

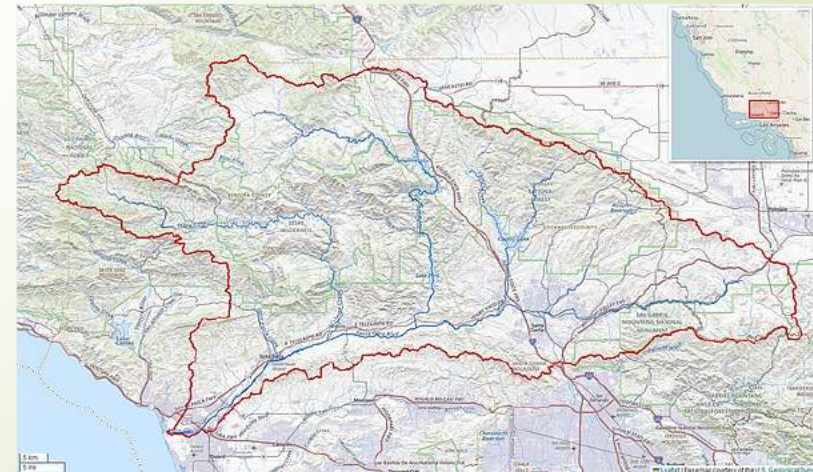
Santa Clara River Arundo Control Program

Update for Santa Clara River Watershed Committee

February 26, 2026

Project Objectives

- ▶ Develop mechanisms to support long-term maintenance and management of invasive weed control in the entire Santa Clara River
 - Removal efforts are more readily fundable via existing sources
 - Ongoing efforts are required to maintain benefit of removal efforts
 - Long-term management requires ongoing coordination, cooperation, and sustained funding





Since the Last Time We Presented to You . . .

- ▶ **Last time we presented**

- General overview of the proposed effort

- ▶ **Since that time**

- Coordinating workgroup met to develop a governance approach
- Additional partnership conversations
- Developed a preliminary budget
- Beginning to draft an enabling agreement



Anticipated Structure of the Program

- Coordinating Workgroup
- Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Project Proponents



Coordinating Workgroup

- ▶ Inform (or possibly direct) decision making and provide strategic oversight and direction
 - Broad understanding of issues affecting the watershed
 - Committed to long-term engagement to advise/inform overall direction of the program
 - Develop overall strategies for program implementation
 - Develop decision-making processes for funding and management actions
 - Help set priorities for management actions
 - Develop and implement funding strategies
 - Participate in long-term governance and oversight of the program

