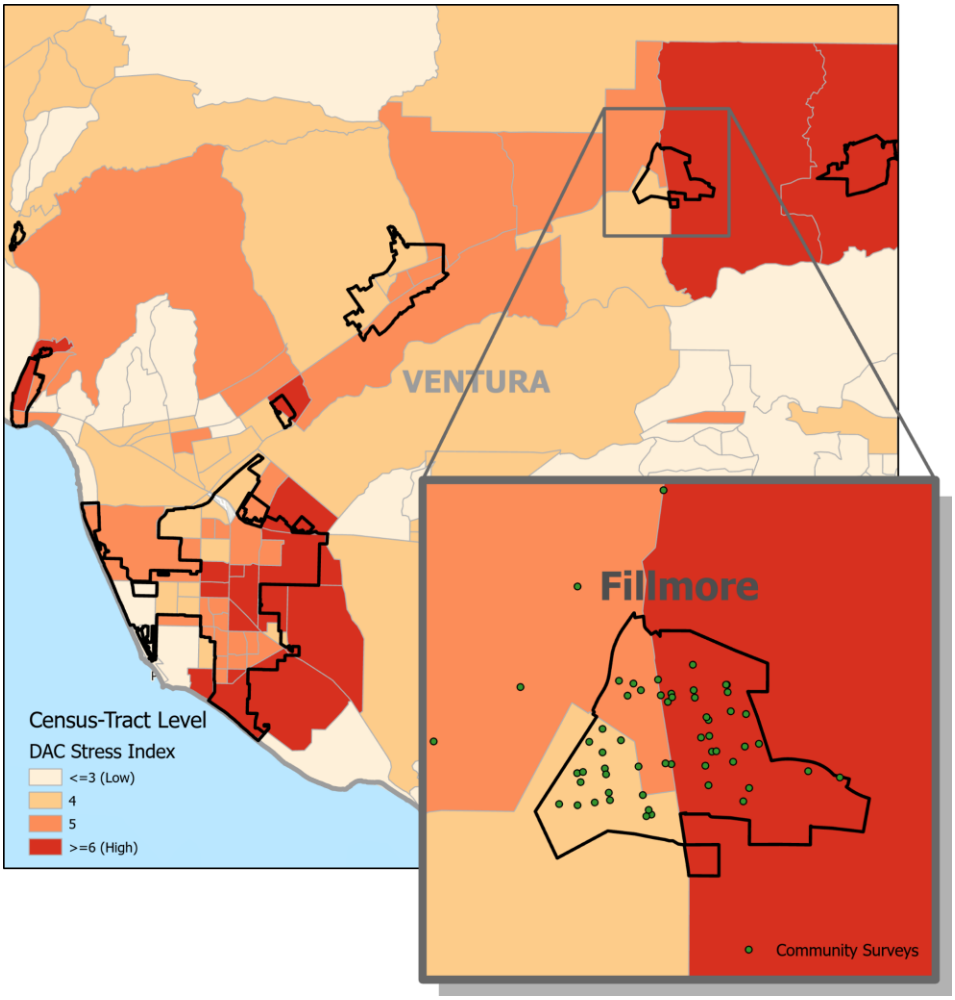


Figure F.1 Fillmore, California: Fillmore Water District Boundary with Community Survey Responses. Community members and the district boundaries encompass three different DAC Stress Model types (6, 5, 4).

Community Needs

Fillmore District

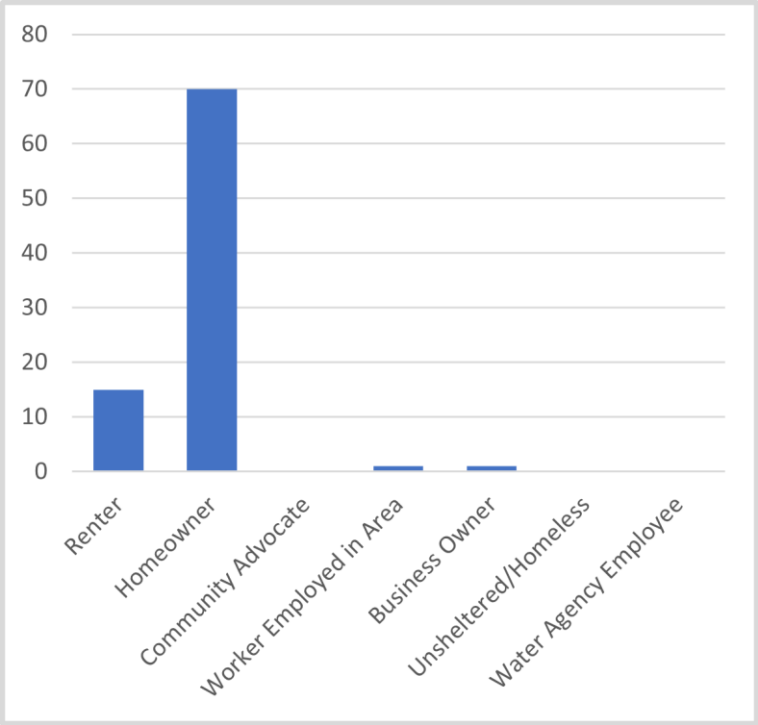


Figure F.2 Stakeholder community survey respondent types within Fillmore in Ventura County.

Q5 What are the three things your community needs the most?

- Water Rates and Quality were a primary theme - also included: better restaurants, lower water bills, more stores, more arts based activities, water and sewer cost too high, better education (K-12), better water quality, more recreation, more jobs, lower sewer bills, more social services, softer water, infrastructure repairs (roads), affordable housing, solar power, need to filter tap water - too hard, reusable water without using softeners, water too hard and damages infrastructure (house and city), environmental education, more diverse water resources housing, public safety, - majority notes water, climate change, green spaces

Q10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

- The most pressing concerns include climate changes, water, open spaces, parks, greenspaces, homelessness,

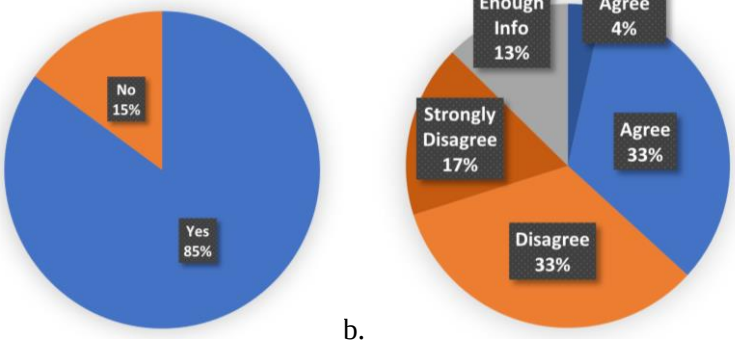
Q16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large?

- Responses note that a majority of community members do not feel their voices are being heard by government entities. Community voices are not being heard.

Community Water Needs and Solutions

Fillmore District

All of the community survey respondents indicated that they are on both septic and wells to meet their water needs and nearly all homeowners indicated some issues and concerns with water quality. Across 73 responses, 10 (13%) comprising 9 homeowners and one renter said they had no issues with water in their homes. Of the 86% respondents indicating there is a water issue, primary water issue themes included hardness, taste and odors, high mineral content, high nitrates, and observed skin irritation when using water in their homes (Figure F.3a). Other highlights include that 50% of respondents disagree that the local government is meeting water, infrastructure and beautification needs (Figure F.3b).



a. b.

Figure F.3 Fillmore community survey responses regarding whether there are drinking water quality concerns in the community (a), and whether local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification issues (b).

Additional survey questions related to the community water needs and possible solutions through the perspective of community members participating in the survey include the following:

Q6. What water-related issues are of greatest concern in your community?

- Drinking water, **high cost of water and wastewater,** flooding, trash in water including industrial contamination, access to clean and safe water, more shade trees to improve water resources, water available for fire and agriculture.

Q9 Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

- Ideas about how water can be improved generated responses including the following:
  - stop responding to state regulations unless they pay for infrastructure/improvements, **monitoring more frequently and reporting data to community**,
  - stop over watering public spaces, fix broken water infrastructure,
  - more efforts to determine ways to **replenish aquifers**,
  - soften water to improve taste/odor,
  - **catch rainwater (BMPs-mentioned multiple times),**

- adjust water rates as community grows,
- **develop incentives/rebates for water softening** systems,
- **remove fracking activities** - too close to groundwater,
- stop putting chlorine in water,
- earmark sales taxes to improve water, break down calcium,
- conserve water,
- implement irrigation regulation during dry conditions,
- **hire staff f**or creek regulations,
- **filter wastewater to drinking** water,
- **water related recreation and learning opportunities for for youth**,
- lower rate costs.

Community Strengths

Fillmore District

Q4 List three things you like about your community.
Q5 What are the three things your community needs the most?

- High frequency themes of responses including:
  - small town
  - friendly
  - rural life
  - walking and bike paths
  - weather
  - care about green belt
  - low crime
  - quiet
  - close to nature
  - local businesses
  - historic downtown
  - civic pride
  - playgrounds and parks
  - agricultural community
  - little traffic

Community Engagement

Fillmore District

Q11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?

- Only 19% of respondents said that they participate in community planning efforts - many participate by writing local officials about concerns, social justice issues and queer community.
  - There is a **Civic Pride** group that promotes beautification, HOA, and city council meetings.
  - The lack of time and other priorities were the primary reasons that they did not participate. Additionally, many did feel that as a community they participate in planning efforts,

Q13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or received information from?

- School districts, county supervisors, city council primary responses, and a few noted state officials/representatives.

Q15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?

- water related participation/planning - only 9 said yes

Q17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?

- 5% of community respondents said they were aware of IRWM

Q18. DO you know what drinking water agency provides your water?

- 41% said yes, they know the agency that provides their water.

Appendix G | Community Needs Assessment Tables

1. Are you responding to this survey as a resident or other community member?

	Count	Percentage
Homeowner	360	58%
Renter	240	39%
Community Advocate	10	2%
Business Owner	5	1%
Work Employed in the Area	2	0%
Unsheltered Homeless	1	0%
Grand Total	618	100%

2.Please provide the zip code of the community for which you are responding.

Zip Codes	Count	Percentage
93036	130	21%
93033	97	16%
93015	94	15%
93001	83	14%

93030	63	10%
93060	50	8%
93004	30	5%
93040	17	3%
93003	15	2%
93035	7	1%
93041	4	1%
93065	3	0%
93063	3	0%
93023	3	0%
93021	3	0%
91320	3	0%
93022	2	0%
93010	2	0%
93630	1	0%
93101	1	0%

93012	1	0%
89101	1	0%
Grand Total	613	1

2b. What City is this community located in?

	Count	Percentage
Oxnard	234	43%
Ventura	122	22%
Fillmore	83	15%
Santa Paula	40	7%
Piru	14	3%
El Rio	9	2%
Simi Valley	6	1%
Saticoy	4	1%
Port Hueneme	4	1%
East Ventura	3	1%
Moorpark	3	1%

Camarillo	3	1%
Oak View	2	0%
Newbury Park	2	0%
Ojai	2	0%
Stanley	2	0%
NIL	2	0%
Casita Springs	2	0%
Unincorporated Ventura County	2	0%
Nyeland	2	0%
Santa Clara Valley	1	0%
Thousand Oaks	1	0%
sycamore village	1	0%
Poin megu	1	0%
Las Vegas	1	0%
Rose Park	1	0%
Rio	1	0%

Rice	1	0%
Grand Total	549	100%

2c. What is the name of this community?

	Count	Percentage
Oxnard	83	17%
Other	70	14%
El Rio	65	13%
Fillmore	49	10%
Ventura	38	8%
Nyeland Acres	23	5%
Santa Paula	20	4%
Piru	17	4%
The Avenue	12	2%
West Ventura	11	2%
Saticoy	10	2%
Casitas Springs	7	1%

River Park	7	1%
East Ventura	7	1%
La Colonia	6	1%
North Fillmore	4	1%
North Oxnard	4	1%
Santa Clarita	3	1%
Midtown	3	1%
College Park	3	1%
South Oxnard	3	1%
Poinsettia Gardens	3	1%
Carriage Square	3	1%
Newbury	3	1%
Santa Clara	3	1%
Pleasant Valley	3	1%
Port Hueneme	2	0%
Balden	2	0%

Chapel Lane	2	0%
oak view	2	0%
Moorpark	2	0%
El Dorado	2	0%
The Oaks	2	0%
NIL	2	0%
Ventura Ave.	2	0%
Cabrillo	2	0%
Rose Park	2	0%
Sierra Linda	2	0%
Grand Total	484	100%

6. What water related issues are of greatest concern in your community?

	Count	Percentage
Trash Industrial contamination	64	12%
Drinking water quality	62	12%
High cost of water	53	10%

Access to clean safe water	47	9%
More shade trees	47	9%
Water availability fire sup ag	47	9%
Wastewater	38	7%
Drinking water availability	36	7%
Flooding	27	5%
Other	27	5%
Regulations	25	5%
High cost	23	4%
Water recreation safety	21	4%
Water availability fire sub ag	10	2%
Water recreation safety	9	2%
Grand total	536	100%

7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home neighborhood or community you serve?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	382	62%
No	236	38%
Grand Total	618	100%

7a. If yes, select all of the concerns that apply.

	Count	Percentage
Odors	14	19%
Color	14	19%
Other	14	19%
Contaminant	15	21%
Taste	16	22%
Grand Total	73	100%

8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.

	Count	Percentage
Agree	228	37%
Disagree	143	23%
Strongly disagree	103	17%
Do not have enough information	87	14%
Strongly agree	47	8%
Not understand the question	10	2%
Grand total	618	100%

Use this space to describe the reason for your response:

· The water is a little dirty
· There are no government-provided sidewalks in this area. Also, I usually have to take it upon myself to get the trash hauled away when people dump in our area. The government does not pay for the street lights here either. The private mutual water company pays for the street lights. We have to fend for ourselves or it is a mess. There are overgrown weeds on Ventura Blvd that are a fire hazard and no one does anything about that mess.
· Parks are extremely under staffed and not maintained
· Ventura has been good at promoting and building Ocean Friendly Gardens, but there's still a long way to go.

· They are attempting to address our streets but not much is getting done. The busiest streets, such as Harvard Blvd, Pleasant Street, etc. have not been addressed. There hasn't been upkeep of the streets for many years. Nothing is being done with homeless.
· My local government is regularly maintaining existing infrastructure.
· A lot of the parks are run down and have no shade, streets have tons of potholes
· Things are getting run down. Could use a running + exercise trail with stations to workout.
· Our neighborhood council is very good about keeping after local government to repave the streets, take care of the park, inspect the sidewalks, monitor the sewer system and keep the trash picked up.
· When there are earthquakes the ground gets a lot of pot hole but when we report it they fix it.
· Sidewalks are maintained. Parks are kept clean. Most roads are smooth and driveable.
· There is so much trash along streets, bike paths and on campuses that volunteer groups and individuals work at picking up, but perhaps giving out fines or work details for those dumping trash or a more positive approach might be to give homeless and young people incentives to pick up trash. Sidewalks near some stores are filthy and you need gloves to touch the doors. Downtown planters have been allowed to die even with reclaimed water available. Homeless encampments could be cleared out of river bottoms and a fenced large yard provided for tents with portable toilets and trash bins. Some rental homes are allowed to have trash/junk and weeds remaining in yards.
· My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs like adding murals and trying to keep streets clean but there is LOTS more that can be done.
· Most streets are in good repair, but there are some potholes that need to be filled. The streets in our city are in much better condition than the nearby city of Santa Paula, CA 93060.

· Parks are kept pretty clean and well maintained. Sidewalks near the beach need some repair due to ocean level rise.
· Lots of overgrown landscapes and trash, graffiti
· City does very little in the way of upgrading non revenue generating infrastructure
· Although my local government has begun the process of fixing streets, I'm not satisfied with the disregard to other needed problems. This includes the reconstruction of sidewalks, trees, and landscaping.
· The streets in the neighborhoods need to be redone
· I not revive notice of work being done.
· My wife and I have lived here for 16 years and the water has been always DIRTY! During our first few months we were told that the water would improve once the housing development surrounding El Dorado was started. As it turns out that was false. I later just learned that the owners of the Park were supposed to be "flushing" the system when the Park was developed back in 1974. The owners claimed they did not know they were supposed to implement this program of 1/4 flushing this closed system. They claim they are but after one year of SUPPOSEDLY FLUSHING THEIR SYSTEM the water is no better than it was when we moved into the Park on 11/4/2004. HELP PLEASE!
· "Brown is the New Green" the city has taken as a slogan. It looks it , city and trash is collecting in city spaces. Property owners/residents appear to be keeping a bit of living plant material around.
· THE MAIN STREET WHICH IS HARVARD BLVD IS REALY BAD BUT IN REALITY ALL STREET SHOULD BE FIX COMPLETELY NOT JUST ADDING A COAT
· Overgrown trees, needs weed abatement assistance for residents
· More then half the town does not have sidewalks. We have requested it many times and it has been denied. There is need to have safe sidewalks for children/elderly/disabled to use. There is areas where you have to walk on the streets.

· Street and park maintenance is great.
· I feel like there is not an effective communication channel to inform the residents of plans to address any improvements that are needed so regarding the needed sidewalks... I have no idea where things are at other that it was brought up at a neighborhood council meeting and heard nothing since. The neighborhood council is a volunteer council so there is only so much that they can do to inform the towns people. Having funding from the county for a representative of the town to inform the town, or newsletter or something would go a long way. I feel like for the most part the residents feel that Piru is being forgotten in a lot of ways.
· Some streets are in need to get fixed.
· I do feel that there are areas, for instance the East side of Park street, where significant amounts of dead and dry underbrush and trees border the road and are a fire hazard.
· Not all the streets in Piru got sidewalks ,our main st did but up to certain point which stoped at Main & orchard & did not continue on main to the end where Piru Canyon Rd starts
· Not enough sidewalks it would make the community look so much better. and maybe bring the home values up
· we have good green spaces
· The maintenance of bike paths is poor. More side walks are needed. Streets in some areas are horrible and need to be updated.
· the county does the basics only
· Ventura County District 3 is responsible for Piru - funds are not available for side walks or lights
· They want to reuse treated sewage but how are they going to remove the pharmaceuticals? They're doing something but not the right thing.
· Since we are a nonincorporated community often times we are overseen. It very challenging to get any beautification in Nyeland Acres.

· But they pass the burden to us in fees that our taxes should already cover.
· Only certain areas are getting attended to. Landscaping is the most neglected aspect. Many area parks and neighborhood street are not getting enough maintenance, including cleaning.
· Make ventura even more pleasant
· You need to move the homeless shelter on Second & K street somewhere away from family oriented neighborhoods. This one has been in ours for 10 + years. We find things missing, poop in our yards and water thieves. We are sick of it.
· Hill was just repaved recently
· sidewalks are not clear, parks are not clean, feel like South Oxnard is neglected
· been fixing streets
· The streets need repair
· need to do better maintenance of streets in highly trafficked areas
· lives near Ventura Road and it looks good.
· need more clean up park preservation
· many unhoused folks lots of empty lots
· parks not well maintained trash all over

· City of Oxnard is trying to develop a plan to improve landscaping
· rural area, streets are small, no sidewalks
· there are no parks in the area, have to go to Oxnard for a park for children to play hardly any sidewalks
· roads need fixing
· lighting and sidewalks floods when it rains
· more focus on green spaces/parks clean and maintained throughout the entire community
· never any follow through after promises at city council meetings
· lacking in roads/ streets congestion potholes,
· parks have gotten cleaner
· parks not clean/taken care of
· I think that my local city staff and council really try hard to keep up with the needs of the community within the city's budget. If there were more funds in the budget I think there would be more addressed but the budget is always tight.
· right in the middle
· I feel good about my neighborhood in response to the above statement.
· have not seen much evidence to support the question

· community is older and has been neglected by the city
· poner los químicos correctos
· still wants more attention but feels there has been an effort to build parks
· water bill is sky high and government just started addressing the community last month if you get behind on your bill at all they are just broken records and don't help water folks upcharge you when you're having trouble covering the bill
· areas that need to be addressed
· government is saying one thing and doing another
· improvement of streets and sidewalks
· haven't seen any improvements, had to pay themselves when the septic tanks were taken out
· hasn't been work done on the streets where they live, many potholes
· don't work enough on the streets
· There are no recreation opportunities. More parks and accessible open space are needed.
· they do fix small portions of the streets but rarely the entire street or those with the most traffic
· roads are very potholed- thought the city had received funding to repair them but they never did feels like it has taken a long time to build property/development in the area- seems disorganized
· in general they have been working to fix the streets in the downtown area

· somewhere in between.
· streets have potholes and are uneven parks are dirty public safety issue
· roads are not well maintained
· Ventura the city regulates the waste water going to their ocean and from my knowledge Oxnard does not and that is not ok!!! So much trash going down their from sewers not being properly regulated
· I don't know enough about City of Oxnard's efforts and haven't lived here long enough to form an opinion about the City's progress
· don't pay much attention to Saticoy
· A lot street need repair and Fillmore having a lot low income families we can not afford the high cost to repair our vehicles due to the damage the suffer cause of our streets
· Many residential roads that need resurfacing
· I am concerned that the new homes will displace our historic downtown by creating a new shopping center, and I hope my city will preserve downtown.
· There is litter in some places in the neighborhood especially in the apartment complex between the two thrift stores.
· Local government needs more budget flexibility
· the one & only dog park was not built to code and is now being closed, rather than modified to correction. there have been NO discussions to lower the horrendous sewer/water bills
· HIGH COST OF BASIC WATER TO HOMES

· The County of Ventura does some maintenance on roads, tree trimming, cleaning of irrigation channels, but we don't have sidewalks, streetlights or parks really, so infrastructure is limited due to rural nature of area.
· I do not see any new areas except housing tracts
· Could be better
· I don't know if they are. All I know is the price is high and the quality of water is poor.
· Fillmore is a small town with a large population of immigrants, field/agricultural workers, and working families that commute out of town for work. I don't know how much attention has been brought to some of the parks in the area but, many of them lack shade and water fountains.
· City streets and sidewalks need massive repairs
· Lack of constant landscaping and up keep of side walks. In spite of Civic pride effort to address issues that the City was to take over the beautification of the City has not been well maintained or improved.
· My neighbors have had a clogged meter and been on hydrant water for one and a half years and ours since Thanksgiving 2020
· Want to see more improvements
· I see trees taken down, but do not see trees planted to replace.
· I am aware that the City has committees and departments addressing these needs, yet it is not enough to fix appearance and safety of sidewalks and streets.
· In one place they are installing water friendly plants.
· A lot of the sidewalks are uneven and it makes it hard to sometimes walk and sometimes jog because if you jog or run you don't want to trip and go rolling. Some of the streets aren't smooth.

· Huge lack of shade at Two Rivers playground area. It seems like the parks are constructed as an after thought of the builders who are building the new communities. I'd like to see parks actually be fun spaces for little ones to enjoy.
· They are finally repairing the streets and sidewalks.
· There are no sidewalks, unless homeowners paid to have an area covered in cement along the parkways. It took the local community petitioning the County of Ventura to get a park designated, and we had to have an assessment tax added to pay for upkeep. Still no public restrooms, and only limited access to the green areas.
· our parks are poorly maintained and located on the far side of town sidewalks in older areas are in poor condition
· Oxnard has allow business such as the golf course to not pair fair taxes along with other developers to increase growth but does not have the infrastrutue to support the increase traffic, people, schools to provide adiquite service.
· There have been many improvements to parks and streets over the past two years.
· I think more needs to be done to improve Lewis Road. The road is wide enough in most places to be 2 lanes on both sides. It's high traffic, and dangerous to make left turns. It's also tough getting around the railroad.
· A city parks fund does not exist and budget never is available for added maintenance or new facilities. A much smarter way to fund trees, green spaces, parks, and active transportation is needed especially as these are absolutely crucial for reducing CO2 and climate change.
· Our side walks could use work and beautification
· The City has had little budget. With the passage of a new sales tax I think this will change. In my neighborhood landscaping is often done with non-natives that require more water. I'd love to see water-wise natives used more in things like medians, verges, parking lot planters, etc.
· The city of Oxnard Netflix the things that the city is supposed to provide for our taxes I think they're more worried about pensions

· Maintenance of streets and parks and trees= very poor.
· Our City was NOT taking care of these things well due to deficit however, we have new City officials and voted in more funds so the City is now trying to catch up on these things.
· They are looking at getting the city looking good and prioritizing infrastructure and beautiful landscaping.
· Our streets are not in good shape. We could use more bike paths.
· The City is always improving the streets, sidewalks and cleaning up the landscape.
· Trash in the parks. Not enough trash receptacles are not emptied often enough. Old trees lose too many branches in high winds. Old bushes not trimmed.
· I have complained about the non native trees that have destroyed our landscaping. Refuse to trim. Have lifted sidewalks acidic and eats car paint. Poor repairs of sidewalk hazards and damaged vehicle in the process with no care. No option for a separate landscape water meter so we pay sewage for trying to provide grass for our children.
· They need more funding.
· I pay a huge amount of tax via MelloRoos and the trees and areas regulated by the city are not cared for the same way the HOA cares for the landscaping in the complex
· Some efforts are being made but it seems like it takes a long time for issues to be addressed. FYI: a large street sign blew over in the wind storm in January on Kimball between Colton and Hwy 126. It is still laying on the side two months later. Also, much landscaping is overgrowing onto the sidewalk and has not been trimmed in months and months.
· The City of Oxnard is NOT doing enough. Trash and weeds along main roadways is bad. Citizen groups have been doing cleanup. Trees on our street need trimming badly. Big branches come down on to sidewalks when it's windy and it's dangerous.
· Renting, not involved. But hear about horribly high cost from owner friends.

· The city of Oxnard does not have funds to provide parks & other related items to enhance outdoor activities. Plans exist but funding lacks in a city which is highly concentrated with citizens. This is simple lack of leadership.
· Budget cut backs have shifted these items to the public as volunteers. But even though the public takes over these responsibilities, there is not a reciprocal decrease in taxes nor compensation to the residents.
· The issues and their solutions are discussed, if that's what you mean by "addressed." There is a basic lack of revenue and revenue sources to carry out the many infrastructure and beautification needs of this city. Public safety takes 60% of the general fund plus it gets additional funding from something called the "Carman Override" and several taxpayer-approved sales tax hikes. Like most municipalities and counties in California, there is a crushing debt of unfunded pension liabilities.
· The county continually uses our town for movie shoots, and when the town asks the county to address their concerns, the County is slow to react/does not respond to requests, due to the fact that our community is made up of a largely under represented group.
· Heirloom trees are not being protected, invasive trees are being allowed to proliferate in unattended spaces (between fences, mailbox and bus areas).
· We need a major chain grocery store desperately on the far East side of Ventura. This area is developed enough with too many new builds housing and apts. not to have a large grocery store; we have to drive more than 4 miles to the a Vons & over 5 miles for Ralphs
· Local community supports open space and limited development.
· Oxnard government is ineffective and doesn't do much.
· Have not seen any improvements

· Parks, streets & landscaping are not maintained and volunteers are doing the brunt of the landscaping out of frustration. The city claims no money, yet the city manager hired a highly paid and unnecessary Communications Manager just after laying off a good portion of parks employees who we can clearly see were needed much more than his Communications Manager.
· the CRPD and Thousand Oaks City...when they have funds which are returned to them do a good job in my area
· Effects from the latest measurement haven't gone into effect yet. But I am seeing a lot of community members contribute to beautification.
· I can hear gunshots and fireworks from Oxnard frequently. I won't go out after dark. I can now distinguish the sounds of the two. Everything I see is rundown, filthy, not green or heathy and littered with dead unwatered landscaping. Water is too expensive. I feel "ghetto adjacent" and concerned about flooding of climate change.
· access to green space is desperately needed!
· The city seems to be doing a lot of upgrades to existing roadways and sidewalks. I wish I saw more playground upgrades and as mentioned above access from local neighborhood across the freeway.
· The entry area to the neighborhood is maintained and landscaped beautifully
· They maintain trails and parks.
· Dangerous or lacking sidewalks. Need sidewalk behind 24 Hr Fitness. No connection to street there, city blocked pathway. Constant flooding from broken irrigation. Need signs to tell how to report spraying and flooding. Graffiti much worse since pandemic. Check out the used to be beautiful green metal bike path along 101 that connects Ventura in Oxnard to Johnson in Ventura - recently took it, its horrible, spray-painted all along its entirety

· The City is not addressing these needs; they’re just using them as an excuse to raise rates
· The managers of the city of Oxnard squandered city funds then dangled the further degradation of poorly maintained parks and public spaces in voters' mailboxes. during a pandemic when green spaces are so vital to community health, in order to raise our sales tax. Our parks are still in disrepair and if it weren't for some of my Cabrillo neighbors volunteering their time to prune, weed, rake our public spaces it wouldn't get done. I want to see sustainable, water-wise horticulture in these spaces. It's much cheaper, low-maintenance, would save water, attract pollinators, reduce runoff, and add natural beauty for all community members to enjoy.
· Budget shortfalls preclude City and County from doing what is necessary.
· Some improvements are taking place, long overdue
· The City of Oxnard lacks the staff numbers required to maintain the existing parks, medians and any City R.O.W. owned landscape. I’m unsure of their resources to devote to infrastructure improvements.
· Thousand Oaks and Newbury Park strive to maintain the reputation of this area as a very safe, very attractive place to live and work
· There should be more arts, flowers, park clean ups, park access and activities, access to river, clean up homeless camps around river
· Oxnard has partnered with a Consulting Co. called Civic Mic to address the need to improve the Land Maintenance Districts. This effort is looking to find ways to improve streets, sidewalks', & parks. It appears the the city of Oxnard does not have parks personnel on staff to maintain the miles and miles of streets, sidewalks', and parks. thus the city is looking to residents to pic up the slack. Lack of resident participation is concerning and appears that it is not a viable solution. the Measure E funding should help but will they spend the funds appropriately? Time will tell. So I agree they are trying to address the issues, I remain hopeful. I'd like to see the city increase staff to handle the workload.
· Lots a graffiti, not much landscaping
· I never see city staff cleaning parks or medians

· Vineyard Rd, which is the one of the longest main roads is used by commercial drivers all day everyday. The traffic it causes for local residents into and out of El Rio is a concern of safety for pedestrians and a concern of accessibility to panhandlers that make use of the unincorporated areas their home leaving trash, drugs and feces behind.
· There fixing streets that don't need repair over and over again.
· As I mentioned before, our bike lanes are inconsistent at best and a joke at worst. As someone who can't drive, I rely on my bike to get around, and being forced to dodge power poles, pedestrians, and inattentive drivers is hard and unnecessary. There are also quite a few places where the base of my skull hurts because I forgot to brace myself for sudden bumps in the sidewalk - some are about an inch high! The groundwater (both from wells on the eastern (especially southeastern) side of town and from Golden State Water) as well as simply living within 3 miles of the Santa Susana Field Lab has been shown to cause rare forms of cancer over 10x more than normal. Our parks are well-kept, but not many people visit them unless there's some sort of event going on.
· Some cares and most don’t. There is a lot of pressure and blame put on residents getting involved instead of working on access
· Our streets and landscaping are very well taken care of, lots of beautiful flowers and trees and sidewalks that lead to almost anywhere nearby
· Local neighbors are cleaning up streets and beautifying our neighborhood instead of the city. Park water is not drinkable
· I’ve seen multiple walkways /sidewalks and roads with deep cracks that are almost not walkable or undriveable. They are definitely not wheelchair accessible
· I’ve live here since I’m 3 and there has been slightly changes, water is really bad
· I have heard some plans for infrastructure work but haven't seen it
· Wey ser a diference

· no. yo llevo diez anos viviendo ahi y las calles estan igual,asi sin pavimentar, no hay mucho alumbrado publico, no hay parque , el que hay esta todo el tiempo cerrado, no hay un lugar adecuado donde los ninos puedan jugar, antes del covid ya estaba cerrado.
· Is ok
· have not see any improvement whatsoever
· No veo componan nada de lo malo que hay en mi comunidad, todo sigue igual.
· the color
· I want to answer next time I communicate with you

9. Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

	Count	Percentage
No	357	66%
Yes	183	34%
Grand Total	540	100%

10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

	Count	Percentage
Homelessness	302	20%
Housing	261	18%
Public safety	245	16%
Water	195	13%
Climate change	158	11%
Parks open space	137	9%
Transportation challenges	106	7%
Other	87	6%
Grand total	1491	100%

11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?

	Count	Percentage
No	480	77.67%
Yes	138	22.33%
Grand Total	618	100.00%

11a. If yes, what efforts do you participate in?

· If possible, (due to my work time constraints) I participate in community meetings.
· Part of neighborhood committee
· Kellogg park
· Attend city hall public hearings.
· I attend all neighborhood council meetings
· Civic Pride volunteer group, city beautification efforts, community flower show involving youth workshops, various meetings on issues or community events
· Voice my opinion at meetings.
· Former neighborhood council member
· Attend town meetings.
· I have been asked to serve on the Piru Neighborhood Council and I plan to accept this two year volunteer term. I donated to the toy drive for Piru school so every child gets a gift and took place in the gift wrapping event. I volunteer to help any residents who need help negotiating filming location deals with film companies so they do not get taken advantage of. I try to keep up woith local happenings and reported to the Piru Neighborhood Council so they could share the info with the town. One of such things was that Warring Water that supplies the towns drinking water was in the processing of selling to a larger California American Water. I also called California American Water to find out the process of the sale as I hadn't had the greatest experience with Warring Water and was happy to report back that the representative was quite receptive.I attended almost all Piru Neighborhood Council town meetings in the 1.5 years that I have lived here.
· PNC

· Attend local Council and other community related meetings. Donate to local community and youth sports programs, donate to other local benefit drives. Am running for a Community Council position.
· With the cemetery board
· attend piru neighborhood council meetings.
· I attend council meetings. I am also part of the Nyeland Promise, a non-profit organization in Nyeland Acres. We build community capacity and advocacy.
· Meetings
· community meetings at school
· Came to water talks and go to city council meetings
· gone to district meetings
· watch but not attend
· Attend neighborhood council meetings, attend County Board of Supervisor meetings and submit comments, participate in Groundwater Sustainability Plan development
· Chicano town hall
· I am part of a local non-profit community based development corporation and member of the local community council.
· participate in surveys and council meetings
· I try to go to city meeting but they seem to be time while the average person works do it on line.

· surveys from legislators voting staying aware
· C-Frog- monthly meetings to clean up Ventura river/watershed (Once Upon A Watershed) Santa Barbara Channel Keepers planting fruit trees at people's homes
· meetings to expand West Park
· Submit comments to City Council; do personal research on city/county budgets, school budgets, and housing issues; work with a local tenants union; volunteer locally; might sit on a Citizen Advisory Group (mobile home park rent review board)
· Member of City Council
· city council meetings
· Transportation Nothing came out of it
· City council planning commission meetings, read info.
· El Rio/Nyeland Acres Municipal Advisory Committee
· Watch local hearing for new project, read local newspaper, attend public hearing before stay at home orders were put into place.
· I participate in city planning, county planning and local committees on homelessness.
· Bike Path grants, writing comments and speaking on proposed commercial/housing projects

· I attend neighborhood council meetings and view city council meetings. Occasionally I attend or participate in community outreach sessions organized by the City.
· This may be a selfish reason but I spent many nights down at the city hall trying to get single story homes built behind my home when they were building two story houses so that may be selfish but I got involved
· Planning commission and downtown project discussions.
· Surveys
· Meetings discussions related to harbor development
· Community gatherings Attend meetings to provide input
· I am a member of the Piru Neighborhood Council, a volunteer organization made up of its citizens to advocate for its townsfolk.
· Community meetings, support of transition to organic effort, maintaining a drought tolerant, organic and bio diverse property.
· respond to surveys and voice my opinion to elected officials
· strategic planning sessions
· Not really planning per se but various clean-ups: PACC and river bottom. Oxnard Multicultural Festival, Insect Fest VC Fair, pre-pandemic, giving out info on home gardening, invasive species ESL students: dispense info on above Attend meetings on invasive species.

· I watch our city council and neighborhood council meetings, send in letters, and communicate with my council members.
· I plant native wildflowers in barren hellstrips in the Cabrillo neighborhood.
· Land Conservancy and Groundwater Agency
· Public comment and review of boards, which are not managed well.
· Recently involved with the Civic Mic & the ReNew Oxnard initiative, if that counts.
· When I have time, I sign petitions and campaign for city council candidates who share my values instead of keeping up the status quo. I only don't attend city council meetings because I have a hard time staying up that late (they often last until past midnight).
· Fillmore has a great community activist page! They provide opportunities there.
· planning for social justice and support for the Queer community
· I actively write to the city council and city manager I have applied to the arts commission

11b. If not, Select all of the reasons that apply.

	Count	Percentage
I don't know how	176	36%
I don't have time	130	26%
I have other priorities	122	25%
Other	66	13%
Grand Total	494	100%

12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?

	Count	Percentage
Do not have enough information	296	48%
Yes	175	28%
No	124	20%
Do not understand the question	23	4%
Grand Total	618	100%

12a. If yes, are there specific people or groups you would like to share?

· Westside Ventura Community Council
· City council, small business organization
· The Westside Community Council.
· I've been told that this water issue is a problem the State of CA is supposed to handle.
· We have a good attendance at our Towns meeting
· PNC
· Piru Neighborhood Council
· Food sharing programs
· Del Norte Municipal Council Meetings
· The local library does exercising events and such.
· Oxnard Street Corps is involved in Oxnard
· churches set a strong foundation for community engagement
· chicano town hall + churches brings people together- providing transportation, school board meetings, meetings in Spanish and English
· Westside Community Council CAUSE
· EPIC- very involved with children

· food drives for unhoused folks
· Nextdoor
· kids specifically get involved in charities such as runs/walks kids are aware of their rights and what is going on in the neighborhood
· the people that do scare the other people away
· I wish they wouldn't
· good turnout and support
· Viva Oxnard (IG page) Southwinds Neighborhood Council (also has active IG) Ventura Tenants Union (also on IG)
· Civic Pride
· I read reports on NextDoor from numerous people who participate.
· The usual citizen activists who serve on CAGs, belong to Neighborhood Councils and appear before public bodies to offer their opinions or complain or explain about the myriad problems within community planning efforts which beset our city and their (sometimes) solutions for said problems.
· The Piru Neighborhood Council. Piru Youth Sports. Piru Park Commission.
· Lori Hamor director of Food for Thought Ojai.
· NextDoor neighbor
· Friends of Campus Park

· Ojai City General Plan update
· VREG watchdog
· Homelessness
· Rio school district.
· One Step a La Vez
· yes
· before there was housing related groups
· NO
· CAUSE
· When there is construction, the water remains stagnant and it does not look clean enough
· not until now

13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or receive information from?

	Count	Percentage
City council	245	27%
School district	167	19%
None	139	15%
County supervisors	128	14%
State senators assembly members	93	10%
Us congressional representative	84	9%
Other	46	5%
Grand total	902	100%

13 Other.

· MAC Meeting - Tracy sends the agenda every month.
· Online news, word of mouth, my own eyes
· I just look at my mail and see what's happening with the community.
· community newsletter.
· Neighborhood meetings

· The Piru Neighborhood Council
· Piru Neighborhood Council, Inc.
· neighborhood council
· County Gov't
· Neighborhood council
· Radio/TV news and newspaper
· City administration
· Write letters to President.
· Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
· they do not mail information to those of us who do not have internet
· police dept.
· I go online to get whatever I can. As a community we petitioned to not have water rates raised, and yet they were raised anyway. And our city office got a raise too.
· ninguno
· dependent upon what the question is
· internet
· City of Fillmore

· you just get lies
· city staff
· city hall: development department
· newspaper, google
· internet
· news paper
· police officer
· David Smallwood about our water meter clogging
· city,staff
· City,Council,and,the,Supervisors,will,not,answer,emails!,They,ignore,everyone.
· HOA
· Social,Media
· city,staff
·Fellow,political,and/or,environmental,activists,who,have,more,time,to,be,well-informed,by,the,sources,listed,above.
· Governor,
· I don’t know

· community,development

14. What is your preferred way to be contacted by community organizations and governing bodies?

	Count	Percentage
Email	198	36%
Mail	175	32%
Text	87	16%
Phone	72	13%
Other	23	4%
Grand total	555	100%

15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?

	Count	Percentage
No	548	89%
Yes	70	11%
Grand Total	618	100%

15a. If yes, was the planning process responsive to your needs?

· Still participating and waiting to see if my water company will benefit from my participation.
· not completely
· Water/ sewer line installation
· They listened but never got motivated to act
· I attended the first meeting for Water Talks
· Water Talks first meeting was the only meeting I heard about. The Water Talks meeting brought to my attention the Piru Fillmore Basins Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and I started also looking at the United Water Conservation District website to get familiar with where Piru's water was coming from. It was disappointing at how few people attending that first water talks meeting and Is one reason why I agreed to serve on the new term for The Piru Neighborhood Council, I want to try and inform the town so that everyone can have a voice, and to also share information to inform of any concerns. I have been watching The Filmore Piru Basin Groundwater Sustainability recorded meetings and it really is a lot to take in. Also talking to United Water Conservation District representative at that first water talks meeting in Piru brought to my attention how much the Piru water situation needed to be rectified in their opinion.
· Yes - I thought the meeting I attended to be well organized and informative
· Work for water dept.
· Some what - but female geologist was an alarmist and caused owners unnecessary concern.
· Yes
· It was a presentation
· Partially. I attended a city council meeting and some of my concerns were addressed. However, I've yet to see implementation of the said changes.

· No
· neighborhood council for sewer line several years ago
· Somewhat
· when the septic was switching over
· when the community switched over to the sewer system, attended community meetings
· when the system switched from septic years ago
· petitions signing in front of Vons
· no
· one previous meeting
· NO
· es personal colecto agua de la lluvia en barriles
· water ceremonies with a Chumash elder
· No
· N/A
· No.
· meeting for water conservation, not planning meeting more to voice concerns

· No
· reduce waste water
· I don’t know.
· No- voted against water cost hikes
· NO
· No
· No, not really. We’re supposed to have the water turned off today from 9-12 and are hooked up to a hydrant and have a big hole with a metal plate over it in front of our house; we don’t know what damage the sand and silt is doing to our home or health.
· Somewhat. Asked my opinion on planned projects, not sure if that had any effect.
· reuse of waste water for watering purposes. large tanks were placed where a community park was promised where Oxnard high school previously was located.
· I’m a water resources planner
· not really
· It was a local government meeting dominated by old agriculture participants who do not want to change their water use.
· We get "Presentations" not opinion seeking sessions.
· Somewhat.
· Yes

· Yes
· The consensus directive of the Groundwater Agency compromises my positions on occasion.
· Attended all water briefings. Water pure idea is too expensive and not reliable.
· No
· No
· Yes, because they inform us about water problems
· If it's close to me I will be able to attend
· Yes
· she went to a local church to talk about high water costs
· went to a meeting
· Yes, but when there is construction the water remains stagnant and does not believe that it is clean enough

16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large?

	Count	Percentage
No	431	70%
Yes	187	30%
Grand Total	618	100%

16a. Use the space below to identify which voices or groups are being heard and which still need to be heard.

· Groups of rural areas still need to be heard with a faster pace.
· It is not a question of being heard. It's a question of how do we motivate the government officials to address the concerns instead of just giving lip service to the people.
· I feel like we are being heard.
· Non Profit groups and clubs, business groups, seniors groups and school representatives and parents that make the effort to be involved in what matters to their family are being heard, I believe. All have the opportunity to come to council meetings, etc. and speak up. All can study the issues and vote their choices. Perhaps young people and the homeless should be given more opportunity to speak up...
· Ventura's water department - city and county levels are active participants in interests/decision making.
· Other parts of the city are more vocal (higher income areas)
· Piru Neighborhood Council

· na
· heard but not listened to.
· county is receptive to opinions and concerns
· does not know.
· somewhat
· Don't know
· Agriculture, city governments, environmental organizations
· sometimes
· don't know
· depends on what its about
· Don't know
· local associations group- community or vice versa
· being heard but not being addressed as needed
· don't know
· they're supposed to, it's what is expected
· The digital divide remains a problem. Most surveys and outreach in the community is all online, especially due to Covid -19. There are many people in my community who don't navigate computers or

other digital devices with ease and therefore loose patience with long surveys like this one or don't even bother to attempt to take one when offered.
· don't know
· neighborhood council groups
· don't know, a lot of people are concerned about all the development happening in Ventura right now and it seems development plans are being approved more quickly
· voices being heard, but will they do anything about what people saying?
· don't know
· they have a voice, don't know necessarily how much its listened to
· don't know
· don't know
· Don't know
· don't know
· don't know
· don't know
· water got better when the septic tanks were taken out. during the pandemic, people were helping each other out with food distributions.
· C-frog has been really successful

· don't know
· don't know
· public at large yes but not the government
· don't know
· don't know
· Not sure...about planning for population growth and results downstream.
· when statue was taken down in downtown Ventura
· don't know
· historical building committee, WCC
· Individual citizens can be heard, but spanish speaking Community, youth, advocates for resources and examining the budget still don't have good avenues of being heard
· I understand the our adjacent community, the City of Fillmore, has displeased its citizens with regard to water rates, and the citizens have been very vocal about the situation, so I'm guessing the City Council has heard those voices, as it's too small of a town for them to remain unaware.
· White middle aged and millennials are heard/visible at a government level. BIPOC are less visible, efforts to involve seem less effective at city/gov. level.
· I don't know specifics Our water filtration plant needs major repair The city is aware and working on it

· The Piru Neighborhood Council is holding meetings, of which a representative from Supervisor has only appeared once. We hope that they will be more readily available in the future. Piru has been underserved by the county in many ways. We ask for help, but the get minimal responses from the County. The county has no problems allowing Hollywood productions to use the town, but the county does not re-invest into the town.
· Voices in the local Latino community often go unheard for a variety of reasons.
· I worry the environmental stakeholders shout the loudest but don't always represent the wider needs of community members
· Those that advocate and speak up.
· I think the city hears the voices of the most influential members of the community - fairly conservative governance here.
· Surfrider Foundation
· Hispanics
· Because it solves the problem
· Latinos need to be heard more
· They have been involved with the police and the city to work with the churches to be able to connect with the community
· The local government only listens to community groups that have a lot of support and influence and not necessarily to the voices of the community itself.
· They do not listen to the voices of the Mexican community and the towns/streets where they live are the least maintained in the city

· the local government is listening to the voices of the community in the way that many projects to improve the community have started in recent years
· The local government does listen to everyone in the community
· Last year they sent a letter to ask the whole community, in every neighborhood about the needs of the community so they do listen
· they listen to all the voices of the community
· they listen to some groups more than others but they do help the whole community
· They do not listen to community groups that do not participate within the community
· Although they have asked the community for their opinions for many years, they have not listened to the local government or made enough changes
· They no longer listen to some groups, it is convenient for them to say and listen because they hide a lot from the community
· those who have time to participate are listened to. people who work or are not encouraged to participate have not yet heard their voices. but it is understood that this is more difficult. but at least they should be told what decisions were made.
· I don't know who they are

17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?

	Count	Percentage
No	496	89%
Yes	64	11%
Grand Total	560	100%

17a. If yes, in what context?

· Disadvantaged Community Committee Meeting.
· Water Talks newspaper
· A group called out or referenced in text material I have read.
· I recall that it was the strategy plan that was being shared at the local Water meeting that I attended.
· Plans updated every few years.
· Rolletos y correos
· Mail
· Water-supply planning and environmental restoration
· when the new 500/600 homes were built over the last 5 years in SP
· streets are really in bad need of repair

· La ciudad manda informes
· sounds familiar
· lawsuit between LA and Ventura
· Is it a grant program?
· at Von's about a year ago
· Master's degree
· Planing
· News letter
· read about it in WaterTalks
· News
· worked s=with staff as county planner
· mail content
· My mom has mentioned it before.
· Online, Emails, Groups
· Through a class - Trip to Santa Clarita Water District
· I work on IRWM grants/grant management

· went to many County IRWM meetings for Santa Clara River
· I have a PhD in Environmental Science from UCSB we studied IRWPs and I worked for the LA Sanitation District for two years.
· Water Talks
· Reading in the ventura water newsletter. Connecting the pipeline to Ventura
· general water related discussions
· From the water districts and enviro-related websites.
· Just as a local regulatory agency
· college
· Bringing grant monies to local projects
· Regulation
· Rio school District surveys.
· Through the California project WET program
· Went to a Water Talk
· In your meetings
· The water flow is not very good

18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides you water?

	Count	Percentage
No	353	57%
Yes	265	43%
Grand Total	618	100%

18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?

	Count	Percentage
Positive	77	50%
Don't know	35	23%
Other	21	14%
Negative	20	13%
Grand Total	153	100%

18a Other.

· I am the president. Maybe water users would not agree with my experience. But I can stay it is a lot of work.
· To high a cost and too poor quality of product
· City of Oxnard, I am confident the analysis of the water is accurate, the rest is all rhetoric
· No experience.
· I was met with a defensive stance when I asked Warring Water my water questions about where the wells were located, and how testing was done, and if there was enough water to fight a fire. It has made me skeptical of Warring Water.
· Same, no change
· want to make payments online, and be more consistently up to date with payments
· neutral
· neutral
· not the best water
· neutral
· neutral
· neutral
· neutral
· Well

· Neutral
· neutral
· In,order,to,be,sure,I,don't,catch,giardia,again,I,only,drink,RO,or,distilled,water.
· Neutral.,I,have,taken,my,Water,Science,class,to,tour,their,facility,and,spoken,with,the,operators,there.,It,is,in,need,of,upgrades.
· Neither
· N/A

19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?

	Count	Percentage
No	481	86%
Yes	77	14%
Grand Total	558	100%

19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

· Information mailed to me
· I read the pamphlet that it is often send out on the mail and I also look at the city website for more information.
· Just need to look up on the internet and that will provide the information.
· Public meeting that I attended that was informative
· City sends info about our water.
· City provides water outreach workshops.
· Progama para ahorrar agua. Reemplazo de lavadoras, regaderas talleres para jardines tolerantes a la seguia
· Mail brochures
· Water District Website
· Museums
· All our neighbors give each other advice.
· I am a retire science teacher. There is a slew of H2O Ed materials available to teachers. A lot from water districts.
· Groundwater Sustainability Agency meetings and workshops
· from CAUSE
· reading newsletters

· a cudir alas juntas del concilio
· city notices
· Ventura Beach
· Ventura Water does great outreach and tours of their facility, as well as promotes things on Facebook City of Ventura's Environmental Sustainability Division also does outreach and offers promotions to the public
· from CAUSE and seen resources around the community
· city has info available and classes as well.
· get occasional emails from city-related things
· websites
· through local non profits
· water district brochure and meetings
· through the school
· workshops and meetings
· ?
· yes, but low attendance on annual shareholder meetings
· VLT presented a seminar, WCC hosted a briefing on the lawsuit

· city holds educational events on drought tolerant landscape
· watershed coalition, water talks, Csusb.edu
· Local news covers the issues when they report on city council meetings and board of supervisors meetings.
· School kids would go on a tour of a local wastewater treatment plant.
· Newsletter from the City
· City
· I personally am an outdoor leader doing class trips to water environments under a state Coastal Conservancy Explore the Coast grant, I take volunteers to do restoration at HRNA and other sites
· Ventura Public Works Water Rate public meetings SB Channelkeeper Surfrider Ventura County
· Some efforts are being made to educate elementary school children on how to conserve water. But that is not enough. It needs to start in the home with an attitude of conservation on multiple levels. But people care more about convenience than they do about conservation.
· Water testing in homes Seminars and workshops by the City on conservation and home improvements Rebates Public Meetings concerning rate changes
· Outreach from local water district boards and from the Ojai Valley Green Coalition.

· There are tools shared on social media and through the newsletter. As well as info. I'm fairly new, 5 years, so I have been mostly just reading and listening for now. I came from LA.
· MWD and DWP or Hyperion
· Workshops conducted by the Groundwater Agency. Matilija Coalition meetings dam removal. Ojai's Chautauqua panel on water issues. Ventura River Adjudication news. Ventura River Watershed Coalition meetings. Keep the Sespe Wild newsletter. Friends of the Ventura River newsletter
· Workshops and comments only. Not a true relationship. Water board is run improperly and has little accountability.
· On how to take care of the water
· Yes, I'd love to

20. Is your home or business on a septic system?

	Count	Percentage
No	398	73%
Don't Know	96	18%
Yes	52	10%
Grand Total	546	100%

21. Is your home or business on a private well?

	Count	Percentage
No	428	79%
I don’t know	87	16%
Yes	26	5%
Grand Total	541	100%

22. Primary language spoken at home?

	Count	Percentage
English	450	67%
Spanish	181	27%
Other	36	5%
Tagalog	5	1%
Japanese	1	0%
Grand total	673	100%

22 Other Primary language spoken at home:

	Count	Percentage
Mixtec	34	97%
Tamil	1	3%
Grand Total	35	100%

23. How did you hear about this survey?

	Count	Percentage
Mail	200	36%
Cause	152	28%
Other	35	6%
Facebook	25	5%
Friends Of Santa Clara River	19	3%
Community Organization	16	3%
Watertalks Event	14	3%
Rio School District	14	3%
Public Library	9	2%
Treepeople	8	1%
Family Member	7	1%
Piru Neighborhood Council	6	1%
City Of Oxnard	6	1%

City Function	6	1%
Social Media	5	1%
Watertalks Website	4	1%
Instagram	3	1%
City Council Member	3	1%
Oxnard College	3	1%
Bookmark From Library	2	0%
Neighborhood App	2	0%
City Website	2	0%
Better World Group	2	0%
Internet	2	0%
Sierra Club	1	0%
Council For Watershed Health	1	0%
Trust South La	1	0%
Social Eco Education	1	0%

Active Sgv	1	0%
College Of The Canyons	1	0%
Mujeres De La Tierra	1	0%
Grand Total	552	1

24. How was this survey completed?

	Count	**Percentage**
Hard copy	177	56%
Phone	140	44%
Grand Total	317	100%

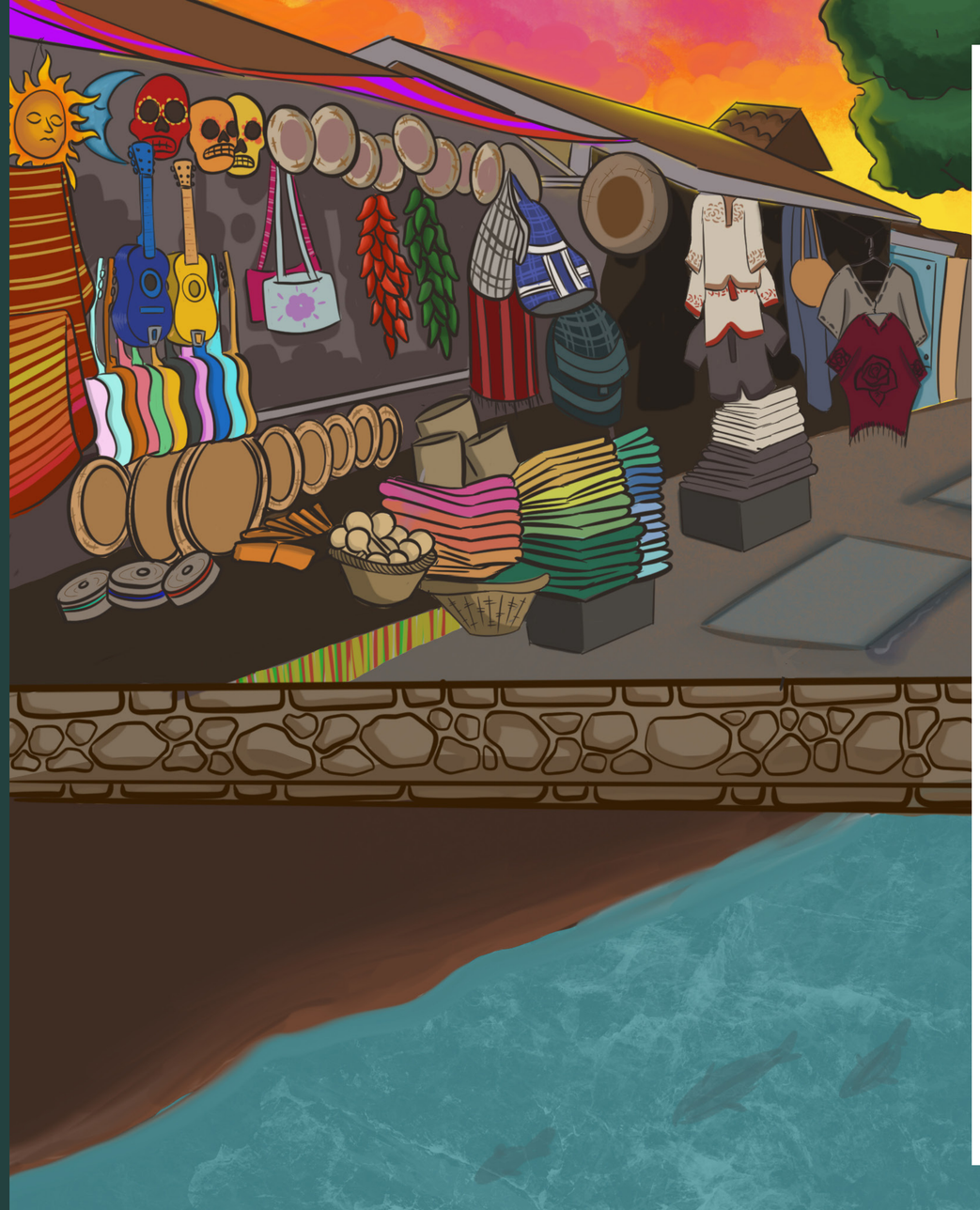
APPENDIX C- ENGAGING TRIBAL EXPERTISE- NURTURING CONNECTIONS



Nurturing Connection

Authentically engaging tribes is our responsibility as we live on the unceded lands of Tribal Nations

> Water has a memory, water has a spirit, and water is alive, and so you can't contain it. You can't change it.



The water was colonized just like our people were and even though the river is concretized, channeled and controlled, water is still flowing underneath, within the water tables. It's not as easy of a flow, but water does and always will do what it is meant to do. There are places along the river where you can see the water seeping up. Likewise at Olvera Street where the vendors are, the brick is always wet. It's because water has a memory and it's still flowing as it always has even though it's underneath.

Water has memory, water has a spirit, and water is life. You can try to control it in the way people have since 1938, but water will continue to flow its course. We know that we're related to all the elements, we're related to nature, and we're related to each other. I feel like this is comparable to the resilience of our people – that resilience of the water.

Tina Orduno Calderon
Gabrielino Tongva, Chumash, Yoeme and Chicana

Artist's Statement

Monica, a proud member of the Gabrielino/Tongva Nation, Acjachemen, and Mexican, draws profound inspiration from her diverse cultural background, infusing her artwork with a rich display of traditions. Specializing in illustration, painting, sculpture, creative writing, and digital art, she possesses a talent that knows no bounds.

Monica has remained deeply connected to her roots, dedicating herself to serving local native communities. She passionately collaborates with various native communities. Through her work, she meticulously documents their issues, traditions, and ceremonial practices, shining a spotlight on their invaluable cultural heritage.

Monica's recent body of work comprises a captivating series of paintings, where she skillfully incorporates hands actively engaged in Native culture from diverse tribes across Turtle Island. These artworks serve as powerful tributes to the vibrant tapestry of indigenous traditions, resonating with authenticity and depth.

<<Copyright statement. All art used with express permission of Monica Zavala and cannot be shared or used without the artist's permission. All rights reserved to the artist.>>

You can learn more about Monica and see more of her work at www.monicazavala.com



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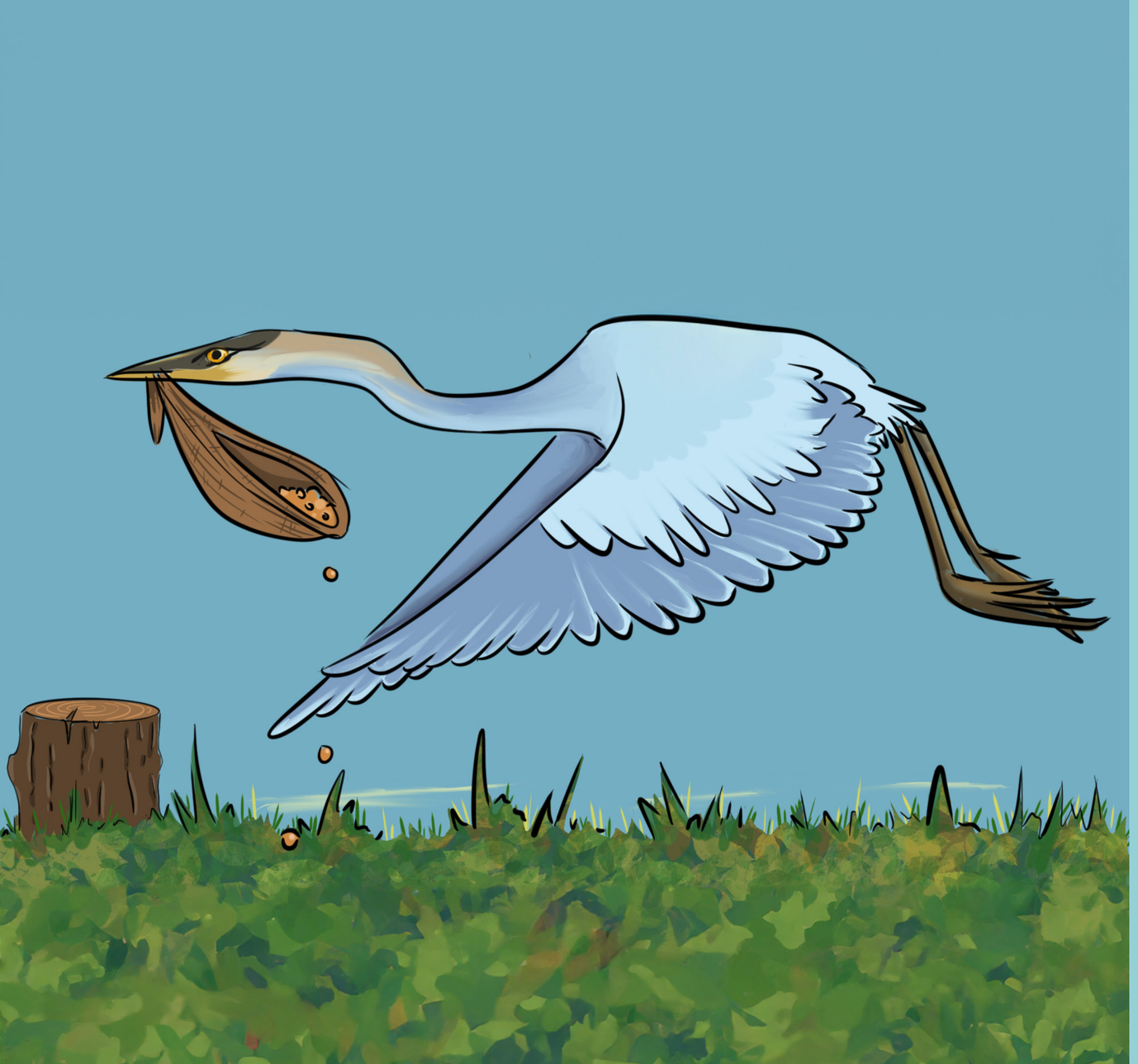


Nurturing Connection is a framework that centers California Native American Tribal engagement, with a focus in Los Angeles County, that is intersectional, fluid and rooted in justice that does not perpetuate harm. The goal of this framework is to provide a resource for community groups, agencies and individuals to learn from tribal voices and introduce guiding concepts to help further understandings around engaging with tribes and tribal members with water projects. These concepts and resources can be applied to building relationships for continued tribal environmental justice and equity projects.

This original idea was birthed through an extensive multi-year process through the ***WaterTalks*** program in the Los Angeles area, which began with a water tribal needs assessment that was conducted by Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples. Multiple project ideas flowed from the assessment and resulted in the development of this framework, which is authored and designed by a group of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) individuals who collectively have over a decade of experience in social, environmental and water justice.

This framework is meant to engage the reader through multiple modalities to promote understanding in ways that best support individuals absorbing unfamiliar content. Through art, tribal voices, concepts, history and practice exercises, the framework provides diverse avenues for readers. The authors intentionally avoided creating an ‘instruction manual’ type framework, as each tribe and tribal member are different. The authors believe that the best way to engage with tribes is to be active and continuous in one’s efforts. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, therefore this framework is meant to be a companion alongside one’s long term commitment to engaging tribes authentically.

INTENTIONAL TERMINOLOGY



California Native American Tribe

A Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.



Tribal Engagement

Ensure that government-to-government communications between government agencies and Tribes effectively address areas of mutual interest and concern. Examples are establishing a Tribal Advisor in the Governor's Office to oversee consultation between the Administration and Tribes, and AB 52, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014, which strengthens notification requirements under CEQA and invites tribal input at an earlier stage of environmental review.



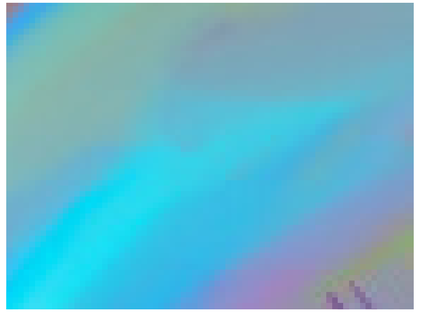
Tribal Consultation

California SB 18 defines consultation as "the meaningful and timely process of seeking, discussing, and considering carefully the views of others, in a manner that is cognizant of all parties' cultural values and, where feasible, seeking agreement. Consultation between government agencies and Native American tribes shall be conducted in a way that is mutually respectful of each party's sovereignty. Consultation shall also recognize the tribes' potential needs for confidentiality with respect to places that have traditional tribal cultural significance."



Tribal Sovereignty

Refers to the unique political status of federally recognized Indian tribes. Federally recognized Indian tribes exercise certain jurisdiction and governmental powers over activities and Tribal members within their territory. Existing limitations on Tribal sovereignty are defined through acts of Congress, treaties, and federal court decisions. Non federally recognized tribes are still sovereign, but are not currently recognized by the US government.



Free, Prior and Informed Consent

The right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent is a standard of human rights articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and utilized as a global standard, that affirms all peoples and Indigenous Peoples right to self-determination, recognizing that tribes are sovereign entities that should be consulted as such. FPIC ensures Indigenous People's right to provide, withhold, or withdraw consent from a project impacting their territory.

SECTIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Click to go to page



LOS ANGELES NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBAL VOICES

> Our traditional ways of living are different, and we have the ability to conceptualize— we don't work on the same timelines, our decision making processes are fundamentally different… we might not have answers right away when we need to discuss with community.

Jessa Calderon,
Tongva & Chumash

> Some environmental justice groups have been super supportive and reached out at individual levels and reached out beyond just outline structuring – they are always checking in on legislation and news ensuring that local tribal voices are included.

Anonymous,
Gabrieleno/Tongva

> Problems come from conceptualizing amazing projects, but not providing sustainable methods to execute the project and Not educating oneself on the tribe/tribal organizations and then the tribe as a result having to educate.

Desirae Jordan, *Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Former Program Manager of Tataviam Land Conservancy*

> Empty promises feel like being handed a mic that is turned off – we had an experience with an agency that expressed they would love to help but then later retracted these sentiments citing it was not in the best interest of their customers.

Anonymous,
Tongva

> One time as I was heading home, the ancestors guided me to stop at an art & research organization that I have a relationship with, so I did. They were having a meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers because of their expertise on the river…I was invited to sit down and join the meeting that I would not have been part of…I had not been invited initially.

Tina Calderon, *Gabrielino Tongva, Ventureño Chumash, aand Yoeme*



> An agency hired a tribal liaison which was good, but that liaison was from Arizona with no community relations tribe whose lands they were on and the tribe claimed to have never met him – they felt like his position was just symbolic and was not actually pushing to do the work of working with and for tribal communities.

Cynthia Ruiz, *Cherokee, Former Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Commissioner*



GUIDING CONCEPTS

Organizational and Individual Intentions

Building authentic relationships take time.

Partnerships with tribes should be seen as long term investments into a relationship based on showing up, listening first and engaging in reciprocal exchanges.

Re-evaluate notions of time/pace.

Patience is key—restricting tribes on time can deeply be deeply harmful and setback the relationship and we must evaluate who in society we allow more time for vs who we don't and why.

Inclusion every step of the way.

"We are still connected to these lands…let us decide if we need to be there or not based on what's happening and what topic it is." - Tina Calderon

Be comfortable with the uncomfortable.

Tribes have had to endure 200+ years of not being heard, erasure, oppression, and subjection to violence—listening and having patience and a growth mindset are critical.



Actionable Commitments

Accountability is critical after a legacy of failed promises delivered.

Not delivering on promises leads to continued mistrust and permanent and long lasting continued damage to tribal relationships.

Collaboration over power.

Let go of authoritative power notions when entering the relationship and remember that tribes are sovereign.

Thoroughly compensate Tribes for their time and expertise.

Tribal knowledge and expertise should be valued as specialists and subject-matter experts and be compensated accordingly. Tribal expertise is much rarer and tribal knowledge is both intergenerational and unique, which should be valued accordingly.



GUIDING CONCEPTS

Internal Understandings and Expectations

Do your homework.

Take time to do research and learn about the tribe/s being engaged before reaching out, and evaluate how to adhere to tribal protocol.

Center your thinking in how your intentions will benefit tribal people.

Consistently evaluate if your behavior is extractive.

Benefitting tribes benefits all of us.

As the original and best stewards of the land, benefitting tribes is supporting a cultural legacy of uplifting quality of life for all.

GOVERNMENT TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT HISTORY

Below are resources that detail United States policy and legislation that relates to the history of the government's acknowledgement (or lack thereof) of tribal sovereignty and the right to tribal self-determination. The authors of this Framework would like to highlight that federal, state and local government recognition of tribal sovereignty, consultation and engagement has been harmful, violent and insufficient. Some policies have changed over time thanks to hard fought reform led by Indigenous Peoples.

The authors of this Framework strongly encourage readers to read and engage with the resources below to understand these histories as they are critical to formulating authentic strategies around tribal engagement.

- **American Indian Politics and the American Political System**
  By: David E. Wilkins and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark
  Chapter 5. A History of Federal Indian Policy

- **California Indian History**
  Contributors: Kimberly Johnston-Dodds, M.P.A., M.A., Deborah Cismowski, Susan Hanks, M.L.I.S., Marta M. Knight, M.A., Chris Kuzak, M.A., Sarah Supahan, Michelle Trujillo, M.A.

- **Native American Heritage Commision - California Indian History**
  By: Professor Edward D. Castillo, Cahuila-Luiseno

- **Indian Policy Timeline - The Indian Experience**
  By: Native Wellness Institute



PUTTING CONCEPTS INTO PRACTICE



The following scenarios and questions are meant to facilitate reflection, conversation, and dialog to practice and reinforce the concepts in this framework as the reader begins engaging tribes and continuously along the way. The authors of this framework strongly encourage actively engaging with these questions through journaling, self reflection and discussions with others.

Scenario

I am a community organizer facilitating a native plant workshop for local gardeners in my community. I want to engage local tribes to help deepen my understanding of flora, fauna and historical significance of the area. I've found the website of a couple local tribal organizations, what are my next steps?

Questions to ask

- ☐ *Why am I reaching out to tribal members?*
- ☐ *What are my expectations going into engagement with tribes?*
- ☐ *Am I cognizant of the true history of the tribal groups I am engaging with (from their perspective)?*
- ☐ *Have I engaged with all tribes with historic ties to this locality?*

Scenario

I am a city planner working to develop TEK-informed (traditional ecological knowledge) solutions for water management and conservation in heavily impacted regions. I want to engage local tribes for their input on appropriate solutions. Assuming I have completed the steps of the previous scenario, when and how do I approach tribes to be involved in this project?

Questions to ask

- ☐ *Am I open to receiving honest feedback when I reach out to tribal groups?*
- ☐ *Am I building a team that tribal groups can trust?*
- ☐ *Am I asking for tribal input on this project or mining for tribal cultural knowledge?*
- ☐ *Have I thought about where I can invite tribes and tribal members to the tables of power I have access to?*
- ☐ *Have I engaged with all tribes with historic ties to this locality?*

Scenario

I am project lead for an engineering firm hired to engage the local community on a water infrastructure project. I understand that the project site is housed on a certain group's tribal lands, and want to connect them in the early stages of development and design. I have assigned a member of my team to contact the tribe regarding this project; but they've reported no response to their email inquiries and feel that the timeline will not allow adequate time to gather and implement tribal feedback. Assuming I have completed the steps of the previous scenario, how can I assist my team to ensure a successful project?

Questions to ask

- ☐ *Have I familiarized myself with all local, state and federal laws mandating respectful government-to-government consultation?*
- ☐ *How does shifting a deadline make me feel and can I reflect on who I am willing to shift timelines for?*
- ☐ *In what ways am I preparing and educating my team on engaging tribes?*
- ☐ *How will I compensate tribal members for their expertise equally to others I engage on a project?*
- ☐ *Have I engaged with all tribes with historic ties to this locality?*

Scenario

I support the tribal policy advisor for a large public agency and am helping to plan the next iteration of climate resilience funding and projects. How would I engage tribes to identify and implement water and other climate management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives?

Questions to ask

- ☐ *How will I ensure to engage tribes at each step of a process?*
- ☐ *In what ways will I show up for the tribes I'm engaging?*
- ☐ *Have I made promises I can't keep to tribes?*
- ☐ *Have I engaged with* all *tribes with historic ties to this locality?*



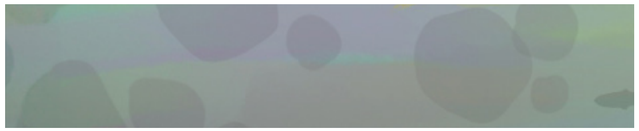
LESSONS FROM THE FIELD/CASE STUDIES

The following lessons and stories from the field are first hand accounts from the authors of the Framework in the work they have done–sharing their experiences in an attempt to help guide readers to put the concepts and resources into practice.



Hiring

Intentionality in hiring is critical throughout the process of executing tribal projects if you have the responsibility for the hiring of an internal team and managing the budget. After several meetings with a tribal-led consultancy firm pushing for the hiring of a full time staff member focused on tribal engagement, the Director and Project Manager of the nonprofit managing a state-funded water justice program came to the understanding that this was extremely important. They moved around priorities in the budget, found supplemental funding and got approvals to make this a reality. Hiring for the tribal engagement coordinator position took time and the team was patient and gave it the time it needed. The team employed recruitment strategies based on authentic relationship building with tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members and did not cut corners. **There were many moments where the Director and Project Manager could have rushed the process, but the patience and relationship building resulted in hiring a tribal member of the region.** Hiring was also not the only component of responsible hiring. Supporting the new hire, giving the new hire space and time to develop relationships, and respecting tribal customs and procedures was critical. Not doing this leads to employees feeling undervalued and leaving.



Working with Tribal Organizations

A program consisted of a series of project ideas that were developed by a group of community-based organizations. The original intention was for a tribal organization to operate as a consultant and review the project ideas in partnership with the partners involved before beginning the process of selection for funding. One of the main requests of the community-based organizations was for a project that created opportunities for tribal engagement; be it history, plant knowledge, workshops, dedicated education sites etc. The underlying sentiment was that organizations wanted to be able to learn more about and interact with tribal communities.

There was an unspoken expectation that the tribal organization would take on the development and implementation of this project; however due to the sheer amount of work that they already had on their plate, it was necessary to change the timeline for their review of established projects. Through the built authentic relationship with the tribal organization there was an open pathway for dialogue about the realities of time and workload. There were extensions granted and incorporated for their review which led to a collaborative document which became the foundation for this tribal engagement framework.



Partnership With A Tribal Conservancy

A project with a tribal conservancy had a lot of energy and enthusiasm from all partners involved. The only reason the project was moving forward was due to the relationships that had been built over time by the tribal engagement coordinator. As with any project the conservancy was figuring out the ways in which they wanted to execute different goals and components of the vision for the conservancy. To be an authentic partner to the conservancy it was critical to shift timelines, help with different components of the project as things arose and be flexible. What was hugely important was ensuring that in working with the conservancy, other partners wouldn't impose their own organizational systems onto the conservancy. Ultimately these timeline changes and deliverable changes were very similar to other changes that have been made for other non tribal clients and partners. A critical takeaway was questioning who and who not your organization is willing to make timeline shifts for and why.



Consideration Without Representation

A non-tribal BIPOC* team member who actively practiced tribal engagement found themself pushed into a position as the authority on tribal engagement across other projects within their organization. Often this looked like co-workers sharing their events or ideas in a meeting, mentioning a tribal component, and then silently waiting to see if the team member would add any comments. As a non-tribal BIPOC woman in predominantly white spaces, she was hesitant to speak/act on behalf of other marginalized groups that she was not a member of. However, in these instances, centering best-possible-outcomes for tribes helped to create opportunities for thoughtful consideration on the validity/necessity of proposed projects. Some questions posed included:

Q: How is simply giving a white-designed landscaping feature a Tongva name benefiting the tribe?

A: it's not, and may even mislead people into believing the Tongva were considered, consulted and included in any phases of this project.

Q: Does the use of "nature based solutions" create erasure for the indigenous practices that informed their origins?

A: yes; implementing a practice of using the term "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (TEK) in organizational course material and briefing staff on the importance of using the appropriate term helps tribes to retain their visibility in the arena or ecological development.

**BIPOC people are not the end-all-be-all representatives of other BIPOC peoples. While their insight and experiences are valuable, having a BIPOC team member does not supersede the need for tribal engagement training and practice for all staff members.*



Being Asked for Advice as a Tribal person

Directly following a presentation on a project, a Tribal person was approached multiple times to be a sounding board for someone's idea. Due to the difficulty of talking about some of the subject matter associated with this project and feelings of being in these predominantly white spaces, and the length of the presentation, the Tribal person had taken a break and was unavailable for a period.

While the act of reaching out may have been well intended and there may have even been great ideas, there was a lack of awareness and understanding of insights just shared and explained in the presentation on this project. In a space in which the development team of this project are asking participants to be open minded and willing to accept different perspectives and decolonize the ways of working with communities, it became apparent that the person who reached out did not think it applied to them.

Presenting Traditional Worldviews

While meeting with a major regional water agency, tribal members were asked of ways to best conduct outreach and work with tribal communities. While specific actionable suggestions were made (including adjusting timelines, reaching out a multitude of times, patience, clear communication, etc.), the discussion of difficulties in getting tribal communities interested in this line of relationship building was discussed. It was made clear that not only would historical harms need to be addressed, discussed and likely brought up, but it was also highlighted that there would be significant challenges as the entity's existence is against Tribal world views and perceptions regarding water. While the water agency may genuinely want to improve relations and work in a more authentic and intentional way with tribes, it seemed important to let them know of conflicting ideals that may be present. Those who work at an agency that want or are planning to work with tribes need to recognize or be open to understanding their existence and function proactively harms Tribal communities if they are to build authentic relationships.

RESOURCES

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

For Institutions And Companies

- ☐ The most important component of a framework and strategies is how those framework and strategies will authentically and intentionally be implemented
- ☐ Authentic relationships with tribes requires individual and collective work
- ☐ Understand that Tribe's needs and preferences may be directly in contradiction with a project and an agency's goals
- ☐ Continually engaging tribes is a long-term commitment; it will not always be comfortable but it is always important
- ☐ Prioritize the agency and sovereignty of tribes to propose significant changes to, or even reject a project or proposal.
- ☐ Ask: how are our interactions with Tribes benefitting tribal communities?

*To see sample institutional frameworks and policies please reference the **appendix.***

Consider when developing policies and frameworks that they are:

Accessible

- Be easy to find on the agency or organization's website
- Cite the relevant Executive Order, policy and legislation that are referenced
- Go beyond the requirements of those Executive Orders, policies and legislation

Well-Supported

- Have a clear team with specific roles
- Have a tribal liaison/s or individuals that will be prepared to be responsive and in consistent communication with tribal groups
- Finalize a plan of "timely and consistent" outreach practices
- Have funding and/or capacity building resources attached to it

Comprehensive

- Go beyond the internal team's needs and takes into account Tribes' and tribal groups needs, preferences and limitations
- Build towards consultation and/or consensus: a form of deep listening where in a cooperative approach to community agreement is prioritized by investing time and considering different perspectives and modalities, until trust is built and a new level of understanding is reached.
- Partner with other offices, organizations, or departments to ensure that a tribal engagement framework is consistent and applies to all relevant groups and/or entities in the organization
- Center around receiving and building on feedback

Author's Note:
This is not an exhaustive list.

APPENDIX // CALIFORNIA STATE AGENCY TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT WEBSITES, DOCUMENTS, POLICIES

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	RESOURCE TITLE AND LINK	DATE
California Office of the Governor	Governor Jerry Brown Executive Order B-10-11	*09-19-2011*
California Office of the Governor	Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-15-19	*06-18-2019*
Governor's Office of Planning and Research	Tribal Research Program (Fifth Climate Change Assessment and Tribal Research Program)	*N/A*
California Natural Resources Agency	Tribal Affairs Overview	*N/A*
California Natural Resources Agency	Tribal Affairs Departmental Overview	*N/A*
California Natural Resources Agency	CNRA Adoption of Final Tribal Consultation Policy	*09-19-2011*
California Natural Resources Agency	Tribal Nature Based Solutions Program	*N/A*
California Natural Resources Agency	Tribal Nature-Based Solutions Draft Grant Guidelines Summary	*N/A*
California National Resources Agency	Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy	*N/A*
California National Resources Agency 30x30 Partnership	30x30 Tribal Priorities Summary	*N/A*
Ocean Protection Council	OPC Tribal Engagement Strategy + Summary	*01-24-2023*
California Climate Adaptation Strategy	California Climate Adaptation Strategy	*N/A*
CA Department of Water Resources	CA Department of Water Resources Tribal Policy	*N/A*
CA Department of Water Resources	Tribal Engagement in Integrated Regional Water Management	*N/A*
California Coastal Commission	California Coastal Commission Adopted Tribal Consultation Policy	*08-08-2018*
CA Department of Water Resources	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (Overview)	*N/A*
CA Department of Water Resources	DWR Program Assists Tribal and Underrepresented Communities With Groundwater Challenges	*09-23-2022*
California Office of the Tribal Advisor	Cultural Humility Training	*N/A*
California EPA	CalEPA Tribal Policy	*08-20-2015*
California EPA	Committee Charter and Directive by CalEPA Secretary	*02-24-2011*
California EPA	CalEPA Policy for Working with California Indian Tribes	*10-19-2009*



APPENDIX D- TRIBAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT (WCVC)

Sacred Places Institute
for Indigenous Peoples

Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County

Prepared by Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples
Submitted on February 17, 2023

The importance of O' (Water)

Water has always played, and continues to play, multiple roles to Chumash peoples. The ocean, rivers and stream ways were often used as a means of travel. The Chumash and neighboring Nations used tule reed and plank canoes to paddle up and down freshwater and saltwater ways. Ceremonies of significance were also held in both salt and freshwater. Gathering of fish, clams, shells and other life, including basket weaving materials, was done by the water. Daily cleansing practices were also held near or in the water. Baskets were and are made near water by the material gathered near the water, and play many roles including water jugs. ***The lifeforce of water and the value of human relationship to water was taught at the stage of infancy and became a lifelong practice for Chumash peoples and neighboring Nations.***

Although our access to water has been severely restricted by settler colonialism we still carry many of these teachings, understandings and practices today. We recognize that the water has become polluted and contaminated by the industrialization that colonization has brought onto our sacred spaces.

> ***It is important to us as Native peoples to heal and reconcile our relationship with all bodies of water on our ancestral homelands. The limited access we have to bodies of water has not limited our efforts to reconcile these relationships. Many Natives still practice reciprocity with our waters despite the challenges they face in the 21st Century***.

The authors of this report acknowledge that the geographic area represented in this document (Ventura County) is the unceded ancestral lands and waters of the Chumash, Tataviam, and Tongva people, the original stewards of this land. We recognize that these Tribes are still present in the areas reflected in this Report. We honor their elders both past and present and the descendants who are citizens of these tribes for their exemplary respect for water; we honor their continued connection to and protection of one of the most beautiful and diverse landscapes in the world.

Team Member Involvement:
Angela Mooney D'Arcy, Acjachemen, Executive Director
Jessa Calderon, Tongva & Chumash, Indigenous Water Program Director
Gabriella Lassos, Gabrielino-Tongva, IYEJP Director & Indigenous Water Program Associate
Spenser Jaimes, Šmuwič, IYEJ Program Associate & Indigenous Media Production Assistant

Tribal Needs Assessment Methodology

A. Covid-19 Impacts on Tribal Communities

Sacred Places Institute recognizes that our work must be responsive to the needs of our communities and that Covid-19 has affected our tribal communities in profound ways that go beyond the pandemic challenges facing our society in general. Therefore, SPI had to become more agile and flexible in responding to the current crisis.

For tribal communities Covid-19 has exacerbated disparities that exist as a result of settler colonialism and the land dispossession and state-sponsored attempted genocide sanctioned first by the **Papal Bulls via the Doctrine of Discovery** and later via the U.S. legal system and the associated paradigm of Manifest Destiny.

The legacy of colonization continues to manifest in health inequities experienced by Native American people, who face some of the highest health disparities in the country, including those related to infant mortality, teen and young adult suicide, diabetes, liver disease, heart disease, other chronic conditions, and lower life expectancy. The COVID pandemic has deepened these disparities, especially given unreliable data concerning COVID infection and death rates within Native communities. On one hand, many of our community members do not want to report that they are American Indian / Alaska Native at testing sites due to past instances of prejudice and surveillance. On the other, “American Indians and Alaska Natives make up about 2% of the U.S. population but are often left out of national data analyses or marked as statistically insignificant,” a sign of continued attempted genocide against Indigenous peoples. Due to the loss of tribal Elders and leadership gaps within tribal governance bodies, COVID -19 has deeply impacted the spiritual, mental, and economic wellbeing of our community members.

As an organization with a deep commitment to water justice, it is often easy to commit to meetings, projects, and deadlines associated with large scale paradigm shifts we hope to see in California. However, the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of committing to supporting people, not merely the projects that we have come to associate with climate and water justice issues. Indeed, we at SPI strongly hold that macro scale differences can only occur if there is economic, spiritual, and mental wellbeing at the personal level. We have noticed that many of our community members were, and continue to be, overworked and overwhelmed, and Zoom-fatigue has been very apparent during meetings.

B. Online Survey Development

The Tribal Survey was designed to mirror and expand on the community needs assessment survey in order to more accurately capture and ultimately express the unique needs of tribal communities. It identified the emerging issues and concerns of the California Native American Nations with ancestral ties to Ventura County, the Chumash, Tataviam and Tongva Nations, as well as Native American and Indigenous populations living in the region. These issues include the needs and strengths of the Native American tribes, tribal and Indigenous communities they

serve and are a part of, barriers to culturally appropriate and tribally specific access needs related to water, and barriers to equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Finally, the Survey set out to identify tribal governance and decision-making processes and engagement strategies and future challenges and opportunities.

Survey questions were designed by local tribal water scholars including SPI staff and advisory board members. Survey designers also utilized the tribal water surveys developed for the Santa Ana Watershed and Greater Los Angeles County as well as a tribal water survey developed by California Indian Environmental Alliance for use in the Bay Area, occupied and unceded Ohlone homelands. SPI utilized the latter survey to inform our survey, as the Ohlone are also not federally acknowledged and thus there are some similarities between the experiences of tribal communities with ancestral homelands in both of these regions.

C. Engagement Strategies and Techniques

SPI utilized a variety of techniques to inform and engage tribal community members who live or work within the Ventura County region, or consider the areas within Ventura County boundaries to be ancestral homelands in our outreach and engagement efforts related to tribal water-related strengths and needs. In addition to the Tribal Survey, which was distributed digitally by SPI, via the 3 tribal listening sessions and completed by 21 individuals.

Tribal Perspectives: Findings

A. Defining Tribal Communities and Indigenous Populations–Tribal Communities and the Ventura County Region.

Ventura County in its entirety sits on the shared ancestral homelands of the Chumash, Tataviam and Tongva peoples. *Note before colonization Chumash, Tataviam and Tongva families often identified by the village names which their families were born into, still they are all family.* Prior to becoming Ventura county these Native nations did a phenomenal job at keeping their homelands pristine and livable, then, there was no such thing as “Disadvantaged Communities.”

All of the respondents shared that they identified as Native or Indigenous. Responders were all Chumash with some identifying as Chumash and Tataviam, as well as Chumash and Tongva. Of those who responded, roughly half identified as speaking on behalf of, or representing their communities, in some leadership capacity. Respondents included tribal council members, tribal chairpersons, tribal language preservationists, and heads of local tribal organizations.

Many individuals completed the survey on behalf of their Tribe, Tribal community, family as a head of household, or as an individual Tribal member. The majority of survey respondents shared that they did not identify as Tribal Elders. About half of the survey respondents identified as traditional cultural practitioners. 70% of survey respondents stated that they currently live on their ancestral homelands.

B. Tribal Community Priorities

Community Strengths & Needs

When asked what the Tribal community is most proud of, community responses were: To have a connection to the community which includes their tomol building and paddling especially the annual crossing to Limuw, how water brings community together which is healing to the spirit and community, of still having knowledge and connection to the spirit of the land and water, being water and ocean protectors, resilience of culture and tradition, and developing relationships with government agencies, organizations, universities and colleges to access land and water for cultural use.

Overwhelmingly Tribal community members prioritized their cultural and spiritual relationship to water as both a significant strength and need in terms of something needing to be protected, expanded, and even re-established in some instances. Some community members noted that their relationship to water consists of gathering aquatic plants, gathering aquatic animals, holding ceremony with water, making sure to leave offerings to the water, participating in Tribal community gatherings around water, participating in the launching of the traditional tomols and tule boats, recognizing the water as a living relative that has stories tied to the Chumash, Tataviam and Tongva people, understanding that we are connected to the water and that it has become scarce so we must do our best to protect water, acknowledging that people have become disconnected from water and are reclaiming their connection, having daily practices to conserve water, and recognizing the need for education around water and taking it out of ownership of major manufactures and companies.

Community members agreed that water contains energy which sustains life and plays/ed a role in the creation of life on earth. They understand the water ways can and do provide a means of transportation. Community members recognized that water assists in providing meals. They also use water in daily cleansing rituals. Some community members recognized that water shapes the land around us and acknowledged that water supports their community and culture.

In terms of additional strengths identified by project participants, through the virtual surveys, community members shared what successes are good examples of what is possible for their tribal communities: Working on language revitalization, preventing luxury home development return the sacred rocks back to Morro Bay, having somewhere to keep two of our tomols, working with Organizations and Universities to access land and water for cultural usage, were all examples shared about times the community has come together in support of water and to engage in ceremony in sacred places.

Half of respondents indicated that safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking is accessible to all members of the community. 100% of respondents expressed issues with waste water infrastructure,Half of the respondents agreed that the community is impacted by storm water quality issues or flooding. When asked if other water access needs in the community were met, such as water for ceremonial purposes or for recreation, half of the respondents said no.

When asked if there are any regulatory/compliance issues that impact the community 100% answered with uncertainty. 100% were unsure of what opportunities there are to overcome any barriers involving the Ventura water issues. 100% of respondents agreed that the Tribal community ancestrally tied to the area should be involved in any efforts to overcome barriers. No additional needs in regards to access to safe water were identified by the tribal community.

When asked what strategies could create space for engagement, respondents answered: Land trusts, Indigenous leaders being included in planning efforts, respect and recognition of our people, giving power to implement cultural values back to federal and state tribes. They also shared that local and state officials should have an understanding and be taught about California's brutal history towards Indigenous peoples. Having Chumash representatives on the water and resource department board and in decision making positions. Holding listening sessions without prioritizing recognized representatives and including cultural organizations like mine, and independents. Respondents also mentioned, having local pow wows open to the whole community, education in schools about indigenous peoples and California's genocide on indigenous peoples in the 1700's and 1800's. One respondent shared "Ongoing efforts to bring tribes together on all levels to keep the voices of our ancestors alive, we need to draw on the cultural knowledge to be connected as the people of this land, we can continue the work to repair what's been done, with the understanding we can't go back in time and lastly, as a community we can slowly repair the things we can change one day at a time."

50% of respondents indicated that other water access needs such as for ceremonial purposes or for recreation were not being met. An additional 50% of respondents indicated that they did not know if these needs were being met.

C. Barriers to Tribal Involvement

Barriers to engaging tribal communities include a lack of support, lack of time and resources, lack of communication within tribal groups as well as between community members and the government, a disinterest in the subject overall, a lack of water appreciation and difficulties in getting people educated about and involved in these types of planning efforts. Respondents shared that lack of communication between tribal groups, lack of communication between community members and the government, disinterest in the subject, and an overall lack of support are all barriers that limit engagement within the community.

When asked about what the community knew about Ventura IRWM and what relationships were upheld, 95% of the Native community admitted to have no knowledge of the Ventura IRWM nor have they had engagement in the IRWM planning process. Because of this, many are unaware of the resources like grants and other forms of financial support that are offered to the community. When it comes to participation in public meetings many of the community members lack access to transportation, electronic devices or both. Some said that virtual platforms have been a better option to attend meetings and request they be held in the evenings when most people are out of work or school.

Factors Limiting Cultural Access

In regards to the question what factors limit access to culture in your tribal community there were 21 virtual survey respondents. 13 chose access to our ancestral land that is now privatized including fenced and barbed wired, 15 people agreed that governmental agencies play a role in limiting access, 15 people shared that gaps in knowledge limited their access to culture, access to money limited access to culture for 15 people, 12 people said extraction, mining and other means of corporate greed limit access, 14 people described channelization and damming of waterways as limiting access, 1 respondent expressed that the increase in the cost to live in the country has led them to move away from their ancestral homelands, another shared that the privatization of public lands is also limiting their access to the land and water.

Some community members identified lack of federal recognition as standing in their way to have the respect of the local/state/federal government when it comes to government involvement and inclusion to addressing and dealing with environmental concerns. When asked if local/state/federal representatives had reached out to their communities in regards to water planning, 55% of respondents said no, 40% said they were unsure and 5% said yes. Environmental concerns included air pollution, contaminated land and water, water damming and infrastructure, fire issues, lack of caring for and tending to the land, sea level rise, plastic pollution, oil, gas and other extractions.

In our in person meetings some opportunities shared by our respondents to overcome these barriers included; engaging community members in these issues, coming together and standing up for the earth, protecting the sacred, people giving up their seats for Native leaders or willing to share space and paid positions, educating non North American Native people, and implementing further surveys. Requests to do better with the houseless community and food security have also been asked by the Native community.

When asked who needs to be involved in the effort to overcome these barriers, answers included: Tribal and Non-Tribal Community members, and representatives from Tribes ancestrally tied to the area.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Tribal nations are sovereign governments with whom settler colonial state and local institutions must regard as such via government-to-government consultation. Additionally, tribal community members are experts on their own communities, and their expertise must be recognized and elevated to be equal to that of the water managers. Water managers can develop projects and programs that meet tribal community needs and gain tribal community support by learning about the history of California Native American tribes, especially with respect to water and forced removal in Ventura County, and listening to and engaging the voices present in these communities with respect, intent, understanding, and compassion.

Supporting Cultural Access

There needs to be a concerted effort to work on policy related to opening up spaces for tribal community members that currently cannot be accessed. Regarding stewardship, consider creating capacity building partnerships with local tribes and Indigenous-led organizations to support land and water rematriation and rehabilitation.

Due to lack of access to privatized and county/state owned lands added with the need to work to attempt to survive, Native communities have not been able to continue cultural maintenance such as burning and working with the land. Due to this inability to uphold relationships with the homelands, fire is now a major concern. Native communities deserve to regain their relations with the land. Due to the need to pay rent, the Native community should have grants or a means to pay for their contribution to maintain the land.

Virtual respondents shared some of the ways and ideas that cultural access projects can be supported. Some responses shared include:

- Building of an environmentally friendly Tomol House in Ventura;
- Sponsorships;
- Helping educate obstructors and local governing bodies on the significance of areas we are trying to preserve and request access to;
- Working with Tribes and counties to establish policies that promote cultural awareness and access;
- Assistance in gaining permits for overnight ocean ceremonies and gatherings;
- Creating change on a county/state/fed policy level;
- Group trips to hard to access areas.

Support Tribal Governance in Watershed Management Planning

IRWM and other water-planning related capacity building dollars should support local tribes and Indigenous-led CBOs to develop tribal and Indigenous-community-driven programs around water issues identified as important to these communities by the communities themselves. Financial and other resources should also be directed toward supporting tribal leadership development so that tribal community members can more effectively advance their tribes' water interests in water planning efforts taking place within their ancestral homelands and waters.

APPENDIX E- WCVC & USCR CBO TRAINING AGENDA

Training Session Outline for Session Leaders

(Three and a Half Hours + One 30 Minute Break)

Materials Required for Training Session:

- *Sign-in sheets (PlaceWorks to provide)*
- *Name tags (PlaceWorks to provide)*
- *Agendas (CSU to provide)*
- *Participant Packets (CSU to provide)*
- *Sample PPT and Website (to be presented on screen)*

10:00-10:15 pm (15 minutes) **Welcome, Introduction, and Overview**

[Boykin] 1. Welcome

- Introduce Training Session Leaders: CSU staff, PW Staff, Heather Merenda, and Rick Viergutz
- Describe structure of the training and materials that each participant has, including the Facilitator Handbook

2. Introductions

- All attendees to participate using the following format:
  "My name is _____ and I am with ORGANIZATION. I am grateful that water____ (keeps me hydrated, keeps plants alive, is clean enough to drink from the tap, is affordable, fills the ocean, etc.)"

3. Overview of Today's Agenda

- The Purpose of WaterTalks
- The Role and Responsibility of the WaterTalks Outreach Partners
- The Toolkit
- Lunch Break
- Planning, Conducting, and Documenting Your WaterTalks Event
- Additional Assistance and Resources
- Further Discussion, Review, and Closing

4. Printed Materials

- Handbook and Appendices
- Toolkit

10:15-10:30 am (15 min.) **The Purpose of WaterTalks – Why We Are Here [Boykin]**

Refer participants to:

Handbook: *Introduction*

1. Proposition 1, the Water Bond of 2014
2. IRWM and WaterTalks
   - The Three Phases of the DACIP: Community Input, Needs Assessment, Technical Assistance
3. Objectives for All Events
   - *Community Empowerment*: better at advocating for themselves (understand tools and processes); engaged citizens
   - *Knowledge*: of local water issues, local providers
   - *Listening Sessions*: Opportunity to discuss community strengths and needs; increase sense of place

10:30-10:45 (15 min.) **The Role and Responsibility of the WaterTalks Outreach Partners [Melissa]**

1. Overview

Refer participants to:

Handbook: *Introduction*

- Outreach Partners will **plan**, **conduct**, and **document** one or more WaterTalks events within the geographic area to which they've been assigned.
- CoC has been assign the following communities:

DAC ID#	DAC Name
115	Bouquet Canyon
116	Canyon Country
119	Newhall
120	Santa Clarita
121	Val Verde

- You need to hold one WaterTalks event in each of these communities. All events must be completed by March 31st, 2020.

2. Initial Tasks

Refer Participants to:

Handbook: *Tasks to be Completed by Outreach Partners*

- Attend Facilitator Training: We're all here, so you're already on your way

with this one!

- Complete IRB Training

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook Appendix B: *How to Complete IRB Training*

  - Purpose of training is to ensure that Community Partners clearly communicate that they are gathering information from the community members and that this information could help serve their communities. Training is required of one person at each organization. Time spent on training is billable.

- Select Event Type(s) and review toolkits

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook: *Select Event Types*

  Appendix C: *Event Guide*

  - WaterTalks events can either be formal meetings/presentations or Action-Based Events. Formal meetings are generally single purpose events, where you convene community members just for WaterTalks. Action-Based Events generally less formal, pop-up events that piggy back on other community events or occur in places where community members already gather.

  - Check in with Heather to determine which event type is most appropriate for your community. Heather can help connect you to events in the community if you're interested in action-based events.
    - Heather can help you determine an approach to inviting Water Service Provider or other experts and elected officials if needed.
    - Heather can help determine which topics are most important to share with your community

  - Review your toolkits as soon as possible. There are printed versions here today to begin your review. If you have any comments or requests for edits based on your knowledge of these communities, let Melissa know as soon as possible.

3. Planning the Event, Conducting the Event, and Documenting the Event

   Refer Participants to:

   Handbook: *Tasks to be Completed by Outreach Partners*

   - You are responsible for all aspects of planning, conducting, and documenting one WaterTalks event in each of the 5 communities

assigned to CoC.

- We will provide detailed information on these tasks after we go over the Toolkit. For now, we're going to focus on the content that's available for you to share during your WaterTalks event.

10:45 – 12:00 am (75 min.) **Your Toolkit [C.C./Boykin]**

1. Overview of Toolkit **[C.C.]**
    - Purpose of the Toolkit:
        - Information for you about water in the area that your WaterTalks event will be held
        - Provides content for you to select from for your WaterTalks event
        - There is a separate toolkit for each community. Some information is common to all communities, but some information has been customized to the community level
    - Contents of Toolkit:
        - Project Background
        - Water in Our Environment
        - Our Tap Water
        - Digital templates for your use are available for downloading. You can find the link in your Handbook on Page 7 or on the WaterTalks website:
            - Event flyer template for advertising your event
            - Power Point presentation template
            - Agenda template
            - Sign-in sheet template
            - Takeaway flyer template
            - Comment card
        - Online resources available on the WaterTalks website
2. Project Background **[Boykin]**
    - What is WaterTalks?
        - IRWM Regions – How do we plan for water in California?
    - Project Overview – How is WaterTalks funded?
        - Funding – What sources of funding are available for water-related projects?

3. Water in Our Environment **[Boykin]**

- Surface Water and Groundwater – Where does my rainwater go? How do contaminants get into our water?
- Watershed – What is a watershed?
- Groundwater – Where does my groundwater come from?
- Flooding – Am I at risk of flooding? (Optional)
- Access to Water-Related Recreation – How clean are our lakes, streams, rivers, and beaches? Where can I find parks and local waterways? (Optional)
- Existing Land Use – How does land use affect our water?
- Capturing and Storing Water – How can we catch and store rainwater?

4. Our Tap Water **[Boykin]**

- Water Sources – Where does my tap water come from?
- Drinking Water – How much water does one person drink? What is the cost of drinking water?
- Tap Water Quality – How clean is my drinking water?
- Water Service Provider – Who is my water service provider?

5. When and How to Use the Data **[Boykin]**

- Available Data: Flood risk, water quality (web resources)
- Website introduction
- Some data has been customized for your community
- Some data must be presented at your event, and some is optional
    - Select information that is most relevant to your community's concerns
- Sensitive Topics
    - Which topics are potentially sensitive/inflammatory?
    - When to use data, when not to
    - Preparing for sensitive topics
        - Utilizing experts (including WSP)

- - - - - -12:00 – 12:30 (30 min.): **LUNCH BREAK***- - - - - - - - - 12:30-1:30pm (60 min.)* **Planning, Conducting, and Documenting the Event [Melissa/C.C.]**

1. Planning Your WaterTalks Event **[Melissa/C.C.]**

Refer Participants to:

Handbook: *Planning the Event*

- Complete the Pre-Event Checklist **[Melissa]**

  Refer Participants to:

  Appendix D: *Pre-Event Checklist*

  - Checklist for each event must be completed and submitted at least 6 weeks before your event, and **no later than Friday, February 14th**. Link to checklist on Page 7 of the Handbook or the WaterTalks website.
    - Identify and secure event location
    - Plan for outreach (flyers, social media, etc.)
    - Request Posters (specify languages) and submit any edits to toolkits

- Prepare and Print Event Materials as Needed **[C.C.]**

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook: *Planning the Event*

  Appendix C: *Event Guide*

  Toolkit: *Flyer Instructions and Template*

  Handout: *Sample flyer and instructions for customizing*

  - All materials are available for download. The link is in your handbook on Page 7
    - WaterTalks Event Flyer
    - Presentation
    - Sign-In Sheets
    - Agenda
    - Takeaway Flyer
    - Comment Cards
  - You will need to use these templates to create materials customized for your event and community. This includes customizing the presentation, if you're using it, with content from the toolkit, based on your knowledge of the community.
    - Make JPGs from PDF

- Identify Staff and Roles at Event **[C.C.]**

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook: *Planning the Event*

  Appendix C: *Event Guide*

  - Necessary roles should be identified and assigned (greeter, sign-in table, facilitator, presenter, note-taker, etc.).
  - Roles will vary based on the type of event you're holding •

Language Access: Consider interpretation needs

- Advertise the Event **[C.C.]**

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook: *Planning the Event*
  Appendix C: *Event Guide*

  - Best Practices: timing, methods, audience

- Build Familiarity with Materials **[C.C.]**

  Refer Participants to:

  Handbook: *Planning the Event*
  Appendix C: *Event Guide*

  - Now is the time to make sure you understand all the materials you'll be presenting and sharing
  - Practice your presentation, if you'll be giving one

2. Conducting Your Event **[C.C.]**

   Refer Participants to:

   Handbook: *Conducting the Event*
   Appendix C: *Event Guide*
   Appendix E: *Frequently Asked Question*

   - As a reminder, these events are mainly listening sessions with the following objectives:
     - Community empowerment and engagement
     - Knowledge of local water issues, local providers
   - Setting Up
     - General equipment, supplies, staffing, on-site signage
     - Special considerations for community meetings, pop-up events, action events, other event types
   - Engaging Event Participants
     - Review Appendix C. Your approach will depend on the type of event and how you've set it up
     - If you're doing a presentation, consider an open Q&A session, small break-out groups, or stations

- If you're doing an Action-Based event, you may need to actively recruit people to engage with you as they walk by
- Review the FAQs and add to it as you come across new questions

- Gathering and Documenting Information
  - Cannot gather information from participants under 18 (okay to count as participants)
  - Notes: date, times, place, number of attendees. All information you will include in your project narrative
  - Recording: video or audio if equipment available (optional)
  - Photos: 3-4 photos of event
  - Other Material: flip charts, photos, comment cards
- Comment Cards/ Post-Event Survey
  - Encourage all participants to complete forms
- Event Breakdown
  - Be sure to comply with all venue requirements, including removal of wayfinding signage, if used

3. Documenting the Event **[Melissa]**

Refer Participants to:

Handbook: *Documenting the Event*
Appendix D: *Post-Event Checklist*

- Post-Event Checklist
  - Access checklist from link on Page 7 of the Handbook or from WaterTalks website.
  - Outcomes, lessons learned, event narrative
  - Upload materials: sign-in sheets, photos, comment cards, invoices
- Reimbursement
  - Post-Event Checklist must be complete to receive reimbursement
  - Allowable expenses are labor, supplies, printing, translation, venue

- Food and childcare are not allowable
- CITI Training- invoice hours to CSU
- Large format printing (posters) invoiced separately to CSU

1:30 – 1:45 pm (15 min.) **Additional Assistance and Resources – Where to Get Help [Melissa/Heather/Boykin]**

- The WaterTalks Website
- Your Contacts: Melissa, Heather, C.C.

