

INLAND EMPIRE WATERKEEPER®

Advocacy • Education • Restoration • Enforcement



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

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Inland Empire WATERKEEPER®: Furthering our Presence

On this second anniversary of our start in November of 2005, Inland Empire Waterkeeper (IEWK) continues to advocate on behalf of the entire Santa Ana River Watershed. This year we have received a sizable grant, hired a new full-time Keeper and Programs Director, and developed our blossoming advocacy, education, restoration and enforcement programs. This annual report memorializes our successes from 2007, and lays out where we intend to direct our attention in 2008 and beyond.

The biggest change at Waterkeeper is the addition of Mr. Lee Reeder as our permanent and full-time Director and Waterkeeper (pictured at right). Lee took over the position and Interim Director Autumn DeWoody, became Programs Director. Lee has more than 30 years experience in business development, public relations and communications. He is also a passionate nature photographer, experienced outdoorsman and National Forest volunteer. He comes to Inland Empire Waterkeeper to boost public visibility and build the program.



In the Community

High School Education Program



River KATS: Kid Activism Together with Science

Our high school science program has one basic goal: to provide an outdoor, hands-on environmental experience at NO COST to the teacher. We can organize trips to any facility related to water, provide real water testing equipment for hands-on water sampling, and provide presentations on watershed topics. This year, we gave the program a proper name, "River KATS: Kid Activism Together with Science," provided two field trips for local high school science classes and received a large donation for field trips in 2008.

- February 21, 2007: We conducted a field trip for Corona High School students to Prado Wetlands for weeding, planting and water testing (pictured here). Supplemented by a presentation on falconry and a brief tour of the wetlands. The trip was preceded by in-class talk by IEWK staff on water quality topics, and followed up by worksheet on water quality.
- September, 2007: Received donation of \$2,500 from the Inland Empire Chapter of the Association of Environmental Professionals for field trips and education program purposes, such as equipment and staff time. With that donation, we were able to schedule seven trips for more than 200 students at Val Verde High School, Corona High School, Norco High School, Summit High School, Patriot High School, and Ramona High School. Sites for the trips

vary from the San Jacinto wetlands treatment facility and the Prado Wetlands to the Riverside wastewater treatment plant.

- November 28, 2007: We conducted a field trip with a Rubidoux High School science class of 36 to Riverside wastewater treatment plant, supplemented by river water sampling with help from several local volunteers.
- We sent letters to most four-year high schools in the watershed offering field trips or other watershed learning opportunities, such as in-class talks or simple water testing lessons. We received such an overwhelming response that we have turned teachers away because we do not have the funding at this time. We are currently seeking funding to expand the program.



Outreach

Over the past year, we have strived to increase our presence in the Inland Empire. This was most evident by the release of the “Inland Empire Edition” of *Coastkeeper* Magazine that was sent to thousands of Inland Empire agencies, environmental organizations and interested individuals. Other events are described below.

- ***April 21, 2007: Environmental Expo at Cal State San Bernardino***

The expo is the largest annual environmental educational event in the Inland Empire, where hundreds of families come to participate. We brought our elaborate watershed diorama that shows where polluted urban runoff terminates after flowing through our communities. We spoke with children and parents all day, provided lots of informational materials and received dozens of email addresses to add to our distribution list. We displayed our new t-shirts and banner for the first time.

- ***October 6, 2007: World Water Monitoring Day at Santa Ana River Cleanup***

During the annual Santa Ana River cleanup hosted by the Riverside/Corona Resource Conservation District, we took several groups of children to the river to run five basic tests of water quality: turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and electrical conductivity (pictured here). About 50 boys and girls participated, and then returned to help remove seven tons of trash from the river.