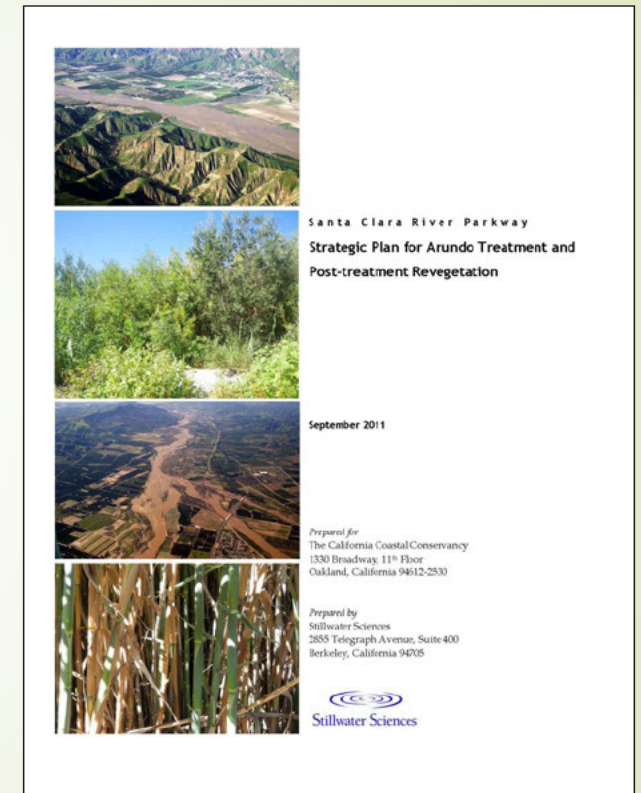
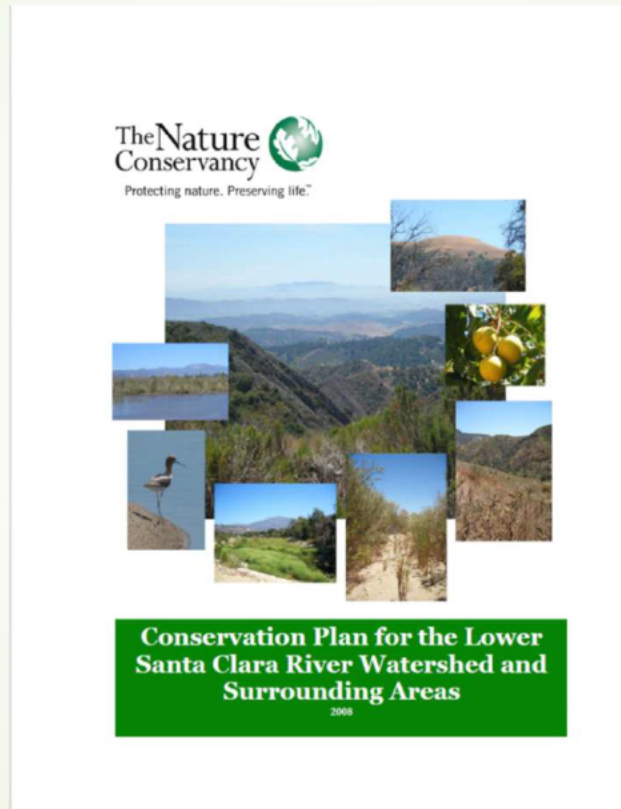
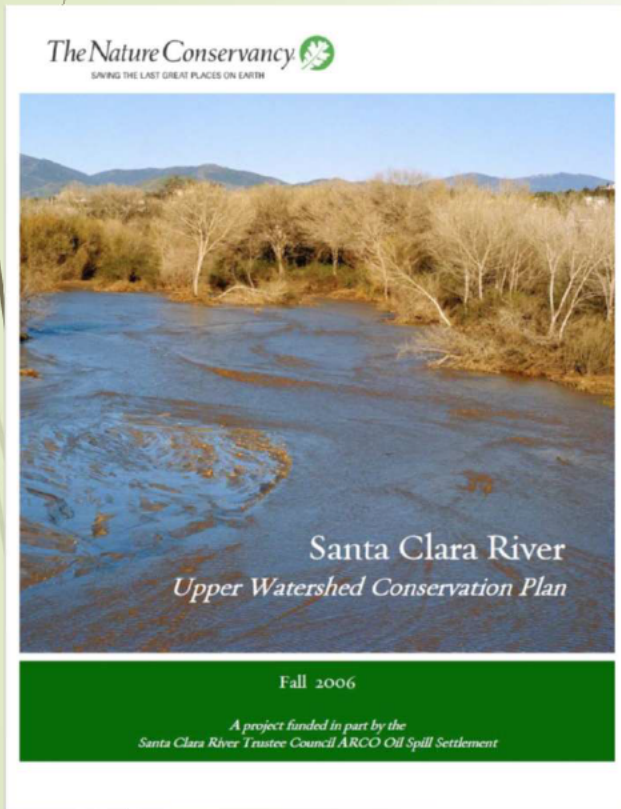
Coordinating Workgroup Members

- City of Santa Clarita
- Council for Watershed Health
- County of Los Angeles
- County of Ventura
- LA County Department of Public Works
- Santa Clara River Conservancy
- Santa Clara Valley Water Agency
- SCCWRP
- The Nature Conservancy
- Treepeople
- United Water Conservation District
- Ventura County Resource Conservation District