1:45 – 2:00 pm (15 min.) **Further Discussion, Review, and Closing [Melissa]**

APPENDIX F- WATERTALKS CBO TRAINING, TOOLKIT, AND OUTREACH MATERIALS



WaterTalks: Facilitator Handbook

Upper Santa Clarita River IRWM Region

DRAFT, September 2019

Prepared By:

CSU Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI) and PlaceWorks

Project Partner: TreePeople/Council for Watershed Health

California Department of Water Resources, Los Angeles-Ventura County DACIP

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Introduction

This handbook provides information about WaterTalks to contracted facilitators (also referred to as Outreach Partners). It includes all information needed to prepare for and complete WaterTalks outreach events in identified disadvantaged communities.

What is WaterTalks?

WaterTalks is a program funded through the California Department of Water Resources for the Los Angeles and Ventura County areas. Its purpose is to implement Proposition 1, "The Water Bond of 2014," and ensure widespread community engagement in recommending water-related infrastructure projects. The program includes conducting and hosting public meetings with members of identified disadvantaged communities to both provide information and receive feedback. The goal of these outreach events is to build community members' understanding of water resources and empower engagement in future IRWM planning.

What is the Role of Outreach Partners?

California State University (CSU) will contract with nongovernmental organizations (NGO)and community-based organizations (CBO) to assist with outreach within a specific geographic area. Contracted organizations (Outreach Partners) are responsible for planning and conducting events and documenting outcomes. The number of events that each Outreach Partner will conduct is based on the contracted scope. **Events may be conducted as public meetings or action-based events.** Outreach Partners will receive in-person training as well as Toolkits containing background information and outreach materials for each event.

This handbook is intended to guide Outreach Partners in conducting successful outreach events. It describes the tasks to be completed by Outreach Partners consistent with the contracted scope of work; identifies outreach materials available for events; and provides specific instructions and resources for completing pre-event, during-event, and post-event tasks.

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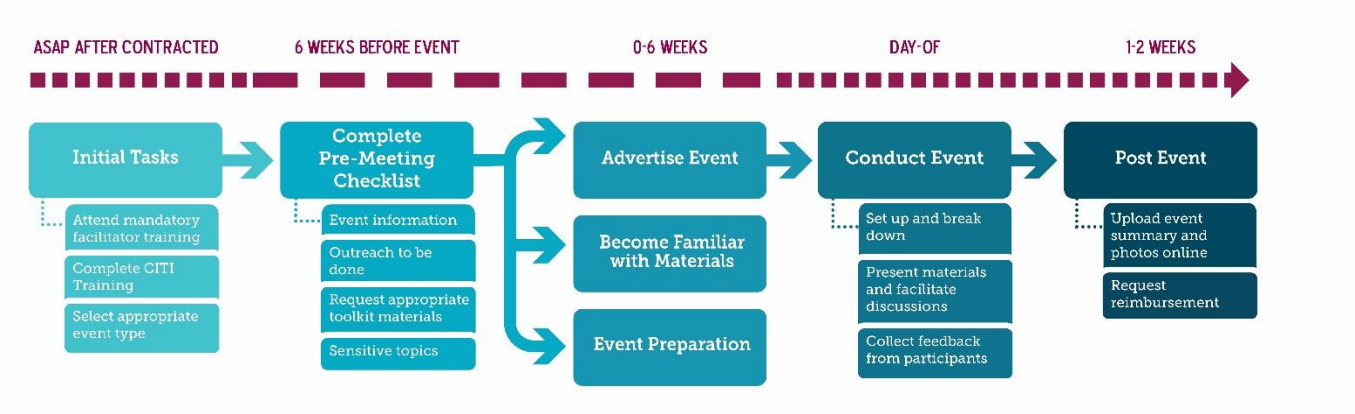
Tasks to be Completed by Outreach Partners

Outreach Partners will be responsible for planning, conducting, and documenting events. Specific tasks necessary to complete this effort and the approximate schedule and/or deadlines for each task are illustrated in the figure below, followed by a more detailed description of each task.



Initial Tasks

1. **Attend Mandatory Facilitator Training:** This training will provide guidance pertaining to appropriate methods of outreach and formats for engagement, presentation content and materials, messaging, and project management. At least one member of each organization responsible for planning or conducting events should plan to attend the training; RSVPs to the CSU Team will be required. The training will be scheduled for a weekday and will take approximately four (4) hours. After this training, participants will be equipped to assign their staff to specific events and tasks.

2. **Complete CITI Training:** CSU requires all contractors who gather data or information from people to complete the Human Subjects Ethics Training in the Protection of Human Participants (CITI Training). This training helps ensure interactions with community members are transparent and that community members understand that the information they provide at the meeting may be used in the future to help serve their community.

   One representative of each Outreach Partner organization needs to complete the CITI Training, which is offered online through CSU San Bernardino. The training takes approximately four (4) hours to complete and should be completed at least one week before holding any events. Time spent should be invoiced directly to CSU, and does not come from contracted budget.

   Appendix E contains detailed instructions for accessing and completing the CITI Training.

3. **Select Event Type(s) Appropriate for your Community(ies):** Outreach Partners will choose the most appropriate types of events for each community where they are conducting outreach. Acceptable types of events include public meetings and action-based events. Additional types of engagement may be approved upon request. Refer to Appendix D, Event Guide, for more detailed descriptions of these event types.

Planning the Event

1. **Complete the Pre-Event Checklist/Webform.** It is critical that this form be completed at least six (6) weeks prior to the meeting to ensure that Toolkits can be produced.

    a. **Event information.** Provide event name, location, date and time, event type, anticipated attendance. To secure a location, Outreach Partners will need to communicate with the venue regarding desired room layout, necessary technology, rental fee (if any,) and any other logistical details. Ensure sufficient parking/transit access and ADA accommodations. If the meeting is to be held online or via teleconferencing, the technology needed to execute the meeting must be confirmed.

    b. **Outreach to be done.** Identify the outreach methods that will be utilized (ex. Flyers, social media, email, invitations to community leaders and/or elected officials, etc.), and provide a brief description of the planned strategy.

    c. **Request toolkit materials appropriate for your event format and community.** Select appropriate materials to be used at the event(s) you will be holding. As a trusted Outreach Partner, your organization will be expected to provide feedback and additional requests to ensure the materials selected are the most appropriate.

2. **Customize and Print Event Materials.** Outreach Partners are responsible for customizing event flyer, agendas, sign-in sheets, and comment cards. Templates are provided for all of these materials in your Toolkit. Outreach Partners s are also responsible for printing these materials once they have customized them with the appropriate event information. Printing is a reimbursable expense.

3. **Identify Staff for Each Meeting.** Necessary staff roles should be identified and assigned based on the event type and size. Roles may include but are not limited to **greeter, sign-in table staff, facilitator, presenter, note taker, facility contact,** and/or **small group discussion leader**. If Leadership Group Members determine that **interpreter services** are needed, ensure that staff is able to provide this service and/or hire an interpreter. If Outreach Partners choose to provide **childcare,** they should also ensure that appropriate staff are identified. *Note that childcare services are optional and are not allowable reimbursable expenses.*

4. **Advertising the Event.** You should strive to draw large numbers of public participants to your events by choosing the most effective outreach methods and potentially collaborating with others such as local businesses, places of worship, cultural groups, schools, etc. Publicizing the event(s) is an essential step to invite participants and can be done by email, phone, social media, or mailings. Note that CSU will notify water service providers that serve community(ies) that the event(s) is taking place and will invite a representative to attend. Depending on the issues in each community, Outreach Partners may choose to reach out to water service providers and request that they participate in the event as topic-area experts. Water providers will be identified as part of education materials.

5. **Become Familiar with Your Toolkit.** A sample Toolkit is included in Appendix G and contains many resources that are relevant to all communities. Customized Toolkits for each event will be available for download within 4 weeks of completing the Pre-Meeting Checklist. It is important that facilitators are familiar with all presentation materials. It is recommended that

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facilitators review materials as early as possible to identify any questions or topics that they would like to discuss with the CSU Team or topic-area experts prior to the event.

Conducting the Event

Outreach Partners will be responsible for all event logistics, staffing, and supplies. Day-of tasks will depend on the type of event. In general, this will include:

- Setting up and breaking down before and after the event, providing adequate on-site signage.
- Presenting the selected materials, incorporating relevant activities, and facilitating discussion. Providing language/interpretation support if determined appropriate.
- Collecting feedback from attendees.
- If providing food and/or refreshments, or childcare at the event, please note that these expenses are not reimbursable.

Appendix D, Event Guide, provides more detailed recommendations for conducting various types of events.

Documenting the Event

Following each event, Outreach Partners will need to complete the post-event checklist/webform. The webform will ask for key outcomes, lessons learned, and a brief event narrative. In addition, the webform will serve as the platform for uploading sign-in sheets, 3-4 event photos, comment forms, and invoices. An alternative to the webform will be available upon request. ***The webform (or alternative as approved by CSU) must be completed prior to processing of payment invoice.***

Reimbursement

Your contract outlines the terms and procedures of cost reimbursement. Please note the following:

- Allowable expenses include staff labor, mileage to/from events, venue fees, interpretation, printing, and consumable supplies such as markers and flip charts.
- Durable equipment such as projectors or screens are not allowable expenses.
- Ineligible costs include participant stipends, food, childcare and group transportation.
- If you would like to hold a raffle to encourage attendance, you cannot offer giftcards as a prize. Allowable prizes include home water quality testing kits and other water-related materials.
- Time spent completing the CITI training should be invoiced directly to CSU and does not come from your contracted budget. While project-related invoices can be uploaded using the webform, invoices for CITI training should be emailed or mailed to Kathleen Firstenberg (contact information below) and will need to include the company and employee names, address for check mailing, dates, number of hours, hourly rate, and the activity (CITI Certification Training).

Contact information for invoice submittals and related questions:

Kathleen Firstenberg, Program Manager
Email: KFirstenberg@csusb.edu
Mailing Address:
Attn: Kathleen Firstenberg
California State University, San Bernardino
WRPI, PL-401
5500 University Pkwy
San Bernardino, CA 92407

What Outreach Materials are Available?

Toolkit

A Toolkit has been prepared by the CSU team that contains information about WaterTalks, educational materials about water, and templates for use in event preparation. While some of the materials (flyer and sign-in sheets) can be customized by your organization, other materials will need to be tailored by the CSU team for each event location. Instructions for requesting toolkits are provided in the "Pre-Event" section of this handbook.

The Toolkit addresses a wide range of topics, some of which are required for presentation at each event and some of which are supplemental. Supplemental materials may be requested/utilized at the discretion of Leadership Group Members, based on understanding of community context and needs. Facilitators should familiarize themselves with each topic before determining which materials to share with the community.

The PowerPoint Presentation Template provided in the Toolkit covers the same topic areas as the Toolkit booklet. The Toolkit booklet will be provided in English, and the PPT Template and Posters will be available in other languages upon request.

Topics covered in the Toolkit are listed below. All topics are considered as part of the comprehensive (required) materials, with the exception of those identified as optional. Topics that will include customized information for your community are identified with an asterisk.

<u>Project Background</u>
- What is WaterTalks?
- IRWM Regions – How do we plan for water in California?
- Project Overview – How is WaterTalks funded?
- Funding – What sources of funding are available for water-related projects?

<u>Water in Our Environment</u>
- Surface Water and Groundwater – Where does my rainwater go? How do contaminants get into our water?
- Watershed – What is a watershed?
- Groundwater – Where does my groundwater come from? *

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- Flooding and Climate Change – Am I at risk of flooding? (Optional) *
- Access to Water-Related Recreation – How clean are our lakes, streams, rivers, and beaches? Where can I find parks and local waterways? (Optional) *
- Existing Land Use – How does land use affect our water*
- Capturing and Storing Water – How can we catch and store rainwater?

Our Tap Water
- Water Sources – Where does my tap water come from?
- Drinking Water – How much water does one person drink? What is the cost of drinking water?
- Tap Water Quality – How clean is my drinking water?
- Water Service Provider – Who is my water service provider? *

In addition to this educational material, the Toolkit includes the following templates:
- Event Flyer Template
- PowerPoint Presentation Template
- Agenda Template
- Sign-In Sheet Template (zip code, email, permission for photos/future outreach, etc.)
- Comment Cards (also available as online survey)

Website and Online Tools

Many resources and tools will be available for you on the WaterTalks website: https://watertalks.csusb.edu/ [Note: website currently under construction; this section may be updated to reflect final website contents. Use of checklists vs. webforms will be confirmed]

The WaterTalks website is designed as a resource for community members, Water Service Providers, and Outreach Partners (Facilitators).

General Information and Resources (Available to Everyone)

The following information and resources will be available to you and the general public on the WaterTalks website:

- **Project Background Information.** Including an overview of the funding sources, goals, and schedule, as well as links to relevant background information.
- **Educational Materials.** Educational materials will be provided for all topics that are addressed in the Toolkit, as well as additional supplemental topics. The website will provide greater depth on topics where appropriate, as well as links to additional resources.
- **Interactive Maps and Data.** Community members will be able to navigate watershed, groundwater basin, water service provider service areas, water quality information, and other data using interactive maps. The interactive maps and data can also be utilized by facilitators during events where appropriate and feasible.
- **Event and Participation Information.** The website will include a map and calendar identifying upcoming events. Users will be able to find events based on their location. The website will also provide information about related meetings (such as IRWM meetings) that

are open to the public. Contact information for water service providers and other key contacts will also be provided.

- **Feedback Survey.** Following events, participants will be asked to complete a comment card or take the short on-line survey available on the WaterTalks website.

Facilitator Resources and Tools

In addition to the resources above, Leadership Group Members will be able to utilize the website for:

- **Pre- and Post-Event Checklists.** Webforms will allow your organization to submit pre-event and post-event information, including uploading post-event materials. Events identified using the pre-meeting checklist will automatically be included in the community event map and calendar.
- **Customized Toolkits and Customizable Materials.** Leadership Group Members will be able to download all outreach materials, including digital copies of the event-specific Toolkit, as well as all customizable materials.
- **Facilitator Resources.** Additional resources, including the Facilitator Handbook and materials from the Facilitator Training, will also be available for viewing or download.

Water Service Provider Tools

Water service providers that serve communities where WaterTalks events are being held will be invited and encouraged to confirm and/or update the information that will be shared about their service (such as service area, water sources, and water cost) using the WaterTalks website. The website includes a portal through which water service providers can view their information, and either confirm this information, identify revisions, or provide new/additional data.

Additional Resources

Project Intern(s)

To build and strengthen relationships with disadvantaged and underrepresented communities in the Los Angeles-Ventura Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) Area, the WaterTalks Internship joins college students from California State University (CSU) campuses and local community colleges with local agencies to assist with engagement, public affairs, and education projects or programs. WaterTalks interns are available to all Outreach Partners upon request, and at no cost to Outreach Partners.

For additional information about the intern program:

- Visit http://wri.csusb.edu/DACIPinternship.html
- Contact Christina Rodriguez (chrodrig@csusb.edu or 909-537-3615)

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Project Contacts

City of Santa Clarita - Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Program
Heather Merenda, Project Manager
Email: HMERENDA@santa-clarita.com
Telephone: (661)284-1413

CSU/PlaceWorks (Toolkits/Water Data; Invoicing and reimbursement)

Kathleen Firstenberg, Program Manager at Water Resources and Policy Initiatives at CSUSB
Email: KFirstenberg@csusb.edu
Telephone: (909) 537-3860

C.C. LaGrange, Senior Associate
Email: clagrange@placeworks.com
Phone: (714)966-9220

Isby Swick Fleischmann, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks
Email: ifleischmann@placeworks.com
Telephone: (510) 848-3815

Acronyms and Definitions

Acronyms

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

CBO – community-based organization

CSU – California State University

DACIP – Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program

DWR – California Department of Water Resources

IRWM – Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

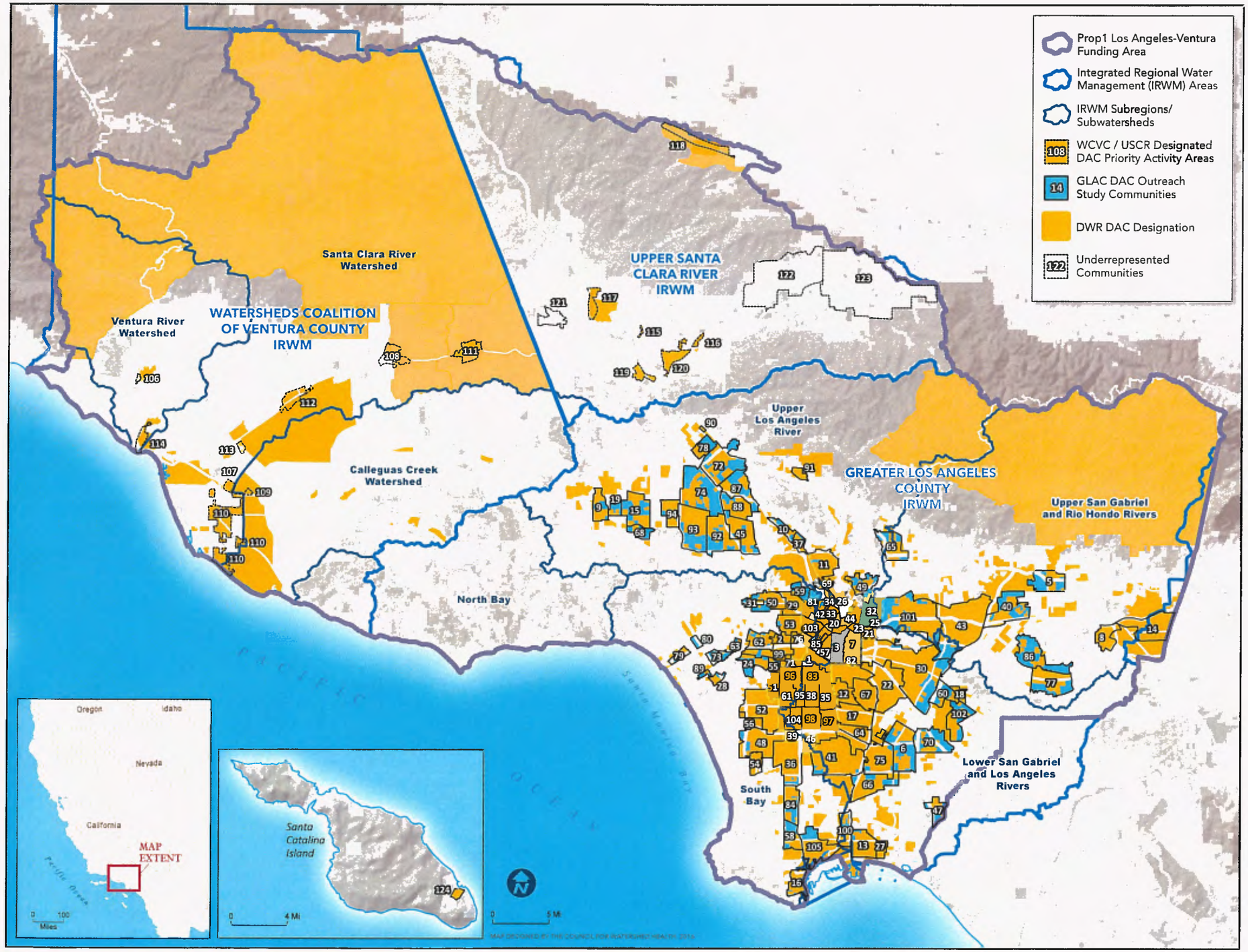
NGO – nongovernmental organization

Definitions

Proposition 1 – Also known as The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act. Proposition was approved by voters in 2014.
CITI Training – CITI is the Collaborative IRB Training Institute. The training referenced in this handbook is the Human Subjects Ethics Training in the Protection of Human Participants. This training is required for one person at each Outreach Partner organization.

Appendix A-
Map and List of Disadvantaged Communities

This Appendix provides a map and list of designated disadvantaged communities within Proposition 1 Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area. These communities are the focus of WaterTalks outreach events. This appendix will be updated to provide more detailed maps showing the specific DAC(s) targeted within each Toolkit (typically one Toolkit per event).



DESIGNATED DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE PROP 1 LOS ANGELES-VENTURA FUNDING AREA

1 - Adams/Central
2 - Arlington/Harvard Heights
3 - Arts District/West Boyle Heights
4 - Atwater Village
5 - Azusa/Citrus
6 - Bellflower/Southeast Downey
7 - Boyle Heights
8 - CalPoly Pomona
9 - Canoga Corridor
10 - Central Burbank
11 - Central Glendale
12 - Central Huntington Park
13 - Central Long Beach
14 - Central Pomona
15 - Central Reseda/S. Northridge
16 - Central San Pedro
17 - Central South Gate
18 - Central Whittier
19 - Central Winetka
20 - Chinatown/Cornfield
21 - City Terrace
22 - Commerce/Bell Gardens
23 - County Hospital
24 - Crenshaw/Baldwin Hills
25 - CSULA and Neighborhood
26 - Cypress/Glassell Park
27 - East Central Long Beach
28 - East Del Rey
29 - East Hollywood
30 - East LA/Montebello/Pico Rivera
31 - Eastern West Hollywood
32 - El Sereno
33 - Elysian Park
34 - Elysian Valley/Frogtown
35 - Florence Firestone
36 - Gardena/N. Harbor Gateway
37 - Glen-Bank
38 - Goodyear/Van Meter Springs
39 - Greater Athens
40 - Greater Baldwin Park
41 - Greater Compton
42 - Greater Echo Park
43 - Greater El Monte
44 - Greater Lincoln Heights
45 - Greater North Hollywood
46 - Greater Willowbrook
47 - Hawaiian Gardens
48 - Hawthorne
49 - Highland Park
50 - Hollywood
51 - Hyde/Harvard Park
52 - Inglewood
53 - Koreatown
54 - Lawndale
55 - Leimert Park
56 - Lennox
57 - Little Tokyo/Toy District/Skid Row
58 - Lomita/Southwest Carson
59 - Los Feliz
60 - Los Nietos
61 - Manchester/Harvard/Chesterfield
62 - Mid-City
63 - Mid-City West
64 - North Lynwood
65 - Northeast Pasadena
66 - North Long Beach
67 - Northern Lower LAR Cities
68 - Northern Tarzana
69 - Northwest Glassell Park
70 - Northwest Norwalk
71 - Outer Expo Park
72 - Pacoima
73 - Palms
74 - Panorama City
75 - Paramount
76 - Pico Union
77 - Rowland/Industry
78 - San Fernando
79 - Santa Monica I-10 Corridor
80 - Sawtelle
81 - Silverlake
82 - South Boyle Heights
83 - South Central
84 - S. Harbor Gateway/West Carson
85 - South Park/Fashion/Lofts District
86 - South Puente Valley
87 - Sun Valley East
88 - Sun Valley South
89 - Southwest Mar Vista
90 - Sylmar/Foothill Blvd Comm
91 - Tujunga/Foothill Blvd
92 - Valley Glen/Valley Village
93 - Van Nuys
94 - Van Nuys Airport
95 - Vermont Knolls
96 - Vermont Square
97 - Watts Proper
98 - Watts West
99 - West Adams/Jefferson Park
100 - West Long Beach
101 - West SGV 10 Freeway
102 - Western South Whittier
103 - Westlake
104 - Westmont
105 - Wilmington
106 - Casitas Springs
107 - El Rio
108 - Fillmore
109 - Nyeland Acres
110 - Oxnard
111 - Piru
112 - Santa Paula
113 - Saticoy
114 - West Ventura
115 - Boquet Canyon
116 - Canyon Country
117 - Castaic
118 - Lake Hughes
119 - Newhall
120 - Santa Clarita
121 - Val Verde
122 - Agua Dulce
123 - Acton
124 - Avalon

Appendix B-
Pre-Event Checklist

Q1 **WRI Pre-Event Checklist (For NGOs/CBOs)**
Please complete the following information for your event at least **six (6) weeks** in advance.

- Event Name (1) _____
- Location (Venue) (2) _____
- Location (Address) (3) _____
- Date (MM/DD/YYYY) (4) _____
- Time (AM/PM) (5) _____
- NGO/CBO Primary Contact (Name) (6) _____
- Primary Contact (Email) (7) _____
- Primary Contact (Phone) (8) _____

Q1b **DAC Communities**: _____

Q2 **Event Type** (please select one)

- ○ Public Meeting (1)
- ○ Town Hall (2)
- ○ Workshop Pop-Up (3)
- ○ Open House (4)
- ○ Other (5) _____

Q3 **Outreach Efforts** (please select all that apply)

- ☐ Flyers (1)
- ☐ Social Media (2)
- ☐ Email contact list (3)
- ☐ Elected official Invitations (4)
- ☐ Water Service Provider Invitations (CSU will send) (5)

Q4 Please briefly describe your planned outreach approach.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q5 **Request Customized Toolkit Materials** A customized Toolkit will be provided for each event as a digital file (PDF). Templates that you will need to customize (Flyer, Agenda, Sign-In Sheet,

Comment Card, and PowerPoint file) are available to download at (WaterTalks_templates). Additional customized materials can be requested using the form below.

Q6
Posters

If needed for your event, you may select **up to three (3) pages** of the Toolkit to be provided as large-format posters (24 x 36 inches). Please select the desired items below.

- [ ] What is WaterTalks? (1)
- [ ] IRWM Regions (2)
- [ ] Project Overview (3)
- [ ] Funding (4)
- [ ] Surface Water and Groundwater (5)
- [ ] Watershed (6)
- [ ] Groundwater (focused) (7)
- [ ] Flooding (optional) (8)
- [ ] Access to Water-Related Recreation (optional) (9)
- [ ] Existing Land Cover (10)
- [ ] Capturing and Storing Water (11)
- [ ] Water Sources (12)
- [ ] Drinking Water (13)
- [ ] Tap Water Quality (14)

- [ ] Water Service Providers (15)

Q7 What language(s) will you need the posters translated into?

- [ ] None (1)
- [ ] Spanish (2)
- [ ] Vietnamese (3)
- [ ] Korean (4)
- [ ] Cantonese (5)
- [ ] Mandarin (6)
- [ ] Tagalog (7)

Q8 Will you require a sign-language (American) interpreter?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

End of Block: Event Information

Appendix C-
Post-Event Checklist

Q1 **WRI Post-Event Checklist (For NGOs/CBOs)**

- ○ Event Name (1) _____
- ○ Location (Venue) (2) _____
- ○ Location (Address) (3) _____
- ○ Date (MM/DD/YYYY) (4) _____
- ○ Time (AM/PM) (5) _____
- ○ NGO/CBO Primary Contact (Name) (6)

  _____
- ○ Primary Contact (Email) (7)

  _____
- ○ Primary Contact (Phone) (8)

  _____

Q2 **Attendance**

	0 (1)	1 - 5 (2)	6 - 10 (3)	11 - 20 (4)	21 - 30 (5)	31+ (6)
Community Members (Over age 18)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Community Members (Under age 18)	○	○	○	○	○	○
NGO/CBO Staff	○	○	○	○	○	○
Water Service Providers	○	○	○	○	○	○
Elected Officials	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q3 **Did you feel that you had appropriate training to conduct the meeting?**

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Display This Question:

If Did you feel that you had appropriate training to conduct the meeting? = No

Q4 **What additional training would have been helpful?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q5 **Are there questions/comments that require follow-up?**

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Display This Question:

If Did you feel that you had appropriate training to conduct the meeting? = No

Q6 **What questions or comments require follow-up?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q7 **Event Narrative**

Please provide two or three paragraphs describing the event highlights.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q8 **Upload Sign-in Sheet *(Link to be provided)***

Q9 **Upload Photos *(Link to be provided)***

Q10 **Upload receipts, invoices or other documents to ensure payment *(Link to be provided)***

Appendix D- Event Guide

Event types appropriate for WaterTalks are described in the matrix below, along with considerations for determining when to use each event type. Potential activities are identified for each event type within the matrix, and questions that could be utilized for any event type are provided following the matrix. Additional event guides will be available on the WaterTalks website.

EVENT STYLE/MEETING TYPE	DESCRIPTION	BEST USED	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
A. MEETINGS/ PRESENTATION	One or more individuals present information to an audience using materials such as a Powerpoint presentation and/or handouts. Group discussion is encouraged. Approx. number of attendees: 10-25+	To share information with an audience by compressing complex data into a message that is short and easy to understand.	• Formal Powerpoint presentation • Boards for review • Open forum for public to make comments and ask questions
B. ACTION-BASED EVENTS	Events take place in a strategized location to seek out participants in the community. These events engage targeted users in a creative way to generate ideas and receive feedback on a specific issue or topic. Events often piggy-back on existing events (e.g., community clean up, tree planting, etc.) Approx. number of attendees: 25-75+	To engage communities in a fun and spontaneous event that encourages active participation and involvement. Activities are tied to water-related education.	• Information boards • Participatory 'sticker' boards • Surveys • Photo booth • Mapping exercise • Activity boards • Information packet • Giveaways/ brochures
C. OTHER	May be approved upon request		

EXAMPLE DICUSSION QUESTIONS

- WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT WATER?
- WHERE IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE FOR WATER-RELATED RECREATION?
- WHAT WATERWAYS AND NATURAL RESOURCES ARE IN YOUR WATERSHED?
- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN IT RAINS IN YOUR COMMUNITY? WHERE DOES THE WATER GO?
- IS FLOODING A CONCERN IN YOUR COMMUNITY? WHAT ISSUES DOES FLOODING CAUSE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?
- DOES YOUR COMMUNITY CATCH AND STORE WATER? HOW COULD THIS BE DONE?
- HOW MUCH WATER DO YOU DRINK? HOW MUCH WATER DO YOU USE?
- WHERE DOES YOUR TAP WATER COMES FROM? (IMPORTED; SURFACE; GROUND; RECYCLED; ETC.)
- DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF YOUR TAP WATER? DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND OUT HOW CLEAN YOUR WATER IS?
- WHAT WATER-RELATED ISSUES ARE OF GREATEST CONCERN TO YOUR COMMUNITY? HOW COULD THESE ISSUES BE ADDRESSED?
- HOW ARE WATER-RELATED PROJECTS PLANNED, DESIGNED, FUNDED, AND IMPLEMENTED?

Appendix E - CITI Training

Requirements and recommendations for completing the CITI training:

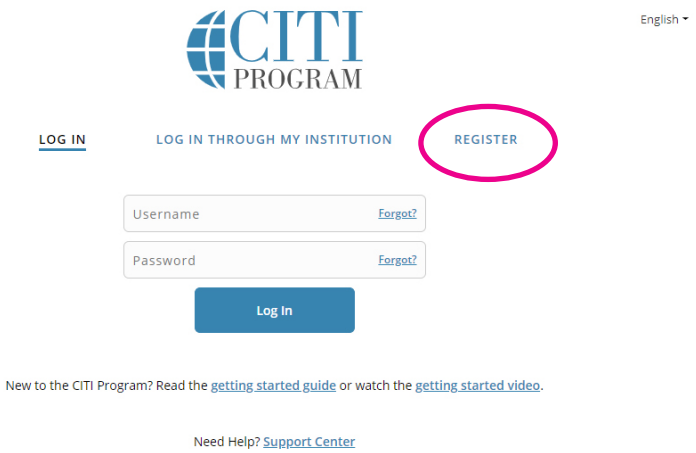
- Only one person from your organization should take the CITI training.
- Computer (fully charged or plugged in)
- Pencil and paper to take notes
- Ability to save the final completion certificate
- 4-6 hours to complete the full training
- You may complete the training in multiple sessions
- You MUST complete all 16 required modules. You are not required to complete supplemental modules.
- You MUST pass all module quizzes with 100% to pass the training. Each quiz contains 5-10 questions. You can retake the quizzes as many times as needed to achieve 100%.
- The final test uses the same questions as the previous quizzes, but rearranges the questions to ensure you're paying attention.
- After completing all modules, you will receive a certificate. Save the certificate and email it to Kathleen Firstenberg at KFirstenberg@csusb.edu.

You must complete the training and submit this certificate at least one week before your first community outreach event.

REGISTRATION

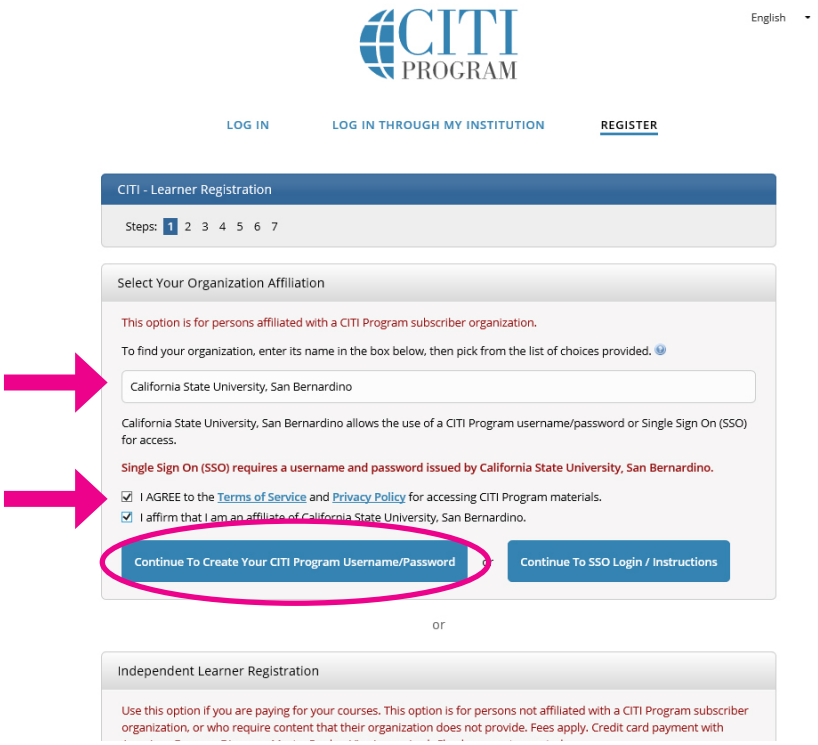
You must register with CITI Program to access the training. There are seven steps in the registration process, and it will take 5-10 minutes to complete the process.

Go to https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=14 and click on "REGISTER"



Step One

- Begin by entering or selecting from the list “California State University, San Bernardino” as your Organization Affiliation.
- Next, check the boxes stating “I AGREE to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy for accessing CITI Program materials and “I affirm that I am an affiliate of Califronai State University, San Bernardino”
- Finally, click on the blue box that says “Continue to Create Your CITI Program Username/ Password”



Step Two

- Enter the requested personal information

Step 3

- Create your username and password
- You will need this information to log in and complete the training

Step 4

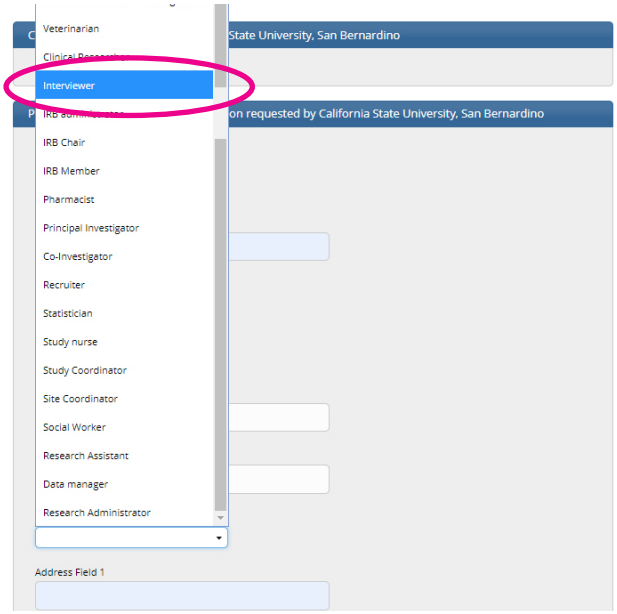
- Enter your Country of Residence

Step 5

- Provide answers to questions about Continuing Education Credits (recommend answering “no”); and preferences for future contact from CITI

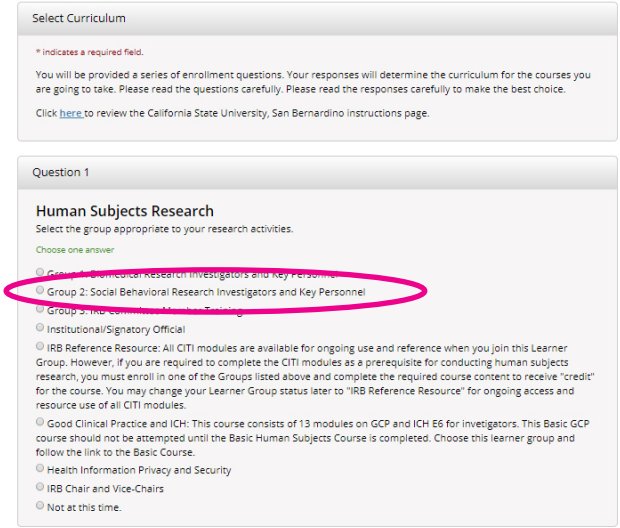
Step 6

- Provide the requested information. Answers are only required for fields with an asterisk (*).
- For the question “Institutional Email Address,” enter your regular email address
- For the question “What is Your Role in Research,” select “Interviewer” from the menu



Step 7

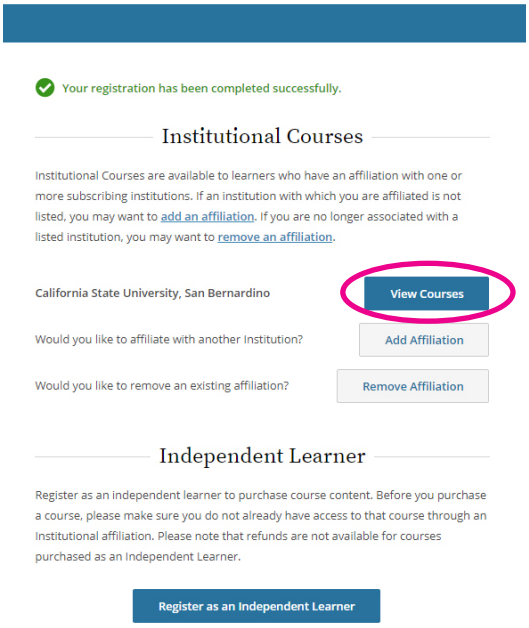
- Only answer Question 1. Select **“Group 2: Social Behavior Research Investigators and Key Personnel”**
- Leave all other questions **blank**
- Click on the Complete Registration button at the bottom of the page



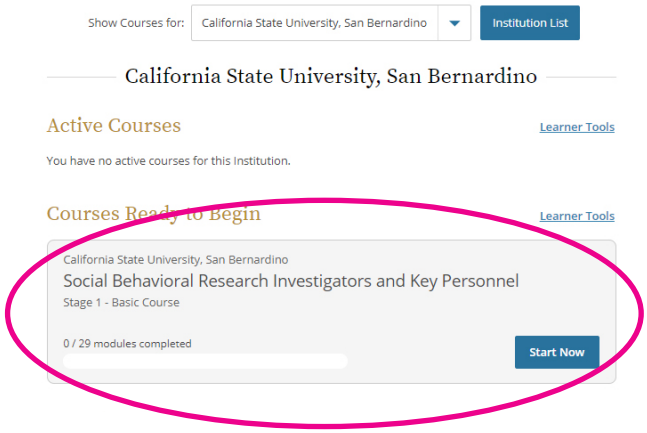
- Finalize your registration by clicking on the blue button



- Select the blue button to view your courses

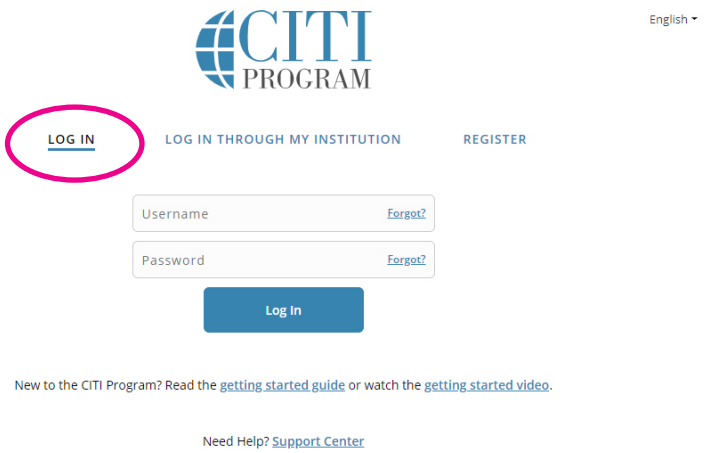


- Confirm that the course assigned to you is “Social Behavior Research Investigators and Key Personnel,” with 16 required modules and 9 supplemental modules.
- If you’re ready to begin the training now, select “Start Now”



COMPLETING YOUR TRAINING

- If you’re not already logged in, access the login page at: https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=14



- Once you’re logged in, complete the modules as you have time; your progress will be tracked by module completed.
- If you need to leave a session before you take the quiz at the end of the module, you will need to start over at the beginning of the module.
- Once you have completed the training course, save your certificate and email it to: Kathleen Firstenberg at KFirstenberg@csusb.edu
- If you have any questions about the registration process or training course, please contact Kathleen Firstenberg at KFirstenberg@csusb.edu

You must complete the training and submit this certificate at least one week before your first community outreach event.

Appendix F- Frequently Asked Questions

What is IRWM?

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) utilizes Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) to plan for water in California. DWR defines IRWM as "a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. " With the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM region, there are five subregions. The integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act (SB 1672) has provided over $1.5 billion in State funding dedicated to support and advance integrated, multi-benefit regional projects. For more information including opportunities for engagement go to: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/irwmp/Prop1DACIP.aspx

What is WaterTalks?

WaterTalks is a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Its goal is to explore the strengths and opportunities of 128 communities in the Los Angeles and Ventura counties facing ongoing economic and environmental distress, and gather input to prioritize and recommend water-related projects based on issues of greatest concern. WaterTalks aims to ensure that regional water resource management considers the health, safety, welfare, and resiliency of lower-income community members.

How is WaterTalks funded?

WaterTalks is funded through the California Department of Water Resources. In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act"—Proposition 1—to meet the State's long-term water needs. Proposition 1 funds an array of sustainable water-related projects, including drinking water protection, public water system improvements, water recycling, wastewater treatment, drought relief, emergency water supply management, and watershed protection.

Why was my community chosen?

Community events are located in areas that contain one or more Disadvantaged Community (DAC). A DAC is defined in Water Code §79505.5(a)as a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income.

What is the purpose of WaterTalks outreach events?

WaterTalks will be implemented in three phases, each involving outreach events to DAC communities. Each phase will build upon the previous phase, and culminate with project

proposals for Prop 1 funding from DAC communities. The purpose of each phase is described below.

- **Community Outreach (2019-2020 and ongoing).** The first phase of WaterTalks outreach events are designed to educate and engage communities in the Los Angeles and Ventura counties facing ongoing economic and environmental distress, empowering them to engage in water planning including subsequent phases of WaterTalks. These events will also allow community members to raise questions and concerns about water-related issues, and to gain access to information and other resources about water in their community.
- **Needs Assessment (Future).** In this phase, a comprehensive Needs Assessment will be conducted to identify and prioritize water management and infrastructure deficiencies as well as related community needs for improving improve water supply and water quality; enhancing open space, recreation and habitat; and improving flood management. Outreach activities will continue during the Needs Assessment.
- **Project Development (Future).** Projects will be identified and evaluated with the goal to ensure prioritization of projects that will provide the greatest possible benefit to the largest number of DACs. A Technical Assistance training and support program will be developed for entities that serve DACs, such as cities, community-based organizations, mutual water companies, water quality managers, park and open space managers and other water and land resource managers. This program will support DACs in developing project plans, permits, studies, and other requirements to ensure high priority projects are "shovel ready" for subsequent implementation in future grant funding cycles.

Are there other funding sources available?

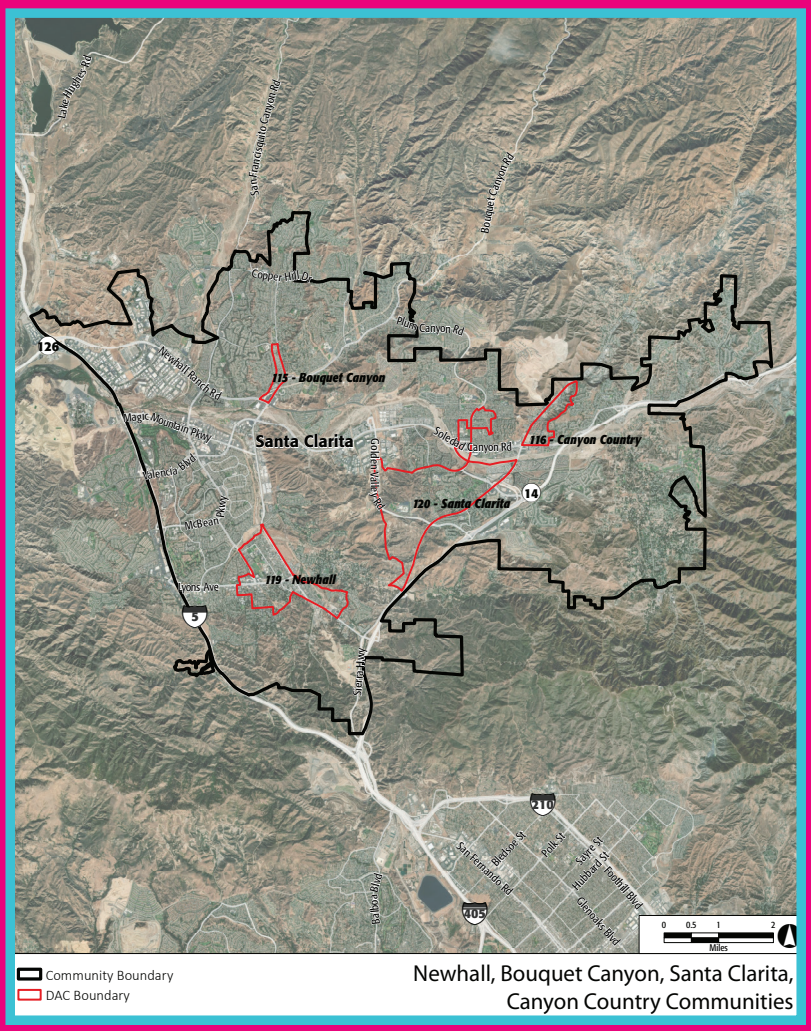
In addition to funding from the Regional Water Management Planning Act, Prop 1 and Measure W are potential funding sources to support water-related multi-benefit projects throughout our community. For additional funding resources, please visit: https://www.fundingresource.org/.

WATER talks

Newhall, Bouquet Canyon, Santa Clarita, Canyon Country Communities

02.01.2020

UPPER SANTA CLARA RIVER
INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT



Funded by California Department of Water Resources and Prop 1

It's **our** water.

PROP 1
GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM
WATER BOND 2014

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

TOOLKIT
TABLE OF CONTENTS

WATER talks

PROJECT BACKGROUND

What is WaterTalks?

IRWM Regions- How do we plan for water in California?

Project Overview- How is WaterTalks funded?

Funding- What sources of funding are available for water-related projects?

Jobs Related to Water- What sectors focus on water? What kinds of jobs focus on water?

WATER IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

Surface Water and Groundwater- Where does my rainwater go?

Water Contamination- How can contaminants get into our water?

Watershed- What is a watershed?

Groundwater- Where does my groundwater come from?

Flooding- Am I at risk of flooding?

Access to Parks and Local Waterways- How clean are our lakes, streams, rivers, and beaches? Where can I find parks and local waterways?

Existing Land Use- How does land use affect our water?

Capturing and Storing Water- How can we catch and store rainwater?

OUR TAP WATER

Water Sources- Where does my tap water come from?

Water Consumption- How much water does one person drink? How much water do we use at home?

Tap Water Quality- How clean is my drinking water?

Water Service Provider- Who is my water service provider? How much does my water cost?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ACRONYMS

TEMPLATES:

- Event Flyer Template
- PowerPoint Presentation Template
- Agenda Template
- Sign-In Sheet Template
- Comment Cards
- Take-Away Flyer

Additional resources available online at watertalks.csusb.edu

Prepared by:
Water Resources & Policy Initatives, California State University & PlaceWorks
in collaboration with:
TreePeople and the Council for Watershed Health

CSU The California State University WRPI WATER RESOURCES & POLICY INITIATIVES

PLACEWORKS

TREEPEOPLE

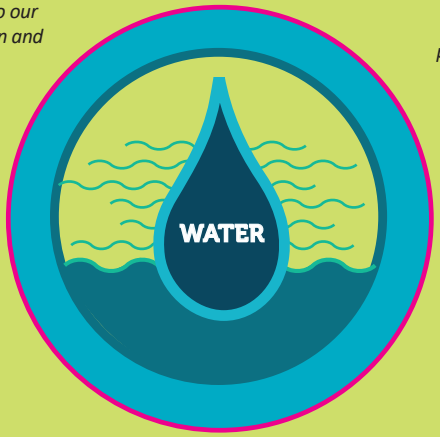
WHAT IS WATERTALKS?

WaterTalks is a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Its goal is to explore the strengths and opportunities of 128 communities in Los Angeles and Ventura counties facing ongoing economic and environmental distress, and to gather input to prioritize and recommend water-related projects based on issues of greatest concern.

WaterTalks will be implemented in three phases. The first phase of WaterTalks outreach events are designed to educate and engage communities in the Los Angeles and Ventura counties facing ongoing economic and environmental distress, empowering them to engage in water planning including subsequent phases of WaterTalks.

WaterTalks aims to ensure that regional water resource management considers the health, safety, welfare, and resiliency of lower-income community members. To do so, WaterTalks is providing a series of community events for the benefit of local residents to do the following: (1) raise questions and concerns about their water-related issues, (2) provide crucial input regarding their community's water needs, possible solutions, and (3) to learn about the State's most current water related topics. These include drinking water, water conservation, flood management, drainage, vector control, access to parks and recreation, and the overall health of our watersheds.

Participation in a WaterTalks Community events will help ensure communities' needs, concerns, questions, and insights become part of the State's future water projects. A schedule of meeting dates and locations is available on the WaterTalks website: https://watertalks.csusb.edu



Clean Water

Clean water is essential to our hydration, food production and sanitation needs.

Flood Protection

Flood protection strategies are vital to preventing flooding catastrophes in our counties, cities and neighborhoods.

Drainage & Vector Concerns

Management of drainage water is important to reduce water related vector-borne diseases.

Health & Well-Being

Educate people about their water quality to ensure healthy living.

Green Walkable Neighborhoods & Safe Routes to School

Water is an essential ingredient for shaded, walkable, and healthy streets.

Multi-Objective Parks, Recreation, & Habitats

Access to natural resources (i.e. creeks, streams, rivers etc.) and open space directly contributes to public and environmental health.

IRWM REGIONS

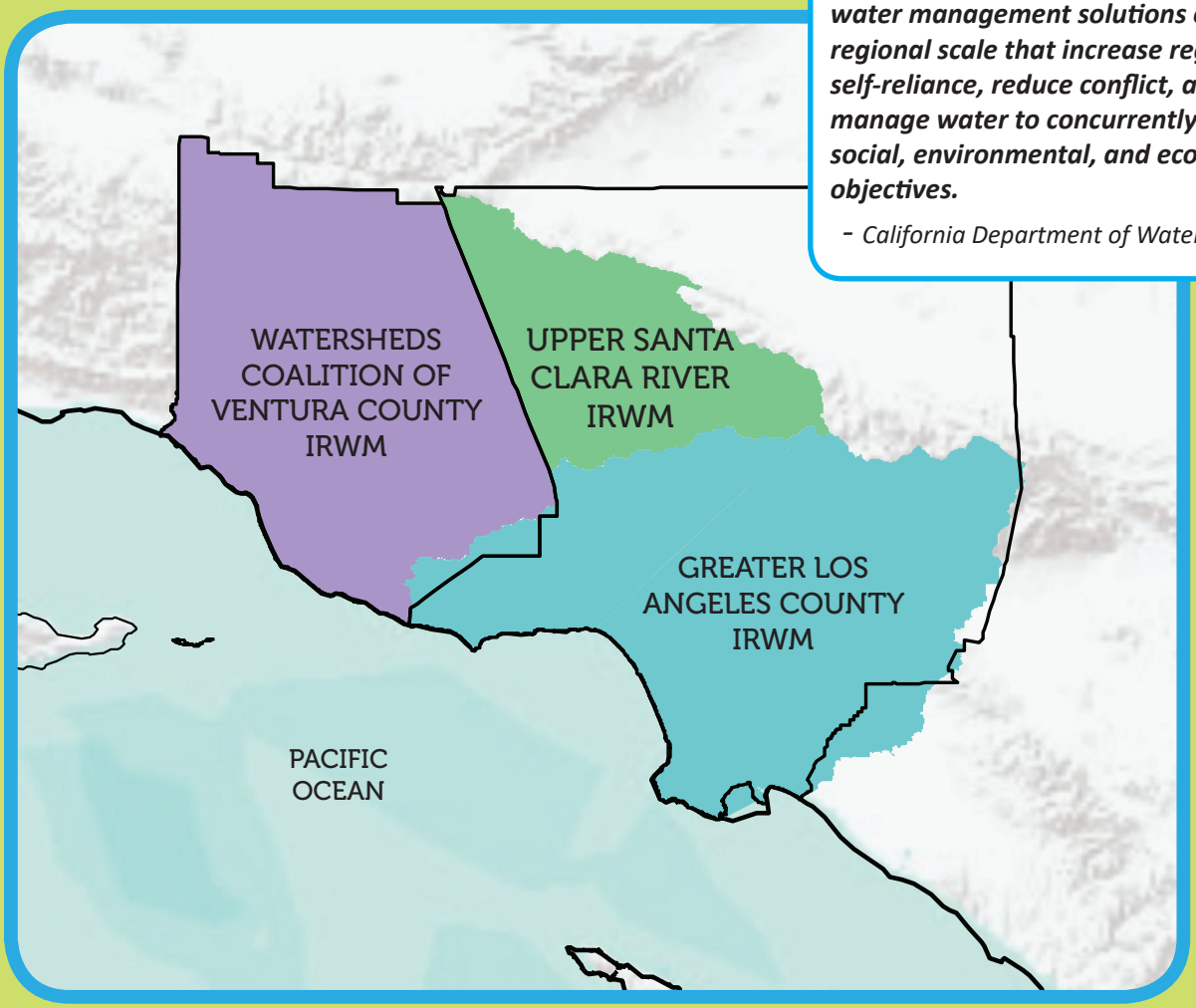
HOW DO WE PLAN FOR WATER IN CALIFORNIA?

The Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act (SB 1672, 2002) has provided over $1.5 billion in State funding dedicated to support and advance integrated, multi-benefit regional projects. WaterTalks supports California's collaborative effort, Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM), in three of Southern California's planning areas.

- Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC)
- Upper Santa Clara River (USCR)
- Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC)

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives.

- California Department of Water Resources



IRWM meetings for USCR and its subregions are open to the public!
To learn more visit: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/irwmp/

PROJECT OVERVIEW

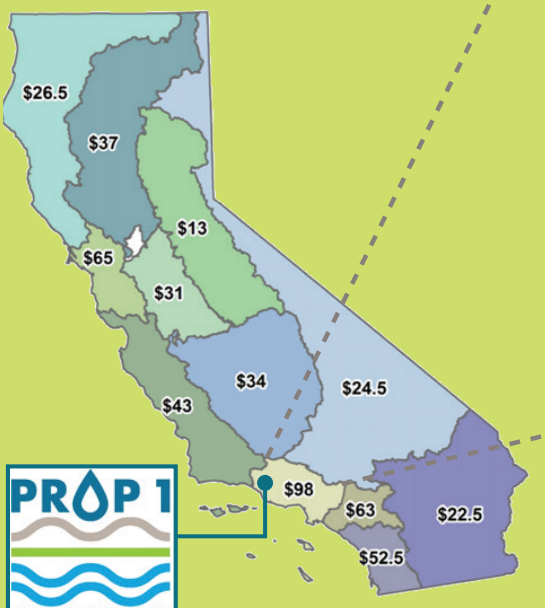
WaterTalks is funded through the California Department of Water Resources. In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act" – Proposition 1 – to meet the State's long-term water needs. Proposition 1 funds an array of sustainable water-related projects, including drinking water protection, public water system improvements, water recycling, wastewater treatment, drought relief, emergency water supply management, and watershed protection. The Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area received $98 million in Proposition 1 funding, ten-percent ($9.8M) of which is dedicated to planning and outreach in underserved communities.

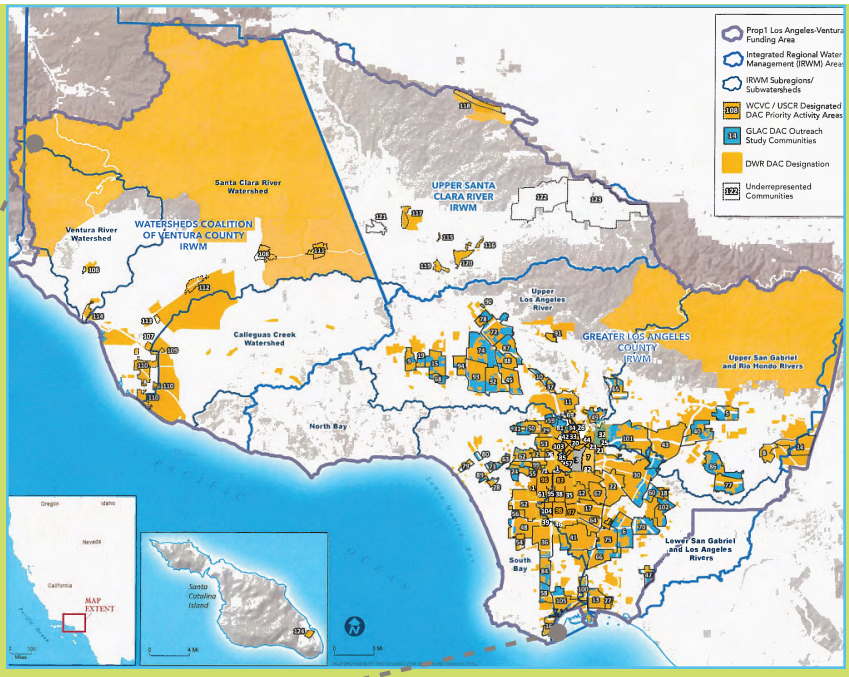
WaterTalks is being implemented in three regions in the Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area. The California State University's Water Resources and Policies Initiative (WRPI) is involving communities for the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) and Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) regions. TreePeople, along with the Council for Watershed Health, is engaging communities in activities for the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) Region. The two teams collaborate with numerous community based organizations to host local WaterTalks community events.

Proposition 1 Funding Areas

- Central Coast
- Colorado River
- Lahonton
- Los Angeles
- Mountain Counties
- North Coast
- Sacramento
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San Joaquin River
- Santa Ana
- Tulare Lake

Funding allocations in millions





PROP 1
LOS ANGELES-VENTURA
FUNDING AREA

Where can I learn more?

Proposition 1: California's Integrated Regional Water Management, and the Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program (DACIP), see the following websites:

- https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/Proposition-1
- https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/Proposition-1/DAC-Involvement-Program

FUNDING

WHAT SOURCES OF FUNDING ARE AVAILABLE FOR WATER-RELATED PROJECTS?

In addition to funding from the Regional Water Management Planning Act, Prop 1 and Measure W are potential funding sources to support water-related multi-benefit projects throughout our community. Multi-benefit projects address two or more of the following:

- water quality
- stormwater management
- flood management
- restored and enhanced ecosystems
- reliable surface and groundwater supplies

Proposition 1

Water Quality, Supply & Infrastructure Improvement Act

Year: 2014

Funding Available: $7.545 billion in bonds in California, including $98 million in the LA-Ventura Funding Area

What can be funded: water-related projects including surface and groundwater storage, water recycling, and stormwater projects

Measure W

Safe Clean Water Parcel Tax

Year: 2018

Funding Available: approx. $300 million per year will be generated by a parcel tax (2.5 cents per square foot of impermeable space on private property in the County of LA)

What can be funded: stormwater capture projects focusing on nature-based solutions

For additional funding resources, please visit:
https://www.fundingresource.org/

JOBS RELATED TO WATER

WHAT SECTORS FOCUS ON WATER?

Jobs related to water can be found at public agencies, nonprofit organizations, or private companies in three general areas: providing water services, restoring and protecting natural resources, and managing the flow of surface waters.

AREAS OF FOCUS	
Water Service Provider	• Tap Water • Wastewater
Natural Resources	• Conservation • Restoration • Youth Conservation Corps
Hydrology/Public Works	• Flood Control • Stormwater

WHAT KINDS OF JOBS FOCUS ON WATER?

Water-related jobs require a variety of skill, experience, and education levels. Many of these jobs are needed across all sectors. The table and list below describes these various sectors and career paths that focus on water.

JOBS RELATED TO WATER:

- Wastewater Treatment Operator
- System/Plant Operator
- Stormwater Management
- Certified Erosion, Sediment /Stormwater Inspector
- Hydroelectric Plant Technician
- Chemist
- Research Analyst
- Accountant
- Attorney
- Secretary
- IT Technician
- Engineer
- Surveyor
- Geologist
- Dispatcher
- Heavy Equipment Mechanic
- Graphic Designer
- Photographer
- Office Assistant

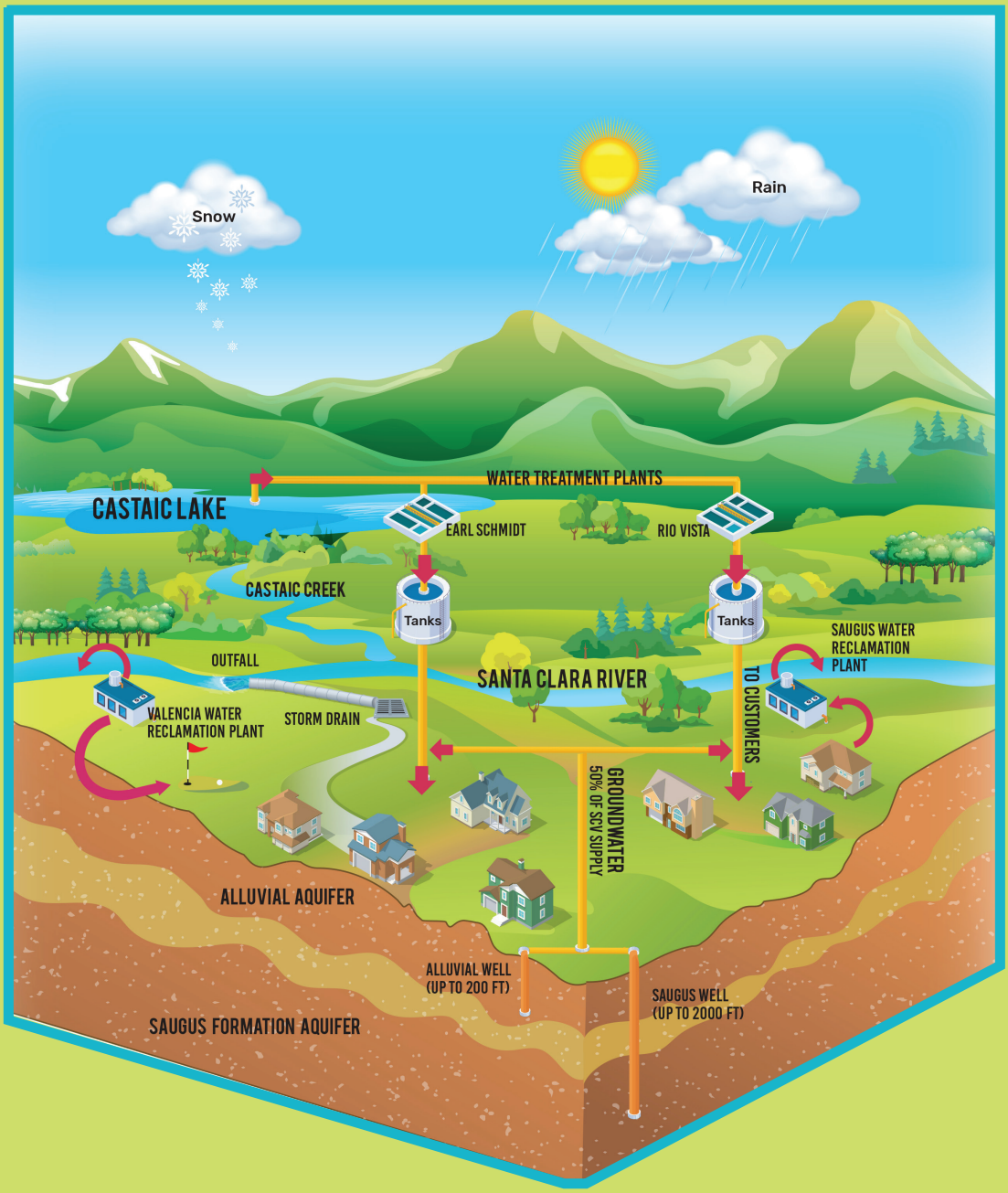
For more information about jobs related to water, please visit:
https://water.ca.gov/About/Careers or watertalks.csusb.edu

SURFACE WATER AND GROUNDWATER

WHERE DOES RAINWATER GO?

Rainwater, surface water and groundwater systems are integrally connected.

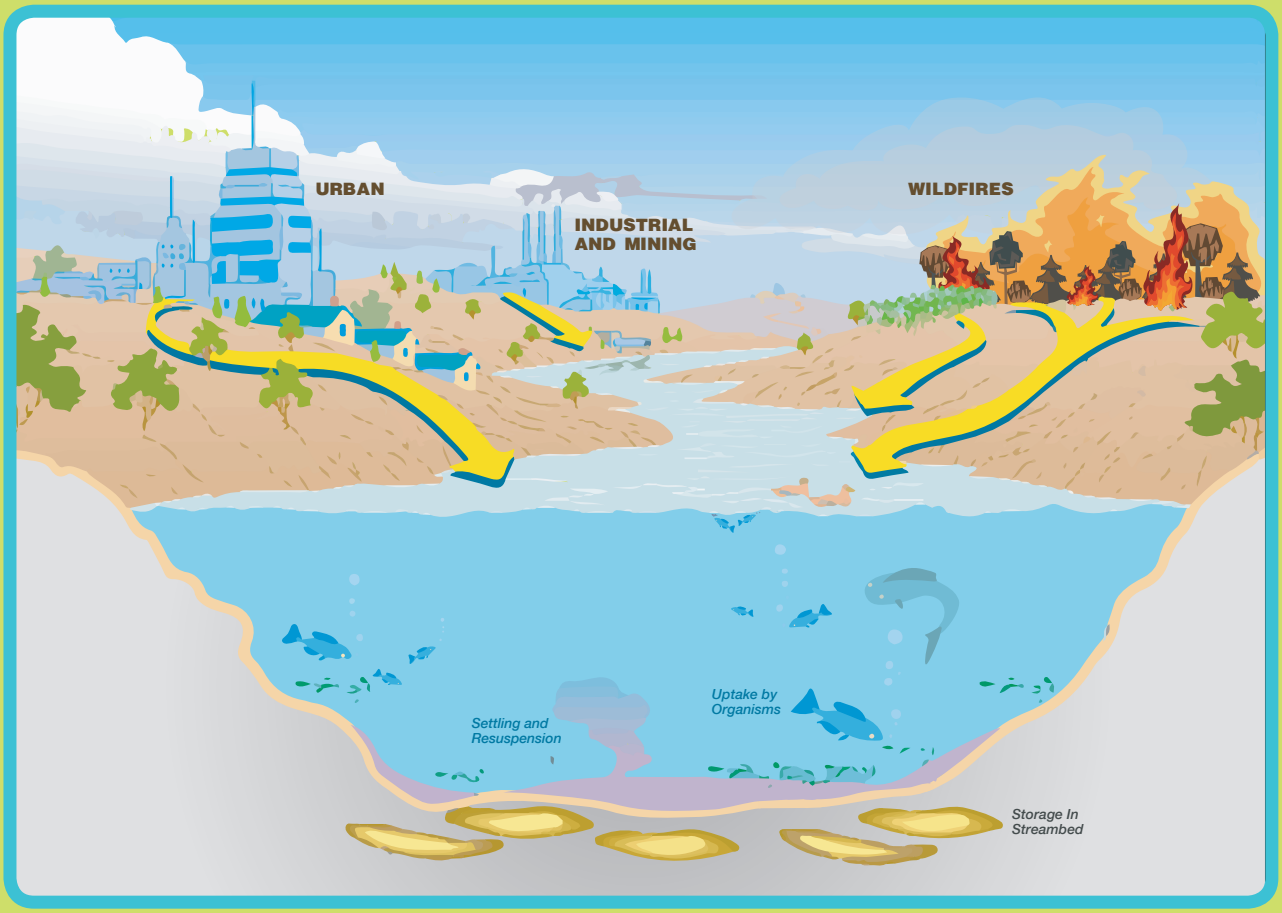
- Rain falls to the earth and collects on the surface or underground.
- Surface water flows into rivers, streams and reservoirs.
- Groundwater is precipitation that seeps into the earth's soils and rock formations and is stored in aquifers. Groundwater can be pumped from underground reservoirs known as "aquifers".



WATER CONTAMINATION

HOW CAN CONTAMINANTS GET INTO OUR WATER?

Trash, fecal bacteria, litter, pesticides and herbicides, brake pad dust, and many other pollutants impact our local streams, rivers, beaches, and groundwater aquifers. These contaminants flow through the built environment during storm events, ultimately settling in our streams, oceans and groundwater. An estimated 10 billion gallons of polluted water is flushed into the ocean during a typical storm in LA County.

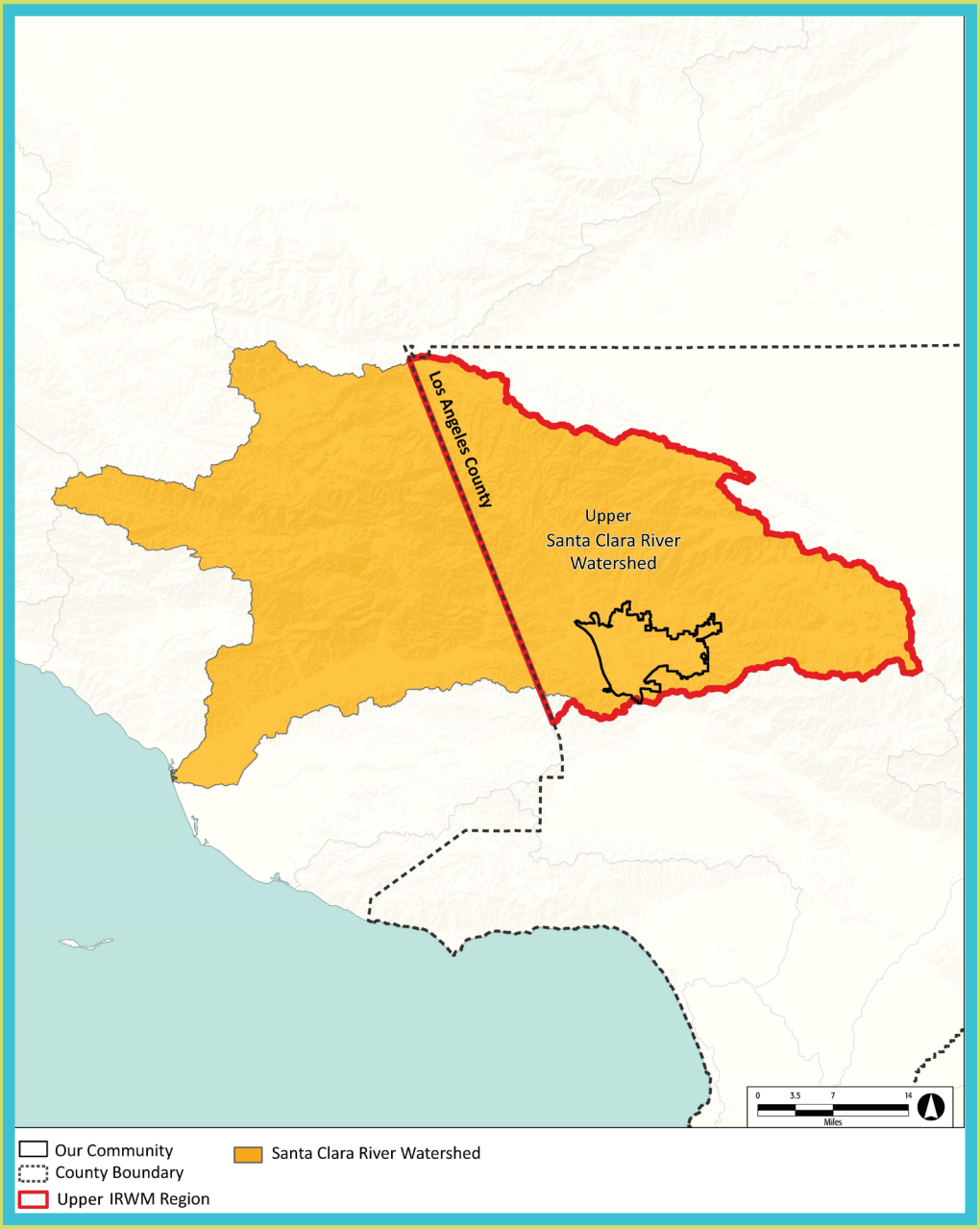


Stormwater pollution can be prevented by correctly disposing chemical and material waste or by using green infrastructure practices that treat and clean our waters.

WATERSHED

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is a land area that channels rainfall and snowmelt into creeks, streams, and rivers that flow into a common outlet such as a reservoir, bay, or the ocean. Our community is located in the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed.



Source: California Natural Resource Agency, 2019; LA County, 2005

GROUNDWATER

WHERE DOES MY GROUNDWATER COME FROM?

A groundwater basin is an aquifer or system of aquifers that stores water beneath the surface. Impermeable surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, and clay or heavily compacted soils, prevent surface water from infiltrating and reaching groundwater aquifers.

In the north and east areas of our region, groundwater is extracted from the southwestern portion of the extensive Antelope Valley Basin, and the smaller Acton Groundwater Basin. In the southern part of our region, groundwater is extracted from the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin's alluvial aquifer and Saugus Formation.



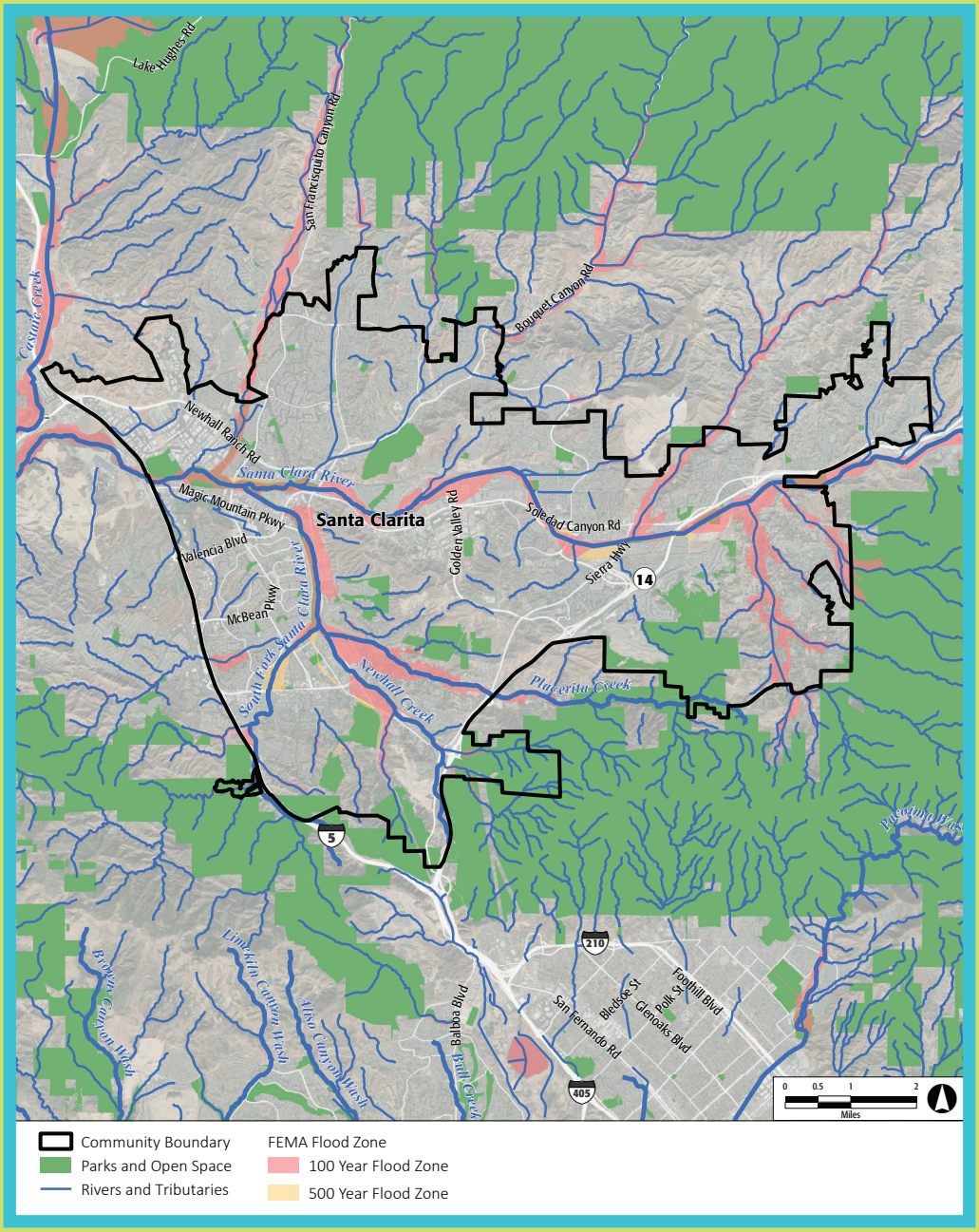
Source: California Natural Resource Agency, 2019; USGS, 2013

FLOODING

AM I AT RISK OF FLOODING ?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines flood zones as areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding, also known as the 100-year flood zone. Areas moderately at risk for flooding have a 0.2% annual chance of flooding, also known as the 500-year flood zone.

More localized flooding may occur within and beyond FEMA flood zones, and can negatively impact communities.



Source: GreenInfo Network 2019; USGS, 2018; FEMA, 2018

ACCESS TO PARKS AND LOCAL WATERWAYS

HOW CLEAN ARE OUR LAKES, STREAMS, RIVERS, AND BEACHES?

Water bodies and the habitats and open space they support can provide places for recreation and respite, contributing to quality of life in our communities. Thousands of visitors swim, wade, kayak, and fish at dozens of freshwater sites located across our region. However, certain contaminants can pose a health risk to those that recreate in and eat fish from our local streams and rivers. Before you recreate, check the most recent water quality reports available through these resources:

- Santa Clara River Water Quality: http://parkway.scrwatershed.org
- Green, Santa Clarita: www.greensantaclarita.com

WHERE CAN I FIND PARKS AND LOCAL WATERWAYS?



Source: PlaceWorks, 2017; USGS, 2018; LA County 2017

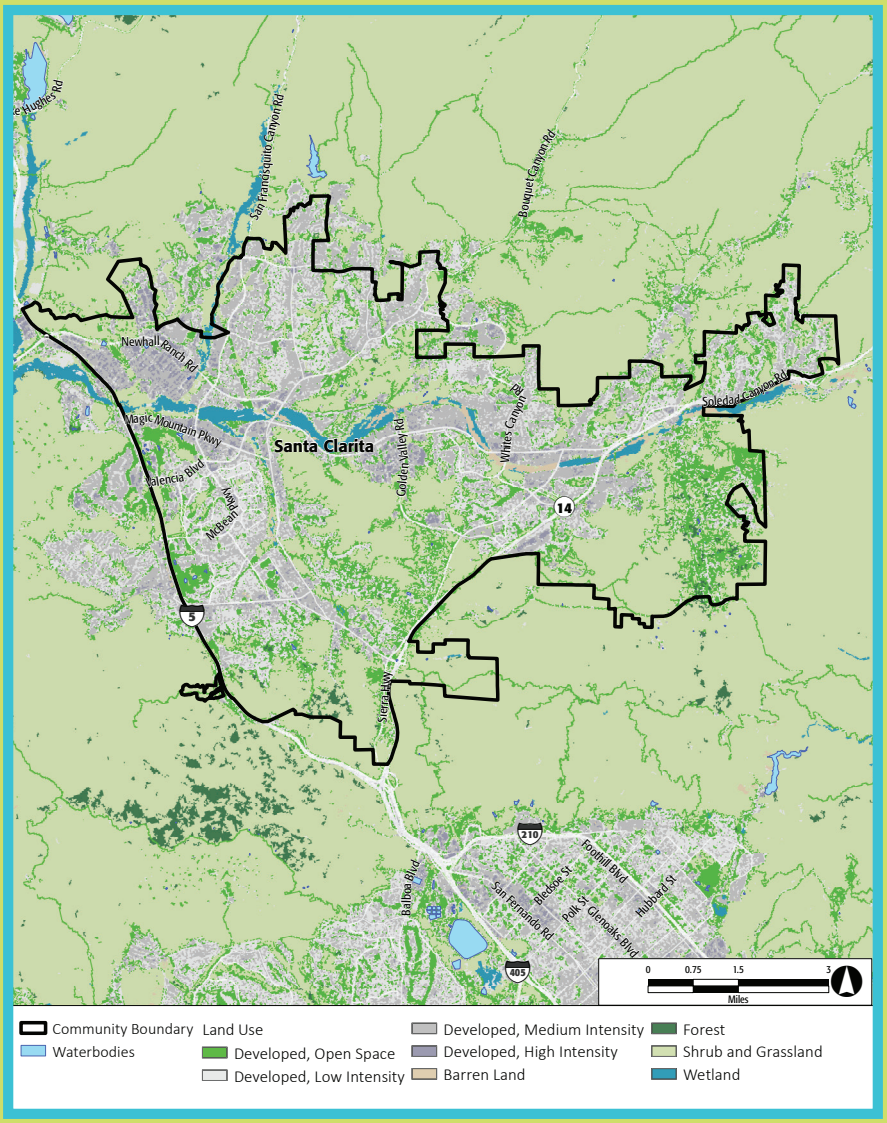
EXISTING LAND USE

HOW DOES LAND USE AFFECT OUR WATER?

Land use directly affects how water moves through communities. Land use in urban communities ranges from open space and agriculture to varying levels of development.

Developed land often consists of impervious surfaces, such as asphalt and concrete. When land is paved, water is not able to soak into the ground. Water that flows over the hardened landscape is channeled into the storm drain system and directed into rivers and oceans.

Too much water flowing across the hardened landscape can result in flooding and/or erosion. This untreated water is called urban runoff. Urban runoff, carrying pollutants such as automotive fluids, trash and pesticides, is the biggest source of pollution in our rivers and ocean.



Source: NLCD, 2016; USGS, 2018; LA County 2017

CAPTURING AND STORING WATER

HOW CAN WE CATCH AND STORE RAINWATER?

It is crucial to our water supply that we treat and clean contaminated runoff, or urban runoff, by incorporating green infrastructure practices into our built environment. Potential green infrastructure strategies that catch, store, and treat urban runoff include constructing rain gardens, bioswales, and biorention ponds; protecting open space; removing hardscape; and redirecting rainwater that falls on rooftops and parking lots into large tanks (cisterns) where it can be stored for later use.

These various methods function to keep our waterways and ocean clean, and help replenish our groundwater supply and reduce our dependence on imported water. Additionally, sustainable landscaping and irrigation practices can reduce and treat urban runoff while also conserving water.











WATER SOURCES

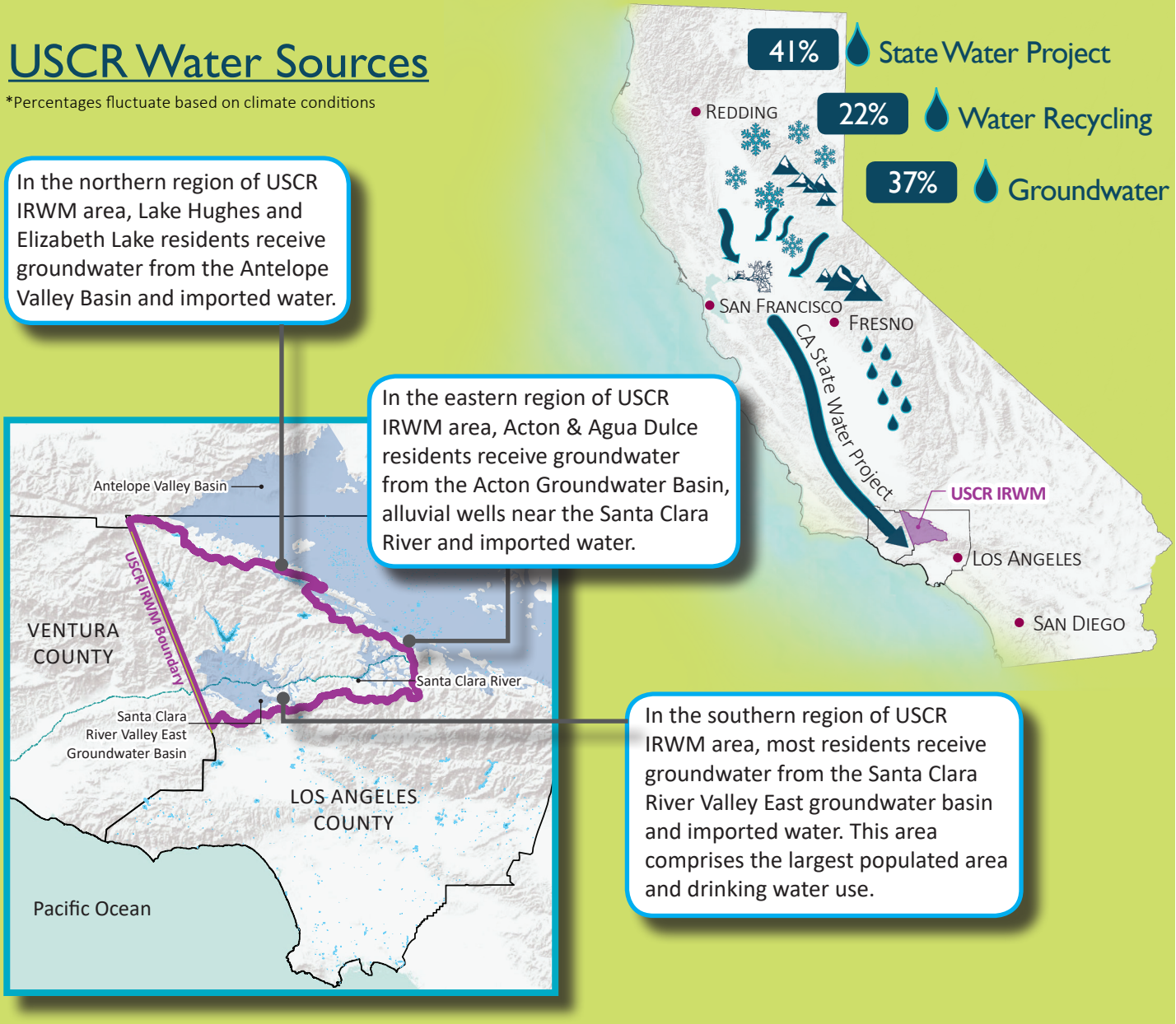
WHERE DOES MY TAP WATER COME FROM?

The water supply for the USCR IRWM comes from three main sources: (1) California State Water Project, (2) water recycling, and (3) groundwater.

The State Water Project is sourced from snow pack and rain from the Sierra Nevada range, flows to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, then through the State Water Project Aqueduct to supply water to Los Angeles County. Water recycling allows for municipal wastewater to be treated and re-utilized. Groundwater is the water stored beneath the Earth's surface. Wells are used to pump the groundwater into our water supply system.

USCR Water Sources

*Percentages fluctuate based on climate conditions



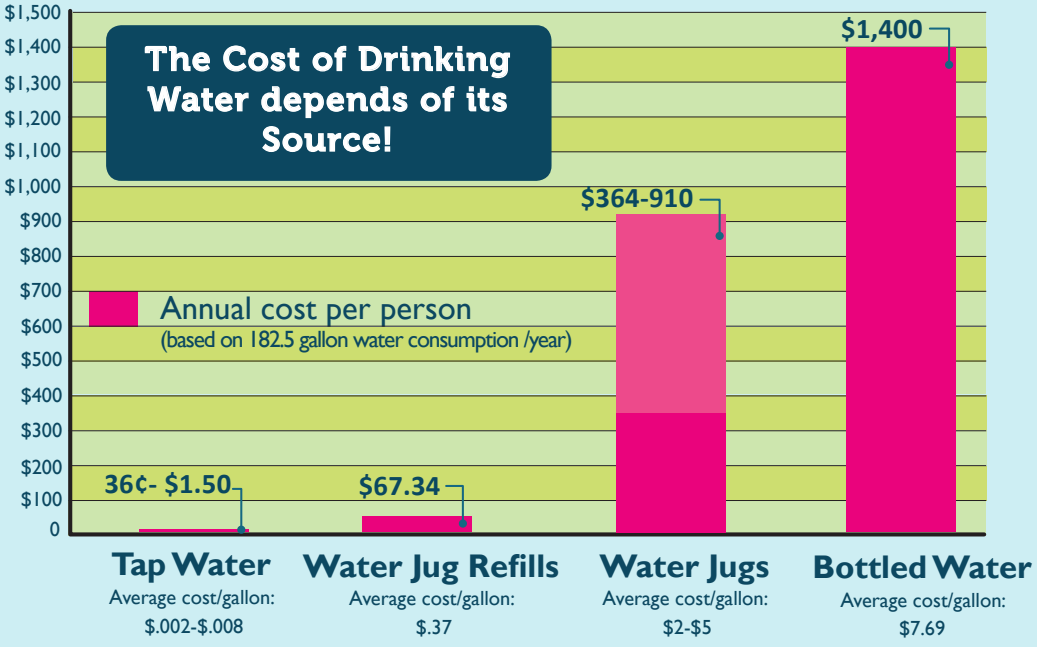
Source: Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, 2014

WATER CONSUMPTION

HOW MUCH DOES ONE PERSON DRINK?



8 Cups per **day** = **1/2 gallon** per **day** = **182.5 gallons** per **year**



HOW MUCH WATER DO WE USE AT HOME?



Residential water uses based on the following resources:

1."How We Use Water." ***EPA***, Environmental Protection Agency, 5 Feb. 2018, www.epa.gov/watersense/how-we-use-water.

2. *"Residential Water Use Trends and Implications for Conservation Policy." Legislative Analyst's Office, 8 Mar. 2017, https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/3611.*

TAP WATER QUALITY



Water quality testing ensures that our drinking water is safe and meets federal and state drinking water standards. The US Environmental Protection Agency establishes federal standards that determine the maximum concentration allowable for specific contaminants in tap water. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Divison of Drinking Water is responsible for regulating drinking water. While tests are important for identifying potential health issues, the presence of some contaminants does not necessarily indicate the water is unsafe to drink for all populations.

How can contaminants get into my tap water?

Contaminants can wash into rivers and streams, or seep into groundwater. Common sources of contamination include: naturally occurring chemicals and minerals, agriculture and land use practices, industry, and urban runoff. Water service providers are responsible for ensuring that the water they provide meets State and federal requirements for maximum contaminant levels.

How often is my water tested and reported?

The State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (DDW) requires community water systems to publish and make available an annual Consumer Confidence Report. Water agencies collect water samples from designated sampling points or wells quarterly, and report results in the annual report.

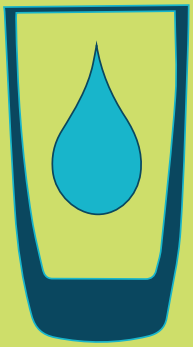
What is my water tested for?

The EPA has set maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for more than 90 contaminants, and maintains a list of unregulated contaminants that may require thresholds in the future. Regulated contaminants include:

- Microorganisms such as viruses, bacteria.
- Inorganic chemicals such as lead, arsenic, nitrate, copper, and chromium.
- Radiological contaminants from natural radioactivity or human activity such as uranium and radon.
- Pesticides such as 1,2-Dibromo-3-chloropropane (DBCP), 1,2-Dibromoethane (EDB), and 1,2-dicholoropropae.

What is an exceedance? What happens when there is an exceedance?

An exceedance occurs when the concentration of a contaminant is above the established safe threshold and could potentially cause a threat to human health. When this occurs, agencies are responsible for sending an unsafe water notice to all customers and instructions on how to proceed when using tap water.



Are property owners responsible for water quality?

Water service providers are responsible for providing safe water to water meters, and property owners/landlords are responsible for maintaining water infrastructure from the meter to tap. In some cases, domestic water quality issues result from infrastructure that is the responsibility of the owner/landlord to maintain.

Do you receive your drinking water from private wells?

Private well owners are not required to test their drinking water for any contaminants. If you recieve your drinking water from a private well, it is strongly recommended that you contact your local public health agency for guidance on testing your drinking water supply.

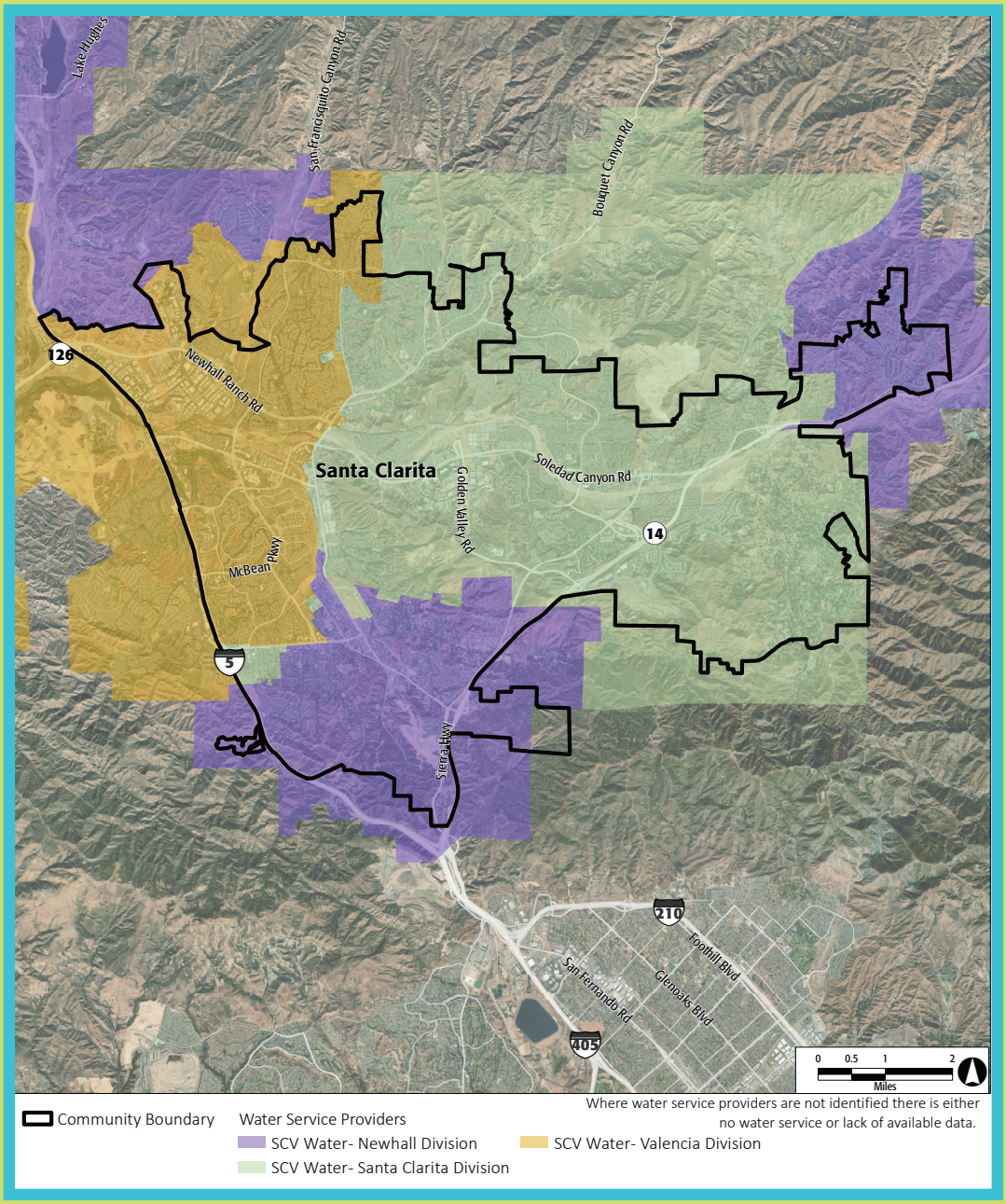
To learn more about water quality in your community, please visit:https://yourscvwater.com/water-quality/.

WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS

WHO IS MY WATER SERVICE PROVIDER?

The water service providers that serve our community are listed below:

- Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water)- Santa Clarita Division
- SCV Water- Valencia Water Division (VWD)
- SCV Water- Newhall Water Division (NWD)



Source: Tracking California, 2018; State Water Resources Control Board, 2018; SCVWater, 2019

WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS

HOW MUCH DOES MY WATER COST?

The table below identifies the primary water source that the Water Service Providers in your community provide to their customers, as well as the total average monthly water cost for all households that they serve. In many cases, Water Service Providers serve customers including households outside of your community.



WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS	Primary Water Source	Total Households Served By Provider	Avg. Cost per Month per household ($)	Median House Income (MHI) For Customers
SCV Water- Santa Clarita Division	Castaic Lake/ SWP and Wells	30,193	$65	$99,202
SCV Water - Valencia Division	Castaic Lake/ SWP and Wells	24,333	$52	$104,516
SCV Water - Newhall Division	Castaic Lake/ SWP and Wells	5,533	$72	$81,087

Source: Luskin Center Water Atlas, 2015; Tracking California, 2018; American Community Survey 2013-2017, 2018, State Water Resources Control Board, 2019

Water fees reflect the cost of daily system operation and maintenance and compliance with water quality regulations, as well as the cost of infrastructure construction, maintenance, repairs, rehabilitation, and replacement, or water purchases from third party suppliers. Each Water Service Provider sets fees that reflect their infrastructure and operations costs, and thus fees vary from one operator to another.

To learn more visit:
https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-water-infrastructure/pricing-and-affordability-water-services or https://watertalks.csusb.edu/



Have Questions?

Contact your local service provider or use the following link(s) to download a water quality report.

Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water)

27234 Bouquet Canyon Road
Santa Clarita, CA 91350
T. (661) 297-1600

SCV Water-
Santa Clarita Division

26521 Summit Circle
Santa Clarita, CA 91350
T. (661) 297-1600
E. ccare_scwd@scvwa.org
https://yourscvwater.com/connect/#contactyourdivision

SCV Water -
Newhall Division

24631 Avenue Rockefeller
Valencia, CA 91355
T. (661) 294-0828
E. ccare_nwd@scvwa.org
https://yourscvwater.com/connect/#contactyourdivision

SCV Water -
Valencia Division

24631 Avenue Rockefeller
Valencia, CA 91355
T. (661) 294-0828
E. ccare_vwd@scvwa.org
https://yourscvwater.com/connect/#contactyourdivision

GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

Aquifer: formation of porous rock, gravel or sand that holds an underground supply of water. Wells can be used to pump water from aquifers.

Aqueduct: channel or other constructed watercourse that is used to carry water from one place to another.

Bay: a waterbody that is surrounded by land on three sides, and is connected to an ocean, or lake.

Bioretention: a chemical and biological process that treats and removes contaminants from stormwater and urban runoff. Stormwater is collected into the bioretention areas, which are depressed landscaped areas that slow and treat on-site stormwater runoff through various physical, chemical and biological processes.

Clean Water Act: U.S. federal law, passed in 1972, that regulates water quality standards and pollutant discharges.

Contaminants: a harmful or damaging substance.

Constituent: mineral or chemical present in water.

Drainage: the relative process by which water flows and moves through a soil's profile.

Drought: a period of low rainfall.

Dry Weather Run-Off: the process by which human activities such as car washing, landscape irrigation or street washing indirectly cause contaminants to enter our stormwater system.

Estuary: a water body where fresh water from rivers mixes with tidal saltwater.

Exceedance: a measurement that determines if a concentration of a contaminant is above the established safe threshold and/or a threat to human health.

Infiltration: the process through which water drains and leaches into the earth.

Inlet: an indentation along the coastline, such as a bay, cove, or estuary.

Impervious: not allowing water to flow through or within the surfaces.

Greywater: domestic wastewater generated by households or office buildings, which can be reused for non-potable uses. Sources of greywater include sinks, showers, baths, dishwashers or washing machines.

Groundwater: surface water that has drained into the ground. This water is stored in underground spaces called aquifers.

Green Infrastructure: a sustainable water management approach that uses biological processes to provide flood protection, clean air, clean water, and diverse habitats.

Flood Management: methods and practices developed to reduce flood risk to the built environment, provide emergency preparedness and response, forecast river levels based on weather conditions, improve water quality and supply reliability, and enhance public safety.

Non-Point Source Pollution: pollution caused indirectly by rainfall or snowmelt that collects various contaminants as it flows through the built environment.

Outlet: an area where water flows into a larger water body.

Pervious: areas or materials which water can pass through.

Point Source Pollution: pollution caused directly by a specific and very localized source, such as a leaking fuel tank or pipe.

Potable: water that is safe to drink.

Watershed: land area that channels rainfall and snowmelt into creeks, streams, and rivers that flow into a common outlet such as a reservoir, bay or the ocean.

Water Conservation: the protection and preservation of water resources.

Water Meter: a device that measures the amount of water used.

Water Recycling: process that reuses treated wastewater as a water resource.

Wastewater treatment: a process that removes contaminants from wastewater or sewage and transforms it into an effluent that can be returned to our water cycle.

Water Quality: the condition and measure of water relative to human health based on biological, chemical and physical parameters.

Rainwater: water that is collected from rain.

Reservoir: a large body of water that stores and holds water. Often created by dams.

Urban Runoff: water that flows through and within the urban environment and collects various contaminants such as motor oil, grease, pesticides, toxins and more.

Stormwater Management: strategies to reduce pollution and improve water quality.

Surface Water: water that flows within and over the surfaces of the built environment.

ACRONYMS

EPA – US Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
GLAC – Greater Los Angeles County
IRWM – Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act
Measure W – Safe Clean Water Parcel Tax (LA County)
MHI - Median Household Income
Prop 1 – Proposition 1, Water Quality, Supply & Infrastructure Improvement Act
SWP – State Water Project
SWRCB – State Water Resources Control Board
USCR – Upper Santa Clara River
VCWPD- Ventura County Watershed Protection District
WCVC – Watershed Coalition of Ventura County
WRPI – California State University's Water Resources and Policies Initiative

APPENDIX G- USCR TRIBAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT



The Water Talks of Native peoples (and nations) in **northern L.A. and Ventura** counties (completed November, 2023 with data from 2020, 2019 full SAWPA reports) with reference to proposed **Rubidoux** and **Kuruvungna Spring**s projects

Submitted by James V. Fenelon, Professor and Director at California State University, San Bernardino

Content Outline and Listing in Report

1 Introduction and Summary of Report

2 Content Outline and Listing in Report

3 WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography / Methodology Report 12/15/18 (and)

Santa Ana River Watershed Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment, August 2020

Planning and Initial data collection through meetings and less formal Listening Sessions – Tataviam

Lessons learned from Rubidoux (supported) and Kuruvungna Springs (proposed) projects.

