



SANTA ANA WATERSHED PROJECT AUTHORITY

One Water One Watershed: A Unified Voice for the Santa Ana Watershed April 2008

Meet the Water Supply Reliability Pillar



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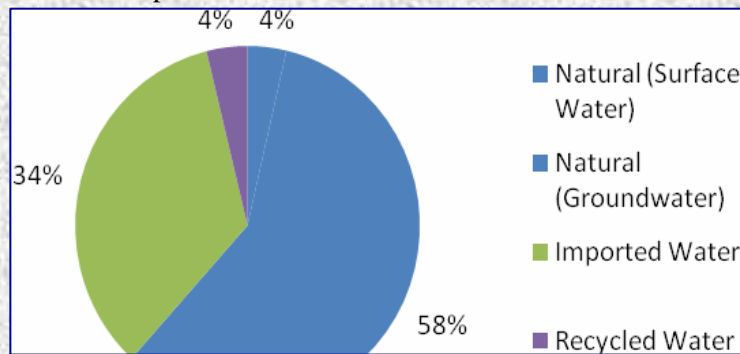
Water Supply for the Santa Ana River Watershed

By Bob Tincher

Water. We cannot live without it, we are captivated by its beauty, and most of us love to play in it! Yet, if we are being honest, most of us know very little about where it comes from. In fact, most would be surprised to learn that some, or all, of their water originates as snow melt in Northern California or the Colorado Rockies. It is these kind of surprises that make California unique when it comes to the subject of water.

The State of California's varied climate, varied hydrologic cycle, and diverse geography pose interesting challenges to water management. The cooler climate in the northern portion of the state and Mediterranean climate in the southern portion of the state has resulted in a population imbalance with more people living in the south. This population imbalance is further exaggerated by the fact that nearly all of the precipitation falls on the northern

portion of the state. One of California's fundamental challenges is to move water from north to south. This is accomplished by a number of large water projects, including the State Water Project. The State Water Project is a complex system of canals, pipelines and pump stations that moves water from the northern portion of the state to the southern portion of the state. In addition to the *imported water* from Northern California, a portion of the Watershed also receives water imported from the Colorado River. Combined, imported water supplies currently meet more than 1/3 of the water demand in the Santa Ana River Watershed (Watershed). Given this dependence on imported water, water agencies in the Watershed will be working with other agencies throughout the state to support projects such as a long-term solution in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.



In addition to the challenges posed by California's population imbalance, the natural hydrologic cycle brings challenges of its own. Historically, California's hydrologic cycle

consists of a limited number of wet years followed by a series of dry years, or drought. This "feast or famine" hydrology requires water managers to capture and store

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water during wet years for later use during drought. Storage of wet year supplies occurs in both surface and underground storage reservoirs. The underground storage reservoirs or groundwater basins provide most of the water storage space, and consist of sand and gravel layers called “aquifers”, which are separated vertically by layers of clay that prevent water flow. These aquifers and clay layers are arranged similar to a multi-layer cake with the cake representing the aquifer and the frosting representing the clay layers. The groundwater basins within the Watershed are primarily replenished by natural supplies. Overall, groundwater and other natural supplies currently meet over 60% of water demands in the Watershed.

Remaining demands, not met by natural supplies or imported water, are currently being met by recycled water. Although recycled water currently meets only about 4% of the demand, it will more than double in the future.

Providing the most cost-effective and reliable water supply into the future will require a variety of different water management strategies, the first of which is to use water more efficiently. By using water more efficiently, we can actually reduce the overall demand for water. Storage is also a foundational strategy that will continue to help “narrow the gap” between wet years and periods of drought.

Another related strategy may involve changing the way we utilize our imported water supplies. In the past, the use of imported water has been minimized, as much as possible, due to its higher cost. However, as demands continue to exceed local supplies, cost is becoming less of an issue and is causing us to re-think the way we use imported water. Instead of minimizing the use of this important resource, we are now investigating the concept of “base loading” off of imported water. Base loading off of imported supplies will help reduce demands on local supplies which can then be used during drought periods when imported water is scarce.

The above strategies are only a sample of those being evaluated in the *One Water One Watershed* (OWOW) process. This collaborative process has provided a valuable forum for discussion, debate, and fresh ideas. But, the OWOW process is only the beginning. The development and implementation of water management strategies will require continued cooperation among local and regional water agencies into the future.



SAWPA and Stakeholders Collaborative Efforts Recognized by Santa Ana Regional Board

Over the past 20 years, the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) has effectively served as a forum or “roundtable” to resolve interagency conflicts, address regional water issues, and support the development of long-term integrated water resource planning through multi-agency agreements and partnerships in the Santa Ana Watershed (Watershed). Serving as the administrator and facilitator to these multi-agency efforts, SAWPA has worked closely with Federal, State and local agencies to address complex water issues in the Watershed through a collaborative and inclusive process. Examples of these efforts include the Nitrogen/Total Dissolved Solids (N/TDS) Task Force, the Santa Ana River Use Attainability Task Force, the Stormwater Quality Standards Task Force, the Santa Ana sucker Conservation Team, the multiple TMDL Task Forces, as well as recent efforts to form new task forces for Imported Water Recharge and, most recently, monitoring programs for emerging contaminants.