In April, IEWK collaborated with the Canyon Springs High School Academy of Creative Technologies (in Moreno Valley) to produce our first t-shirt design, which displays our heron/fish logo with the line, “Protecting our Inland Waterways One Stream at a Time.” We also produced a new batch of tri-fold pamphlets that are updated with new pictures and projects. In June, we commenced with our monthly e-newsletter that contains project updates, local events, support for local projects and people, and pictures. It now reaches more than 170 people located throughout the Inland Empire. In October we completed our Web site overhaul, which enhanced our ability to post documents and provide information in a more accessible format. In addition, we finally met our

remaining requirement from Waterkeeper Alliance to obtain a vessel that has our trademark name on the side. This was done through a donation, from Crestline resident Terry Hatcher, of an 18-foot Grumman canoe with onboard motor and room for four. We plan to take it to local lakes in 2008.



South Coast Watershed Protection and Outreach Grant

Advocating for our Cleveland National Forest / Santa Ana Mountains

In May we were honored to receive a grant of \$123,500 from Resources Legacy Fund Foundation to advocate against two development projects that threaten the Cleveland National Forest: the Lake Elsinore Advanced Pumped Storage project, and the Irvine-Corona Expressway tunnel. This grant has been a significant catalyst for our operations in the area. The grant requires several things, including water quality sampling of forest canyons to develop baseline data, connect with local agencies and activists to voice our position for water quality, and educate the community on the dangers of the projects on the forest. This grant will continue until July, 2008 but we hope to continue our efforts beyond that time for activities in the Elsinore Valley.

- ***Technical Advisory Committee***

Prior to initiating any sampling program, it is necessary to include a technical advisory committee (TAC) composed of stakeholders on the development of the quality assurance project plan (QAPP). Our TAC was made of a representative from the U.S. Forest Service, City of Lake Elsinore, University of California Riverside, and Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District. Their input and support directed us to the canyons we sample, and the constituents we test for.

- ***Water Quality Lab***

In order to run most of the tests necessary for our project, we require the use of a water quality lab, which we found thanks to the local Hydrophix office (previously, "Abtech"). Hydrophix has provided \$1,570 of in-kind donations of lab supplies and lab space to allow us to test for several types of bacteria and nutrients. Otherwise, samples are sent to Centrum Analytical Laboratories who generously assist with testing for metals, TSS and other more complex constituents.

- ***Water Sampling Volunteers***

The grant language included a requirement to include volunteers in the water quality testing, complete with training sessions and materials. We were fortunate to find the hearty group of volunteers we meet with every month to sample our four sites. They come from varied

backgrounds, and generously offer their time and energies. The number of volunteers has steadily increased, which has helped increase our visibility to the community.

- ***Sampling Sites***

Selecting four sampling sites from all the canyons on the east side of the Santa Ana Mountains was an iterative process. Sites were rated based on ease of physical access in the event of a rain, ease of obtaining right of access from property owner, likelihood of runoff during rain (if not year-round), and proximity to the proposed location of the LEAPS project or the Tunnel project. We settled on Main Street Canyon in Corona, Coldwater Creek Canyon in Corona, Leach Canyon in Lake Elsinore, and Lion Spring in the Cleveland National Forest.

- ***Spanish translation webpage***

One of the tasks included developing materials in Spanish. We are proud to have a Spanish-only Web page about LEAPS on our site, complete with translated opposition letters and a petition. As the Tunnel project develops, we plan to make it and any associated documents available in Spanish as well.

- ***Motion to Become Party to Proceedings***

We have filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to become an “intervener” to the LEAPS project application. Also, we have filed a motion with the California Public Utilities Commission to become “party” to the project application they will oversee.

- ***Meetings***

We attend board meetings regularly at Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District and we have requested inclusion in upcoming meetings held by Riverside Orange Corridor Authority on the tunnel project.



Public Policy

It is imperative for environmental organizations, especially those in the Inland Empire, to stay diligently abreast of local and regional developments that affect the Inland waterways. To the maximum extent possible, we write letters of both opposition and support, we attend meetings and research records. The following is a synopsis of our public policy activities over the past year:

- On May 18, IEWK attended an intimate meeting with California State Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod (SD 32), provided by the Planning & Conservation League. Others in attendance included the San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust and local agriculture and dairyman interest groups. We discussed the importance of smart redevelopment projects that encourage on-site infiltration of urban runoff.
- Since May 24, IEWK has supported the *One Water, One Watershed* project being led by the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) by contributing to the Water Quality Pillar and the Environment Pillar. The intent is to develop an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan for the Santa Ana River Watershed, to eventually obtain significant grant funds for projects.
- The [Riverside] County/City Arroyo Committee published a long-awaited status report on the arroyos that naturally occur throughout the region. It contained numerous important recommendations for city and county staff and elected officials to consider. We publicly supported this document by writing letters to city and county leaders in June, 2007 and publishing our support on our website.
- In September, we attended a rare QAPP and QA/QC training course led by State Water Board representatives at the Orange County Coastkeeper offices. Coastkeeper and the Citizen Watershed Monitors of Orange County hosted the all-day Workshop.
- On October 10, IEWK and San Diego Coastkeeper staff were trained by Orange County Coastkeeper Associate Director of Programs Ray Hiemstra on the proper method of investigating illegal discharges from industrial and construction sites. We were then equipped with the necessary tools to pursue enforcement actions.
- On October 24, IEWK attended the I-215 Corridor Economic Development conference in Riverside, which looked at the future of a strip of Riverside County along interstate 215 between Temecula and Moreno Valle that is slated for massive residential, industrial and commercial development. IEWK was probably the only non-profit environmental organization present.

- IEWK sent letters of support to the Lake Arrowhead Community Services District and the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District to support their efforts to maintain lake levels with “recycled” water in spite of public opposition.
- IEWK continues to participate in the activities of the San Jacinto River Watershed Council, who is completing an integrated regional water management plan.
- IEWK continues to participate in the Stormwater Quality Standards Task Force that focuses on the entire Santa Ana River watershed. They are currently coordinating a recreational use survey using cameras on several waterways throughout the watershed to determine when and where residents are recreating in waterways. Also, work is commencing on economics analyses to determine the cost of meeting REC-1 standards on a watershed-basis. Lastly a document has been presented to EPA to update bacteria indicator objectives for REC-1 and REC-2 beneficial uses.
- IEWK Keeper Lee Reeder is a member of the State Department of Water Resources Alluvial Fan Task Force, which is working to create a model ordinance for development in these water-sensitive areas. He has also has been named a member of the advisory board of the Water Resources Institute at California State University, San Bernardino.
- IEWK is pleased to participate in the Middle Santa Ana River Pathogen TMDL efforts, including the Bacterial Indicator studies.



Advocacy and Enforcement

The establishment of Inland Empire Waterkeeper has helped to identify, solve, and where necessary, prosecute non-compliance violations. In 2007, we provided more tips on illegal and illicit discharges to both the City of Riverside and the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. They appreciate our assistance in monitoring this vast and heavily congested watershed. Our focus has been threefold when it comes to advocacy and enforcement: industrial dischargers, construction sites and the LEAPS project (discussed previously). One enforcement case from 2006 has lingered; the Maple Ridge housing development in Big Bear built by Corman Leigh Communities has not yet resolved flooding and geotechnical concerns. Likewise, at this time San Bernardino County has not actively addressed residents' concerns. The SEP funds (\$25,000) from our settlement were provided to the Big Bear Natural Heritage Foundation to go towards a restoration project on Baldwin Lake, which receives runoff from the Maple Ridge site. We settled another SEP agreement (\$25,000) with the same developer for a residential development in Lake Elsinore called Viscaya. That money was directed to the Lake Elsinore & San Jacinto Watershed Authority (LESJWA) for habitat restoration in Lake Elsinore. Both entities have gratefully received the money and put it to good use.

Industrial Discharges

City of Corona

Progress was made in 2007 to settle consistent and egregious violations of industrial discharge permits for six industrial dischargers in the City of Corona. At this time, negotiations are ongoing but we hope they will chose to settle on the terms of meeting their permitted discharge levels and possibly providing SEP funds that can be funneled via IEWK to a restoration project in Temescal Creek.

Scrap Yards

In late 2006 and early 2007, several scrap yards in San Bernardino County were investigated and samples taken during rain events. Two facilities were sent Notices of Intent to Sue based on extremely high metals concentrations in the site runoff that will eventually flow to the Santa Ana River. At this time, negotiations are still ongoing.