Santa Ana Watershed and Los Angeles River – initial Findings of Strengths and Weaknesses

Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County (Sacred Places Institute, February 2023)

Working report of participation with Tataviam at cultural / festival meetings (August 2023)

Possibilities (for further work) Proposals for research development with local Native Nations – (Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and other Native Nations)

Working Description of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies





Introduction and Summary of Report

The Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at California State University, San Bernardino, was approached in August of this year (2023 upon his return from two years as a visiting professor at an east coast college) to complete a set of studies extended from related work (from 2016 through 2021) with particular focus on Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in Santa Clarita and Santa Paula regions of the Santa Clara River valley. The result, comprehensive of all previous work, is this report.

For the general reader, and to lay a comparative historical foundation to the background of what constitutes California Indians and the tribal nations and socio-political groupings they represent, we need to describe the background of Settler Colonialism (Spanish Mission system) and Culturicide / Genocide (U.S. Taking, sovereignty) that created the complex realities of the Indigenous population.

The colonization of California Indians initially followed a somewhat predictable pattern – initially European "explorers" acting as advance agents for colonial invasions, using Discovery as their rationale, in the methods of establishing "missions" – made up of coerced and voluntary conversions of Natives, (to become Catholic but in fact only as neophytes) supported by military garrisons and government centers or representatives (presidios) – were built using Native labor and resources, along the coast, later inland in areas such as greater Los Angeles, causing disruption to the tribal nations.

Resistance from Native Nations started quickly, with the first revolt by the Kumeyaay around San Diego, followed by other missions in the southern region, notably the Chumash in the Santa Barbara region, and less coordinated attempts by Tongva-Gabrieleno in the Los Angeles region. Missions were designed to coerce Native families to move under Catholic systems, destroying traditional culture and languages, while using quasi-indentured labor to build mission complexes, shortening life spans, and breaking their connections (and later claims) to the land from which they were dispossessed (University of California, 2021; Costo and Costo, 1987).

After Mexico became independent, the missions were technically secularized, but no encouragement was given to Native peoples to rebuild and existing lands (and grants) were handed out to Mexican-Spanish descent leaders, often called rancheros, further eroding Indigenous cultures, and later making difficult political relations to those tribal nations continuing to survive and maintain tribal sovereignty.

When the United States took over (1848–1850) Anglo and other invasive immigrant groups seeking gold, and easy land takings, swept into the area, beginning to congregate in areas of San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, as cities. The California leadership (governor and legislature) compelled Indian men, women, and children into legalized indentured labor, physically assaulted many Native peoples being turned into vagrants on their own land and even declared partial state genocide, (war of extermination) along with sidelining/ shelving treaties made with Native tribal nations, (Fenelon and Trafzer, 2014).

The United States then built the state of California over tribal nations, some who had been eliminated, others existed in tribal groupings, often unrecognized by federal authorities, many identified by their "mission Indian" status. Dominated and ignored in the first half of the 20th century, many emerged in contested status in later 20th century, struggling for sovereignty and recognition by the 21st century.



Content and Previous Work Listing in this Report (as summary)

Development of the modern world-system in the United States, specifically California, created urban environments, resource extraction and corporate agricultural production, destructive and exploitive of healthy environments, including riverine and watershed regions such as greater Los Angeles. Previous work done on the Santa Ana watershed and Los Angeles riverine areas were inclusive of Indigenous perspectives for the first time after 2010 as evidenced in tribal water summits and in planning groups, (where they were initially called "disadvantaged groups" of marginalized people) so those responsible and informed leaders requested reached out to entities such as Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies, (hosted at California State University where the Water Resources Institute (WRI); now the Institute for Watershed Resiliency (IWR) was also housed at the time) to participate in the studies and development of water issues. We are including that work in the writing of this report:

The Water Talks of Native peoples (and nations) in **northern L.A. and Ventura** counties.

(Prepared by James Fenelon, Sociology department, California State University San Bernardino)

We herein supply a series of "bullet points" from which this report is being constructed, which includes the following four sections:

1 – A section on the WRI initial involvement and planning, mostly as a subsequent subset of the SAWPA and L.A. River efforts, along with some of the meetings and listening sessions from that early work.

2 – Initial response and evaluation of the **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** (provided by various entities and the Sacred Places Institute in February of this year).

3 – Working report of attendance / participation with members of the Tataviam tribal nation at cultural / festival meetings (held in August 2023 in the Valencia – Santa Clarita area)

4 – Outline of Possibilities (for further work) and Proposals for ongoing research and development.

Let us address each of these (four) components of this work and report as stated herein.

WRI (Native) Team Report for **Community Water Ethnography** Methodology Report 12/15/18 (and)

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WRI[i] initial involvement and planning, mostly as a subsequent subset of the SAWPA and L.A. River efforts, along with some of the meetings and listening sessions from that early work.

The Water research with Institute for Watershed Resiliency (IWR) and CSU WATER was started, much to the credit of and following praise for: Boykin Witherspoon of CSU WATER, Jennifer Alford (IWR) in writing reports, and our Native American Team leaders, Luke Madrigal, and Julia Bogany. Collectively, we developed an approach and set of methodologies, reported below, some of which we extended to studies launched in northern Los Angeles and Ventura counties. This led to the reports and activities listed below.



We report on our printed (and informally published) work done through 2018 into 2019, followed by the initial work done with northern Los Angeles Native communities as connected to the Los Angeles River work started by our Native Team Leaders. This will primarily be drawn from:

CSUSB Research **WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography** and Methodology Report 12/15/18 – outline below with extensive discussion in the endnotes for each listing.

We refer to the working report to elucidate on the approach, planning, methodologies, sessions, provisional findings and activities of this 3 to 4 year project:

Working Report – Native Listening Sessions, Planning, Observations, initial Findings

Description of Native SAWPA Design and Planning for Listening Sessions[ii]

Descriptions of Summaries – 1) Preparatory Work and 2) Native Listening Sessions[iii]

Summaries of Preparatory Work for Native Listening Sessions

Planning meetings for Indigenous Sessions and Methods[iv]

Planning meetings with Indigenous Leaders, Tribes and Organizations

Presentations and meetings at Tribal Water Summit (Sacramento, 1-3, 4/2018)

Informational sessions and conferences with WRI

Summaries of Interviews and Listening Sessions – 2

Tribal Alliance informational session at Torres Martinez (pre-sessions)

Tribal Alliance informational session at Cahuilla (post-sessions)

Tongva Cultural Center (El Monte) and Urban Indian population (north of Santa Ana River)

Sherman Indian School (Riverside) Cahuilla and Urban Indians (south of Santa Ana River)

Native Listening Session on Water– Indigenous Perspectives in Cahuilla land, Riverside June 16th

Luke Madrigal – Cahuilla Team Leader, Reflection Statement:[v]

Inland Empire Community Leaders (Native) Informal Interviews

Academic (Native Scholars) Public (Informal) Interviews

CSUSB Native Team (3) Roles and Profiles

Principal Investigator – Professional and Cultural qualifications

Indigenous Researchers – Cultural Knowledge and Native Nation experience

Partnerships Roles and Profiles

Research Methods and critical Scholar-Authors (Native Ethnographic Studies).

References

(Addendum: UCI Originating Primer with CSUSB Native Contributions to SAWPA Project)

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This leads us to work done in 2019 experiencing shutdown (of on-site work) because of the pandemic.

We conducted initial Organizing sessions in rough replication of the above stated format, With the NA Water Talks team Julia Bogany and others (Luke Madrigal).

We conducted discussions with (Malibu site and other Communities claiming Chumash identity).

We had meetings and initial Zoom session (Santa Paula and Santa Clarita) (held in 2020 and 2021).

Pandemia hit us, Luke Madrigal passed away, we continued to have meetings and phone conversations, but no longer in person or face-to-face, unless including some Zoom meetings.

We had discussions / meetings with leaders from the various research groups and state administrators, after which Julia Bogany had health problems, and then passed away.

I took a leave of absence (visiting distinguished professorship) at Swarthmore College on the east coast.

Picture from Kuruvungna Springs showing Rudy Ortega (Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians) and other (Chumash, Tongva-Gabrieleno, so on) leaders, at signing years earlier:



(this prelude to the Los Angeles River Watertalks, was never fully initiated before pandemic shutdown).



Santa Ana River Watershed Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment, August 2020

(following are excerpts and selections from pre-existing studies coordinated by CIPS)

We report some of our initial findings in two separate ways, as found in the documents listed below:

Santa Ana River Watershed COMMUNITY WATER EXPERIENCES An Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment **–** Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program, Integrated Regional Water Management, August 2020

Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities, CSU San Bernardino **by** The Native SAWPA Listening Session team from California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB)

Subset listing of the Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities report:

Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities, CSU San Bernardino.

4 preview Native informational and presentation events, (2017).

2 (or 4) formal Listening sessions (2018)

2 field-testing sessions

2 follow-up Feedback (formal) response sessions

200+ participants totals for the above sessions and events – We have completed Stages 1, 2 and part of 3 of our initial research design for Native American / Tribal / Disadvantaged Communities (DCI) inputs on water and related community issues - Outline report continues with breakdown by 4 stages of research activities and accomplishments

Native Listening Session Findings to Date *Perspectives in Cahuilla Land*

Strengths and needs are summarized in the following table, and additional details will be available through the *WRPI's (CSU WATERs) Santa Ana River Watershed Disadvantaged Communities Technical Report* P*erspectives in Cahuilla Land* Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs Examples:

● **Water is a rich theme** across these communities in respect to their **spiritual connection** to the Earth and water rights.

● Recognize that **water dictated where people settled** and as such we should be mindful that if this is taken away it will impact communities for present and future generations.

● Water can heal solutions are in our landscape.

● Recognize that **water is part of all communities** not just native/tribal communities. "**We don't own it, it owns us**."

● Trends in water management have created barriers for them to connect to the land and water spirits (gates, reservoirs, etc.).

● Designation of “Disadvantaged” is derogatory and often **creates barriers to participation** in decision making processes.

● **Lack of representation in governmental process** means they are often “marginalized” in respect to inclusion on water decisions.

● Many don’t get involved until it impacts them as individuals. ● Community needs opportunities to **contribute to water management by sharing their knowledge** related to their documented historical records to accurately recognize water and its contributions to communities and help to address how to we **balance development with the rights of water** (spiritually).

● They want to learn to “**talk water” with water community** (i.e. agencies, providers, etc.).

● Want **action-oriented results**.

El Monte: Tongva *and related tribes* Table: El Monte Native Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs Examples[vi]

● **Historical wisdom of Environment**; understand cause and effect.

● Coordinate and **Host outreach summits**.

● Line of **communication with tribal government** and other sovereign people.

● Concerns fall on **deaf ears**.

● Profiteering **water districts steal water** to sell back to them.

● Government **agencies do not want to recognize**, listen to Tongva people because they know it’s native water and they **don’t want to recognize native rights**.

● Agencies and **water companies take** from the land**, do not give back** to land or communities.

● **Discrimination**.

● **Respect for rights** and needs.

● Need to transition **from a consultant to a decision maker** in water issues.

● More **accountability of companies** and government agencies related to water management.

● Greater **understanding of water governance** and agency roles to build coalitions.

● **Unity a**cross all communities: non-native, native, government, etc.

Categorical Results: Listening Session Themes #1 El Monte: Additional Findings [vii]

Themes Examples

<u>Legal/Societal Structures</u>

● CA tribes seen as a formality or courtesy to reach out to them but there is **no "teeth" or accountability** to not following Native wishes about land-use. Consultation

● "If we're not at the table, we're on the menu."

● **More recognition** and citizen involvement needed.

Signs of discrimination

● More education in school

● **Wasteful companies** take water and trees from land and give nothing back to the community

Spiritual

● Government agencies do not **want to recognize**/listen to Tongva people because they know its native water and they do not want to recognize where it's been taken from.

● **Atrocity when developers do not divert projects for Native burial sites** preservation.

Planning and Initial data collection through meetings and less formal Listening Sessions – **Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians**

In this section, we review "lessons learned" from project development associated with earlier studies, (Rubidoux Project, mostly Cahuilla along the Santa Ana River) (Kuruvungna Springs project, not submitted mostly Tongva near the Los Angeles River environs) associated with the findings from the formal studies; link these with recent guided meetings, on-site visits (from Swarthmore student – faculty Native teams) and connections and response to the Sacred Places Institute report from this year, (provided to WRI). Then, our fourth component of this report, we make observations from meetings and sessions with the cultural representatives of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians culled from previous work, and attendance at their annual gathering and public presentations festival near Santa Clarita and make various statements and proposals for potential projects and ongoing work in their region.

During my two years away, we had research groups visit the Chemehuevi about the Salt Song Projects, desert water sites and trails, reservation formation and sovereignty, and related socio-political matters. (October 2022), working with Native American Land Conservancy and other organizations. (including guided meetings with Matt Leivas of the Chemehuevi and phone consultancy with Sean Milanovich, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians). (reports of these visits available upon request)

Upon my Return in August of 2023, we brought up past meetings and sessions, and new reports, that did also consider the Participatory signing in the above events, where some of our work was Renewed, previous findings were re-considered, and we learned of new reports and work such as below –

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Lessons learned from Rubidoux (supported) and Kuruvungna Springs (proposed) projects.

The Rubidoux (spelled Robidoux by state and local agencies) project grew directly out of the WRI CIPS (SAWPA) studies by Native participants and leadership and was formally proposed to the organizational evaluation teams (under SAWPA control) who chose it above other proposals for funding and support. Organization leaders in conjunction with non-Native competitors sought to undermine the proposal, forcing a lower funded proposal in re-competition, which the project survived again (with local agencies, metropolitan water districts and tribes, offering greater funding) when an unnamed group of leaders, (state-funded water agencies and political orgs) determined that an entirely Native led effort was not to be trusted, and pulled the initial (already won under competitive evaluation) acceptance to make it fully conditional to administrative coordinators under their control, and therefore answerable to agencies, rather than Indigenous led coalitions and the above named Native leaders. While our leaders did not like this approach and its covert criticism of Indigenous leadership and tribal self-determination, we did ask local tribal nations and organizations about their approach, and they collectively responded they would not work with the newly proposed coordinator as they did not know him, have any experience with his decision-making, or deference to Native leaders / control, which they had already accepted.

Local organizations and municipal water agencies decided to support the project irrespective of the proposal re-directions, and tribal authority and a renowned Native political representative offered full support under the leadership of Luke Madrigal, when he was taken down by an infectious disease and passed away. The proposal went on hold during this period, as we considered other Native leadership, even as we entered the pandemic, and then our other respected Native team leader, Julia Bogany, took a health fall (after participating in stressful virtual meetings on this very issue) and also passed away. CIPS Director then accepted the distinguished visiting professorship on the east coast, and the project proposal was never revisited.

We want to learn from this set of experiences, for proposals from other Native environmental teams, such as this report has identified, so they are not repeated, a problem all too common in Indian Country. First, let us take this short excerpt from the Rubidoux proposal:

> Louis Robidoux Nature Center was recently leased by Riverside County Parks District to a consortium of local entities that will rehabilitate the site for multi-purpose benefits including habitat restoration, an educational center with focused sustainability programming, community farming, and a wildlife rehabilitation center (Consortium). With its location near the Santa Ana River, the site offers many natural resources that are culturally significant to local Tribes and Indigenous Peoples groups. … Consortium is partnering with the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies to lead development of features that will support the objectives of Native participants. The project area was a local meeting and trading place, where many of the Native Nations worked out important agreements. Rehabilitation of the site, incorporating this rich history is an important way to convey what is known about the environmental, physical, socio-political, and cultural relationships amongst the Cahuilla, Luiseno, Serrano and Tongva peoples who gathered in this locale. The …project (will) develop three main elements to address Native participants' interests at the site.

> First, plans and conceptual designs for Tribal gatherings and other events particularly as related to their connection to the land and water. Second, plans and designs for location(s) and/or facilities on site that support cultivation, demonstration, and/or education on the traditional uses of native plants and other natural resources including K12 educational programs, a master gardener program, songs and stories shared at a gathering location on site, etc. Finally, a web-based tool that will facilitate the long-term, secure documentation of important Tribal songs and stories gathered from Tribal members… (edited, James V. Fenelon, November 2023)

We can observe in this case study, an actual outgrowth of conducting this Water Talks research, is tribal leadership and self-determination is critical to any (re-)solutions or project proposals, as is participation by Native organizations, coalitions, or allies. We also see that only Indigenous peoples themselves with applied scholarship and cases from tribal nations, can identify cultural, socio-political and environmental issues that impact their peoples, and more broadly defined Native Americans in general, which actually comprises the much greater number in California (Native Americans as non-California Indians) which is partially the result of Indian Relocation efforts during the Termination era of latter 20th century policy, itself a set of influential actions (PL 280) stripping California tribes of jurisdictional self-determination. Finally, and most importantly, we can see the lack of informative stances, the benign neglect or actual hostility toward Native nations and peoples by state agencies and organizations, is still a big problem.

The Kuruvungna Springs proposal or visualized project, which never saw the light of day, has similar precedents and predictive issues for the work and associated report we are considering here today. Readily observable in the photo above, with Listing of tribal leaders (four 4 Nations, 2 representatives) including the Chumash, the Tataviam (Rudy Oretega, included among leaders in this report), Tongva, Acjachemen (or Juaneño) and Urban Indian representatives, signing with the Catholic church (Bishops) are the full participation (self-determination) of tribal and urban representatives to provide accurate historical / cultural accounts of Native peoples at, for and because of Catholic Missions in their region. This is a first step toward reconciliation, reciprocity and repair, as the Harvard HUNAP conference just signified at their conferrings with University faculty and local tribal leadership –*"Responsibility and Repair: Legacies of Indigenous Enslavement, Indenture, and Colonization at Harvard and Beyond Event"* – including the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah); Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band; Massachusett Tribe at Ponkapoag; and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

Kuruvungna Springs is a tribally controlled site (Tongva-Gabrieleno) located in central *Tovangaar* near an ancestral village, and now nearby UCLA and other central Los Angeles areas. Tribal nations from around the world are often received there (the Maori, Native Hawaiians, and so on) where Indigenous protocols are practiced and reproduced in modern settings. Our informal propositions were to develop the entire site and its relationship to other springs and the Los Angeles River, and of course tribal representation, into a demonstration project where coalitions of Native Americans, tribal Nations, Indigenous leaders, and scholars could present their worldviews, histories and cultural practices dealing with environmental and socio-political issues of the day. Julia Bogany, Tongva, association President and Native Team leader for our projects, was to head up this work, after conducting extensive listening sessions and meetings, similar to what had been done for the Santa Ana River watershed area and Rubidoux projects. However, as mentioned earlier, Tongva cultural leader Julia Bogany had blood clots and stroke after an intense set

of meetings with organizations opposing our Robidoux and other work, which developed into circulatory and heart issues that ultimately caused her passing to the spirit world, a great loss for Indian peoples. CIPS Director James Fenelon subsequently went on a distinguished visiting professorship, and all issues were postponed, and not followed through by new leadership unfamiliar with our studies, proposals, and likewise developmental work.

Here we see the importance of developing full Indigenous participation in a sustainable, reproducible way that can survive organization and state hegemonic threats, and divisions among Native people, which are structural results of long-term settler colonialism. After Acknowledging the Santa Ana Watershed and Los Angeles River – initial Findings of Strengths and Weaknesses, and their proposals – we consider the Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County (Sacred Places Institute, February 2023)

Initial response and evaluation of the **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** (provided by Sacred Places Institute) is found in a report (same name) **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** prepared by Sacred Places Institute, (Submitted February 17, 2023)

We link all the aforesaid work, especially the Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County, (since there is considerable overlap with the Chumash in these reports), with ongoing analysis based on the working report of our participation with the Tataviam at cultural / festival meetings (August 2023).

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Report of attendance at / participation with members of the Tataviam at cultural / festival meetings (held in August 2023 in headwaters region of the Santa Clara riverine watershed)

Renewal and Prescriptive Suggestive findings follow this part in the above-named report, that includes discussion and planning for the reported observations and reflections based on the research we had conducted previously in the region, mostly coordinated by our team leader Julia Bogany with significant input from Native team leader Luke Madrigal.

WaterTalks (Julia Bogany notes) Dates, Times, Events, Places (2020)

Chumash Ventura listening session meeting transcription 2-22-20 (excerpts J V Fenelon 11-4-23)

Santa Paula Water Talks – Summary Statements (February / March 2020)

These works conform directly to research work we completed in the Santa Ana Watershed ethnography, Los Angeles River and Rubidoux / Kuruvungna Springs projects, especially in the planning meetings, tribal alliance, and other information sessions, and of course in the actual listening sessions, as planned. Since we have efficiently described those processes, and identified their counterparts in developmental work described above, we will move directly to attendance and participation in the August 2023 meeting.

At the August 2023 event, multiple tribal leaders and members were in attendance, noting both Peoples and places, along with tribal sovereignty of the Tataviam and Chumash, and of the Northern Tongva Gabrielino, with other tribal representatives ranging from the Cahuilla to the Luiseno.

As in the earlier reports, we identify the State and other agencies, discounting past “settler colonial” practices with a focus on Indigenous trade relations of nations/tribes in the region. Herein we identify Inter-trading networks among tribes and protocols for constructive engagement and communication.

Perhaps the greatest development we have as an instructive model to date, is that of the Rubidoux center proposal submitted to SAWPA with the support of All of the surrounding tribal nations, various municipal and regional water authorities, and other inputs stated or observed in this report.

As we found in our earlier work on the Santa Ana and initial work on the Los Angeles River water talks, comprehensive Eco-systems must be considered as a whole, including the Headwaters (in mountains), tributary creeks and rivers, and erosion related to urban development (see Santa Ana environs, also Los Angeles River revitalization efforts with de-concretization) down to the ocean.

Extending from alluvial plains water flowing from tributaries/rivers (Santa Clara) spreading to the coast, alongside “wildlife” and plants in conjunction with cultural “fire” control methods by Indigenous people, we also consider rejection of Indigenous led / inspired Rubidoux proposal, to make our observations, followed by planning proposals and suggestions culled from interactions with local tribal leaders:

Below are cards and identity markers from some of the tribal leaders and members we interacted with:



Based on previous interactions with leaders, program coordinators and tribal members, including: (phone and zoom meetings, one listening session, continued contact communications, initial planning)

supported by short discussions during the event described above (including tribal leaders listed here) – : I (or we) can make the following tentative points or take-aways:

● The **Fernandeño Tataviam** Band of Mission Indians are still fighting for federal recognition as an expression of their traditional (inherent) sovereignty, critical to future developments

● Many of their leaders were present with the Chumash during their revitalization period in the last decades of the 20th century and maintain those close relationships today.

● As noted elsewhere, water systems are/must be considered as a whole (ecosystem) from the headwaters to the ocean.

● Discussions and presentations of projects and efforts stated in earlier meetings and the initial listening sessions are more (or just as) viable today (and must originate from Native communities).

● Cultural restoration / revitalization can only be undertaken or developmentally guided by tribal members themselves.

● Development is both economic and educational, primarily for the youth and future generations.

● Relationships with water and land are both spiritual and culturally defined.

● *Mni Wiconi* as expressed at Standing Rock and now throughout many Indigenous communities – "water is life" – has been embraced by Tataviam peoples.

● Storytelling is an integral part, really a foundation, of their ongoing development / revitalization.

● The Tataviam (and their advisors) have identified cultural-environmental sites where projects, (like what was proposed for Robidoux and planned to be proposed for Kuruvungna Springs) could be, should be, supported to tie all these points together.

● Acknowledgement of the Indigenous land and water relationships is most important to identify and should be integral to co-development efforts with local municipalities and regional agencies.

and

● This report needs to be shared with The **Fernandeño Tataviam** Band of Mission Indians.

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Possibilities For Further Work

Proposals for research development with local Native Nations follow – (Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and other Native Nations are our central concern here) – with specific recommendations concerning ongoing research modalities, methods, and outcomes.

Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at CSUSB (Director, James V Fenelon)

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Outline of Possibilities (for further work) and Proposals for ongoing research and development with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and other Native Nations (Chumash, Tongva)

When the report has been finalized / finished, we will consider possibilities of ongoing research and of proposals that could be developed, to review the following critical issues identified in the interactive meetings: Sovereignty and recognition, Regional / area environmental dynamics of Water and land…

In considering proposals, we need to identify the (whatever) agencies – state, Municipal authorities, WA, Ventura and L.A. County representatives – as actors who must do all ongoing and future work in conjunction with, and when on identified Native traditional lands, in deference to Indigenous protocols, culture and leadership as nominated by tribal nations themselves.

We need to praise the IWR and its working with tribes and delineate any Futures for its further work – while remembering the untoward actions taken against the Rubidoux project proposal – as indicative of hegemonic and powerful political interests, many of them discriminatory in nature and overt practice, that need to be recognized and curtailed to the extent possible.

All research, proposals and developments should be connected to issues that arose during the tribal water summits, and in conjunction with existing American Indian, Native Nation and Indigenous peoples programs at universities and colleges in their respective region. Moreover, these programs themselves need to be calibrated and tuned to local Native Nations as needed and/or called for by the Indigenous tribal nations and their leaders.

Universities must remain open to Indigenous interpretations toward such regulations as IRB boards, which otherwise are discriminatory and dismissive toward oral traditions, cultural representations, practices of respect and reciprocity (which exceed those of mainstream demands) and understandings of the broader environment as a lived and living world of all life forms, and indeed the earth as mother and stones as spirits as relatives (please see Fenelon, 2015 for analysis of this language).

Cultural – spiritual practices, such as Bird-singing, purification ceremonies, revitalized rites of renewal, and on the list goes as awareness deepens, need open respect in both public and private spaces, just as complicated and controversial historical narratives need to be addressed to incorporate Native voices. We note that genocide conducted by the state of California has only been accepted in the last five years, even as it alone affects all understanding of Indigenous and mainstream (dominant group) populations, and our collective histories, current realities, understanding of water, and therefore prospects.

We (now only the CIPS Director) would like to make a final note or statement on the hopes and dreams, and futures of Indigenous Peoples in California and indeed the world. Through recognizing, respecting, and revitalizing many Indigenous perspectives and practices toward what we call the Environment, Land, and Water, we not only take responsibility and begin to repair the legacies of settler colonial violence, we also look for contributions to create a better world for everyone, and see a vision of climate change and restorative justice that heals the past, builds equity in the present, and envisions an environment filled with hope for the generations to come…

James V Fenelon for the spirits of Julia Bogany and Luke Madrigal ------ ------ ------ ------



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Reports (referred to) and **Attachments** (data excerpts, summaries):

Note: *these are sent to IWR of CSU-Water to be kept on file, rather than attached to the report*

WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography and Methodology Report 12/15/18

Santa Ana River Watershed COMMUNITY WATER EXPERIENCES An Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program, Integrated Regional Water Management, August 2020

Robidoux Project CIPS Tribal Programming Engagement w WRI SAWPA DWR (edited v2)

WaterTalks (Julia Bogany notes) Dates, Times, Events, Places (2020)

Chumash Ventura listening session meeting transcription 2-22-20 (excerpts J V Fenelon 11-4-23)

Santa Paula Water Talks – Summary Statements (February / March, 2020)

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) – Contacts and Leaders (inserted into text)

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Endnotes as descriptors to the listings in this report.

[i] The Water Resources Institute acronym at the time of the research under different leadership, recently changed to Institute for Water Resiliency IWR so will retain WRI for the past and use IWR for the present work.

[ii] The Native SAWPA team out of Cal State was first initiated in the late spring of 2017 when the CSU WRI Director approached the Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies, both at CSU-SB campus, about developing and conducting Listening sessions about water (and land) issues for Native Americans, California tribal groups and Indigenous-descent people in the region. Agreements grew out of these discussions, premier among them that for Native participants and leaders to be fully engaged, (perhaps even partially or engaged at all) Indigenous perspectives and protocols needed to be followed, gatherings or sessions would need to be led by local Native recognized community leaders, and that any "data" collected and all "findings" would have to be shared and reviewed by the community and leaders of the sessions, without qualification. The agreement was made, there was discussion on compensation, and follow through phases, and most of the rest is described below.

[iii] The main categories for the body of this part of the report on the pre-planning / preparatory work for the development and for implementation of the Native Listening sessions held for the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) managed Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program (program) project partners in support of an upcoming report tentatively entitled: Native American / Indigenous Community Water Ethnography of the Santa Ana River Watershed, were 1) Summaries of Preparatory Work for Native Listening Sessions (four categorical descriptive reporting of activities and participants), and 2) Summaries of Listening Sessions (and Interviews) containing the primary informational and data collection ethnographic activities (also in four categorical descriptive reporting of the two Tribal Alliance informational activities and of the two Native Listening sessions with agendas and listing of participants).

[iv] Date: October, December, 2017 followed through from January to March, 2018 Location: Various including CSUSB, Claremont, CINC, UCR (San Bernardino / Riverside County) Facilitators: CSUSB and Native Leaders

[v] The process of putting together focus groups for SAWPAA was an important effort to Indian community. It wasn't surprising to find a high level of interest in this process despite the tendencies to shy away from bureaucratic processes that sometimes marginalize the Indian community. We were able to bring together significant numbers of tribal leaders, elders, and community members from local and relocated tribes. Of particular interest were story

lines of local tribes such as the Cahuilla, Luiseno, Tongva, and others, where stories, information, and concerns raised (were about) traditional beliefs in water and environment. Recent events at Standing Rock, Water is Life, came to a forefront of immediate concern about futures of Indian and all people in securing answers to difficult questions to bring balance to environmental chaos we currently live in. In summary, I am excited and positive that bringing together more information about our traditional land use, water use, and traditional practices can incite us to action in this process, as well as ignite other processes of re-indigenizing us to do something for the future generations.

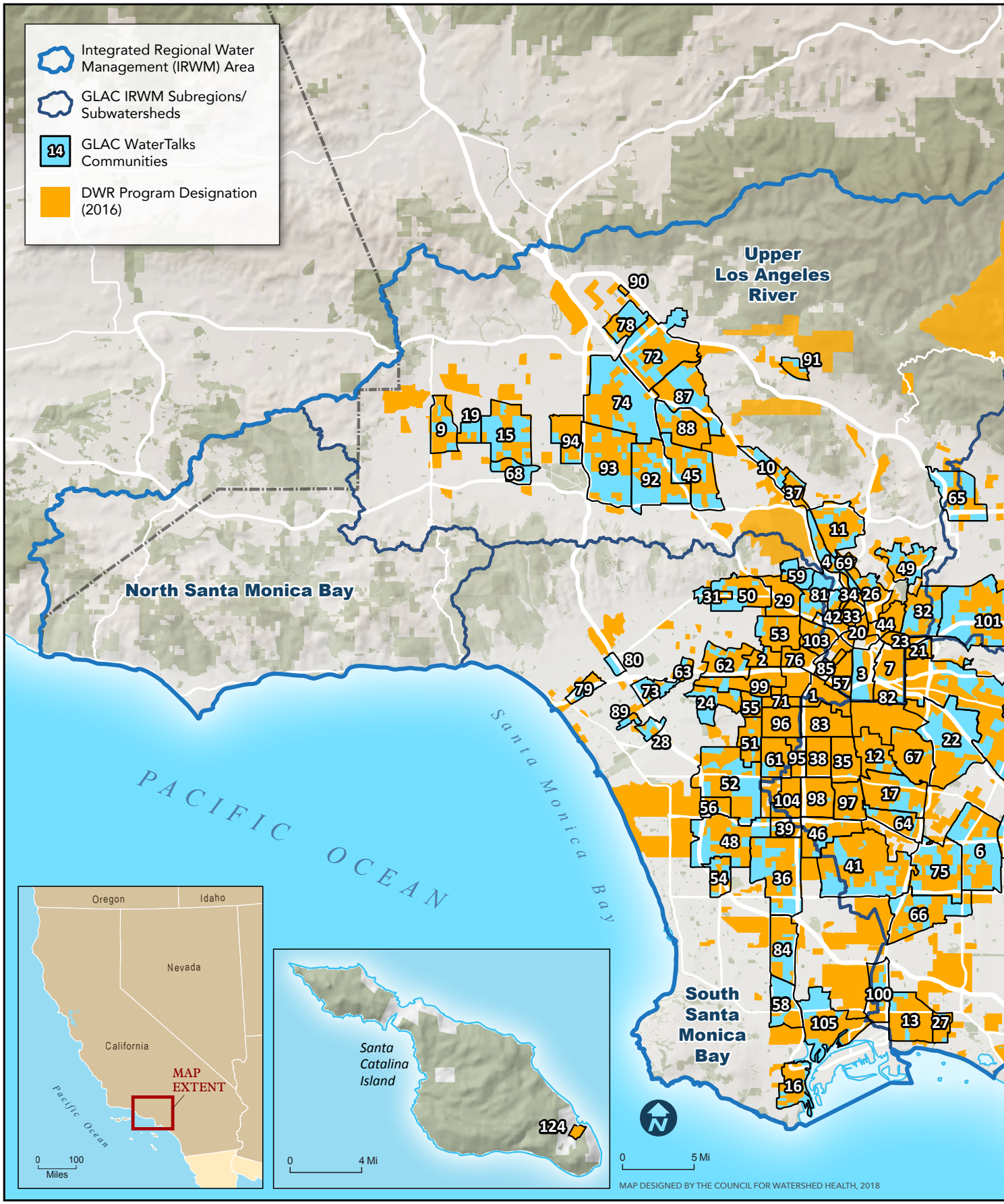
[vi] El Monte: Tongva and related tribes

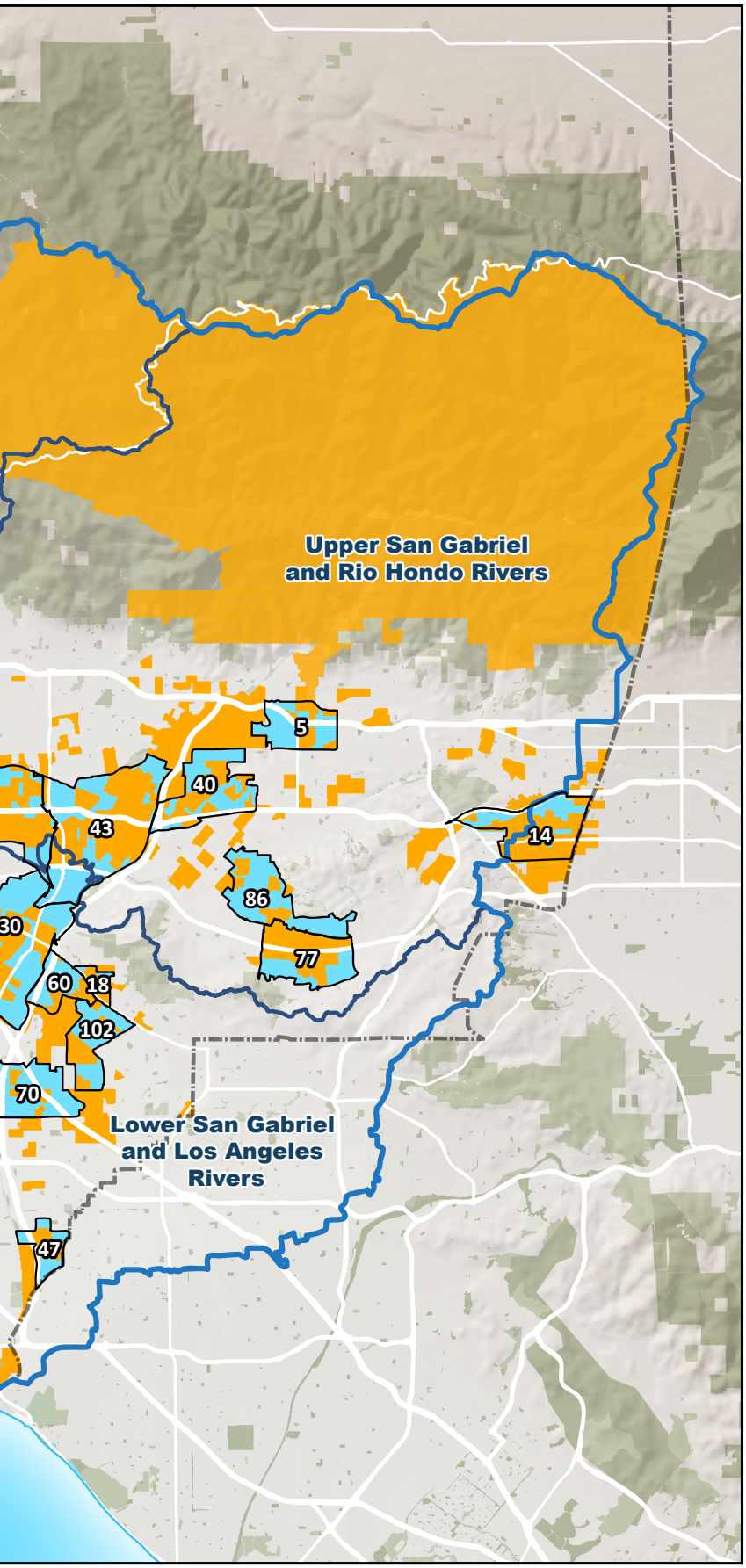
El Monte Tongva Native Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs

Legal/Societal Structures ● Atrocity when developers do not divert projects for Native burial sites preservation.

APPENDIX H- GLAC MAPS

FIGURE ES-1. WaterTalks Communities





WATER TALKS COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY IRWM AREA

1 - Adams/Central
2 - Arlington/Harvard Heights
3 - Arts District/West Boyle Heights
4 - Atwater Village
5 - Azusa/Citrus
6 - Bellflower/Southeast Downey
7 - Boyle Heights
9 - Canoga Corridor
10 - Central Burbank
11 - Central Glendale
12 - Central Huntington Park
13 - Central Long Beach
14 - Central Pomona
15 - Central Reseda/S. Northridge
16 - Central San Pedro
17 - Central South Gate
18 - Central Whittier
19 - Central Winetka
20 - Chinatown/Cornfield
21 - City Terrace
22 - Commerce/Bell Gardens
23 - County Hospital
24 - Crenshaw/Baldwin Hills
26 - Cypress/Glassell Park
27 - East Central Long Beach
28 - East Del Rey
29 - East Hollywood
30 - East LA/Montebello/Pico Rivera
31 - Eastern West Hollywood
32 - El Sereno
33 - Elysian Park
34 - Elysian Valley/Frogtown
35 - Florence Firestone
36 - Gardena/N. Harbor Gateway
37 - Glen-Bank
38 - Goodyear/Van Meter Springs
39 - Greater Athens
40 - Greater Baldwin Park
41 - Greater Compton
42 - Greater Echo Park
43 - Greater El Monte
44 - Greater Lincoln Heights
45 - Greater North Hollywood
46 - Greater Willowbrook
47 - Hawaiian Gardens
48 - Hawthorne
49 - Highland Park
50 - Hollywood
51 - Hyde/Harvard Park
52 - Inglewood
53 - Koreatown
54 - Lawndale
55 - Leimert Park
56 - Lennox
57 - Little Tokyo/Toy District/Skid Row
58 - Lomita/Southwest Carson
59 - Los Feliz
60 - Los Nietos
61 - Manchester/Harvard/Chesterfield
62 - Mid-City
63 - Mid-City West
64 - North Lynwood
65 - Northeast Pasadena
66 - North Long Beach
67 - Northern Lower LAR Cities
68 - Northern Tarzana
69 - Northwest Glassell Park
70 - Northwest Norwalk
71 - Outer Expo Park
72 - Pacoima
73 - Palms
74 - Panorama City
75 - Paramount
76 - Pico Union
77 - Rowland/Industry
78 - San Fernando
79 - Santa Monica I-10 Corridor
80 - Sawtelle
81 - Silverlake
82 - South Boyle Heights
83 - South Central
84 - S. Harbor Gateway/West Carson
85 - South Park/Fashion/Lofts District
86 - South Puente Valley
87 - Sun Valley East
88 - Sun Valley South
89 - Southwest Mar Vista
90 - Sylmar/Foothill Blvd Comm.
91 - Tujunga/Foothill Blvd
92 - Valley Glen/Valley Village
93 - Van Nuys
94 - Van Nuys Airport
95 - Vermont Knolls
96 - Vermont Square
97 - Watts Proper
98 - Watts West
99 - West Adams/Jefferson Park
100 - West Long Beach
101 - West SGV 10 Freeway
102 - Western South Whittier
103 - Westlake
104 - Westmont
105 - Wilmington
124 - Avalon

The Fluid Connection of Tribal Communities and Water

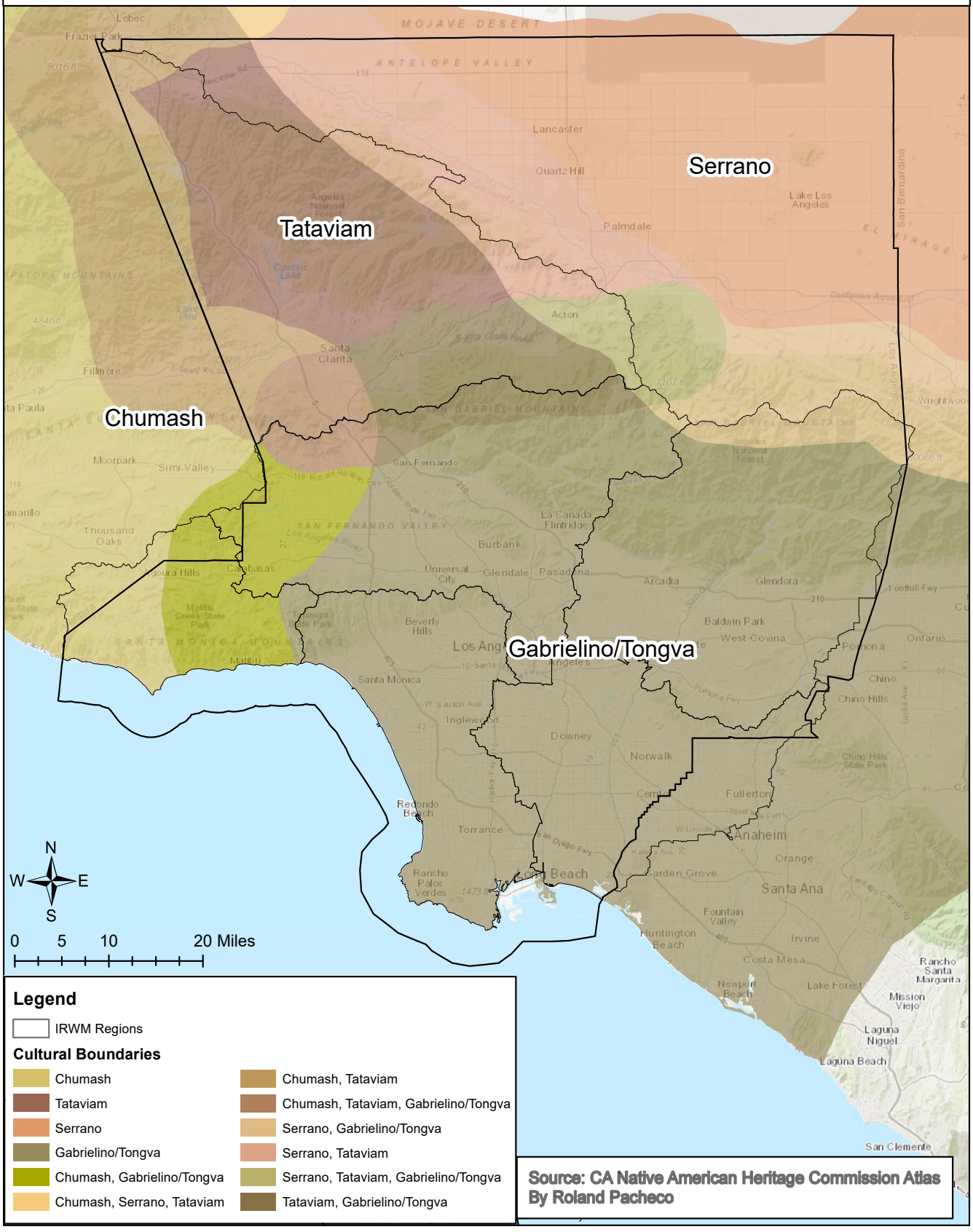


FIGURE 1. Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area



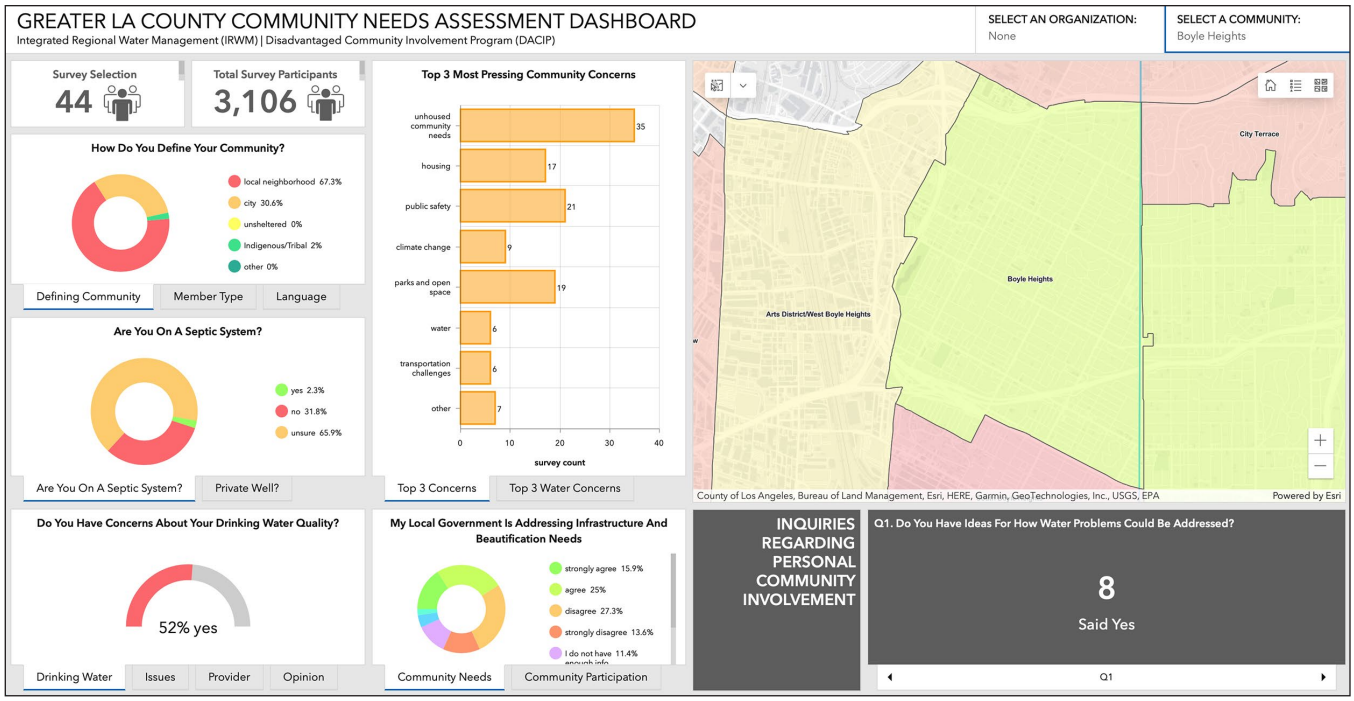


FIGURE 5a. Online dashboards were developed to highlight the Strengths and Needs Assessment survey results.

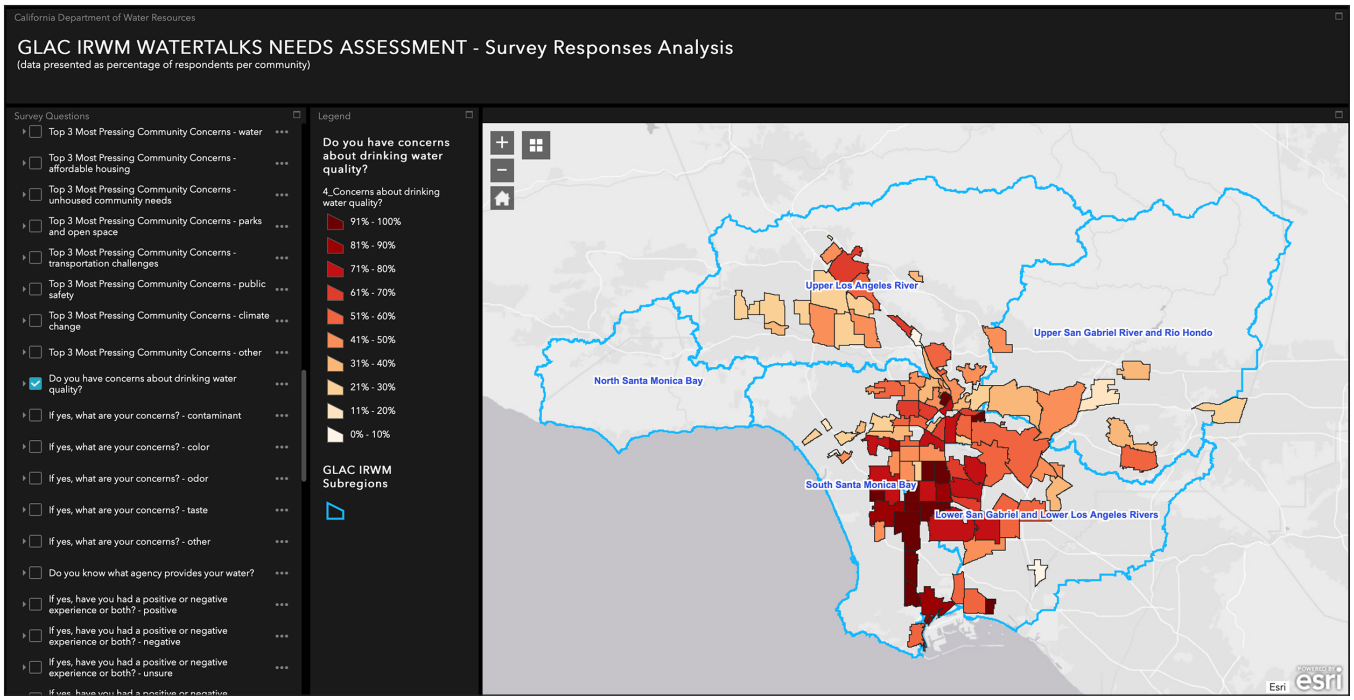
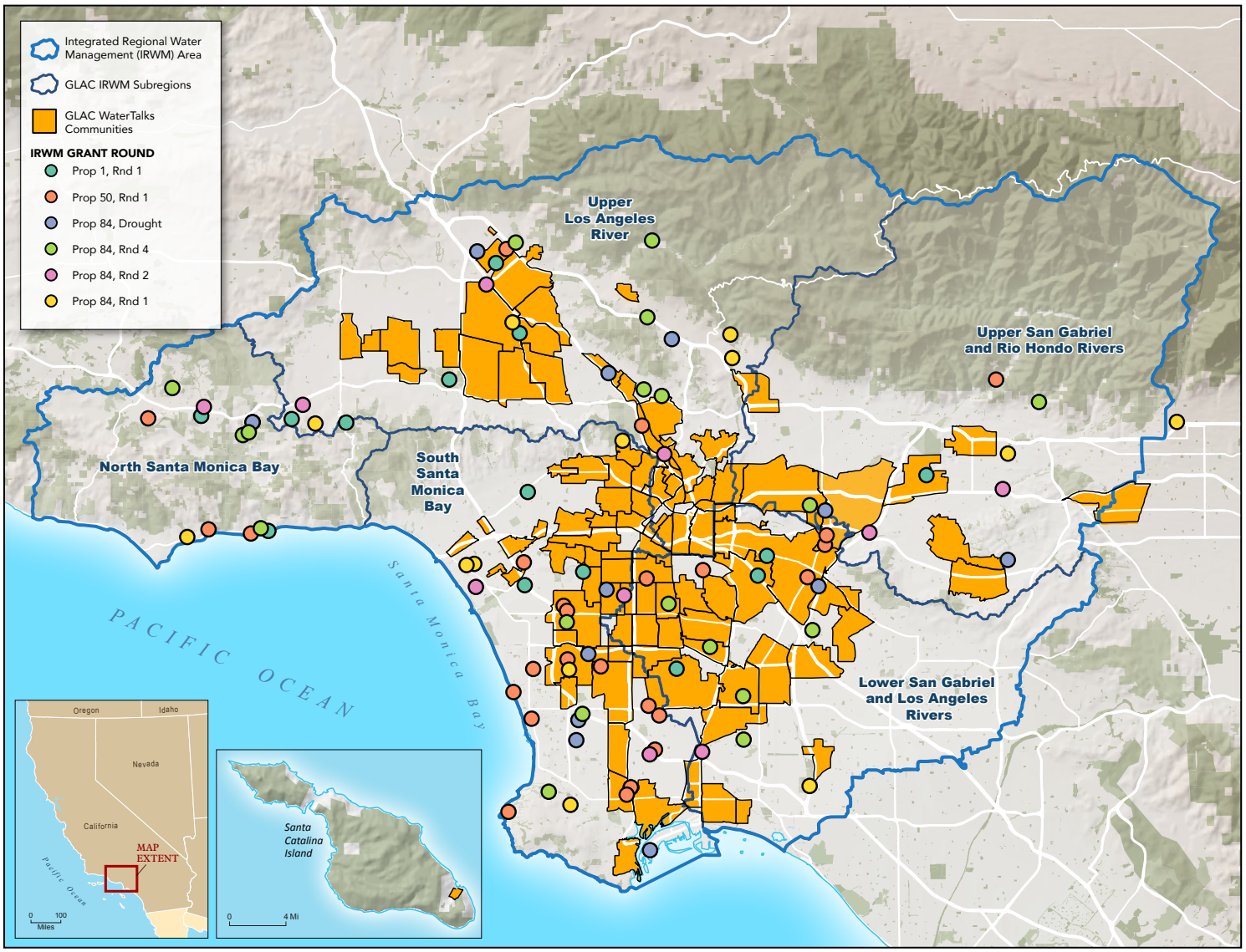


FIGURE 5b. Survey responses were also embedded in an interactive map tool to highlight any spatial patterns (e.g. hot spots) in the data question by question.

FIGURE 8. Past Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Funding Awards (2006-2020) by grant type.



Grant award amounts in each IRWM subregion are highlighted in *FIGURE 10*. North Santa Monica Bay, the IRWM subregion with the smallest population, received 14 grants. All of the grants in that region were for less than one million dollars. The Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) subregion received 20 grants. ULAR saw less investment compared to other highly populated IRWM subregions. Downtown Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley neighborhoods adjacent to the Los Angeles River as well as neighborhoods in East Los Angeles did not receive grants, highlighting WaterTalks communities that did not see IRWM investments. The South Santa Monica Bay region has received the largest number of investments per subregion, with 25 grants in total. A majority of the grants in South Santa Monica Bay fall outside of WaterTalks communities. The Upper San Gabriel and Rio Hondo (USGRH) subregion received 13 grants. While less awards were given to USGRH compared to other regions, a majority of the investments granted were for high dollar amounts. The Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers (LLASGR) subregion

FIGURE 9. Past Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Funding Awards (2006-2020) by grant award.

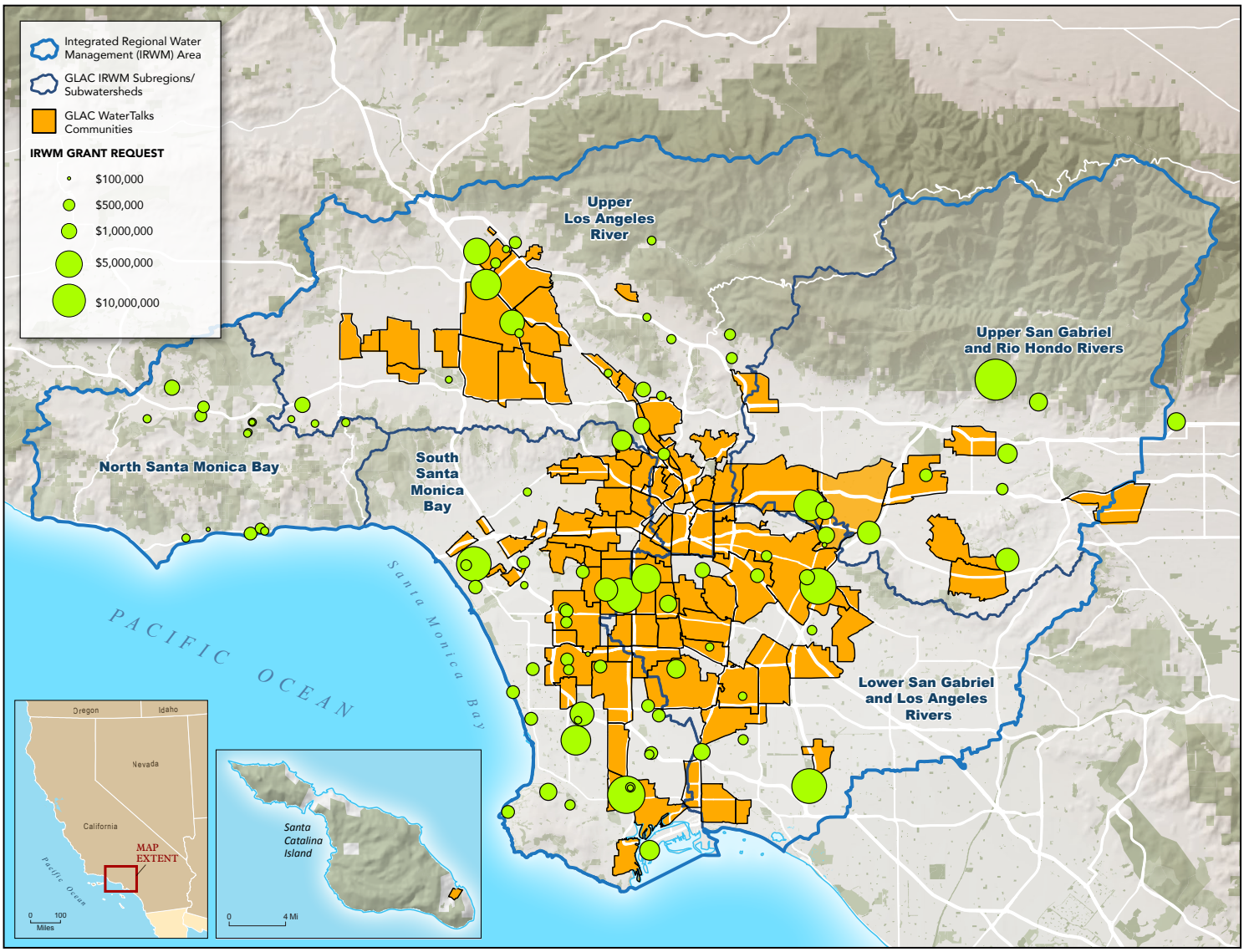


FIGURE 10. Past GLAC IRWM funding allocations per subregion.

Subregion	Within a DAC	Total Projects	Total award Request
North Bay	8	20	$27,917,257
Upper Los Angeles River	0	14	$11,065,648
Upper San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo	7	25	$46,383,797
Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers	5	13	$30,006,301
South Bay	9	15	$28,049,,839
TOTAL	29	87	$143,422,842



Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Subregions
UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER
UPPER SAN GABRIEL AND RIO HONDO RIVERS
LOWER SAN GABRIEL AND LOS ANGELES RIVERS
NORTH BAY
SOUTH BAY
SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS
SAN ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS
SIMI HILLS
VERDUGO MNTS
SAN JOSE HILLS
PUENTE HILLS
CHINO HILLS
PALOS VERDES HILLS
PACIFIC OCEAN
Santa Monica Bay
Santa Clarita
Simi Valley
Thousand Oaks
Calabasas
Malibu
Santa Monica
Beverly Hills
Los Angeles
Burbank
Glendale
Pasadena
Arcadia
Azusa
Glendora
San Dimas
Alhambra
Montebello
Norwalk
Whittier
West Covina
Pomona
Ontario
Rancho Cucamonga
Chino
Inglewood
El Segundo
Manhattan Beach
Torrance
Carson
Downey
Santa Fe Springs
Brea
Fullerton
Anaheim
Yorba Linda
Orange
Santa Ana
Tustin
Seal Beach
Huntington Beach
Rancho Palos Verdes
Wrightwood
Los Angeles River
Tujunga Wash
Rio Hondo River
San Gabriel River
Walnut Creek
San Jose Creek
Santa Ana River
Los Angeles Reservoir
Pacoima Reservoir
Big Tujunga Dam
Hansen Dam
Chatsworth Reservoir
Sepulveda Basin
Devil's Gate Reservoir
Cogswell Reservoir
San Gabriel Reservoir
Morris Reservoir
Santa Fe Flood Control Basin
Puddingstone Reservoir
Whittier Narrows
Prado Flood Control Basin
Marina del Rey
Ballona Creek
Compton Cr.
Dominguez Ch.
Los Angeles Harbor
Long Beach Harbor
Alamitos Bay
Anaheim Bay
Oregon
Idaho
Nevada
California
Pacific Ocean
MAP EXTENT
0 100 Miles
0 2 Mi
0 2 Km

APPENDIX I- DACIP DATA HUB USER GUIDE

DACIP Data Hub User Guide

Los Angeles - Ventura DAC Involvement Program Data Hub

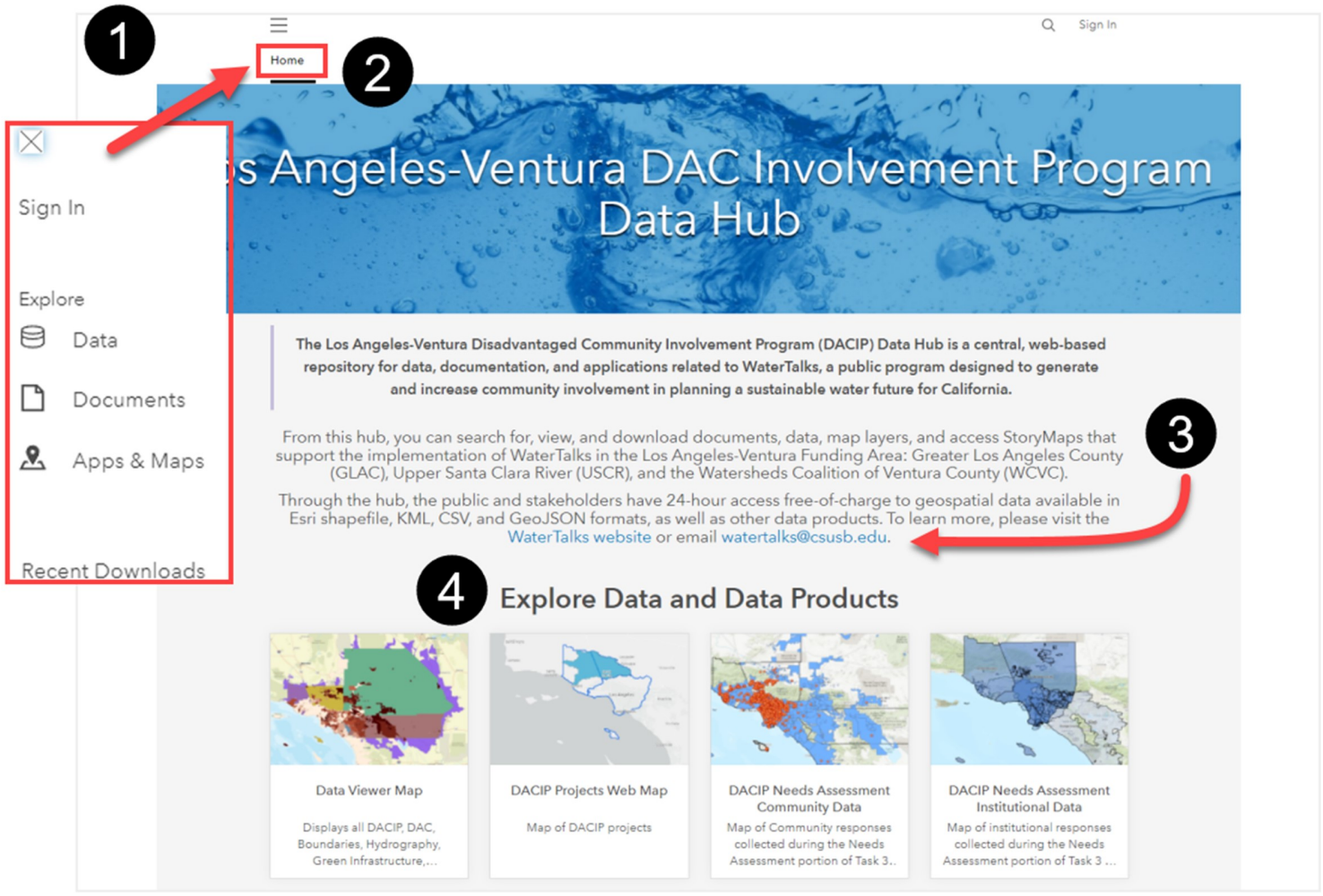
The Los Angeles-Ventura Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) Data Hub is a central, web-based repository for data, documentation, and applications related to WaterTalks, a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California.

From this hub, you can search for, view, and download documents, data, map layers, and access StoryMaps that support the implementation of WaterTalks in the Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area: Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC), Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), and the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC).

To learn more, please visit the WaterTalks website or email watertalks@csusb.edu.

July 2022

Homepage



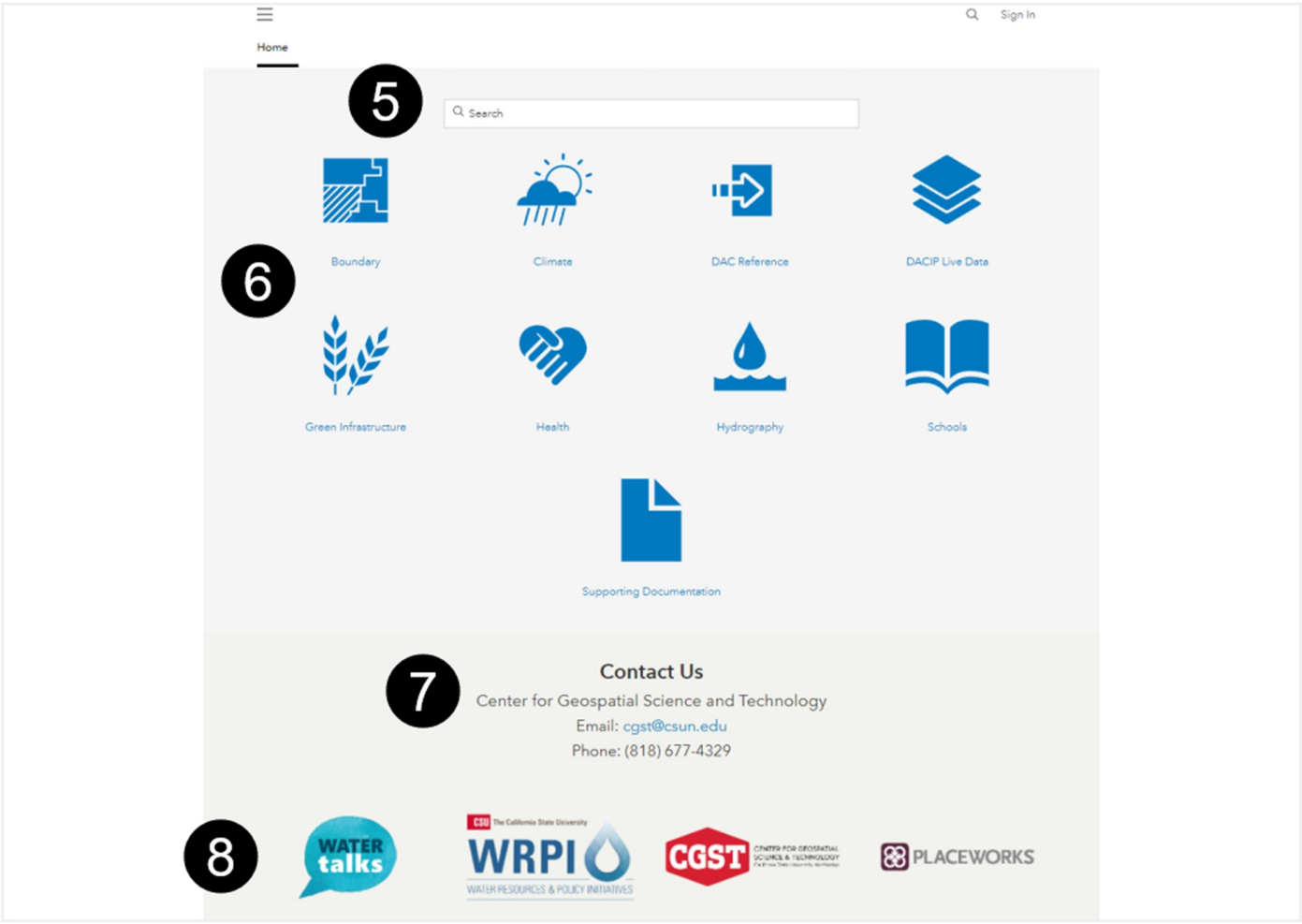
1 Click on the hamburger menu to explore content on the Data Hub.

2 Click on the *Home* button while exploring the Data Hub to return to the homepage.

3 The text provides information about the type of content accessible on the Data Hub. Click on the WaterTalks hyperlinks to learn more about the program's objectives.

4 Click on the tiles to explore interactive maps and web applications related to the DACIP project and funding areas.

Homepage (continued)



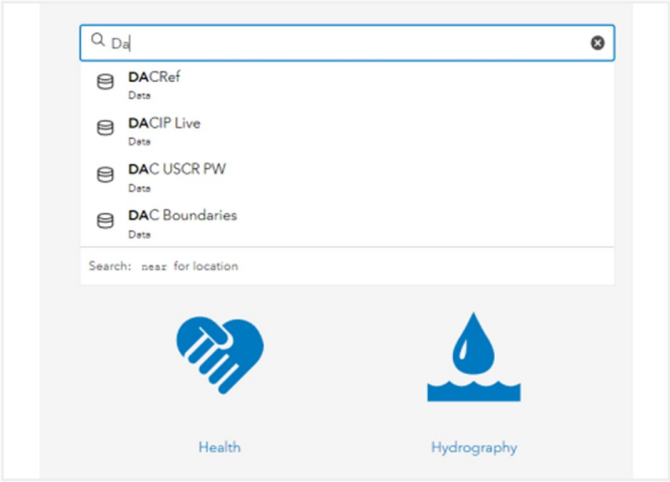
5 Use the search bar to search for content by keyword.

6 Click on the category icons to access datasets related to each topic category.

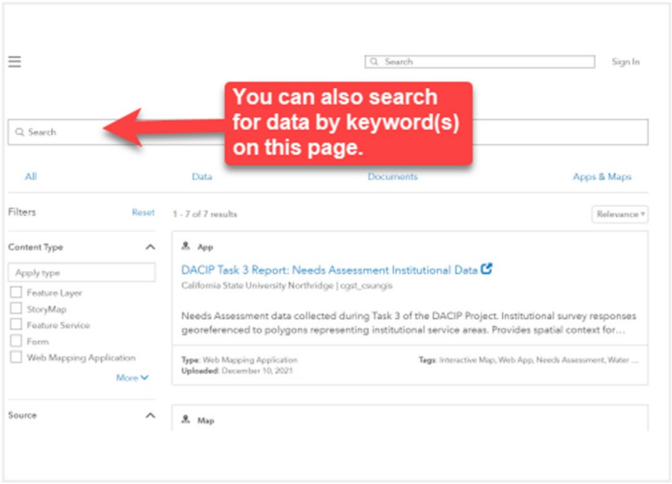
7 Direct questions or comments to the contact information listed here.

8 Click on the logos to view the participating organizations' websites.

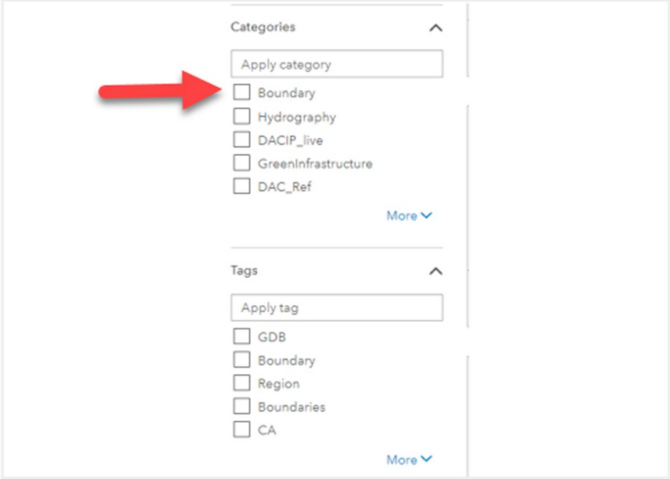
Searching for Data



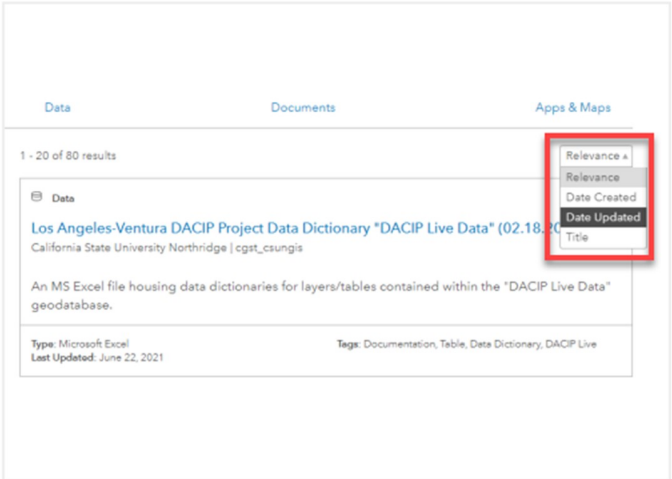
1 Begin by typing in a keyword in the search bar on the homepage. As you type in your keyword, the site will provide you with suggestions for data contained in the repository. Clicking on a suggestion will take you directly to a detailed web page about the data.



2 After you enter in a keyword in the search bar, you are taken to a page listing the matching data (this same page appears if you select one of the category icons on the homepage).

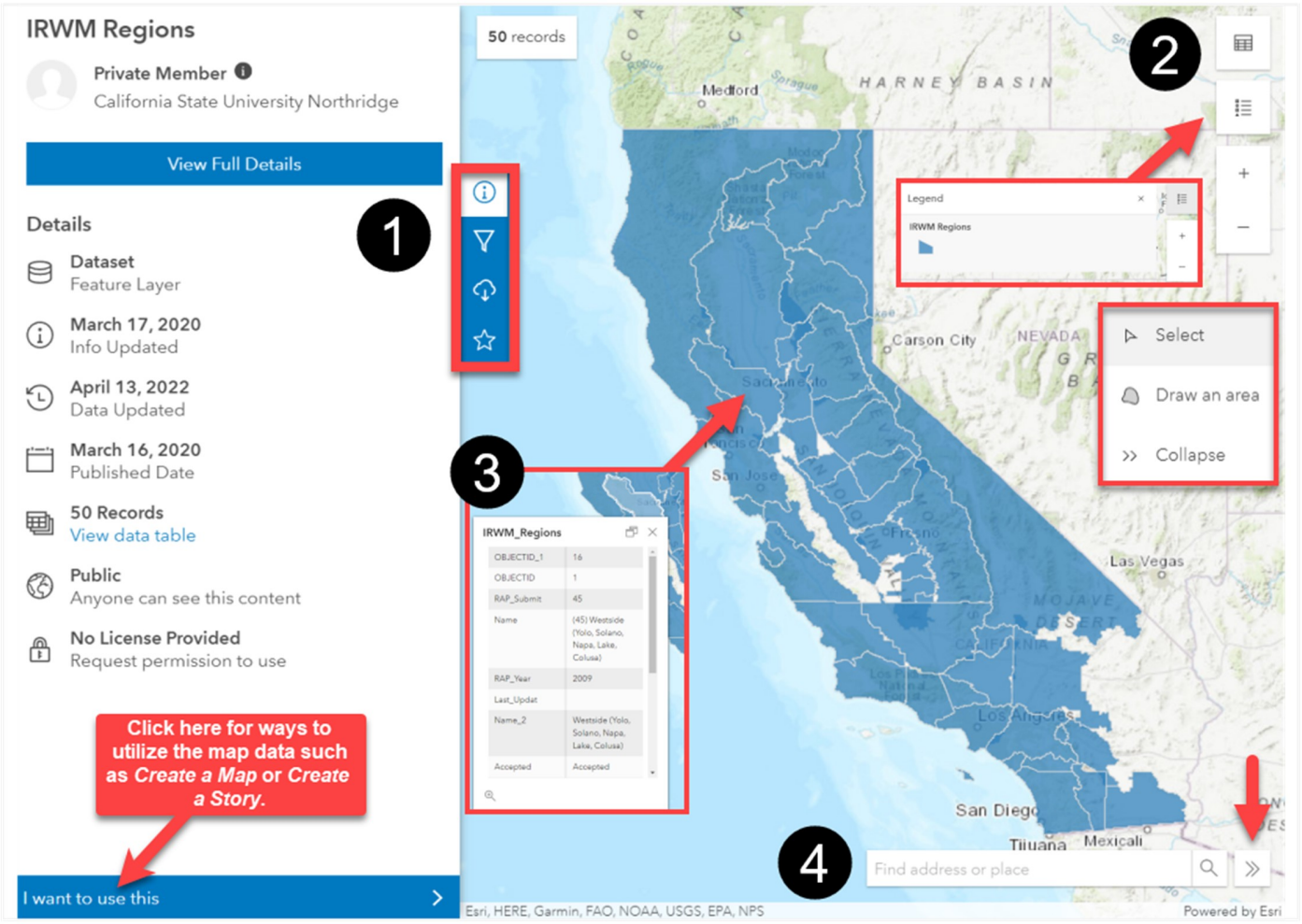


3 On the left side of the page, checking the applicable boxes allows you to filter through the data by type, share settings, source, etc.



4 You can also sort the data by relevance, date created, date updated, or title.

Exploring Data



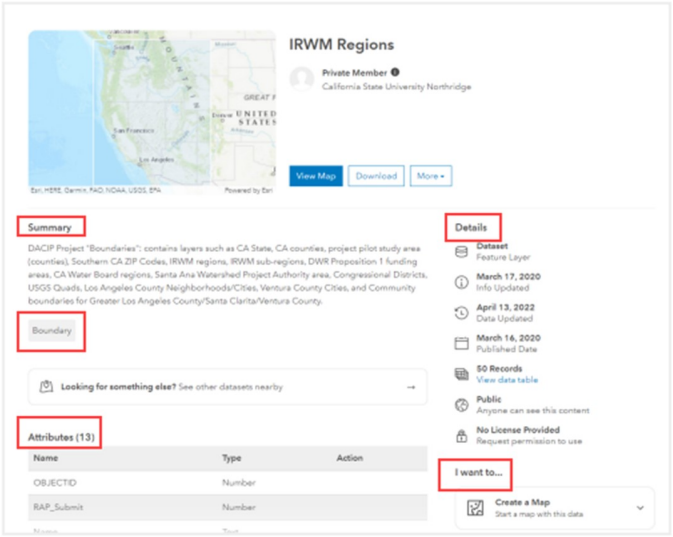
1 Once you select a dataset from the previous page, you are redirected to a web map displaying the data. Click *View Full Details* for the metadata and other options. Click on the icons to view *More Info*, *Filter Data*, *Download*, and *Add to Favorites* (from top to bottom). Refer to page 5 for more information about .

2 Click on the table icon in the upper right corner of the map to open the attribute table. Click on the second icon to open the map legend. Click on the plus or minus sign to zoom in or out. Select layers will provide tools to *Select* or *Draw an area*. Note that icons may appear in different locations on your screen.

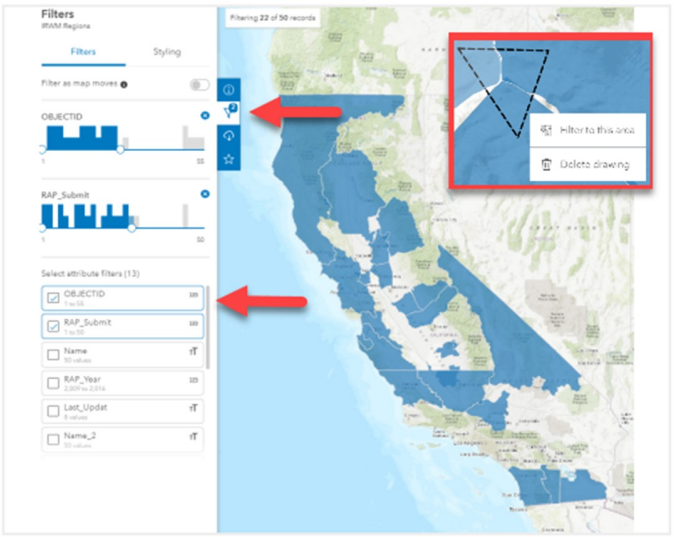
3 Clicking on the map will open up a pop-up displaying the attributes associated with the selected feature.

4 Search for a specific address or location by clicking on the magnifying glass. Click on the double arrow heads to minimize the search bar.

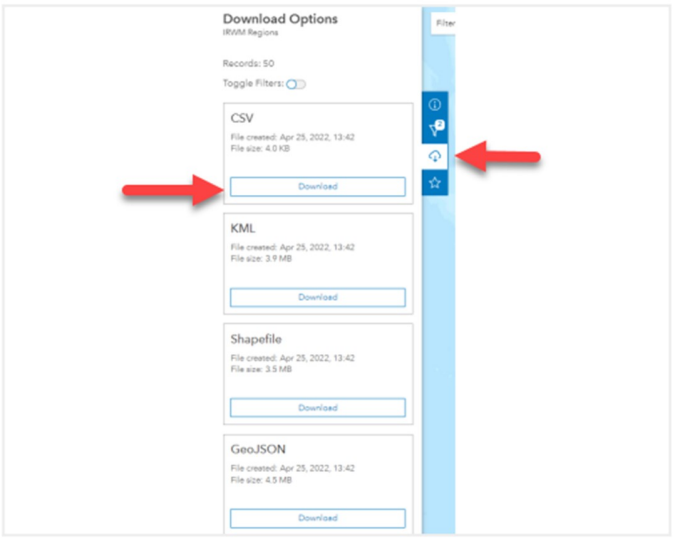
Exploring Data (continued)



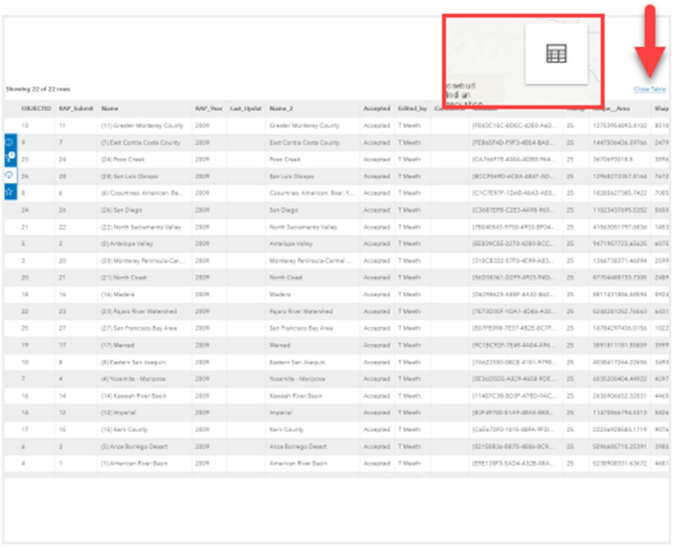
5 Click on *View Full Details* to view a summary of the data, tags used, attributes, etc.



6 Click the *Filter Data* button and check the applicable boxes to only display features matching the criteria on the map. The *Draw an area* tool can also filter the data.



7 Click the *Download* button to see options for downloading the data. The data will download directly to your computer and by default, into the *Downloads* folder.



8 After you click the table button in the upper right corner, the attribute table will appear. Click *Close Table* to return to the map.

APPENDIX J- WCVC REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Funding for DACIP projects in Ventura County

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: VENTURA COUNTY DACIP PROJECTS

On behalf of the Los Angeles-Ventura Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP), also known as WaterTalks, made possible through grant funding from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), we invite stakeholders in **Ventura County** to respond to the RFP seeking competitive projects that would serve Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). There is approximately $485,000 available for projects under this grant. Funding will be distributed between selected applicants.

Goal:

The goal of the grant program is to identify projects that will benefit under-served or

disadvantaged communities (DACs), economically distressed (EDAs), and other underrepresented communities in Ventura County.

Eligibility:
Disadvantaged Communities (DAC's) definition from the California Public Utilities Commission:

"Disadvantaged communities refer to the areas throughout California which most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes as well as high incidence of asthma and heart disease. One way that the state identifies these areas is by collecting and analyzing information from communities all over the state."

DWR DAC and EDA mapping tools can be used to evaluate DAC and EDA status of communities in California at the following link:

https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/Mapping-Tools

Eligible Activity Types Include:

General Activity Categories	Examples of Activities
Needs Assessments	Survey community members or water providers, facilitate meetings or workshops
Education	Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, RWMGs education on DAC needs
Community Outreach	Public meetings open to DAC community members, door-to-door outreach
Engagement in IRWM Efforts	DAC regional engagement coordinator role, DAC Advisory Committee to RWMG, DAC representatives in governance

Facilitation	Facilitated RWMG meetings, facilitated project development meetings
Technical Assistance	Public Agency/Elected Official Capacity Building, Facilitation, Agency staff training
Governance Structure	Facilitation, increase DAC involvement in decision making, assess water charges/rate plans, assess consolidation of water providers, Enhancement of DAC Aspects of IRWM Plans
Site Assessment	Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities
Enhancement of DAC Aspects in IRWM Plans	Development of Funding Area-wide DAC plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all IRWM plans
Project Development Activities or Construction	Environmental Compliance, Pre-Construction Activities, Site Assessment, Grant Writing, Project Development
Financial Strategy	Provides aid with grant applications or similar.

Procedure:

Please submit proposals via the **Project Description Form link**: https://arcg.is/WWKGa0

Information and supportive materials required for the Project Description Form include:

- Project Location
- Sponsors
- Cost
- Deliverables
- Project benefits
- Project information and attachments

Applicants will receive an email containing a link to edit their responses which allows them to complete the form at a later time, if needed. **If you require assistance completing the Project Description Form, please contact Miranda Moore at** miranda.moore@csusb.edu.

Timeline:

Application Submissions are currently being accepted.

Once projects have been submitted they will be reviewed by WCVC IRWM representatives and then the WCVC DAC Committee for consideration for grant funding. Applicants may be contacted and asked to provide more information about your project(s) submittal. Applicants will be provided with updates as the process moves forward. If you would like to be added to the WCVC DAC Committee or if you have further questions please contact:

Lynn Rodriguez, Project Manager

Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County

Integrated Regional Water Management Program

(805) 708-2974 (cell)

Lynn.rodriguez@ventura.org

www.watershedscoalition.org

Miranda Moore

Program Administrative Coordinator

Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)

Water Resources Institute (WRI)

5500 University Parkway

San Bernardino, CA 92407

P: 909-537-5529

F: 909-537-7682

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APPENDIX K- PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM

CGST

DACIP Project Description Form - Ventura

The purpose of this form is to collect project submissions to be evaluated for funding under the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP).

If you need help understanding or completing any of the questions, please contact the DACIP Team.

Please note that questions labeled as **[REQUIRED]** must be completed to be considered for funding. Questions without this designation are optional, and it is up to the applicant's discretion whether or not to provide a response.

You may edit your responses and/or complete the form at a later time by entering valid contact information for questions 42-44. Upon submission, you will receive an email containing a link to your saved responses. After clicking the link and making any changes, click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form to save the changes.

Which funding track is this project for?*

[REQUIRED] Select the funding track that applies to your project.

Project Overview Information

1. Project Title

[REQUIRED] Enter the name of the project.

Character Limit: 500

2. Project Website

Enter the website of the project if applicable.

3. Project Concept Abstract

[REQUIRED] Briefly describe the project concept.

Character Limit: 750

4. Project Type

[REQUIRED] Select the project type that best describes the project based on the below examples.

(1) **Needs Assessments:** Survey community members or water providers, facilitate meetings or workshops

(2) **Education:** Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, regional water management groups education on disadvantaged communities needs

(3) **Community Outreach:** Public meetings open to disadvantaged communities community members, door-to-door outreach

(4) **Engagement with Integrated Regional Water Management Efforts:** Disadvantaged Communities regional engagement coordinator role, disadvantaged communities advisory committee to regional water management group, disadvantaged communities representatives in governance

(5) **Facilitation:** Facilitated regional water management group meetings, facilitated project development meetings

(6) **Technical Assistance:** Public agency/elected official capacity building, agency staff training, assess water charges/rate plans, and assess consolidation of water providers

(7) **Governance Structure:** Increase disadvantaged communities involvement in decision making

(8) **Site Assessment:** Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities

(9) **Enhancement of Disadvantaged Communities Aspects in Integrated Regional Water Management Plans:** Development of funding area-wide disadvantaged communities plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all integrated regional water management plans

(10) **Project Development Activities or Construction:** Environmental compliance, pre-construction activities, grant writing, project development

(11) **Financial Strategy:** Provides aid with financial aspects of grant applications or similar

5. Project Description

[REQUIRED] Provide a description of the project.

Character Limit: 8,000

6. Additional Attachments

Upload additional relevant project documents (e.g., photos, other materials, plans and specs, feasibility studies, needs assessments, MHI surveys, etc.).

1

Drop file here or select file (bmp, doc, docx, gif, jpeg, jpg, pdf, png, ppt, pptx, tiff, xls, xlsx)

7. Project Deliverables

[REQUIRED] Select **one or more** deliverables that apply to the project.

- Property Acquisition
- Plan
- Study
- Non-Construction Implementation
- Permits
- Project Designs
- Trainings
- Other

8. Project Benefits

[REQUIRED] Select **one or more** benefits that apply to the project.

Examples:
(1) **Improved Climate Adaptation or Carbon Sequestration:** Uses green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, natural materials/processes

(2) **Adherence to Water Plan(s):** May include adherence to Urban Water Management Plan, Integrated Regional Water Management, Enhanced Watershed Management Program,

Groundwater Quality Management Area, Stormwater Resources plan, Measure W Stormwater Investment Plan

(3) **Water Quality:** Improves water quality of drinking water and surface runoff, addresses primary pollutants of concern

(4) **Water Supply Resilience:** Improves drought response

(5) **Habitat Improvement:** Supports specific endangered or at-risk species, increases biodiversity, increases habitat corridors that connect larger open spaces, practices resources stewardship

(6) **Water Conservation:** Reduces water demand, captures runoff/rain

(7) **Recycled Water:** Integrates purple pipe, gray/black water systems

(8) **Improves Groundwater Quality and/or Quantity:** Stormwater filtration, ground water injection, revives dry wells, enhances dry weather runoff treatment

(9) **Reduces Flood Hazards:** Reduces localized street and sidewalk flooding, enhances floodplain protection

(10) **Provides Recreational/Ceremonial Access/Use:** Increases public open space, access to public open space

(11) **Improves Community/Agency Capacity:** Increases community awareness and education, increases community/tribal involvement in project development, improves operational efficiency

- (1) Improved Climate Adaptation or Carbon Sequestration
- (2) Adherence to Water Plan(s)
- (3) Water Quality
- (4) Water Supply Resilience
- (5) Habitat Improvement
- (6) Water Conservation
- (7) Recycled Water
- (8) Improves Groundwater Quality and/or Quantity
- (9) Reduces Flood Hazards
- (10) Provides Recreational/Ceremonial Access/Use

(11) Improves Community/Agency Capacity

Applying/Implementing Entity

9. Entity Name

[REQUIRED] Enter the name of the organization or agency applying for funding.

Character Limit: 500

10. Address

[REQUIRED] Enter the building number, street, city, state and ZIP code of the organization or agency (example: 1234 Smith Ave, Los Angeles, CA 91340).

11. Contact Name

[REQUIRED] Enter the first name and last name of an individual point-of-contact for the organization or agency.

Character Limit: 100

12. Contact Title

[REQUIRED] Enter the individual's title.

Character Limit: 100

13. Contact Email

[REQUIRED] Enter the individual's email.

14. Contact Phone Number

[REQUIRED] Enter the individual's phone number.

Character Limit: 20

Other Partners/Collaborators

15. Entity Name

Enter the name of other organizations or agencies that are either partnering or collaborating on the project.

Character Limit: 500

16. Address

Enter the building number, street, city, state and ZIP code of the organization or agency (example: 1234 Smith Ave, Los Angeles, CA 91340).

17. Contact Name

Enter the first name and last name of an individual point-of-contact at the organization or agency.

Character Limit: 100

18. Contact Title

Enter the title of the individual.

Character Limit: 100

19. Contact Email

Enter the email address of the individual.

20. Contact Phone Number

Enter the phone number of the individual.

Character Limit: 20

21. Additional Partners/Collaborators

If there are additional project partners or collaborators, enter their information below (i.e., organization/agency name, address, contact name, contact title, contact email, contact phone number).

22. Other Stakeholders

Enter the names and affiliations of project stakeholders **not** identified above as official partners or collaborators.

Character Limit: 500

Project Location

23. Project Geographic Location or Address

Enter the project's location or address. 1000

24. Project Sphere of Influence

[REQUIRED] Does the project's sphere of influence (i.e., the geographic area that the project affects or serves) adhere to a pre-defined boundary type (e.g., water service provider boundary, ZIP code, IRWM region)?

- If **Yes**, only answer questions 25 and 26.
- If **No**, only answer question 27.

500

25. Pre-Defined Boundary

[REQUIRED] Select the boundary type that applies to your project.

-Please select-

26. Pre-Defined Boundary Description

[REQUIRED] Please describe the pre-defined boundary in more detail (e.g., the name of the county, city, region).

27. Other Project Sphere of Influence

[REQUIRED] Explain why the project's sphere of influence does not adhere to a pre-defined boundary **and** describe the project's sphere of influence in more detail.

If applicable, draw the sphere of influence using this web application.

Budget/Cost

28. Total Project Cost: Known/Unknown

[REQUIRED] Specify if the project cost is known.

- Amount known
- Amount unknown
- Need help in determining

29. Total Project Cost

[REQUIRED] Enter the total project cost (can be $0). If budget development assistance is needed, please contact the DACIP Team.

30. Matching Resources: Entity Name

Enter the name of the agency or resource providing matching resources for the project.

If more than one, enter the agency or resource contributing the most amount of funding.

Character Limit: 500

31. Matching Resources: Amount

Enter the dollar amount of matching resources.

32. Matching Resources: Level of Commitment

Specify the level of commitment of the matching agency or resource.

- Planned
- Pledged
- Secured
- Need Help/Assistance

33. Additional Matching Resources

If there are additional matching resources, enter the name(s) of the agency or resource, amount(s), and commitment level(s) (i.e., planned, pledged, secured, need help/assistance).

34. Post Grant Funding: Entity Name

Enter the name of the agency or resource providing post grant funding for the project. Post grant funding includes sources of funding to support the project after initial implementation.

Character Limit: 500

35. Post Grant Funding: Amount

Enter the amount of post grant funding.

36. Post Grant Funding: Level of Commitment

Specify the level of commitment by the matching agency or resource.

- Planned
- Pledged
- Secured
- Need Help/Assistance

37. Additional Post Grant Funding Sources

If there are additional sources of post grant funding, enter the name(s) of the agency or resource, amount(s), and commitment level(s) (i.e., planned, pledged, secured, need help/assistance).

38. Estimated Annual O&M Expenses

Enter the estimated annual operations and maintenance expenses in dollars for the project.

39. Cost Breakdown by Deliverable

If known, identify the cost per deliverable for each task or outcome in this project.

Please complete the deliverable template document found here and attach below.

Drop file here or select file (pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx)

Schedule/Deliverables

40. Project Assistance and Support

[REQUIRED] Can the technical assistance training and project development support you are seeking be completed by December 2022?

41. Duration of Project Assistance and Support (# of Months)

Enter the estimated duration in number of months of the technical assistance training and project development support being requested.

42. Schedule of Deliverable Milestones

If known, provide an estimated schedule of deliverable milestones.

Please complete the milestones template document found here and attach below.

Drop file here or select file (pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx)

Contact Information for Individual Completing Form

The contact information entered below will be used to send an email containing a link to edit the form responses.

*

43. Name of Individual

[REQUIRED] Enter the first name and last name of the individual completing this form.

*

44. Email of Individual

[REQUIRED] Enter the email address of the individual completing this form.

*

45. Form Completion

[REQUIRED] Specify if all of the responses for this form have been completed.

- Select **Yes** if the responses are complete and final.
- Select **No** if the responses are incomplete and will be revised at a later time.



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APPENDIX L- VENTURA AVENUE WATER AND CLIMATE RESLIENCE WORKSHOP SUMMARY



Ventura Ave WaterTalks Ventura Community Workshop

Wednesday February 08, 2023, 6:00-8:00 PM

Hosted by:
CAUSE, Watershed Coalition of Ventura County, and WaterTalks

Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWM) Subregion:
Ventura County

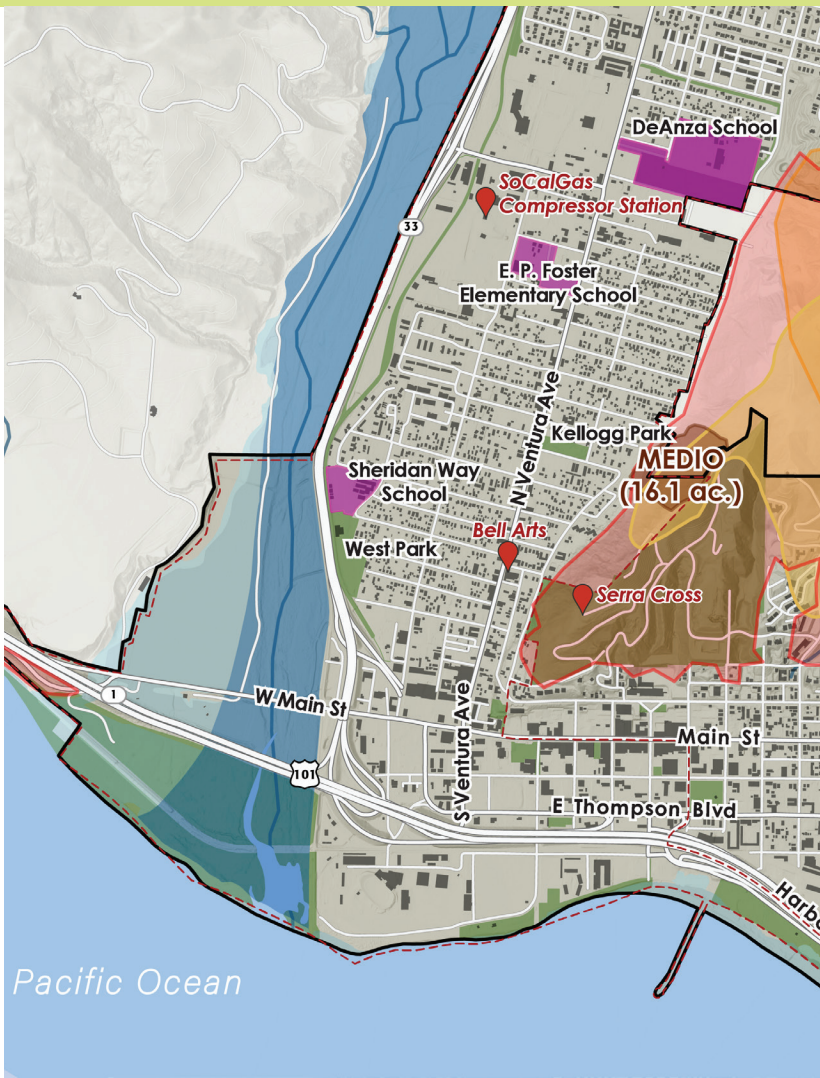
DACIP Communities:
Ventura

Event Information:
Bell Arts Factory
432 N. Ventura Ave
Ventura, CA 93001

Objective:
Help us plan where we need more shade, native plants, flood protection, mudslide and wildfire risk mitigation, and access to water in our community.

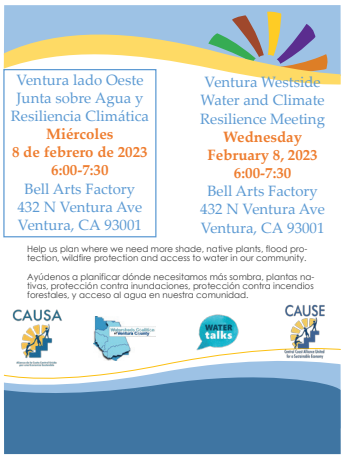
Project Type:
Community Outreach

Project Components: Public Health, Climate Resilience, Canopy Cover, Native Vegetation, Flooding, Mudslides, Wildfires, and Water Access



Highlights of Community Feedback

CAUSE and the WaterTalks team hosted an in-person workshop to identify local water and climate resilience issues, and over 60 West Ventura residents participated. Attendees divided into two groups; English speakers and Spanish speakers, and rotated through two map stations: 1. Water access, trees/shade and native plants and 2. Flooding and native plants, mudslides and wildfire. Exercises included locating specific areas where more shade and water access is needed, as well as areas of flooding and climate concerns.



Top priorities identified to address flooding and native plants:

- The following areas are prone to flooding and are where communities would like to see imroved drainage: Main Street, Thompson and Ventura Ave, Ventura Ave and Harrison, by the Library, and Harbor Blvd to HWY 101.
- Create areas for truckers because they have nowhere to go during major flood events, when the 101 closes, or when major roadway closures occur.
- Plant native plants along Ventura Ave and adjacent hillsides.



Top priorities identified for trees/shade and native plants:

- Ventura Ave
- Kellogg Park
- First half of Olive Street
- Ventura High School
- Plant trees along creekside and better access to river/cross river.
- Plant more trees, not only along the main avenues, but the cross streets as well.
- Provide shade/trees at bus stops.



Top priorities identified for improved water access:

- Install more water fountains/hydration stations at EP Foster Elementary School.
- Install water fountains/hydration stations at bus stops.
- Install water fountains/hydration stations in all parks.
- Concerns regarding maintenance of water fountains at schools, parks, and public areas. (Overall water quality, rusting of the water fountains, pipe corrosion, and timely water fountain filter cartridge replacements).

Top priorities identified to address wildfire and erosion/mudslide risks:

- Maintain dry brush everywhere that can pose a risk, especially on hillsides.
- Native plants needed on hillsides for erosion control along hills behind Ventura Ave, and Thomas Fire edge.



Other needs identified:

- Resource Center: evacuation plan information, environmental newsletter, air, water, and soil quality reports, media literacy workshops.
- Warning Systems: loud alarm, Amber Alerts, and updates on progress.
- Evacuation Routes: paper on every resident's door, research-based decisions made about evacuation routes, signage on roads, another on-ramp to HWY 33, and emergency vehicle routes.
- Lighting: improve lighting in parks and public spaces for safety.

Contact:
Alex Garcia
CAUSE Ventura Community Organizer
Email: alex@causenow.org
Phone: 805-754-4203

CAUSE Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy
COUNTY of VENTURA
Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County
PROP 1 WATER BOND 2014
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES STATE OF CALIFORNIA

APPENDIX M- SANTA PAULA WATER AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE WORKSHOP SUMMARY



Santa Paula Water and Climate Resilience Workshop

Thursday October 13, 2022, 6:00-7:30 PM

Hosted by:
CAUSE, Watershed Coalition of Ventura County, and WaterTalks

Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWM) Subregion:
Ventura County

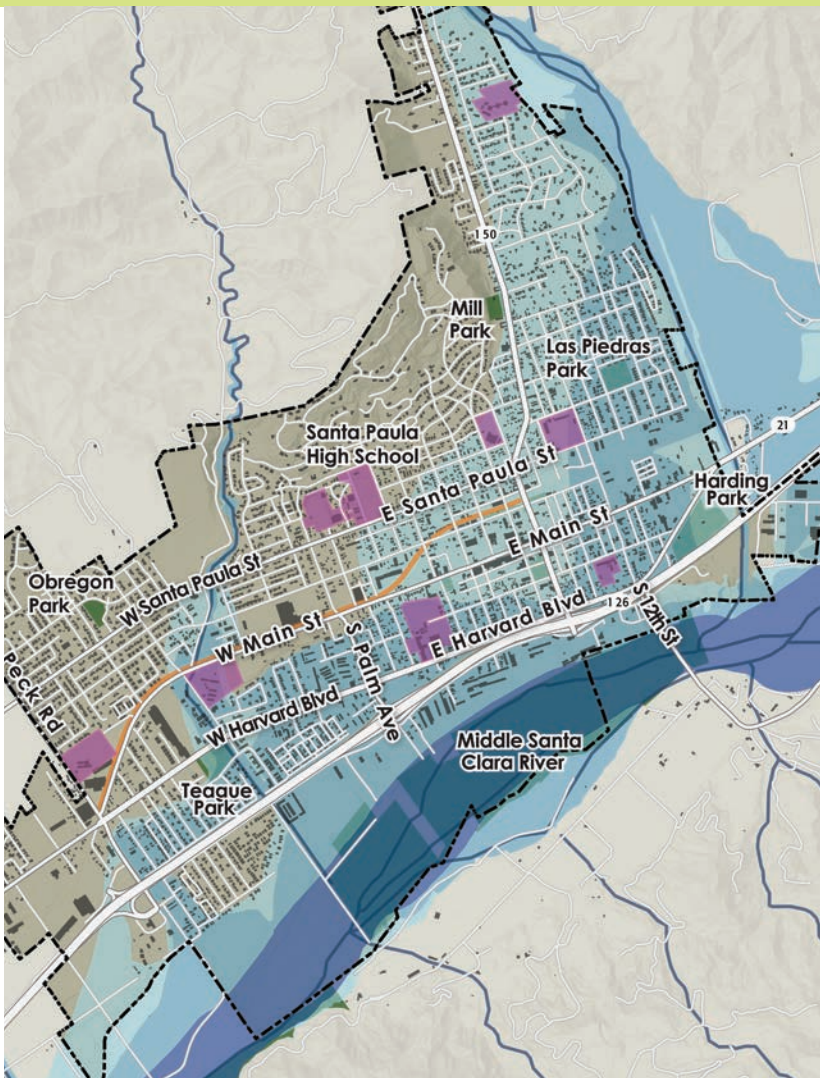
DACIP Communities:
Santa Paula

Event Information:
CAUSE Office
216 N. 8th St.
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Objective:
Help us plan where we need more shade, native plants, flood protection and access to water in our community.