Potential additional participants

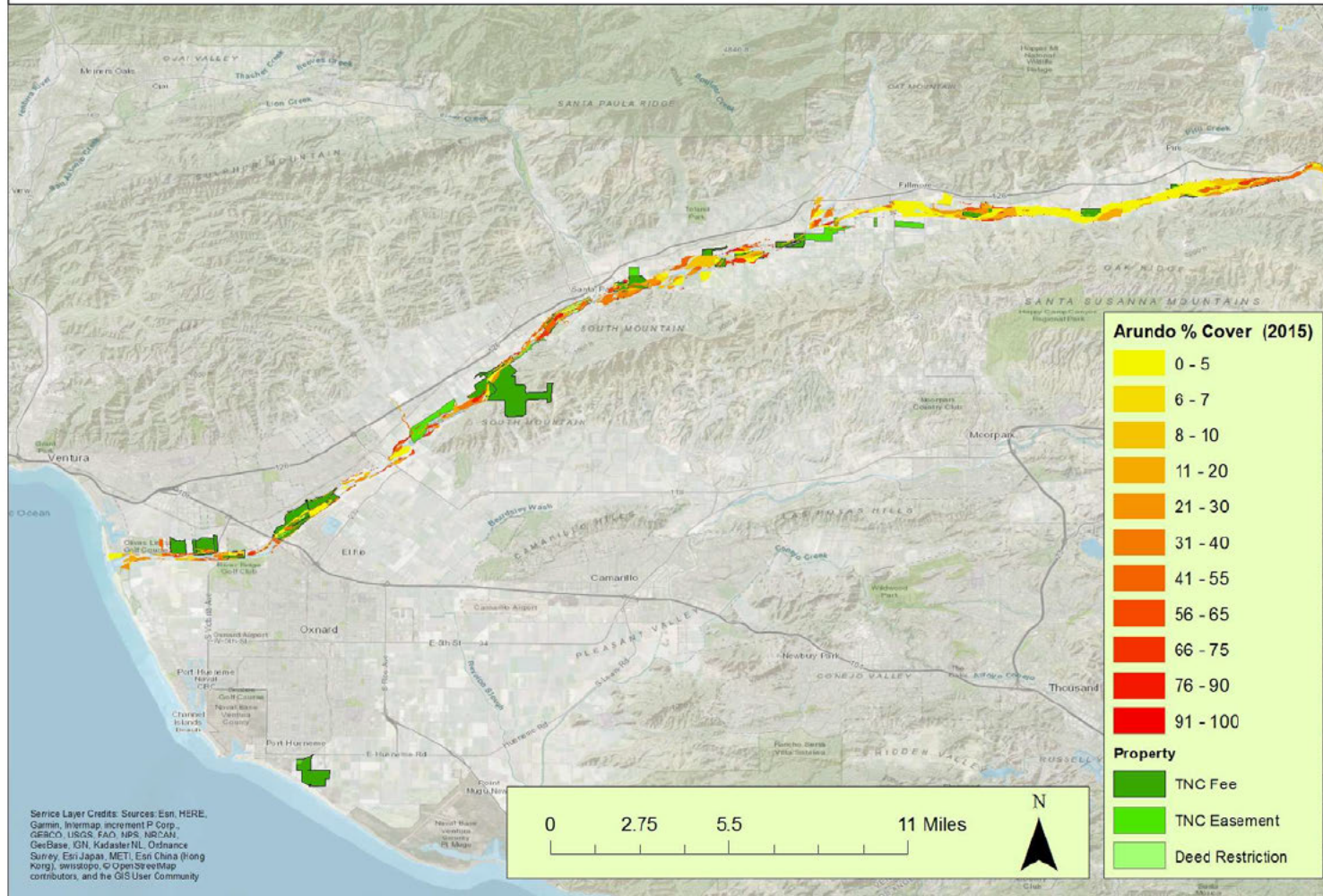
- Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Five-points

Leveraging Prior Efforts



Santa Clara River and Coast Restoration

Petar Dixon, Project Manager Santa Clara River and Coast
December 18, 2018





Critical Attributes

Distinct bi-county entity with a mission focused on invasive species control and long-term resource conservation and biodiversity enhancement

- Focused and dedicated mission
- Continuity
- Sustained funding



Proposed Program Elements

- ▶ Program governance and management
 - Coordination on prioritization and implementation
 - Take advantage of opportunistic actions
 - Community/Stakeholder engagement and education
- ▶ Funding strategy and fiduciary management
 - Securing sources of money
 - Funding ongoing O&M
- ▶ Monitoring, tracking and reporting
 - Data management
 - Reporting on progress, success, and needs