In late 2007, four additional scrap yards and recycling yards were identified as possible illegal dischargers based on historic sampling results taken as part of their industrial discharger permit. Investigations are ongoing and weather permitting.

Developer Campaign

Spot Checking and Site Investigation

Based on a tip, we started to investigate the massive Spring Mountain Ranch development in Highgrove in coordination with the Riverside Land Conservancy. Although the concerns were many, our focus was on adequate stormwater capture, treatment and discharge into Springbrook Wash such that the structural integrity of the Wash (natural sides and bottom) is adequately maintained during typical storm events. To do so, meetings were held with Riverside County Flood Control staff, and City of Riverside staff. In October, a spot check was performed and several inadequate erosion control measures photographed. This was sent to local regulators to handle. We will continue our spot-checking at this enormous development through 2008.

Based on another more recent tip, spot checks are commencing in the Eastvale and Jurupa areas of Riverside County. We have observed illegal dumping and illicit runoff directly entering the river. Evidence suggests this region is in great need of spot-checks and enforcement actions, which we will carry-on through 2008.

Rain was fairly nonexistent in the winter and spring of 2007. Thankfully, the rain came in early December of 2007, which allowed us to spot-check four active construction sites in Riverside. Overall, we have been satisfied with their erosion controls but we will continue monitoring these sites through 2008.



Partnerships and Fundraising Efforts

Fundraising has improved over the year, with several donations from private individuals and public entities, such as the City of Chino, Sport Chalet, Inland Empire Chapter of the Association of Environmental Professionals, and Hydrophix.

Over the course of the year, we applied for grants from A & B Foundation, Longs Drugs, and the State Water Resources Control Board. We have plans to apply for several grants in

2008, including U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, EPA and California Department of Fish and Game.

In October, we partnered with the Riverside/Corona Resource Conservation District to engage children with water sampling of the Santa Ana River during the District's annual River cleanup event. Over 50 children tested water for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH and turbidity, while removing 7 tons of waste.

In November, Orange County Coastkeeper was given a grant from Metropolitan Water District to install and study parcel-level infiltration systems to reduce household water use in Orange County. Programs Director Autumn DeWoody will partner and act as technical advisor on this project.

In December, Orange County Coastkeeper and Inland Empire Waterkeeper partnered on an EPA environmental education grant to bring environmental professionals to high school classrooms. We will hear the outcome in 2008.

A look Ahead



Our goals for 2008 are as follows:

Community Programs

- Increase the number of inland schools participating in our High School Education Program to 10.
- Hold two more inland stream clean up days in both San Bernardino and Riverside County, engaging 200 more citizens in cleanup efforts.
- Continue engaging citizens in water monitoring activities. Organize another inland “Snapshot Day” Citizen Water Monitoring Event with a more comprehensive sampling strategy in mind so as to increase the utility of the data gathered.
- Increase internships by maintaining a better relationship with local high schools, colleges, universities, and law schools.

Advocacy and Enforcement

- Comment on the draft EIR expected on the LEAPS project in December, 2008 and continue diligent monitoring of events surrounding the LEAPS and TE/VS projects.
- Participate with the Riverside-Orange Corridor Authority/Riverside County Transportation Commission on the proposed Irvine-Riverside Expressway Tunnel and the Mid-County Parkway located in Gavilan Hills.
- Comment on and actively participate in the development of the new MS4 permits for Riverside and San Bernardino Counties this year.
- Reach final agreement on enforcement actions taken in 2007.
- Continue to monitor construction projects and industrial facilities in the Inland Empire that may detrimentally impact the Santa Ana Watershed. In particular, industrial facilities in Fontana, Colton and San Bernardino.

Partnerships and Fundraising

- Double our membership, with particular focus in the Elsinore Valley, Perris Valley and Corona/Norco.
- Partner with the local council of Girl Scouts of America on restoration projects.
- Complete recruitment of an effective Advisory Board.
- Conduct effective fundraising activities.
- Continue researching major donors and building business relationships within the watershed.
- Publish an Inland Empire Waterkeeper magazine.