Project Type:
Community Outreach

Project Components: Public Health, Climate Resilience, Canopy Cover, Native Vegetation, Flooding, Water Access



Highlights of Community Feedback

CAUSE and the WaterTalks team hosted an in-person workshop to identify local water and climate resilience issues. Attendees divided into three groups; English, Spanish, and High School students, to rotate through three map stations, locating specific water and climate resilience needs. The High School Campus map was reserved for student comment, while everyone had a chance to comment on City Flood Areas and Tree Canopy maps.









Top Priorities from Flood Areas:

- Construct catch basins in the neighborhoods north of Cornell Dr. (south of the City) to reduce flooding to the river, help infiltrate the soil and create a drainage in that area.
- Improve drainage at Main St. and 12th St. to catch water before flooding the river.
- Plant native plants along the Santa Paula Bike Trail.
- Plant Sycamore trees where Eucalyptus trees were removed in 2022 along Cemetery Rd. and other streets.
- Improve drainage at Pleasant St. and N. Mill St. (near McKevett Elementary School).

Top Priorities from Tree Canopy:

- Teague Park
- Las Piedras Park
- Mill Park
- Santa Paula Bike Trail—more shading and water fountains.
- Plant more trees along Harvard Blvd.
- Provide shade/trees at bus stops.

Better Water Access

- Install water fountains/hydration stations along the Santa Paula Bike Trail.
- Install water fountains/hydration stations in all parks

Santa Paula High School Priorities:

- Maintain existing water fountains and hydration stations, including keeping them clean, improving water flow and pressure, and making sure filters are changed in a timely manner.
- Provide 10 new hydration stations at the locations identified by participants on the Santa Paula High School campus map.
- Provide more shade trees outside the library/center courts.
- Provide AC and fans in the classrooms.

Other needs:

- Organize a community tree planting for the new park being created for the Limoneira homes on the east end of Santa Paula.
- Agricultural employers need to provide shade for farmworkers on their breaks.

Contact:
Fabiola Gomez, Santa Paula Community Organizer
CAUSE
Email: Fabiola@causenow.org
Phone: (805) 749-1214

CAUSE
Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy
COUNTY of VENTURA
Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County
PROP 1 WATER BOND 2014
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES · STATE OF CALIFORNIA

APPENDIX N- URBAN AND MULTIBENEFIT DROUGHT RELIEF GRANT PROJECT SELECTION MEMO

Greater Los Angeles County WaterTalks: Urban Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Funding

Prepared by: Mike Antos; Stantec

Prepared For: Peter Massey, TreePeople / WaterTalks

The Urban Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Funding Opportunity

In December 2021 it was shared with the WaterTalks Consultant Team (Team) that the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) was setting aside $5 million of the Urban Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Funding (UMDR) for each Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program Funding Area. DWR shared their express intent to support eligible projects identified by the Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program that might not otherwise be eligible for Proposition 1 Implementation Grants. The deadline for application submittals to use these funds was April 15, 2022.

As directed by the DACIP Task Force, the Team gathered to review the grant requirements of the UMDR program, comparing them to the most prominent strengths and needs identified during the community assessment work of the WaterTalks Program. The UMDR funding sought drought-response projects that could be implemented quickly, so prioritized projects already deep into their planning and, where appropriate, permitting processes. This review discovered that the clearest match between what the grant would support and what community members prioritized was 1) water supply reliability and drinking water projects, that 2) were already planned and, 3) were understood to be critically needed.

Developing an Approach and Engaging Project Proponents

At a January 12, 2022 meeting of the DACIP Task Force, the Team proposed to identify projects distributed across the three IRWM Regions (Greater Los Angeles County, GLAC; Upper Santa Clara River, USCR; and Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County, WCVC) within the Funding Area, using a rough distribution of resources scaled to the different size and population of the Regions (GLAC $3 million, USCR $1 million, WCVC $1 million). Figure 1 represents the proposed effort, which was approved by the Task Force at that meeting.

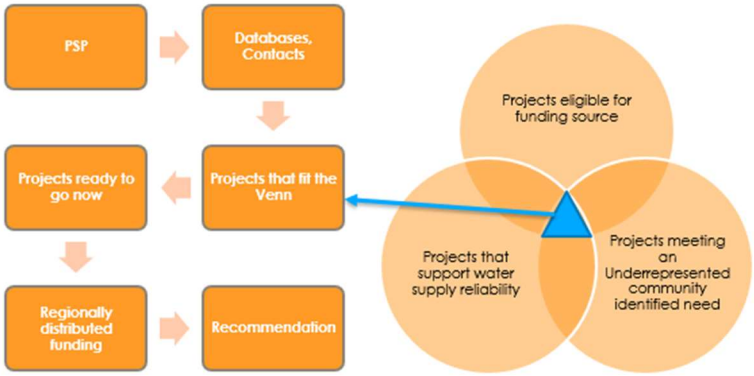


Figure 1 - Project Identification Approach for 2022 UMDR DACIP Set-Aside

The remainder of January and early February were dedicated to identifying projects that fulfilled this strategy. This effort relied heavily on relationships that had been established throughout the IRWM Program over the prior ten years, and more recently the work of the DACIP in each of the three regions. The result was a list of nine projects whose initial funding need was $6,568,850, a value that was greater than the available $5 million set-aside for the three IRWM Regions.

At the February 17, 2022, DACIP Task Force meeting, the consultant team was granted permission to gather the nine project proponents to discuss the opportunity, and to consider how the nine projects could best collaborate on using the available grant resources. This step was an innovation from previous IRWM practices in the region where decision-making bodies were responsible for aligning needs with available grant funds – a process that is often fraught and uncomfortable.

A February 25, 2022 Collaboration Meeting was scheduled where representatives of each of the nine projects participated in a facilitated discussion. Table 1 was shown to the group, and each participant introduced themselves and the project they were seeking to fund with the UMDR grant.

Proponent	Rep in this meeting	IRWM
Nyeland Acres MWC	Dina	WCVC
Garden Acres MWC	Mike B & Mary Anne	WCVC
City of San Fernando	Matt	Upper LA
Rubio Canon LWC	Lisa	Upper SG/RH
Valley County WD	Jose & Tara	Upper SG/RH
Pico Water District	Mark	Lower/Lower
West Basin MWD	Jenyffer	South Bay
Santa Clara Conservancy	Shawn	USCR
TreePeople	Peter	USCR

Table 1 - Facilitation Roster for Project Proponent Collaboration Meeting

Following these personal introductions, and discussions of the different projects being included, the group was shown that the combined need of the nine projects exceeded the available grant resources, and asked if any of the project proponents were able to adjust the need for grant funding without undermining the success of their project.

Collaborative Budgeting

Table 2 was projected to the group with the "Proposed Ask" and "Change" columns blank. The group discussed which projects could proceed with decreased budgets, and which had no other pathway to success without UMDR funding. The two blank columns were edited during the meeting as they were discussed, allowing the group to collaborate on discovering the best balance of costs and needs. This facilitation technique was adapted from *Participatory Budgeting* (PB), a "democratic process in which community members decide how to spend a part of a public budget."[1]

[1] Learn more about Participatory Budgeting at the non-profit Participatory Budgeting Project

Project	Proponent	IRWM Region or Subregion	Known Cost	Proposed Ask	Change
Nyeland Avenue 8-inch Mainline	Nyeland Acres MWC	WCVC	$730,850	$714,000	$ (16,850)
Garden Acres Backup Well Land Purchase and Engineering	Garden Acres MWC	WCVC	$714,000	$714,000	
Well 3 Nitrate Removal Treatment System	City of San Fernando	GLAC Upper LA	$2,000,000	$750,000	$ (1,250,000)
Interties and Emergency Generator	Rubio Canon LWC	GLAC Upper SG/RH & Upper LA	$366,000	$366,000	
Morada Well Rehabilitation	Valley County WD	GLAC Upper SG/RH	$1,000,000	$750,000	$ (250,000)
Well 4A Rehabilitation Project	Pico Water District	GLAC Lower/Lower	$400,000	$300,000	$ (100,000)
Grass Replacement +	West Basin MWD	GLAC South Bay	$350,000	$300,000	$ (50,000)
Arundo Mapping Priority Removal	Santa Clara Conservancy	USCR and WCVC	$508,000	$508,000	
Rural Water Supply Reliability Program	TreePeople	USCR	$500,000	$500,000	
	Totals:		$6,568,850	$4,902,000	$ (1,666,850)
	Available for Grant Administration:			$98,000	

Table 2 - Results of Facilitated Collaboration Meeting between Project Proponents

Though not a true or full example of PB, this approach allowed the different project proponents to grapple with the differences between the projects and achieve the best outcome for each other and as a group.

The project proponents on the call took a mere ten minutes to reach a consensus that reduced funding for some projects and retaining a full request from others was the appropriate outcome. As seen in Table 2, a total of approximately $1.6 million was removed from the requests in four of the projects, while five were unchanged. The results also amended the original target of balancing funding across the three IRWM Regions, with the outcome instead seeing approximately $1.4 million spent in WCVC, $1

million in USCR, and $2.6 million in GLAC. Of special note is the relatively minor concession offered by Nyeland Acres MWC, driven by a desire to be aligned with their neighbor, Garden Acres MWC. In this situation it was a decision about parity and community, and not expressly needed to achieve the greater purpose of distributing the grant resources effectively.

Moving Towards Approval and Grant Awards

The results of the collaboration meeting were shared with the DACIP Task Force on March 9, 2022, where the process of investigation, project identification, and the collaboration meeting among the project proponents were reviewed. The Task Force concurred this was a good outcome and acted to communicate to the three IRWM Regions that a consensus was reached, and that the next steps, unique to each Region, should be taken to allow the projects to move forward in a grant application to DWR.

At this meeting, it was observed that the Administration of the UMDR grant by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (FCD) was going to be more costly than the $98,000 held to that purpose during the collaboration meeting. As a result, and in the end, FCD ultimately committed to managing the grant, nonetheless.

The remaining month of effort included supporting projects moving through the approvals processes in the three regions, and then providing technical assistance as the project proponents worked with FCD and DWR to fulfill the administrative needs of being a "Local Project Sponsor."

Lessons Learned

In the past the IRWM Program in the LA Funding Area left decisions about the distribution of grant funds to the decision-making bodies and DWR. These decisions often led to either very uncomfortable situations in the regions, where projects were asked to equally cut a percentage of budget, or some projects were asked to step back from the funding effort entirely. When left by the Regions or the Funding Area for DWR to handle the distribution, their decisions often were assessed as misaligned with regional priorities. The proportion of grant funds distributed between the three regions in the LA Funding area was competitive, and with DWR being responsible for final decisions, added stress and strain to the integrated planning program.

This WaterTalks effort revealed that an approach of collaboration between project proponents, where they together developed a solution when need outstrips capacity, is a path open to the IRWM Program in the LA Funding Area. The lessons learned in this effort played a role in how the Funding Area later applied for Proposition 1 Round 2 implementation grants.

The principle of the IRWM Program is that decisions should be made as close to the spot where those decisions will have an impact, coordinated and supported by a regional understanding of process, priority, and need. Relying on relationships, the rich and contextual WaterTalks *Strengths and Needs Assessment*, existing understandings of prioritization, and then collaborative decision-making, resulted in a bright spot example for the statewide Integrated Regional Water Management Program, and the statewide Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program.

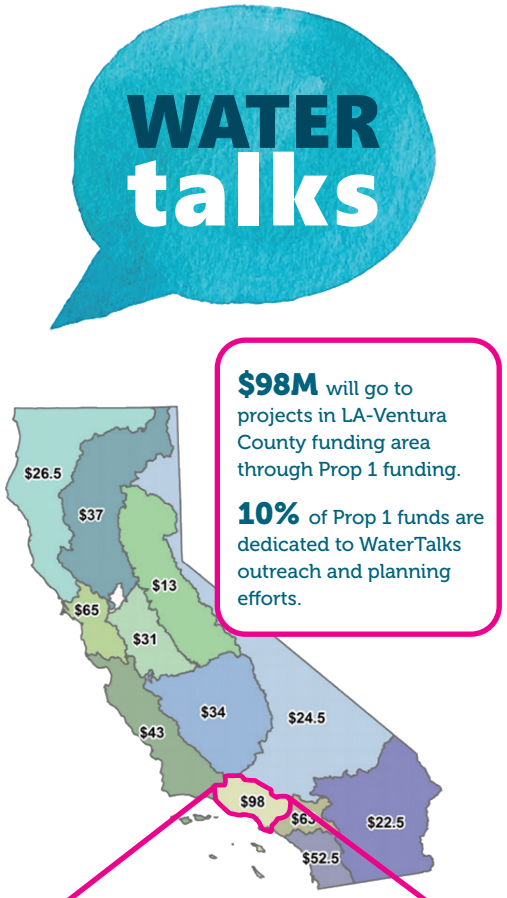
APPENDIX O- VENTURA NEEDS ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VENTURA COUNTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT SUMMARY

WHAT IS WATERTALKS?

WaterTalks is a public program designed to increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Its goal is to help underserved communities identify and prioritize needs and develop proposals for grant funding. To prioritize and recommend water-related projects based on issues of greatest concern, the program explores the strengths and opportunities of 128 communities in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties that face ongoing economic and environmental pressure.

In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act"—Proposition 1—to meet the state's long-term water needs. Prop 1 funds are managed by the California Department of Water Resources. WaterTalks is funded by Prop 1.



$98M will go to projects in LA-Ventura County funding area through Prop 1 funding.

10% of Prop 1 funds are dedicated to WaterTalks outreach and planning efforts.

WATERTALKS PROCESS

WATERTALKS IS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN THREE PHASES:

1 OUTREACH/COMMUNITY INPUT

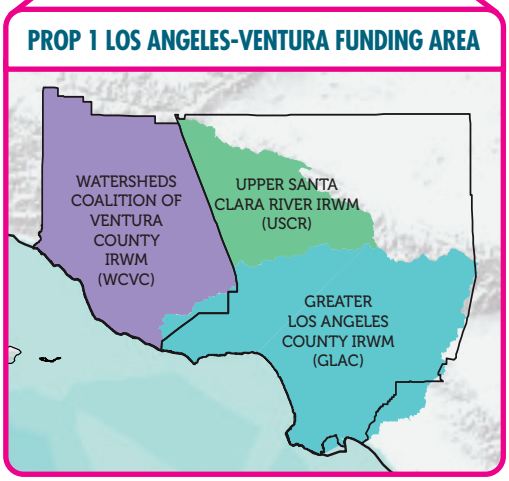
Inform through community workshops and gather input from surveys.

2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Assess community needs and priorities based on outreach.

3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Help develop selected projects and move them to implementation.



WHAT IS IRWM?

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale. There are three IRWM regions in the LA-Ventura funding area:

- Greater Los Angeles County
- Upper Santa Clara River
- Watershed Coalition of Ventura County

Prepared by:

In Collaboration with:

» TreePeople
» The Council for Watershed Health
» Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County

Learn more about WaterTalks and funding opportunities at:
watertalks.csusb.edu

Date Published: 06/17/22

1 OUTREACH

The first phase of WaterTalks outreach events was designed to educate and engage disadvantaged communities (DAC) in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, empowering them to engage in water planning including subsequent phases of WaterTalks. Workshops were held and a survey was distributed throughout the communities during 2019–2020 to identify community needs and priorities. The survey is still live and accessible via the WaterTalks website.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community survey was developed to collect feedback from people living in identified DACs in each region.
The survey was translated to Spanish, Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi to meet the language needs of all three IRWM regions.
The survey included questions about:

- Demographics
- Community character
- Water-related concerns in the community
- Interest and involvement in community programs, politics, and planning

INSTITUTIONAL INTERVIEWS AND SURVEY

An email blast was sent to a list of institutions based on the percentage of people in their service area that live in DACs. Institutions were also chosen based on their willingness to assist in spreading knowledge about WaterTalks and their ability to get community members to take the survey. Institutions that responded either filled out the institutional survey or were interviewed.
The survey included questions about:

- Needs and strengths of the community they serve and are a part of.
- Barriers to equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure
- Their own governance and decision-making processes and engagement strategies
- Future challenges and opportunities

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT

Outreach is currently underway to gather feedback on water-related strengths and needs from Tribal members in Ventura County. Data and responses will be reflected in this section when the process is complete.

OUTREACH METHODS USED:

- Virtual events
- Printed WaterTalks newspapers and WaterTalks surveys mailed to community residences
- WaterTalks bookmarks distributed to local libraries
- Social media posts
- Paid online and newsletter advertisements
- Email blasts (eblasts) to community partners, institutions, and agencies
- Phone banking to residents
- Institutional and school outreach

Take the WaterTalks Survey: ***https://watertalks.csusb.edu/***
Find Community Toolkits here: ***https://watertalks.csusb.edu/ventura-county***

2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The second phase of WaterTalks entailed compiling and analyzing the data received during the outreach and surveys conducted in Phase 1.

WATER talks

COMMUNITIES

Respondents noted that community strengths included a strong sense of community; the availability of recreational areas, green spaces, and clean beaches; the weather; social service programs; and local businesses. The *Needs Assessment Report* for the WCVC region identified these water-related issues:

- Water contamination due to trash and industrial facilities
- Drinking water quality
- High cost of water
- Water availability for fire suppression and agriculture
- Access to clean, safe water
- Inadequate wastewater collection and treatment
- Drinking water availability
- Recreational water safety
- Flooding
- Compliance with new regulatory requirements

Broader concerns with crossover to water-related issues included the need to increase green space and recreational opportunities, provide adequate assistance to unsheltered and homeless community members, increase affordable housing, and support higher paying jobs. In inland high-stress DACs, respondents highlighted a need to ensure adequate transportation routes during floods and hazardous conditions.

Results from the *Community Needs Assessment* will inform future outreach and engagement in the following ways:

- Provide a database of contacts for future outreach and engagement
- Help the County match suggested/potential projects with agencies and community groups in those areas
- Assist community groups and the County with generating new project ideas that further help meet community needs.

"I like the small town, great school, friendly neighbors, caring and family oriented. " - Ventura Resident

"We need more affordable housing, more affordable clean water and improved agricultural sustainability." - Ventura Resident

FACT SHEETS

Fact sheets have been developed for each DAC included in the survey to highlight its specific needs. The communities within Ventura are:

- Casitas Springs
- Oxnard
- El Rio
- Nyeland Acres
- Saticoy
- Santa Paula
- Fillmore
- Piru
- Ventura Avenue

NEEDS ASSESSMENT DASHBOARD

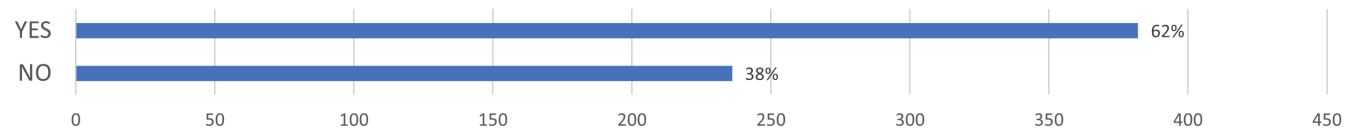
The *Needs Assessment Dashboard* displays the data received in a more accessible, user-friendly, and graphical way. It can be used to quickly identify community concerns and needs.

https://bit.ly/Ventura_Dashboard

DISCLAIMER:

The map dashboard should only be used as a general informational planning resource. The WaterTalks team has scheduled at least one update to the dashboard for new surveys submitted since June 15, 2021. New survey data is expected to be incorporated in summer 2022.

WHEN ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE CONCERNS ABOUT DRINKING WATER QUALITY, RESPONDENTS ANSWERED:



2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT *(CONTINUED)*

WATER talks

INSTITUTIONS

Institutions indicated that their primary strengths include:

- Shared interconnections and the ability to collaborate with multiple agencies and nonprofits, which helps to:
  - Identify resource needs so they can be quickly addressed
  - Share information with the community to inform decision making
- Implementation of best management practices
- Green space between cities, where many disadvantaged communities tend to recreate
- Variety of resources, collaborators, and strategies for addressing homelessness
- Community's ability to collaborate through public-private partnerships to improve utilities and internet services

Institutions shared various needs associated with improving the physical and emergency infrastructure for providing water resources. Aging infrastructure, changing regulatory requirements, and increasing development pressures often drive up utility rates. This is particularly difficult for smaller communities and water providers that do not have a tax base to address increasing costs. Limited water resources also impact a community's ability to promote development to increase the tax base. Input from institutions illustrated that:

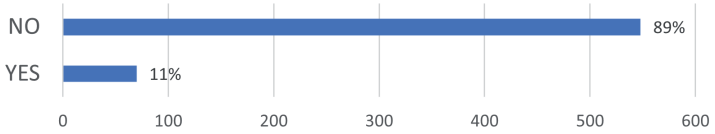
- Funding to aid the homeless population is limited and not sustainable.
- Institutions need more effective methods of engaging with the community. Language barriers get in the way and working populations often do not have time to attend education and outreach events.
- The lack of affordable and stable internet slows the lines of communication and subsequent participation in decision making processes related to water.
- Mutual water providers do not feel that the IRWM Program is interested in working with them, and outreach has been limited.

TRIBAL AND INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

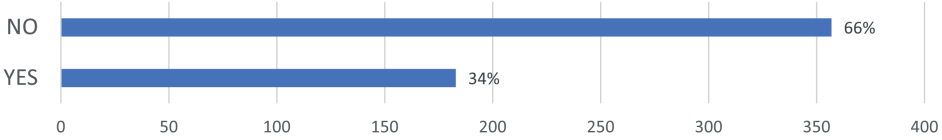
A majority of water institutions indicated they do not interact with tribal or indigenous communities. However, when there are issues or concerns about preserving cultural resources and ceremonial grounds, the Chumash Tribe is often involved in assisting institutions with meeting CEQA requirements. When areas are impacted by fires, water institutions often reach out to the Chumash Tribe, the Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project, and Mixteco communities to ensure impacted areas do not contain cultural resources before restoration efforts begin. The Wishtoyo Foundation was identified as an organization involved in regional wastewater issues.

IS THE COMMUNITY ENGAGING IN WATER PLANNING?

Respondents in DAC communities were asked whether they participated in water-related planning in the community:



Respondents in DAC communities were also asked whether they had ideas on how water problems could be addressed:



3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The third phase of WaterTalks included a series of webinars to teach community members how to develop and submit projects for funding consideration. WaterTalks also built an application to assist in evaluating projects for funding.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

On February 1, 2022, an online training webinar, *Funding for Water Related Projects in Ventura County*, was held to teach members of the public and community representatives or leaders how to develop their ideas into projects that can be submitted for funding consideration. The first module of the training covered:

- Generating and Describing Project Ideas
- Organizing Community Support
- Identifying and Approaching Agencies
- Identifying Technical Needs and Resources
- Identifying Funding Sources
- Navigating Funding Requirements

PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM AND TRAINING WEBINAR

The second module in the training webinar provided step-by-step instructions on how to complete the *Project Description Form*. The main project description template collects project information in various categories, including project overview information, location information, and budget/cost information.

PROJECT EVALUATION

Projects will undergo a data-driven evaluation process via the *TAPPED application. TAPPED allows IRWM representatives to interact with multiple data points to compare and prioritize potential technical assistance projects. This includes community and institutional needs assessment data.

*TAPPED APPLICATION

TAPPED stands for the Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard. This online tool shows information in a more understandable way so that it is easier to see how projects submitted for funding could meet community and institutional needs.

HAVE A PROJECT IDEA THAT YOU'D LIKE TO GET FUNDED?

View the *Funding for Water Related Projects in Ventura County* webinar:
https://bit.ly/WT_WebinarRecording

Download the webinar presentation:
https://bit.ly/WT_Webinar_Module1

Download the Project Description Form Guide:
https://bit.ly/WT_Webinar_Module2

Submit your *Project Description Form*:
https://bit.ly/DACIP_Proj_Description_Form

MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES FOR WATER-RELATED PROJECTS:

IRWM DAC Involvement Program:
https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/Proposition-1/DAC-Involvement-Program

Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Funding:
https://water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought/Urban-Multi-Benefit-Drought

IRWM Round 2 Funding:
https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/Proposition-1/Implementation-Grants

Small Community Drought Relief Funding:
https://water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought/Small-Community-Drought-Relief

APPENDIX P- UPPER SANTA CLARA RIVER NEEDS ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UPPER SANTA CLARA RIVER NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT SUMMARY

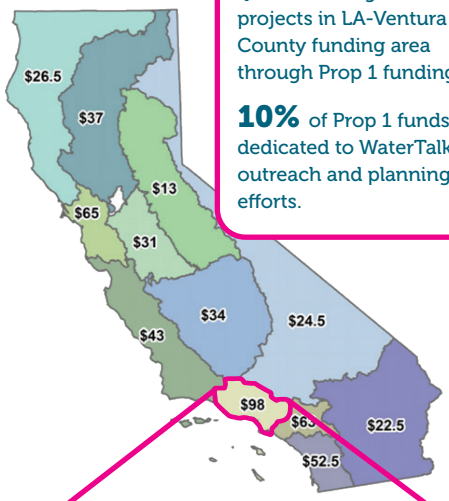
WHAT IS WATERTALKS?

WaterTalks is a public program designed to increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Its goal is to help underserved communities identify and prioritize needs and develop proposals for grant funding. To prioritize and recommend water-related projects based on issues of greatest concern, the program explores the strengths and opportunities of 128 communities in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties that face ongoing economic and environmental pressure.

In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act"—Proposition 1—to meet the state's long-term water needs. Prop 1 funds are managed by the California Department of Water Resources. WaterTalks is funded by Prop 1.

$98M will go to projects in LA-Ventura County funding area through Prop 1 funding.

10% of Prop 1 funds are dedicated to WaterTalks outreach and planning efforts.



WATERTALKS PROCESS

WATERTALKS IS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN THREE PHASES:

1 OUTREACH/COMMUNITY INPUT

Inform through community workshops and gather input from surveys.

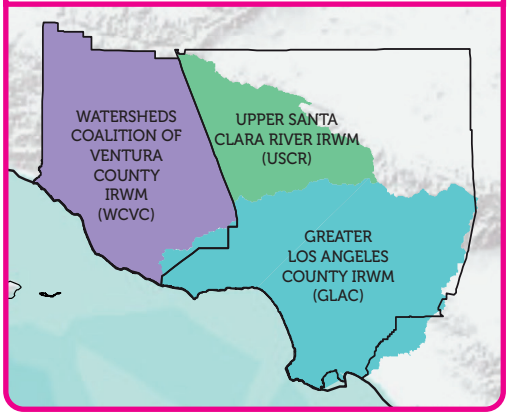
2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Assess community needs and priorities based on outreach.

3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Help develop selected projects and move them to implementation.

PROP 1 LOS ANGELES-VENTURA FUNDING AREA



WHAT IS IRWM?

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale. There are three IRWM regions in the LA-Ventura funding area:

- Greater Los Angeles County
- Upper Santa Clara River
- Watershed Coalition of Ventura County

Prepared by:

In Collaboration with:

» TreePeople
» The Council for Watershed Health
» Center for Geospatial Science & Technology at California State University, Northridge (CSUN)

Learn more about WaterTalks and funding opportunities at: *watertalks.csusb.edu*

Date Published: 11/04/22

1 OUTREACH

The first phase of WaterTalks outreach events was designed to educate and engage disadvantaged communities (DAC) in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, empowering them to engage in water planning, including subsequent phases of WaterTalks. Workshops were held and a survey was distributed throughout the communities during 2019–2020 to identify community needs and priorities. The survey is still live and accessible via the WaterTalks website.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community survey was developed to collect feedback from people living in identified DACs in each region. The survey was translated to Spanish, Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi to meet the language needs of all three IRWM regions.

The survey included questions about:

- Demographics
- Community character
- Water-related concerns in the community
- Interest and involvement in community programs, politics, and planning

INSTITUTIONAL INTERVIEWS AND SURVEY

An email blast was sent to a list of institutions based on the percentage of people in their service area that live in DACs. Institutions were also chosen based on their willingness to assist in spreading knowledge about WaterTalks and their ability to get community members to take the survey. Institutions that responded either filled out the institutional survey or were interviewed.

The survey included questions about:

- Needs and strengths of the community they serve and are a part of
- Barriers to equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure
- Their own governance and decision-making processes and engagement strategies
- Future challenges and opportunities

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT

Outreach is currently underway to gather feedback on water-related strengths and needs from Tribal members in the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) IRWM Region. Data and responses will be reflected in this section when the process is complete.

OUTREACH METHODS USED:


Virtual events


Printed WaterTalks newspapers and WaterTalks surveys mailed to community residences


WaterTalks bookmarks distributed to local libraries


Social media posts


Paid online and newsletter advertisements


Email blasts (eblasts) to community partners, institutions, and agencies


Phone banking to residents


Institutional and school outreach

Take the WaterTalks Survey: ***https://watertalks.csusb.edu/***
Find Community Toolkits here: ***https://watertalks.csusb.edu/upper-santa-clara-river-watershed***

2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The second phase of WaterTalks entailed compiling and analyzing the data received during the outreach and surveys conducted in Phase 1.

COMMUNITIES

Respondents noted that community strengths included self-reliance, retaining traditional values, a clean and safe environment, friendly residents and business owners, family activities, the rural nature of the landscape and amenities, good schools, proximity to the beach, and affordable homes. The Needs Assessment Report for the USCR IRWM Region identified these water-related issues:

- Poor drinking water quality
- Lack of water available for fire and agriculture
- Limited access to clean safe water
- Strain on overburdened utility infrastructure due to new development
- Failing septic systems
- High water costs
- Burdensome water quality regulations
- Groundwater depletion and pollution

Broader concerns with crossover to water-related issues included climate change, homelessness, the need to increase green space and parks, and more civic engagements and regulatory oversight of industrial operations, including local landfills.

Results from the *Community Needs Assessment* will inform future outreach and engagement in the following ways:

- Provide a database of contacts for future outreach and engagement
- Help local governments match suggested/potential projects with agencies and community groups in those areas
- Assist community groups and local governments with generating new project ideas that further help meet community needs.

"I like the paseos, our great neighbors, and the neighborhood is lovely, safe, and clean." - USCR Resident

"We need better roads, fewer new homes and neighborhoods that lead to more congestion, and better representation in local issues." - USCR Resident

FACT SHEETS

Fact sheets have been developed for each DAC included in the survey to highlight its specific needs. The communities within the USCR area are:

- Acton
- Agua Dulce
- Bouquet Canyon
- Canyon Country
- Castaic
- Lake Hughes
- Newhall
- Santa Clarita
- Val Verde

NEEDS ASSESSMENT DASHBOARD

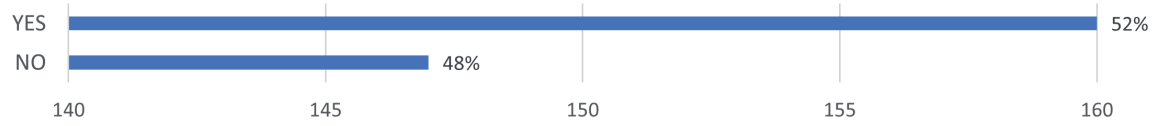
The *Needs Assessment Dashboard* displays the data received in an accessible, user-friendly, and graphic way. It can be used to quickly identify community concerns and needs.

https://bit.ly/USCR_Dashboard

DISCLAIMER:

The map dashboard should only be used as a general informational planning resource. The WaterTalks team has scheduled at least one update to the dashboard for new surveys submitted since June 15, 2021. New survey data is expected to be incorporated in November 2022.

WHEN ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE CONCERNS ABOUT DRINKING WATER QUALITY, RESPONDENTS ANSWERED:



2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT *(CONTINUED)*

WATER talks

INSTITUTIONS

Water institutions surveyed felt that assets to communities throughout USCR were:

- Community members' high level of engagement in a variety of issues, including ground and potable water quality, water-related natural hazards, and human-induced toxic burdens.
- Several key community groups that are consistently engaged in community issues often collaborating with various public service and nonprofits to meet emerging water and community service needs.

Institutions shared various needs associated with aging infrastructure, compliance with shifting and new regulations, and financial barriers associated with changing regulations that drive the need for infrastructure upgrades and additional monitoring.

STAKEHOLDER CONNECTS AND DISCONNECTS

Both water institutions and community organizations connected through their recognition of:

- Strong town councils and regular public meetings attended by community members who are engaged in emerging issues.
- Changing regulations coupled with natural hazards, and legacy and emerging toxins that create a myriad of water quality concerns.
- Changing regulations that result in financial barriers.

Disconnects among stakeholders include:

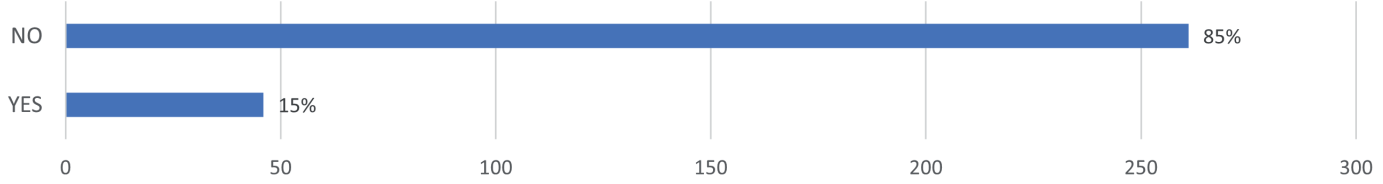
- Communities' desire to remain independent of county and water agency governance.
- Water institutions suggesting community engagement is selective only occurring when water issues affect local communities versus water issues across the region.

TRIBAL AND INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

A majority of water institutions surveyed indicated that they do not engage with Tribal or Indigenous communities; however, one water agency serving high-stress DACs across urban and rural communities noted that they have worked with the Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in relation to meeting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

IS THE COMMUNITY ENGAGING IN WATER PLANNING?

Respondents in DAC communities were asked whether they participated in water-related planning in the community:



3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The third phase of WaterTalks included identifying projects using data from the Strengths and Needs Assessment. These projects were further vetted with community surveys and discussions. Technical assistance from professional design teams will further develop these through spring of 2023, with a goal of submitting them for funding to multiple sources. WaterTalks also built an application to assist in evaluating projects for funding.

EDUCATION SERIES

In spring of 2022 a series of online training webinars was launched, to share guest expert speakers and topics of interest related to water projects. These were designed around multiple themes and audiences:

WaterTalks for Agencies and Electeds

Hosted by Council for Watershed Health, participants learn about the Systems Thinking approach to water and land-use planning in relation to the Integrated Regional Water Management and the Safe Clean Water Programs. Attendees will hear from local government representatives about how these programs have benefitted their constituents and communities.

Tribal Allyship Training

Hosted by Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples and TreePeople, participants learn regional history, understand state law in working with CA Native American tribes, and learn best practices for engaging and supporting local indigenous communities in water infrastructure and related planning efforts.

WaterTalks for Community

Six online or in-person training sessions will be held in 2023 focused on a variety of topics, including:

- Sources of water serving the area
- Indoor drinking water quality
- Wastewater management
- Green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to water challenges

PROJECT EVALUATION

Projects will undergo a data-driven evaluation process via the *TAPPED application. TAPPED allows IRWM representatives to interact with multiple data points to compare and prioritize potential technical assistance projects. This includes community and institutional needs assessment data.

*TAPPED APPLICATION

TAPPED stands for the Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard. This online tool shows information in a more understandable way so that it is easier to see how projects submitted for funding could meet community and institutional needs.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Check out recordings of past sessions (Agency & Elected):
https://www.watershedhealth.org/watertalks

Check out recordings of past sessions (Tribal Allyship):
https://bit.ly/TribalAllyship

Watch CA Indigenous Perspectives on Sacred Waters:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvMDtohObGo

Submit a project for consideration:
https://bit.ly/USCRProjectForm

MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES FOR WATER-RELATED PROJECTS:

IRWM DAC Involvement Program:
https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/Proposition-1/DAC-Involvement-Program

Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Funding:
https://water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought/Urban-Multi-Benefit-Drought

LA County Safe Clean Water Program:
https://portal.safecleanwaterla.org/scw-reporting/map

Small Community Drought Relief Funding:
https://water.ca.gov/Water-Basics/Drought/Drought-Funding/Small-Community-Drought-Relief

APPENDIX Q- CAL-RURAL REPORT ON ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN DACS AND IRWMS

Disadvantaged Community Participation in Integrated Regional Water Management

Integrated Regional Water Management

Definition of IRWM

Integrated Regional Water Management, or IRWM, is a model for managing water and related resources at the regional scale. IRWM promotes collaboration to increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. This approach delivers higher value for investments by considering all interests, providing multiple benefits, and working across jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of multiple benefits include improved water quality, better flood management, restored and enhanced ecosystems, and more reliable surface and groundwater supplies.

IRWM encourages agencies to utilize regional water management strategies to develop plans to protect communities from drought, improve and protect water quality, and improve water security at local levels while reducing dependence on imported water. It acts as a grant program, to fund water resource projects, and as technical support for integrated, multi-benefit projects that meet local water resource needs for each of the States' 48 IRWM regions.

History

The IRWM story began in 2002, when the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act (SB 1672) was passed by the California State Legislature. The legislation set the parameters and priorities for IRWM planning and directed State agencies to give preference to projects developed under the IRWM umbrella. The act also encouraged local and regional agencies to work together through Regional Water Management Groups (RWMGs). IRWM is administered at the State level by the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

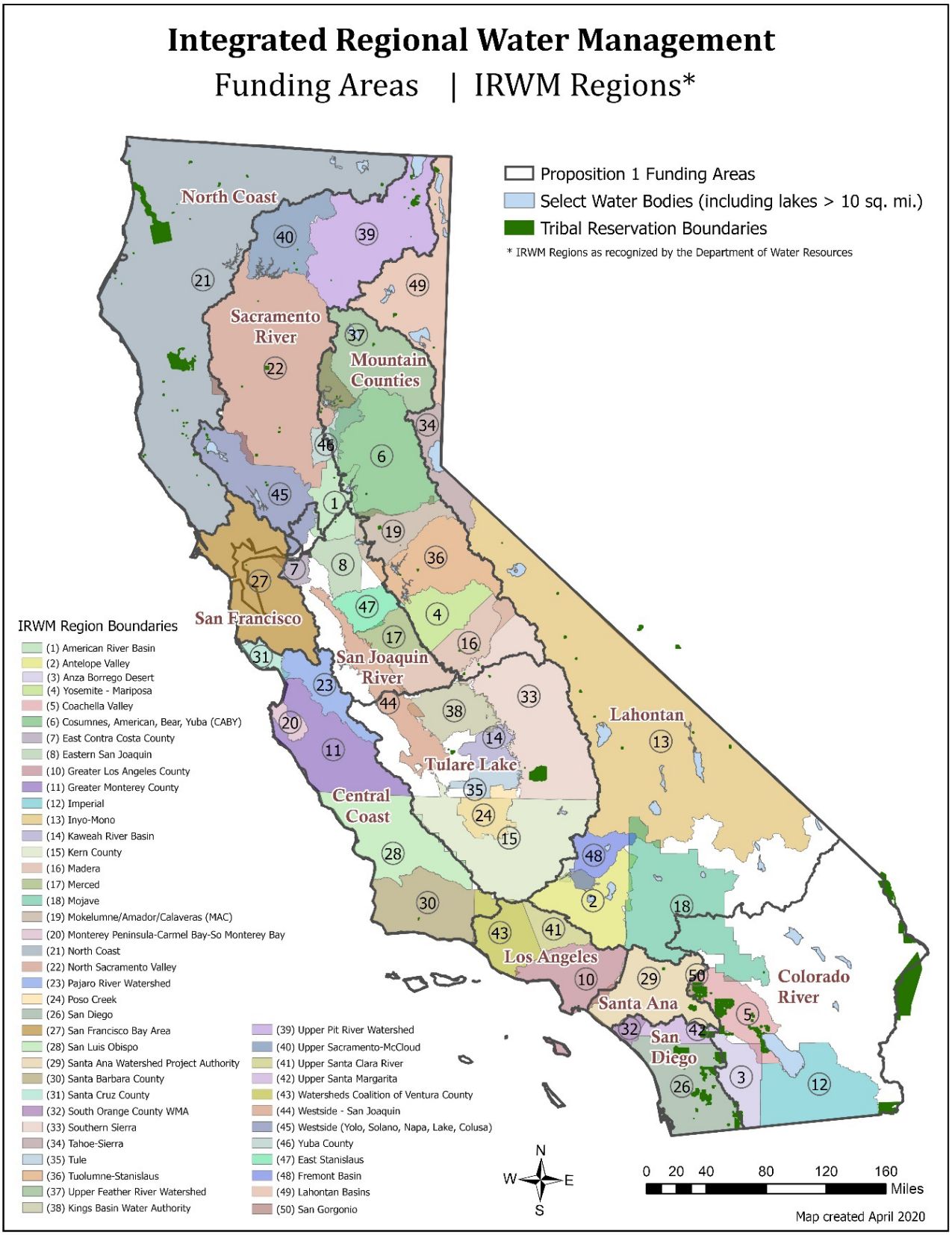
Following the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act, three additional bond acts have been passed: Proposition 50 in 2002, Proposition 84 in 2006, and Proposition 1 in 2014.

IRWM Regions

The Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act provides standards for identifying an IRWM region. The regions are self-formed based on geography and communities with the only guidance provided by the State being that regions should follow watershed boundaries when possible. Regions are then combined into funding areas, each of which contains 1-10 IRWM regions.

The intent of IRWM is that it is an open, inclusive process that takes into account the priorities and desires of a diverse set of stakeholders, including underrepresented communities and Tribes. Once a region is approved by DWR, it can then participate in the IRWM funding programs.

As shown below, the 48 IRWM regions in California cover 87% of the state's geographic area and 99% of the population:



https://www.roundtableofregions.org/irwm-region-map

Region Acceptance Process

The Region Acceptance Process (RAP) is a component of the IRWM grant program and is used to evaluate and accept an IRWM region into the IRWM grant program. RAP requires regions to describe their proposed boundaries and justify why those boundaries make sense for their regional processes. Every region must have a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) and must demonstrate stakeholder inclusiveness, public involvement, and a governance structure.

Regional Water Management Groups

Regional Water Management Groups (RWMGs) are composed of three or more local agencies, at least two of which have statutory authority over water supply or water management. RWMGs typically consist of water, wastewater, and groundwater agencies; local, state, and federal agencies; environmental organizations; community-based organizations (CBOs); Native American Tribes; academic institutions; and local residents who are engaged in integrating water resources planning across multiple sectors.

The governance structures of RWMGs vary widely among the 48 regions. Some RWMGs form Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) to manage that region's IRWM program, while others may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Agreement (MOA), which are less formal and official than JPAs but communicate the intention of IRWM stakeholders to collaborate on water management issues. Similarly, decision-making structures and processes are diverse. In some IRWM regions, a small handful of stakeholders are designated to make decisions for the entire region, whereas in other regions, all interested stakeholders are eligible to be part of the decision-making process. Decisions in some regions are reached by majority vote while other regions use an all-or-nothing consensus process.



IRWM Plan

IRWM Plans present regional water management objectives, as agreed upon by the stakeholders, including goals and measurable objectives and strategies, and represent an integration of multiple planning efforts and documents. IRWM Plans reflect integrated planning in the region that balances water supply, habitat restoration, surface water and groundwater quality, and flood management priorities. Plans enumerate projects that will help meet the objectives. The IRWM Program Guidelines, released by DWR, lay out the Plan Standards that IRWM Plans must adhere to. Some of the required elements in the Plan Standards include stakeholder involvement, governance structures, outreach efforts, relation to local water and land use planning, climate change, and Plan implementation.

DWR then reviews the region's Plan through the Plan Review Process to determine whether it adequately meets the Plan Standards. IRWM Plans are updated on a regular basis, based either on new IRWM Program Guidelines or an IRWM region's own Plan update schedule. Each IRWM region must prepare and adopt an IRWM Plan to be eligible for IRWM funding.

Disadvantaged Communities

Since the beginning of the IRWM Program, DWR has emphasized outreach to disadvantaged communities (DAC). A DAC is defined as a census geography (Census Designated Place, Census Tract, or Census Block Group) whose median household income (MHI) is 80% or less of the statewide median household income. DACs may be cities, small towns, or unincorporated rural areas. It is recognized that DACs have had less opportunities to participate in IRWM and its governance structures and may have water supply and water quality needs that have gone unmet. Therefore, the State has designated specific funding in Prop. 84 and Prop. 1 to foster DAC involvement and inclusion in IRWM and has incentivized IRWM regions to prioritize projects that benefit DACs.

More recently, the concept of underrepresented communities has become more commonplace. This term recognizes that there are communities that may not meet the quantitative definition of DACs but that are still not adequately represented in regional water management efforts. Examples of such communities include unincorporated rural areas, minority populations within larger urban areas, Economically Distressed Areas (EDAs), and communities whose DAC eligibility varies over time as data changes. The EDA definition attempts to capture communities that have an MHI between 80 and 85 percent of the statewide annual MHI, and also considers factors such as financial hardship, unemployment, and population density.

Tribes

The emphasis on tribal inclusion and outreach has changed over time. While some IRWM regions have included tribes from their inception, other regions are just now starting their tribal outreach. Tribes are included in the governance structures of few IRWM regions. Prop. 1 funding encourages the inclusion of tribes in all aspects of IRWM planning and implementation, including governance and project funding.

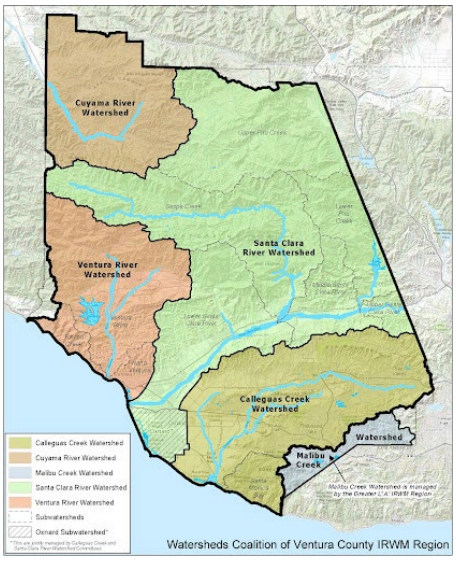
Ventura IRWM Region



The Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) IRWM Region serves as the "region" responsible for IRWM planning and implementation. The County benefits from rich natural, economic, social, and cultural resources. Due to a long history of collaborative management of water resources in the County, the existing IRWM program was built on a strong, established foundation. The WCVC encompasses the majority of Ventura County, apart from a portion of the Malibu Creek Watershed as shown below and serves a population of approximately 854,000.

History

In the 1970's a Water Quality Management Plan was adopted by 23 local agencies, and since then, water management and planning has occurred in Ventura County at the regional level. In 1994, a County-wide Water Management Plan was adopted. The WCVC started in 2006 after the passage of Proposition 50 and the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act. In December of 2006, the first WCVC IRWM Plan was adopted. WCVC has been very successful in bringing diverse interests together to manage water resources at a regional level. The region has a thriving agricultural industry, miles of coastline and rivers offering recreational opportunities, a strong economy, a mix of urban and rural communities, research institutions, naval base operations, valuable and abundant pristine ecosystems and forest land, local groundwater and surface water reserves, and access to imported state water.



Governance

Two agreements, the MOU and the Charter, guide the management of the WCVC IRWM region. The WCVC MOU was adopted in 2008 and is extended by an amendment every five years. The MOU and the Charter collectively lay out the organization of WCVC and the roles and responsibilities of the various entities participating in the coalition, including individual stakeholders. There is a fee structure in place to fund ongoing planning efforts of the WCVC, which includes twenty-one member organizations (cities, water and sanitation agencies, County entities, etc.). Non-governmental agencies are not required to provide funding support, though they receive the same benefits of participation as those providing the funding.

The WCVC structure consists of five committees: three Watershed Committees (Calleguas Creek, Santa Clara River, and Ventura River), the Steering Committee, and the General Membership (comprised of all WCVC stakeholders). WCVC General Membership and Steering Committee meet two to six times per year, while the individual Watershed Committees meet eight to twelve times per year depending on the need.

The Steering Committee is the leadership group for the WCVC and is comprised of two appointed representatives from each of the three major watersheds and the Program Director, for a total of seven members. The County of Ventura serves as the Program Director and, in most cases, as lead agency to apply for, receive, and administer State IRWM-related grants on behalf of WCVC. As such, the County also serves as liaison with the State and administers of ongoing IRWM activities. The Program Director is not a voting member of the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members represent the interests of their individual watersheds and integrate those interests into the broader regional plan. They also keep the stakeholders of their respective watersheds informed of actions taken at the regional level. The Steering Committee provides programmatic and fiscal oversight to the ongoing IRWMP process and directs both the work plan and cost allocations for the twenty-one agencies providing financial support for the regional effort.

The General Membership (Ventura's RWMG) has the ultimate decision-making authority on behalf of the IRWM region, acting on recommendations of the Steering Committee. Decisions are made by consensus, and there is rarely any dissent when a vote is taken.

The top priorities of the WCVC IRWM Region are:

- Protect and improve water quality
- Protect, conserve, and augment local water-supply portfolio
- Protect people, property, and the environment from adverse flooding impacts
- Protect and restore habitat and ecosystems in watersheds
- Provide water-related recreational, public access, stewardship, engagement, and educational opportunities
- Prepare for and adapt to climate change

Stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in the WCVC include incorporated cities, water agencies, counties, non-profit organizations, state and federal agencies, universities, wastewater agencies, agricultural interests, business groups, and Native American tribes. The table below lists participating stakeholders:

Agency or Organization
Cities
City of Camarillo
City of Fillmore
City of Moorpark – water service provided by County of Ventura Waterworks District #1
City of Ojai –water service provided by Casitas MWD
City of Oxnard
City of Santa Paula
City of Port Hueneme
City of Simi Valley
City of Thousand Oaks
City of Ventura (San Buenaventura)
Wholesale Water Agencies
Calleguas Municipal Water District
Casitas Municipal Water District
United Water Conservation District
Retail Water Agencies[1]
Camrosa Water District
Meiners Oaks Water District
Ventura River Water District
Pleasant Valley Mutual Water Company
Ventura County Waterworks District #1 - Moorpark
Ventura County Waterworks District #8 – Simi Valley
Golden State Water Company
Fillmore Irrigation Company
Channel Islands Beach Community Services District
County Agencies
Ventura County Public Works Agency
Ventura County Executive Office – Sustainability Division
Ventura County Resource Management Agency
Ventura County Watershed Protection
Ventura County Board of Supervisors
Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner
Ventura County Fire
Ventura County Office of Emergency Services
Environmental Stewardship Organizations
Friends of the Santa Clara River
Santa Clara River Conservancy (newly formed)
Matilija Coalition
Ventura County Resource Conservation District
California Wildlife Conservation Board
California Native Plant Society

[1] There are more than 160 smaller water purveyors, primarily mutual water companies, which are not listed.

Agency or Organization
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
Ventura Hillsides Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
Wetlands Recovery Project
Trust for Public Land
Surfrider Foundation
Ventura Coastkeeper
Santa Barbara Channelkeeper
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Sierra Club – Ventura Chapter
State, Federal, and Regional Agencies and Universities
Regional Water Quality Control Board – Los Angeles Region
California Coastal Commission
California Coastal Conservancy
U.C. Cooperative Extension – Farm Advisor
University of California – Santa Barbara
California State University – Channel Islands
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Department of Water Resources
Southern California Assoc. of Governments
California Department of Parks and Recreation
U.S. Forest Service –Los Padres National Forest
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Naval Base Ventura County
Wastewater Agencies
Ojai Valley Sanitary District
Camarillo Sanitary District
Saticoy Sanitary District
Ventura Regional Sanitation District
Groundwater Basin Management Authorities/Sustainability Agencies
Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency – per California Water Code
Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency – per California Water Code
Santa Paula Basin Pumpers Association – court adjudicated
City of Fillmore/United Water Conservation District – groundwater managers of Fillmore and Piru Groundwater Basins per AB 3030 provisions. Now known as the Fillmore-Piru Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Arroyo Santa Rosa Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Mound Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Upper Ventura River Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Community Organizations and Recreational Interests
Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County
Santa Monica Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
Pleasant Valley Park and Recreation District
Conejo Recreation and Parks District
League of Women Voters

Agency or Organization
NAACP of Ventura County
Flood Management Agencies
Ventura County Watershed Protection District
Native American Tribes
Individual members of various bands of the Chumash/Barbareño Tribe and Wishtoyo Foundation
Agricultural and Business Groups
Farm Bureau of Ventura County
Building Industry Association
Ventura County Economic Development Association
Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business
Limoneira Ranch

WaterTalks (https://watertalks.csusb.edu/ventura-county)

In 2016, the WCVC Disadvantaged Community Involvement Grant Program (DACIP) was formed. It involves DACs, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and stakeholders in IRWM planning efforts to ensure balanced access and opportunity for participation in the IRWM planning process, and to increase the understanding of water management needs of DACs.

WaterTalks is the Ventura-Los Angeles DACIP, funded by DWR and Proposition 1, intended to increase community involvement in IRWM and support collaborative planning efforts across 128 communities in Ventura and Los Angeles counties. WaterTalks is implemented in three regions in the Ventura – the Los Angeles funding area: the Greater Los Angeles County Region, the WCVC, and the Upper Santa Clara River. In Ventura County, collaborative efforts are supported in nine communities: Casitas Springs, El Rio, Fillmore, Nyeland Acres, Oxnard, Piru, Santa Paula, Saticoy, and West Ventura, each with community-specific toolkits and resources.



The WaterTalks process is implemented in three phases. The first phase is outreach and community input. Workshops to identify community needs and priorities are held alongside surveys that collect data and input for future events and phases. The second phase, Needs Assessment, assesses community needs and priorities based on the data collection from the first phase. The third phase, Technical Assistance, helps develop selected projects and move them to implementation stage. WaterTalks outreach strategies include:

- Virtual events
- Mailing WaterTalks newspaper and surveys
- WaterTalks bookmarks
- Social media posts
- Newspaper and online advertisements
- Email blasts & Phone banking
- School and institutional outreach

Other WCVC Programs

The WCVC region has many other programs that address and work with water-related issues:

- Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County (AWA) provides a forum for the exchange of information on local and regional water issues. AWA includes a variety of entities (agriculture, municipalities, water purveyors, small systems, industrial water users, private business, concerned citizens, students, etc.).
- Groundwater is an important resource in Ventura County, supplying more than 63% of the county's water needs. Seven Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) have been formed to ensure the proper management to meet the current and future demands of urban, industrial, agricultural, and in-stream water uses.
- Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program (VCSQMP) works to improve stormwater quality, monitor the health of watersheds, and meet Ventura County Stormwater Permit compliance. The program is conducted through residential outreach; business outreach and inspections; design, installation, and maintenance of trans capture and runoff diversion devices; and additional best management practices.
- Ventura County Watershed Protection District addresses planning for risks associated with flooding, post-fire debris flow, and dam failure. Flood hazards are identified and profiled, assets are identified, and vulnerability as well as capability is assessed. A mitigation strategy for reducing potential hazards, including goals, objectives, and actions, is also included. The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Ventura County has taken the place of the Flood Mitigation Plan and was most recently adopted in 2015.

Non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations have been instrumental in connecting DACs and underserved communities to the IRWM process, and in assisting these communities in applying for funding. Organizations such as the Central Coast Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) and Friends of the Santa Clara River (FSCR) conduct community outreach and perform needs assessments. The WCVC can help connect communities to these organizations for assistance.

CAUSE
Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy

Project Solicitation and Prioritization

IRWM has provided over $1.5 billion in State funding to support and advance integrated, multi-benefit regional projects. The primary source of funding for IRWM projects are grants included in Prop. 50, Prop. 84, and Prop. 1, as well as funding from State Clean Water Revolving Loans (low-interest loans), fisheries grants, other chapters of water bond legislation (i.e. Stormwater Flood Management, Groundwater Sustainability, and Water Use Efficiency), and federal grants.

PROP 1
GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM
WATER BOND 2014
RELIABILITY | RESTORATION | RESILIENCE

Eligibility

A list of project preferences and priorities, eligibility requirements, and program requirements are laid out under the IRWM Grant Program Guidelines.

The following entities are eligible for IRWM grant funding:

- Public Agencies
- 501c Non-profit organizations
- Public utilities
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes
- State Indian Tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's Tribal Consultation list
- Mutual Water Companies

DWR provides three separate grant programs, each with specific requirements and selection processes:

- Planning grants: support the development and updating of IRWM Plans
- Implementation grants: support on-the-ground water and wastewater construction projects
- Disadvantaged community grants: aimed at increasing the engagement and involvement of disadvantaged communities, EDAs, and underrepresented communities in the IRWM process

Projects proposals must include a local cost share of at least 50% of the total project costs. Local cost share may include, but is not limited to, federal funds, local funding, or donated services from non-State sources. If the project directly benefits a DAC or EDA, then the local cost share requirement may be waived or reduced. DWR issues separate Proposal Solicitation Packages (PSP) for specific grant funding opportunities, which can be found on their website at: https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs/

Project Submission and Selection

Entities that implement water and wastewater projects are called local project sponsors (LPS). Local project sponsors that wish to put forward projects IRWM funding should visit the WCVC website or directly communicate with the Program Director. Projects are submitted through an online portal, where more information about LPS and project eligibility requirements can be found.

Selection of projects in WCVC is determined by the consensus of the General Membership, based on the recommendation of the Watershed Committees and the Steering Committee. For each round of IRWM Implementation Grant funding, emphasis is placed on developing a geographically balanced and integrated suite of projects that best meet the needs of the Region, addresses the IRWM Plan Goals, fits the Resource Management Strategies, and helps the region adapt to climate change. The WCVC Project Review Process consists of the following steps:

1. Call for Projects and Programs
2. Watershed Committee Review and Selection
3. WCVC Steering Committee Review and Selection
4. WCVC General Membership Review and Approval

If the IRWM Plan is not currently being updated, the approved project list is published in an IRWM Plan Addendum. The new project list is then posted on the WCVC website and in the web portal and communicated to stakeholders through e-mail notifications.

Qualitative project assessment, as opposed to numerical analysis or weighted scoring, is done by the WCVC when reviewing projects submitted for funding and inclusion in the IRWM Plan. During the Watershed Committee Review and Selection, factors such as high priority projects, sufficient local match, and projects with new ideas that further the IRWM Plan goals are considered when ranking projects in priority order. For the Steering Committees Review and Selection, factors such as the project's benefits, elements, and readiness are all considered. The General Membership considers and approves projects for specific grant solicitation and authorizes the entity to apply for an Implementation Grant on behalf of WCVC and for the preparation of an IRWM Plan addendum for projects not already included.

Projects benefitting disadvantaged and underserved communities undergo a separate evaluation process. Funding considerations for these communities are made based on a project's ability to meet the specific needs determined by the DACIP Needs Assessment Report. Stakeholders determine how well the region's specific needs are met by a potential project through the Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED) Application, which allows comparability between proposed projects and community-determined needs. The TAPPED Application was created to serve as an ongoing mechanism for submitting projects, sharing information, and posting progress on projects and programs. The Project Evaluation Criteria list in the TAPPED Application contains more than 40 criteria and categorizes them into thematic groups (Project Description Criteria, General Reference Criteria, DAC Socioeconomic Criteria, DACIP Community Needs Assessment Criteria, and DACIP Institution Needs Assessment Criteria).

Project Examples

IRWM Implementation projects range from water treatment, water distribution, and water recycling to flood management, salinity management, and ecosystem protection. All these project types have been funded through the WCVC. A list of the 42 WCVC IRWM-funded projects are shown below, broken out by funding source.

Proposition 50

Calleguas Regional Salinity Management Pipeline- Hueneme Outfall
Waterworks District #1 Recycled Water System Phase 2
Calleguas Creek Arundo and Tamarisk Removal Project
Simi Valley Tapo Canyon Water Treatment Plant
El Rio Forebay Groundwater Contamination Elimination Project
Oxnard Forebay Groundwater Contamination Elimination Project
Fillmore Integrated Water Recycling Plant
Ventura River Watershed Protection Plan
San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds Rehabilitation Phase 1
Senior Canyon Water Company Automation Upgrades
Salinity Management Pipeline Phase 1E

Proposition 84 Drought Round

Ventura County Agricultural Water Use Efficiency Program
Salinity Management Pipeline Phase 2D
Camrosa Pleasant Valley Well
El Rio Retrofits for Groundwater Recharge
Groundwater Replenishment and Reuse Project
Lake Casitas Aeration Project
San Antonio Creek Arundo Removal Project

Proposition 1

Calleguas – LVMWD Interconnection
Reclaimed Water Storage Reservoir
Los Robles Desalter
Eastside to Westside Waterline Interconnection Phase 2
Iron and Manganese Removal Project Phase 1

Proposition 84 Round 1

Ventura County Regional Urban Landscape Efficiency Program
Waterworks District #1 Recycled Water System Phase 2
Calleguas Creek Arundo and Tamarisk Removal Project
Simi Valley Tapo Canyon Water Treatment Plant
El Rio Forebay Groundwater Contamination Elimination Project
Oxnard Forebay Groundwater Contamination Elimination Project
Fillmore Integrated Water Recycling Plant
Ventura River Watershed Protection Plan
San Antonio Creek Spreading Grounds Rehabilitation Phase 1
Senior Canyon Water Company Automation Upgrades
Salinity Management Pipeline Phase 1E

Proposition 84 Round 2

North Pleasant Valley Groundwater Desalter
Moorpark Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion Phase 4
South Oxnard Stormwater Flood Management
Invasive Plant Removal Santa Clara River
Ventura River Invasive Plant Removal

Proposition 84 Final Round

Water Wise Incentive Program
Camrosa Recycled Water Pipeline
Pleasant Valley Mutual Water Company Desalter
Moorpark Desalter Phase 1
Santa Clara River Steelhead Coalition Restoration

Participation in IRWM

WCVC communications are carried out through the website (https://watershedscoalition.org), email lists, regular watershed meetings, General Membership meetings, and the WaterTalks website. Anyone can directly reach out to WCVC for information on upcoming meetings, events, or to be added to the email lists. Similarly, DWR notifies the status of grants and important information through its website (https://water.ca.gov/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grant-Programs), where one can sign up to be included in the email distribution list. The WaterTalks program has a committee that meets approximately every other month to discuss topics specific to DACs and underserved communities, assessing needs, identifying priorities, providing technical assistance for developing project proposals for funding, and ensuring that regional water resource management and planning consider the health, safety, welfare, and resiliency of lower-income community members. Anyone can attend these meetings. Meeting information can be found on the WaterTalks website (https://watertalks.csusb.edu/ventura-county).

Participating in meetings will directly involve community members with the decisions that are being made. Getting involved will help individuals understand what is happening at a local level and in their community.

To be added to the WCVC or WaterTalks email lists, or to obtain more information about the IRWM Program and WCVC, contact Lynn Rodriguez at lynn.rodriguez@ventura.org.

APPENDIX R- GLAC STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT



GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A WATER PERSPECTIVE

WATERTALKS

Integrated Regional Water Management
Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES · STATE OF CALIFORNIA ·

Greater Los Angeles County
Integrated Regional Water Management
Leadership Committee

WATER talks

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WaterTalks is funded through the California Department of Water Resources. In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act" – Proposition 1 – to meet the State's long-term water needs. Locally, WaterTalks is managed by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, with fiscal management by West Basin Municipal Water District.

Oversight of the WaterTalks program is conducted by the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program Task Force, representing three distinct Regions:

Greater Los Angeles: Grace Kast – Co-chair
Greater Los Angeles: Ramy Gindi
Upper Santa Clara Regional Water Management Group: Heather Merenda– Co-chair
Upper Santa Clara Regional Water Management Group: Rick Vasilopulous
Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County: Lynn Rodriguez – Co-chair
Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County: Lara Shellenbarger

A consultant team was engaged to design and implement the WaterTalks Strengths and Needs Assessment and other tasks in the Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Region. Led by TreePeople, these partners include the following:

Active San Gabriel Valley
Better World Group Advisors
Communities for a Better Environment
The Council of Mexican Federations in North America
Council for Watershed Health
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
Koreatown Youth and Community Center
Mujeres de la Tierra
PlaceWorks
Promesa Boyle Heights
Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples
Social Eco Education
Social Justice Learning Institute
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Trust South LA
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LAND AND WATER ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAARA' (WATER):

Water has always played, and continues to play, multiple roles in Tovaangar. The ocean, rivers and stream ways were often used as a means of travel. The Tongva and neighboring Nations used tule and plank canoes to paddle up and down freshwater and saltwater ways. Ceremonies of significance were also held in both salt and freshwater. Gathering of fish, clams, shells and other life, including basket weaving materials, was done by the water. Daily cleansing practices were also held near or in the water. Baskets were and are made near water by the material gathered near the water, and play the role of water jugs.

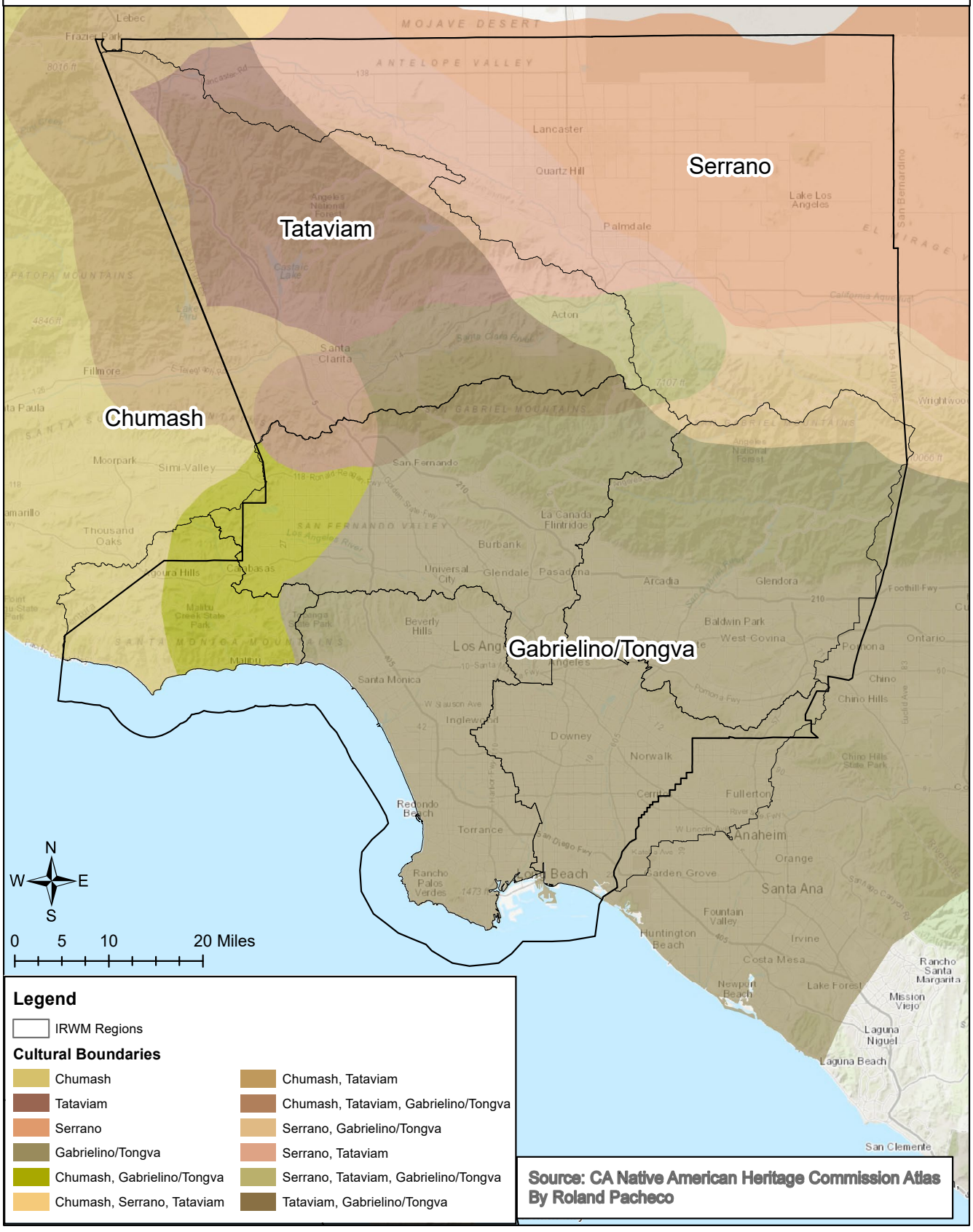
"The lifeforce of water and the value of human relationship to water was taught at the stage of infancy and became a lifelong practice for Tongva peoples and neighboring Nations."

Although Native peoples' access to water has been severely restricted by settler colonialism, many of these teachings, understandings and practices are still carried today. It is recognized that the water has become polluted and contaminated by the industrialization that colonization has brought onto Native sacred spaces.

"It is important to Native peoples to heal and reconcile their relationship with all bodies of water on ancestral homelands. The limited access to bodies of water has not limited efforts to reconcile these relationships. Many Natives still practice reciprocity with their waters despite the challenges they face in the 21st Century."

The authors of this Report acknowledge that the geographic area represented in this document (the Greater LA County Integrated Regional Water Management area) is the unceded ancestral lands and waters of the Tongva, Chumash, and Tataviam people, the original stewards of this land. We recognize that these Tribes are still present in the areas reflected in this Report. We honor their elders both past and present and the descendants who are citizens of these tribes for their exemplary respect for water; we honor their continued connection to and protection of one of the most beautiful and diverse landscapes in the world.

The Fluid Connection of Tribal Communities and Water



The authors also express, however, that acknowledgement of ancestral homelands alone is not enough. Through the data collection and findings we now present, we seek to lift up the stories, culture, and community of these California Native American Tribes, and all indigenous people living in this Report's geographic coverage area.

The Disadvantage Community and Tribal Engagement Program is funded by the California Department of Water Resources, and the authors recognize DWR's Tribal Engagement Policy, which is included in the Appendices.

About the map:
TreePeople developed the Tribal Cultural Boundaries Map as a support tool for carrying out the WaterTalks Program, to be a visual guide of how the original caretakers of the land viewed the pre-colonized land of what is now Los Angeles County and nearby areas.

TreePeople shares this map with the understanding that it is intended for educational and display purposes only. The geographical information displayed is not for use in determining locations of cultures, boundaries or people for recognition, consultation or any other legal or policy purpose.

Creation of the core map used source data from the California Native American Heritage Commission Digital Atlas of California Native Americans, as it is our understanding that local tribes had input in the creation of the commission's data. We recognize that data from the digital atlas may be updated periodically and recommend turning to that source, which can be found at *https://nahc.ca.gov/cp/*

Map development:
Roland Pacheco, Tribal Engagement Coordinator, TreePeople
Jason MacCannell, Special Assistant to the Director of California State Parks

WHY "WATERTALKS?"



The Proposition 1 - funded program that made this Strengths and Needs Assessment Report possible is the Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program administered by the CA Department of Water Resources. The authors have devoted notable time to the consideration of these three words: "disadvantaged community involvement."

- Disadvantaged: The term "Disadvantaged community" has become standard terminology used for several years in the public sector. Its definition is written into the California Public Resource Code (Section 75005) and used by multiple agencies to determine how public funds are distributed as a means to promote equity and justice. The term is embedded in policy and funding at the state and local level.
- Involvement: The Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program is designed to ensure the involvement of disadvantaged communities in IRWM planning efforts. In the Greater LA County area, a significant portion of resources have been allocated to "involvement" in the forms of outreach, authentic engagement, education, coalition building, and capacity building.
- Community: However, in the field of Community Organizing, it is common knowledge that the term "disadvantaged" is unliked by people in areas that meet the official definition. Many find it demeaning or offensive. Consolidating the word to an acronym (DAC) -- even if just for the purpose of expedient communications -- can take the offensiveness even deeper.

The result? There is an inherent problem with a community involvement program whose very name creates a barrier to authentic engagement and communication.

As a consequence, early on in the program, leadership and consultants for the LA Ventura Funding Area determined it was important to find another way to name and describe the program. As is shared in the Methodology Section, outreach facilitators have focused questions on what residents like about their community, what they want to see change, and then delve into how water is involved. There is often education about water in the community, such as who the water local providers are and where the water comes from.

In short, the program engages the community in talks about water, and is therefore called "WaterTalks."

Throughout this document use of the term "disadvantaged community" will likely be limited to its more public administration use, such as the funding programs, state laws, regulations, and the like.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Local residents are experts in their own communities, and their expertise must be recognized in balance with that of the water managers."

WaterTalks is a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Its goal is to explore the strengths and opportunities of 104 communities in the Greater Los Angeles area facing ongoing economic and environmental distress, and gather input to prioritize and recommend water-related projects based on issues of greatest concern. Included are members of California Native American Tribes and Indigenous Peoples living in the region.

In 2014, voters approved "The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act" – Proposition 1 – to meet the State's long-term water needs. Proposition 1 funds an array of sustainable water-related projects, including drinking water protection, public water system improvements, water recycling, wastewater treatment, drought relief, emergency water supply management, and watershed protection.

The California Department of Water Resources was then charged with creating a program to ensure the involvement of disadvantaged, underrepresented and Tribal communities in water project planning, design and implementation through the Integrated Regional Water Management program (IRWM) which has been active throughout the state for many years.

Statewide this program is called the "Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program," and locally is called "WaterTalks." Their creation was driven by conclusions made throughout the state in earlier stakeholder engagement and water integration efforts, including in Los Angeles County. Of the conclusions reached, the most prominent was the idea that local residents are experts in their own communities, and their expertise

must be recognized in balance with that of the water managers. Water managers can develop projects and programs that meet community needs and gain community support by listening to and engaging the voices present in their communities with intent, understanding, and compassion.

GREATER LA COUNTY OVERVIEW

Integrated regional water management in the Greater Los Angeles County region is carried out by some of the largest water agencies in the United States, some of the smallest in California, and many others in between. There are complex regulatory systems that seek to ensure clean water for personal use and in the environment. The GLAC region boasts the watersheds of the LA River, the San Gabriel River, and those that drain to the Santa Monica Bay including, prominently, the Malibu and Ballona Creek watersheds. These water bodies and lands are significant for California Native American Tribes, including the Tongva, Chumash, and Tataviam peoples; the land and water is their unceded ancestral homeland. The WaterTalks program assessed the needs, as well as the strengths, of 104 self-identified communities and Tribal needs region-wide. The Strength and Needs Assessment used a variety of tools to engage with multiple audiences:

- members of Tribal communities
- people in communities through partnerships with community-based organizations
- school district educators and facilities managers
- institutions that provide water and social services to communities.

The Strengths and Needs Assessment sought to:

- Inform and engage WaterTalks communities in a conversation about their water management-related needs, preliminary needs assessment results, and a plan for continued community engagement and active involvement in decision making.
- Gain a better understanding of water management-related community needs to help direct resources and funding.
- Build initial capacity within communities to develop project concepts and engage technical support for design and project development.
- Increase participation of members of the public, non-governmental organizations (NGO), community-based organizations (CBO), and public and private institutions in IRWM planning and project development activities.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This Assessment builds off two efforts: A) the 2013 Disadvantaged Community Outreach Evaluation Study: An Analysis of Technical Assistance and Outreach Methods (Outreach Study). The DWR-sponsored Outreach Study for the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) Region generated community boundaries that express the lived experience of people and resulted in a list of 104 cities or neighborhoods *(FIGURE ES-1)*. B) Working with NGOs and academia as consultants, the Los Angeles-Ventura IRWM Funding Area created the WaterTalks Program to engage and inform each community about IRWM through a variety of efforts.

Community

For community input, 13 CBOs were brought together, forming a coalition that resulted in the WaterTalks Leadership Group of CBOs, which conducted surveys and virtual



Council of Mexican Federations (COFEM) staff canvassed local parks to collects survey data for the needs assessment.

listening sessions. These 13 organizations represent 75-80% of the 104 areas identified for the GLAC IRWM Region, are rooted in their respective communities, and have experience conducting surveys, hosting workshops and collecting data.

Originally, data collection for Tribal and community perspectives was designed to take place during workshops where the Leadership Group of CBOs would host gatherings, "meeting the community where they are." COVID-19 exacerbated the already deep inequities and challenges in these communities, and further impeded the team's ability to engage and survey residents on water-related issues. An intended approach using in-person meetings and events changed to reliance on a digital Community Survey tool. Several months were added to the process *(FIGURE ES-2)*, which allowed the Leadership Group of CBOs to complete more than 3,591 online surveys that asked open-ended fundamental questions:

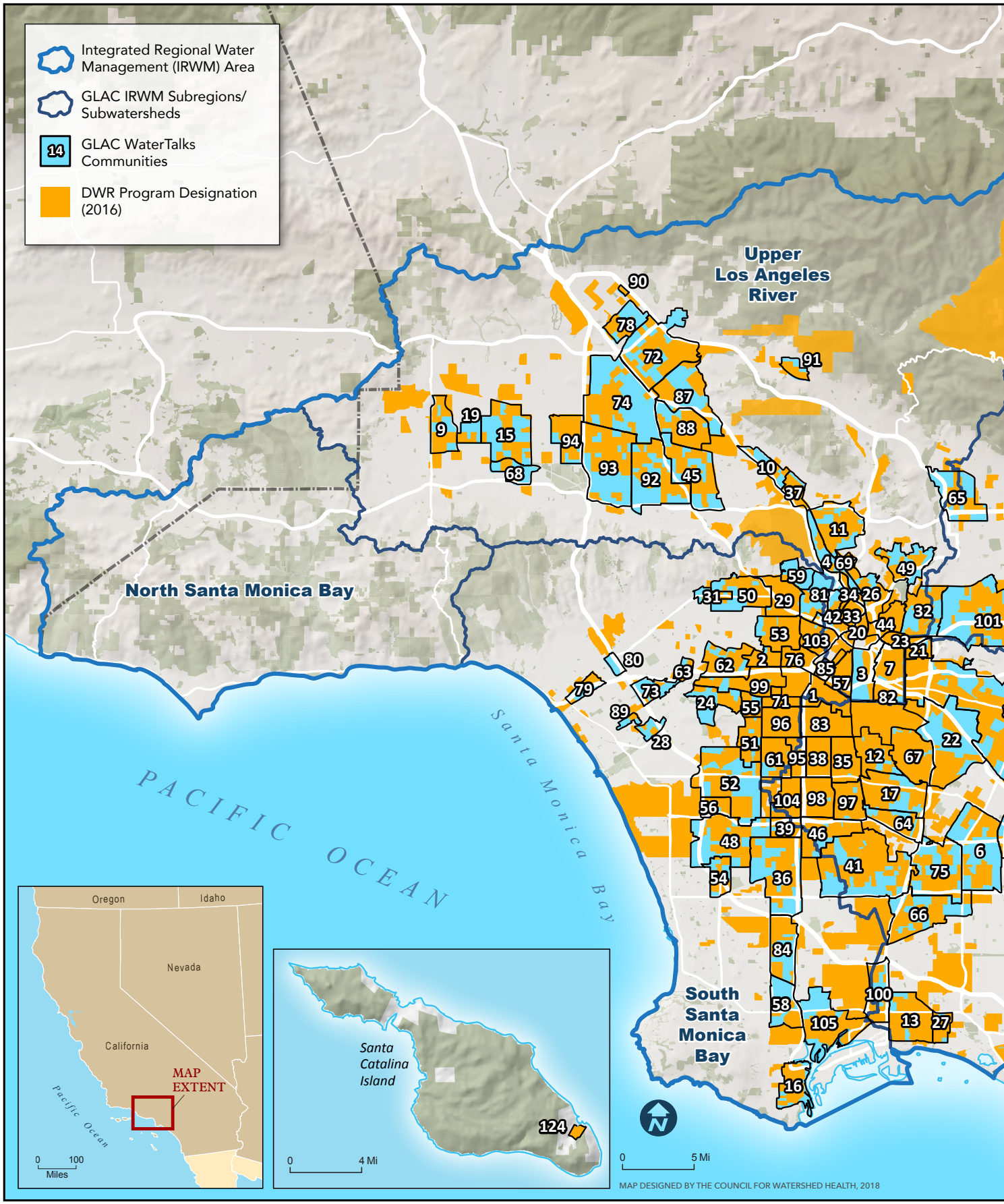
- What do you like best about your community?
- What does it need most?
- How is water a part of your community?

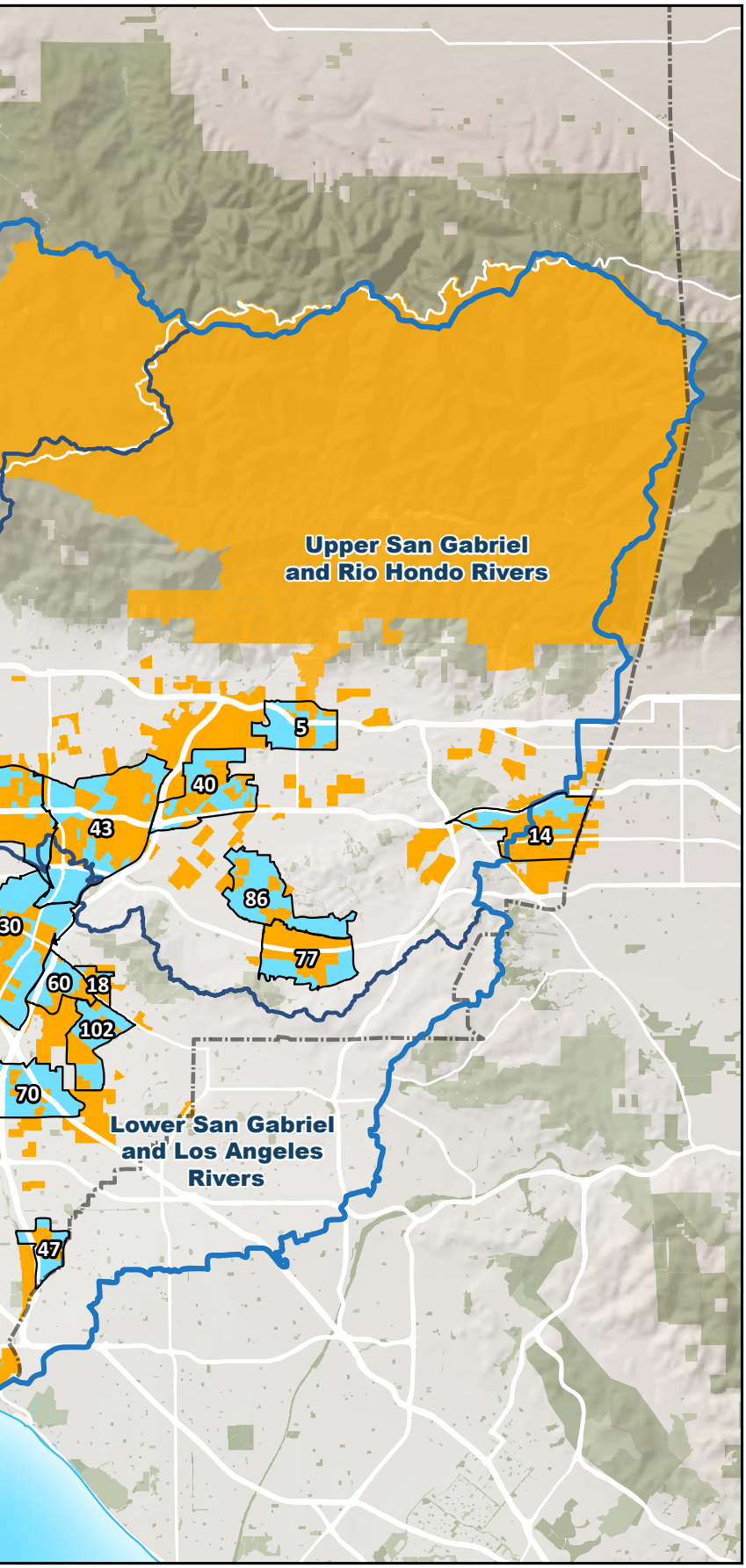
They also held 29 virtual community listening sessions; used social media to raise awareness and garner feedback through the promotion of the digital Watertalks survey; and reached 300,000 people via phone banking, texting and newsletter e-blasts. Geographic data from the WaterTalks surveys was combined with demographic and place-based data from local and State sources to identify survey respondents living in 104 disadvantaged communities across the GLAC region. A Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to map the location of each WaterTalks survey respondent, assign that respondent to a community name, and spatially assess strengths and needs data. Insights from this mapping exercise were used to analyze survey responses across multiple scales of characteristics and geographies *(FIGURE ES-3)*.

Tribes

A Tribal Survey was created to expand on the Community Survey to express the unique needs of tribal communities, designed by local tribal water scholars. Originally, four data collection workshops were to be held in order to reach a representative population of Indigenous Peoples in the GLAC region. The severe impacts of COVID-19, especially on Tribal communities, instead required a variety

FIGURE ES-1. WaterTalks Communities

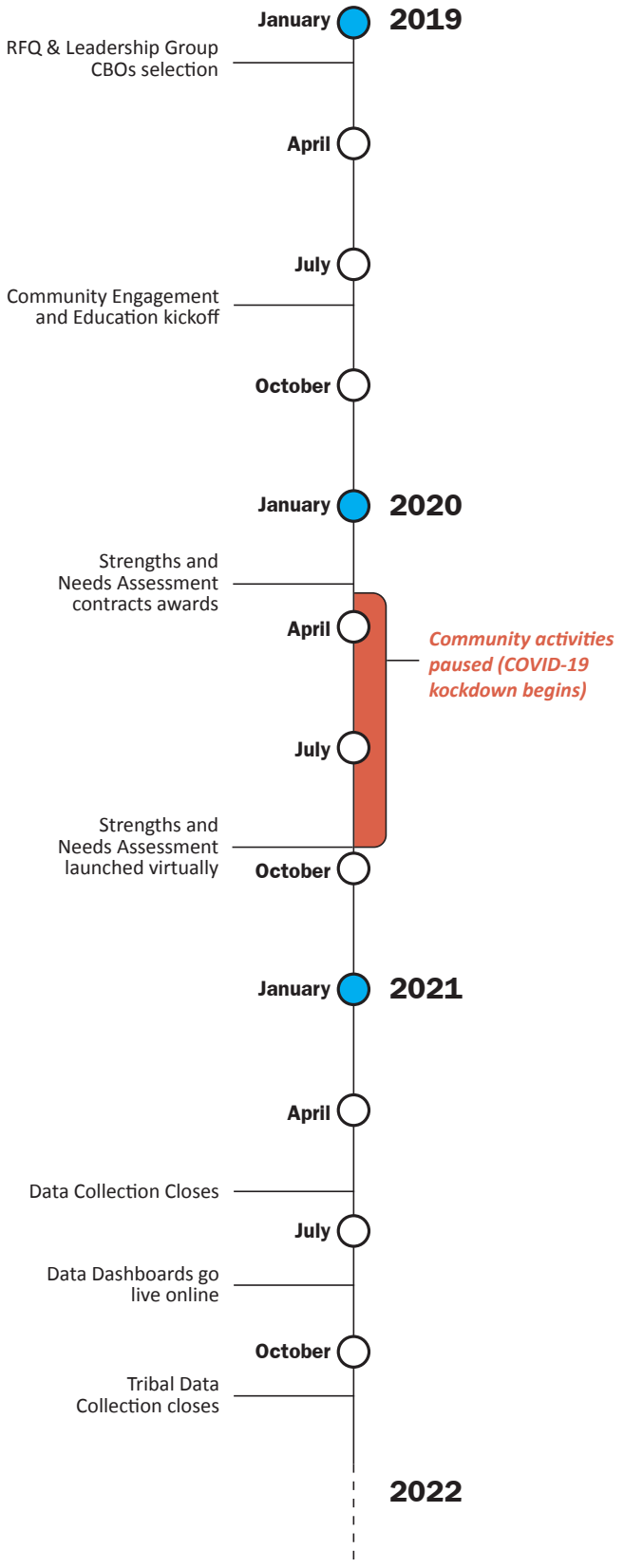




WATER TALKS COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY IRWM AREA

1 - Adams/Central
2 - Arlington/Harvard Heights
3 - Arts District/West Boyle Heights
4 - Atwater Village
5 - Azusa/Citrus
6 - Bellflower/Southeast Downey
7 - Boyle Heights
9 - Canoga Corridor
10 - Central Burbank
11 - Central Glendale
12 - Central Huntington Park
13 - Central Long Beach
14 - Central Pomona
15 - Central Reseda/S. Northridge
16 - Central San Pedro
17 - Central South Gate
18 - Central Whittier
19 - Central Winetka
20 - Chinatown/Cornfield
21 - City Terrace
22 - Commerce/Bell Gardens
23 - County Hospital
24 - Crenshaw/Baldwin Hills
26 - Cypress/Glassell Park
27 - East Central Long Beach
28 - East Del Rey
29 - East Hollywood
30 - East LA/Montebello/Pico Rivera
31 - Eastern West Hollywood
32 - El Sereno
33 - Elysian Park
34 - Elysian Valley/Frogtown
35 - Florence Firestone
36 - Gardena/N. Harbor Gateway
37 - Glen-Bank
38 - Goodyear/Van Meter Springs
39 - Greater Athens
40 - Greater Baldwin Park
41 - Greater Compton
42 - Greater Echo Park
43 - Greater El Monte
44 - Greater Lincoln Heights
45 - Greater North Hollywood
46 - Greater Willowbrook
47 - Hawaiian Gardens
48 - Hawthorne
49 - Highland Park
50 - Hollywood
51 - Hyde/Harvard Park
52 - Inglewood
53 - Koreatown
54 - Lawndale
55 - Leimert Park
56 - Lennox
57 - Little Tokyo/Toy District/Skid Row
58 - Lomita/Southwest Carson
59 - Los Feliz
60 - Los Nietos
61 - Manchester/Harvard/Chesterfield
62 - Mid-City
63 - Mid-City West
64 - North Lynwood
65 - Northeast Pasadena
66 - North Long Beach
67 - Northern Lower LAR Cities
68 - Northern Tarzana
69 - Northwest Glassell Park
70 - Northwest Norwalk
71 - Outer Expo Park
72 - Pacoima
73 - Palms
74 - Panorama City
75 - Paramount
76 - Pico Union
77 - Rowland/Industry
78 - San Fernando
79 - Santa Monica I-10 Corridor
80 - Sawtelle
81 - Silverlake
82 - South Boyle Heights
83 - South Central
84 - S. Harbor Gateway/West Carson
85 - South Park/Fashion/Lofts District
86 - South Puente Valley
87 - Sun Valley East
88 - Sun Valley South
89 - Southwest Mar Vista
90 - Sylmar/Foothill Blvd Comm.
91 - Tujunga/Foothill Blvd
92 - Valley Glen/Valley Village
93 - Van Nuys
94 - Van Nuys Airport
95 - Vermont Knolls
96 - Vermont Square
97 - Watts Proper
98 - Watts West
99 - West Adams/Jefferson Park
100 - West Long Beach
101 - West SGV 10 Freeway
102 - Western South Whittier
103 - Westlake
104 - Westmont
105 - Wilmington
124 - Avalon

FIGURE ES-2. Strengths And Needs Assessment Timeline



of techniques including digital surveying, individual interviews, online listening sessions and outreach during events attended by Tribal and Indigneous Peoples.

Institutions and Schools

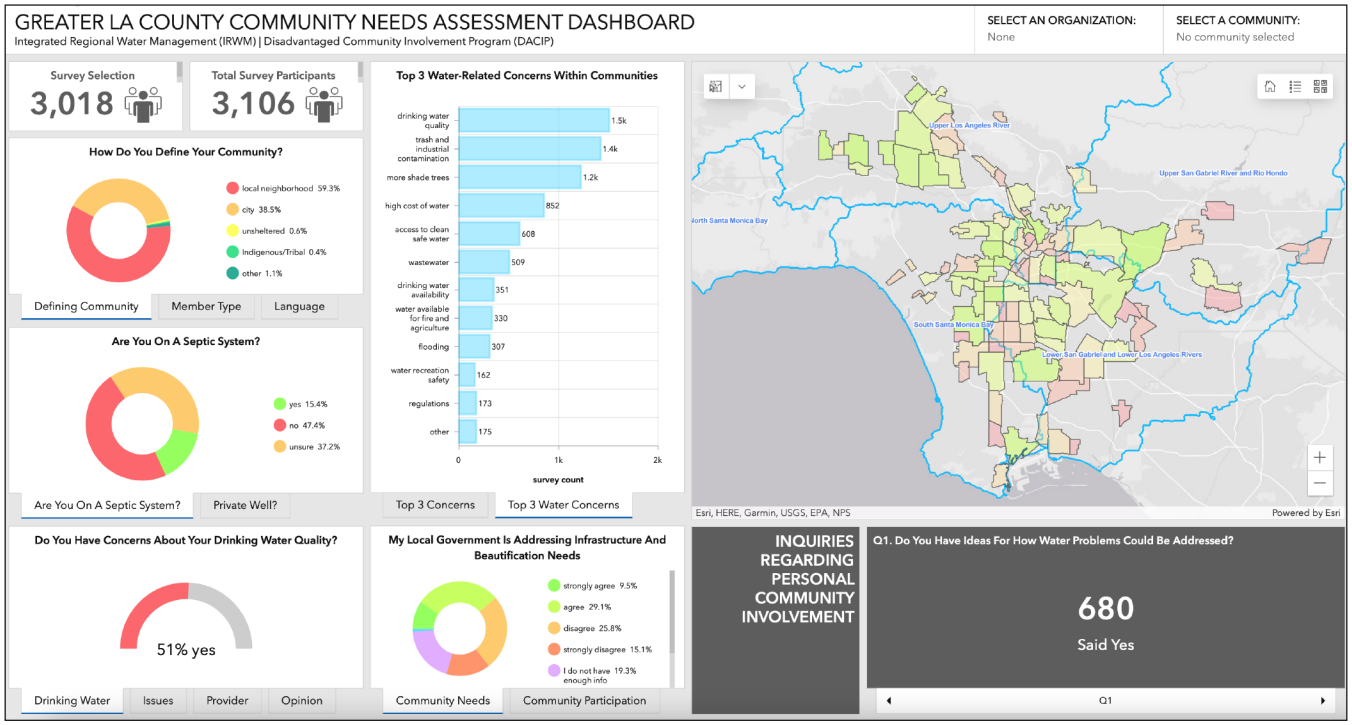
Institutional assessments occurred through a series of 25 ethnographically informed interviews to understand the perspectives of institutional staff and leaders in the communities that they are a part of and serve. A representative sample of institutional leaders from different types of water management agencies, institutions that serve many or just a few community members, as well as municipal, private and mutual water providers were interviewed. Non-water managers that provide community services with links to the multi-benefit concepts embedded in IRWM were also invited, as were several elected leaders within municipalities. The same ethnographic approach was used to interview school districts in the GLAC IRWM Region, completing six virtual listening sessions with facilities personnel, key decision makers, and educators with an understanding of school and local issues.

FINDINGS

Tribal

Overwhelmingly tribal community members prioritized their cultural and spiritual relationship to water as both a significant strength as well as a need - in terms of something needing to be protected, expanded, and even re-established. More than half of respondents indicated that access to water for ceremonial purposes or for recreation were not being met, or they did not know if these were being met for the community. It was also expressed that the community is in need of safe spaces to gather, practice their culture and educate non-native community members of their history and culture to undo the harm being done by modern ignorances.

FIGURE ES-3. Online Dashboard of Survey Results



Community

Strengths in WaterTalks areas, expressed through the Assessment, often centered around connections and relationships within the community, access to culture such as food and events, and the resilience of people, collectively.

There were several community priorities that emerged from surveys and WaterTalks meetings. Most prominent are those focused on drinking water quality and a recommendation for consistent, regular communication related to drinking water quality. Other findings reinforce surface water quality as a priority and encourage coordination with local schools and development of community-driven programs that build capacity for projects, stewardship and leadership programs.

Findings from the surveys and interviews also identified barriers that continue to prevent community involvement in water planning and management. While COVID created a more accessible forum (online - Zoom, WebEx) for CBOs to participate, there is still the difficulty of tracking when meetings occur, accessing translation when needed, and finding time and funding to allow regular attendance.

Institutions and Schools

There were several overarching themes reflected in the collected testimonies of those interviewed. These interviews revealed that large regional institutions with capacity provide formal and informal mutual aid to institutions with less or no capacity, however, this process is haphazard and uneven and there are social, political, or institutional barriers preventing the matching of capacity and need. Many school district interviewees identified maintenance and operations as being underfunded, expressing a myriad of obstacles created by years of budget cuts, with most resources going to immediate needs such as repairs for facilities. Lack of



Ultimate Restoration Unlimited (URU) staff outreaching to residents about WaterTalks at a community event.



Promesa Boyle Heights conducts phone banking for the needs assessment surveys.

maintenance funding is a barrier to water infrastructure projects including nature-based solutions. Water issues included water quality coming from drinking fountains, flooding that hampers commutes to school and can cause public health risks, and emergency preparedness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tribal

Recommendations reiterate the deep need for healing of relationships with Tribal and Indigenous Peoples. This includes regaining access to land and water, and restoring Native and Indigenous Peoples to a place of leadership in water planning and management.

- Create permanent indigenous seats on regional water leadership committees, and funding to support individuals named to these seats.
- Create or revise current policies to open up land and water spaces for tribal community members - land that cannot currently be easily accessed.
- Create capacity building partnerships with local tribes and indigenous-led organizations to support land and water repatriation and rehabilitation.
- Increase commitment from local agency and government leaders to not only support tribal interests but to learn more about local tribal communities.
- Define resources to increase and maintain Native communities' knowledge of laws and policies related to indigenous rights and access to ceremonial land and water.

Community

Community recommendations focus primarily on drinking water concerns and the need for more green space - topics that stood out within the Strengths and Needs Assessment.

- There is a demand for a drinking water grading system to reduce confusion around multiple water quality reports, and help build trust between communities and water providers.
- Regional drinking water education programs are imperative given the high number of providers and high percentage of people who cannot identify their provider.
- Water providers and/or trusted community partners should provide at-home water testing and infiltration systems.
- Continue to build policies and funding that allow local schools to provide green park space and offsite storm-water capture.
- Access resources to increase capacity for community members to take on leadership roles in water planning efforts.

Institutions and Schools

Recommendations for institutions intend to address the drinking water challenges expressed by communities, and harness regional capacity for equitable, positive, local outcomes. Those for schools look at the lack of funding for maintenance and operations, and the need for increased green infrastructure.

- Build understanding at regional and local institutions of community needs and strengthen ties between water providers and the people they serve.
- Support struggling water systems toward greater individual capacity, or consolidation with other systems, to improve affordability and quality of service.
- Assure the State's human right to water through water services for all residents, regardless of housing status.
- Conduct open, transparent county-wide tap water quality testing, to identify solutions needed to address multiple, complex issues of drinking water in the region.
- Establish funding for under-resourced school districts to replace and update water infrastructure, including water refill stations and wastewater infrastructure.
- Employ a wide variety of means to increase green infrastructure and nature based solutions on campuses, and the long-term maintenance of these features, including cost-share partnerships and investments that take into account long-term economic benefits of water projects.
- Include school leaders in regional and local water planning and management structures.
- Increase capacity for schools to connect with and appropriately serve their Tribal and Indigenous students.

FIGURE 1. Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area



I. PROPOSITION 1 DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM DACTIP Task Force developed four tasks to carry out the program, with one of them being the Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment was conducted across the Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area *(FIGURE 1)*, one of twelve areas statewide that are implementing the DACTIP. The goal is to identify and prioritize water management and infrastructure deficiencies and related community needs in ways that meet IRWM objectives to improve water supply and water quality, enhance open space, recreation, habitat, and flood management. The process includes outreach to both community residents and water related service providers who serve disadvantaged communities.

The goals of the statewide Needs Assessment are to:

- Inform and engage members of disadvantaged communities in each IRWM Region in a conversation about their water management-related needs, preliminary needs assessment results, and a plan for continued community engagement and active involvement in decision making.
- Gain a better understanding of water management-related community needs to help direct resources and funding.
- Build initial capacity within disadvantaged communities to develop project concepts and engage technical support for design and project development.
- Increase participation of members of disadvantaged communities, including the public, non-governmental organizations (NGO), community-based organizations (CBO), as well as public and private institutions, in IRWM planning and/or project development activities.

The LA-Ventura Funding Area chose to refer to the work as a Strengths and Needs Assessment, in recognition that all communities, including those designated as disadvantaged by the state, have strengths that should be reinforced and needs that should be met. This assessment includes engaging with people in communities through partnerships with community-based organizations, with members of tribal communities, with school district educators and facilities managers, and with institutions. Institutions engaged include those that provide water and community services to disadvantaged communities, including cities (officials, water departments), water agencies, agencies that manage parks or natural open spaces, water quality program managers, sanitation districts, flood management entities, and mutual water companies.

II. GREATER LA COUNTY REGIONAL OVERVIEW

A. SETTING THE STAGE AROUND WATER

The Los Angeles–Ventura Funding Area of the California Integrated Regional Water Management Program includes three independent IRWM planning regions: Greater LA County (GLAC), Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), and Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC)[1]. The largest of the three, the GLAC IRWM Region, includes 87 cities and more than 9.8 million residents representing 26 percent of California's population. Approximately 42 percent of the GLAC population resides in census block groups where the median household income (MHI) is below 80 percent of the statewide MHI; this means that approximately 2.5 million disadvantaged community residents are within the GLAC IRWM region.

Within the GLAC IRWM region are five sub-regions, WaterTalks communities are located within four of the five sub-regions: South Bay (35 communities), Upper Los Angeles River (34 communities), and Lower San Gabriel-Lower Los Angeles River (27 communities) and Upper San Gabriel River / Rio Hondo (9). There are none in the North Santa Monica Bay sub-region.

Integrated water management within the GLAC IRWM region is carried out by some of the largest water agencies in the United States, some of the smallest in California, and many others in between.

Currently, the GLAC IRWM Leadership Committee consists of the following agencies, which includes chairpersons for sub-regional committees:

- Los Angeles County Flood Control District
- Gateway Water Management Authority
- Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
- West Basin Municipal Water District
- City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
- Water Replenishment District
- Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts
- City of Torrance
- City of Glendale
- Raymond Basin Watermaster
- Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission
- Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
- City of Los Angeles, Watershed Protection Division

Different aspects of water management are performed by local, special district, county, state, and Federal governments, by mutual water companies, and by investor-owned utilities. There are complex regulatory systems that seek to ensure clean water for drinking and washing, and in the environment. Land managers, from local planning departments to the U.S. Forest Service, have responsibilities that intersect with water management in ways that are at times well acknowledged and at other times unexamined. Developed

1 Needs Assessments for each planning region can be found on the WaterTalks website (*www.watertalks.la*).

and undeveloped recreational areas and land committed to transportation also have roles in integrated water management. The coastal zone of the GLAC region holds well-known beaches that are a destination for residents and tourists alike. The GLAC region boasts the watersheds of the LA River, the San Gabriel River, and those that drain to the Santa Monica Bay including, prominently, the Malibu and Ballona Creek watersheds.

These water bodies are also places of significance for California Native American Tribes, including the Tongva, Chumash, and Tataviam peoples, whose unceded ancestral homeland encompasses the GLAC Region.

Among all the water managers in the GLAC region, often overlooked are every single household and business that manage the water they use to meet their needs. Below is detail about the WaterTalks communities, where state policy suggests the presence of disadvantage, and where the DACIP is focusing its efforts.

WaterTalks Communities: The California policies that designate communities as disadvantaged do so by assessing median household income (MHI). When the MHI of a community is below 80% of the statewide MHI, that community is considered disadvantaged. In the GLAC region, using U.S. Census data to calculate this statistic, reveals a patchwork of Census Block Groups that are either disadvantaged, or not, according to these policies.

In 2013, DWR sponsored Council for Watershed Health to carry out the Disadvantaged Community Outreach Evaluation Study: An Analysis of Technical Assistance and Outreach Methods (Outreach Study) on effective outreach strategies for disadvantaged communities within the GLAC Region. In the Outreach Study, the patchwork of Census Block Groups was analyzed to develop a more coherent understanding of what communities in the region are disadvantaged. Because there are so many contiguous cities in the region, the Outreach Study sought to develop community boundaries that express the lived experience of people and resulted in a list of 104 communities. This list is used as the geographic framework for WaterTalks. Much of the Strengths and Needs Assessment dashboard tool provides a map of these communities *(see Section III, part E)*.

The Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area created the program called WaterTalks and contracted with consultant teams (led by TreePeople and Cal State San Bernardino) to engage each community through a variety of efforts. In the GLAC Region, a coalition was formed of locally focused organizations to access WaterTalks communities *(D., below)*. This Strengths and Needs Assessment asks the members of the WaterTalks Communities to share the things they appreciate and the things they would change about their community.