Outline of Organizational Mission

- ▶ Transparency to stakeholders and the watershed communities
- ▶ Ability to involve key stakeholders as project partners
- ▶ Sustained funding mechanisms to promote longevity
- ▶ Shared governance and administrative structure among cooperating entities, including clear decision-making process
- ▶ Ability to receive and manage funds
- ▶ Ability to obtain and hold permits
- ▶ Ability to hold easements and rights of entry
- ▶ Dedicated staff to accomplish the organization's mission
- ▶ Ability to subcontract for services

Governance Options

Option	Benefits	Challenges
A. Existing state program or agency	Does not require development of new organizational structure. Can take advantage of existing program resources	Staffing and resources for existing programs is already limited and it may be difficult to take on additional responsibilities
B. Existing organization or institution	Can take advantage of relevant expertise and capabilities of an organization focused on implementation and monitoring	Would require additional resources to allow the organization to accommodate the new program
C. MOU between organizations	Creates shared responsibility and foster collaboration. Allows for division of labor among existing organizations	May dilute resources of the member organizations and the program may be given lower priority than core mission areas. May be more difficult to ensure all tasks are adequately completed.
D. Form a new entity	New entity would be focused on Arundo control as its primary mission	Would need a cooperative agreement or MOU, staff, and organizational structure

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Existing Organization - Options

- ▶ TreePeople
- ▶ Santa Clara River Conservancy
- ▶ Friends of the Santa Clara River
- ▶ Ventura County RCD

- ▶ Appropriateness
- ▶ Willingness
- ▶ Needs (funding/staff)



New Entity - Options

➤ Joint Powers Authority

➤ Non-profit



➤ Stability

➤ Joint governance

➤ Funding options and flexibility



Short-list of Proposed Direction

- ▶ Existing organization → VCRCDCD
- ▶ New organization → Establish a new JPA




Potential New JPA

Key Features

- ▶ Public agency
 - ▶ Overseen by a Commission
- ▶ Flexible partnership options
- ▶ Lots of options for funding
- ▶ Challenges
 - ▶ Time to establish
 - ▶ Commitment of member agencies

Potential Members

- ▶ County of Ventura
- ▶ County of Los Angeles
- ▶ Santa Clara Valley Water Agency
- ▶ City of Santa Clarita
- ▶ United Water Conservation District
- ▶ Ventura County Resource Conservation District



Approximate Annual Budget Needs

TASK	BUDGET
Program management	\$200,000
Outreach and engagement	\$45,000
Monitoring tracking and reporting	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$285,000

Budget includes labor and supplies only (no facility overhead)



Funding Options

- Existing grants and contracts (short-term)
- Direct allocation from partner agencies
 - Participant dues (JPA)
 - Donations (non-profit)
- Mitigation or offset fees (JPA)
- Enforcement funds/SEPs (JPA)
- Assessments through future ballot measure
- New contracts or grants



Action Items and Next Steps

- Develop draft agreement(s)
- Schedule follow up discussions with initial potential member agencies and other partners
- Survey of potential roles among coordinating committee
- Develop an Implementation strategy/work plan
- Develop a cost and financing plan
- Update map of ownership and responsibilities (already started by SCCWRP and others)



Emerging Partnership Opportunities

- ▶ USFWS collaboration on vireo recovery planning
 - Opportunities for funding
- ▶ Five-points
 - Mapping, implementation, coordination
- ▶ Canyon to Desert RCD
 - Technical coordination and assistance



Working with the Watershed Committee

- Regular updates
- Sharing of draft products
- Coordination on implementation (and funding)
- Assistance in outreach
- Other?

QUESTIONS

– SCCWRP – [REDACTED]@sccwrp.org

- Tree People - [REDACTED]@treepeople.org



Stakeholder Advisory Committee

- ▶ Provide input and advice from the perspective of potentially affected entities or individuals.
 - Provide strategic insight and advice on targeted issues
 - Ensure local/landowner perspectives are represented
 - Coordinate on individual projects to ensure consistency and leverage with overall program
 - Identify and help fill data gaps or specific funding needs
 - Review and provide feedback on draft plans and strategies



Project Proponents

- ▶ Implement individual projects along specific reaches of the river consistent with the overall program
 - Secure project funding
 - Implement removal activities
 - Conduct performance assessments
 - Provide data to agreed upon data management system
 - Participate in coordination meetings