Institutional Engagements Report: To include an understanding of how water-related institutions serve WaterTalks Communities, the Strengths and Needs Assessment conducted interviews with staff and officials of water suppliers, regional water, wastewater, and stormwater agencies, municipal governments, and related institutions. Two focus group discussions were held, one with managers from mutual water companies, and one with CBOs focused on providing services to those experiencing homelessness. While CBOs are not public agencies nor regulated utilities, they are a consistent provider of safe drinking water for unhoused people in Los Angeles County.

For more information on Integrated Regional Water Management in Greater LA County, please visit *https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/irwmp/About.aspx*

B. PARTNERSHIPS (LEADERSHIP GROUP OF CBOS)

In order to engage members of these 104 communities, TreePeople brought together the **WaterTalks Leadership Group of CBOs**, a coalition of 13 community-based organizations to ensure that members of WaterTalks communities and the institutions that serve them are able to participate as equals in planning for local green infrastructure and water sustainability projects. These organizations are all rooted in their respective communities and have a deep history in building capacity and providing resources for their communities to engage in social and environmental justice efforts. Every organization brought experience conducting surveys, hosting workshops, and other forms of data collections; they have met monthly since the fall of 2019 (and more frequently at times), to easily access the full range of its collective experience.

During the development of the Leadership Group, there were several factors that played into the selection process of the CBOs that would take part in the strengths and needs assessment throughout the region. To represent as many voices in the region as possible, TreePeople issued an RFQ that was heavily focused on geographic target areas. These 13 organizations represent 75-80% of the 104 communities identified for the GLAC IRWM Region. Other gap areas were addressed by working with the Leadership Group CBOs to cover areas in proximity to their assigned areas and with other existing networks who have an interest in addressing the topic but did not serve as subcontractors.

An important consideration when seeking Leadership Group members was that organizations have ready access to existing audiences that could be tapped multiple times during this process. Considering the multiple waves of engagement within the Water Talks program, having repeat audiences builds community capacity over time and allows for WaterTalks to be plugged into their existing events and programs. The recommended Leadership Group organizations were endorsed by the GLAC Disadvantaged Community Committee, which is a subset of the GLAC IRWM program.

Overview of the Organizations

- **Active San Gabriel Valley** works to support a more sustainable, equitable, and livable San Gabriel Valley through community events, open streets, transit improvements, green infrastructure, and advocacy for a more sustainable, equitable and livable San Gabriel Valley by fostering civic engagement in communities across the San Gabriel Valley to effect policy, program and environmental change.

- **Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)** was founded in 1978 and is one of the preeminent environmental justice organizations in the nation. The mission of (CBE) is to build people's power in California's communities of color and low-income communities to achieve environmental health and justice by preventing and reducing pollution and building green, healthy and sustainable communities and environments.

- **The Council of Mexican Federations in North America (COFEM)** is aimed at creating opportunities for Latino Immigrants in North America, with a special focus in

California. The mission of COFEM is to empower immigrant communities to be full participants in the social, political, economic, and cultural life of the United States and their home country by uniting, strengthening, and expanding our member organizations to better advocate, preserve and share their cultural traditions.

- **East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ)** is an environmental health and justice non-profit organization working towards a safe and healthy environment for communities that are disproportionately suffering the negative impacts of industrial pollution. Established in 2001 by residents of the Commerce/East Los Angeles area who were concerned with the increasing environmental health impacts of industrial pollution in their community, as well as several pending expansion projects adjacent to homes, schools and parks.

- **Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC)** is the leading multi-service organization in Koreatown, supporting children and their families in the areas of education, health, housing, and finances. KYCC serves more than 11,000 people each year at eight locations throughout Koreatown, most of whom are first generation immigrants from Asia and Latin America and are committed to making Koreatown a safe and beautiful place to live and work.

- **Mujeres de la Tierra** has the distinction of being one of few Latina-founded and led 501(c)(3) environmental equity nonprofits that focus on the healing of La Madre Tierra (Mother Earth) in Southern California. They are dedicated to advocating and fighting to revert the effects of negative social and environmental impacts placed upon vulnerable communities, especially those that are immigrant, low-income, and/ or people of color through self-empowerment to inspire leadership.

- **Promesa Boyle Heights** is a collective of residents, youth, schools, and community organizations, led by Proyecto Pastoral, united in lifting community voices and working together to transform conditions and improve opportunities for students and families. Where community families drive decision-making, Promesa's values lie in building Boyle Heights residents' power, capacity, and confidence, born out of a social justice mindset.

- **Social Eco Education** is an emerging effort by noted community organizer, Martha Rodriguez-Camacho, who's experience includes historic efforts in Compton related to drinking water, and serving on the board of the Central West Basin Municipal Water District.

- **Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI)** is an Indigenous-led, community-based organization located in the ancestral homelands of the Tongva People in Los Angeles. SPI advocates for environmental, social and cultural justice and works locally, regionally, and globally to build the capacity of Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples to protect sacred lands, waters, and cultures.

- **Social Justice Learning Institute (SJLI)** is dedicated to improving the education, health, and well-being of youth and communities of color by empowering them to enact social change through research, training, and community mobilization.

- **T.R.U.S.T. South LA** is a community-based effort that works to stabilize the neighborhoods south of Downtown LA, where increased property values and rents have pushed out many long-term residents. Their mission is to serve as a steward for community-controlled land; to be a catalyst for values-driven, community-serving development; to build awareness and leadership in housing, transportation and recreation; and to create programs that encourage economic opportunity.

- **Ultimate Restoration Unlimited Inc (URU)** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2014. Their mission Is to promote positivity, community pride, and leadership skills to the youth and disadvantaged of Los Angeles by providing opportunities to participate in neighborhood clean-ups and improvement projects citywide.

- The **Watts Clean Air & Energy Committee (WCAEC)** empowers the Watts Community to achieve environmental justice by improving air quality and helping the community gain access to careers in the growing green energy industry. WCAEC has been operating since 2014, the three founders knew that the disadvantaged Watts community was in dire need to have active community education and engagement around the larger picture of global warming including air and energy, which includes water.

III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

A. ONLINE SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Survey - used primarily online but also in paper form - was designed to work toward identifying the emerging issues and concerns in the community rather than focusing exclusively on community deficiencies and gaps. It was designed to consider the capacities, skills, and assets of community members, agencies, and organizations. There were also interview questionnaires developed in conjunction with the survey to guide direct conversations with community members and institutional representatives.

The assessment design was conducted pursuant to requirement of the Institutional Review Board for California State University, San Bernardino. The survey instrument and data collection methods met the protocols required by the IRB for this program. Any form of survey, digital or paper, was entered into a database managed by staff at the California State University. All digital and paper surveys, and interviews, included an opening statement that introduced the interview process and assured the anonymity of the participant.

Also necessary to the process was gathering data to complete a template (spreadsheet) provided and required by the CA Dept of Water Resources (DWR). Template topics include community characteristics, drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, water rates and financing. Design of questions allowed for metrics to be included that fall outside the DWR template of Needs Assessment topics, such as community capacity.

Survey questions went through multiple draft rounds in April and May of 2020 using the following process:

- Created a list of topics and questions related to community strengths and all categories of the DWR template.
- Reviewed for other topics and filters including Tribal Community involvement, homeless population representation, community capacity and readiness, and interconnection with other multi-benefit urban planning efforts and related funding sources, and climate resilience related to water issues.
- Created a “cross-walk” matrix connecting draft survey questions to the DWR template as well as the interview tools, to be certain all elements would be included. This was done in conjunction with Cal State University/ San Bernardino (who served as lead consultants for the Upper Santa Clara River and Ventura County areas) so one survey tool could be used across the entire funding area, and the process could meet the requirements of the Institutional Review Board.
- Presented and discussed the draft Survey with GLAC Program Managers, Task Force Members and the Leadership Group NGOs in July 2020. A comment period was open for these groups and further drafts were built from comments.

"...water in Los Angeles is very complicated, and community members struggle to describe how their needs can be met through water projects or programs."

"The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of committing to support people, not merely the projects that we have come to associate with addressing climate and water justice issues."

- The team led by CSU San Bernardino developed the tool for online use, with feedback from the GLAC WaterTalks team, and then managed the online process over the course of several meetings.
- Approval and testing of the online survey tool, and proofing and printing of the paper version, was carried out in August-September, and the online survey went live at the beginning of October. The WaterTalks CBOs were trained in use of the tool in September of 2020.

The survey tool was built around two fundamental questions:

- What do you like best about your community? What does it need most?
- How is water a part of your community?

Survey questions were used to engage an audience to share what they want to talk about, rather than try to drive specific questions that might not garner real interest or an honest answer. In the case of talking directly with participants in Listening Sessions, the open questions could help the facilitator understand how to take the conversation and apply it to water issues.

Using this approach sought to overcome a long-held challenge in community engagement and water planning - that is, water in Los Angeles is very complicated, and community members struggle to describe how their needs can be met through water projects or programs. The WaterTalks approach drew from the fields of both Community Organizing and Urban Planning to find a common language to describe strengths and needs.

The team at CSU also suggested the following minimum thresholds of survey responses per WaterTalks Community:

- ***Minimum Sample Size of 10:*** If the sample size is less than 10, it becomes easier to identify people in the sample, especially if the data pertains to a vulnerable subgroup (i.e. racial and disability categories).
- ***Minimum Sample Size of 30:*** To be considered statistically significant, the sample size should be 30 or greater.

As it turned out, individual communities had 30 survey responses on average. With the onset of COVID, inability to canvas, and difficulty identifying local community support, there was a subset of communities where the Leadership Group CBOs were not able to capture a desired minimum sample size. These areas could benefit from future waves of engagement, outreach programming, and capacity building *(see recommendations section)*.

B. TRIBAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The Tribal Needs Assessment was designed and implemented by Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI).

Tribal Survey Development: The Tribal Survey was designed to mirror and expand on the Community Survey in order to more accurately capture and ultimately express the unique needs of tribal communities. It identified the emerging issues and concerns of the California Native American Tribes with ancestral homelands within the GLAC region--the Tongva Gabrielino, Chumash and Tataviam Nations, and Native American and Indigenous populations living in the region, including the needs and strengths of the Native American tribe, tribal and Indigenous communities they serve and are a part of, barriers to culturally appropriate and tribally specific access needs related to water, and barriers to equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Finally, the Tribal Survey set out to identify tribal governance and decision-making processes and engagement strategies and future challenges and opportunities.

Tribal Survey questions were designed by local tribal water scholars including staff with SPI and its advisory board members. Survey designers also used the tribal water surveys developed for the Santa Ana Watershed as well as a tribal water survey developed by California Indian Environmental Alliance for use in the Bay Area, occupied and unceded Ohlone homelands. SPI used this survey to inform the GLAC area survey as the Ohlone are also not federally acknowledged and thus there are some similarities between the experiences of tribal communities with ancestral homelands in both these regions.

Tribal Survey Modifications: Tactics regarding the use of the survey and survey design were modified due to feedback from tribal community members that the survey was too long and thus prohibited many community members from completing the survey. Two of the tribal community listening sessions were used to work directly with tribal participants to modify the survey design in a way that would make it more accessible to the community. The modified survey used a multiple choice format rather than the fill in the blank/short answer format that had originally been designed. This substantially decreased the amount of time required to complete the survey.

Data Collection: The original approach to the assessment called for holding a minimum of four data collection workshops in order to reach a representative population of Indigenous Peoples in the GLAC region. The planned approach was to hold these sessions in collaboration with Los Angeles based tribal nations and maximize survey completion by tabling at multiple Indigenous cultural and political events throughout the calendar year.

The impacts of COVID-19 instead required a variety of techniques to inform and engage tribal community members who live or work within the GLAC region, or consider the areas within GLAC boundaries to be ancestral homelands. The Tribal Survey was distributed digitally by SPI and Indigenous partner organizations such as Indigenous Circle of Wellness, via multiple online tribal listening sessions and at selected community events throughout 2021. It was completed by 20 individuals. Additionally, SPI hosted 4 digital tribal listening sessions, and SPI Tongva staff members conducted 2 tribal focus group meetings with 12 people, and one-on-one interviews with tribal community members throughout the process.

COVID-19 and Tribal Communities: It's important to note that, given the impacts of COVID-19 on Tribal communities, it is very remarkable that a Strengths and Needs Assessment was able to be conducted and completed. The timeline was extended

beyond that of the rest of the program to help accommodate the challenges.

Due to the loss of tribal Elders and leadership gaps within tribal governance bodies, COVID -19 has deeply impacted the spiritual, mental, and economic wellbeing of Tribal community members. It was noted during data collection that many Tribal community members were overworked and overwhelmed, and Zoom-fatigue has been very apparent during meetings. SPI remained attentive of community needs throughout the GLAC Tribal Needs Assessment process and echoed similar efforts made by WaterTalks CBOs *(described below)*.

But the challenge was actually far greater. It may be hard for many non-native people to comprehend, but COVID-19 has exacerbated long-held disparities in Tribal communities going back hundreds of years - as a result of settler colonialism, and land dispossession and state-sponsored attempted genocide. These atrocities were sanctioned first by Papal Bulls of the 1400s and later via the U.S. legal system and the associated paradigm of Manifest Destiny.

The legacy of colonization continues to manifest in health inequities experienced by Native American people, who face some of the highest health disparities in the country, including those related to infant mortality, teen suicide, diabetes, liver disease, heart disease, other chronic conditions, and lower life expectancy. Moreover, Native adults are more likely to be uninsured than all other adults in LA County, which limits access to needed care.[1]

The COVID pandemic deepened these disparities, especially given unreliable data concerning COVID infection and death rates within Native communities. On one hand, many Tribal community members do not want to report that they are American Indian/ Alaska Natives at testing sites due to historic instances of prejudice and surveillance. On the other hand, American Indians and Alaska Natives make up about 2% of the U.S. population but are often left out of national data analyses or marked as statistically insignificant[2], a sign of continued attempted erasure of Indigenous peoples.

The challenge of engaging a community carrying such governmental historic harm, in a publicly-funded program such as WaterTalks, cannot be overstated.

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of committing to support people, not merely the projects that we have come to associate with addressing climate and water justice issues. Indeed, SPI and the WaterTalks program hold that macro scale differences can only occur if there is economic, spiritual, and mental wellbeing at the personal levels.

1 *https://lanaic.lacounty.gov/la-county-native-american-organizations-launch-psa-to-help-combat-covid-19-and-save-lives/*

2 *https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/09/covid-19-data-native-americans-national-disgrace-scientist-fighting-be-counted*

C. LEADERSHIP GROUP (CBO) ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

"In short, the approach acknowledged the public as experts in their community, and their input could then provide water project developers with information to inspire community-based designs."

To better understand the water needs within 104 communities the WaterTalks process was built around multiple waves of engagement. The initial stage of the multi-phase approach included 39 education workshops where community members learned about how the State manages water, where their tap water comes from, and the goals of the IRWM process. This model of repeated engagement was intended to build capacity over time, and WaterTalks could then return for a second wave of engagement to carry out data collection activities. Following data collection, another wave of engagement sought to share the results and confirm what was heard during the assessment.

The complexity of the region highlighted the need to draw on the expertise that community members have about their local environment. Their input to open-ended survey questions around the strengths and needs of where they live, learn, work, and play was meant to provide data to guide technical experts in prioritizing community voices when determining what programs and projects can be developed to solve problems and reinforce strengths. By using common language to describe goals, vision, hopes, and fears and asking basic questions to engage an audience, this process brought to the surface the essential data to design projects that have community support. In short, the approach acknowledged the public as experts in their community, and their input could then provide water project developers with information to inspire community-based designs.

Original Approach: A variety of data collection methods to best reach their audiences was recommended by Leadership Group CBOs. The initial approach included 50% workshops, 30-35% interviews at community events and 15-20% neighborhood canvassing. Data collection was therefore originally designed to take place largely in the form of community workshops -- ideally with existing audiences -- led by a trusted messenger, and spark a conversation about community knowledge, strengths, needs and challenges in relation to water. A key element to this approach was to "meet the community where they are", so the approach included presenting to existing community groups such as neighborhood councils, churches, block clubs and others where the discussion gathers input from attendees. Outreach at well-attended community gatherings such as farmers markets, pow-wows, festivals and other events where large numbers of residents can be reached through canvassing, tabling and informational meetings would provide a variety of forums to reach residents in a way they feel most comfortable engaging in. Lastly, conducting door-to-door canvassing was planned as needed to reach community members who would be otherwise unable to attend public meetings.

Impact of COVID: Events were already on the calendar when, in March of 2020, the societal shut-down of COVID-19 stopped everything in its tracks; more importantly, it brought unprecedented pain and suffering to the very communities that this program sought to reach. While this Strengths and Needs Assessment is a critical step in better understanding the water needs within under-resourced communities, the devastating health, economic and social damage COVID-19 caused was all-consuming and has disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Color. The Leadership Group CBOs had to redirect their resources to address their own communities' immediate needs, including loss of employment, housing

and food insecurity, lack of healthcare, lack of childcare and lack of access to technology, among others.

It was exceedingly difficult to engage with people during such a chaotic and distressing time. However, this process was still critical to the health of our residents, because as the rest of the state moved along its IRWM funding process, it was imperative that meaningful engagement take place in the GLAC region to ensure that the needs of these communities be met with substantial, community-led water infrastructure investment.

The LA–Ventura Funding Area Task Force, with support of the CA Department of Water Resources, revised the timeline for data collection with an additional four months to gather accurate data while adjusting to circumstances and barriers compounded by the pandemic.

Here is where the model of working with a network of CBOs found new opportunity: resilience is core to these organizations, with a history of working tirelessly to uplift marginalized community voices and that same resilience allowed the outreach coalition members to pivot their strategies to collect needs assessment data during this difficult time. For example, CBOs were able to use COVID resource programs such as surveying people in line at testing sites and food distribution centers - all the while implementing CDC guidelines to keep the community safe. Both paper and the mobile form of surveys were used. This reciprocity highlights the importance of caring for community members' immediate needs while understanding the importance to continue investing in the future that participating in this needs assessment provides. This direct form of outreach also addressed the very striking digital divide that has inhibited many groups from participating in virtual forms of outreach. Older community members, people with varying abilities, or those that do not use the internet on a regular basis due to their beliefs and culture were among many community members whose voices may not have been heard without the form of in person outreach at these service centers.

At these online meetings, community organizers would carry out the same type of dialogue that would otherwise take place at an in-person workshop. These worked off PowerPoint outlines, polling and other engagement tools that followed the community listening session format and personalized them to be relevant to a local audience.

Virtual Listening Sessions: WaterTalks held 29 virtual community listening sessions covering 43 GLAC communities, including WaterTalks organizations who transitioned their regular member meetings on a virtual platform. This format provided robust quantitative data in the form of a community forum where input was anonymous. These sessions would typically take place in the evenings or weekends and would last from 45-60 minutes. Leaders facilitated the dialogue in either English, Spanish, or both. Others on the WaterTalks team took notes from community member responses, chat documentation, and other interactive tools including mentimeter, polls, and mapping activities where participants could drop a pin on specific areas in their community with issues such as flooding or lack of tree canopy *(FIGURE 2)*.

A series of open-ended questions were presented followed by conversation probes to dig deeper into topics such as cost of water or access to recreational opportunities. The discussion outline was based on the survey tool. There was a sense of connection and rich discussions that came from these sessions. Participation would range anywhere from 5-40 community members including members of neighborhood councils, parents, school personnel, students and in some cases elected or appointed office representatives. Sessions were promoted according to their geographic area via social media, e-newsletters, and

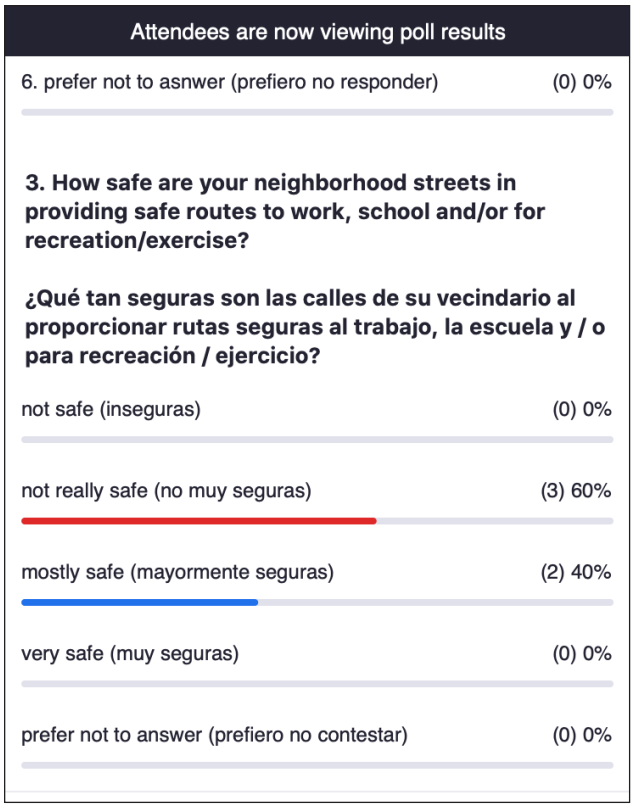


FIGURE 2. Example of Zoom-based polling used to engage residents during listening sessions.

through a network of partners, schools, and elected officials.

Digital Survey & Social Media: Social media was a powerful tool to raise awareness and garner feedback through the promotion of the digital WaterTalks survey, which became essential to garnering qualitative and quantitative feedback *(FIGURE 3)*. To increase accessibility to the survey, it was made available in five languages, based on requests from the Leadership Group CBOs: English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Farsi.

Phone Banking and Texting: Trained staff, volunteers, interns, and promotoras spent hours on the phone calling residents from desired communities to either promote the online survey or take surveys with them directly on the phone. More than 5,000 calls were made through phone banking and a total of 300,000 people reached through geographically focused texting campaigns and e-newsletter blasts.

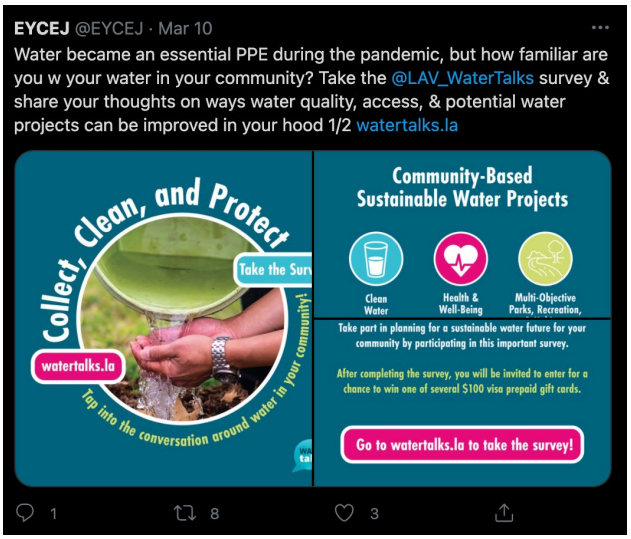


FIGURE 3. Campaigns from the CBO Leadership Group helped promote the survey on social media.

Incentives for Community Experts: A critical component to garnering meaningful c ommunity insight is to acknowledge the value of participants' time and local expertise - as would be done for any technical experts. The incentives available through funding from the WaterTalks Program were items such as rain barrels, water filters, water testing kits, life straws, and trees. Examples include:

- Trust South LA sent art kits to their member families (who needed such supplies for the suddenness of online schooling); youth were invited to draw their ideal healthy community environment, and TSLA had a virtual art showing where students could present their work while parents participated in a Listening Session *(FIGURE 4)*.
- Both TreePeople and Koreatown Youth and Community Center engaged participants with curb-side fruit and shade tree pickups, after completing surveys.

Weekly drawings for $100 VISA gift cards were tied to the online survey as well as participation in select virtual listening sessions. VISA cards were selected over other sources to give flexibility to community participants who don't have access to online

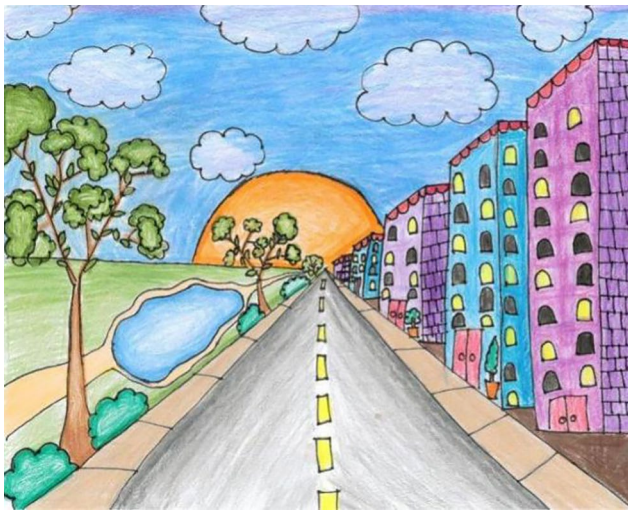


FIGURE 4. Trust South LA provided art kits to their member families (who needed such supplies for the suddenness of online schooling). Youth were invited to draw their ideal healthy community environment, and TSLA had a virtual art showing where students could present their work while parents participated in a Listening Session.

shopping or those in food deserts with no local store shopping. Funding was provided by outside parties, as incentives were ineligible for reimbursement through state funds for this program.

D. INSTITUTIONAL & SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENTS

Institutional and Schools design and engagement was led by Stantec with support from the GLAC Region consultants. Institutional and Schools Engagements were carried out using an ethnographic approach to understand the perspectives of institutional staff and leaders, and the communities they serve.

Ethnographically Informed Interviewing: Ethnography is a social science technique for gathering information through open-ended listening in everyday spaces over extended periods of time (SAWPA, 2020). Such practices can reestablish trusting relationships between the people who lead or work in public institutions and all the community members that empower those institutions. Current calls for "civic ethnography", or "citizen social science" reflect a growing awareness that long-term dialogue embedded with mutual respect is needed in public administration.

For WaterTalks, this type of interview allows the person(s) being interviewed to consider broad questions and to share answers from within their own sense of priorities. Their choices regarding what to include or not include in their answers are as meaningful as the content of the answer itself. How leaders and institutional staff prioritize topics can reflect gaps or a lack of emphasis on issues that other community members prioritize, and therefore, point to opportunities for progress.

Relationship to the California State University and its Institutional Review Board: The assessment was conducted with the oversight of the Internal Review Board for California State University, San Bernardino. Each interview was documented by the interviewer and a note taker, and the note-taker later provided a summary report of the proceedings using a combination of notes taken and a database managed by staff at the California State University. Each person interviewed was read an opening statement that introduced the interview process and the anonymity afforded to their participation.

Anonymity Clause and Its Purpose: The Internal Review Board application called for an anonymity clause for all interviews. Therefore, throughout this report the identity of those interviewed is kept anonymous by withholding names and positions. Though public agency staff, and certainly elected leaders, have very low expectations of privacy when working in that public capacity, WaterTalks assumed anonymity was important for at least some participants and committed to a consistent approach.

Interview Instrument - Institutional Community Membership: Institutions are, in fact, members of the communities they serve, a notion which is often contrary to how they are perceived both internally and externally.

The interview instrument was designed to encourage people who work for or manage institutions to consider themselves part of the communities being discussed. Community is not always geographically bounded – like for instance members of an ethnic or religious group who count all other members around the world as part of that community.

One place of fragmentation between communities and the institutions is the sense that the institution, and the people who work there, are outsiders to the community they serve. People who identify themselves as part of the community and people who work for the institutions often both hold this view, and it is a barrier to engagement and trust. Encouraging the interviewees to consider themselves as members of the community helps them think more broadly and holistically about the community during the interview.

Interview Instrument - Summary: A set of eight interview prompts were developed for the Institutional Engagements instrument and refined over the course of several remote meetings in spring 2020 with feedback from the larger WaterTalks team. This included alignment with questions in the Community Survey instrument. The Institutional Engagements Interview Instrument can be found in full as *Appendix A* and is summarized below.

The aim was to understand institutional staff and leadership's perspectives on:

- Needs and strengths of the community they serve and are a part of.
- Barriers to equitable access to the benefits provided by water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.
- Their own governance and decision-making processes and engagement strategies.
- Collaborative efforts between multiple agencies or institutions in their community.
- Future challenges (climate change, environmental degradation, etc.) and opportunities (e.g., funding sources and partnerships).

The eight interview prompts within the instrument were followed by a set of probes that were only used if the interview subject did not include an answer to the probe in their initial answer to the main prompt. The prompt and probe structure allows for interview subjects to respond to broad prompts and to prioritize the items they think are most relevant to the prompt's topic. This allows the interview designers to be surprised by a linkage drawn by the subject, and to note when items thought to be key are omitted by the people being interviewed. Following up with the probes allows for all relevant data to be collected if something thought to be key was not discussed in the initial response.

Interviews: a total of 25 phone interviews were held from August 2020 to February 2021. 54 people participated across the 25 interviews. 12 interviews were of a single participant, and 13 had more than one participant. The list of invited participants was developed by the WaterTalks consultant team and the Task Force which together focused on developing a representative sample of institutional leaders from different types of water management agencies, institutions that serve many or just a few community members, as well as municipal, private and mutual water providers. Non-water managers that provide community services with linkages to the multi-benefit concepts embedded in IRWM were also invited, as were several elected leaders within municipalities.

Notes taken during interviews were analyzed using Dedoose, a qualitative analysis software. Notes were coded for topics and themes shared by those who were interviewed. Each set of notes was evaluated to inductively develop a coding tree based on the content shared by participants. Once all the interview

notes had been coded separately, another review of the notes with the entire code tree permitted additional linkages to be drawn, and additional insights to be gained. Using the coding results, themes and topics across all interviews are visible, including things common across many, or unique or rare in only one or a few.

Schools: The Strength and Needs Assessment for School Districts in the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM funding area used the same ethnographic approach as the institutional engagements. Interviews were held with school district facilities personnel, key decision makers, and educators with an understanding of school and local issues. The interview instrument was adapted from the institutional interview tool and designed to encourage interviewees to consider themselves part of the community bounded by the populations their school district serves.

This was an unprecedented time for school personnel as they geared up for one of the largest tasks in the state which was to determine how to keep students educated, provide basic needs, and navigate how to safely reopen schools. Due to the extenuating circumstances that COVID-19 brought upon the globe and its strain on the school system, in lieu of outreach events, WaterTalks executed six virtual listening sessions with members of various school districts in April and May of 2021. Focus groups with a sampling of school superintendents, board members, teachers, and facilities and operations personnel were conducted with a series of eight guided interview prompts, each question followed by a probe that would allow participants to elaborate on their responses.

E. DASHBOARD DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ASSIGNMENTS

The Strengths and Needs Assessment resulted in 3,591 online community surveys, 29 community listening sessions, and Leadership Group CBO input collected within the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) Region between the period of September 15, 2020 through June 15, 2021. For those online surveys collected in the GLAC, 3,106 were able to be assigned to one of the 104 WaterTalks communities.

Survey respondents live in the following IRWM Subregions:

- The majority of survey respondents live in the South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB) region or Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) region (71%).
- The Lower San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers (LLASGR) region and Upper San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers (USGRH) region were home to the remainder of respondents (29%).

The process used was based on a 2013 effort *(referenced above)* called the Disadvantaged Community Outreach Evaluation Study: An Analysis of Technical Assistance and Outreach Methods (Outreach Study). The WaterTalks consultants confirmed the boundaries and eligibility of 104 disadvantaged communities from the Outreach Study in 2017, and used it to define the communities the WaterTalks program would ultimately focus on.

After data collection was completed in June of 2021, geographic data from the WaterTalks surveys was combined with demographic and place-based data from local and State sources to identify the survey respondents who were actually living in or near the 104 communities. The WaterTalks program then refined DWR's Disadvantaged Community census geographies based on additional indicators, such as level of education, unemployment, parks access and more.

A Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to map the location of each WaterTalks survey respondent, assign that respondent to a community name, and spatially assess

strengths and needs of those in the GLAC region. The following data sources were used in the development of community assignments:

- WaterTalks Surveys
- Council for Watershed Health: DAC communities – GLAC Region
- California OEHHA: Draft CalEnviroScreen 4.0
- California DWR: DAC Boundaries (Block Group, 2018)
- California DWR: Proposition 1 Funding Areas
- Los Angeles County Enterprise GIS: IRWM Region and Sub Regional Boundaries
- Los Angeles County Enterprise GIS: zip codes

Surveys were assigned a WaterTalks community name based on zip code and cross-street information provided. Those surveys that specified both a zip code and valid cross street were then assigned a location confidence level of "high;" surveys which provided a zip code and only one street name (no cross-street) were set to a confidence level of "medium;" and surveys which provided only a zip code were set to a confidence level of "low."

The resulting map contained all survey points that intersected with DAC Community boundaries (2,373 surveys). However, since the existing DAC Community boundaries may not represent a complete and comprehensive selection of all respondents likely living in and or adjacent to under-resourced communities, the project team chose to expand the criteria for surveys with DAC data from two additional sources.

1. Areas that are recognized as having an overall percentile of 80 and above from CalEnviroScreen (CES) 4.0 were incorporated into the development of the GIS mapping tool. Surveys that did not intersect with Disadvantaged Community boundaries were spatially joined with the CES shapefile. If the resulting points were within half a mile of a Disadvantaged Community boundary, they were assigned the name of the closest community.
2. Areas recognized as Disadvantaged Communities from DWR's most recent map tool version (2018) were also incorporated in the development of the GIS mapping tool. Surveys that did not intersect with Disadvantaged Community boundaries or with areas above the CES 80 percentile indicator were spatially joined with DWR data. Again, if the resulting points were within half a mile of a Disadvantaged Community boundary, they were assigned the name of the closest community.

The remaining survey points that did not intersect with any of the DAC criteria listed above underwent one additional check to assign those surveys that were geographically "adjacent" (within a defined perimeter of a community) to an existing DAC community boundary. Those unassigned points set to a geocode confidence level of "high" were spatially joined with the closest DAC Community in a half mile radius; unassigned points set to a geocode confidence level of "medium" or "low" where there was much more variability in their exact location were spatially joined with the closest DAC Community in a one-mile radius. This entire sequence of operations enabled an additional 733 records geocoded outside DAC Community boundaries to be assigned to a community name. Insights from this mapping exercise were then used to analyze survey responses and make it available for use across multiple scales of characteristics and geographies through online dashboards *(FIGURE 5)* which can be viewed at *www.redesign.la/dacip*.

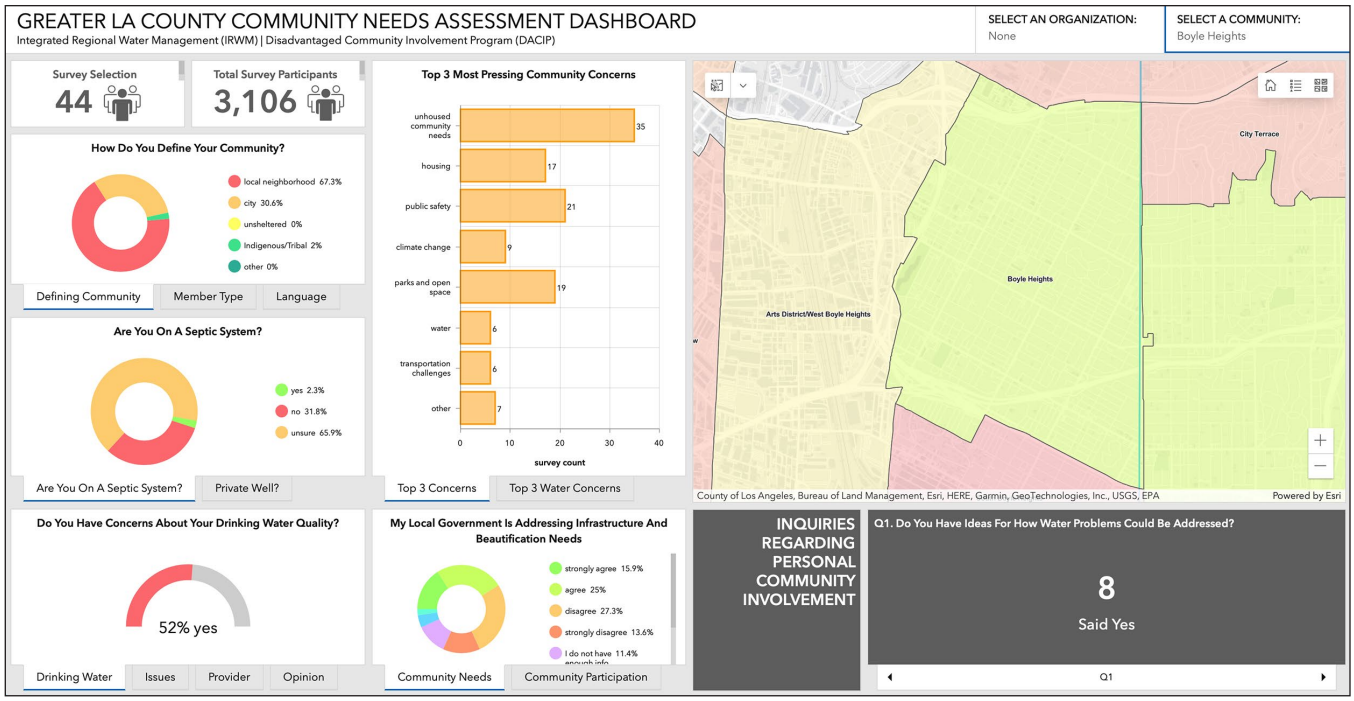


FIGURE 5a. Online dashboards were developed to highlight the Strengths and Needs Assessment survey results.

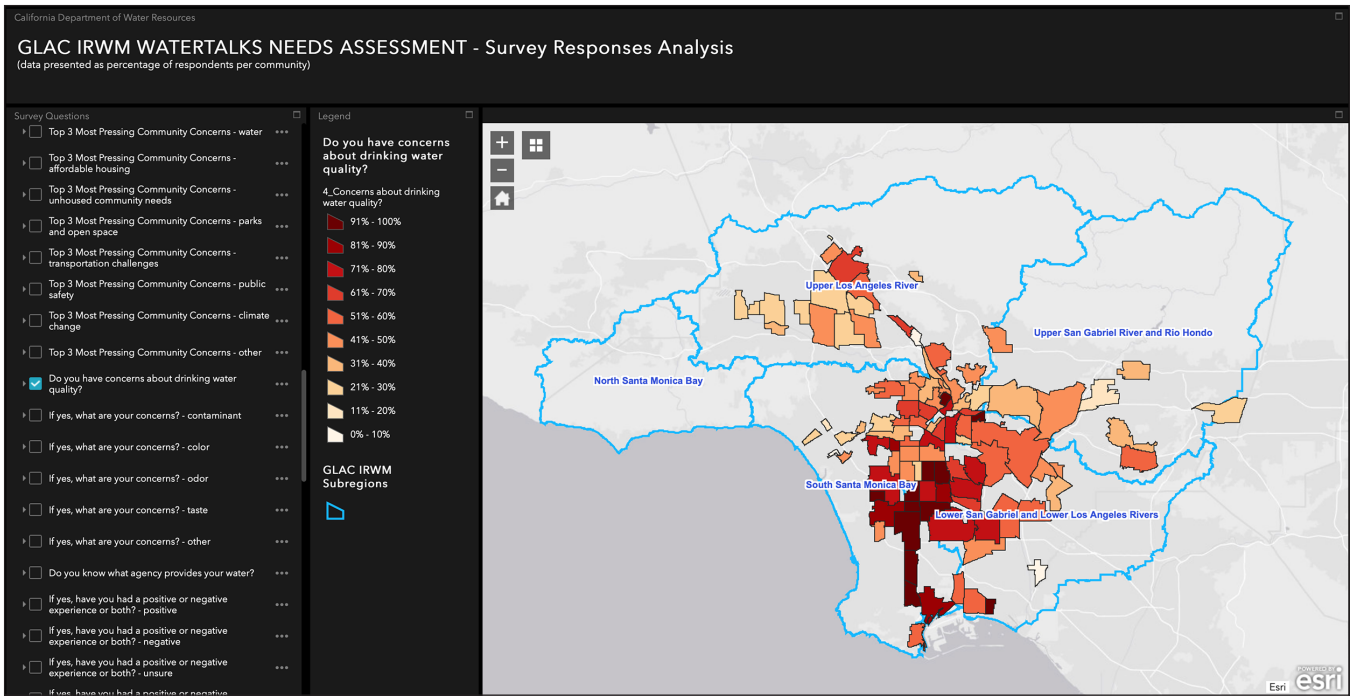


FIGURE 5b. Survey responses were also embedded in an interactive map tool to highlight any spatial patterns (e.g. hot spots) in the data question by question.

IV. FINDINGS

A. FINDINGS - TRIBAL PERSPECTIVES

Defining Tribal Communities and Indigenous Populations

The Greater LA County IRWM Region in its entirety sits on Tongva territory, and portions sit on territory of the Chumash people as well. It's important to note that before colonization all Tongva and Chumash families identified by the village names which their families were born into, and family structures remain as a means of identification today. The Tataviam (traditionally from what is today NW LA County) married into the Tongva and Chumash villages in the San Fernando Valley and near the San Fernando Mission; here they all endured hardship together in the painful time of California's Mission Era.

Prior to becoming Los Angeles county these Native nations did a phenomenal job at keeping their homelands pristine and livable. There was no such thing as Disadvantaged Communities.

A majority of the respondents to the Strengths and Needs Assessment noted that they identified as Native or Indigenous with a few others sharing that they identified with Mexican roots and one other sharing that they did not identify as Native or Indigenous. Respondents were from a plethora of Native and Indigenous backgrounds including Tongva, Gabrielino-Shoshone, Gabrielino, Chumash, Acjachemen, Huichol, Maya, Inca, and Ramuri. Of those who responded, roughly half identified as speaking on behalf of, or representing their communities, in some leadership capacity. Respondents included tribal council members, tribal chairpersons, tribal language preservationists, and heads of local tribal organizations.

Many individuals completed the survey on behalf of their tribe, tribal community, family as a head of household, or as an individual tribal member. Others chose not to classify themselves, and one identified themselves as participating as a water activist. The majority of survey respondents identified as tribal Elders. About half of the survey respondents identified as traditional cultural practitioners. Just over 50% of survey respondents stated that they continued to live on their ancestral homelands.

Tribal Community Priorities - Strengths & Needs

When asked what the Tribal community is most proud of, community responses were: having a connection to community, spirit, self, the land and water, being water protectors, resilience of culture and tradition, and developing relationships with government agencies, organizations, universities and colleges to access land and water for cultural use. Also important to note is that one respondent mentioned not knowing how to reply because they feel disconnected to their culture and people due to the previous and current destruction of their homelands.

Overwhelmingly tribal community members prioritized their cultural and spiritual relationship to water as both a significant strength and need in terms of something needing to be protected, expanded, and even re-established in some instances.

- Some community members noted that their relationship to water consists of gathering aquatic plants, gathering aquatic animals, holding ceremony with water,
- making sure to leave offerings to the water, participating in Tribal community gatherings around water, participating in the launching of the traditional tule boat,
- recognizing the water as a living relative that has stories tied to the Tongva people,
- understanding that we are connected to the water and that it has become scarce so we must do our best to protect water,
- acknowledging that people have become disconnected from water and are reclaiming their connection,
- having daily practices to conserve water,
- recognizing the need for education around water and
- taking water out of ownership of major manufactures and companies.

Community members agree that water contains energy which sustains life and plays/ed a role in the creation of life on earth. They understand the water ways can and do provide a means of transportation. Community members recognize that water assists in providing meals. They also use water in daily cleansing rituals. Some community members recognized that water shapes the land around us and acknowledged that water supports their community and culture.

In terms of additional strengths identified by project participants seen through the virtual surveys, community members shared successes and good examples of what is possible for their tribal communities: Working with organizations and universities to access land and water for cultural usage, supporting the protection of the Ballona Wetlands and ecosystem from imminent destruction from development as well as current involvement in maintaining and restoration of our Ancestral waterways and ecosystems, practicing water conservation, and starting a land trust. These were all examples shared about times the community has come together in support of water and being able to engage in ceremony in sacred places.

Only 35% of respondents indicated that safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking is accessible to all members of the community. Additional tribal community needs identified by the survey responses and via the listening session and focus groups include the need for financial assistance, affordable filtration systems and clean water, funding for language classes, healthcare, reforestation and legal representation. It was also expressed that the community is in need of a safe space to gather and would like to have classes where they educate Non-native community members of their history and culture to undo the harm done from modern ignorances. Some community members shared that they are affected by storm water quality issues and flooding. Others shared concerns about fires and climate change impacting their community in a negative way.

25% of respondents indicated that other water access needs such as for ceremonial purposes or for recreation were not being met. An additional 40% of respondents indicated that they did not know if these needs were being met. These findings are in alignment with statements made by the institutions interviewed as part of this project. See Section IV.C. Findings, Institutional Perspectives which reports:

"Most participants did not have a substantive response to this question [around water access for ceremonial purposes] One participant shared that their community is 'fairly built out', highlighting limited community access to open spaces adjacent to rivers. A few participants shared that there is wide disparity in access to water for recreational or ceremonial purposes within their institutions' service areas, and that recreational and ceremonial access to water should not be limited to beach access. One participant mentioned a motion by Supervisor Solis to examine barriers to tribal cultural practices, sharing that the effort identified access to water as a barrier. A few participants shared about water quality concerns related to ceremonial and recreational needs, including progress in managing beach water quality and the challenges of watershed protection in their area, especially to address the long-term impacts of fires."

Barriers to Tribal Involvement

Barriers to engaging tribal communities include a lack of support, lack of time and resources, lack of communication within tribal groups as well as between community members and the government, a disinterest in the subject overall, a lack of water appreciation and difficulties in getting people educated about and involved in these types of planning efforts.

When asked about what the community knew about GLAC IRWM and what relationships were upheld, 70% of the Native community admitted to have no knowledge of the GLAC IRWM nor have they had engagement in the IRWM planning process. Because of this, many are unaware of the resources like grants and other forms of financial support that are offered to the community. When it comes to participation in public meetings many of the community members lack access to transportation, electronic devices or both. Some said that virtual meetings have been a better option to attend and requested they be held in the evenings when most people are out of work or school.

Institutions tend to have a substantial knowledge gap when it comes to understanding tribal histories and contemporary water issues important to tribes, creating another kind of barrier. As indicated in Institutional sections of this report, except for the water suppliers that rely on surface water imports from tribal lands and are therefore legally required to engage with tribes, few agency respondents discussed engagement with Indigenous communities and tribes. Aside from a single mention of Native American Heritage Month as an opportunity to "consider indigenous water and land management," and one reference to the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Revitalization Master Plan[1] as an example of effective engagement with indigenous communities and the inclusion of tribal perspectives in local watershed management planning, agency officials did not raise the issue of tribal engagement.

Factors Limiting Cultural Access

In regards to the question "what factors limit access to culture in your tribal community" there were 13 virtual surveys each giving multiple responses:

- 6 chose access to our ancestral land that is now privatized including fenced and barbed wired,
- 5 people agree that governmental agencies play a role in limiting access,
- 6 people shared that gaps in knowledge limited their access to culture,
- 4 people shared that lack of money limited their access to culture,

1 *https://upperlariver.konveio.com/*

- 7 people said extraction, mining and other means of corporate greed limit access,
- 5 people described channelization and damming of waterways limiting access,
- 1 respondent expressed the laws prevent them from practicing some of their cultural ways.

Some community members identified lack of federal recognition as standing in their way to have the respect of government to government involvement and inclusion to addressing and dealing with environmental concerns. Environmental concerns included air pollution, contaminated land and water, water damming and infrastructure, fire issues, lack of caring for and tending to the land, sea level rise, plastic pollution, oil, gas and other extractions.

Opportunities shared by our respondents to overcome these barriers include engaging community members in these issues, coming together and standing up for the earth, protecting the sacred, people giving up their seats for Native leaders or willing to share space and paid positions, educating non North American Native people, and implementing further surveys. Requests to do better with the houseless community and food security have also been asked by the Native community.

When asked who needs to be involved in the effort to overcome these barriers, answers included:

- Tribal and Non-Tribal Community members, and
- representatives from Tribes ancestrally tied to the area.



FIGURE 6. Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM Subregions

B. FINDINGS - COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

1. Defining Community

Geography
Survey respondents live in the following IRWM Subregions *(FIGURE 6)*, and looking at these regions can be useful in understanding the Community Findings. They help envision the LA basin as four major sections:

- Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) - northwest
- Upper San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers (USGRH) - northeast
- Lower San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers (LLASGR) -southeast
- South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB) - southwest

How communities identified themselves
A majority of respondents defined their community as either a local neighborhood or city, but respondents in the ULAR region were most likely to identify with the term "local neighborhood" while respondents in the USGRH region were most likely to identify with the term "city." Across the combined region, roughly half of respondents identified as renters and one third as homeowners. However, the USGRH region has the greatest percentage of renters while the ULAR region has a larger percentage of homeowners.
A majority of respondents cited English as the primary language spoken at home and Spanish was included about half as often.

2. Community Strengths

Communities share that their strengths lie in their people, in the built environment or both.

ULAR: When respondents listed favorite things about their community, answers ranged from diversity and good food to proximity to nature. Top strengths mentioned in the ULAR region, for example, included:

- Good neighbors, a sense of community, access to parks, safe and quiet neighborhoods, and central location/ proximity to freeways and public transportation.
- In some areas of ULAR, such as West Boyle Heights/ Arts District, some highlighted the opportunities for community involvement and inclusivity as well as Cities' responsiveness to issues like broken power lines and potholes.
- Some also mentioned ample City, school, and CBO assistance/resources for community members, and strong community events like Dia De Los Muertos and Art Walk.
- Some respondents highlighted elements of the water system like Lake Balboa, the LA River, recycled water at Valley Glen Park, and stormwater capture in Victory Boulevard's meridians.

USGRH: Community members in the USGRH region often highlighted:

- Environmental strengths, such as proximity to parks, hiking trails, hills and landscape. More specific callouts included El Monte and "Emerald Necklace."
- Others in the region described having a friendly community and liked the family-oriented, quiet, and small-town feel of their community.
- Other frequently used strengths cited in USGR were diversity, a strong Latinx community, good dining options, and a sense of safety.

LLASGR: In the LLASGR region, a large focus was on:

- The strengths of people, whether through community resources, diversity, culture, people of color, family-owned and Black-owned businesses, street vendors, and "resilience of the people."
- Many people listed the schools and City Council as a plus.
- Others included public transportation and freeway access as a strength.
- Parks, community organizations, and community centers were also highlighted, along with local landmarks like Watts Tower and Hawkins Burger.

SSMB: Similar to members throughout GLAC, respondents in the SSMB highlighted strengths across areas of both people and the built environment:

- Some focused on the sense of community, small businesses, friendly neighbors, and social services.
- Others highlighted their community's walkability and recreational opportunities ("early morning run" was used frequently).
- Other highlights were plentiful restaurants and grocery stores, and proximity to parks (Griffith Park was called out frequently along with neighborhood parks like Centinela Park, Darby Park, and Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area for Inglewood residents).
- The word "trees" was used more in this region than others in the GLAC area.

3. Community Priorities - Overview

The most frequently noted community concerns across the GLAC region are homelessness, housing, and public safety. Water as a general subject-matter was not identified as a top community concern - except when it came to drinking water in specific communities *(FIGURE 7) (discussed below)*.

"Communities no longer have a relationship with water and therefore it is difficult to engage with people about water because of this lost connection and related feeling of helplessness."

Members of the Leadership Group CBOs, in summarizing the conversations they experienced during the Assessment, expressed that communities no longer have a relationship with water and therefore it is difficult to engage with people about water because of this lost connection and related feeling of helplessness. Jessa Calderon at Sacred Places Institute stated it most concisely in that systems we have in place need to be reconstructed with acknowledgement that the original way was not to have pipes in the home; connecting to a water source helps you "earn" water and not waste it. "We don't stop to think where water is stolen from and brought into our households." Laura Gracia at Communities for a Better Environment added that there is an immediate need to focus on the larger structural racism issues and politics tied to stolen water, history of redlining, and purposefully placing Black, indigenous, and people of color in industrial areas.

ULAR: Phrases such as "homeless problem," "homeless issue," "shelters," "homeless help," and more were used when describing community needs. This was also a frequent topic reoccurring in most community listening sessions, but there was little discussion around actual solutions. Other topics frequently mentioned include:



FIGURE 7. Word cloud highlighting most common repeating phrases when asked "What are your community's top concerns?

- Street repairs, cleanliness, and access to healthy and affordable food.
- In parts of the ULAR region, members focused on water issues in the Valley through increasing the number of green streets, green alleys, and drought-tolerant lawns.
- Some in the foothill communities cited fire danger as a concern.
- Others included poor air quality due to heavy transportation as an area of concern.
- In some communities like West Boyle Heights/Arts District, a high priority was the need for agencies to build trust around water quality and improve communication about water issues (including conservation, infrastructure maintenance, and privatization).
- A gas plant in Sun Valley, operated by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, was frequently mentioned as a source of concern for gas leaks and air quality.

USGRH: Many community members focused on housing concerns and used phrases such as "affordable housing," "low-income housing," "rent control," and "rental assistance."

- Additional public space and grocery store options were also mentioned.
- Others in the region listed security and law enforcement as a top need, and the word "kids" was used to describe needs in this region at a higher rate.

- Many also felt that there was a need for streetscape improvements, including better lighting, bike lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian safety, and increased tree canopy.
- Community members in various listening sessions pointed out the City's recent increase in cutting down trees in El Monte and Baldwin Park as particularly troubling. They shared that increasing the canopy would cool down the community, improve air quality, and provide space for children to play.
- Finally, cleaner water and more trust and engagement around tap water were frequently listed in respondents' answers.

LLASGR: Community members focused on a large variety of needs, including better water and air quality, addressing trash, green space improvements (i.e. more pocket parks, more park monitoring), homelessness, mental health, healthier food, job training, and public safety.

- Water was cited particularly heavily in this region with phrases such as "clean water," "water quality," and "brown water" appearing often. Lower water bills and increased accountability for water agencies were also listed as needs, particularly in South LA/ South Central.
- In these neighborhoods, broken hydrants, broken sprinklers, and runoff were common concerns.
- Also prevalent was the need to address the added costs for poor water quality, either incurred through paying for expensive bottled water or water filtration or by traveling out of the way to "waterias" or to a laundromat that wouldn't stain clothing.
- Some members described a need to address structural racism and environmental injustices in which communities of color are disproportionately burdened with environmental hazards and industrial contamination.
- Mentioned in these conversations was a desire to not only hold polluters accountable, but to hold agencies which allow poor water quality to enter communities of color accountable.

SSMB: Top needs in the SSMB region had a lot to do with housing, homelessness and street improvements like additional bike lanes. Compared to other regions, housing and climate change captured a larger percentage of concern (with some communities reaching 90% and 75%, respectively). Also -

- *Trash*, *cleanliness*, and *street cleaning* were dominant words used to describe needs in this region, as were *parking* and *traffic*.
- Similar to LLASGR, many community members listed cleaner or better water and air quality as a top priority.
- There was a shared sentiment that the community does not get notified of contamination in a timely manner, further leading to mistrust of agencies.

4. Community Involvement in Local Planning

Across the region, most community members responded that they personally do not participate in general planning efforts. This was particularly relevant in South LA where 70% of respondents did not know how or have time to participate. When asked if respondents' communities participated in community planning efforts, a majority of people answered that they do not have enough information to know; a smaller majority answered yes ('yes' answers were concentrated in the SSMB area). Moreover, the vast majority of people across

the GLAC region do not think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large.

As to water-related planning specifically , an overwhelming majority of respondents have never participated, nor have they ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program. However, a higher percentage of community members in the LLASGR region and southern ULAR region have participated in water planning than in other areas. A majority of respondents did not know which drinking water agency provides their water. However, for those that did, many had a positive experience or did not know whether their experience was positive or negative. More negative experiences were cited in the LLASGR region. Across GLAC, over 90% of survey respondents are not aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally.

Listening session participants throughout the GLAC area felt that community planning meetings draw a select group of community members, and are often not accessible to them because of short notice, inconvenient times, or not being aware that an event is taking place.

Respondents varied in their belief that their local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs (streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.), however many felt they did not have enough information to answer the question. In general, there was a stronger sentiment that beautification needs were being addressed in the USGRH region than the ULAR region. When it comes to unaddressed infrastructure and beautification needs, many pointed to a lack of trees, an excess of concrete, graffiti and trash in their communities. Some listening participants shared that when their city does address an issue, such as street resurfacing, it can take years.

A concern over unequal investments within GLAC cities was also present at many listening sessions. For example, one participant at a listening session in San Fernando shared that, while some streets get repaved, those that need it most do not. Some participants felt that larger cities with more resources overshadowed the beautification needs of smaller or less-resourced communities.

When asked about which governing entities and/or elected officials folks sought their information from, most people cited City Council or School Districts.

In the ULAR and USGRH regions in particular, a large percentage of respondents cited School Districts as their primary source of information.

- Community members who answered “none,” were more concentrated in the SSMB region.
- At a listening session in Winnetka, Van Nuys and Tarzana, a community member shared that one barrier for receiving information from elected officials was the feeling that leaders changed all the time, making it difficult to know where to go for help and volunteering opportunities.
- Community members that were familiar with neighborhood councils felt a higher degree of involvement in local planning issues and believed neighborhood councils were good sources of information and connectors to elected officials.

On the whole, most people prefer to be contacted by community organizations and governing bodies via email over text, mail, or phone. The largest CBO recruiters of the survey were TreePeople, KYCC, and Watts Clean Air and Energy Committee, with 22% of respondents citing ‘other’ as the source of hearing about the survey.

"Growing up in South Central, it was culture shock to see people trust local tap water in other places."

5. Tap Water Quality

The top water-related concerns for the GLAC region are:

- Drinking water quality
- Trash, industrial contamination
- Pollution in streets and waterways
- A need for more shade, trees, and landscape

While these concerns were similar across all regions, issues about drinking water quality were most pronounced in the LLASGR and SSMB regions. The high cost of water was more pronounced in the ULAR region.

Roughly half of all respondents have concerns about drinking water quality in their home, neighborhood, or community they serve. In 13 different communities within the GLAC region, over 90% of respondents answered that they had concerns about drinking water. Problems raised were predominantly taste and contaminants, followed by color and odor. While contaminant and odor problems were fairly spread throughout the region, color concerns were particularly cited in communities on the Western edge of the LLASGR region while taste concerns occurred mainly in the SSMB region.

In listening sessions, residents and the CBOs working in these communities shared strong concerns over many aspects of tap water quality. In a listening session in South and Southeast LA, one resident said their water tasted like nickel, sharing, "if it was the only source of water it would eventually cause long term health effects." Some community members shared experiences with cloudy water or called their water "disgusting." Others echoed this sentiment, saying that the tap water is unsafe and has to be boiled before drinking (some reported a thick white layer accumulating after boiling). One listening session participant shared that, "growing up in South Central, it was culture shock to see people trust local tap water in other places." In response, many community members prefer bottled water, reserving tap water for cooking purposes only. Many at the listening session also asked for more information about water quality and long-term health effects of exposure to their water for both drinking and bathing. Some asked about alternative options, inquiring whether household water capture was possible, whether water quality studies existed, or if it would be possible for agencies to be more transparent about the state of aging pipes.

These concerns were not unique to the LLASGR region. Community members in El Monte shared that the water "tastes really bad and people are spending a lot of money on bottled water." A community member at a Pacoima listening session observed that when their tap water is left standing, algae grows. In a Sun Valley listening session, participants shared their concerns about the impact of landfills on water safety and the quality of groundwater— worrying that water quality was even worse at schools. Some thought the water tasted or smelled too chlorinated and purchased filters to help. Boyle Heights and Pacoima community members observed that water comes out brown in various areas and they need to leave the water running to fix the issue. In multiple listening sessions throughout the ULAR area, many people felt uncertain about whether the water was safe to drink and wanted to find more information. In contrast, other participants within ULAR communities shared that they felt confident about the tap water and were comfortable drinking directly from the faucet or drinking tap water once filtered.

In Inglewood, some listening session participants shared their concerns about the water quality at their school and home. One community member said, "I don't rinse with the water that comes out of the faucet, my son's hair started falling out, and mine doesn't grow." Some shared that they've purchased a water filter or have bought water bottles because they are unsure of the quality.

Within many listening sessions, a common observation was the connection between poor water quality and residential plumbing issues. At a South/ Southeast LA listening session, someone shared that, "the plumbing in the apartment is very old and needs to be updated, the water comes out of the pipe dirty even if it is of good quality; we should have regulation that makes owners update water pipes." This sentiment was echoed in Inglewood, where community members added that not only should residential pipes be routinely assessed and updated, but the risk of increasing water service outages due to poor maintenance should be addressed more seriously.

6. Other water concerns

While only a small fraction of respondents have a home or business on a septic system, a larger percentage exists in the LLASGR region and SSMB region. In contrast, less than 2% of survey respondents said they had a private well. This data is impacted by the response of more than a third of all participants who did not know if they used a private well or septic system.

Even though flooding was not ranked as a top water-related issue for the region overall, flooding issues were present for multiple communities, most of which in the ULAR area.

Pollutants from trash entering the water system as runoff was a worry in many listening sessions, as was potential contamination from industry. Some residents noticed

"In general, there is a strong interest in water education on a variety of topics throughout the region."

smells emanating from wastewater plants or observed that water draining into the LA River had a smell, particularly in the summer. A few listening session participants shared concerns over point-source pollution including hazardous releases onto streets (e.g., car repair shops in Sun Valley) or groundwater and soil contamination (e.g., aerospace industry in Winnetka).

Direct access to water was a concern for some, particularly in the LLASGR and SSMB region. At a Compton listening session, one participant shared they don't have direct access to safe drinking water other than donations folks offer them like from the Compton Tenants Union or the water they access directly from water hydrants. The latter option, however, further criminalizes and makes them targets when they just really need water. There was also a concern in some listening sessions over ensuring elderly and disabled residents had access to clean water, especially for those unwilling to drink from the tap.

When listening session participants were asked if there are other water access needs in their community, such as water for ceremonial purposes or for recreation, many said yes. Ideas included more splash pads for kids to play in, swimming pools, access to natural water for ceremonial purposes including baptisms, and more public drinking fountains.

Finally, a common concern shared throughout listening sessions was community members' foundational disconnect from the water system. They shared that a lack of information about water has prohibited people from forming a deep connection to water resources, which, in turn, has led to wastefulness and a sense of disempowerment when it comes to resolving water issues. This concern about

wastefulness was also present in discussions over conservation.

7. Mistrust of Water Quality and Agency Accountability

Many respondents throughout the region shared a mutual mistrust of drinking water quality (taste, contamination, odor and color) as well as a desire for increased agency accountability in addressing water quality concerns. One community member at an Inglewood listening session shared that their mistrust of tap water is influenced by the 2014 public health crisis in Flint, Michigan. Another person shared they lacked trust in drinking water despite reading reports confirming that the water is clean. Participants at the West Boyle Heights/ Arts District listening session shared that, "there is a lack of community trust for CBOs and agencies who promise community improvements that never materialize." A listening session participant in Greater North Hollywood agreed, believing that agencies don't listen or help that much. Instead, they "just pick the phrases and words to say while doing what they have always done."

This feeling was present in a Watts listening session as well, where participants shared that agencies were not responsive in reporting water challenges, describing one experience in which water was contaminated for three months before residents were notified by LADWP. During this time, people reported black water coming out of taps. The agency reported the cause was aging pipes and acted by flushing out the system. And, while meetings were held to reassure the community that the water was safe, community members shared that there "was no further accountability" after that point.

At the same listening session in Watts, community members discussed the difficulty of getting information to the community, noting that there is a sense of fatigue and barriers due to "only a handful of people [having] the capacity to hold agencies accountable." Indeed, water testing and a higher degree of information-sharing around water quality were frequently listed as a top need throughout the GLAC region. Many respondents highlighted a need for better communication around water quality and contamination through readily available (and translated) water quality reports, or an easy-to-understand grading system for water quality, similar to a grading system for restaurant health inspections. Even as information is shared about the water quality of agencies' supply itself, barriers exist in knowing the safety of water that may have been contaminated within community members' homes. As members at a Greater San Gabriel Valley listening session shared, "water quality tests are done at the source of the water, but people don't know about the quality of their plumbing."

In general, there is a strong interest in water education on a variety of topics throughout the region. Across GLAC, many pointed to the connection of increasing education and increasing trust in tap water. Participants at a listening session for the Greater San Gabriel Valley, for example, shared that a water education program would help address the costs associated with purchasing bottled water and creating a secondary issue with excess plastic waste. Relatedly, there were multiple expressions of wanting more information about water privatization, and how bottled water is related. Community members present at listening sessions in the ULAR region also wanted a better understanding of imported water and diminished flows to the GLAC region and additional resources about water conservation.

Many community members throughout the GLAC region felt that renters, low-income and fixed-income homeowners, and foreign-born community members should be directly engaged in educational efforts, as they are

too often left out. Others wanted to prioritize water improvements at schools, either through protecting students from poor water quality or targeting schools for educational opportunities.

8. Affordability of Water

The high cost of water was the 4th-ranked water concern out of 8 options. Affordability concerns were particularly referenced during listening sessions in the Southern part of ULAR and Northern areas of SSMB, such as Boyle Heights and Koreatown. Concerns were both about high water bills as well as the added cost of purchasing bottled water on top of a tap water bill, or the indirect costs associated with traveling to more trusted water sources.

Sentiments around water affordability varied throughout listening sessions. While some participants in the ULAR area felt their water was inexpensive, others in the GLAC region thought their water bills were too high, especially given the poor quality and the efforts made to reduce household water use. Others pointed out that the high cost of water resulted in a reduction of vegetation because of the costs associated with watering trees and lawns.

9. Supporting the Development of Multi-Benefit Projects

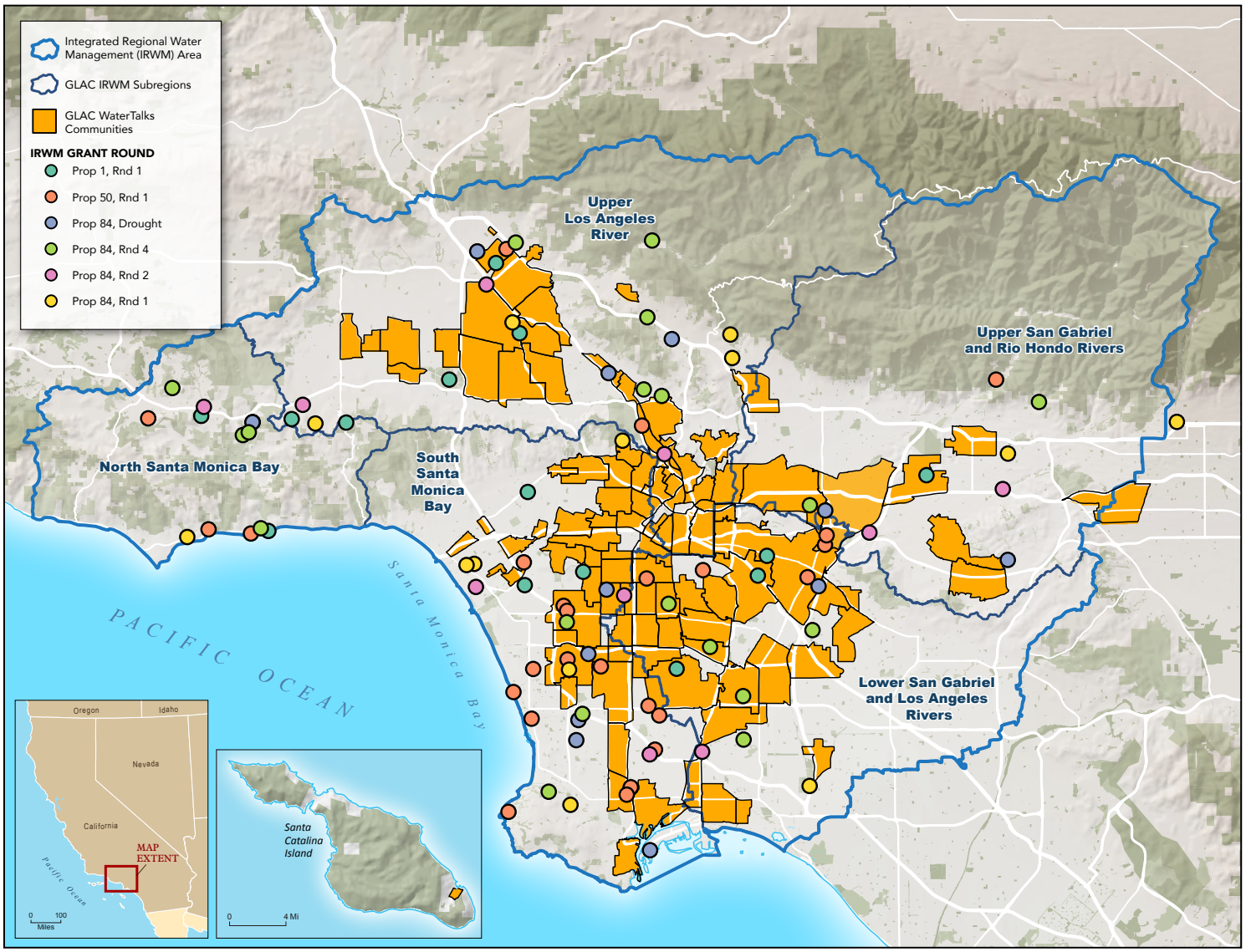
A highly mentioned need was increased access to nature, additional trees, and general beautification needs with the acknowledgement that park projects can lead to multiple benefits, including water benefits. There were many calls for more parks, including pocket parks, dog parks and community gardens, as well as more trees, particularly at schools. Community members present at listening sessions in the ULAR region, for example, expressed the connection that water is needed for street trees and newly planted trees, regardless of hot weather and lawn dormancy. Participants at listening sessions in South and Southeast LA mentioned the desire for comprehensive solutions that reduce pollution, enhance water capture, and include workforce development programs for good, local jobs. Access to jobs for unhoused and people with criminal records was important for many community members, including participants at a Watts listening session. Many also shared the desire to connect projects to the food justice movement by increasing the ability for community members to grow their own food.

There were also calls to consider the impact of projects on people experiencing homelessness. For example, a Compton community member shared, “something important to consider for any projects that are meant to beautify community areas, it is important to be in conversation with houseless community members and ensure they aren’t further pushed out and criminalized by the project but instead included and provided with resources.”

10. Investments

Locational data for projects awarded from past Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) IRWM funding rounds (2007-2020) were mapped to analyze equity in geographic distribution and dollars received *(FIGURES 8 & 9)*. This can help identify those underresourced communities that may have not yet received IRWM funding and uplift those areas for future rounds. Of the 87 projects funded through the IRWM Prop 50, Prop 84, and Prop 1 allocations, only 1/3 of the projects are located within a designated WaterTalks Community. The proportion of actual dollars distributed to WaterTalks Communities versus the total ($143.4 million) is approximately 40% (58.6 million). In addition, a majority of the past projects awarded were submitted by larger and/or well-resourced municipalities/agencies; only three NGOs have applied for and received funding over GLAC IRWM’s history.

FIGURE 8. Past Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Funding Awards (2006-2020) by grant type.



Grant award amounts in each IRWM subregion are highlighted in *FIGURE 10*. North Santa Monica Bay, the IRWM subregion with the smallest population, received 14 grants. All of the grants in that region were for less than one million dollars. The Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) subregion received 20 grants. ULAR saw less investment compared to other highly populated IRWM subregions. Downtown Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley neighborhoods adjacent to the Los Angeles River as well as neighborhoods in East Los Angeles did not receive grants, highlighting WaterTalks communities that did not see IRWM investments. The South Santa Monica Bay region has received the largest number of investments per subregion, with 25 grants in total. A majority of the grants in South Santa Monica Bay fall outside of WaterTalks communities. The Upper San Gabriel and Rio Hondo (USGRH) subregion received 13 grants. While less awards were given to USGRH compared to other regions, a majority of the investments granted were for high dollar amounts. The Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers (LLASGR) subregion

FIGURE 9. Past Greater Los Angeles County IRWM Funding Awards (2006-2020) by grant award.

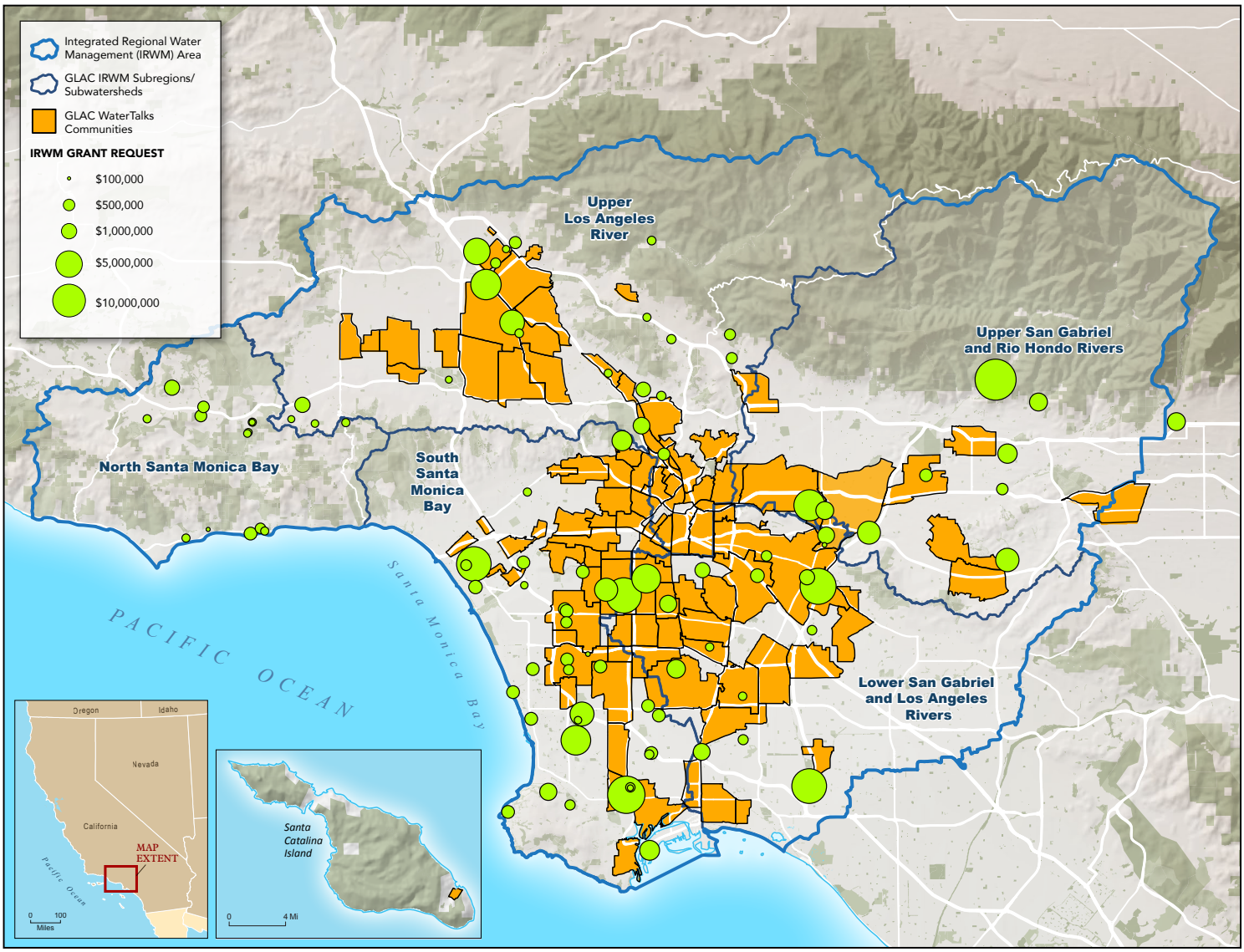


FIGURE 10. Past GLAC IRWM funding allocations per subregion.

Subregion	Within a DAC	Total Projects	Total award Request
North Bay	8	20	$27,917,257
Upper Los Angeles River	0	14	$11,065,648
Upper San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo	7	25	$46,383,797
Lower Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers	5	13	$30,006,301
South Bay	9	15	$28,049,,839
TOTAL	29	87	$143,422,842

received 15 grants in total. Of those grants, a majority of them are in the northwestern section of the region, with a concentration of funding in South Los Angeles. A number of WaterTalks communities, such as Long Beach and Norwalk have not received any past IRWM investments. In addition, from a regional perspective, the West side of the county sees more investment than the East side of the county. There are a larger proportion of projects located in the Los Angeles River Watershed compared to the San Gabriel River Watershed.

C. FINDINGS - INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Summary

Talking with staff and managers at water providers and agencies focused on flooding and sanitation, along with elected leaders, was the focus of 25 institutional engagement interviews. Using a needs assessment data template supplied by the Department of Water Resources as the basis, an ethnographically informed interview with eight questions was developed. Detailed results corresponding to each question are found in *Appendix A*.

When asked to express concerns and opportunities, some uniform answers were provided. First, these interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the hardships felt by the community and the institutions both were front of mind for those interviewed. More customary concerns like regulatory uncertainty, and the opportunities available from multi-benefit infrastructure, were also shared. The questions surrounding how to provide access to safe water for drinking and washing for those experiencing homelessness was also prominent in many of the interviews when challenges were discussed. Also notable were the number of examples of regional collaboration between institutions.

Those interviewed had very different experiences with the level of engagement between their work and the communities served by their institutions. Common across the interviews were discussions of local organizations who help focus or direct community attention, and the effect of cultural and language differences on engagement opportunities and challenges.

Below is a discussion of several overarching themes which appeared as answers to multiple questions, and from institutions with differing management responsibilities, making them especially notable. These themes include:

- Gaps in the Regional System Leave Some Vulnerable
- Belonging
- Finding and Defining Community
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Addressing Tap Water Quality Issues and Concerns
- Affordability and Quality of Service Challenges of Small Drinking Water Systems
- Provision of Drinking Water for LA County's Unhoused Population
- Supporting the Development of Multi-Benefit Projects
- Regulatory Uncertainty

Gaps in the Regional System Leave Some Vulnerable

Participants described regional collaboration to create infrastructure that can provide reliable water and wastewater service. This

"Several of those interviewed who work for public agencies expressed that the institution has no connection to the community, rather, it is connected via other institutions."

"Knowledge is accumulating about which systems in LA County need support to achieve sustainable water service, and now collaborative efforts should focus on filling those needs with regional capacity."

represents a significant shift in the past twenty years, with increased understanding of how institutions intersect and impact one another. A decades-long effort has developed these broad region-wide capacities, and ongoing investment seeks to improve them and maintain their ability to serve the region. There are many examples of shared planning, mutual aid agreements, and implementation of multi-party projects.

However, what was missing from interviews was an emphasis on equitably reaching all people in LA County. There has not been adequate attention and financial support for making sure that those communities who are disconnected from regional collaboration efforts are acknowledged, and to focus such that all people have equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. Where there is not a water supplier with adequate technical, managerial, financial, social, and political capacity, community members may lack access to safe, affordable drinking water. This, despite being within the service area of a well-resourced regional agency with large capital projects to make drinking water available. Additionally, there is a clear gap in service provision to people who are unhoused, even when they fall within the service area of a well-resourced water supplier.

Several participants shared that there is a gap in knowledge about smaller water systems in LA County, and are struggling or likely to fail as a result. Such knowledge, however, does seem to be available:

- With the completion of the statewide Needs Assessment conducted through the Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Program, there is more statewide information than ever on which water systems are failing or at risk of failing.
- The Water Replenishment District of Southern California has also received state funding for a needs assessment within its service area; the University of California at Los Angeles released a report in January 2021 entitled "The Human Right To Water In Poor Communities Of Color: Urban Disadvantaged Community Water Systems In Southern Los Angeles County."

At the same time, institutions focused on water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure tend to adopt a system-level focus, not thinking of smaller units of analysis (household or individual) where people interact with their infrastructure. Shifting the focus of service delivery to the individual could also be useful in equitably benefiting communities with water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.

Belonging

The idea that institutions are part of the community they serve, and therefore, the people who work at the institution belong to that community, was rarely shared by those interviewed. Though the first interview question encourages considering an institution as well as its staff and leaders as members of the community, almost everyone who was interviewed revealed an "outsiders" perspective on the communities served, chiefly seen in how they structured the language of their answers. Several who are in elective office were much more likely to suggest they are members of the community they serve than

"Participants' perspectives made it clear that there is a need to disentangle characteristics related to tap water quality, including health-related, aesthetic, and preconceptions that keep people from trusting and safely consuming their tap water."

those who hold jobs in institutions. Several of those interviewed who work for public agencies expressed that the institution has no connection to the community, rather, it is connected via other institutions. In one case this sentiment was shared by staff of an agency that has a directly elected board, reflecting a lack of awareness of representation and accountability that flows from community through to the institution. Developing ways to overcome this institutionalized sense of outsider-ness is likely a productive next step.

There is a growing number of stories where public agencies adopt an "anchor institution" role for the community or communities they serve. The concept of anchor institutions comes from the non-profit and philanthropic sector, where organizations can be developed to play a key motivational and supportive role towards a much broader set of community goals or a transformation. One example of anchor institutions is Camden Collaborative Initiative in Camden County, New Jersey. This "solutions-oriented partnership between governmental, non-profit, private, and community-based agencies" was created to achieve stronger outcomes for environmental justice and quality of life across Camden (*camdencollaborative.com*).

Finding and Defining Community

A diversity of perspectives was shared about how to define community, both geographically and in relationship to the institutional mission. Almost everyone interviewed described communities as being defined by the legal/political boundary of city, county, or service area. Almost everyone interviewed from a regional institution described the cities and unincorporated areas as separable communities within their service area. It would likely be productive for more CBO and elected representatives to engage directly with the agencies that serve them, particularly when those agencies themselves have elected leaders.

As is shared in the Camden example above, there are agencies that have oriented their mission delivery to achieve broader social benefit. The City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Bureau of Street Services had undertaken a reconsideration of how its mission can be delivered, resulting in efforts to use cool pavement for resurfacing projects, and installing and servicing hygiene stations on sidewalks to provide drinking fountains, bottle fillers, and sinks with soap for handwashing. Both examples are of an agency fulfilling its mission with an eye towards easily managed multiple benefits, filling unmet needs with small adjustments.

In both examples, Camden and Los Angeles, a public institution broadened the idea of how mission delivery can align with other efforts, overcome adjacent challenges, or more broadly benefit the community. Decisions can be made to follow this lead, and to re-think what is permitted and appropriate within existing authorities to be an anchor institution, a prominent member and significant contributor to community well-being and prosperity.

Climate Change Mitigation

Participants shared concerns about the extensive current and impending impacts of climate change in their communities, including water supply reliability, flooding, excessive heat, and more. Participants were concerned with the impacts of climate change on hydrology, and how larger storms and reduced surface

water imports would impact their ability to serve their communities. Implicit in many discussions about increasing water and wastewater rates was the need for greater ability to recycle water due to water supply reliability challenges. Participants also shared concerns beyond water. One example is the impacts of excessive heat for vulnerable community members, such as older adults and people experiencing homelessness, as well as those who take public transit. To address these and other climate change impacts, participants recognized that they need to make plans today for future conditions. Large infrastructure projects often require 15 to 20 years for planning, design, and construction, which poses a challenge for small and large institutions alike in addressing current and impending impacts of climate change.

Addressing Tap Water Quality Issues and Concerns

Participants' perspectives made it clear that there is a need to disentangle characteristics related to tap water quality, including health-related, aesthetic, and preconceptions that keep people from trusting and safely consuming their tap water. Water quality issues related to older premise plumbing, or "infrastructure behind the meter" that is owned by a building owner, were identified by some participants. A few participants shared about premise plumbing as a challenge for drinking water quality in older buildings, schools, and apartment complexes, where pipes, pipe fittings, and solder containing lead may still be in place. One participant shared that their office is working to identify funding sources to address premise plumbing issues in older buildings, but that restrictions due to Proposition 218 and Proposition 26 prevent use of ratepayer money for premise plumbing projects. Their office is trying to identify "private financing models" or "private ratepayer funds" to support replacement of premise plumbing that poses a risk to drinking water quality at the tap. Another participant shared their perspective that premise plumbing issues should be addressed with incentives and rebates. Despite safe drinking water reaching a property boundary, metal mobilization in premise plumbing including lead fittings or solder can negatively impact water quality at the tap, especially in older apartment buildings.

One participant from a water supplier shared that they do not have premise plumbing issues and cited recently completed Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) testing that did not show any exceedances at taps sampled. However, this participant did share that they receive complaints about taste and odor related to premise plumbing. Aesthetic water quality changes are often noticed by community members and discourage tap water consumption, regardless of whether their tap water quality is unsafe to drink. An emphasis on uncovering and addressing health-related tap water quality issues where they persist would both help to provide safe water on tap and help to address community concerns about tap water quality and encourage tap water consumption.

One participant from a water wholesaler referred to disadvantaged community members' distrust of tap water as "inequity by choice", indicating that the community members were opting for the cost burden of purchasing bottled water instead of drinking tap water. Institutional participants did not offer thoughts on the connection between tap water quality distrust and the persistence of unsafe or aesthetically unpleasant tap water due to older premise plumbing.

Affordability and Quality of Service Challenges of Small Drinking Water Systems

Providing a reliable, safe water supply in southern California, amidst drought from climate change, groundwater contamination, regulatory changes, along with additional challenges is no easy feat. Larger water systems in LA County are able to meet the needs of their community by harnessing the

"There is a gap in water service provision for people experiencing homelessness in LA County, and people who are unhoused struggle to access safe drinking water."

experience and knowledge of their extensive staff, engaging in water-related policy and legislative development, and devoting resources to collaborative efforts.

However, the challenge to prioritize what system challenges to address is felt more by small systems. Smaller systems have fewer staff, fewer resources, less redundant infrastructure, less political influence, and a smaller ratepayer base.

Larger environmental, economic, and societal crises are felt more acutely by small water systems. The COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the staffing and revenue vulnerability of small systems. Drought often has a larger impact on smaller systems and their communities, especially when a system is dependent on a single water source.

Small systems are unable to spread the cost of regular service and capital projects over a large rate base and additionally can have greater impacts if a small number of community members lose their jobs or otherwise fall into financial hardship during economic downturns. Some participants from smaller water suppliers said they were unable to apply for grants either due to eligibility requirements and/or technical capacity. These participants said they are often unable to compete for grants because of lack of both in-house capacities to develop a grant application and lack of funds to hire consultants to complete the application for them.

Small systems lacking capacity to apply for grants and loans are thus more dependent on revenue from water rates than their larger counterparts, which either results in higher water rates or lower quality of service, or both. When water systems are unable to raise their rates or collect rates (e.g., with the COVID 19 pandemic water shutoff moratorium), water system finances can reach a crisis point and need support. One participant described how people pay more for lower quality water from small water systems and stated that the solution is to consolidate water systems but "no one is investing in drinking water in LA County" and "nothing is happening."

Even when system-level finances are sustainable, affordability of water and sewer rates at a household level can still be a challenge. Many participants from public agencies mentioned how Proposition 218 limits their ability to provide low-income assistance.

Provision of Drinking Water for LA County's Unhoused Population

There is a gap in water service provision for people experiencing homelessness in LA County, and people who are unhoused struggle to access safe drinking water. Except for one participant from a wastewater agency, participants from water suppliers, wastewater agencies, city governments, and other entities did not discuss homeless or unhoused communities when asked about barriers to accessing the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure. However, they later shared about deficiencies in access when asked how their work engages with homelessness.

In a group interview that included CBOs focused on providing services to unhoused people (in the absence of adequate public services), these organizations shared how accessing clean drinking water is particularly challenging for unhoused populations.

From these interviews, it seems that water suppliers largely do not think of unhoused people as members of their community

and those they are meant to serve. Some participants pointed to a desire to discourage unhoused people congregating in the community as the reason for the lack of public water fixtures for drinking, bathing, cooking, and sanitation. The State of California statutorily recognizes that "every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes." Even if the state and region were to aggressively direct resources toward affordable housing and services for unhoused people, homelessness in LA County would not end overnight; it is clear that resources also need to be devoted to, and institutions need to be charged with, providing safe drinking water to people while they are unhoused.

"A lack of resources and funding to support facilities operation and maintenance emerged as the greatest need among schools."

"The accessibility and reliability of safe, clean water from drinking fountains is a colossal need. "

"Most underground systems are outdated, and these old sewer pipes frequently backup."

Supporting the Development of Multi-Benefit Projects

Participants acknowledged deficiencies of existing stormwater infrastructure and expressed urgency regarding addressing these deficiencies to mitigate flooding, poor stormwater quality impacts on human and ecological health, and the cost of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) compliance. Participants also expressed a desire to harness the possibilities of multi-benefit projects, including reducing heat islands and increasing green space. One participant whose agency serves the City of LA shared that there are challenges to collaboration on multi-benefit projects—for example, for green streets, the Department of Transportation does not understand green streets, and others do not understand transportation.

Participants had many different perspectives on the purpose of the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) and multi-benefit stormwater projects in general, and some of these differences seem to have posed a challenge to collaboration. Municipalities are spread thin trying to reach Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) compliance alongside numerous other challenges, which seems to hinder more expansive perspectives about the benefits that can be accrued from their projects. Unequal valuing of different types of expertise, with multi-benefit project design being seen as solely the realm of engineers, further reinforces a focus on regulatory requirements. Watershed Coordinators in the SCWP could be a potential bridge, helping identify multi-benefit projects, guiding design engineers to incorporate better community benefits into projects, and helping municipalities meet their regulatory goals while thinking more expansively about projects' community benefits.

Regulatory Uncertainty

New and upcoming regulations can significantly impact the financial health of an institution. Participants frequently shared concern about PFAS regulations, water efficiency standards, and MS4 permits. For example, a change in PFAS regulations may require costly wellhead treatment or even take a well permanently offline. Institutions are often challenged to balance regulatory compliance with financial health and public safety. Planning for the increased costs associated with new regulation, in concert with

concerns about the broader economy and the legal and political challenges associated with raising rates, was central to many who were interviewed.

D. FINDINGS - SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSPECTIVES

The Strength and Needs Assessment for School Districts was informed by interviews with school districts spread across the GLAC IRWM Region:

- Bassett Unified School District
- Glendale Unified School District
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Lynwood Unified School District
- Norwalk–La Mirada Unified School District
- Pomona Unified School District

Bassett Unified School District is based in La Puente Valley of the eastern region of the San Gabriel Valley. Glendale Unified School District serves the city of Glendale, portions of the city of La Cañada Flintridge and the unincorporated communities of Montrose and La Crescenta. Los Angeles Unified School District is the largest public school system in California and serves students throughout various areas of the county. Lynwood Unified School District is headquartered in the City of Lynwood. Norwalk–La Mirada Unified School District serves most of Norwalk, La Mirada, and Santa Fe Springs. Pomona Unified School District has schools in Pomona and Diamond Bar, is the third-largest school district in Los Angeles County and is located 30 miles east of downtown Los Angeles.

There were six interview/focus groups in this assessment and participants included school superintendents, board members, architects and engineers, facilities and operations personnel and teachers. The assessment was conducted with a series of eight guided interview prompts, each question followed by a probe that would encourage participants to elaborate on some responses.

The interviews started off by discussing each school community's respective strengths and needs. Responses varied widely, however the themes that emerged ranged between physical, social, and programmatic features that some schools have and others need. The following were either one school's strength or another school's need:

- Community involvement
- Access to outdoor space
- Resources for facilities operation and maintenance

Community Involvement
While some schools described high community involvement in decisions made about the school as a strength, others noted involvement and investment from the community as a need. Barriers to having a school staff and administration that seeks to serve the student body included:

- Lack of involvement among parents
- High turnover rate among staff
- Inconsistent leadership
- Language barriers among parents and caregivers
- Limited capacity tied to socioeconomic conditions

Outdoor Space
The next overarching theme that came up as both a strength and a need was access to outdoor space within and or near campuses. One school considered themselves lucky to have an established outdoor space and access to local recreation opportunities. However, many schools shared that their campuses had too much asphalt and were in need of green space and shade.

Resources for Facilities Operation and Maintenance

A lack of resources and funding to support facilities operation and maintenance emerged as the greatest need among schools. It was shared that hundreds of buildings are over 100 years old, and many facilities are on average 50-60 years. Additional funding is needed beyond roof and electrical repairs to allow schools the opportunity to provide additional community resources, especially for schools in lower socio-economic census tracts within the various districts.

While many school sites have greatly benefitted by various collaborations and pilot projects that range from reclaimed water irrigation, water fountain filters, and the implementation of storage tanks and catchment basins, it was clear that funding was also needed for the long-term maintenance of these initiatives and the ongoing training of staff to maintain them.

Benefits of and Barriers to Accessing Drinking Water, Wastewater, or Stormwater Infrastructure

To address concerns regarding drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure, it was necessary to understand the benefits and barriers that many school communities experience. The common barriers amongst several schools included access to:

- Clean water coming from drinking fountains
- Safe school commuting and school services including recreational activities due to frequent flooding
- Efficiency programs including the use of native planting instead of high water use lawns, etc. due to lack of knowledge, funding and support
- Knowledge and clear communication to the public about water infrastructure
- Improved public health due to poor wastewater infrastructure

The accessibility and reliability of safe, clean water from drinking fountains is a colossal need. A teacher in one district said that the water coming from school drinking fountains is calcified, with a thick white film and lots of bubbles. Some students have expressed that the water from other fountains is yellow and brown. Lack of access to information about the water quality from drinking fountains also leads to concerns about the plumbing to provide clean water. The mistrust of the school's water quality causes the students and teachers to purchase bottled water, increase single-use plastic waste, or not drink any water at all.

One school district was able to report that the water quality coming out of drinking fountains is substantially improving. The previous standard for drinking water had a maximum lead content of 15 ppb. Currently, thousands of drinking fountains with a lead content greater than 5 ppb are being removed or replaced with a filtration system. This particular school district was proud to pioneer this new water quality standard and start a campaign to encourage students to use the improved drinking fountains.

Increased funding to cover costs for wastewater infrastructure and management came up in all of the interviews, with representatives stating that most underground systems are outdated, and these old sewer pipes frequently backup. These frequent backups have led campuses to shut down and perform extensive bacteria testing in which students cannot enter school until lab analysis results are reported.

Nonexistent or outdated gutter systems have led to localized flooding and pooling as issues of concern for many school districts, especially those located in a valley. Most schools expressed not having enough infrastructure to

"Schools can serve as trusted messengers of information that could expand across the community.'

divert the stormwater channels after wildfires and subsequent mudslides from localized flooding sites.

One school district noted that public health issues that arose after frequent flooding on campus led to a tiger mosquito outbreak and exposed the school community to their vector-borne diseases. After a brief school closure to control the pests, the chemicals used in the process seeped into the field that students played in, causing exposure to other toxic substances. School personnel pointed to this as potential development with more funding and resources by using nature-based solutions to capture stormwater and infiltrate onsite, reduce vector-borne diseases, pollution, flooding, and costs for utilities.

The Financial Health of the Water Systems in the School Community

Across the board, school district representatives expressed a general lack of funding for facilities operations and maintenance. They shared that they would benefit from more access to grants and resources as more pressing maintenance concerns take priority in spending district funds. This would allow schools to use more resources for infrastructure improvements, staff training, and outdoor learning opportunities on and off campus. Staff training was highlighted as a need for continued investment to sustain projects onsite over the long term. Representatives noted that having staff training on greywater systems for example at the beginning of a project is not always effective because most issues arise years after installation. Staff turnover and the advancement of technologies also calls for a need to invest in continued training on maintenance of greywater and other infrastructure on campus for school staff.

School Community Involvement in Decisions about Water

When asked about community involvement around decisions based on water, some districts reported a high level of engagement where residents were a part of the design and maintenance of local projects such as using drought-tolerant plants and rain gardens. Some engagement strategies to increase involvement were sending out emails, e-flyers, public service announcements, and banners. Other forms of engagement also included school-hosted events such as immigration workshops and presentations.

Many noted that community members and parents were eager for more green spaces and other beneficial projects. However, most districts' concerns regarding community involvement was providing further education and guidance on environmental projects for those who are engaged. Furthermore, school districts interviewed had little to no engagement experience or knowledge about their local tribes and indigenous communities.

Key challenges to community involvement that were illuminated during interviews included:

- Language barriers
- Lack of resources to follow through with ideas that surface amongst parents and community members
- Seemingly closed systems that make it harder to accept outside participation in projects if it doesn't go through rounds of bidding.
- Lack of district wide research on tribal enrollment on campuses, as no schools interviewed had any statistics on district demographics of tribal representation.

Collaborative Efforts Between Multiple Agencies or Institutions

Participants highlighted key partnerships and resources between organizations, county and city agencies that allowed them to advance in their work around water. The programs mentioned include:

- OneWaterLA, a city and county collaboration, where GPS technology is used to locate local aquifers for schools to capture stormwater to replenish groundwater.
- SEEDS, a garden-readiness program.
- Kaiser's Health Academy.
- US Green Building Council's training for custodial staff.
- Parks and Recreation Departments joint use of school and community fields.
- WaterWise, solar boat competitions, and creek restoration initiatives are district sponsored education and conservation programs that provide students hands-on opportunity to learn about nature.
- Consistent meetings with water providers to find opportunities to reduce use and set goals to find efficiencies in water, electricity, and gas.

Initiatives like these are models for effective collaboration with schools and can offer schools the opportunity to overcome specific barriers to the long-term success and sustainability of projects. The barriers that were expressed for projects was that they are typically too small to go through a local agency. Another one mentioned is the rigidity of the commercial rate structure that schools are under. There was also a case where a school district straddles county lines, and for that reason projects can't take place on either side of the county line. Lastly, knowledge about new opportunities and resources was considered a barrier in schools taking on different collaborative programs.

Concerns and Opportunities Now and into the Future

The concerns that the school community shared were:

- Support in the face of an emergency or natural disaster
- Hot water for gymnasium showers
- Earthquake retrofitting projects
- Smoke and heat preparedness
- Funding for infrastructure improvements

The overarching opportunities many school district representatives would like to see moving forward include:

- The integration of more nature-based features in and around their campuses. Urban gardens, bioswales, and native landscapes stood out from the conversations for their benefits to cut utility costs, reduce flooding, capture stormwater, comply with permits, improve public health, and educate the school community about their uses. One example of a successful project mentioned was a vacant lot converted with drought-tolerant native landscaping and a walkway.
- Supporting lifestyle changes throughout the school community, from water bottle refill stations, using reclaimed water for irrigation, and training staff and students on tree care to increase survival rates.
- Integrating the benefits of school greening and beautification projects into the curriculum to educate

students, staff, teachers, and parents. This can happen by expanding science-based curriculum for middle and high schools, or early education programs like Nature Explore. It can also extend to conservation workshops for families, professional development for staff, and more opportunities for those in the school community to contribute to and maintain beautification projects such as trees and open space.

Finally, schools can serve as trusted messengers of information that could expand across the community while also benefiting the individual school - but districts need resources and proper support to do so. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a testament to the critical role schools play in their respective communities by keeping families fed and well informed while meeting the responsibilities of keeping thousands of children educated, healthy, and safe.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

A. RECOMMENDATIONS - TRIBAL PERSPECTIVES

The following tribal-forward recommendations are based on feedback stated in Section IV. A, Findings - Tribal Perspectives. This feedback seeks to focus energy around two major themes:

- Supporting access to land and water for cultural expression and practice
- The critical need for involvement of Tribal voices and expertise in water management and planning

It's always important to remember that Tribal nations are sovereign governments in California, with whom settler colonial state and local institutions must regard as such via government-to-government consultation. Additionally, Tribal members are experts in their own cultures and communities, and their expertise must be recognized and elevated to be equal to that of water managers. Water managers can develop projects and programs that meet tribal community needs and gain tribal community support by learning about the history of California Native American tribes, especially with respect to water and forced removal in Los Angeles County, and listening to and engaging the voices present in these communities with respect, intent, understanding, and compassion.

Supporting Cultural Access

The deep connection between Native communities and local land and water bodies cannot be overstated; without access to land and water, the very culture of Native and Indegenous People in the GLAC Region is effectively shut down and in many cases erased. There needs to be a concerted effort to work on policy related to opening up spaces for tribal community members that currently cannot be accessed.

There is also a large opportunity for land and water stewardship supported by Native communities; a recommendation is to create capacity building partnerships with local tribes and Indigenous-led organizations to support land and water rematriation and rehabilitation.

"There needs to be a concerted effort to work on policy related to opening up spaces for tribal community members that currently cannot be accessed."

"Tribal members are experts in their own cultures and communities, and their expertise must be recognized and elevated to be equal to that of water managers."

"Currently, there are no direct funding streams dedicated to help support indigenous nations participate in water-planning efforts within the GLAC region."

As indicated in the Institutional Findings section of this report, most interviewees did not have a substantive response to the question regarding access for ceremonial purposes:

> *"One participant shared that their community is 'fairly built out,' highlighting limited community access to open spaces adjacent to rivers. A few participants shared that there is wide disparity in access to water for recreational or ceremonial purposes within their institutions' service areas, and that recreational and ceremonial access to water should not be limited to beach access."*

Due to lack of access to privatized and county/state owned lands added with the need to work to attempt to survive, Native communities have not been able to continue cultural maintenance such as maintenance burning and other traditional ways of working with the land. Due to this inability to uphold relationships with the homelands and provide stewardship practices that maintained local lands and waters for thousands of years, serious problems have emerged, including fire which is now a major concern for Native and non-Native people alike.

Native communities deserve to regain their relations with the land, including restoration and care - but need funding to do so. Native community members have living expenses like everyone else; they need access to grants and other means to pay for their contribution to maintain the land.

Respondents shared some of the ways and means that cultural access projects can be supported, including:

- Through open, respectful and ongoing communication and sharing of ideas between present day land and water managers and the original caretakers of the land;
- Support for local tribes and Indigenous groups via financial and other resource assistance including financial or land donations to the land conservancies created and led by representatives from the Native Nations on whose ancestral lands the GLAC region is located;
- More support from local agencies and government leaders, including stronger commitments from these entities to learn more about local tribal communities;
- Designation of Cultural Corridors which would allow for safe places to practice stewardship;
- Supporting tribal community members in their efforts to understand and keep up to date about local, state, federal, and international laws, policies, and protocols related to Indigenous religious rights and their access to cultural practices and ceremonial land.

<u>Tribal Governance in Watershed Management and Planning</u>

Currently, there are no direct funding streams dedicated to help support indigenous nations participate in water-planning efforts within the GLAC region. There are multiple ways to address this barrier that creates a significant gap in leadership and coordination:

- IRWM, Safe Clean Water Program and other capacity building dollars could

support local tribes and Indigenous-led CBOs to develop tribal and Indigenous community-led programs around water issues important to these communities.

- Financial and other resources could also be directed toward supporting tribal leadership development so that tribal community members can more effectively bring their expertise to water management - taking place within the very boundaries of their ancestral homelands and waters.
- Allocation of funds from the next phase of WaterTalks *(Task 4 Project Development)* to support tribal-inspired projects and programs, and tribal nations' direct involvement in development, decision-making and capacity-building and time spent engaging in future IRWM decision-making.

Finally, The Los Angeles-Ventura IRWM funding area leaders, including the Task Force members, are strongly encouraged to help create permanent indigenous leader seats on regional Leadership Committees, the DAC Task Force, Safe CLean Water Program Watershed Area Steering Committees and other significant water-related decision making bodies.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS - COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The following community-forward recommendations are based on feedback stated in Section IV and recommendations from the WaterTalks Leadership Group of CBOs:

- There is a demand for a drinking water grading system that will help reduce confusion around annual water quality reports, provide consistent "apples-to-apples" water quality standards across communities in the region, and will ultimately build trust and accountability between the community and their service provider(s). This grading system would be public facing and a prominent tool that communities would not have to look for, but is shared with them on a regular basis, especially for those renters or communities where language is a barrier.
- Results showed that only 42% of respondents knew their water provider. Building off of the grading system, develop a regional drinking water education program that would help address multiple challenges at once - i.e., build trust around tap water and reduce the amount of money people spend on bottled water. Similar to the existing LADWP program, funding is needed so other agencies can offer at-home water testing and filtration systems as a way to build trust around tap water. Considering the lack of trust in agency-led water monitoring among many Needs Assessment participants, it is recommended that an impartial academic institution or lab could be the entity to analyze samples and provide results back to the community.

"There is a demand for a drinking water grading system."

"...build trust around tap water and reduce the amount of money people spend on bottled water."

"...work with schools on a range of water issues as well as shared space."

- Many listening session participants spoke about opportunities to work with schools on a range of water issues as well as shared space. With many GLAC communities being highly urbanized and park poor, there needs to be a concerted effort to work on policy related to opening up green spaces on school grounds that currently cannot be accessed by the general public. This includes better coordination between the school district and city to open green space up to the public after school hours as well as ultimately allowing stormwater capture to occur from offsite sources.

- Regarding stewardship, consider creating capacity building school partnerships with local CBOs to support community gardens that are truly accessible to the community. Related to this idea is a need to centralize resources and extracurriculars within and between schools in order to reach a broader community. One community example highlighted that a recent fundraiser for hydration stations at a school increased students' desire to drink the water, adding to the belief that schools have a wide influence on a community's trust in water.

- Nonprofits and grassroots organizations are vital liaisons between larger resources (e.g. food banks, social services, health care) and the people who really need them. IRWM and Safe Clean Water capacity building dollars could help local CBOs develop a program that replicates the Promesa Boyle Heights' "Promotora" model and/or Nature For All's Leadership Academy. These community-driven programs not only provide a foundation around local water issues, but it helps community members build capacity to take on leadership roles in water planning efforts, supporting them in making decisions for the community.

- IRWM has an important opportunity to invest in WaterTalks communities and on projects proposed by small, less-resourced agencies, cities, and NGOs. The data on past investments highlights certain inequities in geographical disbursement of funds between subregions and within subregions. WaterTalks communities were only funded more than other communities in one of the five subregions. Additionally, the disbursement amongst regions prioritizes LA River communities to San Gabriel River communities. Projects funded in South Santa Monica Bay should be more proportional to projects in other subregions.

- Funding multi-benefit projects (as opposed to single purpose infrastructure investments) in WaterTalks communities will address this existing inequity of project type and strengthen the impact of IRWM investments in the long term. The IRWM program has an opportunity to focus funding in both smaller cities and those under-resourced communities in larger municipalities. Downtown Los Angeles, communities in East Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Norwalk are examples of WaterTalks communities that have not yet seen IRWM funding. A more concerted effort to provide application assistance to NGO and NGO/city/agency partnerships will provide pathways for IRWM funding to more intentionally impact WaterTalks communities.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS - INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

In the Greater LA County Region, powerful regional capacities are not being fully deployed to meet key water needs because of policy, relationship, funding, legal, and perception barriers. The following recommendations aim to better harness regional capacity for equitable, positive, localized outcomes:

- GLAC IRWM Technical Assistance efforts could first develop and then provide training for staff at regional institutions to develop a better understanding of communities that are within their jurisdiction and benefitting (or not) from their mission. This is one aspect of a broader effort to help community members and institutional staff become familiar with one another, and develop a sense of community between them.
- The State Water Board SAFER team could hold listening sessions with potential receiving water systems and smaller, struggling water systems in LA County to understand their concerns about potential consolidations; then align state and regional support to address these concerns, with the goal of supporting consolidation to improve affordability and quality of service.
- Where consolidation is impractical or untenable, GLAC IRWM Technical Assistance efforts could help regional and local agencies work together to identify technical, managerial, financial, social, and political (TMFSP) support for smaller water suppliers, either from a regional agency or as mutual aid between smaller water suppliers, with a focus on addressing current challenges and preparing for future challenges, including larger impacts of climate change. This TMFSP support could come in the form of physical interconnections between water systems, shared long-term planning efforts, support for design of new infrastructure projects, circuit rider programs to support operations and maintenance, shared administrative capacity, and more.
- Related to the two above recommendations, the State Water Board SAFER Team, Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) for the County of Los Angeles, and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)

"Help community members and institutional staff become familiar with one another."

"A county-wide tap water quality testing program needs to be carried out in a transparent, participatory way."

"Develop a premise plumbing rebate program targeting older buildings."

"Most school districts expressed an overarching need and desire for more water bottle refill stations throughout campus."

"Ensure that on-site staff are well-versed in the monitoring, maintenance, and operations of green infrastructure technologies."

"Lessons learned from effective collaboration with schools deserve to go beyond the pilot phase."

Luskin Center for Innovation could collaborate with small water systems to consider regionalization strategies for LA County.

- A legal structure of goals, requirements, and protections is needed to ensure that water suppliers or relevant municipal or county agencies are responsible for securing the human right to water for all people within their service area regardless of housing status.
- A county-wide tap water quality testing program needs to be carried out in a transparent, participatory way, to disentangle health-related water quality characteristics, aesthetic water quality characteristics, and preconceptions that keep people from safely consuming and trusting their tap water. This effort can also help improve understanding about where water system and premise plumbing issues are separately or collectively responsible for insufficient tap water quality or trust.
- A regional water agency could develop a premise plumbing rebate program targeting older buildings with lead pipes, and build in anti-gentrification, especially for rental units. Support for training of union plumbers and workforce development programs could augment the workers available to complete these premise plumbing replacements.
- Regional water districts should expand residential incentive programs that specifically focus on home water conservation solutions (ex: rain gardens, tree plantings, and other stormwater collection features).
- It remains vital to focus on identifying and leveraging funding to help municipalities see multi-benefit projects as opportunities rather than burdens. To start, Watershed Coordinators in the Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) can strive to educate project proponents focused on single benefits (stormwater quality or water supply) about other benefits that can be accrued for their communities through expansive thinking about multi-benefit projects.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS - SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES

Underfunded school districts expressed a myriad of obstacles after years of budget cuts and funds going to immediate needs/repairs. The following are some recommendations for partner organizations and/or agencies to consider when looking for opportunities to partner with schools to better serve the needs of the overall school community.

- Install Water Refill Stations to support hydration and education: Several schools noted a reliance on plastic disposable water bottles due to mistrust in water from fountains and lack of access to fountains, including those that were removed after exceeding levels of contaminants. Most school districts expressed an overarching need and desire for more water bottle refill stations throughout campus. Many expressed advocacy

efforts to shift to a culture that embraces reusable water bottles. Water refill stations ensure the dispensing of quality water, are waste-free and sustainable, and also support eco-healthy behaviors through the use of reusable water bottles over single use plastic.

- Use "Green" Infrastructure to reduce flooding: Flooding on school campuses, especially at San Fernando and San Gabriel Valley schools, is an issue that creates localized pooling around campus, as well as street flooding preventing students from getting to schools. Transforming school campuses using "green infrastructure" to capture, divert, and infiltrate storm-water would slow runoff to prevent flooding, clean the water and increase local water supplies.

- Build resources for Long-term Maintenance and Support: With new green infrastructure comes the need for professional development opportunities and ongoing training for school personnel, including maintenance and custodial staff. Identifying funding is needed to ensure that on-site staff are well-versed in the monitoring, maintenance, and operations of green infrastructure technologies, for both above-ground greening and underground infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability and success.

- Increase Nature-based Solutions to Enhance School Experience and Learning: The need for more outdoor green space was greatly expressed, especially when there is a lack of proximity to open space and recreational opportunities. Investment in the reduction of asphalt and impermeable surfaces, and the installation of more trees, native, butterfly and edible gardens, healthy soil through the use of mulch, water infiltration through bioswales, and other nature-based solutions provide innumerous benefits. This includes protection from extreme heat, increased student concentration and creativity, stress reduction, and enhanced learning opportunities. School greening contributes to the overall health of school communities and neighborhoods.

"As was shared more than once in this report, local residents and Tribal members are experts in their own communities, and their expertise must be recognized in balance with that of the water managers."

- Funding and Wastewater infrastructure: Across the board, school representatives mentioned having outdated wastewater systems that have caused sanitation issues on campus and have led to campus shutdowns. Support and funding is needed for schools to address aging infrastructure.

- Outreach and Education on Programs, Funding Opportunities and More: The lessons learned from effective collaboration with schools deserve to go beyond the pilot phase and be implemented throughout districts to spread their benefits equitably among schools. This can look like the creation and district-wide implementation of best practices focused specifically on supporting schools - by identifying programs, funding, cost-share partners, and navigating the stricter guidelines schools are under. Schools need funding that is geared towards long term investments such as identifying alternatives to a school bearing the upfront costs of a project when energy,

power, and financial savings will be felt over the long term. Additionally, factoring in funding for continued education for school personnel on the project to account for staff turnover and the ongoing maintenance along with the necessary staff training for infrastructure projects will ensure that the school community will reap the benefits of projects.

- There is also an opportunity to include school personnel in the IRWM and other regional water management processes, as only one interviewee shared that they were familiar with the IRWM program. Lastly, there lies opportunities to include local indigenous tribes in school-based project development, as all but one school district interviewee had experience collaborating with local tribes or even looking into the indigenous student population in the district.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS - BARRIERS TO INVOLVEMENT IN IRWM

A variety of barriers to participation of disadvantaged communities in IRWM and similar programs were noted through the Strengths and Needs Assessment process. Challenges center around meeting logistics, membership structure, paid participation and the confusion around parallel funding programs.

- Meeting notices. It can be very difficult finding out when meetings occur and who to contact; if or where there is a central website with contacts, calendars, or avenues to hear about upcoming events. LA County Public Works provides means to sign up for multiple meeting mailing lists, but could use stronger promotion. Parallel to the outreach and regular publicity that Measure W receives, IRWM could follow-suit or even pair up, given that the same County agency supports both programs. (ex: shared up-to-date calendars and events, regular announcements, direct sub-regional contacts).

- Meeting times and venues: While COVID actually drove society to more accessible online forums for CBOs to make meetings, there is still difficulty tracking when meetings occur. If and when meetings return to in-person, the challenges will only increase for small CBOs with strapped capacity issues.

- Lack of direct funding for CBOs and tribal nations to participate. Currently there are very few if any small CBOs serving under-resourced communities that participate in the GLAC Disadvantaged Community Committee or SCWP Watershed Area Steering Committees. These CBOs can provide direct access and a channel to community feedback, making them extremely valuable. Committees and participants at different levels within GLAC IRWM primarily consist of agency staff only or paid consultants - which makes sense as it is part of their work day and they don't have to find funding to cover their time in meetings. Within the funding for IRWM activities, identified groups - including tribes - could be given annual or multi-year contracts for paid participation to cover their time and costs. This is likely to be a small investment given the potential return.

- Committee Makeup: There is a complete absence of tribal nations in IRWM Leadership or subregion steering committees. Building on the previous point, CBOs and tribal nations should hold seats on committees so that there is a consistent mechanism for meaningful community input. Examples like Measure A's Citizen Oversight Advisory Board can be used as a model for IRWM.

- Water Providers: Similarly, there is a lack of community and tribal seats on commissions and boards related to water utilities and districts that lead to accountability, oversight, and ultimately public trust. Indigenous nations in particular should be recognized and have paid appointments on the commissions that service those territories the tribal nations stewarded pre-colonization.

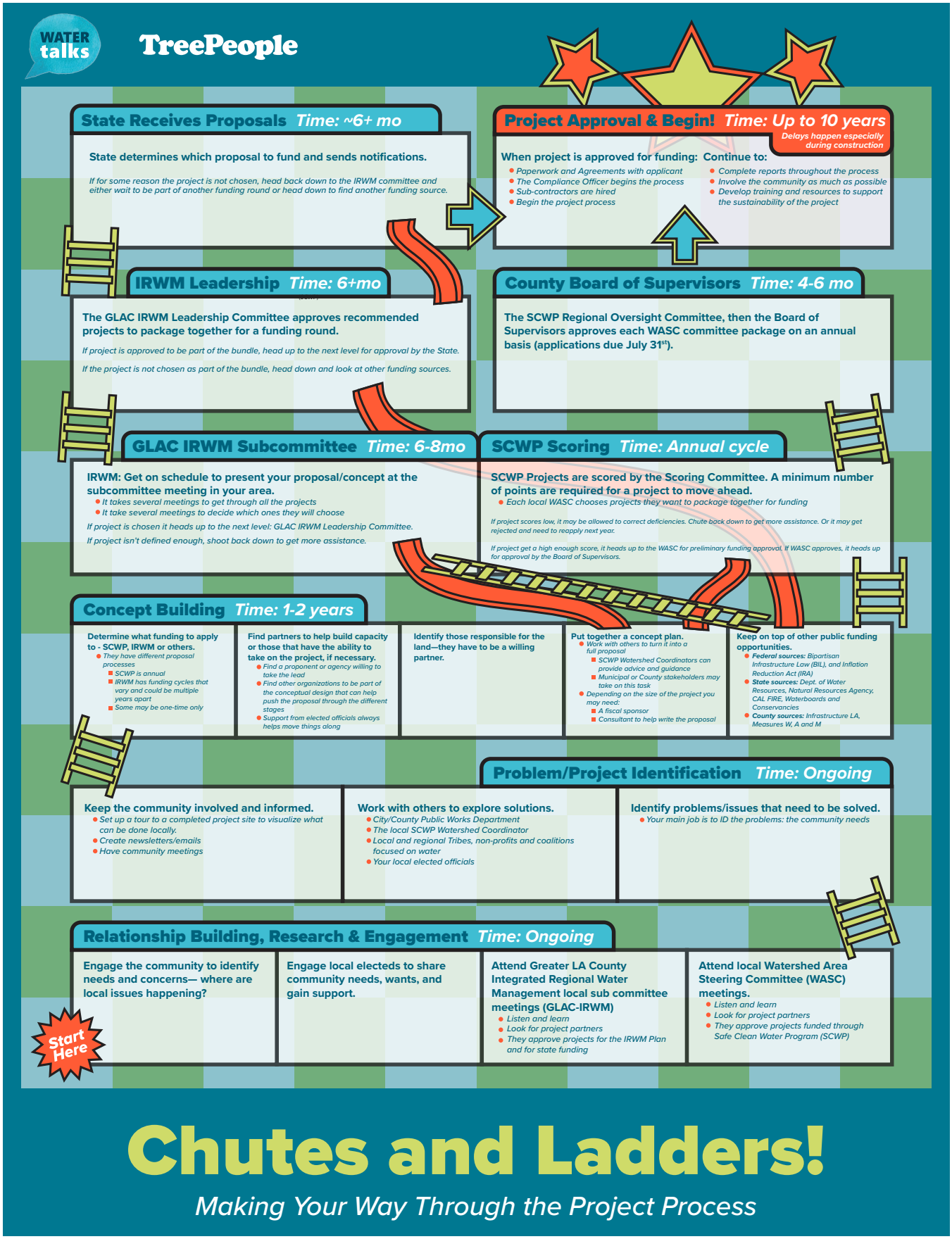
Finally, there is understandable confusion among those outside the water management community around several parallel efforts, including IRWM, Measures WHAM, Safe Clean Water Program, Upper and Lower LA River Revitalization, LA River Master Plan, and others. This confusion creates an invisible barrier that can currently only be overcome by total immersion in the LA water space - something small CBOs and residents don't have time or resources for.

Meetings, project opportunities, and planning currently run on independent schedules and there is a need for more coordination, especially between funding programs. Increased frequency of interagency dialogues is needed to grow awareness around progress of these parallel funding programs. The intent is to maintain consistent messaging and piggyback between events of a similar nature to gain better community involvement. As mentioned in the infrastructure recommendations, IRWM Steering Committees could include the Safe Clean Water Program (Measure W) Watershed Coordinators in planning and funding decisions so that dollars and engagement can be leveraged.

IN CLOSING

As was shared more than once in this report, local residents and Tribal members are experts in their own communities, and their expertise must be recognized in balance with that of the water managers if we are to build a sustainable and resilient water future for the region. While the Findings and Recommendations presented in this WaterTalks Strengths and Needs Assessment may seem overwhelming and insurmountable, there are always next steps to explore. One example is the simple and (and low-cost) creation of education tools to help communities understand complex issues, such as the WaterTalks "Chutes and Ladders" infographic *(FIGURE 11)*. It proved very helpful to WaterTalks participants, and lays out the differences between IRWM and the Safe, Clean Water Program funding streams.

FIGURE 11. WaterTalks "Chutes and Ladders" infographic developed to help navigate the complexities between IRWM and the Safe, Clean Water Program funding streams.



VI. APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES DETAILED RESULTS

Findings from 25 institutional interviews are discussed below. The results are organized by each main prompt from the interview instrument. The results are described in terms of the frequency of comments or ideas shared by the interested parties who were interviewed and are described as from "everyone", "almost everyone", "several", "one", or "none" of those interviewed. This system is used to help understand if there is consensus among the interview subjects on certain ideas, or if an idea was voiced by only one or a few interview subjects. Some direct quotes are provided when the note-taker recorded specific words used by interview subjects.

INSTITUTIONAL VIEWS ON COMMUNITY

Question 1: Today, we'd like to focus on the community you serve through your role at the [institution name], but we are also aware you may have insight from other experiences in your career. We'd like to start out by asking you to describe some aspects of your community in general. Will you please tell us about your community's strengths, and what it needs?

This question sponsored expansive answers for some and very narrow answers for others. Though this question encourages considering an institution as well as its staff and leaders as members of the community, almost everyone who was interviewed revealed an "outsider's" perspective on the communities served, chiefly seen in how they structured the language of their answers. None of those interviewed used possessive pronouns about the community they serve (mine, my, our), nor did they place themselves in a broader community of people (we, us). Throughout the interviews these words were deployed to describe their institution or the other people that work there, not the community or communities they serve. Several who are in elective office were much more likely to suggest they are members of the community they serve than those interviewed who hold jobs in institutions. Several of those interviewed who work for public agencies (with directly elected or appointed leaders) expressed that the institution has no connection to the community, rather, it is connected via other institutions. In one case this sentiment was shared by staff of an agency that has a directly elected board, reflecting a lack of awareness of representation and accountability that flows from community through to the institution.

Another distinction that became clear was that some of those interviewed perceived their service area to include one, or many communities. Several of those interviewed, particularly at smaller institutions, suggested that their role served a single community. Institutions that serve a larger population were more likely to describe their institution as serving many communities. Several participants switched between the idea of serving a single community at the scale of their legal service area, and also multiple communities within that same geography. This trading between understandings of communities was more likely to be shared by those in or close to political offices, and less likely but not unheard of from those in public agency jobs.

The final distinction that is valuable to highlight is how those interviewed defined what makes a community and how to distinguish one from the next. Almost everyone interviewed

described communities as being defined by the legal/political boundary of city, council district, county, or service area. Almost everyone interviewed from a regional institution described the cities and unincorporated areas as separable communities within their service area. Several of those interviewed did express communities as defined by another characteristic, including both needs and cultures. Several interviewed described communities of need that are not always geographically bounded, like those experiencing homelessness, or those which speak a language other than English.

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING THE BENEFITS OF WATER, WASTEWATER, STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Question 2: What do you see as barriers to access the benefits of drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure in your community?

Access to Safe, Affordable Drinking Water

Participants from water suppliers consistently shared that safe drinking water is provided to their service area, despite challenges like aging infrastructure, limited water supply, specific hydrogeologic characteristics (e.g., limited infiltration to groundwater), and groundwater contamination. One participant described the water they serve as "high quality", and the pride underlying this comment seemed to be shared by many staff of water suppliers. Some participants from water suppliers discussed how they have historically been successful in providing safe, affordable water but are concerned about how to tackle and prioritize growing challenges, including groundwater contamination, climate change, and drought.

Additional discussion revealed some caveats to the current provision of safe drinking water at the tap. Water quality issues related to older premise plumbing, or "infrastructure behind the meter" that is owned by a building owner, were identified by some participants. A few participants shared about premise plumbing as a challenge for drinking water quality in older buildings, schools, and apartment complexes, where pipes, pipe fittings, and solder containing lead may still be in place. One participant shared that their office is working to identify funding sources to address premise plumbing issues in older buildings, but that restrictions due to Proposition 218 and Proposition 26 prevent use of ratepayer money for premise plumbing projects. Their office is trying to identify "private financing models" or "private ratepayer funds" to support replacement of premise plumbing that poses a risk to drinking water quality at the tap. Another participant shared their perspective that premise plumbing issues should be addressed with incentives and rebates.

While some participants were concerned about substandard premise plumbing impacting water quality at the tap, one participant from a water supplier shared that they do not have premise plumbing issues and cited recently completed Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) testing that did not show any exceedances at taps sampled. However, this participant did share that they receive complaints about taste and odor related to premise plumbing. One participant from a water wholesaler referred to disadvantaged community members' distrust of tap water as "inequity by choice", indicating that the community members were opting for the cost burden of purchasing bottled water instead of drinking tap water. Participants did not offer thoughts on the connection between tap water quality distrust and the persistence of unsafe tap water due to older premise plumbing.

Some participants shared anecdotes about metal mobilization issues in their or their neighbors' distribution systems after changing chemical treatment or water source. These anecdotes only included constituents with secondary maximum contaminant levels (MCL), which are non-mandatory water quality standards set based on aesthetic considerations, such as taste, color, and odor. Drinking water provided was still considered safe from a regulatory standpoint, but the community was concerned about the poor appearance and taste of their water. In one anecdote, the transition to an alternative water source was prompted by a short compliance period for a new California drinking water MCL, and the participant expressed frustration about the short compliance period.

Several participants voiced concerns about their ability to meet rising costs to treat and deliver drinking water, collect and treat wastewater, and construct stormwater infrastructure without making rates unaffordable for their communities. One participant shared that unexpected regulatory issues can create rate uncertainty and increases. Some smaller water suppliers as well as wholesalers and regional water agencies voiced concern about small agencies' ability to deliver safe, affordable water with increasing challenges of water contamination, drought, and aging infrastructure. Some participants shared that small agencies struggle to retain qualified staff that often move to a larger agency for a salary increase. Another participant described how people pay more for lower quality water from small water systems and stated that the solution is to consolidate water systems but "no one is investing in drinking water in LA County" and "nothing is happening." One participant from a water wholesaler shared about a recent water system consolidation prompted because an older system's wells were too shallow to access groundwater during the drought.

Except for one participant from a wastewater agency, participants from water suppliers, wastewater agencies, city governments, and other entities did not discuss homeless or unhoused communities when asked about barriers to accessing the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure, but did later share about deficiencies in access when asked how their work engages with homelessness. CBOs focused on providing services to unhoused people in the absence of adequate formal services shared how accessing clean drinking water is particularly challenging. One participant shared that in Skid Row, there are only eight drinking water fountains for over 5,000 unhoused people, and that those fountains are not adequately cleaned or maintained.

Provision of bottled water is typically implemented by both agencies and CBOs as a way to address immediate drinking water access for the unhoused. Participants from both agencies and CBOs also discussed efforts to work with water suppliers to establish permanent water fixtures that provide drinking water for unhoused people. Participants from water suppliers and from offices of elected officials shared that the choice not to install water fountains, sinks, and bathrooms is to discourage unhoused people from staying near water fixtures. One participant referenced California's legislative recognition of the human right to water, sharing that unhoused people are denied that right every day.

Wastewater/Sanitation Infrastructure or Regulation Issues

Overall, participants shared a story of successful regional collaboration to meet the wastewater and recycled water needs of LA County. Several participants shared about the regional impact of the Sanitation Districts of LA County in providing wastewater treatment, recycled water, and larger regional conveyance for the majority of the county's population and area outside

of the City of LA. While individual municipalities are largely responsible for their local sewer infrastructure, a few participants shared about a consolidated sewer maintenance district for operations and maintenance, for those that do not have the resources to maintain their sewer system.

One participant shared that a combination of efforts, including investments in City of LA sewer systems before the turn of the millennium, a maintenance and replacement program, and an inspection program, are seen to have addressed sanitary sewer overflow issues, but the City still has "80 sewer spills per year."

While perspectives on regional collaboration for recycled water were generally positive, some participants shared that advanced treatment of wastewater is cost and energy-intensive, and that the cost of recycling water could cause rates to creep up and create affordability concerns. These participants shared that there is a disconnect between public desire for recycled water and knowledge of what is required to recycle water, in terms of infrastructure investments and impacts to bills for wastewater and water services. One participant from a wastewater agency shared that they were unable to subsidize rates for particular groups, further contributing to affordability issues. Still, these participants shared that they are able to spread out the cost of capital projects over their large service area as well as get grants and loans to "fit what we know the community can handle."

Some participants discussed less populated areas of LA County, where residents are on septic systems, resisting a transition to sewers because they worry sewer service will prompt growth of their neighborhood. A few participants shared that septic systems were more common in more affluent communities in LA County, implying that differences in septic and sewer service were not representative of wastewater infrastructure inequities.

Stormwater Quality or Flooding Issues or Flooding

Participants acknowledged deficiencies of existing stormwater infrastructure and expressed urgency regarding the addressing of these deficiencies in order to mitigate flooding, poor stormwater quality impacts on human and ecological health, and the cost of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) compliance. Participants also expressed a desire to harness the possibilities of multi-benefit projects, including reducing heat islands and increasing green space.

While enhancing water supply is a goal of many stormwater infrastructure projects and of the LA County Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP), enhancing water supply was rarely mentioned, and only by representatives of institutions that are directly tied to implementing the SCWP. One regional groundwater management agency shared that stormwater recharge will not produce a lot of volume, and that stormwater projects will be more focused on MS4 compliance than recharge. Another regional agency shared that diverting stormwater "makes more sense for environmental issues but not for groundwater replenishment" based on the characteristics of their underlying geology (dense clay) that prevents recharge.

A few participants shared that there are communities in northeast LA and southeast LA where community members cannot cross the street and children cannot walk to school during a storm due to localized flooding. One participant shared that because of these impacts, the City of LA evaluates internal Safe, Clean Water Program project proposals for their potential to address localized flooding.

One participant whose agency serves the City of LA shared that there are challenges to collaboration on multi-benefit projects—for example, for green streets, the Department of Transportation does not understand green streets, and others do not understand transportation. The same participant shared that stormwater infrastructure design being seen as solely the realm of engineers, and engineers myopically focusing on meeting regulatory requirements, can be a barrier to achieving multiple benefits like providing green space and reducing heat island effects. The same participant also shared a more positive example. In Pacoima, collaboration between CBOs, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), and consultants led to collaborative development of a green alley adjacent to a housing development and set a precedent for bringing together different funds for multi-benefit projects.

While the institutions interviewed did not initially discuss homeless access to water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure, CBOs focused on homelessness shared how unhoused people are impacted by localized flooding and stormwater quality. Additionally, these participants shared concern about displacement of unhoused people due to construction of stormwater infrastructure.

Water Access for Ceremonial Purposes and for Recreation

Most participants did not have a substantive response to this question. One participant shared that their community is "fairly built out", highlighting limited community access to open spaces adjacent to rivers. A few participants shared that there is wide disparity in access to water for recreational or ceremonial purposes within their institutions' service areas, and that recreational and ceremonial access to water should not be limited to beach access. One participant mentioned a motion by Supervisor Solis to examine barriers to tribal cultural practices, sharing that the effort identified access to water as a barrier. A few participants shared about water quality concerns related to ceremonial and recreational needs, including progress in managing beach water quality and the challenges of watershed protection in their area, especially to address the long-term impacts of fires.

Regulatory and Compliance Issues

Most participants voiced concerns about MS4 compliance and compliance with potential upcoming drinking water regulations.

Some participants with a regional perspective shared that MS4 requirements pushed municipalities to focus on stormwater deficiencies, as stormwater is not "on their radar until they have an MS4 permit compliance issue." Some participants from municipalities shared more negative perspectives on MS4 compliance, including that it is "unrealistic", "an unfunded mandate", and further "cutting up the pie" of their already limited general fund.

Participant framing of potential new drinking water quality regulations for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) varied. Most participants framed potential new MCLs for PFAS as a problem they needed to grapple with, as opposed to framing the challenge as the groundwater contamination itself. One participant framed potential drinking water quality regulations for PFAS as an opportunity to hold entities responsible for PFAS contamination responsible for funding treatment or alternative water sources. This participant also shared that litigation could help minimize the impact of expensive treatment on their ratepayers.

FINANCIAL HEALTH OF THE WATER SYSTEMS

Question 3: What do you think (or know) about the financial health of water systems in your community?

Participants generally said their institutions were in good financial health. They could meet their capital improvement project needs and invest in operations and maintenance. However, some participants were skeptical that all water suppliers in the region are financially sound. One participant stated that "agencies aren't willing to open their books and show that they don't have adequate funding to keep up with O&M [operations and maintenance] and CIP [capital improvement projects]." Several participants pointed to the challenges of the recently consolidated Sativa Water District as an example of what can happen if a system does not have the financial or managerial capacity. One participant said, "we don't know how many Sativas are out there."

Some participants shared that their financial health could be improved, particularly smaller systems. Participants from these institutions frequently cited regulations and their rate structure as challenges to their financial health. Specifically, their rate structures were not set up in a way to cover all of their costs. Several participants pointed to regulations, both existing and forthcoming, as having the ability to severely disrupt system financial health and impact affordability for community members. Participants frequently cited PFAS, water efficiency, and MS4 permits when discussing these challenges.

Often the regulatory challenges are heightened by policy restrictions and requirements. Proposition 218 (Prop 218) requires rate increases be approved by either a two-thirds approval by the electorate or 51 percent approval as a land-owner ballot. Many participants discussed the challenges associated with public perception on rates—that their community is unaware of why rate increases are necessary and unwilling to support them. Due to requirements and public perception, several participants mentioned that they have not raised their rates in several years, ranging from two to six years. One of these participants mentioned that their inability to raise rates has significantly reduced their reserves and threatens their capital improvement project plan. Another participant shared that community perception of water rates during their last water rate increase process was shaped by many recent water main breaks and a newspaper article questioning whether their rates were adequate to provide high quality service.

Additionally, Prop 218 restricts utilities from cross subsidizing or using the fees from one ratepayer to cover the cost of another ratepayer. Many participants mentioned how this limits the ability to provide low-income assistance and manage affordability. Unlike the public systems confined by Prop 218, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requires that private water suppliers cross subsidize among their rate payers.

Participants also shared their view on grants as a key influx of capital for projects. One participant described themself as a "grant-chaser," sharing that they cannot afford to pass up any opportunities for additional funding. Another participant said they cannot get projects done without grants. However, there were some participants who said they were unable to apply for grants either due to eligibility requirements and/or technical capacity. These participants said they are often unable to compete for grants because of lack of both in-house capacities to develop a grant application and lack of funds to hire consultants to complete the application for them.

When discussing grants, most participants mentioned support from regional entities like the IRWM program, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), or the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD). Several participants shared positive feedback about the MWD member block grants program. One participant shared that recently revised guidelines for MWD member block grants expanded eligibility in a way that was helpful to their organization. There was a general consensus that these regional programs were beneficial to their institution's overall financial health.

It is important to understand the context in which participants were asked about the financial health of water systems in their communities. The interviews were held during the COVID-19 Pandemic, a socially and economically turbulent time. Participants discussed the impacts of COVID-19 on their finances, emphasizing issues associated with water bill delinquency. On April 2, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-42-20, implementing a statewide water shutoff moratorium and reconnection mandate. This mandate was still in effect at the time this document was written. The extent to which the moratorium and overall pandemic has impacted, and will continue to impact, water institutions is not clear, and one participant shared that relatively few water systems replied to a State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) survey of COVID-19 Pandemic impacts to their system. However, several participants mentioned that their financial health has been impacted by the pandemic. They gave examples of delaying capital projects and rate increases, in addition to delayed approval for permits and difficulties associated with staffing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Question 4: How engaged are members of your community in decisions about water?

This question prompted answers that have been fairly common within water management for decades and reflect the belief that because water management is complicated and technical, communities and community members struggle to understand how or even why they should be engaged. Another common concern shared is that communities are overburdened (e.g., working multiple jobs), and therefore, unable to be engaged for lack of time and attention. As those interviewed reflected on engagement efforts they undertake within their communities, many shared that engagements are often centered on specific projects, or in response to a particular crisis. Similarly, several felt that the community was much more likely to engage when they were upset, rather than in a sustained way when everything seemed fine.

Interestingly, however, several of those interviewed expressed an understanding that institutions are intended to represent the community's wishes and goals, and that those are non-technical and can be found by listening. For several of those interviewed, the link between community wishes and institutional activity starts with listening to the community. Those who shared this perspective were more closely related to elective office than those who are staff of public administrative institutions, with the one exception where the participant's role at a public administrative institution is focused on social justice and civil rights.

Of those interviewed who have management responsibilities related to stormwater quality compliance, most felt that the community was disconnected from the problem, and the opportunities, in a way that made attainment of the management goals very difficult. Those interviewed who are required to hold engagement meetings related to stormwater management

relayed that the meetings have familiar faces, usually representatives of consulting practice staff and people who work with non-profit organizations that focus on environmental quality, and very rarely anyone from the community the engagement was meant to reach. Several conveyed similar stories of engagement meetings that saw relatively low attendance despite what they felt was a robust effort to make them known to the community and meaningful.

Of those interviewed who are elected representatives, or are members of institutions that provide drinking water, almost all shared that communities need to better understand from where water is sourced and to what extent their drinking water is made safe by the public and regulated private institutions. Several also shared a recognition that the lack of confidence the communities feel towards drinking water is impacted much more by popular media stories of failures at systems locally, regionally, elsewhere in California or the U.S. than they are by the routine correspondence in which agencies share data about reliability and safety.

Several of those interviewed expressed a similar set of barriers faced by community members when an engagement is planned. The list is familiar, including non-English speakers, lack of personal technology, crowded schedules with multiple jobs, lack of trust and past failures of transparency, the need for childcare or food at meetings. None of those interviewed shared that these are not in-fact barriers for the community, they are barriers for the institutions themselves. None of those interviewed expressed a recognition that these challenges are a to-do list for achieving successful engagement.

The last common answer across several of those interviewed was the attenuation some institutions feel from the communities that benefit from their mission delivery. In water management in Greater Los Angeles, there are agencies that provide wholesale services to other agencies, and it is those "member" agencies that hold direct relationships with communities. Several other water managers expressed that this separation was by design, and that any time a community becomes engaged with them it is a sure sign of a crisis, because when their mission is being delivered effectively, the community doesn't even know they are there. This idea of a "distance" between the water managers and the community that is hard to overcome is also not uncommon. In some interviews it was clear that the distance was seen as something to be cured, and in others it was clearly seen as positive.

The truth is, of course, that either through elected representatives or through government regulatory bodies, all water managers are accountable to the people of their service area. Only one of the interviews with non-elected members of a public institution acknowledged the connection of the people through the elected leaders of the institution to the mission and staff of the institution. This fundamental linkage, that the people elect representatives who empower agencies to carry out activities to the collective benefit of the people, was not raised by any of those interviewed.

Homelessness

The challenges for water managers in the homelessness crisis in California were addressed by some of those interviewed. A focus group of community-based organizations that provide services for people who are unhoused was also conducted. None of those interviewed offered an awareness that providing clean drinking water for people experiencing homelessness is a duty of a drinking water institution. Water agencies uniformly expressed a worldview that homes, schools, and businesses that hold accounts with the utility are those who receive their

service. And, those interviewed who provide services to people experiencing homelessness did not offer an awareness that high-quality and low-cost water provided by a utility is something to seek for their programs. The drinking and washing water provided at shelters and at other service facilities was not something those interviewed had considered.

After prompting, many shared the observation that public drinking fountains and bathrooms have become rarer, relying instead on private facilities in restaurants and stores. Several mentioned that a move towards rehabilitating this public service was underway in the larger cities, and what an important role they could plan in serving those experiencing homelessness.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Question 5: Please describe any collaborative efforts between multiple agencies or institutions in your community?

Participants shared many perspectives and details about regional collaboration on water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.

History of Collaboration on Water Resilience

Those interviewed shared many stories about how regional collaboration has long been at the core of providing water and wastewater services for LA County, and the passage of Measure W has prompted more regional collaboration on stormwater. Many participants spoke about the strength of the region in working together (within LA County and with other external actors) to build large-scale infrastructure or "megaprojects" like the State Water Project, Colorado River Aqueduct, "world-renowned treatment plants", and a regional water grid that can provide reliable, resilient water service. Some participants described how different entities work together to manage different aspects of the water cycle in LA County, with one participant describing the different agencies involved in treating wastewater to indirect potable reuse standards, injecting that water into the groundwater basin, pumping that groundwater, treating it for potable use, and distributing it to community members. One participant shared the phrase "collaboration as increasing resilience" to describe their perspective on the extensive effort they put in to engaging with related agencies and their community.

Participants described ongoing regional efforts through the IRWM Program, Gateway Water Management Authority, San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Water Replenishment District of Southern California, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and others as the natural backdrop to their work. Collaboration between water-related agencies is framed as necessary to tackle the challenges of water supply, wastewater conveyance and treatment, and stormwater infrastructure in LA County.

Regional Agencies Providing TMF Support for Smaller Agencies

Participants shared about technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) support they provide or receive to augment local capacity. Regional water and wastewater agencies shared examples of how they provide this support, including: engineering design and construction management support for local infrastructure projects; guidance in responding to new regulations, especially for emerging contaminants; "cookie-cutter" templates for information to provide to community members; grant and loan programs; long-range planning support; assistance in finding funding for wellhead treatment; and water quality sampling.

While well-resourced regional water and wastewater agencies are able to provide TMF support and services (e.g., regional water supply, wastewater treatment) for smaller agencies in their service area, a local agency may still struggle to maintain and update local infrastructure. One regional agency described local water suppliers as lacking financial resources for capital projects or "sophistication" to access state resources necessary to fund them.

In a few cases, regional agencies described taking over local infrastructure when the local institution was struggling. This includes examples of consolidating drinking water systems, but also in taking over management of local sewer infrastructure for a struggling municipality. One participant voiced concern about consolidation in terms of losing local control, especially when water rights would be subsumed by the larger system.

Mutual Aid Between Smaller Institutions

In addition to regional agencies' support for smaller institutions within their service area, participants described examples of mutual aid between similar institutions. One participant shared about the recently formed Community Water Systems Alliance that helps systems serving disadvantaged communities operate according to standards and address emerging challenges. Mutual aid efforts include creating "a stronger voice for smaller communities" in state-level advocacy; working together to address emerging contaminants, including organizing to litigate against polluters; and creating interties between water distribution systems for reliability and emergency response. One participant described how working together with neighboring water systems is dependent on functional relationships between staff and elected officials at different institutions.

One participant shared how the COVID-19 Pandemic revealed a greater need for redundancy; with a small staff, operation of facilities can be in jeopardy if one employee gets sick, and if others need to quarantine. This participant shared that some mutual aid agreements allow water agencies to share staff in such cases.

Collaboration Across Sectors

In addition to collaboration between institutions that focus primarily on water, wastewater, and stormwater, participants shared examples of collaboration across sectors, and about opportunities and challenges in additional cross-sector collaboration.

One participant shared the LA Mayor's Water Cabinet, which brought together all LA City departments that "touch water", was instrumental in developing the Hyperion Reuse and Resiliency Program.

A few participants shared about the importance of institutions that focus on stormwater infrastructure collaborating with parks and transportation departments to develop and implement multi-benefit projects, and the need to avoid siloing within sectors. One participant shared an example of a Watershed Area Steering Committee coordinating with the California Department of Transportation. Another participant shared that a barrier to collaboration is a lack of understanding between different departments, stating that "transportation does not understand green streets, others do not understand transportation."

Several participants pointed to Measure W and the SCWP as an outcome and opportunity of collaboration around multi-benefit projects, with one participant referring to Measure W as the

"financial extension" of long-term collaborative processes. One participant shared that there is a "huge expectation from the community to do something great" through Measure W, and there is a need to deliver projects that people see, like, and benefit from.

One participant shared that they want to see collaboration on fire response and watershed protection, specifically in coordinating a state, federal, and local response to address long-term impacts of the Bobcat Fire.

Examples of Specific Collaborative Projects

Several participants gave examples of specific collaborative projects when asked about collaboration in general.

Several participants shared about multi-benefit projects that were a collaboration between institutions with different goals and focuses. One participant shared that a street widening project with stormwater capture and treatment "all penciled out as being a good project on paper for each goal." This participant highlighted that collaborators must be able to meet their goals, and not feel like they are investing an undue number of resources into others' goals, for a collaboration to be successful. A few participants shared about collaborative projects with Pacoima Beautiful, an environmental justice organization in the San Fernando Valley, and one participant shared that Pacoima Beautiful projects set a precedent for collaboration between different funds.

A few participants shared about interties between drinking water systems for reliability or emergencies, or specifically to bring in an alternate source because of contamination of their primary water source, highlighting the willingness of neighboring agencies to support each other. One participant discussed the consolidation of an older water system with relatively shallow wells that went dry during the recent historic 2012-2016 drought.

Collaboration Breakdowns

Institutions having clear and complementary directives allows for collaboration, and participants highlighted countless examples of successful collaboration in providing reliable access to water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure across LA County. Participants also shared examples of different types of breakdowns in collaboration, or blind spots in the collaborative network that has arisen over decades.

Several participants described how smaller water suppliers in LA County may struggle to provide safe, affordable water to their community because of challenges including technical, managerial, financial, social, and political (TMFSP) capacity and groundwater contamination but shared that their knowledge is limited in terms of where the specific issues are. One participant shared that problems are known at a high-level, but it is hard to "drill down" and overcome specific obstacles. Another participant shared that the needs are scattered over the county in a "checkerboard". Another participant shared that they "wish we knew where the other Sativas are", referring to the Sativa Water District that was subsumed by the LA County Department of Public Works after many failures of the system came to light.

While regional agencies do support regional water resilience, there are limitations in terms of what they are able or willing to do to support water suppliers. One participant shared that they "do their piece at the regional level, but then when you get down to the ground-level

there may be breakdowns" in terms of lack of institutional capacity and proactive system maintenance.

A few participants shared concerns about corruption within a regional agency, with one participant stating that they are "going through crisis and wasting taxpayer dollars".

A few participants shared concern about lack of integration and understanding between different water related institutions across LA County. One participant specifically pointing to the need to "get on the same page" about all the projects and programs that are being funded, while another shared that it is challenging to coordinate because "you can't have everyone at every meeting." Some participants shared their concern that smaller municipalities and water suppliers may be overlooked for funding compared to larger cities.

Responses to questions about water provision for people experiencing homelessness also revealed breakdowns in county-wide collaboration. Some participants shared about a "services first" approach to interacting with people experiencing homelessness and that they are a part of collaborative efforts to provide services for people who are unhoused, while other participants shared about a lack of access to drinking water, bathrooms, and showers in LA County. Some participants specifically questioned why available resources are not being spent to increase water fixtures accessible to unhoused communities. One participant from an agency related to but not focused on water posed the hypothetical question: "Can we provide last mile connection to water features if that's what we are hearing from the community?" It seems that the institutions that could play a role in providing water and sanitation services to unhoused people are not clear as to their directive, and do not effectively collaborate to provide adequate services.

CONCERNS

Question 6: What other concerns do you have for your community now and into the future?

The participants mostly used this time to reiterate previously discussed challenges. These include topics such as aging infrastructure, affordability, and changing regulations. However, the broadness of this question allowed the participants to expand beyond the water world. On the topic of aging infrastructure, participants mentioned replacing pipes, but also discuss the need to update all public infrastructure such as roads and parks. Several participants noted the difficulty of maintaining their current infrastructure while also planning for the future.

As for affordability, many participants restated the challenges they face with Prop 218 and their inability to cross-subsidize rates. Some participants were also concerned about maintaining affordability in the face of population growth. While a larger population means a larger rate payer base, it also means more capital outlay for connections and maintenance. One participant was concerned that their rate payers would be unable to sustain their organization; rising capital costs and compliance with new regulations were seen burdens potentially too great to overcome.

Many participants repeated their frustration with regulations, drinking water quality, water conservation, and MS4 compliance. They shared that these mandates are burdensome and "overwhelming", stretching their already limited budget, and make it difficult to prioritize.

While not a regulatory challenge, participants used similar language to discuss climate change; it is an overwhelmingly large issue that is competing with other challenges for resources and attention. For most participants, this question on concerns was the first time they explicitly discussed climate change. From the water supplier view, participants were concerned with the impacts of climate change on hydrology. From larger storms to reduced surface water imports from Northern California, many participants recognized that climate change would alter their priorities. When thinking beyond water, participants mentioned concern over excessive heat and another participant linked climate change to direct impacts on tourism.

Another topic that was repeatedly mentioned as a concern is the idea of equity. Several participants noted that their organization values and encourage equity, but they were not sure about its implementation or application to their work. They felt that equity was lacking a definition. Others also mentioned concern about the equitable distribution of resources. One participant noted that often public infrastructure projects can create more harm than good to low-income communities; their suggestion was to design and implement projects that lift communities up without creating additional burdens.

OPPORTUNITIES

Question 7: What other opportunities do you see for your community now and into the future? Participants shared many general and specific opportunities to address challenges in providing equitable access to the benefits of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.

Infrastructure Projects

Participants from smaller water suppliers shared about specific infrastructure projects within their service areas that would help them to sustain provision of safe, affordable drinking water. These identified projects include wellhead treatment for emerging contaminants, well rehabilitation, water main replacement to address leaks, replacement of water storage tanks, adding generators for reliability, and installing interconnections with surrounding water systems for reliability and emergency response. When discussing these opportunities, participants often shared barriers to implementing these projects, including lack of grant funding or ratepayer funding, specifically noting that they are unable to raise water rates because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. One public utility company shared that the CPUC has supported using imported water instead of installing wellhead treatment, which has kept them from proceeding with wellhead treatment projects.

Some participants spoke about the importance of water fountains, showers, and bathrooms near homeless encampments, recognizing unhoused people as some of the hardest to reach Californians to attain the human right to water. Some participants shared about the opportunity for homeless service providers and water suppliers to collaborate to install and maintain water fixtures for unhoused people to access safe drinking water.

Participants also discussed opportunities for multi-benefit stormwater infrastructure projects in their communities, with several participants pointing to Measure W as a funding source for these projects. Participants shared about the need for projects that address local flooding in northeast LA and southeast LA and opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure into new LA Metro lines, especially those that will run above grade. One participant referred to multi-benefit projects and green infrastructure as an opportunity for projects to "do double and

triple duty for us." Another participant described an "iconic" multi-benefit stormwater project that has a high capital cost, sharing that the high price tag has caused its delay.

One participant described a municipal goal for modifying streets to make it easier and "more pleasant" to walk and bike, but that this effort has not yet been infused with a focus on green streets and adding shade. This participant voiced that helping transportation agencies better understand green streets, and helping others better understand transportation, could help lead to collaborative, multi-benefit projects.

Several participants mentioned housing projects when asked about opportunities for their community and discussed the need to address lack of affordable housing.

Support for Education About Water Topics

Participants shared water topics that they have trouble discussing with their community and stated that it would be helpful to have template education materials available to ease this challenge. The topics specifically called out as challenging to communicate about were emerging contaminants, especially PFAS, and water rates and why it is important to maintain and upgrade water infrastructure.

Financing Premise Plumbing Replacement

Some participants spoke of the need to replace premise plumbing containing lead, especially for schools, rental housing, and older buildings. These participants shared about the challenge of identifying funding for premise plumbing replacement, as water suppliers cannot use ratepayer funds on building owners' property. They pointed to a need to identify financing models or incentives, and perhaps pass legislation, to support replacement of premise plumbing.

Regional Collaboration on Climate Change and Water Resilience

Participants also shared about opportunities to increase regional water resilience and independence. A few participants discussed potable reuse projects and specifically the Advanced Purification Center (APC) at the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant, sharing that they see the APC as an opportunity to reduce dependence on surface water imports from the State Water Project and Colorado River. One participant shared that their agency is helping groundwater pumpers to identify projects (e.g., wellhead treatment, well rehabilitation) to make full use of their adjudicated groundwater rights in order to reduce reliance on surface water imports. One participant shared that recent regulatory issues have prompted their portion of LA County to work together more than previously.

Several participants shared generally about an interest in opportunities to increase their community and region's resilience to climate change and drought. One participant shared that the Coastal Commission recommended they develop a Coastal Master Plan but they cannot afford to develop one, and that they need grant funding to help make plans for sea level rise adaptation. One participant shared that there is a need for a "climate office" to uplift climate priorities and benefits. One participant shared that as areas are impacted by wildfires and other aspects of climate change, city councils are shifting to have younger members more aware of and interested in mitigating climate change impacts.

Support for Small Systems

Some participants shared about opportunities for mutual aid between small water systems, or for larger agencies to support smaller systems, including through consolidation. One participant shared that a wholesaler does water quality sampling for small systems in their service area without charging them, pointing to the cohesion between water suppliers due to their shared effort to get funding to address historical contamination. One participant shared about the formation of a Community Water Service Alliance to help small water systems operate according to standards and address emerging challenges. This participant also shared about the Public Water Agencies Group (PWAG) that is building an emergency response program to address cybersecurity and other threats.

Another participant shared that MWD has changed their guidelines about what their grants can be used for, which has been helpful for smaller systems.

Workforce Development

Some participants shared about the opportunities to incorporate workforce development into programs focused on construction and especially operation and maintenance (O&M) of water infrastructure and multi-benefit stormwater infrastructure. Some participants focused on how new job opportunities can have a positive impact on individual community members, while others spoke of the importance of job creation for economic recovery as we emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

A few participants emphasized the opportunity to engage youth in workforce development programs for O&M of stormwater infrastructure construction of associated green infrastructure (e.g., parks, tree planting). One participant shared their interest in developing green infrastructure operations and maintenance certification programs at local colleges.

One participant shared about potential collaborative projects that could be supported by both Measure W and Measure H with multiple benefits and opportunities for workforce training.

Defining and Working Towards Equity

Some participants shared that there is currently an emphasis on thinking about and discussing equity, but that we have not yet thought about what equity really means, especially when distributing resources. These participants shared that "we" need to clarify terms related to equity and figure out how to put it into practice. One participant shared that current activism around race and the environment is an opportunity to bring more people into decision-making and help them shape the community.

Indigenous Engagement

Few participants shared about engagement with indigenous communities and tribes, except for water suppliers that rely on surface water imports from tribal lands, as they are regulatorily required to engage with tribes. One participant mentioned that Native American Heritage Month was an opportunity to consider indigenous water and land management. Another participant reflected on the effective engagement with indigenous communities and the inclusion of tribal perspectives in a recently released plan, the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Revitalization Master Plan.

Water Conservation
One participant shared that planting drought tolerant plants and implementing appropriate irrigation is an opportunity to reduce demand, make their system more reliable, and help the environment.

Pride in the Community
Several participants shared that people are proud of their community's diversity, culture, and identity, with one participant sharing that people are proud of "moving past our challenges." Several participants shared about infrastructure-related accomplishments that people in their community are proud of, including water conservation, innovative public transit, and well-maintained parks, and more generally of Southern California's role as an "economic engine."

Recent Good Examples of Positive Change in the Community
Several participants shared about shifts in perspectives in their community that they viewed as positive change, including about racial justice and community involvement in decision-making. Some participants specifically pointed to recent civil unrest provoked by the death of people of color at the hands of police, sharing that they are mobilizing to respond to their community's calls for change. Some participants shared that there has been a shift in community interest in and institutional facilitation of community-driven decision-making, and that people are dedicated to improving their neighborhoods.

Some participants mentioned recent infrastructure projects as examples of positive change, including a new bike path that connects several towns, Metro extensions, development of an "innovation zone", streetscape projects, and a "mini park" that transformed a small space.

A few participants mentioned positive changes in collaboration on regional infrastructure, management of water bodies, and identification of community needs. One participant mentioned positive change toward collaborative envisioning of infrastructural needs for climate change resilience. Another participant mentioned collaborative development of the Lower LA River Revitalization Plan as fostering a high standard of community ownership. Another participant mentioned the Southeast LA Collaborative as working together to gain recognition and trust in the community and working to identify community needs and support census work.

One participant shared about an arts festival that engaged with dozens of community artists and featured mutual aid efforts amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, including the provision of community fridges.

One participant shared more generally about lower crime rates and violence in their community in recent years, but also countered that positive change with an observation that they have "never seen more homelessness as in the last five years in LA." They added that they do not know what to attribute the rise in homelessness to, as unemployment is lower than in the past.

Proposed Projects That Have Community Support but are Also Unable to Move Forward
Several participants shared specific projects that have not moved forward due to lack of funding, delays because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, or a need to do collaborative project development. While the anonymity of participants prevents sharing specific projects and their

proponents in this report, information gathered will be made available, or used directly by the Project Team, to the effort of the DACIP Task 4 – Project Development.

COVID-19 Pandemic Changed the Nature of Opportunities or Challenges in Your Community
Several participants shared concerns about the economic impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on their community and on community members' ability to pay their water bills. One participant shared that they are fortunate that tourism is not a key economic driver in their area, otherwise their revenue would have been more impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. One participant shared that, because of the low response rate to a State Water Board survey on COVID-19 impacts to water systems, there is not accurate statewide data.

One participant shared about their organization's workforce, that they are deemed essential and kept working with some modifications to transportation, and provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In sharing this, they noted a sense of obligation to allow their employees to continue to work, that their employees are often the only ones bringing income into their households. One participant spoke about the challenge of adjusting hours and rotating staff to allow for social distancing. Another shared that there was an initial slow down on projects because of limited contractor availability at the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic and that regulators have not been as available to approve permits.

Several participants also shared that the COVID-19 Pandemic is an opportunity for institutions to reevaluate their priorities and approach to providing services for their communities. A few participants specifically pointed to reimagining streets because of outdoor dining changes as an example of how the COVID-19 Pandemic has prompted a reevaluation of our built environment and public spaces. One participant shared that the response to the COVID-19 Pandemic is like "cracking an egg" and that "there's no going back." Another participant shared that we have an opportunity to re-envision the world we want "as we put the pieces back together."

Several participants also pointed to how the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted their community engagement approach and strategies. Some participants noted that their institution had seen increased participation in public meetings due the ease of connecting virtually and providing public comment over the phone or video calls, as opposed to having to travel to a meeting location. Other participants shared about the challenge of virtual engagement with community members that lack internet access, sharing that a technology gap is also a gap in information dissemination. One participant shared that their ability to do outreach has been substantially affected, especially in low-income communities of color where door-to-door canvassing and community meetings are commonly the best way of engaging people. One participant shared that their office has been hosting teleconference town halls with a phone number for participants to text in their public comments.

OTHER THINGS TO SHARE

Question 8: Are there any things about your community that you want to share with us that we haven't already discussed?

The final question allowed participants to reflect on the entire discussion and contribute new information. In general, this question was usually answered with a summary and reinforcement of things previously shared during the interview. Because analysis found topics discussed

here as being either restated, or relevant to one of the earlier questions, this report includes no results for this eighth question, rather, material provided by interviews considering this question is incorporated elsewhere in these results, and contribute to the recommendations stated in *Section V.*

VII. APPENDIX B: DWR TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT POLICY

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
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MAR 0 8 2016

Department of Water Resources
Tribal Engagement Policy

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is committed to fulfilling its consultation obligations to California Native American Tribes (California Tribes[1]) and their sovereign authority over their members and territories. This Tribal Engagement Policy will strengthen DWR's commitment to improving communication, collaboration, and consultation with California Tribes consistent with the Tribal Consultation Policy directives in Executive Order B-10-11[2], the California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy[3], and AB 52[4].

DWR adopts the following policy principles to achieve early and meaningful tribal engagement and to strengthen and sustain collaboration with California Tribes:

- Establish meaningful dialogue between DWR and California Tribes early on in planning for CEQA projects to ensure that DWR's tribal outreach efforts are consistent with mandated tribal consultation policies, and to ensure that California Tribes know how information from consultation affected DWR's decision making process;
- Establish guidelines to share information between DWR and California Tribes, while protecting their confidential information to the fullest extent of the law;
- Consult with California Tribes to identify and protect tribal cultural resources where feasible, and to develop treatment and mitigation plans to mitigate for impacts to tribal cultural resources and cultural places;
- Develop criteria in communication plans and grant funding decisions for all applicable DWR programs that will facilitate tribal participation;
- Provide cultural competency training for DWR executives, managers, supervisors, and staff on tribal engagement and consultation practices;
- Recognize that California Tribes have distinct cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, public health interests, and traditional ecological knowledge about California's natural resources;
- Enable California Tribes to manage and act as caretakers of tribal cultural resources.

To implement this policy, DWR's Executive Committee of the Environmental Coordination Committee will convene a work group of Division and management staff to develop the needed guidelines, procedures, and resources to implement this Tribal Engagement Policy. The work group will present its proposals to the Governance Board, essential to DWR's government-to-government tribal consultation, for approval.

Carl A. Torgersen
Chief Deputy Director

[1] California Tribes and "Tribal Communities" and "Tribal", include all Federally Recognized Tribes and other California Native Americans as defined in Executive Order B-10-11.

[2] See attached Governor Executive Order B-10-11 established September 19, 2011.

[3] See attached California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy established November 20, 2012.

[4] AB 52 (Gatto) added Chapter 532 (Statutes of 2014) Native American/CEQA; found at Public Resources Code section 5097.94 and in sections of 21000, et seq.

TreePeople

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APPENDIX S- USCR NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT



Upper Santa Clara River Needs Assessment Report

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP)

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGST	Center for Geospatial Science and Technology
CSU	California State University
DACIP	Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
GLAC	Greater Los Angeles County
GUI	Graphic User Interface
IRWM	Integrated Regional Water Management
LA-V	Los Angeles - Ventura Funding Area
LACFCD	Los Angeles County Flood Control District
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
TMDL	total maximum daily loads (non-point source pollution)
USCR	Upper Santa Clara River
WCVC	Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County
WRPI	Water Resources and Policy Initiatives

Chapter 1 Los Angeles-Ventura Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) Background

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) allocated $98 million to the Los Angeles-Ventura (LA-V) Funding Area as part of the $510 million in funding authorized through the Proposition 1 IRWM grant. The LA-Ventura Funding Area "includes three independent Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning regions: Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC), Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC)"[1].

A **Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) Task Force** for the LA-V Funding Area was established with representatives from each of the three IRWM regions to "facilitate a consensus-based approach to implement a Funding Area-wide DACIP that meets the objectives of the Proposition 1 DACIP IRWM Grant Program"[1]. The LA-V Funding Area designated the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) as lead for the DACIP. The purpose of DWR's DACIP funding is to ensure "the involvement of disadvantaged communities (DACs), economically distressed areas (EDA), and underrepresented communities within regions' "[2] .

LACFCD proposed a budget of $9.8 million for the LA-V DACIP activities based on a three-part strategy to address the water management needs in the DACs identified across the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The strategies included local outreach, partnering, and local capacity building through technical assistance for project development. The Funding Area's DACIP Task Force incorporated the strategies in the proposed Tasks below.

- Task 1: Pre-Program & Administration
- Task 2: Community Outreach
- Task 3: Needs Assessment
- Task 4: Project Development

The **DAC Consultants**, TreePeople and California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI) in collaboration with Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Community-based organizations (CBOs), created the WaterTalks Program for the Community Outreach Task (Task 2), to engage the communities selected for focus throughout the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The WaterTalks Program details can be found on the public website, watertalks.csusb.edu. WaterTalks provides the community with access to LA-V DACIP information, information on water related topics for each of the 3 IRWM regions, and access to the Needs Assessment Task materials. This Report summarizes and addresses all aspects of the needs assessment task.

1.1 Needs Assessment Task Objectives

A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted across the LA-Ventura Funding Area. The objective of the needs assessment was to "identify and prioritize water management/infrastructure deficiencies and related community needs in ways that meet IRWM Region objectives to improve water supply and water quality, enhance open space, recreation and habitat, and improve flood management"[1].

A solicitation for Task 3, Task Order 3B Solicitation, was released by the DACIP Task Force.The **Needs Assessment Task, Task 3,** was proposed to be completed through the following 4 sub-tasks shown below:

3.1 Design Needs Assessment

3.2 Community Needs Assessment

3.3 Institutions Needs Assessment

3.4 Project Implementation & Reporting

Under Task 3.1, the needs assessment tools and materials were designed to:

1. Combine "the DWR Needs Assessment Template (community characteristics, drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, water rates and financing) with social, cultural and regional information and analysis gathered in Task 2.1, from the local DAC community-member perspective"[3].
2. Be customized for each region so that it could be utilized for future engagement.
3. Be used to conduct community and institutional needs assessments.
4. Be made available online via WaterTalks website

Under Task 3.2, the objective of the community needs assessment was to reach residents of local DACs using the partnerships with Non-governmental organization (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) established during the community outreach task and knowledge of the communities gathered from that task to gather specific data and feedback about their water related issues.

Under Task 3.3, The objectives of the institutional needs assessment were:

1. To facilitate "workshops and interviews with institutions that provide water and community services to DACs, including cities (officials, water departments), water agencies, agencies that manage parks or natural open spaces, water quality program managers, sanitation districts, flood management entities and mutual water companies."[1]
2. To gather data and address the institutions' knowledge for their DACs' needs and "also any challenges they are facing in serving those needs, participating in IRWM, and meeting water quality, water conservation and other regulatory mandates."[1]
3. To have outreach efforts include education on IRWM, Proposition 1, and the DACIP.
4. To use the data gathered to complete the DWR Needs Assessment Template[3] (see Appendix A).

Under Task 3.4, the Needs Assessment Report is to provide analysis of all data collected under Tasks 3.2 and 3.3. This report will provide analysis for all community and institutional needs assessment responses collected before **June 15th, 2021**.

The need to understand respondent geography (i.e., community or institution locations), similarities (i.e., connects) and differences (i.e., disconnects), especially as they occur in high DAC stress levels across economic, social, and environmental factors (i.e., high DAC Stress Levels), was a primary objective of reporting for the Needs Assessment Task.

To understand and illustrate the spatial context of survey responses, completed survey forms (i.e., ArcGIS Survey 123) were uploaded to an online mapping database tool that will later support the public online mapping database (i.e., Graphic User Interface (GUI), TAPPED App, see Chapter 4).

Illustrating the spatial context of community and institutional responses will further assist DAC Consultants and IRWM representatives (DACIP Task Force members) with determining potential project and technical funding needs to improve and sustain water resources.

To support this effort, a project descriptor template and prioritization criteria were developed using data from the Needs Assessment Task for describing and comparing technical assistance project types, identifying where needs are located and evaluation of different project descriptions using project comparison models. Project identification efforts and the online mapping tool will support IRWM representatives who will continue to use this data to inform the prioritization of IRWM activities.

Below are the Desired Outcomes and Deliverables proposed by the LA-V Task Force for Task 3:

Desired Outcomes:

- Inform and engage DACs and their community leaders in the WCVC Region in a conversation about their water management-related needs, preliminary needs assessment results, and a plan for continued community engagement and active involvement in decision making.
- Gain a better understanding of water management-related community needs to help direct resources and funding for project development.
- Build initial capacity within DACs to develop project concepts and engage technical support for design and project development.
- Increase participation of DAC community members, NGOs, and CBOs in IRWM planning and/or project development activities.

Deliverables:

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment Tool for the Region-specific information.
- All information developed through or collected during the Needs Assessment shall be included in the database.
- Final Needs Assessment Report with Region-specific data and narrative summary of identified community characteristics and specific community water management issues, and the resources required (technical, educational, managerial, and financial) to address the needs of DACs.

- A Technical Memo describing how to prioritize development of programs/projects identified under Task 4, Project Development and engage the community with the process for the Region to receive funding, after the Needs Assessment has been completed. The Region's leadership will decide which programs and projects will compete for future funds.
- Needs Assessment Results presented to communities and other stakeholders.
- Report on dissemination of findings of the Needs Assessment shared with communities and other stakeholders." [3]

1.2 USCR Needs Assessment Task Consultants

To assess community and institutional needs and opportunities across the USCR region, the California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI), was selected as the lead consultant in the USCR and WCVC IRWM planning regions for the Needs Assessment Task, Task 3. **WRPI sub consultants** included PlaceWorks and the Center for Geospatial Science and Technology (CGST) at CSU Northridge. PlaceWorks also contracted with local NGO/CBOsCollege of the Canyons, in USCR who were involved in the community outreach task, Task 2, to continue communications with the community. Each partner brought unique experiences and skill sets used to complete Task 3.

California State University Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)

In addition to the Prop. 1 DACI grant, WRPI has been previously awarded funding through the State Water Resources Control Board, California Energy Commission, and Department of Water Resources (Santa Ana Watershed) to provide technical assistance and community engagement to disadvantaged communities across the state. These other grant funded efforts have included or resulted in income surveys, preliminary engineering, CEQA, Feasibility studies, and community engagement. The CSU also works with state agencies and DACs to submit State Revolving Fund construction applications through the FAAST system.

PlaceWorks

PlaceWorks assists both public- and private-sector clients throughout the state in the fields of comprehensive planning, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), urban design, landscape architecture, community outreach, graphic design and environmental review. PlaceWorks has completed numerous community planning, park, and open space projects in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, and frequently works with community organizations to develop and implement outreach and engagement components of projects.

Center for Geospatial Science & Technology at California State University, Northridge (CSUN)

The Center for Geospatial Science & Technology at California State University, Northridge (CGST) is an interdisciplinary research center focused on applications, education, and innovative solutions to real world problems using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). As part of its mission, CGST serves as a leader and catalyst for the advancement of GIS technology for academic institutions, private industry, and the public sector.

The Center has worked on over 50 projects with partners and clients in numerous sectors. A majority of CGST's clients are state, federal, and local public agencies such as CA Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, CalTrans, US Forest Service, LA County Department of Public Health, and LA Department of Water and Power. During the past 16 years, the Center has deepened its involvement in a variety of both locally focused and large, statewide projects related to water resources including the development of a statewide surface water dataset and a water quality geospatial database, among others. The Center has also been heavily involved in the earlier phases of the DAC Involvement Activities Program. Tasks included design and development of the web-based project evaluation tool (TAPPED), development of online needs assessment surveys, centralized database management, DAC modeling and identification, web map development, and implementation of a data/information dissemination hub.

College of the Canyons
College of the Canyons (COC) provides academic training and educational services to the Santa Clarita Valley (SCV), as well as enrolls students from adjoining districts. With regard to the Upper Santa Clara River IRWM, the College is actively connected throughout numerous partnerships, collaborations, and coalitions. These efforts include working with local school districts, businesses, and non-profits. Specifically, this scope includes the USCR areas of #115 to #123 as listed on the Santa Clarita DAC Map. Targeted sectors include those identified in Newhall, Val del Oro/Upstream Newhall Creek, Canyon Country, Bouquet Canyon/Seco Canyon Neighborhood, Lake Hughes/Munz/Elizabeth, Val Verde, and Castaic. Additional communities involve migrant and resident farmworkers, Native American tribal members, and homeless people, many of whom are living in or near rivers and streams.

Chapter 2 Methodology for USCR Needs Assessment

To assess the way and extent to which diverse communities and institutions interact with water resources, the DAC Consultants recommended to the Task Force an interdisciplinary and multi-tiered, phased approach. This included working with existing datasets, institutions, NGOs and CBOs to identify potential survey and interview participants, applying various outreach and communication strategies, creating surveys and interactive database tools (i.e., survey forms, maps) and ensuring the quality of data accurately represented participants' responses. These efforts resulted in the development of two survey tools, a community and institutional survey. The format of the surveys included closed and open ended questions that focused on community members and institutional (agency) needs, opportunities, and conditions. The two surveys were available online and as a hard copy.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, information was not gathered through workshops, door-to-door discussions and in-person one-on-one interviews as originally proposed. Different methods were used to gather information while meeting local public health safety guidelines and the needs of each DAC's members and institutions.

2.1 Design of Needs Assessment

2.1.1 Development of Survey Questions

The DAC consultants collaborated on the development of one community survey form and one institutional survey form for all 3 IRWM planning regions, GLAC, USCR, and WCVC.

Community Survey

The community survey was developed to collect feedback from people living in DAC's identified in each region. The questions included in the community survey were designed to address the required information in the DWR Needs Assessment Template (see **Appendix A**) for all three IRWM regions, while also incorporating the specific needs of each region. The community survey language was reviewed by community groups to ensure that it was comprehensible for the targeted audience.

An additional goal of this survey was to include survey questions that would allow the issues and project ideas to be mapped using an online ArcGIS mapping interface. This allows DAC Consultants to map approximate locations of survey responses to identify locations of water related issues and needs as well as what the community sees as potential solutions.

TreePeople served as the lead on creating the first draft of the community survey questions and the format. The first draft of the community survey was shared with the Task Force in June 2020. The draft community survey was then presented to the GLAC NGOs, WCVC DAC Committee members and other stakeholders for their review and comments.

Institutional Survey

The WRPI team took the lead on developing the institutional survey. The WRPI team used the California RuralWater Association (Cal Rural) survey questions used during SAWPA DACIP Needs Assessment as a template. This template was compared to the DWR Needs Assessment requirements and the draft community survey developed by TreePeople. The draft institutional survey was presented to the Task Force, Consultants, GLAC NGOs, WCVC DAC Committee members and other stakeholders for their review and comments. The WRPI team worked with Stantec and the CSUN CGST team to finalize the institutional survey questions and format. The institutional survey was used to conduct interviews with institutions through virtual meetings, further referred to as institutional interviews, where responses were taken by notetakers. The institutional survey was also available as an excel sheet for institutions who could not meet virtually.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements

Research conducted by Faculty or Staff involving human subjects at a CSUcampus requires an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application to be submitted to the CSUSB's Institutional Review Board Committee for review and approval. The IRB process ensures that when CSUSB faculty and staff are collecting data from individuals that the individual is presented with enough information about the survey they are participating in as well as how responses will be stored and shared with the public. a This process requires that participating individuals acknowledge that they consent to taking the survey, by agreeing to a statement that outlines how their responses will be utilized within the research design and implementation (i.e. informed consent). To

decrease any form of risk to the community and institutions participating in the survey, direct identifiers were not collected from the community, and were scrubbed from institutional interview notes. The introduction and informed consent presented to the survey respondents before taking the community survey online, as a hard copy, or on the phone is shown below:

Introduction: "Participation in our WaterTalks community survey will help ensure that communities' needs, concerns, questions, and insights can be considered to become part of the State's future water projects. By identifying community needs and priorities, your input will help identify and prioritize projects within the LA-Ventura IRWM region for Prop 1 technical assistance funding as well as ongoing and future funding decisions. This Survey will take approximately 10 minutes."

Informed consent: "Your identity and your responses will remain confidential and, of course, you are free to decline to answer any particular survey question. By clicking below, you acknowledge that you have been informed of, and understand, the purpose of the study, and freely consent to participate. Further, you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older. Please indicate this acknowledgement by selecting "Agree and Continue." Selecting "Disagree" will end the survey."

Once individuals complete the survey, they are directed to contact information if they have any questions. The CSUSB IRB leadership approved the information and survey questions presented to the community, as well as the process for maintaining the responses in a secure database and the use of the responses.

2.1.2 Designing the Needs Assessment Tool

Community Survey Tool

The **Needs Assessment Task** required that the DAC Consultants implement a survey platform that was capable of housing a variety of data (both spatial and nonspatial) from various sources in an organized format. The tool needed to offer options for both open-ended (i.e., write-in) and predefined/standardized responses to user input as well as the ability to identify geographic locations. Furthermore, CGST's LA-Ventura DAC Involvement Program Data Hub (Data Hub) already housed data and reference material on an ESRI ArcGIS Hub site (https://dacip-hub-csungis.hub.arcgis.com) and required a platform which allowed responses to be integrated into the same framework for analysis. The Data Hub serves as a central repository for data and data-related products supporting DACIP through the WaterTalks effort. ESRI's Survey 123 software was selected for its survey design capabilities, database management functionality and compatibility with other project components.

PlaceWorks used the approved community survey language to create an ArcGIS Survey 123 form for online use, and a hard copy form for printing and distributing. The ArcGIS Survey 123 form was tested prior to being public facing on the WaterTalks website. The ArcGIS Survey 123 form for the community survey, was posted to the WaterTalks website on September 11th 2020 as the WaterTalks Survey. The introduction and informed consent in Chapter 2.1.1 were presented on the website before the link to the WaterTalks Survey.

PlaceWorks created a separate ArcGIS Survey 123 form for NGOs conducting phone banking and for the WRPI team to enter any surveys submitted by mail.

The community survey was translated to Spanish, Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi to meet the language needs of all three IRWM regions. WRPI led the translation of the community survey language in Spanish, with the help of GLAC NGOs. The GLAC NGOs led translations of the survey language in Korean, Cantonese, and Farsi. PlaceWorks and CSU created survey forms for each language and posted each of them with the appropriate translated introduction and informed consent.

Institutional Survey Tool

Survey Platform

The Needs Assessment Task required that the DAC Consultants implement a survey platform that was capable of housing a variety of data (both spatial and nonspatial) from various sources in an organized format. The tool needed to offer options for both open-ended (i.e. write-in) and predefined/standardized responses to user input as well as the ability to identify geographic locations. Furthermore, the Data Hub already housed data and reference material on an ESRI ArcGIS Hub site (https://dacip-hub-csungis.hub.arcgis.com) and required a platform which allowed responses to be integrated into the same framework for analysis. ESRI's Survey 123 software was selected for its survey design capabilities, database management functionality and compatibility with other project components.

Creating the Database and Forms

ArcGIS Survey 123 forms were designed for the institutional needs assessment data entry and compilation process. The forms allowed participating DAC consultants to enter interview responses from candidate institutions in an accessible and intuitive interface. The participating team members met several times to develop the list of interview questions based on identifying critical needs components and other pieces of information to be collected during the institutional interview effort. Once a list of questions was finalized, a data table schema was developed. This built out the design of the backend database that would eventually hold the data to be collected. Each question was reviewed and where possible, predetermined, standardized responses were developed and associated with the appropriate questions. This was an effort to make the data more streamlined, consistent, and analysis-ready. Further, developing each question and determining access to the institutional interview data required adherence to IRB requirements for confidentiality. The data table schema underwent review by the participating team members to allow for additional comments and modification.

Once the database and table schema were finalized, draft survey forms were designed in MS Excel and translated to Survey 123. Additional review by the DAC Consultants was held. Specifically, design elements, such as color schemes, font sizes, and collapsible sections were addressed and updated. Finally, a production-ready form was developed and tied to the backend database to house the data to be entered. Static, offline versions of the survey form were generated to allow the note takers participating in institutional interviews more flexibility and to account for potential unreliable internet or absence of internet during the interviews. MS Excel

and MS Word versions of the survey were generated for this purpose. When static versions of the form were used, data entry into the Survey 123 form was later carried out, ensuring all data was eventually entered into the standardized Survey 123 form and compiled in the backend database.

Data Entry Process

After the production-ready versions of the Survey 123 form and the backend database were developed, the CSUN Team developed a data entry process.The institutional needs assessment form and data was not public facing as WRPI and Stantec were facilitating interviews and note takers were summarizing notes to enter into database, making sure to remove direct identifiers, to comply with the IRB requirements in Chapter 2.1.1. The respondents were referred to by their job title. This was considered in all steps of the workflow process. First, a shared ArcGIS Online (AGOL) account was created and provided only to the participating interviewers and note takers. This account gave them access to the online form for data entry and also allowed them to retrieve partially filled out forms to resume data entry or to update data that had been previously entered.

Next, a private Google Sheet was established and shared only with approved interviewers and note takers. This sheet had two main purposes. First, it served as a tracker, listing various tracking information such as the different institutions to be interviewed, the interviewing party, date of interview, status of data entry, etc. Secondly, this sheet served as a gateway to the data entry form for each institution to be interviewed. The CSUN Team prepopulated a data form for each institution to be interviewed with basic information (i.e. name of the institution) and then generated a unique URL for each form. The URLs were stored in the Google Sheet, making those forms available only to the approved interviewers and note takers for later data entry. The Google Sheet was updated by multiple parties as the interview and data entry process was constructed and was critical for status updates and assessments.

The CSUN team developed a detailed instruction document for note takers and interviewers (**Figure 2.1**). This document contained all necessary steps and information needed to carry out the data entry and tracking process. It also ensured the multiple people accessing the database and entering data would perform the work in a consistent and controlled fashion. Select note takers and interviewers participated in beta testing the data entry process for a sample institution in order to identify any issues before moving on to production/live data entry. Minor improvements were made after testing, after which, the process was fully moved into production mode and used throughout the institutional needs assessment.

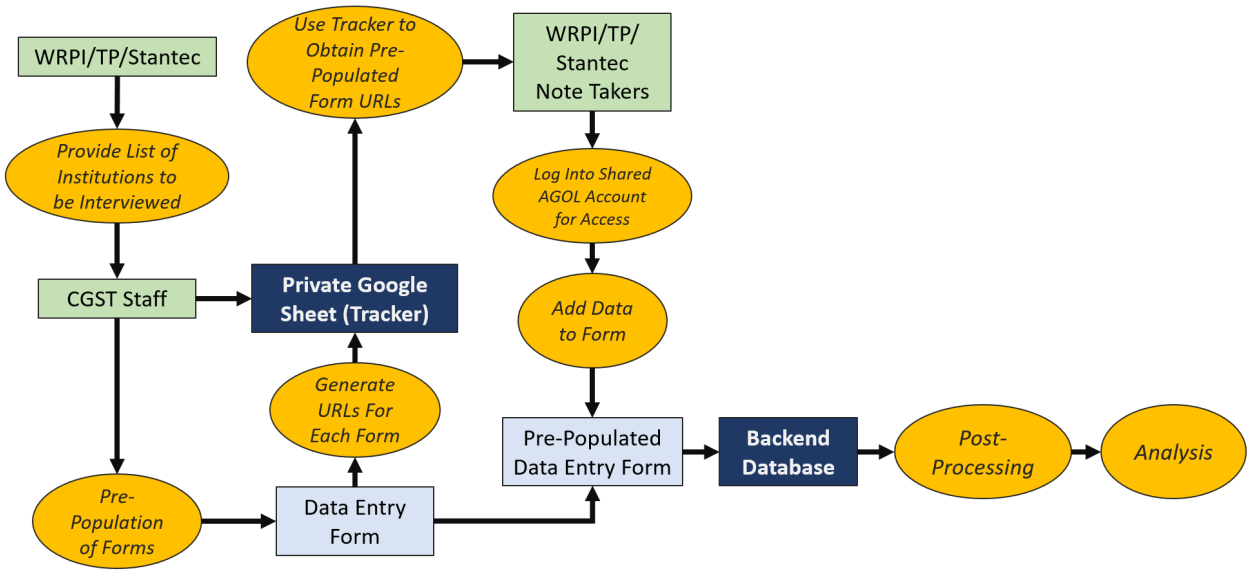


Figure 2.1: Institutional Needs Assessment Data

2.2 Conducting Community Needs Assessment

2.2.1 Determine Audience

PlaceWorks took the lead on tasks directly involving community members, including community survey development, community outreach, distribution of the survey, and working with partner NGOs in the WCVC and USCR IRWM regions.

The DACs in USCR identified as **priority areas** chosen for targeted outreach in the LA-V DACIP Proposal[1] include the following 9 areas:

- Newhall
- Valle del Oro/Upstream Newhall Creek
- Canyon Country
- Bouquet Canyon/Seco Canyon Neighborhood
- Lake Hughes/Munz/Elizabeth
- Val Verde
- Castaic
- Acton
- Agua Dulce

The following information was gathered to identify different forms of outreach and identify the best method of delivering the community survey to community members:

- Zip Codes within the USCR DAC ‘s boundaries
- regions without access to internet
- average age of community members in DACs
- primary languages in the community

2.2.2 Outreach Methods

The WaterTalks campaign, heavily dependent on the College of the Canyons, strategically sought to engage communities and people through a variety of outreach strategies. The outreach engagement plan for the Needs Assessment Task began in November 2020 and ended on April 30, 2021.

Due to the COVID 19 global pandemic, the outreach strategy was revised to follow COVID 19 safety guidelines. In March of 2020, the Community Outreach Task strategy transitioned from in-person engagement to virtual meetings and online engagement. The Water Talks Survey was key to the COVID-19 outreach strategy. All engagement materials encouraged participants to give input by taking the WaterTalks survey. Participants had the opportunity to win a $100 gift card to incentivize community members to take the WaterTalks Survey. The WaterTalks Survey was originally scheduled to close in March 2021 but was later extended to April 30th, 2021.

Outreach strategies to circulate the WaterTalks survey and education information to communities included the following:

- Virtual Events
- Mailing of printed WaterTalks newspaper and WaterTalks Surveys mailed to residences in communities
- Distribution of WaterTalks bookmarks to local libraries. Social media posts
- Paid online and newsletter advertisements
- Email blasts (E-blasts) to community partners, institution, and agency outreach
- Phone banking to residents
- Institutional and school outreach

Outreach efforts were coordinated and facilitated by PlaceWorks staff with support from project partners including Task Force members. Upper Santa Clara Region (USCR) outreach project partner included staff and students from College of the Canyons (CoC). The College of the Canyons students and staff distributed thousands of surveys through the Newhall Library system. Bookmarks and newspapers were distributed to all check out books throughout COVID. The surveys and flyers were also distributed during the City of Santa Clarita Neighborhood Clean Up event on September 26, 2020. Flyers were placed in coffee shops and other open businesses in each of the communities identified. See Appendix B to review outreach materials.

Virtual Events

Due to delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic, several engagement events from the Community Outreach Task were delayed in the USCR region. They were conducted as virtual events and were an opportunity to announce and invite participation in the Survey. A summary of those events are included below:

- 8:30 am, February 1, 2020 - Newhall Farmers Market
- 7:00 pm, March 10, 2020 - Val Verde Civic Association Meeting
- 4:00 pm, November 7, 2020 - Canyon Country WaterTalks
- 6:00 pm, November 19, 2020 - Santa Clarita WaterTalks
- 6:00 pm, December 3, 2020 - Acton WaterTalks

College of the Canyons students mailed surveys to each resident of the senior housing community that is included in the Bouquet Canyon DAC. No physical contact was allowed as a result of COVID 19 protections for seniors.

USCR Newspaper and Printed Surveys

Approximately 14,000 bilingual (English and Spanish) newspapers were printed and distributed by mail or dropped off at local businesses, libraries, and local agencies and community organizations in USCR between January 2020 and April 2021(Tables 2.1 to 2.3). The newspaper included educational information about local water issues and resources as well as the WaterTalks Survey and prepaid postmarked envelope.

Table 2.1 USCR Newspapers Distributed by Mail

Priority Area	# of Newspaper Distributed
Bouquet Canyon	333
Canyon Country	1,401
Lake Hughes	345
Newhall	2,960
Santa Clarita	2,765
Val Verde	746
Agua Dulce	1,011
Acton	1,916
TOTAL	**11,477 Newspapers**

Table 2.2 USCR Newspapers Distributed to USCR Libraries

Library	Newspaper Distributed
Old Town Newhall Library	500
Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library	400

TOTAL	**900**

Table 2.3 USCR Newspaper Distributed to Local Businesses

Local Business	Newspaper Distributed
Venice Pizzeria, Canyon Country	50
Granada Villa Mobile Home Park, Canyon Country	150
Arts Liquor, Canyon Country	50
Caravilla Mobile Home Park, Canyon Country	60
Canyon Market, Canyon Country	30
Newhall Market, Newhall	60
Bonanza Liquor Market, Newhall	40
Lost Stock, Newhall	50
Vons, Newhall	75
Spa Source International, Santa Clarita	30
Vons, Bouquet Canyon	100
Island Pacific Seafood Market, Bouquet Canyon	65
TOTAL	**760**

Library Bookmarks

Bookmarks were created to provide community members with information about the WaterTalks program and Survey opportunity. 2,000 bookmarks were printed for USCR.

Partner Newsletters/Outreach Materials

WaterTalkspartners advertised the WaterTalks campaign on the SCVWA Water Currents Newsletter, Green Santa Clarita website and the Val Verde Civic Association.

Paid Advertisements

Paid advertisements were used to target community members through printed and digital media.

1. **Printed Marketing.** Print media was used to target USCR priority areas through advertisements in the County Journal. A total of two WaterTalks ads were posted in the County Journal. In November 2020, an ad was posted in the County Journal to promote the December 3rd WaterTalks meeting hosted by the WRPI and PlaceWorks. A second ad was posted in March 2021 to promote the WaterTalks Survey.
2. **Paid Digital Marketing**. Digital marketing services, Signal and Spectrum Online, were used to promote the WaterTalks campaign and survey by targeting priority areas communities in the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR), Ventura County, and Greater Los Angeles (GLAC).
    i. Signal posted web banners to promote the WaterTalks program and Survey. This advertisement campaign ran from November 23, 2020 to December 22, 2020. Metrics were not collected for this effort.

    ii. Spectrum online posted digital advertisements about the WaterTalks program and Survey. Priority areas in USCR had 105 total clicks (83 mobile clicks, 44 desktop clicks, 1 tablet click).

Project Website

1. **Online WaterTalks Survey**. The WaterTalks survey was a 23-question survey that asked participants questions relating to local water concerns and community water planning efforts. Participants that took the survey were informed that the Survey results would be used to help inform the use of Proposition 1 technical assistance funding and on-going and future water-related project funding decisions. The WaterTalks survey was available through the WaterTalks website (https://watertalks.csusb.edu/) in five languages English, Spanish, Cantonese, Korean, and Farsi.

1. **Story Maps.** Interactive online story maps were created for selected priority areas in Ventura County, USCR and GLAC regions. These maps were an online tool for people to learn about the water in their environment, the water in their environment, their tap water and water consumption.

2. **WaterTalks Information Factsheets and Newspaper.** WaterTalks materials were available for community members to download factsheets and the WaterTalks Ventura and USCR newspaper. There were three WaterTalks educational factsheets: (1) WaterTalks overview factsheet (2) WaterTalks Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) funding factsheet and (3) water safety relating to COVID-19factsheet.

3. **Meeting Materials.** The WaterTalks website includes WaterTalks meeting schedules and post meeting summaries.

Social Media Outreach

The WaterTalks social media platform actively posted consistent program information and water related resources on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Social media posts were used to engage followers about the program and encouraged community members to take the WaterTalks Survey. Posts were made throughout the duration of the WaterTalks program by the DAC Consultants and subconsultants, as well as community partners and local agencies. 37 posts were posted onto the WaterTalks Facebook page and Instagram account between January 2021 to April 2021. WaterTalks animations were created as fun and interactive resource about the program. Animations were posted on to all WaterTalks social media platforms. 61 posts were posted onto the WaterTalks Twitter account between October 2019 to March 2021.

E-blasts

A series of three e-blasts were created to engage existing and potential community partners. E-blasts were sent out in November 2020, February 2021, and March 2021. E-blast #1 introduced the WaterTalks program to communities. E-blast #2 reminded communities to participate in the WaterTalks Survey. E-blast #3 served as another reminder and announced that closing date of the survey.

E-blasts to Existing Community Partners. WaterTalks e-blasts were created to inform existing project partners about the WaterTalks program and Survey. The E-blast to existing community partners provided instructions about how community groups can get involved as well as provided graphic materials for partners to use and asked to share information with their community networks. Over 43 community partners received this e-blast.

E-blasts to Potential Community Partners. Attached to the existing community partner e-blast included an e-blast to potential community partners. This e-blast was forwarded by existing community partners to engage and inform other community partners about the program. This E-blast provided information about the WaterTalks program as well as links to the website and Survey. Over 200 recipients received this e-blast.

Phone Banking

WaterTalks engaged community members to participate in the Survey by calling residents in the Ventura County and USCR regions. Phone banking efforts were made by PlaceWorks between January 2021 and April 2021.

PlaceWorks Phone Banking: PlaceWorks called a total of 650 residents in USCR priority areas. Below are the numbers of calls made to residents in USCR communities:

i. Canyon Country: 270 calls
ii. Newhall: 30 calls
iii. Castaic Lake: 334 calls
iv. Nyeland Acres: 16 calls

School Outreach

School districts across the Upper Santa Clara River priority areas were emailed and called in March 2021. School districts were asked to participate in the WaterTalks program by sharing the

WaterTalks Survey with their staff, teachers, and parents. PlaceWorks called 33 schools and/or school districts in the USCR region.

Institutional Outreach

WaterTalks reached out to water agencies and relevant institutions for program support. Two institutions were targeted in the USCR region, they include the LARC foundation and the LA Waterworks(districts 36 and 37).

2.2.3 WaterTalks Survey Outcomes

Tables 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 show the quantity of responses by type of survey response and by each of the five languages throughout all three IRWM planning regions. The WRPI team led the data entry effort for WaterTalks Surveys returned through the mail to Cal State San Bernardino. The DAC Consultants agreed to include an opportunity drawing in all three IRWM planning regions for community members that completed the WaterTalks Survey. "A way to incorporate more incentives for people who participated in the survey was to give those who chose the opportunity to enter in a drawing to win a $100 VISA gift card. TreePeople donated these gift cards (as they are ineligible for reimbursement through Proposition 1 and DWR), and every week, a winner from a WaterTalks community was selected. At the end of the needs assessment, 19 gift cards were distributed throughout the funding area."4 (Greater Los Angeles County Community Strengths and Needs Assessment- A Water Perspective Draft - v9.7.21 11, pg.10). A link to a separate website for the Opportunity Drawing is displayed after the WaterTalks Survey is completed online. TreePeople carried out the distribution of gift cards to winners of the opportunity drawing for community members in all three IRWM planning regions, shown in **Table 2.7.**

Table 2.4 Total Summary of Surveys by Response Type

Survey Response Type	GLAC	Ventura County	USCR	Total
Phone/Mail-in/**In Person**	952	378	97	1427
Online	2732	240	210	3182
Total	3684	618	307	4609

Table 2.5 Total Summary of Surveys by Language

Language	GLAC	Ventura County	USCR	Total
English	3235	502	302	4039
Spanish	415	116	2	533
Korean	34	0	3	37
Cantonese	0	0	0	0
Total	3684	618	307	4609

Table 2.6 Opportunity Drawing Outcome

Number	Zip Code	DAC
1	90011	Adams/Central
2	91733	South El Monte
3	91732	Greater El Monte
4	91731	Greater El Monte
5	91042	Tujunga
6	91350	USCR
7	91606	Greater North Hollywood
8	90004	Koreatown
9	93033	Oxnard
10	91335	Central Reseda/Southern Northridge
11	90008	Leimert Park
12	91350	New Hall Bouquet
13	93015	Piru/Fillmore
14	90065	Cypress/Glassell Park
15	90023	Boyle Heights
16	91748	Rowland/Industry
17	91101	Northeast Pasadena
18	90222	Greater Compton
19	90810	West Long Beach

2.3 Conducting Institutional Needs Assessment

The WRPI team took the lead on institutional needs assessment survey development, outreach, facilitating and general project management.

2.3.1 Determine Audience

Determining the first list of institutions to interview was done through an analysis of existing Median Household Income (MHI) data within Water Service Providers (WSPs) serving the chosen DACs in USCR as well as recommendations from the USCR IRWM representatives. WRPI first sent a list of WSPs recommended for interviews based on percentage of DAC and SDAC population within the WSP's service area to the Project Managers. This was determined using the existing data from the Data Hub.

Meetings with the USCR IRWM representatives led to the recommended list of institutions to outreach to shown in the table below. Once several outreach attempts were done for 1st priority institutions, additional institutions were added. The tables below summarize the institutions chosen for the institutional needs assessment in USCR.

Table 2.7 Institutions Identified for DACIP Needs Assessment in USCR

Interview Priority List	DAC Priority Areas	Type	Institution
1st List	Santa Clarita	Non-Profit	LARC foundation
1st List	Acton	Water Service Provider	Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 37
1st List	Val Verde	Water Service Provider	Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 36
1st List	Santa Clarita, Bouquet Canyon, Newhall, Canyon Country	Water Service Provider	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency
1st List	Lake Hughes	Water Service Provider	California Water Service CO-Lake Hughes
1st List	Lake Elizabeth	Water Service Provider	Lake Elizabeth Mutual Water Company
1st List	Agua Dulce	Water Service Provider	North Trails Mutual Water Company
1st List	Agua Dulce	Water Service Provider	SPV Water Company

1st List	Lake Hughes	Camp	The Painted Turtle Camp
2nd List	Agua Dulce	Mobile Home Park	Casa Dulce Estates
2nd List	Agua Dulce	Mobile Home Park	Oak Grove Family Park
2nd List	Lake Hughes	Mobile Home Park	The Oaks
2nd List	Lake Hughes/Elizabeth	School	Hughes-Elizabeth Lake Unified School District
2nd List	Newhall	School	Newhall School district
2nd List	Canyon Country	Church	Real Life Church

2.3.2 Outreach Strategies

WPRI led outreach efforts to institutions through emails and phone correspondence to inform institutions about the WaterTalks program, the LA-V Funding Area DACIP, their local IRWM group, and requesting their participation in the institutional needs assessment (**Table 2.8**). USCR IRWM representatives led further outreach and coordination with institutional contacts to solicit participation in the institutional needs assessment. The following table summarizes outreach efforts in USCR. The email language sent to the prioritized institutions is included in Appendix C.

Table 2.8 Outreach to Institutions in USCR

Institution	First Outreach	Second Outreach	Response
LARC foundation	WPRI received request for interview by Regional Project Manager and was connected to LARC foundation by phone	Follow up email was sent to schedule interview date and time	Interview 11/30/20
Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 37 - Acton	WRPI received request for interview by LA WW District representative at the Acton WaterTalks.	Follow up email was sent to schedule interview date and time	Interview 3/4/21
Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 36- Val Verde	WRPI received request for interview by LA WW District representative at the Acton WaterTalks.	Follow up email was sent to schedule interview date and time	Interview 3/4/21
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency	Regional Project Manager directed WRPI to best contact.	Follow up email was sent to schedule interview date and time	Interview 3/11/21

California Water Service CO-Lake Hughes	1st phone call 1/20/21, second call and introductory email 3/3/21	Institution replied requesting interview questions and possible interest in participating but there was no further response	No Further Response
Lake Elizabeth Mutual Water Company	1st phone call 1/20/21, introductory email sent 2/22/21, and on 3/3/21	Institution requested introductory email, but there was no further response	No Further Response
North Trails Mutual Water Company	1st phone call 1/20/21, left voicemail 3/12/21	introductory email sent 2/22/21	No Response
SPV Water Company	1st phone call 1/20/21, second call 3/11/21	intro email sent 2/22/21	No Response
The Painted Turtle Camp	WRPI left voicemails to COO's office and spoke with different staff 2/16/21, and sent introductory email 3/31/21	institution responded to WRPI that they were unsure about participating and no further response	No Further Response
Casa Dulce Estates	1st phone call 1/20/21	introductory email sent 2/22/21	No Response
Oak Grove Family Park	1st phone call 1/20/21	WRPI sent introductory email to contact 3/16/21	No Response
The Oaks	WRPI left voicemail 1/20/21	WRP called 3-7/21	No Response
Hughes-Elizabeth Lake Unified School District	intro email sent 4/12/2021	follow up email sent 4/23/21	No Response
Newhall School district	intro email sent 4/12/2021	follow up email sent 4/23/21	Not Interested
Real Life Church	voicemail left 4/12/21 could not find an email address online	left voicemail 4/26/21, received call back	Not Interested

2.3.3 Interview Process and Outcomes

Due to COVID-19 regulations from the CSU, WRPI was unable to conduct in person interviews. Interviews were done through Zoom. The institutional needs assessment was available as a digital form using Excel to be filled out by institutions if a Zoom call was not possible or not preferred. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Each was recorded with the permission of the interviewee. The following paragraph was read to the interviewee before the interview began introducing the program and assuring informed consent as part of the IRB requirement.

"Thanks for meeting with us. We are here as a part of the Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Regional Water Management planning effort to learn from you and document the strengths and needs of your community. The planning effort wants to benefit from your experience and include your perspective about your community and your local water. We anticipate that this interview will take between 60 and 75 minutes. We want to be respectful of your time, so we may steer the conversation to be able to stay within that time frame. We will be taking detailed notes because we want to make sure we capture what you say. We may occasionally pause to write things down or ask you to repeat something. Your participation with us today will be kept anonymous. Our notes will not be delivered to the Program, only our report. In the report we will refer to people generally, for instance, as "a city council member" or "a water supply agency staff member." We have broad, open-ended questions prepared for you. There are no right or wrong answers, so please respond however you would like. We may ask some follow-up or clarifying questions. Before we begin, do you have any questions?"

Table 2.9 lists the institutions that completed the needs assessment in USCR, either through a virtual interview, or by submitting their responses through an Excel form of the institutional needs assessment. Their responses or interview notes were then input into an ArcGIS Survey 123 form created for the institutional needs assessment.

Table 2.9 Institutions Interviewed In the USCR Region

DAC Priority Area Served	Institution Type	Institution Name
Santa Clarita	Non-Profit/ community for people with disabilities	LARC foundation
Acton	Water Service Provider	Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 37 - Acton
Val Verde	Water Service Provider	Los Angeles Co. Waterworks Districts (LACWD) - District 36- Val Verde
Santa Clarita, Bouquet Canyon, Newhall, Canyon Country	Water Service Provider	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency

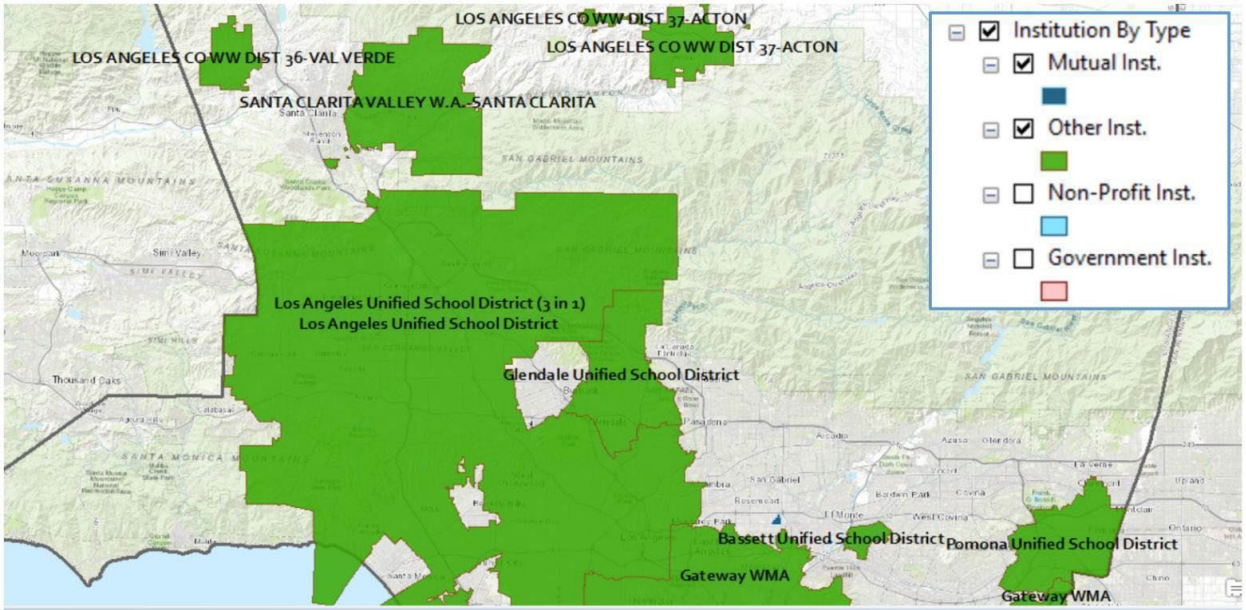
2.3.4 Institutional Needs Data Geographies

Institutional responses collected during interviews (i.e. Survey 123 tool) were exported from the ArcGIS Online (AGOL) environment and underwent several rounds of cleanup (**Figure 2.2**). Since the data was collected through ArcGIS Survey 123 and due to the number of free-response (write-in) questions, much of the data contained extra characters or was in a format that was not usable for analysis (i.e. containing extra carriage returns, extra underscores, etc.). Data cleanup processes were automated where possible to ensure consistency and completeness in the corrections.

Additionally, the data was inherently tabular, meaning it did not have a spatial component after

being extracted from AGOL. Since this data will be used as project evaluation criteria, it was important to provide some kind of spatial reference. It was agreed that it would be best to spatially represent each institution that was interviewed by using their area of influence boundary. In many cases, such as with school districts, assigning a spatial reference was straightforward as it was clear which preexisting boundaries should be used. However, there were several institutions whose area of influence was not obvious. In these cases, a request for feedback was sent out to those that interviewed the target institutions. Feedback was collected and boundaries were determined.

The resulting institutional data contained cleaned up tabular data along with geographies representing each institution. This data was contained in an ESRI file geodatabase and shared with LA-V DACIP DAC Consultants, TreePeople's team and WRPI, who were part of the institutional needs assessment interviews via a private (non-public facing) AGOL group and a set of private web maps to aid in reporting. The data will later be used to identify similarities (i.e. connects) differences (i.e. disconnects) between stakeholders as well as serving as the primary tool to identify and develop project evaluation criteria within Task 4.



Table

Other Inst.

Institution_Name	Q3_County	Q4_IRWM	Q6_Writein
LOS ANGELES CO WW DIST 36-VAL VERDE	Los Angeles County	Upper Santa Clara River	County Waterworks District
LOS ANGELES CO WW DIST 37-ACTON	Los Angeles County	Upper Santa Clara River	County Waterworks District
Bassett Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Glendale Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Los Angeles Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District
Lynwood Unified School District	Los Angeles County	Greater Los Angeles County	School District

Figure 2.2: Snapshot of the institutional needs data showing "other" institution types (i.e. school districts).

2.4 Tribal Needs Assessment Methods

Note: Report section is pending and will be made available when complete.

Chapter 3 Community-Institutional Characteristics and Survey Response Assessment

To determine the type of stress communities may be experiencing related to social, environmental and economic factors, a disadvantaged community Stress Model (i.e. DAC Stress Model) was developed utilizing an index composed of three data sources to demonstrate what census tracts indicate a high level of stress. These data sources provide an index of scores that are compiled using multiple variables as described in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1 DAC Stress Model Data Sources, Description and Application

Data Source	Variable Description	Application
Enviroscreen 3.0 Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), on behalf of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)	CalEnviroScreen identifies California communities by census tract that are disproportionately burdened by, and vulnerable to, multiple sources of pollution. https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30	Higher numbers indicate higher stress
Median Household Income (MHI) United States Census	MHI includes the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Applied California Poverty Level of $31,000 as the MHI threshold for poverty. https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html	Lower numbers indicate higher stress.
Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	Natural disasters and infectious disease outbreaks can pose a threat to a community's health. Socially vulnerable populations are especially at risk during public health emergencies because of factors like socioeconomic status, household composition, minority status, or housing type and transportation. CDC/ATSDR SVI Data and Documentation Download | Place and Health | ATSDR	Higher numbers indicate higher stress

Additionally, **Appendix E** outlines the steps that were applied to develop the DAC Stress Model Levels. The stress model was applied to census tracts to determine where high and low levels of DAC stress communities were present across USCR. Applying this model, specific community characteristics can be identified utilizing the individual indices scores (i.e. enviroscreen), as well as the composite score that reveals that DAC stress level. This will assist with identifying the types and overarching themes of participant responses and how they spatially align with levels of DAC stress across community and institutional boundaries.

Aligning survey responses with DAC stress model results required WRPI and CGST to observe survey questions that identified stakeholders needs, strengths, and potential solutions related to drinking water, agricultural production, industrial uses and to support high quality environmental resources. Developing community survey and institutional interview questionnaires resulted in variability in the types of questions and subsequently the information gathered as some questions were community centric (i.e. relationship with government and agencies), while others were institutional specific (i.e. technical capacity needs). Where similar community and institutional questions aligned, broad themes such as "availability and quality of water resources" and "engagement" were developed to determine relationships in responses across stakeholder types (i.e. Sections 3.2, 3.3).

Utilizing these overarching themes, WRPI and CGST consultants observed trends in community stakeholder responses by determining high frequency responses for a given survey question across the UCSR with a specific focus on high stress DAC areas (Section 3.2). Trends in institutional themes were similarly identified by reviewing interview responses from institutional staff or volunteers. Common themes across institutions (e.g. infrastructure, water rates) are associated with specific examples that highlight how the various institutional types (e.g. water mutuals vs. city water departments) responded (Section 3.3). This process also assisted with understanding the extent to which community and institutional stakeholders aligned (i.e. connect) or not (i.e. disconnected) in their perceptions of water resource issues and related community needs. WRPI and CGST also noted when project needs or examples of successful programs and collaborations were shared (Chapter 4).

3.1 Characterizing the Upper Santa Clara Region

The Upper Santa Clara Region (USCR) contains diverse landscapes encompassing variable environmental (e.g. climate, terrain) and socio-economic (e.g. demographics, household income) characteristics (**Figure 3.1)**. For example, the City of Santa Clarita located in the central portion of the study site, is a rapidly growing urban and suburban landscape just north of the City of Los Angeles within the County of Los Angeles. The built environment is typified by post-WWII sprawling compact to low density suburban developments, interstates, and related impervious surfaces. In contrast, the surrounding areas are characterized by smaller more rural communities including the towns of Val Verde, Castaic, Agua Dulce, and Acton, that are inclusive of or surrounded by agricultural settings, warehouses, and larger residential lot sizes. These rural locations also contain highly mountainous terrain resulting in various natural hazards including extreme temperatures, drought, and wildfires during the dry seasons and debris flows and landslides during subsequent rain events.

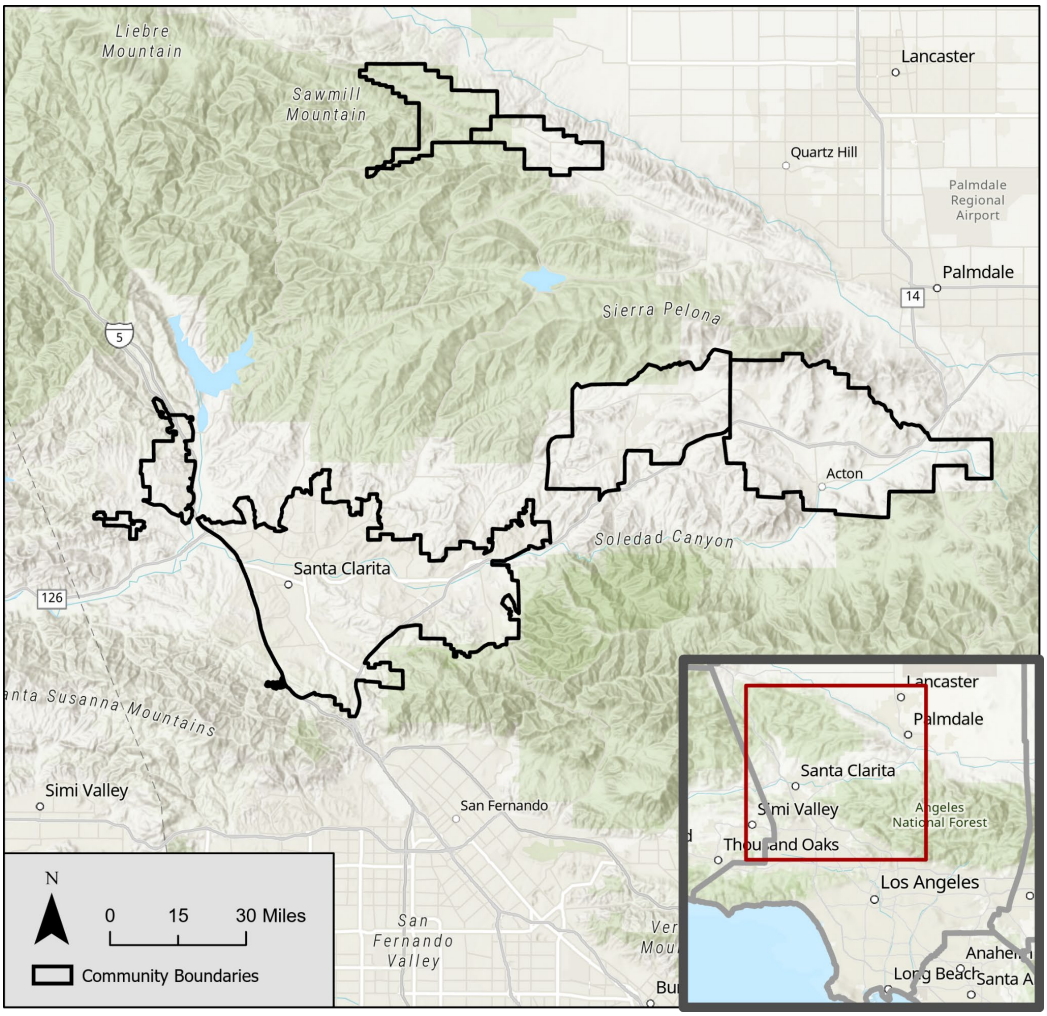


Figure 3.1 USCR area terrain map highlighting the priority areas where institutions and communities were surveyed.

Table 3.2 describes the broad types of community and institutional survey participants. Community participants across the USCR region were primarily represented by homeowners, while those representing institutions were primarily from government agencies representing diverse water management activities across urban and rural landscapes. The majority of participating institutions have objectives directly related to providing drinking water resources, treatment of wastewater, flood and hazard control, stormwater management and ensuring surface and groundwater resources are protected for various human and environmental uses.

Table 3.2 Stakeholder Respondent Types for the USCR Region

Community Member Types	Institutional Types
Homeowner An individual who lives in the USCR region and owns a house, apartment or similar dwelling. n= 253 respondents	**Water Agency (Paid staff)** Respondent type represents a state government *special act agency* with paid full time staff bridging diverse expertise in water issues including various water operations, maintenance, outreach, and regulatory activities. n= 1 respondent
Renter An individual or family who does not own the property they reside in (i.e. house, apartment, mobile home). Although they utilize and interact with water resources in the region, they may be limited in their ability to manage water use in their residence. n=43 respondents	**County Water District (Government)** Respondent type represents county water divisions that work on a variety of water issues including meeting regulations, infrastructure, stormwater, quality and quantity, identification of funding sources and public education and outreach. n= 1 respondent* *representing two rural communities within study area
Community Advocate An individual volunteerings or a paid staff member of an organization working in the USCR region. Organization representation may vary in issues resulting in varying interaction with water issues. n=7 respondents	**Community Organization (Non-Profit)** Large scale facility that provides community services to individuals with disabilities. Activities include on site living, large scale events and use of services throughout Santa Clarita by residents. n= 1 respondent
Work/Employed in the Area Community participants who work for an organization in the USCR region, but who do not reside in the area as a resident. n=4 respondents	

3.1.1 The Geography of Disadvantaged Communities and Institutions

Central to the Needs Assessment Task is identifying the current needs and or emerging issues

that impact water resources in the USCR region with a specific focus on DACs. Applying the DAC Stress Model (**Figure 3.2, Appendix E**) to the USCR region, it was observed that community and institutional boundaries often bridge multiple socio-economic and environmental landscapes.. For example, the City of Santa Clarita encompasses DAC stress levels ranging from 3 to 6 with a majority of the western, central and eastern regions representing low DAC stress levels (i.e DACs 3,4). These characteristics suggest that a majority of residents residing in these areas have higher median household incomes, and lower levels of exposure to environmental health hazards and social vulnerabilities when compared to communities with higher DAC stress levels within USCR. In communities characterized by DAC stress level 4, there is a slightly higher exposure to social vulnerabilities such as increases in environmental hazards and less public health emergency resources. This is likely associated with the rural and sprawling suburban development coupled with steep mountain and canyon landscapes within these communities. Smaller spatial pockets of DAC level 5 occur within the USCR indicating an increase in environmental health hazards in the western and northern reaches with an increase in social vulnerability in the southern reaches. The only DAC level 6 to occur borders the DAC level 4 and 5 communities in the southern USCR signifying higher social vulnerability when compared to DAC level 5 communities.

Institutions in the USCR primarily represent larger water providers who also work with smaller communities when needs arise. Smaller communities in the eastern portions of the watershed are increasingly reliant on hauled water due to lack of proximity to operations wells. Water resource contamination from historical and current pollution inputs often impacts the ability to provide clean water resources. Increasing operation and maintenance costs associated with changing regulations, aging infrastructure, and impacts from climatic changes (i.e., drought, fire, flooding) are also an increasing concern and a barrier to providing affordable water. Institutions serve a variety of DAC Stress types, however, a majority of institutions surveyed represent low DAC Stress areas (i.e., DACs 3,4) with a smaller portion of institutional water provider boundaries serving high stress DACS (i.e., DACs 5,6).

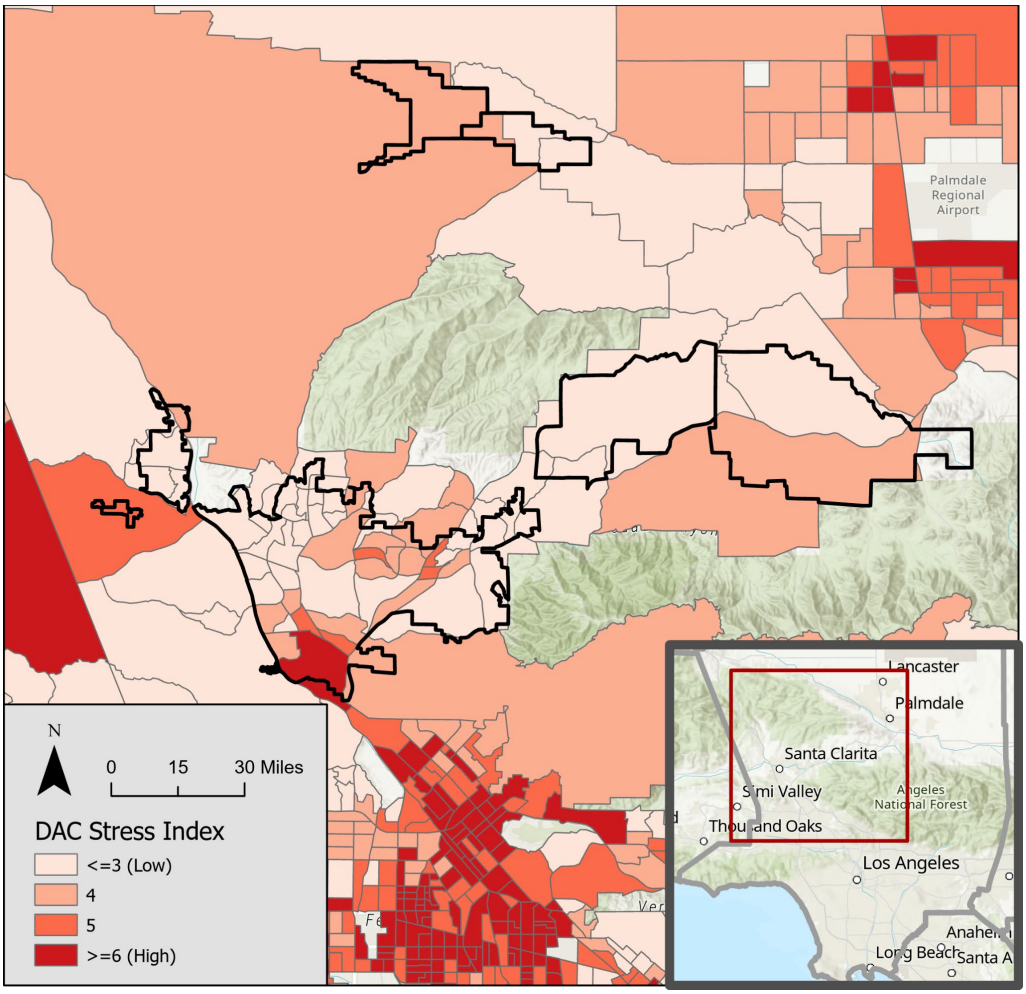


Figure 3.2 USCR region community boundaries and DAC stress model classifications

A majority of USCR community members participating in the survey were classified as homeowners (84%) as compared to those across all IRWMs (43%) (**Figure 3.3**). This pattern was consistent for participants in low and high stress DACs across USCR (84% and 100% were homeowners, respectively.

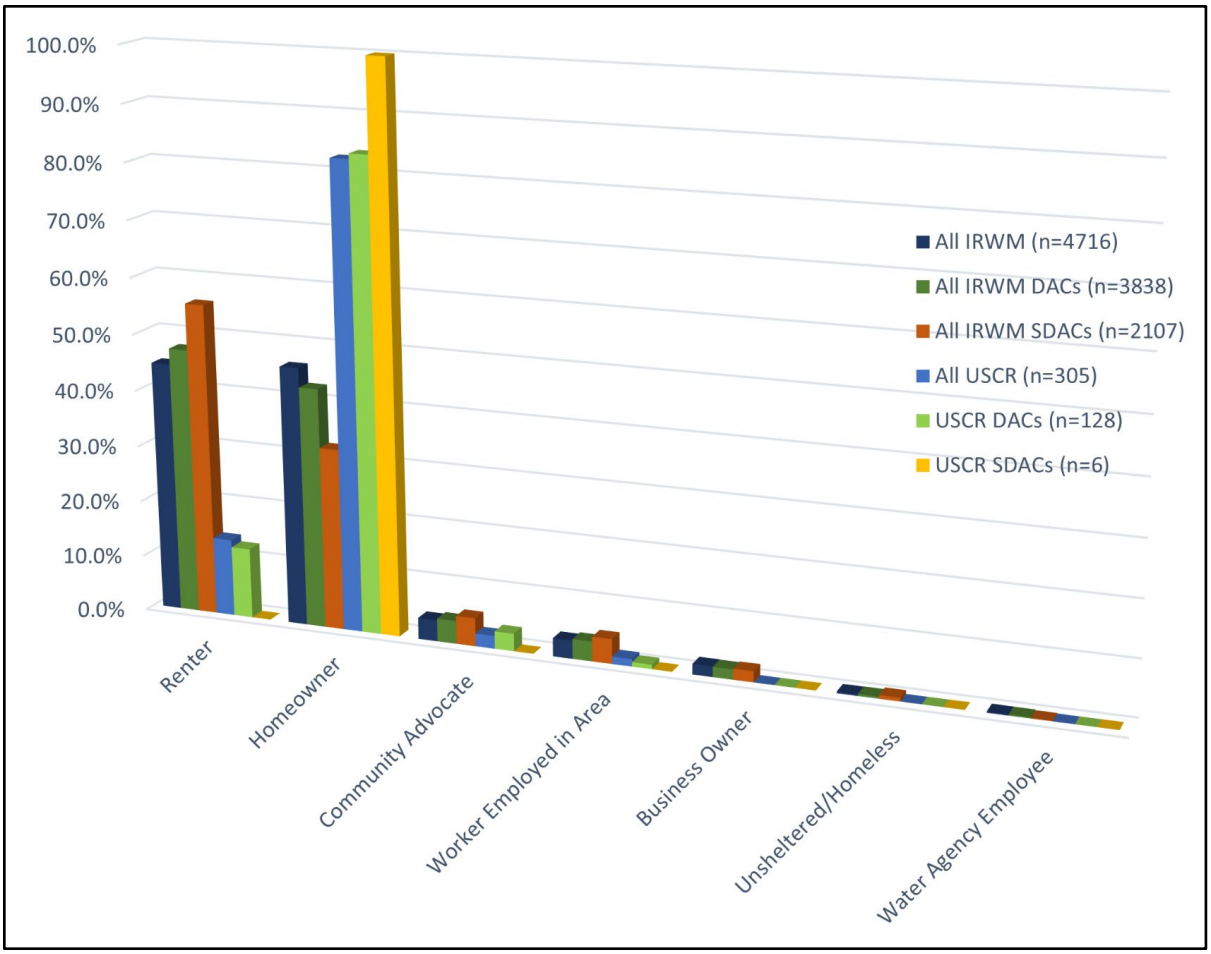


Figure 3.3: Profile of Community Survey Respondents across the entire study area versus USCR alone. Similar to the Greater Los Angeles and Ventura IRWM regions, the USCR communities encompass a variety of DAC stress levels, however, only a small segment of the USCR region and survey participants represent areas with high DAC stress levels (i.e. DACs 5,6). The lower DAC stress levels is primarily related to the rural sprawling nature of populations and communities throughout the USCR, which may mask individual social-economic and environmental health conditions as measured by the DAC Stress Model.

3.1.2 USCR Community Survey Participant Responses Graphical Representation

PlaceWorks and CSUN CGST team processed the WaterTalks Survey responses that were entered as of June 15th, 2021. The WaterTalks responses collected in USCR are summarized in graphs and word clouds under the respective survey question. The WaterTalks Survey responses to questions that have a predefined/standardized response were summarized using Excel's pivot table feature to tally the results and generate graphs.

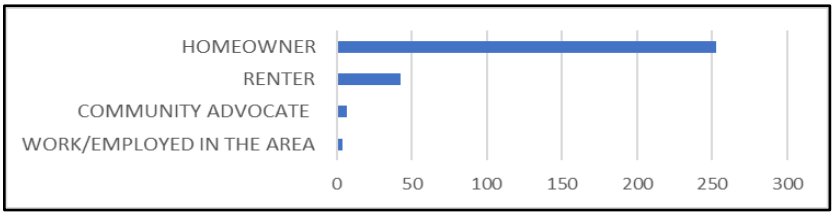
The responses to open-ended (i.e., write-in) questions were summarized using word clouds that highlight repeating words in responses. The size of the words is determined by the frequency, or how many times the word was used in the responses. The larger words had a higher frequency. PlaceWorks used the following website,

https://www.freewordcloudgenerator.com/generatewordcloud, and limited the number of words shown to the top 30.

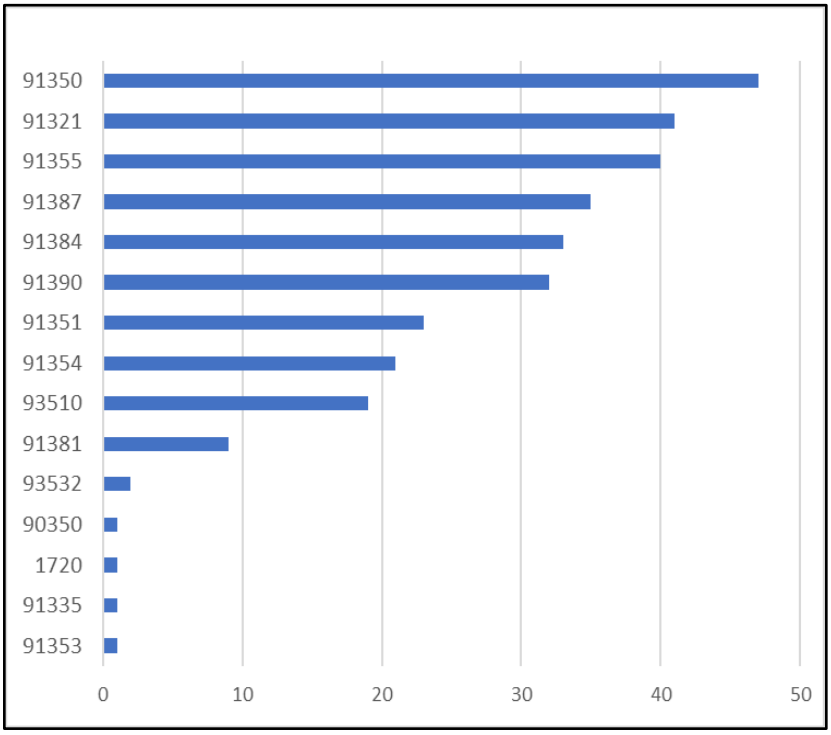
Lists of open-ended (i.e., write-in) responses are provided for questions that called for longer responses from participants that weren't as useful using the word cloud presentation. These responses are listed in Appendix G along with tables summarizing responses to predefined/standardized responses corresponding to the graphs shown in this chapter.

Community Characteristics

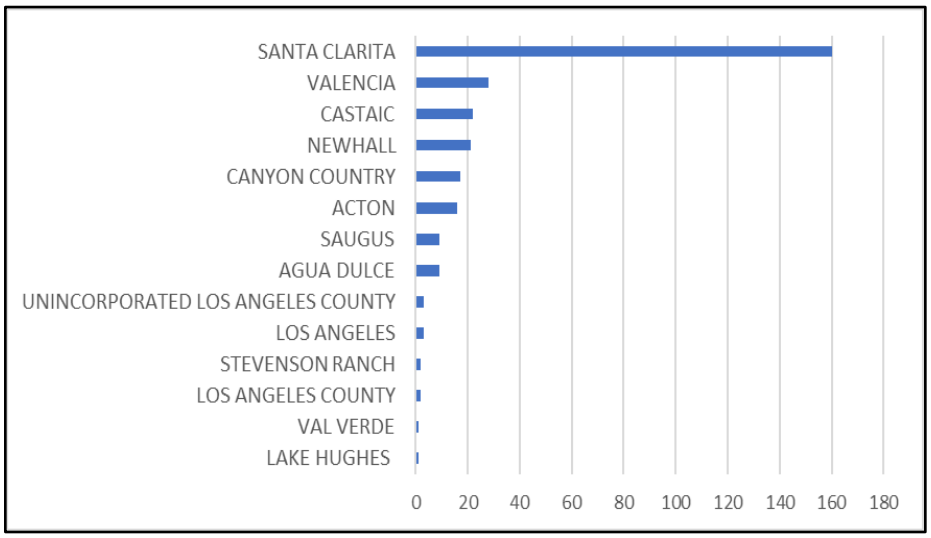
1. **Are you responding to this survey as a resident or other community member?**



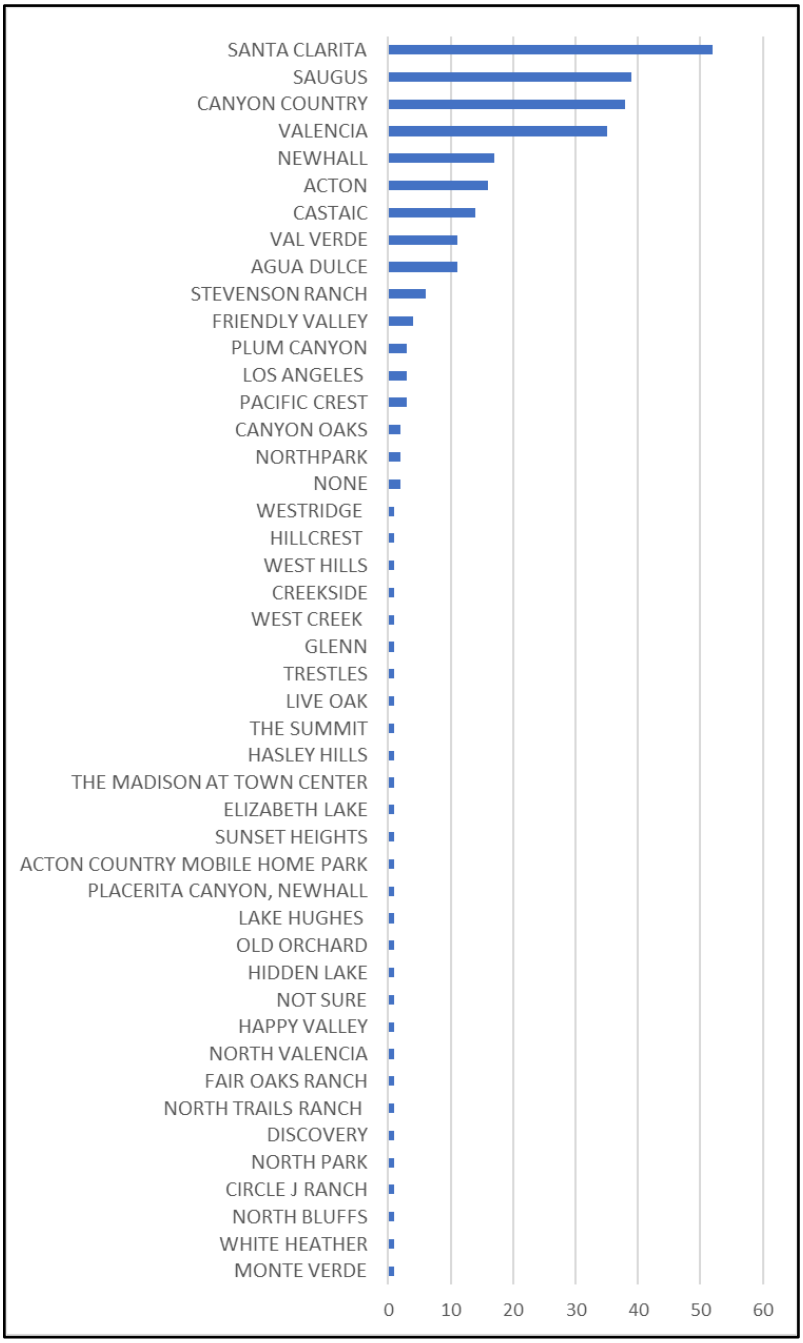
2. **Please provide the zip code of the community for which you are responding.**



2b. What City is this community located in?



2c. What is the name of this community?



Community Strengths and Needs

4. List three things you like about your community.

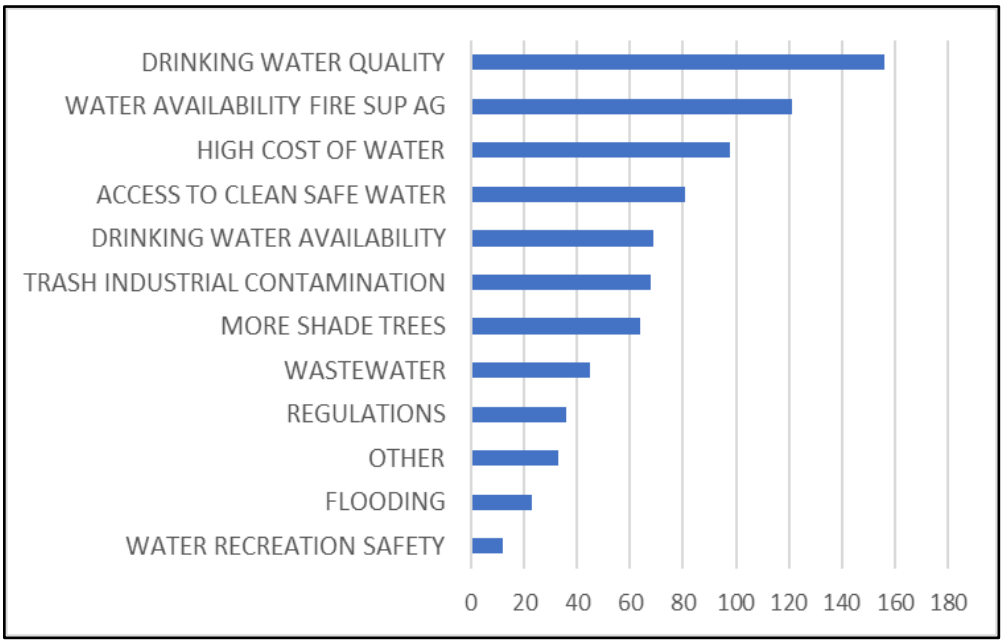


5. What are the three things your community needs the most?

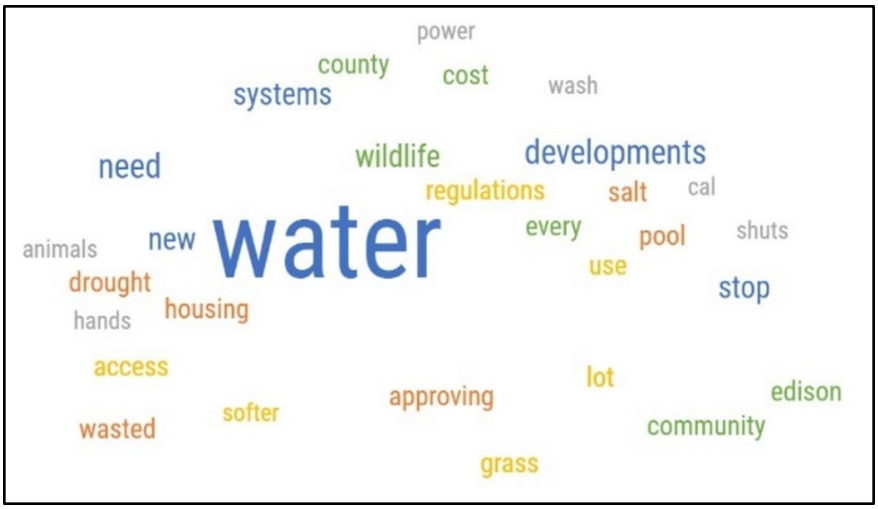


Water Related Issues and Opportunities

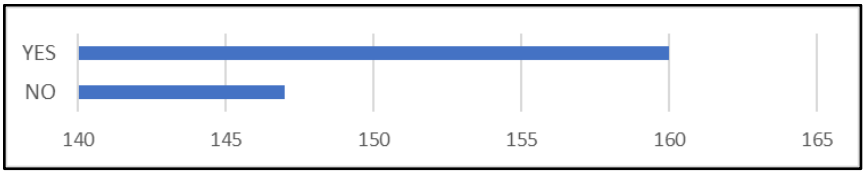
6. What water related issues are of greatest concern in your community?



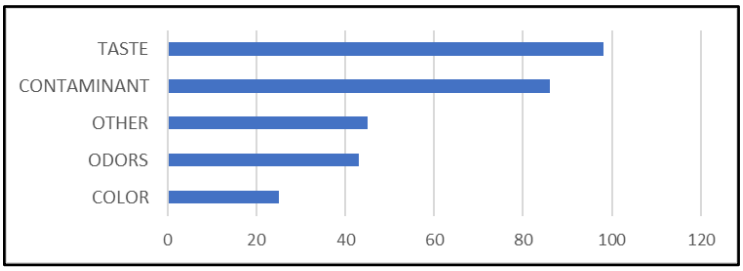
6 Other. Other water related concerns?



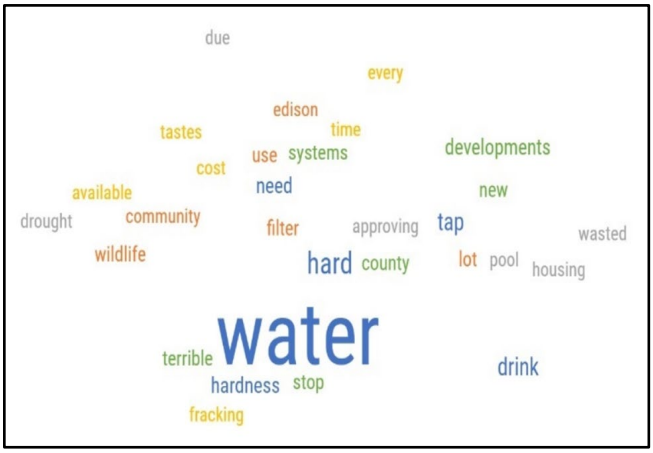
7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home neighborhood or community you serve?



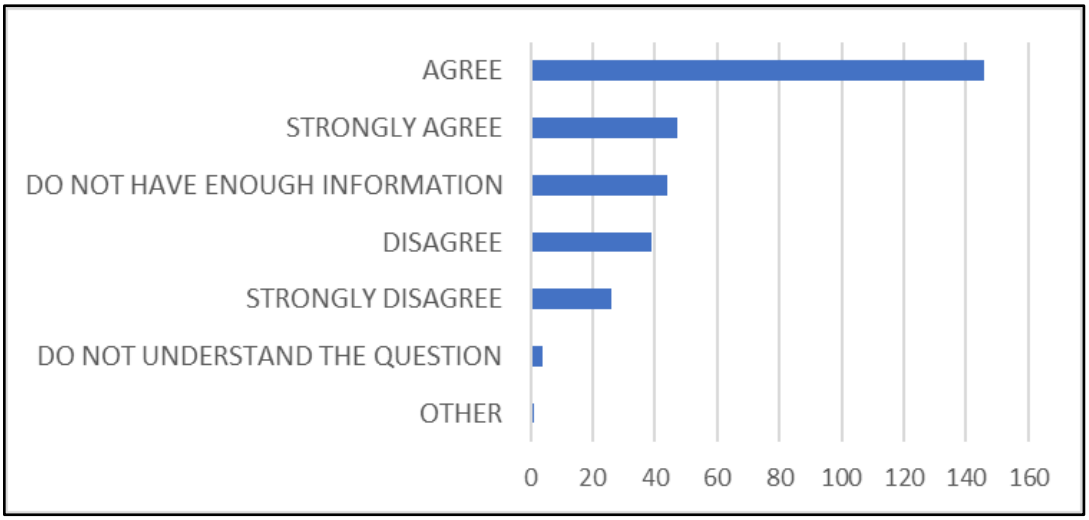
7a. If yes, select all of the concerns that apply.



7a Other. Other water related concerns?

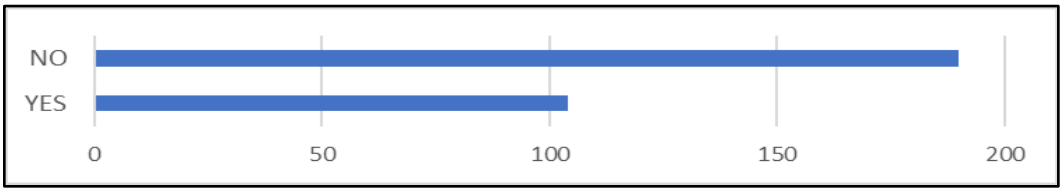


8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.

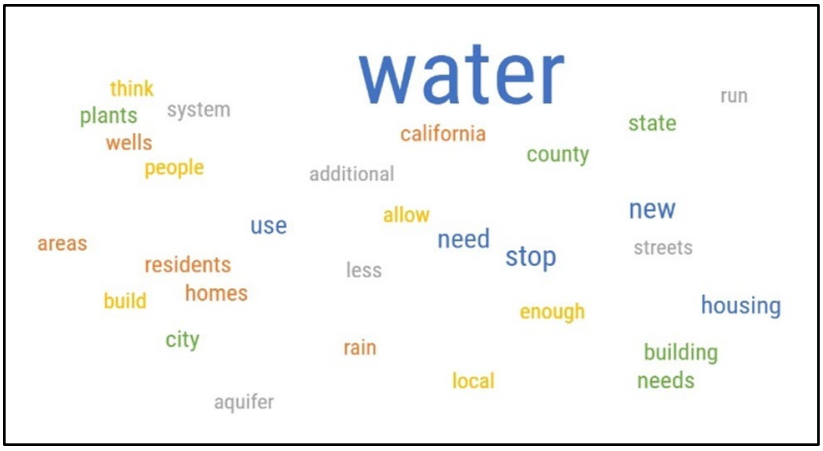


Those who responded were able to write in their reasons for their response (See Appendix G).

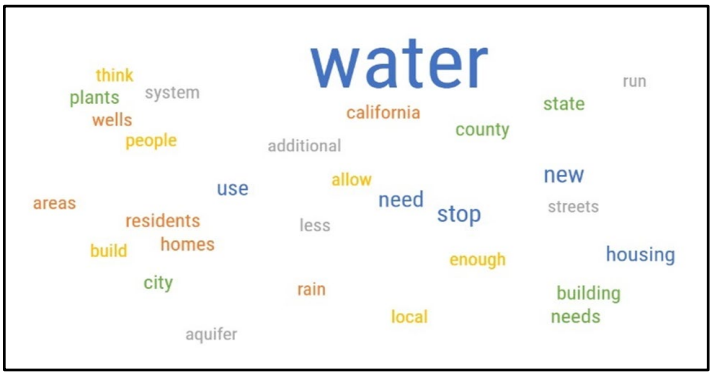
9. Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?



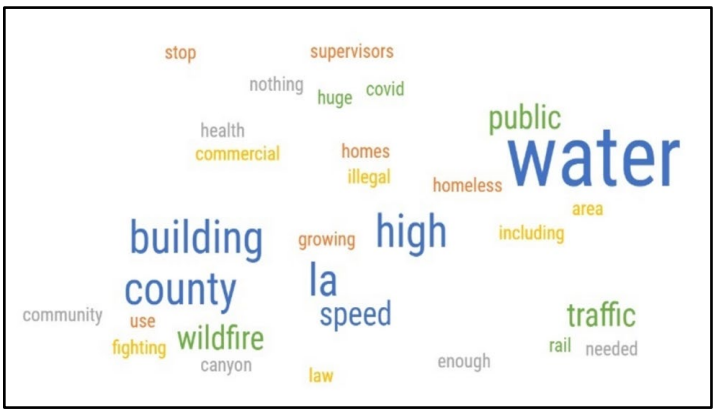
9a. Other community concerns?



10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

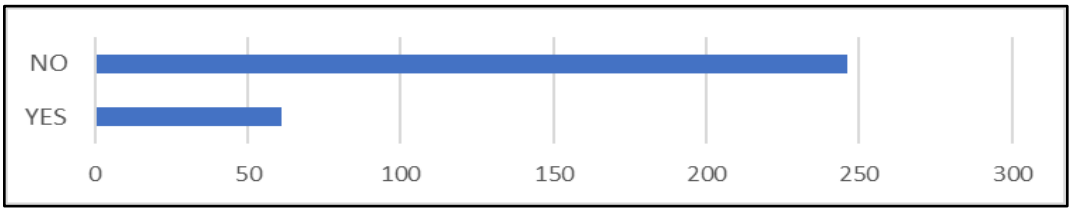


10 Other. Other community concerns?



Community Engagement

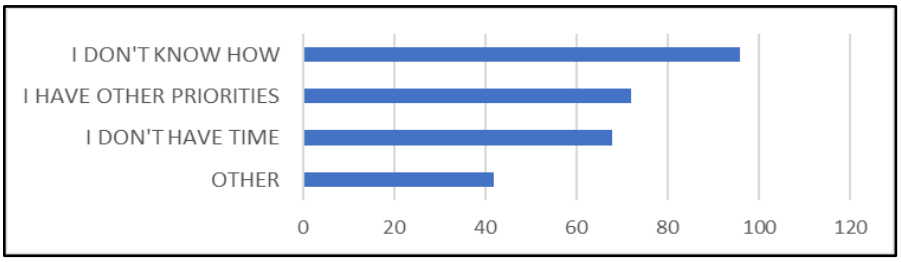
11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?



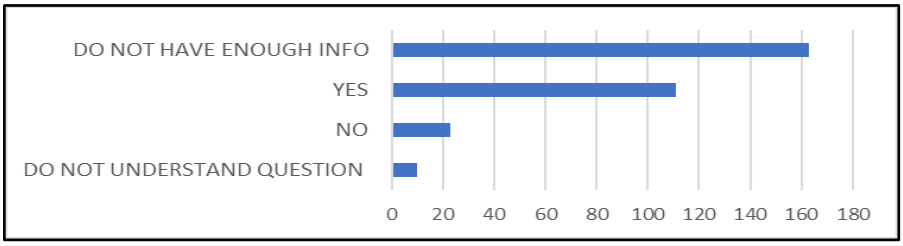
11a. If yes, what efforts do you participate in?

Those who responded with the option, "Yes", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

11b. If not, select all of the reasons that apply.



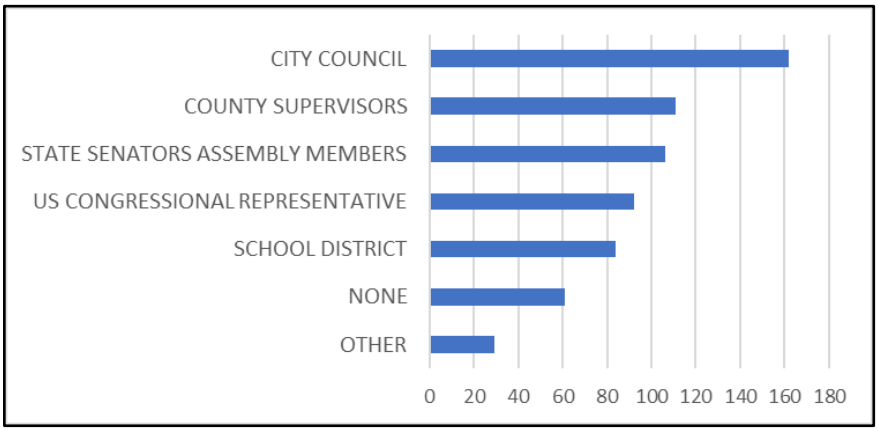
12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?



12a. If yes, are there specific people or groups you would like to share?

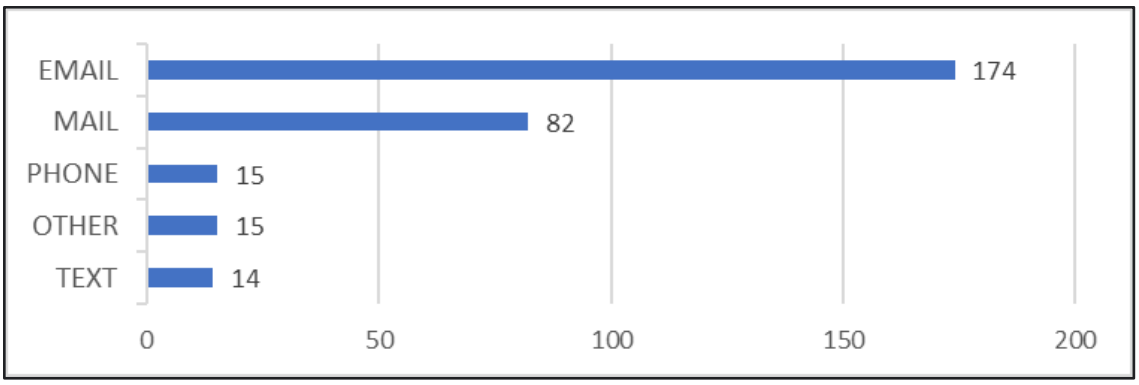
Those who responded with the option, "Yes", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or receive information from?



Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

14. What is your preferred way to be contacted by community organizations and governing bodies?

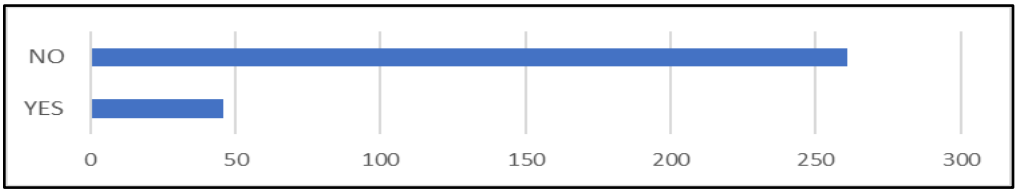


14 Other.

- Facebook
- In person
- I'm not interested
- News papers and local TV and radio including on line.
- Facebook and Email

Those who responded with the option, "Other", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

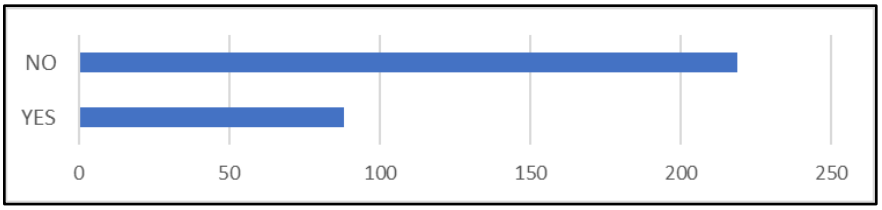
15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?



15a. If yes, was the planning process responsive to your needs?

Those who responded with the option, "YES", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

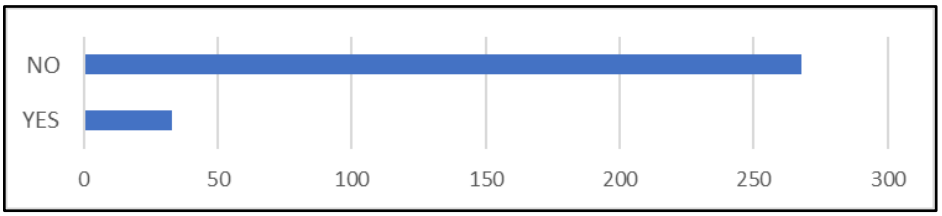
16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by government or the public at large?



16a. Use the space below to identify which voices or groups are being heard and which still need to be heard.

Respondents were able to write in their response for question 16a. (See Appendix G).

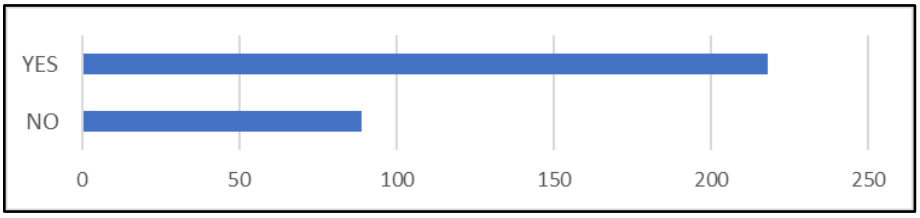
17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?



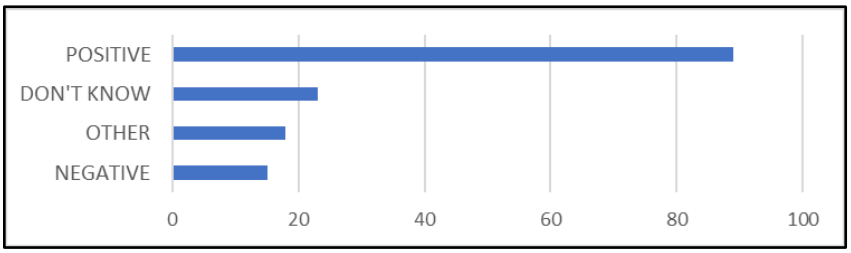
17a. If yes, in what context?

Those who responded with the option, "YES", were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides you water?

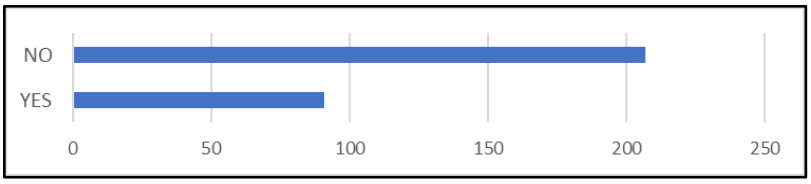


18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?



Those who responded with the option, “Other”, were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?



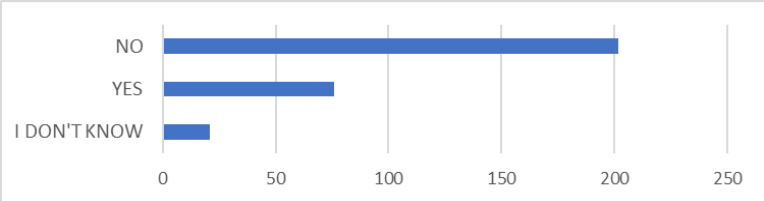
19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

Those who responded with the option, “Other”, were able to write in their response (See Appendix G).

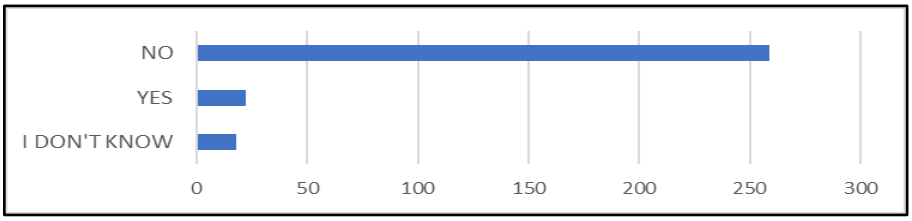
Water Usage Types

Questions #20 and #21 were meant only for respondents who answered as a Renter, Homeowner, or Business Owner in question #1.

20. Is your home or business on a septic system?

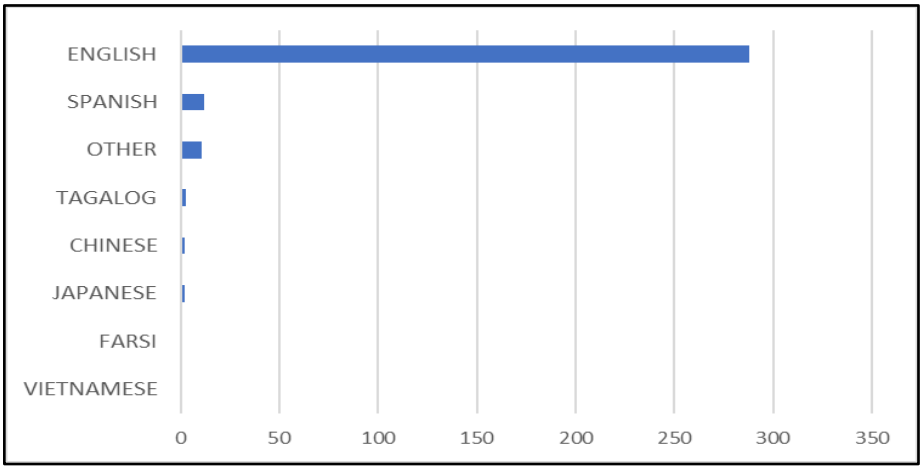


21. Is your home or business on a private well?

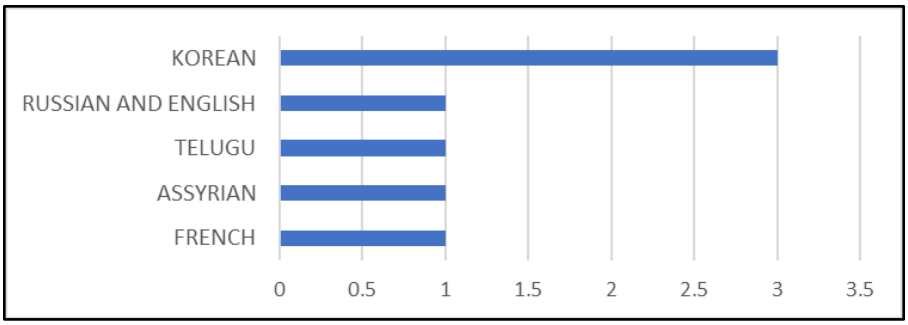


Respondent Primary Language

22. Primary language spoken at home?

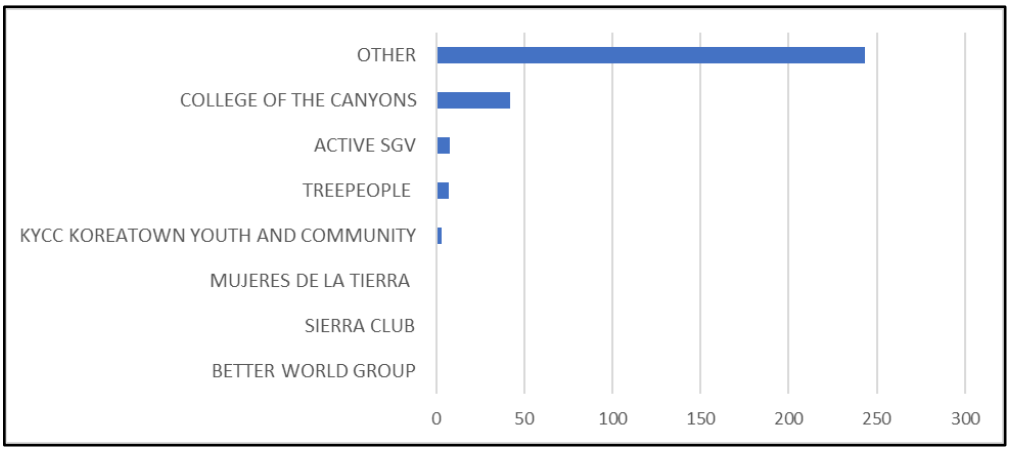


22 Other. Primary language spoken at home:

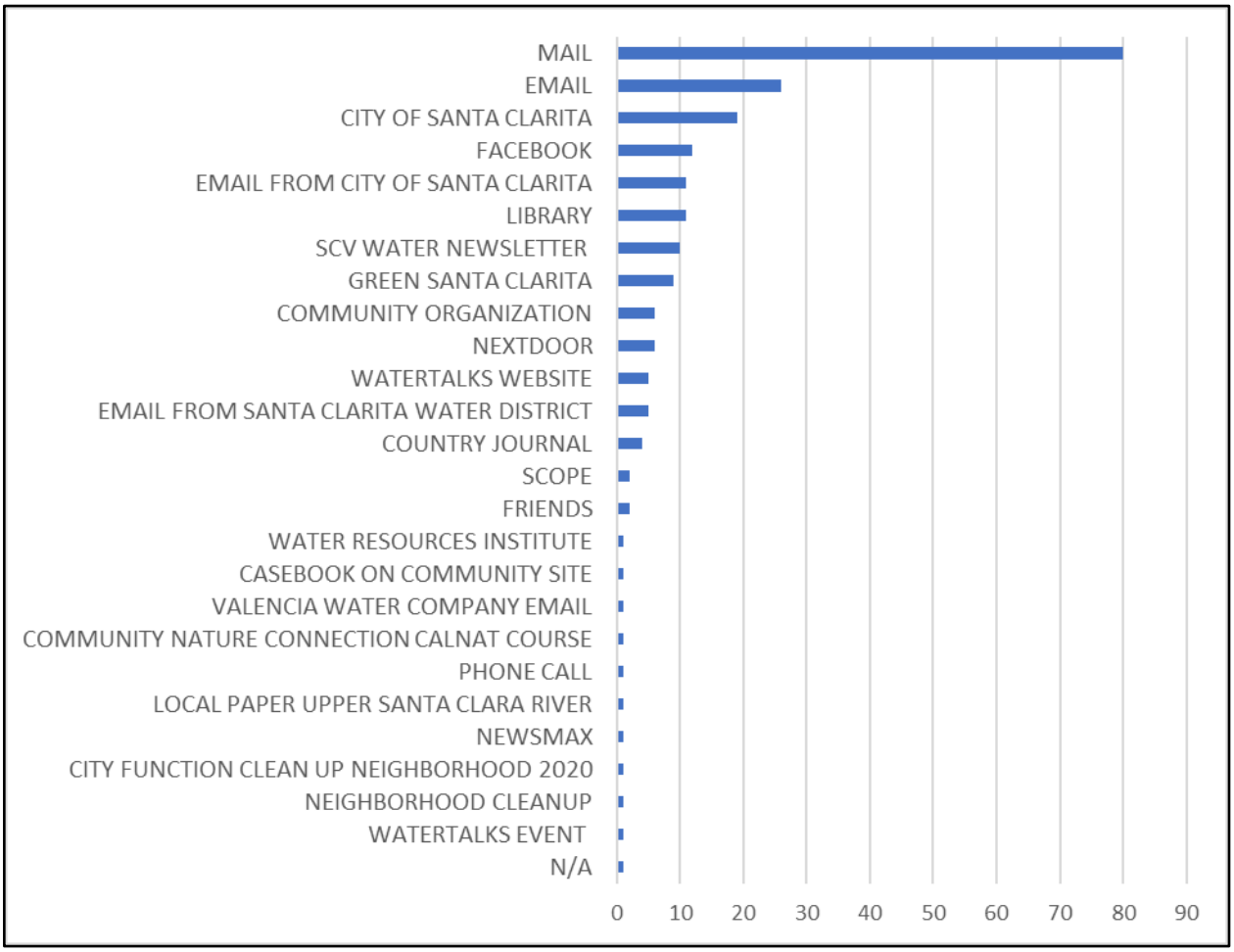


How did Respondent hear about WaterTalks Survey

23. How did you hear about this survey?



23 Other. How did you hear about this survey?



3.2 Community and Institutional Survey Responses: Connects, Disconnects and Opportunities

3.2.1 Needs and Strengths

Community Survey Questions
Q4 List three things you like about your community.
Q5 What are the three things your community needs the most?
Q10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

Institutional Survey Questions
Q17: Will you please tell us about your community's strengths, and what it needs
Q38: What other concerns do you have for your community now and into the future? (Circle One) under needs.

Summary:
Community participants expressed a sense of pride in their communities noting their desire to remain **independent** of public water services in order to 'retain traditional values' and self-reliance, manifesting in these communities pushing back against **development** (**Figure 3.4)**. They also shared that their communities are **clean and safe** often characterized by **friendly** residents and business owners. Community participants residing in high stress DACs noted family activities, the rural nature of the landscape and amenities (i.e. parks, stores) in their response to Question 4. Additionally, the lack of residential areas with HOAs, the presence of good schools, proximity to the beach and affordable homes were also viewed as community assets.

Needs shared by high stress DACs include transportation challenges (i.e. roadways quality, alternative transportation), increasing healthy food options, greenspaces and parks and more civic engagements and regulatory oversight of industrial operations including local landfills.

Community needs expressed by survey participants suggests that water quality and access were the primary identified needs across the USCR region (**Figures 3.5, 3.6**). Water related needs expressed by high dress DAC residents drawing from high frequency responses include the desire to address **water quality** and **access to the county water system**, as opposed to well water systems.. Many high stress DAC participants also suggested that local community and governmental representatives should **curtail new growth and housing development in the region**, which many felt would place more strain on the already overburdened utility infrastructure of the area. Although community members do not want public services, especially in rural areas, they do have concerns about **failing septic systems,** which would require paying for and extending existing sewer systems. Residents recognize that abandoning independent pumped well water systems would have significant impacts on **affordability** related to costs from extending the pipeline **infrastructure.** Additionally, shared costs would emerge across the water system and users often linked to new, more burdensome, water quality **regulations**. For example, well water rates are roughly 50% (i.e. Greater Los Angeles area) of those on the public system. However, groundwater **access** may become untenable. A number of wells in the region are no longer deep enough for extraction due to groundwater depletion and **contamination** (primarily from nitrates) is also a growing concern. Collectively, these conditions result in **water being hauled** by truck to customers in the region, further increasing financial burdens and water uncertainty for residents. Several community participants across all DAC levels expressed increasing concerns with **climatic changes related** to fire, drought, and water resources management.



FIGURE 3.4 Question 4 List three things you like about your community.



FIGURE 3.5 Question 5 What are the three things your community needs the most?

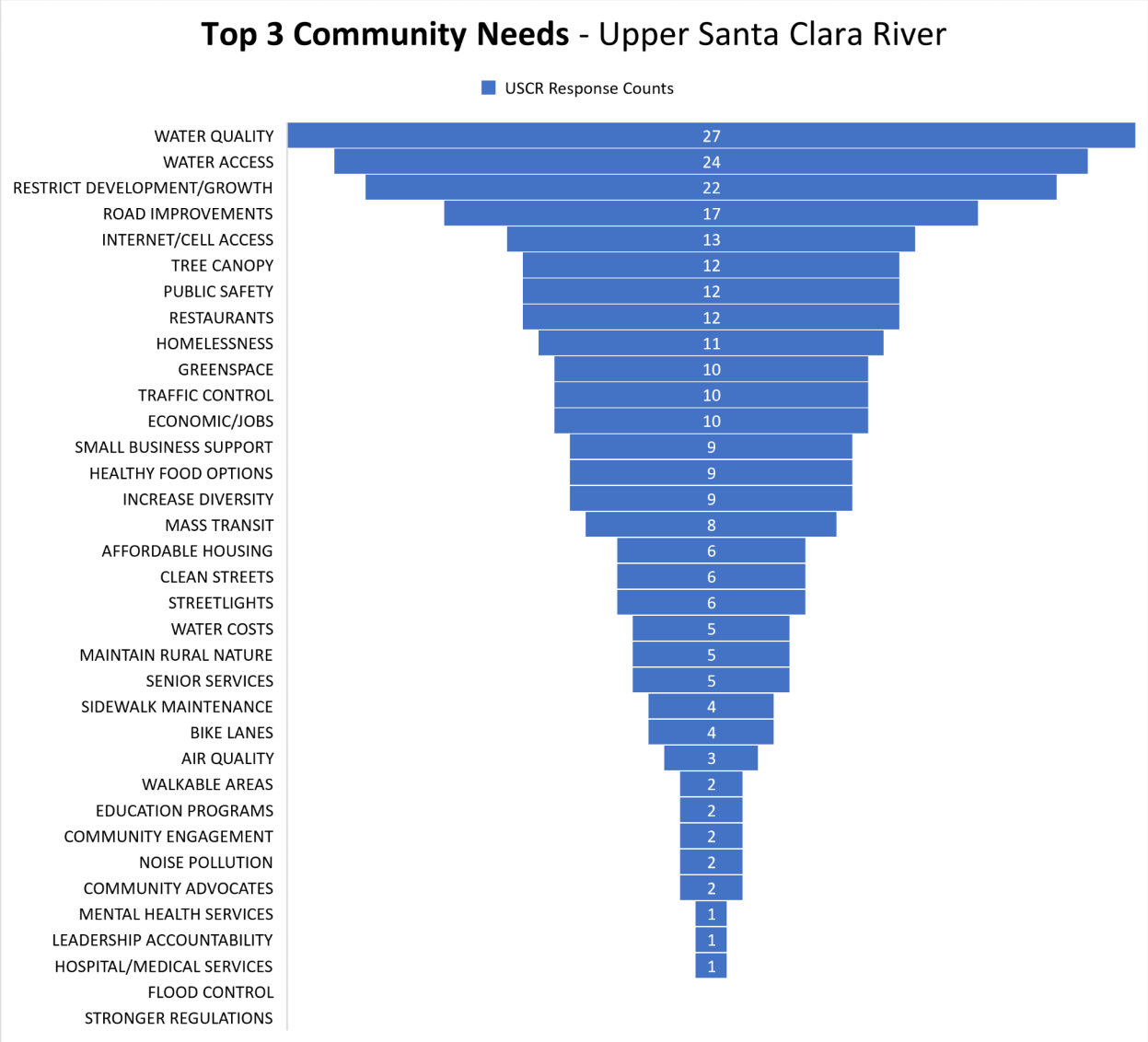


Figure 3.6 Analysis of community survey respondent answer frequencies in USCR.
Source: Survey Question 5 "What are the three things your community needs the most".

Overall, water institutions surveyed felt that an asset to communities throughout the USCR was community members' high level of engagement in a variety of issues including **ground and potable water quality,** water-related **natural hazards** and human-induced **toxic burdens (**i.e. landfills, legacy pollutants). However, the levels and issues related to participation vary. For example, in the eastern part of the watershed, stormwater **flooding** issues have been highlighted at county water agency meetings (i.e. Acton, DACs 3,4) as well as **illegal developments** such as trailer parks with old septic systems **leaching** into local water systems. In the Northwestern watershed (i.e. Val Verde, DAC 5), county water institutions expressed that the community does not seem engaged in water issues, but they are engaged in related issues such as the **landfill**, which has direct links to **groundwater quality**. In areas where residential and commercial growth and development occur,, water institutions recognize that communities remain a **tight knit** often functioning like a small town. Of significant importance was that water agencies

acknowledge and recognize that there are several key **community groups** that are consistently engaged in community issues often collaborating with various **public service and nonprofits** to meet emerging water and community service needs. In particular, it was noted that **The College of the Canyon** is also seen as a benefit to the community for its ability to support community education and water agency outreach efforts.

The primary need identified by water institutions and community organizations was **aging infrastructure.** The need to comply with shifting and new regulations creates financial uncertainty and results in the need to shift resources away from other projects and programs. For example, both regional and county water institutions noted the **financial barriers** to water institutions and community member water rates are often associated with the mismatch between the fast pace of changing regulations driving the needs for infrastructure upgrades and additional monitoring cost. As a result, this creates operation, maintenance and management challenges leading to unpredictability when preparing multi year budget forecasting.

Stakeholder Connects and Disconnects
Both water institutions and community organizations connected through their recognition of strong **town councils and regular public meetings** attended by **community members** who are **engaged** in emerging issues. Stakeholder participants also agreed that **changing regulations** coupled with **natural hazards** and legacy and emerging **toxins** across the landscape (i.e. landfill leachate, soil contamination) create a myriad of water quality concerns. This results in rural communities becoming increasingly reliant on **hauled water** and the need to seek more sustainable water resources as development increases and prolonged drought conditions. Stakeholders also shared that **changing regulation**s create additional **financial barriers** to meeting diverse community water needs, including **infrastructure upgrades**. Disconnects among stakeholders include communities' desire to **remain independent** of county and water agency governance, viewing the Los Angeles area as a threat to their ability to maintain a small community lifestyle as well as the introduction of additional regulations that increase water cost. Many communities describe themselves as **"tight knit" and engaged**, while water institutions suggested that **community engagement is selective at times**, only occurring when water issues directly affect their communities versus supporting water issues across the region.

3.2.2 Availability & Quality of Water Resources

Community Survey Questions:
Q6. What water-related issues are of greatest concern in your community?
Q7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home, neighborhood, or community you serve?
Q9. Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q19: Is safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking accessible to all members of your community? (Circle One)

Summary:
Across the USCR **drinking water quality** was a primary concern for community members (50%) (**Figure 3.7**) and within DACs the **taste of drinking water** (32.8%) and the **presence of**

contaminants (25%) were the two most noted issues. **Water availability** (39.7%) and the **high costs of water** (32.1%) were also a major concern across all USCR communities as well as the increasing droughts that reduce water available for fires and agricultural productions. As previously noted, high stress DACs participants are increasingly concerned about **industrial contamination** of water, **natural hazards** impacting water resources and **changing regulation** increasing **water rates**. Possible solutions shared by high stress DACs include more **infrastructure inspections** to identify issues earlier as an attempt to reduce major cost with operation and maintenance as well as **rewarding those who save water.**

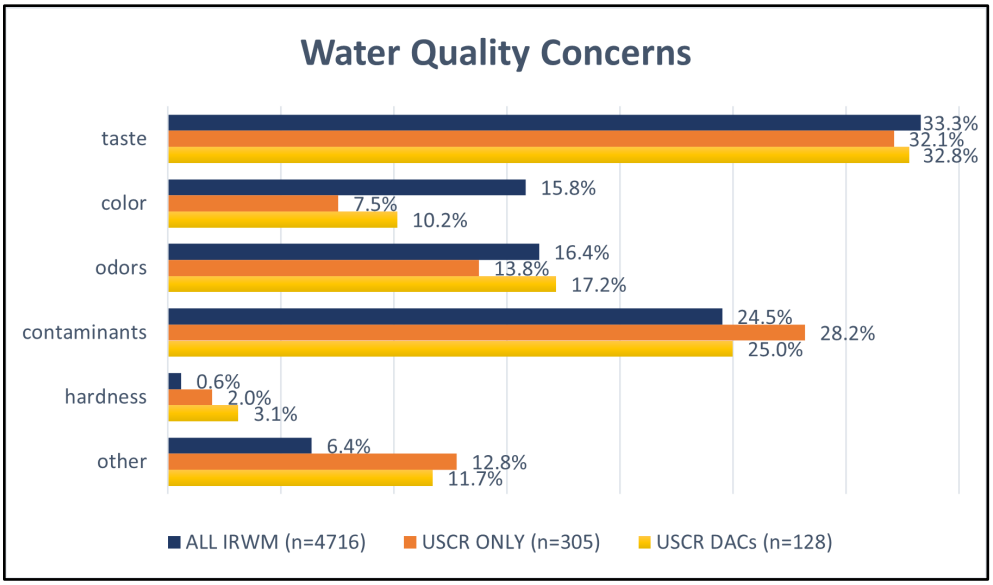


Figure 3.7 Summary of USCR subregion versus all IRWM community survey percentage responses for Question 7 "What are the drinking water quality concerns in your neighborhood or community?".

County and regional water institutions noted that in areas of the watershed where users are within service areas, everyone has access to clean affordable drinking water. In contrast, in **rural areas** many are still on private wells. In the eastern portions of the watershed (i.e. DACs 3,4), county and regional institutions felt that community water supplies were **adequate for drinking, washing and cooking**, however, comments were also suggested that some communities are concerned about **high water rates. Water institutions shared that** that rates will need to be raised soon because **operation and maintenance costs** are often associated with **changing regulations and infrastructure upgrades** as previously discussed. Institutions shared that residents often believe that because they are closer to wells their rates should be lower. To mitigate misinformation about water rate changes, county water institutions have **increased engagement** to raise awareness of why rates will increase, sharing that everyone needs to pay the same price to ensure purchased water is used to **supplement pumped water**. Additionally, water institutions noted that where residents are **too far from water pipelines,** they are not able to pump from wells, creating the need to **haul water** in these communities. This is also linked to residents' hesitation to connect to water service when available because of the high cost associated with connections.

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

Survey participants all connected on their concerns about the **quality of existing water resources**, particularly related to contamination from surface and groundwater resources. Additional points of connections previously

noted included the **rising cost of water rates**, however, community and institutional stakeholder participants disconnected on strategies to mitigate rising costs. The lack of interests in rural communities to be serviced by county and regional water agencies create **barriers to ensuring these communities have adequate and safe water resources**. In these communities, there is often a perception that services provided by county or regional water agencies will result in excessive and unpredictable water rates due to increasing and changing regulations. While water institutions agree that changing regulations increase water rates, the ability of water **agencies to provide secure water resources** may outweigh increased cost associated with hauled water.

3.2.3 Institutional- Community Engagement

Community Survey Questions:

Q8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs (streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.).
Q11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?
Q12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?
Q15. Have you participated in water-related planning in your community?
Q16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large?
Q18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides your water?
Other - 18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q28: How engaged are members of your community in decisions about water?
Q29: What strategies do you use to engage with community members?
Q30: What barriers do you see in engaging with members of your community?

Summary:
From the 305 community members surveyed in the USCR subregion, nearly two-thirds (63%) believed that their **local government was addressing infrastructure and beautification** issues in the area (**Figure 3.8, 3.9**). However, **satisfaction with local government was notably lower for respondents in DACs** (53%) versus those not inside a DAC within the USCR (71%). Additionally, 20% of all USCR respondents said they were engaged in some way with organizations or planning issues in their community. This rate was similar for those individuals living in USCR's overall disadvantaged communities (21%). **Water planning-related engagement** was marginally lower amongst DAC respondents (12%) than for all USCR respondents (15%). Regardless of DAC status, less than a third (29%) of resident respondents in USCR felt their voices were being heard in community planning.

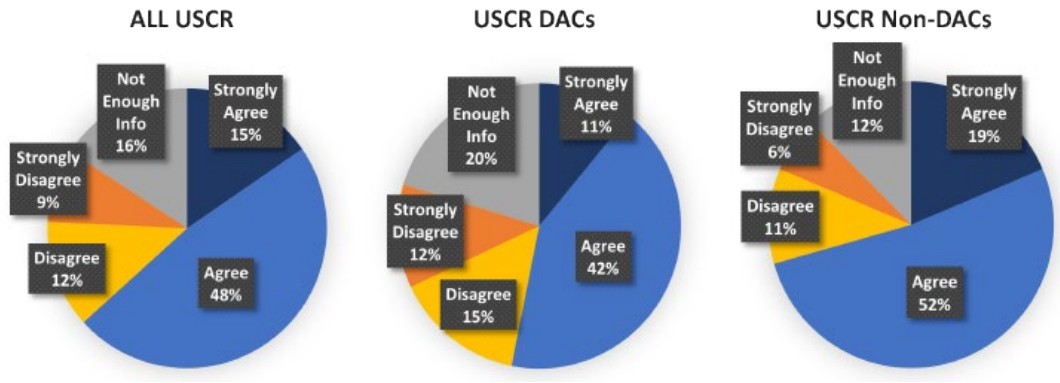


Figure 3.8 Community survey responses in UCSR for question #8 "My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.".

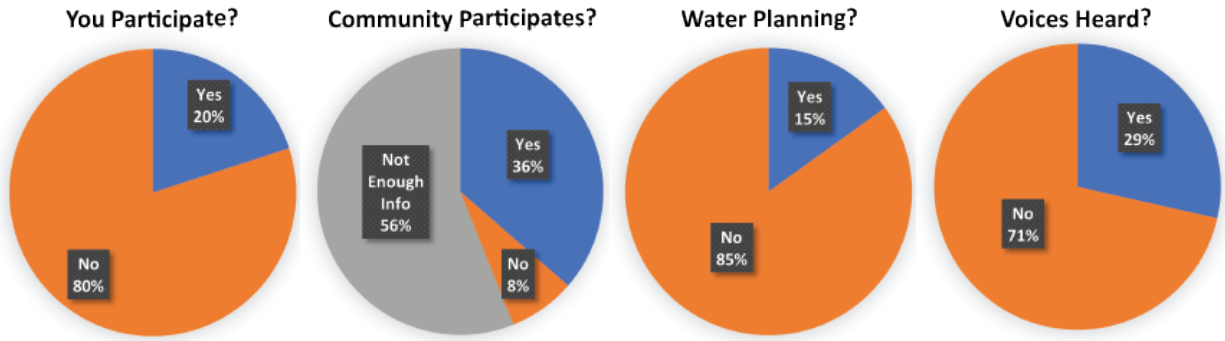


Figure 3.9 Responses to the series of engagement questions for all participants in all communities in USCR (Questions 11-12 and 15-16).

Many agencies are **quick to respond to community requests** or to provide **meetings to communities** that experience identified water related issues. Many of the new planning efforts required by the state **mandate community outreach** efforts including **public meetings**, **stakeholder advisory** committees and **workshops**. Other points of engagement are through **town council meetings** and related activities. It was noted that community members in general are engaged, however, they are **less engaged in water infrastructure decisions**. Larger agencies have put a lot of money and staff resources into engaging the community, but often noted that the community can get **fatigued** and COVID led to less engagement.

Engagement strategies are diverse and include - direct outreach to town councils, newsletters, direct mail, email, paper publications and multiple social media platforms. Additionally, outreach extends to the **K-12 environment** with some agencies having their own education programs to service school districts. Wastewater treatment plants have also been utilized as **educational field trips** and include classrooms. Recently, the primary **barrier for agency-community engagement** has been the required **virtual environment** due to COVID noting that **unstable internet** causes a lot of community members to not participate in virtual meetings and events. Other barriers to engagement noted were the **barriers with technical explanation** of what agencies are doing, so there is a need to include **more "common" language** when meeting with community members so they feel welcomed to participate. Other comments include that many community members **do not engage unless there is an emergency** and they are seeking

immediate assistance.

Stakeholder Connects and Disconnects
Stakeholder participants connected in their desire to **increase engagement** between community members and water agencies, however, while many institutions feel they are engaged with communities, many residents in high stress DACs **did not feel their concerns were being heard** by agency staff. This supported related disconnects often around **perceptions about the level of engagement**. For example, institutions felt community engagement was very selective with residents participating in specific topics versus all water related issues, while community participants shared that they are often weary of water institutions intentions when seeking community engagement opportunities creating barriers to engagement.

3.2.4 Institutional- Community Collaborations

Community Survey Questions:
Q17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?
Q19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?
Q19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q34: Please describe any collaborative efforts between multiple agencies or institutions in your community?
Q35(1): What is the system's or community's involvement in the local IRWM group?
Q36: Does your agency have any involvement through other regional programs?
Q37: Do you see any barriers to engagement in regional efforts?

Summary:
A majority of local USCR respondents **were aware of their provider water agency** (71%), which is in contrast to only 11% of respondents who are aware of IRWMs (**Figure 3.10**). Additionally, nearly a third of respondents were aware of **water-related educational programs** in the region (30%). In high stress DACs, most respondents (75%) have never heard of the IRWM and few were aware of their water provider or the programs they offer (20%). In smaller, rural communities largely reliant on well water, resident engagement was characterized by **frequent community council or neighborhood group meetings** to discuss water needs and local projects related to water resources. These smaller communities note that they feel they are **not a priority for regional water efforts**, and they are often **unaware of projects** or **left out** of decision making and planning processes that directly impact their communities.

Regional and county water institutions noted that **smaller communities** may **not be visible or known to IRWMs** or they may feel that they are too small to participate. **Consistent communication** among community members has enabled them to identify problems and work to find resources to assist them when needed. Water providers indicated that they are often **notified by smaller communities** when an issue arises (i.e. dry well, need to import water).

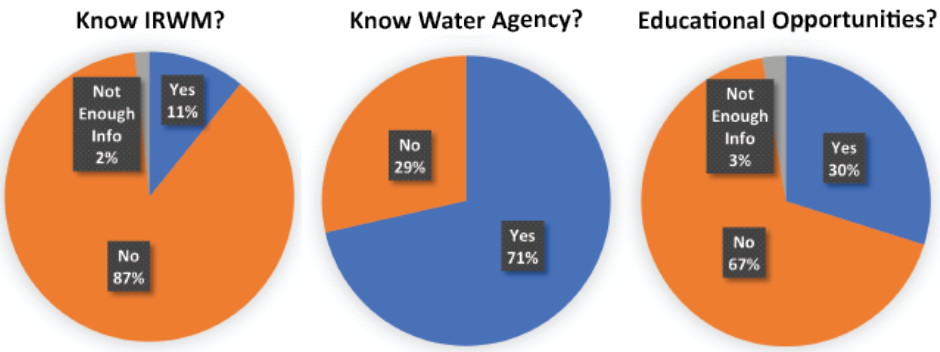


Figure 3.10: Responses to the series of community collaboration questions for community member participants in USCR (Questions 17-19).

County and regional water institutions noted that they are involved with and often play a leadership role in the **Antelope and USCR IRWMs**. These relationships have enabled participating institutions to secure funding for infrastructure and planning efforts. It was suggested that **participation in IRWMs is higher when funding is available** but tends to be reduced when funding is limited.

Table 3.3 USCR Collaborations and Projects

Existing Collaborations
• Los Angeles County Public Works Bouquet Canyon Project • Multi-Agency, Antelope Valley IRWM Region Working Group • Multi-Agency, USCR IRWM Region Working Group • Schools and Colleges, Multiple collaborations with water institutions and K-12 and Higher Education Outreach, Education, and Volunteer Opportunities. • Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, Public Education and Outreach Programs: in classroom activities, school garden programs, public workshops about water use and gardening.

Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects

A primary connection between stakeholders was their **concern that smaller communities were often omitted** from water related planning activities, especially those related to IRWM. The rural nature of smaller communities often means that they form their own council and public meetings, rather than participating in regional efforts. This creates a **disconnect between how water institutions engage** with the communities they serve as well as how information from water institutions is disseminated to community groups.

3.3 Institutional Technical Needs and Emerging Issues

As previously noted, some of the survey questions only apply to institutions such as questions about institutional capacity, infrastructure, ability to meet regulatory requirements, staffing and operation and maintenance cost. Findings related to survey questions that only apply to institutions are outlined and summarized below.

3.3.1 Barriers to Accessing Water Resources

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q18: What do you see as barriers to access the benefits of drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure in your community?

Summary:
Water institutions representing a majority of the watershed area noted that changing **regulations** are increasing operation and maintenance costs that inevitably **increase water rates.** Community organizations serving the central watershed expressed that the increased reliance on hauled water and associated cost is very difficult to manage, reducing their ability to provide public services. As a result, a greater portion of the **overhead and overall budgets** of community organizations are diverted to **water costs**. In the eastern watershed, people are **hauling water** in by truck tanks because they are not close enough for water to be pumped from wells. Additionally, water agencies expressed that **nitrates are increasing** in the groundwater especially in the eastern portions of the watershed, although the plumes and source have been identified in historical documents. To resolve these issues, water agencies would like **funding to study nitrates** in the water table.

3.3.2 Water Resources Infrastructure and Regulations

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q20(2): Are there any issues with drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations that impact your community? (Circle One)
Q21: Are parts of the community impacted by storm water quality issues or flooding? (Circle One)
Q12: Do any of your water sources exceed any primary or secondary drinking water standards? (YES/NO)
Q41: Are there current or upcoming regulations that might impact your community? (Circle One)

Summary:
Overall **nitrate sources and contamination** is the biggest concern related to regulations and ability to provide consistent, safe water supplies and an issue noted by community and water institution participants. Water agencies noted that nitrates are an increasing issue in the groundwater in the eastern watershed. Agencies also shared that they continuously **monitor regulations** to determine strategies to meet guidelines. If guidelines continue to **change the current water resource blending methods** (e.g. well with the treated water) agencies will **not**

be available to meet regulatory standards due to excessive nitrates in wells. A majority of water agencies in this watershed are either implementing or considering the use of **recycled water**, which requires meeting both intake and discharge regulations. Additionally, the presence of **polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)** has caused some wells to come offline as a precaution even though they are not exceeding standards and this process increases agency expenses related to **treatment**. Water institutions are promoting **water conservation across rural and urban communities** to meet upcoming water savings regulations. In general, and especially in high stress DACS and rural communities, water institutions shared that regulations are the primary reason for increases in individual and community water rates.

Eastern watershed communities have expressed concerns about significant **flooding** when it rains because the landscape is relatively flat and is void of stormwater drains or any flood control. In other areas **stormwater** is an issue within canyons when it rains. Agencies have reached out to communities they are aware of that have flooding issues despite the more rural areas **not having flood control agency** representation.

3.3.3 Agency Capacity and Technical Needs to Serve Community

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q39: Are there technical and managerial capacity needs within water agencies that need to be met so the community can be served? (Circle One)
Q25: Does your water system have enough funding to handle operations and maintenance needs? (Circle One)

Summary:
All water institutions and community organizations expressed concerns that new and fast paced **approval of regulations** are leading to unpredictable expenses, many agencies increasing **costs associated with regulations**, and **public notification levels**. This leads to **unplanned and immediate spending** that takes funding away from other water projects. Additionally, the **new drinking water regulations** require treatment at parts per trillion compared to parts per billion just a few years ago leading to increasing costs that tend to **impact low and high stress DACs.** G**eneral rate increases** are also associated with service increases including labor. Although many water institutions felt their current financial state was adequate, many noted that increasingly **budgets are becoming lean** to address regulations and standard operations and maintenance needs.

3.3.4 Tribal and Indigenous Engagement

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q31A: This state program considers members of tribal or indigenous communities as underrepresented in water planning. The program requires regions to consider the strengths and needs of tribal and indigenous communities.
Q31B: Are you aware that your service area is in the ancestral homeland of _____?
Q32: How does your agency engage with indigenous people or tribal communities that you serve?

Summary:
A majority of the institutions surveyed indicated that they **do not engage** with Tribal or Indigenous communities, however, one water agency serving high stress DACs across urban and rural communities noted that they have worked with the Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in relation to meeting the California Environmental Quality Act (**CEQA)** requirements (i.e. monitoring field cultural artifacts).

3.3.5 Homeless Population Engagement

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q33: This program considers people experiencing homelessness as members of an underrepresented community. Does your work engage with homelessness at all?

Summary:
Although homelessness is present throughout communities in the Upper Santa Clara River watershed including high stress DACs, most institutions interviewed noted it was **not prevalent** and if present, other community organizations work with unsheltered populations to provide needed resources.

3.3.6 Climate Change

Institutional Survey Questions:
Q40: Are there any impacts of climate change the community is unprepared for?

Summary:
Drought was identified as the most concerning issues for water institutions related to climate change across the USCR. Specific points of concern included **infrastructure impacts** to buildings and facilities because of extensive **high heat conditions**. This has also resulted in **uncertainty** about **seasonal rains and related natural hazards (i.e. flooding)** and their ability to **effectively plan** for short and longer term water resource availability. Water agencies serving high stress DACs note that they are working to **provide multiple water sources** are available and that **modeling software** is utilized to forecast potential water needs related to climatic changes.

Chapter 4 Applications and Project Identification

A primary task of this process was to identify project and technical assistance needs from survey responses. Activities that supported the identification of projects and technical assistance was completed in tandem with the development of the Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (i.e. TAPPED application). WRPI and CGST reviewed individual surveys from the community and institutional responses in the USCR region to develop a list of project and technical assistance needs (Section 4.1 below). To further determine the general location of these responses, survey respondents were asked to identify the nearest road intersection and their zip code. This process is very time consuming and as such, the TAPPED application offers a streamlined online interface that enables the public and resource agencies to quickly identify

project needs, their location and how it aligns with DAC stress model levels and water provider boundaries.

4.1 Project Identification and Technical Assistance Needs

4.1.1 Community Project Identification

- Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)
    - Rainwater capture, bioswales, used fo greenways/spaces, greywater, treescaping, permeable pavement, native plant landscaping, curb cuts
    - Increase and diversify rebates for turf-removal, provide incentives for planting trees and native plants.
    - Incorporate drought friendly plants on city property.
    - Diversify the ability for water institutions and community residents to capture more rainwater.
    - Programs that give people incentive to replace their lawns with alternatives that need far less water.
    - Implement infrastructure that covers storm drains with trash filters to reduce litter and waste in waterways..
    - Increase surface and groundwater monitoring and testing throughout the watershed.
- Water recycling and reuse practices and related infrastructure investment.
    - Address aging infrastructure needs including the Need for sewer treatment facilities
- Governance and Engagement:
        - Allow multiple avenues for public participation in water issues
- Educational resources and outreach - K-12 and Public (multicultural and environmental relevance)
- “Low Income Areas” more efficiency programs, lower bills, increase ability to engage in water issues
- Develop and distribute multilingual water education and public notice resources
- Public Water Stations for schools, public spaces
- Provide in house filtration systems for water
- Support water conservation through urban farming programs
- Provide affordable and drinkable, especially in DACs.

4.1.2 Institutional Project and Technical Assistance Identification

- Strategies for preventing natural hazards including flooding - stormwater
- Preventing sewer and landfill leaching to improve groundwater quality
- Strategies that support O&M cost while also reducing water rates for residents who cannot afford rising cost
- Strategies needs to reduce nitrate contamination, treatment expenses, to meet new regulations
- Studies needed to determine groundwater quality/water supply quality

- Budget strains and need to increase staff to meet regulations, community needs, implementation of regulatory/programs in DACs and O&M
- Multi-level education and outreach appraises needed

4.1.3 Institutional Solution Examples

- Los Angeles County Public Works, Bouquet Canyon Project
- Multi-Agency, Antelope Valley IRWM Region Working Group
- Multi-Agency, USCR IRWM Region Working Group
- Schools and Colleges, College of the Canyons H2O Conserve Website.
- Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, Public Education and Outreach Programs

4.2 Development of Project Evaluation Criteria, Project Description Form, and Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED)

The Project Development Task, Task 4, of the LA-V DACIP will require an online mechanism to collect data about projects that are conceived and eventually, evaluated for potential funding and implementation. Before developing this data collection mechanism, it was critical to develop a project description template. This template stores and organizes the specific attributes that make up a project's description. The template also will support the development of the online data collection form.

4.2.1 Project Description Form Development

During Task 3, an initial draft project description form was developed using existing materials in **Table 4.1**. Relevant project description attributes were taken from these materials and added to the draft template. Multiple, comprehensive and exhaustive review sessions were held with all LA-V DACIP DAC Consultants to improve the draft template. This level of review allowed the template to be consolidated where needed, ensured key attributes were not missed, transformed language and terminology to be used that were eventually used in the online data collection form, and allowed for an efficient and organized structure. After these rounds of review and revision, the template was presented to the DACIP Task Force for review. Their feedback was collected, reviewed, and additional changes were made to the template.

Table 4.1: Materials used to develop the DACIP project description template.

Material Name	Source	Components Used				
		Proj Description	Proj Benefits	Project Types	Proj Budget	Proj Timeline/ Milestones
SAWPA DACIP Project Submission and Evaluation Process	SAWPA	X	X	X	X	X
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Technical Assistance Project Submission Form: Robidoux Nature Consortium	WRPI	X	X	X	X	X
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Technical Assistance Project Submission Form: Bohnert/Banyon Sewer Project (Rialto, CA)	WRPI	X	X	X	X	X
DAC Involvement Activities Table	DWR		X			
GLAC IRWM Opti Criteria	GLAC IRWM	X	X		X	X
Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSR) Engineering Project Data Template	WRPI	X			X	X
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSR) Engineering Project Data Template	WRPI	X			X	X
Safe Clean Water Program: Technical Resources Project Module	LA County	X				X

The project description template, shown in Appendix D, contains three main sections:

1) The main list of project description attributes;
2) A list of agreed upon project types; and
3) A list of agreed upon project benefits.

The main project description template comprises over 30 description attributes and is organized into thematic categories, including project overview information, location information, and budget/cost information. The list of project types are mainly derived from the SAWPA DACIP and DWR DACIP material, reflecting the official DWR Eligible DAC Involvement Activities list,[5] shown in Appendix A. There are 11 project types with corresponding example activities. The list of project benefits is based on previous SAWPA and DWR DACIP material in addition to the Opti Criteria from the GLAC IRWM Region. The combination of using relevant existing material and an exhaustive review and revision process resulted in a comprehensive project description template.

In addition to the project description template, two attachment templates were also developed. The first attachment template focuses on *project deliverables and budget*. It allows data about these items to be collected in a structured manner and associated with the project's description, enabling use in analysis and reporting. Similarly, an attachment template to collect *project milestones and timeline information* was also developed. These two attachments will exist parallel to the main project description information within the DACIP project database.

In Task 4, the project description template and the two attachment templates will be used to develop an online data collection form. The form will be developed using Survey 123 on the front end and ESRI's ArcGIS Online components on the back end to manage data and data infrastructure. The online form will ensure data about each project is captured in a consistent manner and stored in a centralized database. The data will later be put through post-processing methods and integrated into the Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED) Application allowing IRWM representatives to explore the data as well as rank and evaluate projects.

4.2.2 Project Evaluation Criteria Development

In Task 4, projects will undergo a data-driven evaluation and selection process via the TAPPED Application. To successfully enable this functionality, it was necessary to identify which variables would be made available to decision makers during that process. These variables are termed *project evaluation criteria* and identifying them within Task 3 helped set up the framework and programming of the TAPPED Application as well as expectations for additional data processing within Task 4.

Similar to the project description template, the project evaluation criteria list was initially produced by pulling criteria from existing material and then having the list undergo a robust review and revision process. Initially, many different criteria were added to the draft list. However, in order to keep the project ranking and evaluation process as streamlined as possible and to avoid overwhelming decision makers, it was decided that only the most valuable and useful criteria should be included and prioritized through Task 3 and Task 4 work. This set of criteria is called *Tier 1 criteria*.

As the list of Tier 1 criteria was refined, discussions were held on how the criteria would need to be processed for each project in the database. This step will primarily involve geospatial data processing using each project's sphere of influence in conjunction with data containing the evaluation criteria information. Initial examples of data processing and components to aid in the processing were discussed. This included the use of data crosswalks, software to extract common keywords from textual data, and statistical processing and summarization techniques.
The list of project evaluation criteria, shown in Appendix D, contains over 40 criteria. These are organized into thematic groups, which include:

- Project Description Criteria;
- General Reference Criteria;
- DAC Socioeconomic Criteria;
- Task 3 DACIP Community Needs Assessment Criteria; and
- Task 3 DACIP Institutional Needs Assessment Criteria.

Much of the community and institutional needs assessment data will be made available to decision makers during the project evaluation process. As described above, the needs data will be processed and summarized for each project so that key information from the needs assessment can be taken into consideration when evaluating projects. Criteria from the needs assessment cover topics such as water resource issues, participation in community planning, and water

accessibility.

4.2.3 TAPPED Application Development

The Technical Assistance Proposed Projects Evaluation Dashboard (TAPPED) Application is an interactive online application that will facilitate TA project evaluation. TAPPED allows for project data exploration, project ranking, and project evaluation. It brings together project description data, including evaluation criteria, and reference data. The application contains hosted data on the back end, a multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) core to facilitate project evaluation and ranking, and a user-friendly front-end interface (Figure 4.1). During Task 3, the requirements and design of the TAPPED Application were discussed, developed, and finalized via extensive discussion and planning.

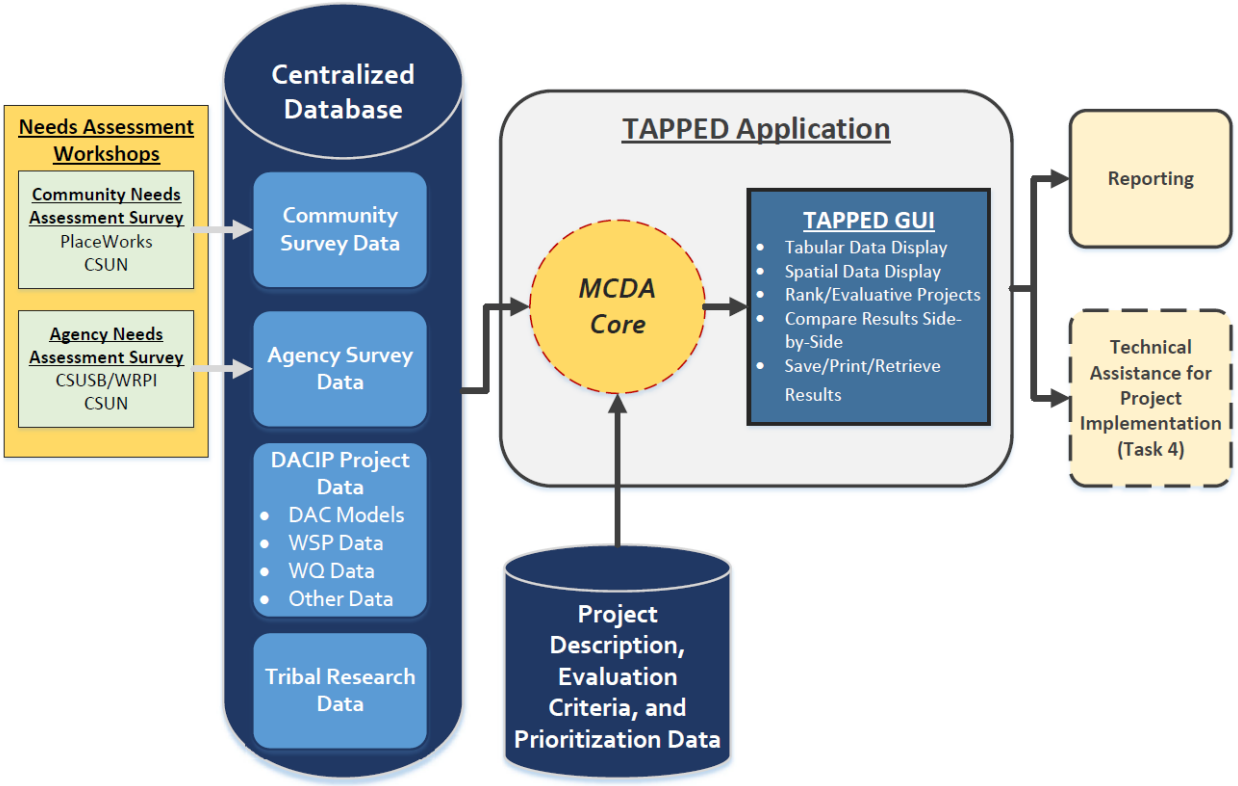


Figure 4.1: Components, structure, and flow of project ranking and evaluation process via the TAPPED Application.

Initially, WRPI's SAWPA DACIP Criteria Workflow (**Figure 4.2**) was used as a rough concept of how a project sorting and selection workflow could be constructed. DACIP project evaluation concepts and processes were then discussed and developed, including how to best encourage decision makers to explore project data, build an evaluation, and interact with the results of an evaluation. Several meetings were held to discuss the TAPPED Application and its many different components.

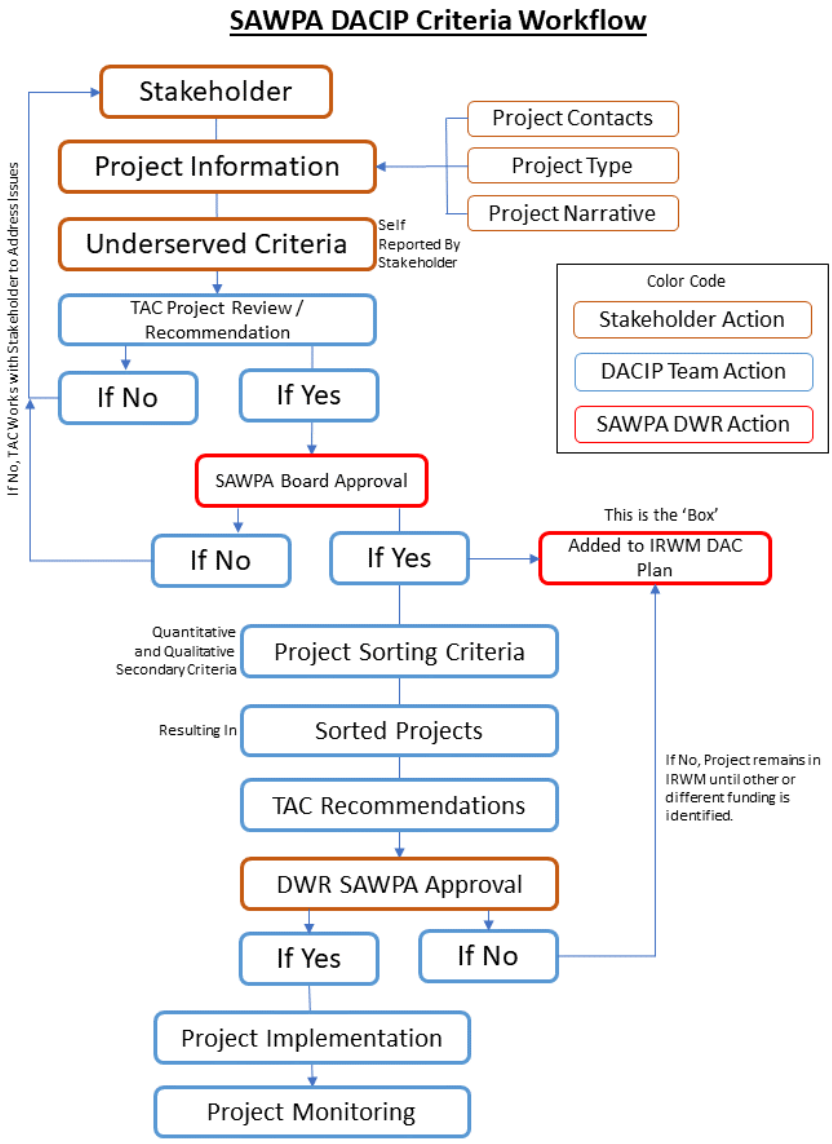


Figure 4.2: WRPI's SAWPA DACIP Criteria Workflow.

An interactive sample wireframe (blueprint), **Figures 4.3 through 4.6,** was developed to showcase the main components and functionality of the application. This allowed for DAC Consultants to better understand and visualize how the application would eventually be developed.

TAPPED will offer the following tools and features:

1. Users will be required to have an account and log in to access the application.
2. Users can view all projects that are classified as a certain Project Type (e.g., needs assessment projects, community outreach projects) (see **Figure 4.3**).
3. Users can evaluate and rank projects by selected Project Type (see **Figure 4.4**). Optional parameters for evaluation include:

a. Manually selecting criteria to use in the evaluation (e.g., project cost, DAC %, affected population)
b. Weighting the selected criteria to indicate relative importance/influence of that criteria in the evaluation.

4. After the evaluation is run, the user will be presented with a ranked list of projects and an interactive map showing the location of those projects (see **Figure 4.4**).
5. Users can click on a project of interest to view all project details (see **Figure 4.5**).
6. Users can manually select and view projects of interest and compare details (see **Figure 4.6**).
7. Users will be able to save, retrieve, print, and export a project evaluation (to retain selected criteria and weighting for future viewing).
8. Users also can adjust an existing evaluation as needed.

Other additional minor functionality will be available and will be further developed and documented in Task 4.

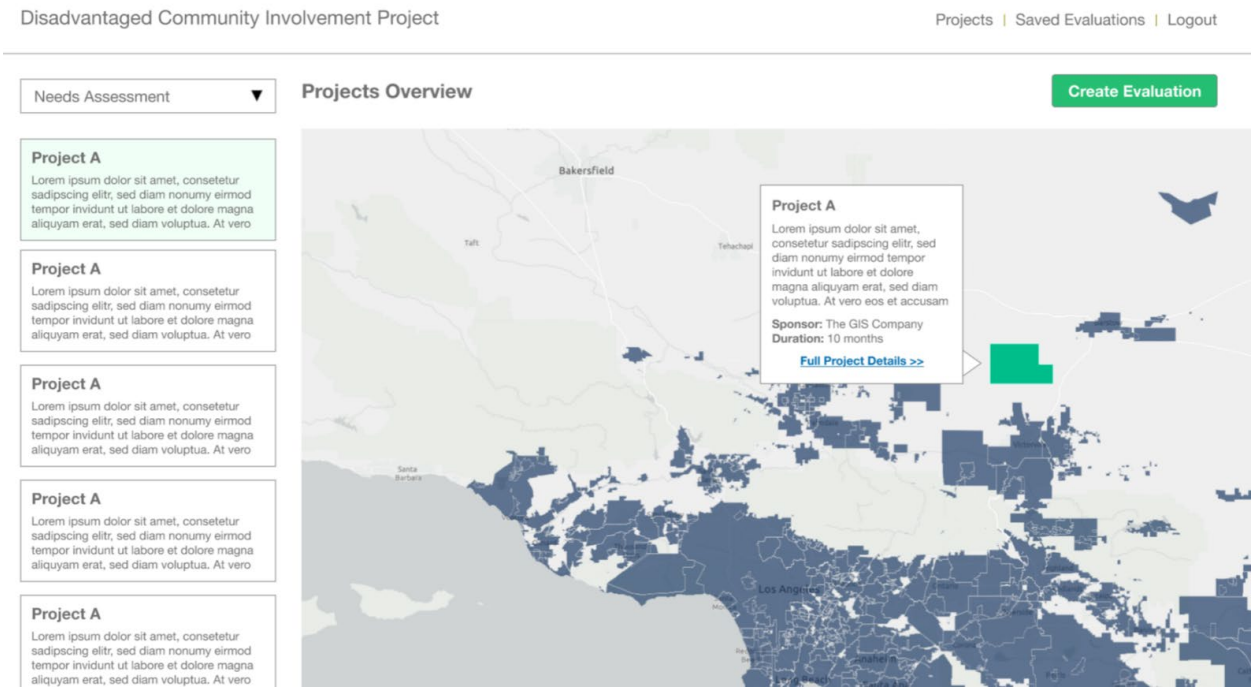


Figure 4.3: Concept project overview page and interactive map within the TAPPED Application.

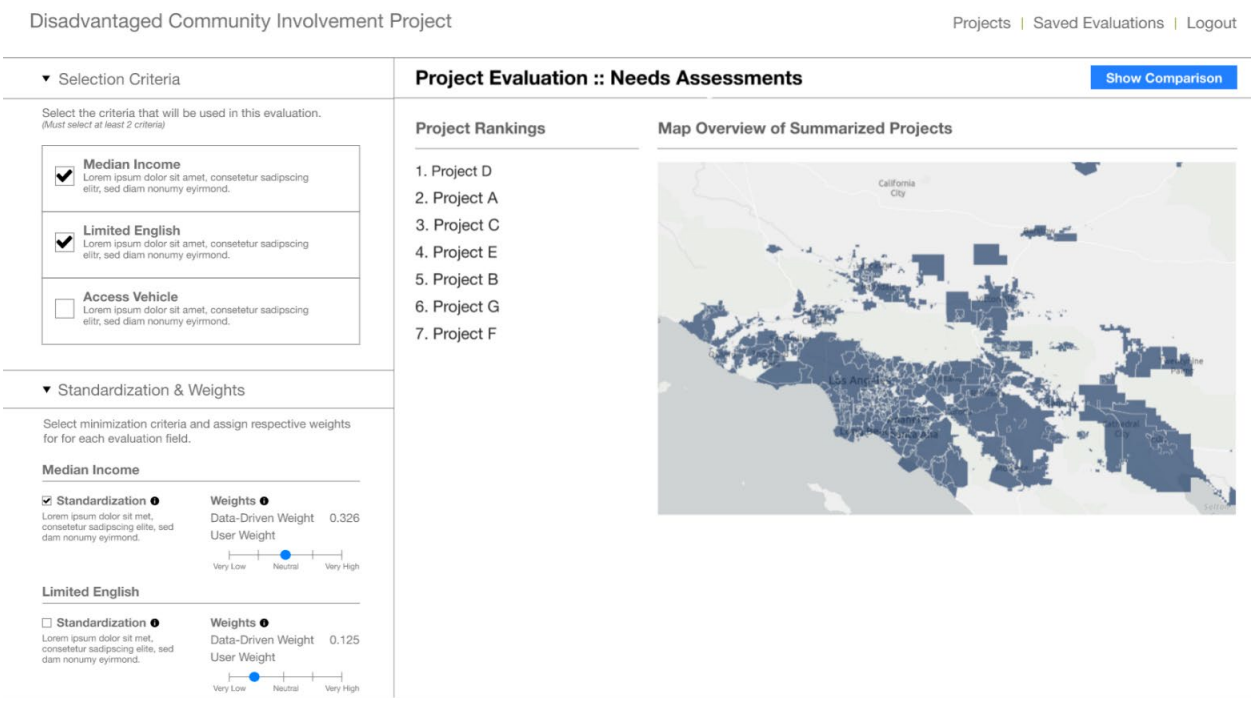


Figure 4.4: Concept page within the TAPPED Application that allows users to conduct their project evaluation by selecting evaluation criteria and assigning weights of importance.

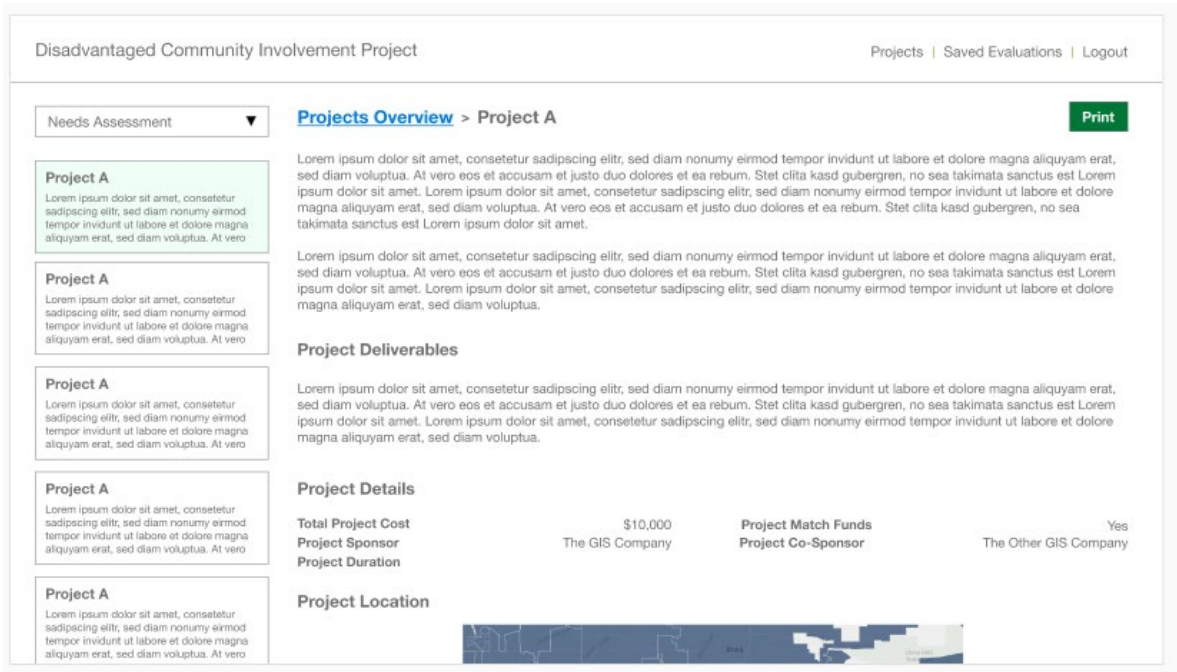


Figure 4.5: Concept page showing project details within the TAPPED Application.

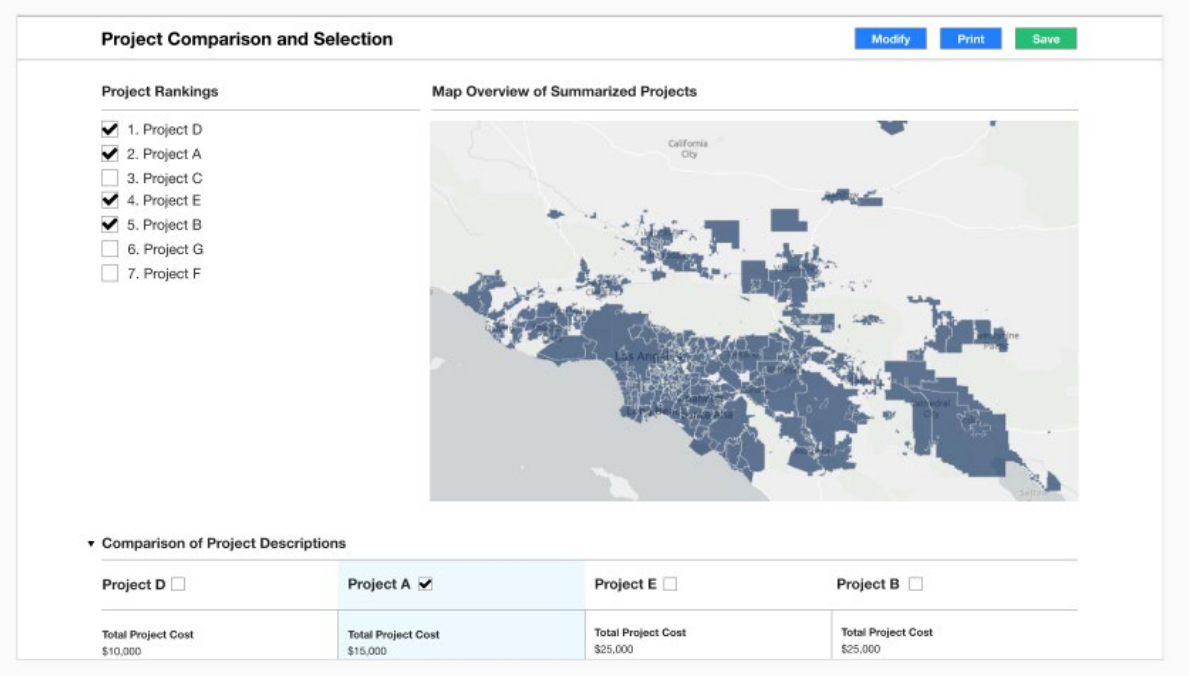


Figure 4.6: Concept project comparison and selection page and interactive map within the TAPPED Application.

The objective of this GUI, TAPPED, is to allow users to interact with multiple database variables to compare and prioritize potential technical assistance projects. Multivariable modeling/comparisons allow the user to identify important variables to consider when evaluating individual projects, such as number of connections, percent of the population meeting the MHI, type and cost of proposed project, multiple benefits, etc. The objective for developing a project descriptor template and prioritization criteria is to allow the LA-Ventura Funding Area DACIP IRWM representatives to make data-driven choices about what proposed projects to select for funding, under the Project Development task, Task 4, with a clearly documentable and transparent process.

References

1.Proposal -LA/ Ventura Funding Area, http://wcvc.ventura.org/dcip/docs/LA_Ventura_DACIP_Application_Final_Proposal.pdf

2. 2019 IRWM Grant Program Guidelines,pg. 6, https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Work-With-Us/Grants-And-Loans/IRWM-Grants/Files/P1-Guidelines/2019-IRWM-Grant-Program-Guidelines122319ay19.pdf)

3. Task Order 3B Solicitation, Exhibit A

4. Greater Los Angeles County Community Strengths and Needs Assessment- A Water Perspective Draft - v9.7.21 11, pg.10

5. 2016 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Request for Proposals, http://wcvc.ventura.org/dcip/docs/Prop1_DACI_GrantProgram-Final_RFP_2016.pdf

6.Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), on behalf of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) **Enviroscreen 3.0,** https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30

7.United States Census **Median Household Income (MHI),** https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html

8.Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry **Social Vulnerability Index,** CDC/ATSDR SVI Data and Documentation Download | Place and Health | ATSDR

Appendix A | Needs Assessment Materials

DWR Needs Assessment Template

See page 8 of the 2016 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Request for Proposals using the following link: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/irwmp/Docs/Prop1/2016Prop1IRWM_DACIRFP_Final.pdf.

Table 3 – Eligible DAC Involvement Activities

Table 3 – Eligible DAC Involvement Activities		
General Activity	**Examples of Activity**	**Desired Outcome**
Needs Assessments **(required)**	Surveys or meetings with community members to identify water management needs	Needs Assessments provide better understanding of water management needs to help direct resources and funding
Education	Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, RWMGs education on DAC needs	Education and interpretive services provide better understanding by community members or RWMGs of water management needs
Community Outreach	Public meetings open to DAC community members, door-to-door outreach	Outreach increases participation in IRWM planning or project development activities
Engagement in IRWM Efforts	DAC regional engagement coordinator role, DAC Advisory Committee to RWMG, DAC representatives in governance	Engagement activities increases activity and roles of DACs in RWMG decision making and increased participation in IRWM efforts
Facilitation	Facilitated RWMG meetings, facilitated project development meetings	Facilitation services encourage participation and stakeholders resolving or overcoming obstacles in communicating needs
Technical Assistance	Service provider trainings, local circuit rider programs to train water and wastewater staff	Technical, financial, or managerial assistance results in community staff able to support local decision making, knowledge, and skills
Governance Structure	Evaluation of governance structures and related plan financing, assessment of DAC involvement in decision making processes	Evaluation of RWMG governance to ensure DAC participation in IRWM regardless of ability to contribute financially
Site Assessment	Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities	Site assessment results in knowledge gained by community staff on water management needs and data for project development
Enhancement of DAC aspects in IRWM plans	Development of Funding Area-wide DAC plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all IRWM plans	IRWM plan DAC-related changes result in IRWM plan updates that support the RWMG's understanding of DAC needs
Project Development Activities or Construction	Planning activities, environmental compliance, pre-construction engineering/design activities, or construction activities	Project development activities for future implementation/construction funding or construction activities

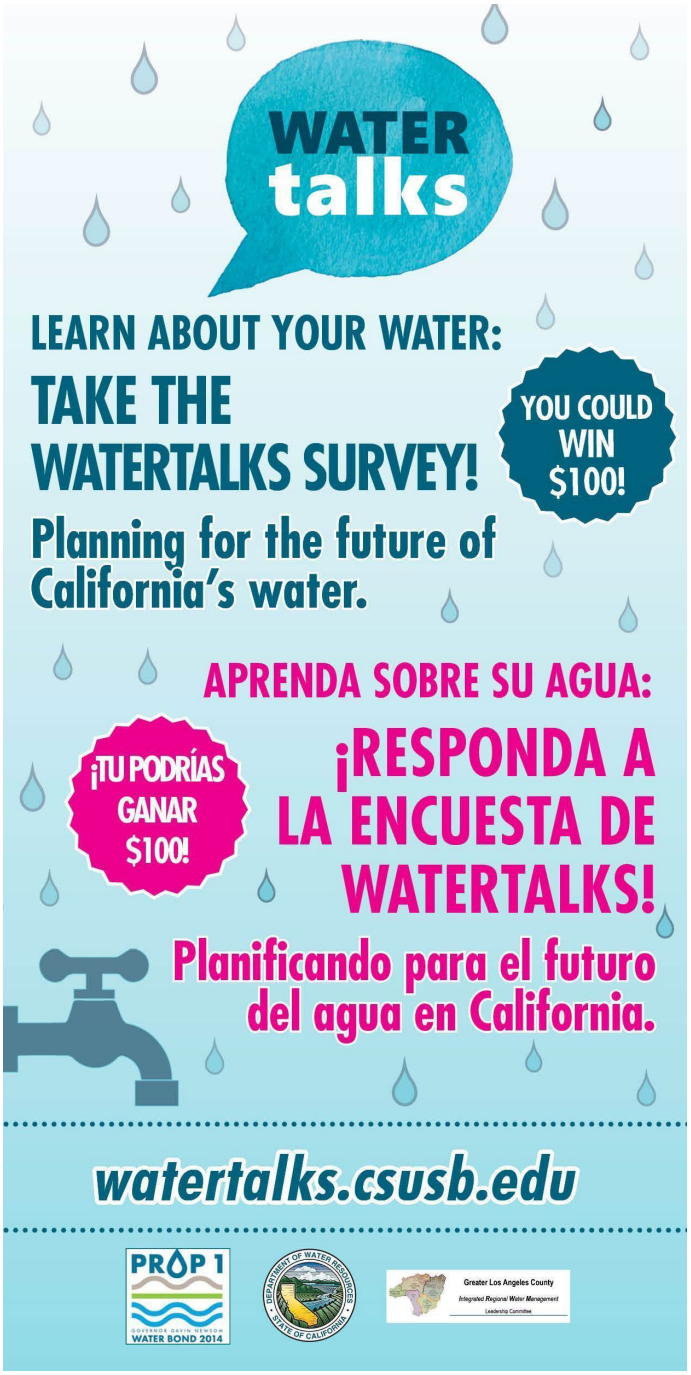
Appendix B | Images of Outreach Materials

Paid Advertisements

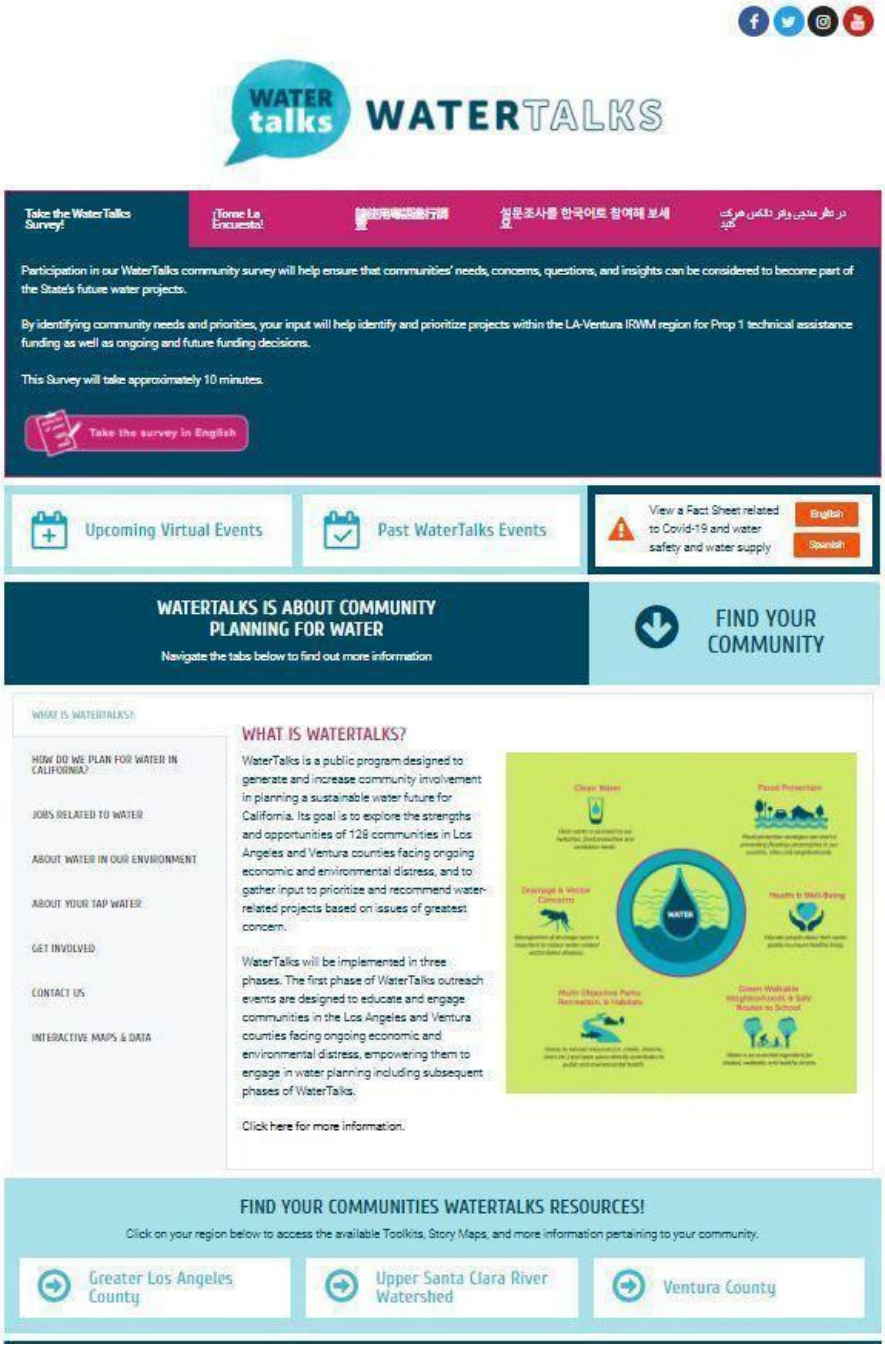
Country Journal Advertising



Paid Advertisements

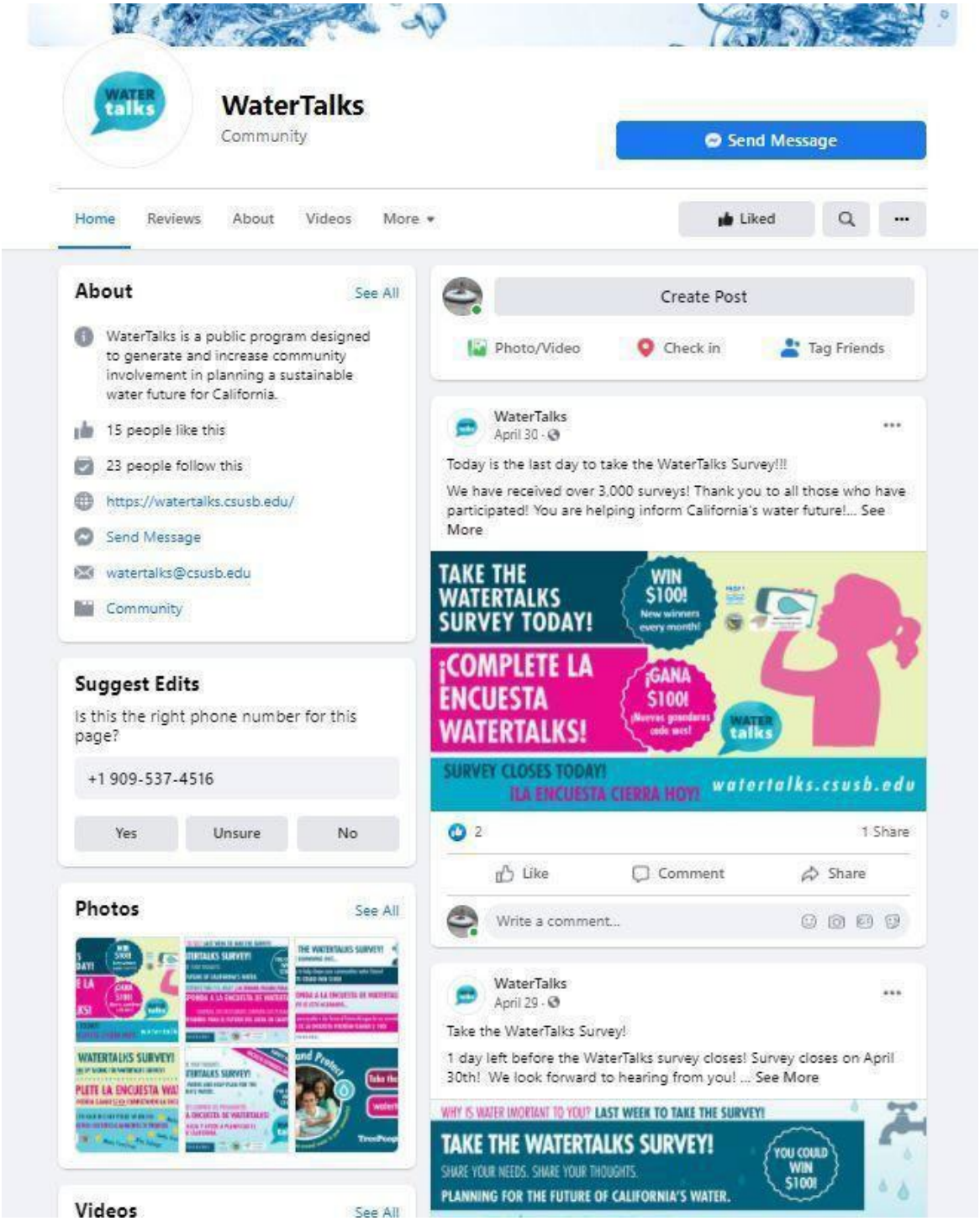


WaterTalks Website Home Page



Social Media Outreach

Facebook Page




LA-Ventura WaterTalks
Published by Lav WaterTalks · Just now ·
Participate in our WaterTalks community survey!
By identifying community needs and priorities, your input will inform how public funds will be distributed to communities across our region.
Take the survey today: https://watertalks.csusb.edu
Win one of several $100 gift cards!
SURVEY
After completing the survey, you will be invited to enter an opportunity drawing to win one of several $100 gift cards!
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Instagram
lav_watertalks
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LA-Ventura WaterTalks
Published by Lav WaterTalks · Just now ·
Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
Tome la encuesta hoy: https://watertalks.csusb.edu
Gana una tarjeta de regalo de $100!
SURVEY
Después de completer la encuesta, se le invitará a participar en un sorteo de oportunidades para ganar una de varias tarjetas de regalo de $ 100
Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
Tome la encuesta hoy: https://watertalks.csusb.edu
Gana una tarjeta de regalo de $100!
Después de completer la encuesta, se le invitará a participar en un sorteo de oportunidades para ganar una de varias tarjetas de regalo de $ 100
Instagram
lav_watertalks
Gana una tarjeta de regalo de $100!
Después de completer la encuesta, se le invitará a participar en un sorteo de oportunidades para ganar una de varias tarjetas de regalo de $ 100
lav_watertalks Participe en nuestra encuesta comunitaria WaterTalks!
Al identificar las necesidades y prioridades de la comunidad, sus comentarios informarán cómo se distribuirán los fondos públicos a las comunidades de nuestra región.
Visite nuestro sitio web para tomar la encuesta hoy: watertalks.csusb.edu

E-Blasts



WaterTalks is a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California. Our goal is to hear from as many community members from Los Angeles and Ventura Counties as possible!

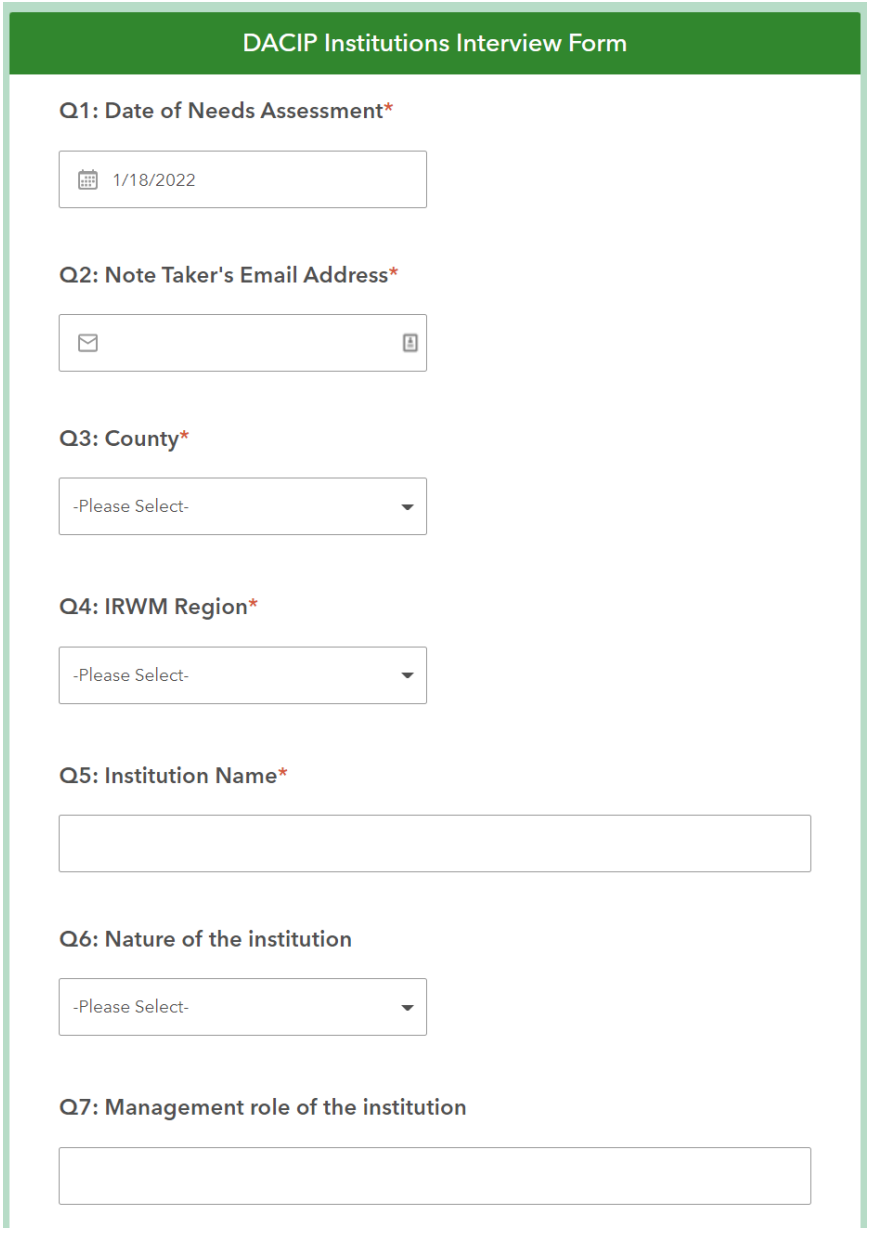
WaterTalks es un programa público diseñado para generar y aumentar la participación de la comunidad en la planificación de un futuro sostenible del agua para California. ¡Nuestro objetivo es escuchar a tantos miembros de la comunidad de los condados de Los Ángeles y Ventura como sea posible!



The WaterTalks Survey is offered in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Korean and Farsi. This survey is an opportunity for individuals to help plan for their community's water future. **So far, over 2,000 participants have taken the survey. Survey participants are eligible to win a $100 gift card! The survey is open until April 30, 2021.**

Appendix C | Community and Institutional Needs Assessment Materials

Institutional Interview Survey 123 Form



DACIP Institutions Interview Form

Q1: Date of Needs Assessment*

1/18/2022

Q2: Note Taker's Email Address*

Q3: County*

-Please Select-

Q4: IRWM Region*

-Please Select-

Q5: Institution Name*

Q6: Nature of the institution

-Please Select-

Q7: Management role of the institution

Q9: This survey is collecting responses from ____?

-Please Select-

Number of people interviewed:

123

SYSTEMS

Q10: What are the water sources for your system? Check all that apply:

- [ ] Groundwater from well
- [ ] Groundwater from a spring
- [ ] Surface water
- [ ] Purchased water requiring treatment
- [ ] Purchased water already treated
- [ ] Do not know
- [ ] Not qualified to know
- [ ] Does not apply
- [ ] Other (please specify)

Q11: What are the objectives of the system? Check all that apply:

- [x] Drinking water
- [ ] Irrigation
- [ ] Wastewater
- [ ] Do not know
- [ ] Not qualified to know
- [ ] Does not apply
- [ ] Other (please specify)

Q12: Do any of your water sources exceed any primary or secondary drinking water standards?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

Please explain.

8000

Q13 (1): How many residential service connections?

123

Q13 (2): What percent of them are rental units?

-Please Select-

Q14: How many non-residential service connection are provided in the community?

123

Q15: Population variability (seasonal or stable)

- ○ Seasonal
- ○ Stable

Q16: Before we begin, do you have any questions?

8000

COMMUNITY - General

[PROMPT] Today, we'd like to focus on the community you serve through your role at [agency]. We'd like to start out by asking you to describe some aspects of your community in general. Will you please tell us about your community's strengths, and what it needs?

Q17 (1): Strengths:

8000

Q17 (2): Needs:

8000

COMMUNITY - Issues and Challenges

[PROMPT] Q18: What do you see as barriers to access the benefits of drinking water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure in your community?

8000

(PROBE) Q19: Is safe, affordable water for drinking, washing, and cooking accessible to all members of your community?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

Q20 (1): What types of drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations impact your community?

8000

Q20 (2): Are there any issues with drinking water and wastewater (sanitation) infrastructure/regulations that impact your community?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q21: Are parts of the community impacted by storm water quality issues or flooding?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q22: Are other water access needs in your community met, such as water for ceremonial purposes or for recreation?

-Please Select-

Please explain.

8000

(PROBE) Q23: Are there any regulatory/compliance issues that impact your community?

-Please Select-

Please Explain.

8000

Institutional Email Blast

Hello,

WaterTalks, a public program designed to generate and increase community involvement in planning a sustainable water future for California is a component of the Department of Water Resources Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DACI) Program funded by a Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant. WaterTalks was specifically developed for the Los Angeles-Ventura Funding Area, which covers the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) IRWM Region. In USCR, community engagement is led by the California State University's Water Resources and Policies Initiative (WRPI).

Late last year, WaterTalks launched the WaterTalks Community Survey (Survey) for the LA-Ventura region to gather community input about their water-related needs and priorities. **WaterTalks is also conducting interviews with selected institutions within these communities. Both the community surveys and institutional interviews will be used to inform the distribution of Prop 1 grant funding and to involve disadvantaged communities and economically distressed areas in the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning process.** WaterTalks representatives will be gathering input from selected institutions and community members until **April 30th, 2021.**

We anticipate that the virtual interview will take about 60 minutes. I have also provided you with a copy of the interview form to fill out as an alternative to the virtual interview.

Please reply to this email if you are interested in scheduling an interview as soon as possible or please send us back the filled-out spreadsheet and any questions you may have.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the WaterTalks program. We look forward to your participation.

Thank you,

Melissa Moreno
Program Manager
Water Resources Institute (WRI)
Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)
5500 University Parkway, PL-401
San Bernardino, CA 92407
909-537-4516
Melissa.Moreno2@csusb.edu

Appendix D | Project Description Template and Evaluation Criteria

Project Attributes

Section	Field/Attribute	Categories/Domains (if applicable)	Definition
Project Overview Information	Project Title		
	Project Website		
	Project Concept Abstract (briefly describe ~750 words)		
	Project Type	See **Project Types** worksheet	Select ONE Project Type that best describes the project. (e.g. Needs Assessments, K-12 Activities, Tech Assistance, etc.)
	Project Description (8000 Words)		
	Upload additional attachments as needed		Upload additional relevant project documents (resumes, photos, and other materials).
	Project Benefits	See **Project Benefits** worksheet	Identify *one or more* benefits that apply to the project.
	Project Deliverables		List proposed project deliverables (e.g. Property Acquisition, Plan Development, Study, Non-Construction Implementation, Permits, Project Design, Trainings, Permits.)
Applying/Implementing Entity	Entity Name		Name of organization/agency, etc.
	Address		
	Contact Name		Identify an individual point-of-contact.
	Contact Title		
	Contact Email		
	Contact Phone Number		
Other Partners/Collaborators (may replicate this section)	Entity Name		Name of other organizations/agencies
	Address		
	Contact Name		Identify an individual point-of-contact
	Contact Title		
	Contact Email		
	Contact Phone Number		
	Other Stakeholders		Names of project stakeholders *not* identified above as official partners.
Location	Project Geographic Location/Address		
	Sphere of Influence		Identify the sphere of influence of the project. If assistance is needed to determine sphere of influence, please contact DACIP Team. [Enable hyperlink that takes the user to contact info.]
Budget/Cost	Total Project Cost: Known/Unknown	Amount known, Amount unknown, Need help in determining	
	Total Project Cost		Enter *total* project cost. Can be $0. If budget development assistance is needed, please contact DACIP Team. [Enable hyperlink that takes the user to contact info.]
	Matching Resources: Entity Name		Agency or resource providing matching
	Matching Resources: Amount		Amount of matching resources
	Matching Resources: Level of Commitment	Received, Pledged, Planned, Need Help/Assistance	
	Post Grant Funding: Entity Name		Agency or resource providing post grant
	Post Grant Funding: Amount		Amount of post grant funding
	Post Grant Funding: Level of Commitment	Received, Pledged, Planned, Need Help/Assistance	
	Estimated O&M Expenses		
	Cost Breakdown by Deliverable		Identify the cost per deliverable for each task or outcome in this project.
Schedule/Deliverables	Project Duration (# of Months)		Enter the estimated project duration in number of months.
	Schedule of deliverable milestones		Provide an estimated schedule of deliverable milestones.

Project Types

4. Project Type

[REQUIRED] Select the project type that best describes the project based on the below examples.

(1) **Needs Assessments:** Survey community members or water providers, facilitate meetings or workshops

(2) **Education:** Translation or interpretive services for information sharing, water campaigns for community, regional water management groups education on disadvantaged communities needs

(3) **Community Outreach:** Public meetings open to disadvantaged communities community members, door-to-door outreach

(4) **Engagement with Integrated Regional Water Management Efforts:** Disadvantaged Communities regional engagement coordinator role, disadvantaged communities advisory committee to regional water management group, disadvantaged communities representatives in governance

(5) **Facilitation:** Facilitated regional water management group meetings, facilitated project development meetings

(6) **Technical Assistance:** Public agency/elected official capacity building, agency staff training, assess water charges/rate plans, and assess consolidation of water providers

(7) **Governance Structure:** Increase disadvantaged communities involvement in decision making

(8) **Site Assessment:** Water quality assessments, median household income surveys, data and mapping activities

(9) **Enhancement of Disadvantaged Communities Aspects in Integrated Regional Water Management Plans:** Development of funding area-wide disadvantaged communities plan to be utilized as a unified approach for all integrated regional water management plans

(10) **Project Development Activities or Construction:** Environmental compliance, pre-construction activities, grant writing, project development

(11) **Financial Strategy:** Provides aid with financial aspects of grant applications or similar

-Please Select-

Project Benefits

8. Project Benefits

[REQUIRED] Select **one or more** benefits that apply to the project.

Examples:
(1) **Improved Climate Adaptation or Carbon Sequestration:** Uses green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, natural materials/processes

(2) **Adherence to Water Plan(s):** May include adherence to Urban Water Management Plan, Integrated Regional Water Management, Enhanced Watershed Management Program, Groundwater Quality Management Area, Stormwater Resources plan, Measure W Stormwater Investment Plan

(3) **Water Quality:** Improves water quality of drinking water and surface runoff, addresses primary pollutants of concern

(4) **Water Supply Resilience:** Improves drought response

(5) **Habitat Improvement:** Supports specific endangered or at-risk species, increases biodiversity, increases habitat corridors that connect larger open spaces, practives resources stewardship

(6) **Water Conservation:** Reduces water demand, captures runoff/rain

(7) **Recycled Water:** Integrates purple pipe, gray/black water systems

(8) **Improves Groundwater Quality and/or Quantity:** Stormwater filtration, ground water injection, revives dry wells, enhances dry weather runoff treatment

(9) **Reduces Flood Hazards:** Reduces localized street and sidewalk flooding, enhances floodplain protection

(10) **Provides Recreational/Ceremonial Access/Use:** Increases public open space, access to public open space

(11) **Improves Community/Agency Capacity:** Increases community awareness and education, increases community/tribal involvement in project development, improves operational efficiency

Project Evaluation Criteria

TARGET TIER 1 VARIABLES			TAPPED APPLICATION USAGE		
Ref ID	Variable Description	Source Dataset Name	TAPPED Dataset Grouping	Tier 1 Project Evaluation/ Ranking Use	Tier 1 Proj Attribute Display Use
1	Project Title	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
2	Project Type	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
3	Project Abstract	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
4	Project Deliverables	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
5	Total Project Cost	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
6	Project Match Funds	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
7	Project Sponsor	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
8	Project Co-Sponsor	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
9	Project Duration (months)	Project Description Data	Project Description	Yes	Yes
10	Project Geography	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
11	Project Benefits	Project Description Data	Project Description	No	Yes
12	IRWM Region	IRWM Regions	General Reference	No	Yes
13	County	CA Counties	General Reference	No	Yes
14	WSPs	WSP Boundaries	General Reference	No	Yes
15	MHI	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
16	Average Est. DAC % HH	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
17	Average Est. SDAC % HH	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
18	Total Number of Households	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
19	Population	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	No	Yes
20	Population Density	Street Weighted DAC Model	DAC/Socioeconomic	Yes	Yes
21	Top Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
22	Percentage of Responses that Include Top Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
23	Second Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
24	Percentage of Responses that Include Second Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
25	Third Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
26	Percentage of Responses that Include Third Community Water Related Issue	Comm Survey (Q6)	Community Needs	No	Yes
27	Community Water Related Issues Resolved by Project (%)	Comm Survey (Q6) X Proj Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
28	Community Water Related Issues Resolved by Project (Margin of Error)	Comm Survey (Q6) X Proj Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
29	Are There Concerns About Drinking Water Quality?	Comm Survey (Q7)	Community Needs	No	Yes
30	Top Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
31	Percentage of Responses that Include Top Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes

32	Second Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
33	Percentage of Responses that Include Second Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
34	Third Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
35	Percentage of Responses that Include Third Community Concern	Comm Survey (Q10)	Community Needs	No	Yes
36	Community Concerns Resolved by Project (%)	Comm Survey (Q10) X PTO Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
37	Community Concerns Resolved by Project (Margin of Error)	Comm Survey (Q10) X PTO Benefits	Community Needs	No	Yes
38	Do You Participate in Community Planning Efforts?	Comm Survey (Q11)	Community Needs	No	Yes
39	Community Needs Survey Sample Size	Comm Survey	Community Needs	No	Yes
40	Barriers to Access of Clean Water	Inst Survey (Q18)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
41	Is Safe, Affordable Water Accessible in Community?	Inst Survey (Q19)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
42	Any Drinking Water or Wastewater Infrastructure/Regulatory Issues That Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q20 (2))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
43	Do Stormwater Quality/Flooding Issues Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q21 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
44	Are Other Water Access Needs in Community Met?	Inst Survey (Q22 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
45	Any Regulatory/Compliance Issues Impact Community?	Inst Survey (Q23 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
46	Does Community Have Enough Funding for Operations and Maintenance Needs?	Inst Survey (Q25)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
47	Awareness of Service Area on Ancestral Homeland of A Tribe?	Inst Survey (Q31)	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
48	Any Stalled Projects?	Inst Survey (Q45 (1))	Institutional Needs	No	Yes
49	Institutional Needs Survey Sample Size	Inst Survey	Institutional Needs	No	Yes

Appendix E | DAC-Stress Model Methodology

LA-VEN DAC Involvement Project Interim DAC-Stress Model Methodology Outline Last Update: 12/10/20

1. Goal: Develop a DAC index composed of three data sources to demonstrate what census tracks indicate a high level of stress.

2. Data Sources/Collection:

a) Enviroscreen 3.0: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30

b) Median Household Income (MHI): US Census

c) Social Vulnerability Index (Susan Cutter):

https://svi.cdc.gov/SVIDataToolsDownload.html

3. Date of Production: September, 2018

4. Model Extent: Covered the following counties:

a) LA County

b) Ventura County

c) Orange County

d) San Bernardino County

e) Riverside County

5. Final Model Resolution/Scale: Census Tract

6. Methodology Summary:

a) Created a single functional census tract layer with key attribution via attribute joins:

i. Enviroscreen: Utilized the continuous numeric composite index attribute: higher number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: Clscore

ii. MHI: Utilized the continuous numeric MHI attribute: lower number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: MHI

iii. SVI: Utilize the continuous numeric composite index attribute: higher number indicates higher stress.

Attribute name: RPL_Themes

b) Developed a Scoring Index per Dataset and Reclassified Key Attribution: DAC Stress Model Methodology Outline 2

i. Enviroscreen Data: Broke the continuous numeric composite index attribute (CIscore) into three categories and assign scores:

1. High 1/3: Score of 3

2. Middle 1/3: Score of 2

3. Low 1/3: Score of 1

ii. MHI: Broke the MHI attribute (MHI) into three categories:

1. Tracts with MHI in the bottom 50% (using median value) of the portion below the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 3

2. Tracts with MHI in the top 50% (using median value) of the portion below the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 2

3. Scores over the MHI threshold for poverty: Score of 1

4. Used CA Poverty Level of $31,000 as the MHI threshold for poverty.

a) Good baseline approach considering CA cost of living, wage rate, etc. is proportionally higher than less urbanized areas, like the Midwest and areas of the East Coast.

b) California Poverty Measure – PPIC/SCPI: http://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/ iii. SVI: Broke the continuous numeric composite index attribute (RPL_Themes) into three categories and assigned scores:

1. High 1/3: Score of 3

2. Middle 1/3: Score of 2

3. Low 1/3: Score of 1

c) Aggregated Scores to Produce Stress Index:

i. Add the scores for each of the three key attributes and produced a field with their sum per tract. Relevant fields/attributes:

1. EnvScrn_Class: Enviroscreen Score

2. MHI_Class: MHI Score

3. SVI Class: SVI Score

4. DAC_Index: Aggregated DAC Stress Index

a) Used this as the stress index and used in mapping/visualization (see below for more info).

b) Null values indicate lack of census data. DAC Stress Model Methodology Outline 3

7. Deliverables:

a) GDB Containing:

i. Final model layer (census tract level)

ii. Clipped versions of final model for the following areas:

1. LA County

2. Ventura County

3. Orange County

4. San Bernardino County

5. Riverside County

6. Santa Ana Watershed

iii. Ingredient data layers

iv. Reference data layers

b) PDF Maps:

i. One map per county

ii. Use the stress index for symbolization:

1. Use a light, medium, and dark red symbolization scheme to indicate stress per tract.

8. Contact Information:

a) Center for Geospatial Science and Technology California State University, Northridge Website: https://csun.edu/cgst Email: cgst@csun.edu California State University Northridge 18111 Nordhoff Street Northridge, CA

b) Water Resources Policy Initiatives California State University San Bernardino Websites: https://www.csusb.edu/water-resources-institute/wrpi Email: WRPI.Comm@csusb.edu 5500 University Parkway San Bernardino CA 92407 Note: The data produced from this methodology is served up through the DACIP Hub site and is available to the public, but we ask that users cite WaterTalks LA-VEN DACIP as developers of this dataset.

Appendix F | Example Needs Assessment Analysis- Acton, California

One example of a smaller community within the USCR study areas is the Town of Acton, which is serviced by the Los Angeles Department of Water, Waterworks WW District 37 located in Lancaster, California. Acton is located within the eastern portion of the USCR and is characterized by DAC stress levels 3 and 4 as noted in Figure F.1. This is one of many examples within the study area where a single agency serves a community that has multiple stress DAC levels, although the rural nature of the landscape means less population density and less diversity in DAC types. Specific question responses are illustrated below as an example of how the survey data and mapping tool can be effective in identifying and resolving community and institutional needs. Respondents to the community survey were represented by a majority of respondents who were homeowners, with fewer respondents representing renters and business owners.

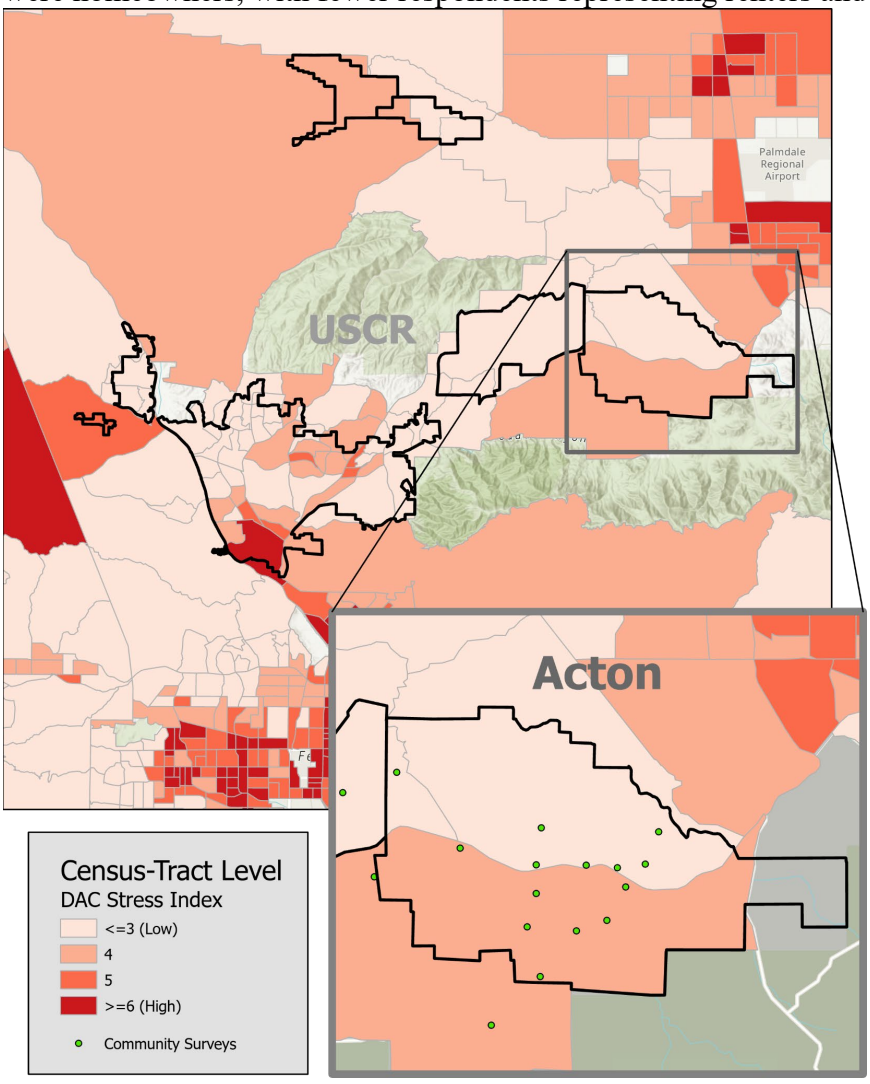


Figure F.1 Acton, California: Water District Boundary with Community Survey Responses (n=16). Community members and the district boundaries encompass three different DAC Stress Model types (3, 4).

Community Needs,

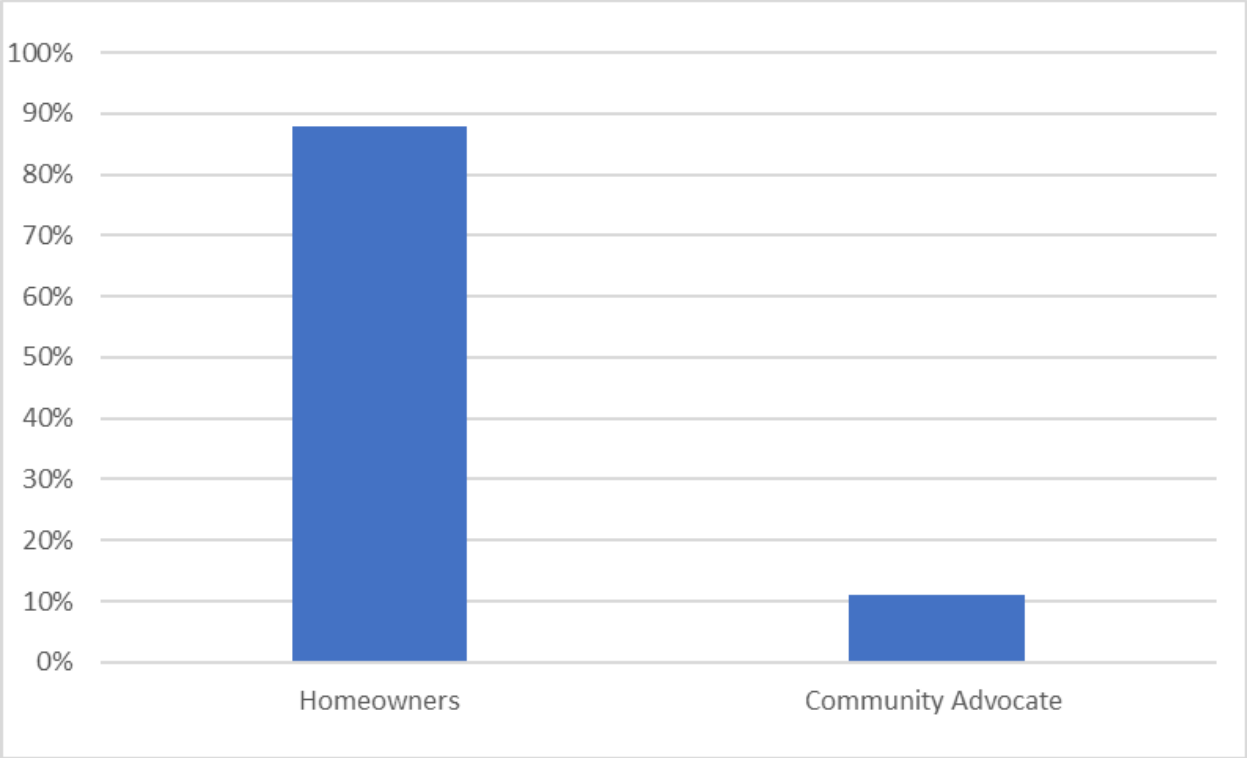


Figure F.2 Stakeholder community survey respondent types within the Acton Community, USCR Region.

Q5 What are the three things your community needs the most?

- *High frequency themes of responses include the following: illegal dumping resulting in the need for better litter control, desire to maintain rural landscape and lack of interest in "city rules' ' influencing rural communities. The Acton community is interested in more representation with decision making bodies including county boards, so that they can adequately represent their needs.*
- *There is also a desire across both institutions and communities for better internet for regular and emergency communication. Community members also noted the need to reduce the number of homes being built and an increased focus on developing and maintaining green spaces.*
- *In relation to water resources and community amenities. community members noted the need for better water quality and quantity and reliable utilities including electricity and water, septic vs sewer, and more paved roads.*

Q10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

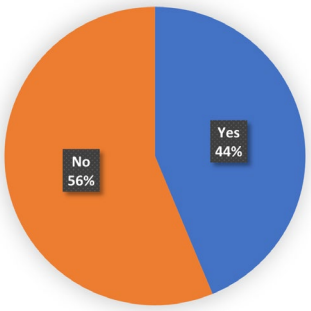
- *Homeowners in the Acton community noted transportation challenges related to the need for paved roads and rural-urban transportation networks, increased public safety (i.e. traffic, speeding), and to reduce development in the area.*

- *Water centric needs highlighted include the need for water parks and open spaces that utilize efficient water management and general water quality and quantity concerns. .*

Q16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by the government or the public at large?

- *Eight-Eight percent (88%) of community members surveyed noted that they do not think that their voices are being heard by the government or public at large.*

Community Water Needs and Solutions

a. 

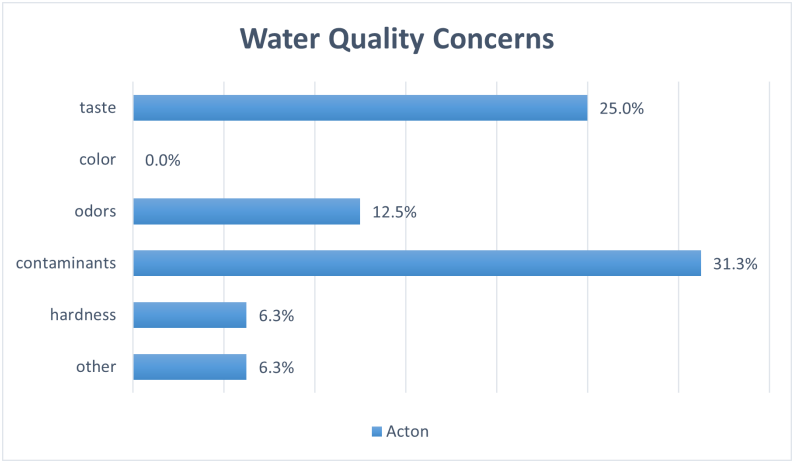
b. 

Figure F.3 Acton community survey responses regarding whether there are drinking water quality concerns in the community (a), and the type of drinking quality concerns (b)

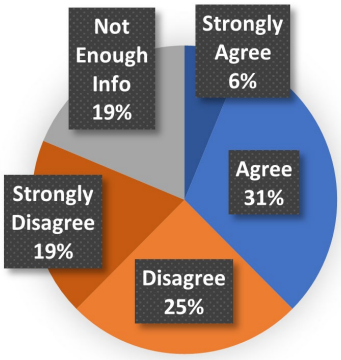


Figure F.4 Whether local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification issues.

Q6. What water-related issues are of greatest concern in your community?

- *Water related issues include the availability and quality of water resources as well as the rising cost of water rates. Additionally, there are water concerns related to the availability of water to support agricultural and fire related activities.*

- *Waste and drinking water were noted by several community members as a growing concern as well as access to wells, hauled water, water infrastructure costs that are collectively making more less affordable.*
- *More shade tress were also noted as a need throughout the community.*

Q7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home, neighborhood, or community you serve?

- *Both community residents and advocates expressed concerns with drinking water contamination and taste.*

Q9 Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

- *Homeowners expressed interests in utilizing gray water technology in their homes to reduce water use and promote reuse when possible.*
- *Septic systems are seen as one of the primary issues with water quality as well as aging infrastructure, with specific observations around the Thousand Trails area. There is a desire by community advocates to develop a sewage treatment system in Acton to reduce these issues. It is also felt that this would allow for community growth and more guarantee that continued access to clean water from the aquifer would be available.*
- *The community has expressed that they would like water decisions to be made by the community, not the county. The county is very large and urban regions tend to have more say and influence on rural areas. More attention is needed in rural areas by governmental agencies at the local and regional levels. This lack of rural acknowledgement makes it very difficult for rural communities to adequately address their specific water needs.*
- *Community members expressed a desire to have water infrastructure expanded to their region to reduce dependency on failing (i.e. quantity and quality) of wells.*

Community Strengths

Q4 List three things you like about your community.

- *Community members highlighted that they enjoy Acton's natural areas including mountains, distance between development, and greenspaces that attract diverse wildlife. Other likable rural features include a "small town" feeling, low crime, quiet neighborhoods, limited chain businesses and community participation in decision making and addressing community issues.*

Community Engagement

Q11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?

- *Several community members noted that they actively and frequently participate in community issues and governance. Of note are participation in the Town Council. MTA*

workshops, Acton Women's Club, and numerous volunteer activities aimed at improving the social and environmental aspects of the community. A few respondents noted they do not know how to participate, however, they are interested in opportunities when available.

Q13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or received information from?

- *City Council*
- *Town Councils*
- *School Districts*
- *County Supervisors*
- *Congressional Representatives*
- *State Senate Assembly Members*

Q15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?

- *Many residents noted that they do not participate in water planning activities. Reasons were largely associated with their desire to participate, however, they feel that the county makes decisions for them with little opportunity to represent their needs or to decide what is best for their community.*

Q17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?

- *None of the community respondents indicated that they know about IRWM.*

Q18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides your water?

- *Fifty-eight percent (58%) of community respondents indicated they were aware of their drinking water provider, with only one responding each indicating a positive and negative experiences with their water providers.*

Appendix G | Community Needs Assessment Tables

1. **Are you responding to this survey as a resident or other community member?**

	Count	Percentage
Homeowner	253	82%
Renter	43	14%
Community Advocate	7	2%
Work/Employed in the area	4	1%
Grand Total	307	100%

2. **Please provide the zip code of the community for which you are responding.**

	Count	Percentage
91350	47	15%
91321	41	13%
91355	40	13%
91387	35	11%
91384	33	11%
91390	32	10%
91351	23	8%
91354	21	7%

93510	19	6%
91381	9	3%
93532	2	1%
91353	1	0%
91335	1	0%
90350	1	0%
1720	1	0%
Grand Total	306	100%

2b. What City is this community located in?

	Count	Percentage
Santa Clarita	160	54%
Valencia	28	10%
Castaic	22	7%
Newhall	21	7%
Canyon Country	17	6%
Acton	16	5%
Agua Dulce	9	3%

Saugus	9	3%
Los Angeles	3	1%
Unincorporated Los Angeles County	3	1%
Los Angeles County	2	1%
Stevenson Ranch	2	1%
Lake Hughes	1	0%
Val Verde	1	0%
Grand Total	294	100%

2c. What is the name of this community?

	Count	Percentage
Santa Clarita	52	18%
Saugus	39	14%
Canyon Country	38	13%
Valencia	35	12%
Newhall	17	6%
Acton	16	6%
Castaic	14	5%
Agua Dulce	11	4%

Val Verde	11	4%
Stevenson Ranch	6	2%
Friendly Valley	4	1%
Pacific Crest	3	1%
Los Angeles	3	1%
Plum Canyon	3	1%
None	2	1%
Northpark	2	1%
Canyon Oaks	2	1%
Monte Verde	1	0%
White Heather	1	0%
North Bluffs	1	0%
Circle J Ranch	1	0%
North Park	1	0%
Discovery	1	0%
North Trails Ranch	1	0%
Fair Oaks Ranch	1	0%
North Valencia	1	0%

Happy Valley	1	0%
Not Sure	1	0%
Hidden Lake	1	0%
Old Orchard	1	0%
Lake Hughes	1	0%
Placerita Canyon, Newhall	1	0%
Acton Country Mobile Home Park	1	0%
Sunset Heights	1	0%
Elizabeth Lake	1	0%
The Madison At Town Center	1	0%
Hasley Hills	1	0%
The Summit	1	0%
Live Oak	1	0%
Trestles	1	0%
Glenn	1	0%
West Creek	1	0%
Creekside	1	0%
West Hills	1	0%

Hillcrest	1	0%
Westridge	1	0%
Grand Total	287	100%

6. What water related issues are of greatest concern in your community?

	Count	Percentage
Water Recreation Safety	12	1%
Flooding	23	3%
Other	33	4%
Regulations	36	4%
Wastewater	45	6%
More Shade Trees	64	8%
Trash Industrial Contamination	68	8%
Drinking Water Availability	69	9%
Access To Clean Safe Water	81	10%
High Cost Of Water	98	12%
Water Availability Fire Sup Ag	121	15%
Drinking Water Quality	156	19%

Grand Total	806	100%

7. Are there concerns about drinking water quality in your home neighborhood or community you serve?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	160	52%
No	147	48%
Grand Total	307	100%

7a. If yes, select all of the concerns that apply.

	Count	Percentage
Taste	98	33%
Contaminant	86	29%
Other	45	15%
Odors	43	14%
Color	25	8%
Grand Total	297	100%

8. My local government is addressing infrastructure and beautification needs.

	Count	**Percentage**

Agree	**146**	**48%**
Strongly Agree	**47**	**15%**
Do Not Have Enough Information	**44**	**14%**
Disagree	**39**	**13%**
Strongly Disagree	**26**	**8%**
Do Not Understand The Question	**4**	**1%**
Other	**1**	**0%**
Grand Total	**307**	**100%**

Use this space to describe the reason for your response:

· Great plan for open space acquisition and preservation; lots of recreational space and ways to get around without a car
· no answer
· We have nice greenbelts on streets and walkways.
· Santa Clarita has always had the "look" of the city a high priority. The city is beautiful and maintaining it that way is very important.
· I love the Paseos
· There are many green spaces
· Our park has been taken care of and remodeled. But I don't know about the other concerns.

· I do see the city workers busy working on repairing water main bursts, sidewalks, and adding trees in the medians.
· I have been disconnected from public projects news in my area for a while due to COVID lockdown for so long.
· Infrastructure needs are not being addressed. Traffic is very congested in many parts of the City. New homes continue to be approved with insufficient long term reliable water supply. A new Sheriff's station is being built to replace the existing one. It needs to be in addition to the existing station.
· The town council seems to bump heads with county rules where there does not seem any input from the town council .
· we are a small community in unincorporated LA county. not a big enough tax base for them to care
· Los Angeles County as a government does not care about the needs of Agua Dulce. They just collect out taxes and do nothing for us.
· To the best of my knowledge, LA County and/or Santa Clarita do not have any beautification programs in place for Agua Dulce. I'd be happy if they would just address the problem with outsiders dumping trash on our roads, or if they would have mowed the roadway shoulders this year to reduce fuel for fires.
· I just know that water out here in Agua Dulce is hard to get from the wells and is always a concern here.
· Locally, we do not have the authority or the control to do anything. Our Acton Town Council cannot decide anything, they can just recommend and/or fight with the County. We are not incorporated, thus we don't have a tax base or any income. The County does whatever it wishes, with no concern about our community.
· Our community has nothing such as this as we are rural - no trees, lighting, or sidewalks. We do have a beautiful park in Acton, but I don't believe the government had much do with it. Please keep our horse trails open and maintained.
· Our roads are always an issue. Always potholes and they never get property fixed

· I feel happy with how our community looks
· of coarse i read your add about a 100$ give away but now i am happy to be apart of a on going concern for our little community. people and families are living here a life time and will continue to do so as it is a nice place to come home too.
· they are constructing more walking paths near our community on Sierra Highway
· The Town Council makes recommendations but they want to keep Acton as it is. I feel that the roads need to be addressed in the town because they flood during strong storms.
· I don't think that is needed at this point in time we have enough of that
· We have a beautiful park supported by the community
· The area is looking better but the roads are still a big problem with all the new housing.
· The community has not changed in a long time. It needs better streets, sidewalks, lighting.
· I want our communities to look nice, be safe, and help provide us the opportunity to live a good and decent life. I am also concerned with money spent and would like our land to be improved with cost-efficient choices.
· I am consistently seeing wasteful re-working done on street mediums.
· City does a good job in this area.
· The City on an ongoing and often too quickly following an earlier project, replant, or totally removes and then return s plants and hard scrape is adjusted as California's water needs change. (main roads near my house have gone through 3 major improvements and changes
· I agree that the concern about trees and the water conservation issue seems to be something that is being handled responsibly. The beautification and planting are both taken into consideration.

· They are not planting enough of the wide variety of plants native to the Santa Clarita Valley, specifically, and the Los Angeles area in general. We are losing our native animals as a result.
· The City is allowing builders to come in and pave over natural waterways & drainage routes of ground water. And they are considering allowing home builders to build more houses in areas that have already been designated protected open space. They're eager to bring in more houses, but not to preserve what we have.
· I have a drivers license but choose not to drive when possible-however, the close proximity to high speed traffic and the sidewalk is scary abs discourages walking abs cycling-bike path is a good walk from home, sidewalk is narrow and traffic makes riding in the street too scary- I'm not afraid to 'take the lane' where I come from (Madison, WI) but I fear for my safety and my life on the roads in Santa Clarita
· The water in our home does show discoloration and odor periodically. This issue persists for a period of a week or so and is usually followed by a very strong chlorine smell. I assume the treatment plant is detecting higher levels of bacteria when the smell occurs and then treats that with a shock of chlorine. This is concerning, as we do not want to be drinking the water under either of these conditions. This seems to happen cyclically.
· Sometimes I still see a lot of trash on the street
· They will update Valencia or Stevenson Ranch or all the "rich areas" but the city doesn't care about Newhall or parts of Canyon Country.
· When representatives at city hall are called and a complaint made, they are ignored! Politicians and city representatives can't be trusted!
· The neighborhood is pretty nice but the greenways need improving
· well maintained
· Addressing issues with sidewalks, streets and parks is always needed and benefits the community.
· Streets just repaved and striped. Parks kept up nicely.

· Truck stop not much else except for the wonderful Library, Sports complex, Lake, Swimming pool for community
· The area in which I live has mature trees and is kept nice and clean. I'm very happy with my neighborhood's appearance.
· I see lots of street landscaping projects
· Our local government is a sketchy town council populated by business owners who don't seem to do anything to improve the community
· Local Government is doing a decent job
· I appreciate the new trees planted along Soledad Canyon Rd. in my neighborhood. I also noticed the newly paved roads. I'd like to see more traffic islands for pedestrians, to make it easier to cross busy streets.
· My community is well maintained by the city and residents.
· on the whole, Santa Clarita is maintained very well with respect to streets, parks, and open spaces.
· We have nice parks but our walkways and landscaping are overgrown blocking sidewalks and tress and dead or firing along the old road between Stevenson Ranch Parkway and Constitution
· Too many chemicals
· Really? You all haven't figured it out yet? ABSOLUTELY NO COMMON SENSE is being used by any of the City and County Planning departments. I could have this place back in shape within a year with plans and money for future refurbishing. Again, INFRASTRUCTURE needs to be updated to accommodate current and future needs instead of lame excuses. Boards, meetings, discussions and I see nothing done with taxpayers money other than people that sit around and yap, yet have never picked up a hammer to move things along.
· L they have been rebuilding the center dividers to be better looking and also to hold a sign welcoming visitors to Santa Clarita.

· The city of Santa Clarita has been addressing these issues since it's incorporation.
· Take a look at Sierra hwy from Golden valley down to Newhall Ave it looks like a forgotten stretch of road
· Santa Clarita cares very much about appearances, and less about social issues like climate change or drought.
· I'm not sure I have enough knowledge to Strongly Agree, but the city does a great job in my neighborhood on trees, lighting the paseos and keeping them tidy, sidewalks well kept up.
· The city of Santa Clarita is constantly improving all issues of concern, keeping and protecting parks and open spaces and is a safe community.
· I have seen initiatives and work crews around the city. However, I have not yet seen any "big" projects in my area
· I don't see it happening anywhere
· Santa Clarita parks are well-tended and provide a lot of joy for thousands of citizens. We are frequent users of the multipurpose fields and frisbee golf course at Central Park, and our daughters have played with AYSO soccer and Storm cross-country. We love the summer concerts (and can't wait to go again).
· The City of Santa Clarita tries its best to keep the city clean and safe, provide park space and open space for its residents and infrastructure as well as new fire stations & new sheriff station. It, however, needs to continue to put money and focus to these areas so that things do not deteriorate or get worse.
· The Santa Clarita City Council is obsessed with the city's image of being clean, quaint and wholesome. Therefore they expend a large amount of resources on city beautification. While ignoring other needs like affordable housing.
· Street repairs not done frequent enough relative to community growth and traffic
· City uses a lot of drought tolerant landscaping

· Our Graffiti-removal team is amazing. Trees are being planted around the city
· While they are building a new rec center (yay!) the streets are tree and plantless, dirty and there is little in the way of nature nearby. Luckily the HOA has made some beautiful grounds that are well landscaped.
· Everything is maintained well.
· Keep the trees trimmed and streets are cleaned regularly
· Concerned about concentrating on redoing center dividers of streets, Adding more plants & sprinklers where so often the sprinklers are watering the streets or are constantly broken.
· I see some road beautification projects
· Improvements along Soledad are appreciated.
· I see the beautification in my city all the times especially in recent years
· My city has been working on a beautification project as I've seen and read in the City's various publications.
· Our local city website and newspaper plus mobile app provides us with a lot of info
· as a small unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, our community doesn't seem to be a priority
· They notify us when things are going on
· This valley continues to build housing and does not take responsibility for traffic, and environmental impacts.

· The concern is apparent in newer and more expensive areas. The concern is also apparent in our constantly improving public areas. Some older lower income areas this is not so visible. Poor planning from the days when we were not a city are at times uncorrected. For example on my street Tall growing trees were planter under low above ground power lines so the power is turned off during windy days.
· Santa Clarita had very beautiful streets, sidewalks, paseos, etc. They should be more water-conscious when they make landscaping decisions.
· Santa Clarita has an abundance of parks and open spaces
· I think the City is doing a great job with infrastructure and beautification
· Dont tax us for structures when you can't collect the water anyway. more taxation without representation. CA.gov spends too much time figuring out how to steal from the residents.
· Need to keep communities looking clean and presentable. Whites Canyon Road from Soledad Canyon Road to Nadal Street needs a beautification program.
· In the past, the focus was on keeping open land for beautification. That is now less important. City is selling out to home building and big business (we have 2 theatres. Now building 2 more within a mile of each other)
· Infrastructure and beautification improves the quality of life, safety, neighborhood improvements and increases the property value.
· city council appears to be engaged and take a practical approach to issues and provide honest and clear and simple responses and answers to public questions
· Local investments in sustainable infrastructure and attracting new businesses is critical for the future of Santa Clarita
· They only change out the plants in the medians
· I am concerned about possible Perchlorinate contamination in my water.

· The city of Santa Clarita is landscaped nicely but my town of Castaic needs a lot of help with landscaping and beautification. We have a lovely lake, but no public use walking or biking trails around the lake.
· We have a beautiful, maintained, park with hiking trails. I'd like to see more hiking trails throughout town. We don't have sidewalks, because this is a rural area. The trees in town grow in vacant lots. No one planted them. They are local indigenous trees and plants that have grown wild. There are some trees (weed trees) that grow rapidly and are hard to control. This could be an issue in the future, but they do give animals and birds a place to live. Sometimes the tumbleweeds get out of control.
· We have 36 beautiful parks in our city, almost all with amenities. Our street has been re-paved 2 times in the last 10 years. That being said, sidewalks need to be addressed, but I think the community needs to bring the trouble spots to the city's attention. Also, I've seen center medians have trees ripped out and replaced with synthetic grass or rocks and then a few years later that's ripped out and the trees are back in. Lastly, sprinklers of city property need to be checked regularly as there are too frequent issues with water running for a long time or broken sprinklers.
· It's a rural area so I am not sure that kind of thing exists
· There seems to be some beautification but there could be more done.
· They miss the mark in the equity of administration of infrastructure and beautification programs.
· Valencia is beautiful, you should check it out. I'm so glad I left LA, it became such a dump.
· Parks and sidewalks are beautiful. Potholes and giant speed humps are costly
· We have excellent parks and green spaces. If there was more water available, we could potentially do more.
· The city has done a great job making city parks and recreation areas a priority. Also, the streets in my neighborhood are resurfaced periodically and city owned trees are trimmed.
· With being quarantined I have not been to enough places to observe the number and degree of improvements being undertaken at this time.

· Living in an HOA, our entire community is well maintained. If we are referring to the community in general, there are some roads and sidewalks that need attention, as expected.
· I think the parks are nice but they can use more vegetation.
· Overall the area is well maintained. Quality has gone down over the years as the infrastructure and plants have aged.
· our streets are re-paved often and our community trees are trimmed.
· Street cleaning can improve.
· We need more trees that withstand wind up in Stevenson ranch. Many older trees have fallen down because of age and they have never been replaced. It gets hot up here and I think more people would be willing to go out if there were more opportunities for shade.
· Santa Clarita is great - beautiful medians, trees, parks, etc.
· It is always nice to keep things up-to-date and remodel every so often. Providing new and improved scenery as well as efficient gadgets for the public.
· Our city does a lot of beautification and maintains parks
· From what I can tell, the area seems well maintained and managed. Streets and paths are pretty clean, well lit, etc. Parks in the area are pretty nice.
· WE don't see any of these type projects in our neighborhood.
· some parts of the city need attention
· Some areas in the city are addressed more than others

· I do not know what steps the city is taking to ensure water purity
· My neighborhood is beautiful
· City needs to use recycled water for irrigation of city owned medians
· Could do more and better/ there is opportunity here- we need to act sooner and have proactive approach- not reactive. Still waiting to hear about the Saugus Library for goodness sake!
· City as spent MILLIIONS on extensively overplanted and overwatered street medians, which City leaders think are beautiful, but all at cost to property owners who had no say in this decision, but that's about all they have done in this area. We don't want the elaborate median plantings.
· When a problem with road surfaces/conditions and sidewalk cracks, they are usually addressed a timely manner.
· There are certain sections of the road that are bad and have been for a long time.
· Water rates going up and also the containments in the water also
· Maintenance is very good
· When I asked what the procedure was to request a bridge, i was told there was none.
· We need street Enhancement
· They are allowing native trees, especially oaks to be removed and not replanting/ We need trees to combat the heat and climate changes. The oak woodland destruction (over 1400 oaks) allowed by the City for the gates industrial project will not be forgotten or forgiven. They did not even replace on a two to one basis as required by their ordinance and are not monitoring.
· I have no idea where this is needed and whether or not they’re doing it

· The county does very little for the unincorporated areas and we have to fight for everything. Our district 36 has no resident representative and the supervisor is weak and useless.
· Hard scape and land scapes seem to be fresh and orderly,.
· We have many wonderful parks, there is not a lot of trash on streets or sidewalks, the medians are well kept.
· In front of my townhome the sidewalk had a tree that was removed for some reason, not sure if it died it didn't look that way. It way never replaced and when I contacted the city, the hole left in the side walk was paved over...
· For the last fifteen years when the Newhall ranch project was delayed it also delayed Val Verde upgrades (stop light Chiquito Cyn Rd and 126, paseos, flood control upgrades, area beautification, covered bus stops etc..). County put in these nice fiberglass fencing but no budget for maintenance. Our dirt sidewalks are not graded only during flooding. Val Verde is a mushroom always pooped on and left in the dark
· I see the same road getting re pave rather than the road that need to be.
· We pay for the beatification on our streets, why we keep planting trees to grow into power lines is beyond me. We did recently get a very poor surrey pass on some roads.
· Homeowners are paying for beautification, our property taxes have increased to improve my neighborhood
· Keep building homes without concern for future resources
· Again we are a small town all they are conserved about is bring more money into the L A county. to hell with our quality of life and the destruction of wildlife habitat.
· Workers regularly upkeep the vegetation along the streets

· Los Angeles County Supervisors have not insisted the new housing development provide parks or trails in sufficient and public quantity for the new developments. Roads are in poor shape in certain neighborhoods and in others that were resurfaced last fall they are already looking awful. We also need bridges on Hasley Canyon Road near Val Verde that always floods and another way in and out of Castaic for when there is a wildfire and or when the Grapevine shuts down. The LA County of Supervisors need to listen to the Castaic Town Council!
· I see improvements but they all stop south of Henry mayo Dr.
· Parks are well maintained. Curbs and gutters are non-existent in this community. Either are there any storm drains. The cost to install this infrastructure is prohibitive.
· I see tree trimmers
· Best city ever: -We have quality roads and sidewalks, and nice art through out city. -Broadband issues are always being worked on. -We are getting new community center, sheriff station, ice rink -City and water agency are working on PFAS. -Keep up the great management of our city!
· Acton Park is great; drainage during rainstorms in downtown Acton is abysmal
· City is always making improvements

9. Do you have ideas for how water problems could be addressed?

	Count	Percentage
No	**190**	**65%**

Yes	**104**	**35%**
Grand Total	**294**	**100%**

10. What are your community's most pressing concerns?

	Count	Percentage
Climate Change	114	16%
Transportation Challenges	109	15%
Homelessness	105	15%
Public Safety	104	15%
Water	100	14%
Housing	74	10%
Other	64	9%
Parks Open Space	36	5%
Grand Total	706	100%

11. Do you personally participate in community planning efforts?

	Count	Percentage
No	246	80%
Yes	61	20%
Grand Total	30	100%

11a. If yes, what efforts do you participate in?

- Town Council meetings; various volunteer efforts
- city council meetings
- Church community events for youth and homeless families.
- our neighborhood has formed a water company trying to ask the county/state for help in bringing in water. we hold meetings in our area to maintain our roads and trees. (private)
- I attended a watertalks event last year.
- Agua Dulce Town Council meetings, communications with City Planners, Santa Clarita City Council meeting (rather pointless though), etc.
- I have been president of the Acton Town Council, I have been an activist in bringing about rent control for mobilehome parks. I have been active in discussions of the Community Standards District.
- Town hall meetings
- I am currently attending the MTA workshops and I'm a member of the Acton Women's Club.
- Attend town council meetings and assist with projects
- Town council
- Water, Parks and Recreation
- School board member
- Taking surveys.
- But before COVID-19, I would go to City Hall too study the planning documents, and attend occasional Planning Department and City Council Meetings. Now I review agendas, attachments to agenda and submit commits virtually in regards to public comments to agenda items
- I am the GM on Staff at this location.
- voting and volunteering for democratic efforts
- Participate in surveys, webinars and documents review.
- Board member with SCOPE
- Elections, donations of time and help to community betterment causes
- Submitting information
- I am a Parks and Recreation Commissioner for Santa Clarita. I attend community meetings that are held to gather input from citizens.
- I've been involved in the city arts district planning, discussing zoning issues with city planners, opposing expansion of landfill.
- Read
- I have attended local meetings with people on the HOA and in the community in regards to the proposed Resort development.
- Attend City Hall meetings
- Have with city in past.
- Complete surveys

- Attend town council meetings
- as important community issues arise, I participate
- neighborhood watch. attend city council.
- Urban Water Management Plan
- local meetings- town council
- town council meetings/surveys/ communication with representatives Sierra club
- Sierra club, river rally, letter writing
- Public meetings
- Board of Directors of HOA
- I'm on the board for my HOA; Attend CCAC meetings; Attend city council meetings.
- I have attended meetings for the local developments which are being built, trail planning meetings, and the local community meetings (CBFC, VVCA, Castaic Area Town Council). I also participated in the planned fight against the placement of an AT&T cell tower. The company wanted to put its tower, so it would be right above neighbors. The closest neighbor to the tower has a daughter with health issues. My sister-in-law is a cancer survivor, who would've been within 1000 ft of the tower. My brother led the cause and the townspeople won. The tower wasn't built at the location.
- City council Meetings. Voting. School board meetings.
- Conservation issues
- Town council meeting
- I am vocal when needed
- I regularly attend City Council Meetings and am a member of the Canyon Country Advisory Committee
- Comments to OVOV drafts, City General Plan drafts, and EIRs for new developments
- Work with local charity
- Surveys and meetings.
- Attend City meetings
- Castaic Area Town Council and CATC Land use Board
- Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment. board member
- Involved in the past efforts to close Chiquita Land Fill. Now, observe on occasion how County monitors landfill.
- Spoke at a planning commission session to not allow the Sand Canyon Resort to develop.
- I've worked with the schools on an oversight committee when the last bond was passed
- None currently; active in the past on high school school location & zoning issues
- Town council meeting lettered to county supervisor
- I participate in Lake Clean Up days, pick up trash, watch Town Council meetings, moderate local Facebook groups
- Was on original advisory committee
- homelessness/housing

- Meetings and comments with the county and caltrans
- Stay abreast of local activity, take surveys
- surveys, meetings RE high speed rail
- Volunteer

11b. Select all of the reasons that apply.

	Count	Percentage
I Don't Know How	96	35%
I Have Other Priorities	72	26%
I Don't Have Time	68	24%
Other	42	15%
Grand Total	278	100%

12. Does your community participate in community planning efforts?

	Count	Percentage
Not Have Enough Info	163	53%
Yes	111	36%
No	23	7%
Do Not Understand Question	10	3%
Grand Total	307	100%

12a. If yes, are there specific people or groups you would like to share?

· no answer
· Not sure I understand this question.
· No
· Agua Dulce town council.
· Agua Dulce Town Council, Acton Town Council.
· The Regional Planning Department of Los Angeles County in conjunction with the Acton Town Council (and the various Town Councils and the Association of Rural Town Councils) are presently actively engaged in updating the various Community Standards Districts documents. and are doing public hearings and Zoom meetings.
· Agua Dulce Town Council and Acton Town Council. They work very hard to keep us from being swallowed up by Santa Clarita's bureaucracy.
· Acton Town Council
· Town council and many community members
· No.
· No
· Nono thank you
· HOA Board Members
· SCOPE
· Not familiar with any
· SCOPE: Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment

· I believe the local water agency works with Newhall Land and private developers to plan communities, and their plans are required to have EIRs environmental impact reports.
· It's the City Council. They make a plan and then they pretend to care what other people think of their plan while continuing forward with whatever their objective is.
· Lots of people participate in my community participate in water needs. Some I agree with and some I don’t.
· The CATC, Castaic Area Town Council and VVCA, Val Verde Civic Association, both have land use committees.
· As a whole, Santa Clarita is involved in planning for the betterment of this community.
· The HOA
· Placerita Canyon Homeowners Association, Sierra Club
· HOA handles the majority of community planning.
· City council
· Various HOA's including Sand Canyon HOA
· no - I don't have their permission to do that
· Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment.
· I believe there is still a Saugus group as part of the City community groups.
· community planning are prioritized for Castaic not Val Verde. Although Val Verde is a much older and established community Castaic is more recognized because it has political influence.
· Castaic Town Council
· Castaic Town Council, One Piece at a Time, Friends of Castaic Lake, BSA Troop 888, BSA Troop 609, Castaic 411 News and Information Facebook Group

· We do a lot of studies!
· Val Verde Civic Association
· HOAs, City Newsletters, Elected Official Newsletters

13. What governing entities and/or elected officials do you seek information from or receive information from?

	Count	Percentage
City Council	162	25%
County Supervisors	111	17%
State Senators Assembly Members	106	16%
Us Congressional Representative	92	14%
School District	84	13%
None	61	9%
Other	29	4%
Grand Total	645	100%

13 Other:

· KHTS radio
· town council,

· Acton Town Council
· Town council - we are not a city
· Social Media
· Various depending on the issue and infrequently contact representatives beyond local City government.
· Depends on the situation
· City Manager, Sheriffs Dept.
· Federal Agencies; private environmental entities
· Newspaper
· Signal, KHTS
· local association and recreation board
· City departments
· community councils
· Water Board Members
· town council
· town council
· Periodic information mailed to residents
· Our current congressional representative is out of touch completely with the needs of the community.
· Town Council

· Individual city departments
· HOA
· Relevant City govt departments
· Sheriff's office
· Castaic Town Council
· Social media, community group pages
· Sns

15. Have you participated in water related planning in your community?

	Count	Percentage
No	261	85%
Yes	46	15%
Grand Total	307	100%

15a. If yes, was the planning process responsive to your needs?

· I attend as an employee of a water agency
· participated in a LA County water board meeting to request that the public be able to review and give feedback on candidates for open board position
· Yes.

· No. Meetings are way too long, dominated by special interests and are structured to discourage people from attending (most important topic is always last on the agenda)
· it went know where- we are to small in numbers and $ for anyone to listen
· Not yet
· Minimally.
· It was helpful to understand some of the issues we face.
· No, the Water District dictated what they would do. There was no real exchange of ideas.
· So far, we have been able to keep big cities from sucking our aquafers dry. It's a constant fight. We were unable to keep the water tax from being forced down our throats. We pay a huge amount for this even though we have so much open space on our properties for water to drain into the ocean. Such a crime! By the way, questions 18 and 19 show that whoever created this survey has no idea that there are people here that DO NOT have to depend on the government for this basic necessity for life. Shame!
· Local attempt to bring in water
· No
· Irrigation
· Not really.
· Not sure, I live in an apt. I think they were contacted
· They took my emails " under advisement" but I knot they're going to do whatever makes them money versus what is best for the long term health of our city.
· UWMP, IRWM, SGMA GSA
· Ot sure on back burner

· No
· I attended but did not speak up.
· No.
· Yes, before I retired I worked for a labor union. I would invite our local water officials to attend our training schools and water seminars.
· Yet to be seen
· no. it is an ongoing process that has much red tape.
· water needs to be directed to the lake
· Yes
· I was there as an observer only.
· no use information gathering toward future EIR falsifying and land grabs
· surveys, landscape classes
· Not really
· It was via voting and no.
· Yes
· I listened to a zoom meeting on water in Santa Clarita. I didn't voice any needs.
· Yes
· No, they keep approving more residences.

· Not enough emphasis on the use of recycled water
· I removed all grass and replaced with xeriscape
· No. The local water district consistently replies to all water supply concerns, that 'there is plenty of water available for the SCV, we will never run short of water, we can always buy as much water as is needed for the SCV (at a higher and higher cost to prop owners but that's not a concern to the water district), all proposed future developments in the SCV can be approved because they will not impact water supplies for current residents, and the district has reserved millions of acre feet of water in case of emergency need (which doesn't explain why we had water rationing during the 5 yr drought - and isn't our right to that water SECONDARY to other cities that have also reserved access to that water????
· We removed our grass, installed water-saving sprinklers, etc.
· Not always.
· No. Its seems as though they want to present that everything is OK when everyone knows we have some major problems
· No we still do not have any direct input and representation for district 36. We have some lemming appointed by our supervisor. I have submitted many letters to SCV water district concerning many issues.
· no
· yes

16. Do you think that community voices or groups are being heard by government or the public at large?

	Count	Percentage
No	219	71%
Yes	88	29%
Grand Total	307	100%

16a. Use the space below to identify which voices or groups are being heard and which still need to be heard.

· BLM
· no answer
· no answer
· Don’t know
· your paper water talks is very informative at least enough to realize our children are being looked after for the future.
· I don't know.
· No thank you
· The officials do listen. It is the idiot public that needs to get things through their thick skulls.
· not sure who they are
· SCOPE, Individual Residents, Developers, Pumpers being heard. Would like to see more input from local businesses and ag community.
· The irate voices are the ones being heard, since they have an ax to grind. Normal people are not that interested unless there's a timely issue in the news. Too bad Santa Clarita has no real newspaper, other than the non-news-filled Signal. I have no clue what's in our drinking water or what the water issues are, other than perpetual drought. That's a climate change issue, and the real problem facing our drinking water.
· Don’t know
· N/A
· SCOPE Santa Clarita Org for Planning and the Environment

· I do not have an answer to this and can imagine a lot of people deleting the survey because it won't let you submit without giving answers.
· Not sure.
· If you belong to union your voice is heard very strongly by all government officials.
· Unions
· The voices with money behind their interests, e.g. developers.
· City council, water board, etc
· It is important to get community input. The people in the area, know the area best. I'd like to see a collaboration of government and residents with projects.
· The water agency.
· Based on what I see from our district and county supervisor, it appears they are listening and doing their best to be responsive.
· The public has the opportunity to contact their City government/elected officials daily if they would like, in small numbers or in large petitions. It's up to them to be heard when they have an issue.
· I really do not know - the ‘not enough info’ button should have been an option
· No concrete knowledge

17. Have you ever heard of the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	33	11%
No	268	89%
Grand Total	301	100%

17a. If yes, in what context?

· through my work
· News stories
· Before retiring I was a Community Library Manager in a different City than I reside. That community had many water related issues, along with 22 water companies for a city of 70,000. Much of the water system was old and various topics came up at City Council meetings, which I regularly attended. It was always interesting, as a city founded fairly early in the Los Angeles scheme of things, and early adjacent City's. I was also invited to tour local water systems for several greater LA areas water systems as I was Library manager in several geographic areas of the County. Invitations to visit the systems were directed to local government representatives and various local business owners. The public Library was often the go to location for members of the community to access regional planning, and many other planning documents, (water, power, CalTrans, etc).
· In relation to our water needs during fires
· Management of water for the region.
· The condensing of multiple small water agencies in the Santa Clarita Valley
· My ex husband is an engineer. He fought his entire career over this issue.
· Read information about IRWM on computer

· I was very involved in water management prior to my retirement two years ago. I was a marketing rep for a labor union and part of my job was to meet with water officials learn about new technologies that could possibly put more of the union members to work.
· that it exists
· only after reading your newsletter
· News
· News reports and some personal friends.
· As a water agency employee
· local meetings to discuss how government is going to steal more of our money.

· flooding/runoff/H2O quality/contamination

· This survey/newspaper
· i only know that I've heard it and it seems to have a lot of lobbyists tied to it.
· Generation of the 5 year Urban Water Management Plan
· Water Agency
· I know the process and goals
· Local paper
· News

18. Do you know what drinking water agency provides you water?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	218	71%
No	89	29%
Grand Total	307	100%

18a. If yes, have you had a positive or negative experience?

	Count	Percentage
Positive	89	61%
Don't Know	23	16%
Other	18	12%
Negative	15	10%
Grand Total	145	100%

18a Other.

· i provide me water. truck it in. LA county just tries to restrict how i get my water.
· I have my own well. There is no agency providing water -- though I would be open to that option.
· I have my own water
· The agency sends out a report as required and offer information to home owners, but most of the information has to be sought after and is not well-known to most home owners.
· In what context?
· Neither.
· have not contacted
· There's been a lot of controversy and it just seems like it's shifted from one bad way of doing things to another bad way of doing things.
· Neither really? No interaction with them at all.
· I have a private well
· Some of both
· my well
· The bill is sent I pay it as expected.
· Neutral
· Sometimes they are not completely up front as stated above.
· In what way(s)? Not in terms of the quality of water...

· Both. It was more positive before Castaic Lake Water and Valencia Water Companies were dissolved and formed into SCV Water
· Private well.

19. Are you aware of educational opportunities around water issues locally?

	Count	Percentage
No	207	69%
Yes	91	31%
Grand Total	298	100%

19a. If yes, can you share those opportunities?

· www.yourSCVwater.com
· water agency has educational programs at garden for schools and public
· Gardening classes, yearly open house, appearing at local community events
· I attended a gardening class put on by the water districts. Also had someone from the water district come out to check on my homes water efficiency n
· SCV Water has educational opportunities
· Water Smart workshops from SCV Water
· gardening tips, water saving strategies

· News from Santa Clarita, the County and the town council
· Online workshops
· SCV Water (Valencia Division) offers classes to help conserve water and use it wisely.
· Weekend classes
· The water treatment plant was or is available (CoVID-19) visits and and the local Water Companies provide virtual classes on a variety of subjects.
· Gardening
· SCV water has a program called SCV WaterSMART. It also posts info on Facebook.
· Our local agency does offer classes periodically as well as "parts" that reduce water usage. Their website does offer information that helps home owners with ideas on how to save water at home, such as what plants use less water, how to look for and fix leaks, ask for a survey to be done, etc.
· Gardening workshops
· online workshop
· Stated above in planning question.
· Ka county public works educational programs
· the water district has occasional programs, water usage. plantings etc.
· Castaic Lake Water Agency
· I have attended classes in planting drought tolerant landscaping
· Classes by the water company
· SCVWA puts out a significant amount of educational information

· Our water agency has a garden promoting desert flora and fauna, offers landscaping booklets with sprinkler recommendations, donates bottled water to charity fundraisers, and hosted fundraisers at their facility like Taste of the Town.
· Gardening, plants, recycling
· receive emails
· College of the Canyons has (or had) a water quality certificate degree
· I know they used to have events in the park that were put on by the water companies as a kind of outreach to the community. I've been to a couple.
· lawn irrigation classes
· Emails about water planning
· Email notifications
· annual climate water usage and plant training
· Water saving classes and pamphlets
· Somewhere in town by the water conservation gardens in Santa Clarita, I'm sure there is a website if I was interested.
· Sorry but since my retirement I haven’t been very involved or up-to-date on educational water issues.
· Water department provides a lot of community information and community board meetings
· Irrigation conservation
· The facility in Central park has workshops.

· The Santa Clarita Water Agency has classes to teach about gardening and landscaping. There are also programs for school-aged kids. As a teacher, I contacted them to see if we could collaborate on a project. But I never heard back from them, so that was disappointing.
· I teach at the local community college, and occasionally workshops or other events are publicized by the SC Water Agency.
· They have classes about plants that use low or no water. They give rebates for new irrigation
· SCV water provides workshops
· Visitor Center, Lake pyramid, and WaterTalks newspaper
· Classes and zoom meetings
· I participated in the smart water use online program conducted by Valencia Water
· Water district classes on line, emails, field trips, in person (pre-covid)...,
· Santa Clarita Water Agency has had some workshops on landscaping. It's hard to attend when you work full time and then attend in the evenings. I would like to see more online events that are recorded and a hotline to someone to call with questions.
· As a former educator, I used to take my students to the West Basin Water Reclamation facility. The facility sent a bus to pick up my students at no charge. They gave us a tour of the plant and then we went to the Roundhouse Aquarium. It was a very nice fieldtrip.
· Castaic Water Agency visits local schools, they have classes on water use and gardening.
· Gardening, drought tolerant plants, composting. waste treatment
· Vista Del Lago
· Classes are offered regarding drought-tolerant landscaping.
· Castaic Water offers classes on water related topics such as drought resistant landscaping and general gardening.

· I know I can look up Santa Clarita water issues and find answers somewhere, eventually. I can also contact the our local College to email questions to the “Water” professor.
· Workshops for the pubic and for schools
· The local water agency provides education information a classes regularly
· Pre-Covid symposia by the local water district
· Currently, the Urban Water Management Plan Workshops have been very informative
· CLWA has on going education on water wise initiatives-
· local water agency has gardening and water conservations classes.
· 1. Attended water conservation meetings 2. Grass removal rebate 3. Water audit of house/property
· I have used them for planting with water run off and conservation in mind
· COC water courses, water agency public meetings, environmental newsletters
· Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment. See our web site
· The Castaic water agency offers classes on gardening, landscaping, etc as it relates to water management.
· They gave a tour of the water filtration plant.
· They have had tours as far as I know
· local events, newspaper, community discussions

20. Is your home or business on a septic system?

	Count	Percentage
No	202	68%
Yes	76	25%
I Don't Know	21	7%
Grand Total	299	100%

21. Is your home or business on a private well?

	Count	Percentage
No	259	87%
Yes	22	7%
I don't know	18	6%
Grand Total	299	100%

22. Primary language spoken at home?

	Count	Percentage
English	288	90%
Spanish	12	4%
Other	11	3%
Tagalog	3	1%
Chinese	2	1%
Japanese	2	1%
Vietnamese	1	0%
Farsi	1	0%
Grand Total	320	100%

22 Other. Primary language spoken at home:

	Count	Percentage
Korean	3	43%
Telugu	1	14%
Russian and English	1	14%
French	1	14%
Assyrian	1	14%
Grand Total	7	100%

23. How did you hear about this survey?

	Count	Percentage
Other	243	79%
College Of The Canyons	42	14%
Active Sgv	8	3%
Treepeople	7	2%
Kycc Koreatown Youth And Community	3	1%
Better World Group	1	0%

Sierra Club	1	0%
Mujeres De La Tierra	1	0%
Grand Total	306	100%

23 Other. How did you hear about this survey?

	Count	Percentage
Mail	80	37%
Email	26	12%
City Of Santa Clarita	19	9%
Facebook	12	5%
Email From City Of Santa Clarita	11	5%
Library	11	5%
SCV Water Newsletter	10	5%
Green Santa Clarita	9	4%
Nextdoor	6	3%
Community Organization	6	3%
Watertalks Website	5	2%

Email From Santa Clarita Water District	5	2%
Country Journal	4	2%
Scope	2	1%
Friends	2	1%
Valencia Water Company Email	1	0%
N/A	1	0%
Local Paper Upper Santa Clara River	1	0%
Neighborhood Cleanup	1	0%
Casebook On Community Site	1	0%
Newsmax	1	0%
Water Resources Institute	1	0%
Community Nature Connection Calnat Course	1	0%
Watertalks Event	1	0%
Phone Call	1	0%
City Function Clean Up Neighborhood 2020	1	0%
Grand Total	219	100%

24. How was this survey completed?

	Count	Percentage
Hard Copy Mail In	61	97%
Phone Survey	2	3%
Grand Total	63	100%

· Great plan for open space acquisition and preservation; lots of recreational space and ways to get around without a car

· no answer

· We have nice greenbelts on streets and walkways.

· Santa Clarita has always had the "look" of the city a high priority. The city is beautiful and maintaining it that way is very important.

· I love the Paseos

· There are many green spaces

· Our park has been taken care of and remodeled. But I don't know about the other concerns.

· I do see the city workers busy working on repairing water main bursts, sidewalks, and adding trees in the medians.

· I have been disconnected from public projects news in my area for a while due to COVID lockdown for so long.

· Infrastructure needs are not being addressed. Traffic is very congested in many parts of the City. New homes continue to be approved with insufficient long term reliable water supply. A new Sheriff's station is being built to replace the existing one. It needs to be in addition to the existing station.

· The town council seems to bump heads with county rules where there does not seem any input from the town council .

· we are a small community in unincorporated LA county. not a big enough tax base for them to care

· Los Angeles County as a government does not care about the needs of Agua Dulce. They just collect out taxes and do nothing for us.

· To the best of my knowledge, LA County and/or Santa Clarita do not have any beautification programs in place for Agua Dulce. I'd be happy if they would just address the problem with outsiders dumping trash on our roads, or if they would have mowed the roadway shoulders this year to reduce fuel for fires.

· I just know that water out here in Agua Dulce is hard to get from the wells and is always a concern here.

· Locally, we do not have the authority or the control to do anything. Our Acton Town Council cannot decide anything, they can just recommend and/or fight with the County. We are not incorporated, thus we don't have a tax base or any income.

The County does whatever it wishes, with no concern about our community.

· Our community has nothing such as this as we are rural - no trees, lighting, or sidewalks. We do have a beautiful park in Acton, but I don't believe the government had much do with it. Please keep our horse trails open and maintained.

· Our roads are always an issue. Always potholes and they never get property fixed

· I feel happy with how our community looks

· of coarse i read your add about a 100$ give away but now i am happy to be apart of a on going concern for our little community.

people and families are living here a life time and will continue to do so as it is a nice place to come home too.

· they are constructing more walking paths near our community on Sierra Highway

· The Town Council makes recommendations but they want to keep Acton as it is. I feel that the roads need to be addressed in the town because they flood during strong storms.

· I don’t think that is needed at this point in time we have enough of that

· We have a beautiful park supported by the community

· The area is looking better but the roads are still a big problem with all the new housing.

· The community has not changed in a long time. It needs better streets, sidewalks, lighting.

· I want our communities to look nice, be safe, and help provide us the opportunity to live a good and decent life. I am also concerned with money spent and would like our land to be improved with cost-efficient choices.

· I am consistently seeing wasteful re-working done on street mediums.

· City does a good job in this area.

· The City on an ongoing and often too quickly following an earlier project, replant, or totally removes and then return s plants and hard scrape is adjusted as California's water needs change. (main roads near my house have gone through 3 major improvements and changes

· I agree that the concern about trees and the water conservation issue seems to be something that is being handled responsibly. The beautification and planting are both taken into consideration.

· They are not planting enough of the wide variety of plants native to the Santa Clarita Valley, specifically, and the Los Angeles area in general. We are losing our native animals as a result.

· The City is allowing builders to come in and pave over natural waterways & drainage routes of ground water. And they are considering allowing home builders to build more houses in areas that have already been designated protected open space. They're eager to bring in more houses, but not to preserve what we have.

· I have a drivers license but choose not to drive when possible-however, the close proximity to high speed traffic and the sidewalk is scary abs discourages walking abs cycling-bike path is a good walk from home, sidewalk is narrow and traffic makes riding in the street too scary- I'm not afraid to 'take the lane' where I come from (Madison, WI) but I fear for my safety and my life on the roads in Santa Clarita

· The water in our home does show discoloration and odor periodically. This issue persists for a period of a week or so and is usually followed by a very strong chlorine smell. I assume the treatment plant is detecting higher levels of bacteria when the smell occurs and then treats that with a shock of chlorine. This is concerning, as we do not want to be drinking the water under either of these conditions. This seems to happen cyclically.

· Sometimes I still see a lot of trash on the street

· They will update Valencia or Stevenson Ranch or all the "rich areas" but the city doesn't care about Newhall or parts of Canyon Country.

· When representatives at city hall are called and a complaint made, they are ignored!

Politicians and city representatives can't be trusted!

· The neighborhood is pretty nice but the greenways need improving

· well maintained

· Addressing issues with sidewalks, streets and parks is always needed and benefits the community.

· Streets just repaved and striped. Parks kept up nicely.

· Truck stop not much else except for the wonderful Library, Sports complex, Lake, Swimming pool for community

· The area in which I live has mature trees and is kept nice and clean. I'm very happy with my neighborhood's appearance.

· I see lots of street landscaping projects

· Our local government is a sketchy town council populated by business owners who don't seem to do anything to improve the community

· Local Government is doing a decent job

· I appreciate the new trees planted along Soledad Canyon Rd. in my neighborhood. I also noticed the newly paved roads. I'd like to see more traffic islands for pedestrians, to make it easier to cross busy streets.

· My community is well maintained by the city and residents.

· on the whole, Santa Clarita is maintained very well with respect to streets, parks, and open spaces.

· We have nice parks but our walkways and landscaping are overgrown blocking sidewalks and tress and dead or firing along the old road between Stevenson Ranch Parkway and Constitution

· Too many chemicals

· Really? You all haven't figured it out yet? ABSOLUTELY NO COMMON SENSE is being used by any of the City and County Planning departments. I could have this place back in shape within a year with plans and money for future refurbishing. Again, INFRASTRUCTURE needs to be updated to accommodate current and future needs instead of lame excuses. Boards, meetings, discussions and I see nothing done with taxpayers money other than people that sit around and yap, yet have never picked up a hammer to move things along.

· L they have been rebuilding the center dividers to be better looking and also to hold a sign welcoming visitors to Santa Clarita.

· The city of Santa Clarita has been addressing these issues since it's incorporation.

· Take a look at Sierra hwy from Golden valley down to Newhall Ave it looks like a forgotten stretch of road

· Santa Clarita cares very much about appearances, and less about social issues like climate change or drought.

· I'm not sure I have enough knowledge to Strongly Agree, but the city does a great job in my neighborhood on trees, lighting the paseos and keeping them tidy, sidewalks well kept up.

· The city of Santa Clarita is constantly improving all issues of concern, keeping and protecting parks and open spaces and is a safe community.

· I have seen initiatives and work crews around the city. However, I have not yet seen any "big" projects in my area

· I don't see it happening anywhere

· Santa Clarita parks are well-tended and provide a lot of joy for thousands of citizens. We are frequent users of the multipurpose fields and frisbee golf course at Central Park, and our daughters have played with AYSO soccer and Storm cross-country. We love the summer concerts (and can't wait to go again).

· The City of Santa Clarita tries its best to keep the city clean and safe, provide park space and open space for its residents and infrastructure as well as new fire stations & new sheriff station. It, however, needs to continue to put money and focus to these areas so that things do not deteriorate or get worse.

· The Santa Clarita City Council is obsessed with the city's image of being clean, quaint and wholesome. Therefore they expend a large amount of resources on city beautification. While ignoring other needs like affordable housing.

- Street repairs not done frequent enough relative to community growth and traffic

- City uses a lot of drought tolerant landscaping

- Our Graffiti-removal team is amazing.

Trees are being planted around the city

- While they are building a new rec center (yay!) the streets are tree and plantless, dirty and there is little in the way of nature nearby. Luckily the HOA has made some beautiful grounds that are well landscaped.

- Everything is maintained well.

- Keep the trees trimmed and streets are cleaned regularly

- Concerned about concentrating on redoing center dividers of streets, Adding more plants & sprinklers where so often the sprinklers are watering the streets or are constantly broken.

- I see some road beautification projects

- Improvements along Soledad are appreciated.

- I see the beautification in my city all the times especially in recent years

- My city has been working on a beautification project as I've seen and read in the City's various publications.

- Our local city website and newspaper plus mobile app provides us with a lot of info

- as a small unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, our community doesn't seem to be a priority

- They notify us when things are going on

- This valley continues to build housing and does not take responsibility for traffic, and environmental impacts.

· The concern is apparent in newer and more expensive areas. The concern is also apparent in our constantly improving public areas. Some older lower income areas this is not so visible.

Poor planning from the days when we were not a city are at times uncorrected. For example on my street Tall growing trees were planter under low above ground power lines so the power is turned off during windy days.

· Santa Clarita had very beautiful streets, sidewalks, paseos, etc. They should be more water-conscious when they make landscaping decisions.

· Santa Clarita has an abundance of parks and open spaces

· I think the City is doing a great job with infrastructure and beautification

· Dont tax us for structures when you can't collect the water anyway. more taxation without representation. CA.gov spends too much time figuring out how to steal from the residents.

· Need to keep communities looking clean and presentable. Whites Canyon Road from Soledad Canyon Road to Nadal Street needs a beautification program.

· In the past, the focus was on keeping open land for beautification. That is now less important. City is selling out to home building and big business (we have 2 theatres. Now building 2 more within a mile of each other)

· Infrastructure and beautification improves the quality of life, safety, neighborhood improvements and increases the property value.

· city council appears to be engaged and take a practical approach to issues and provide honest and clear and simple responses and answers to public questions

· Local investments in sustainable infrastructure and attracting new businesses is critical for the future of Santa Clarita

· They only change out the plants in the medians

· I am concerned about possible Perchlorinate contamination in my water.

· The city of Santa Clarita is landscaped nicely but my town of Castaic needs a lot of help with landscaping and beautification. We have a lovely lake, but no public use walking or biking trails around the lake.

· We have a beautiful, maintained, park with hiking trails. I'd like to see more hiking trails throughout town. We don't have sidewalks, because this is a rural area. The trees in town grow in vacant lots. No one planted them. They are local indigenous trees and plants that have grown wild. There are some trees (weed trees) that grow rapidly and are hard to control. This could be an issue in the future, but they do give animals and birds a place to live. Sometimes the tumbleweeds get out of control.

· We have 36 beautiful parks in our city, almost all with amenities. Our street has been re-paved 2 times in the last 10 years. That being said, sidewalks need to be addressed, but I think the community needs to bring the trouble spots to the city's attention. Also, I've seen center medians have trees ripped out and replaced with synthetic grass or rocks and then a few years later that's ripped out and the trees are back in. Lastly, sprinklers of city property need to be checked regularly as there are too frequent issues with water running for a long time or broken sprinklers.

· It's a rural area so I am not sure that kind of thing exists

· There seems to be some beautification but there could be more done.

· They miss the mark in the equity of administration of infrastructure and beautification programs.

· Valencia is beautiful, you should check it out. I'm so glad I left LA, it became such a dump.

· Parks and sidewalks are beautiful. Potholes and giant speed humps are costly

· We have excellent parks and green spaces. If there was more water available, we could potentially do more.

· The city has done a great job making city parks and recreation areas a priority. Also, the streets in my neighborhood are resurfaced periodically and city owned trees are trimmed.

· With being quarantined I have not been to enough places to observe the number and degree of improvements being undertaken at this time.

· Living in an HOA, our entire community is well maintained. If we are referring to the community in general, there are some roads and sidewalks that need attention, as expected.

· I think the parks are nice but they can use more vegetation.

· Overall the area is well maintained. Quality has gone down over the years as the infrastructure and plants have aged.

· our streets are re-paved often and our community trees are trimmed.

· Street cleaning can improve.

· We need more trees that withstand wind up in Stevenson ranch. Many older trees have fallen down because of age and they have never been replaced. It gets hot up here and I think more people would be willing to go out if there were more opportunities for shade.

· Santa Clarita is great - beautiful medians, trees, parks, etc.

· It is always nice to keep things up-to-date and remodel every so often. Providing new and improved scenery as well as efficient gadgets for the public.

· Our city does a lot of beautification and maintains parks

· From what I can tell, the area seems well maintained and managed. Streets and paths are pretty clean, well lit, etc. Parks in the area are pretty nice.

· WE don't see any of these type projects in our neighborhood.

· some parts of the city need attention

· Some areas in the city are addressed more than others

· I do not know what steps the city is taking to ensure water purity

· My neighborhood is beautiful

· City needs to use recycled water for irrigation of city owned medians

· Could do more and better/ there is opportunity here- we need to act sooner and have proactive approach- not reactive. Still waiting to hear about the Saugus Library for goodness sake!

· City as spent MILLIIONS on extensively overplanted and overwatered street medians, which City leaders think are beautiful, but all at cost to property owners who had no say in this decision, but that's about all they have done in this area. We don't want the elaborate median plantings.

· When a problem with road surfaces/conditions and sidewalk cracks, they are usually addressed a timely manner.

· There are certain sections of the road that are bad and have been for a long time.

· Water rates going up and also the containments in the water also

· Maintenance is very good

· When I asked what the procedure was to request a bridge, i was told there was none.

· We need street Enhancement

· They are allowing native trees, especially oaks to be removed and not replanting/ We need trees to combat the heat and climate changes. The oak woodland destruction (over 1400 oaks) allowed by the City for the gates industrial project will not be forgotten or forgiven. They did not even replace on a two to one basis as required by their ordinance and are not monitoring.

· I have no idea where this is needed and whether or not they're doing it

· The county does very little for the unincorporated areas and we have to fight for everything. Our district 36 has no resident representative and the supervisor is weak and useless.

· Hard scape and land scapes seem to be fresh and orderly,.

· We have many wonderful parks, there is not a lot of trash on streets or sidewalks, the medians are well kept.

· In front of my townhome the sidewalk had a tree that was removed for some reason, not sure if it died it didn't look that way. It way never replaced and when I contacted the city, the hole left in the side walk was paved over...

· For the last fifteen years when the Newhall ranch project was delayed it also delayed Val Verde upgrades (stop light Chiquito Cyn Rd and 126, paseos, flood control upgrades, area beautification, covered bus stops etc..).

County put in these nice fiberglass fencing but no budget for maintenance.

Our dirt sidewalks are not graded only during flooding.

Val Verde is a mushroom always pooped on and left in the dark

· I see the same road getting re pave rather than the road that need to be.

· We pay for the beatification on our streets, why we keep planting trees to grow into power lines is beyond me.

We did recently get a very poor surrey pass on some roads.

· Homeowners are paying for beautification, our property taxes have increased to improve my neighborhood

· Keep building homes without concern for future resources

· Again we are a small town all they are conserved about is bring more money into the L A county. to hell with our quality of life and the destruction of wildlife habitat.

· Workers regularly upkeep the vegetation along the streets

· Los Angeles County Supervisors have not insisted the new housing development provide parks or trails in sufficient and public quantity for the new developments. Roads are in poor shape in certain neighborhoods and in others that were resurfaced last fall they are already looking awful. We also need bridges on Hasley Canyon Road near Val Verde that always floods and another way in and out of Castaic for when there is a wildfire and or when the Grapevine shuts down. The LA County of Supervisors need to listen to the Castaic Town Council!

· I see improvements but they all stop south of Henry mayo Dr.

· Parks are well maintained. Curbs and gutters are non-existent in this community. Either are there any storm drains. The cost to install this infrastructure is prohibitive.

· I see tree trimmers

· Best city ever:

-We have quality roads and sidewalks, and nice art through out city.

-Broadband issues are always being worked on.

-We are getting new community center, sheriff station, ice rink

-City and water agency are working on PFAS.

-Keep up the great management of our city!

- Acton Park is great; drainage during rainstorms in downtown Acton is abysmal

- City is always making improvements