These collaborative efforts by SAWPA and stakeholders within the Santa Ana Region were recently recognized by the California Regional

Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), Santa Ana Region, Regional Board Chair, Carole Beswick, when she proposed that the Regional Board consider a Resolution recognizing the efforts of stakeholders within the Santa Ana Region who have contributed to task force or workgroup efforts on both basin planning and regulatory activities. On January 18, 2008, the Regional Board adopted Resolution No. R8-2008-0018 expressing appreciation for the efforts of stakeholders who have been the driving force for the collaborative and highly successful basin planning and other regulatory task force and workgroup efforts in the Santa Ana Region.

The Regional Board Executive Officer, Gerard Thibeault, followed up the resolution by stating that “the stakeholder participation in these activities has fostered a watershed approach that recognizes and incorporates consideration for the water quality needs and concerns of the entire watershed and an awareness of how activities in one portion of the watershed can affect water quality in other, hydrologically downgradient areas. The Regional Board believes that this watershed awareness has allowed stakeholders in the Santa Ana Region to act in a more consensus-based manner, which has greatly facilitated the successful implementation of important and necessary basin planning and regulatory programs, providing significant water quality and public policy benefits. It has been frequently stated that this stakeholder-driven approach should serve as the statewide model for how to deal with these very important water quality concerns.”

A Resolution of Appreciation for stakeholder participation in basin planning and regulatory activities were presented to the SAWPA Commission on February 19, 2008, by the Regional Board and Executive Officer. Thereafter, the resolution was shared with numerous task forces that the SAWPA staff administers on a regular basis. On behalf of SAWPA staff, we echo the Regional Board’s comments in appreciation to all the many stakeholders who have participated to successfully and economically address the water quality and supply challenges facing the region.

Did you know that May is California Watershed Awareness Month?

In 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed May as California’s Watershed Awareness Month. This annual awareness campaign promotes the importance of watersheds in providing a quality, healthy environment. We are all encouraged to educate ourselves about our local watershed, as well as participate in activities that enhance our natural surroundings and communities.

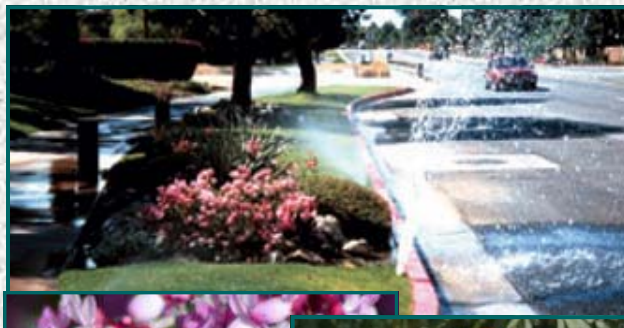
State and local agencies, educators, and members of the community will celebrate this annual recognition with activities and events that promote the importance of watersheds at the grassroots and community level; and support environmental stewardship, resource conservation, and collaborative watershed management. This month provides a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with your community and the Santa Ana Watershed.

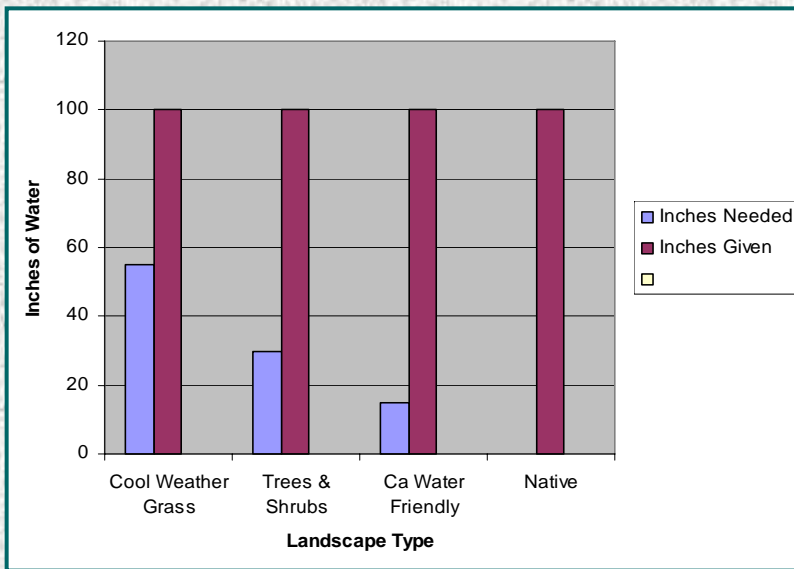
“No Rain” Doesn’t Mean “No Options” – Be Waterwise!

We live with such abundance that the idea of limiting our outdoor water usage really is alien to most of us. But it shouldn’t be! Let’s face it, most of us have the mindset that our yards should have green velvety carpets of grass framing our homes. We don’t give much thought about its water guzzling demands upon our water supplies. But we should!

As a homeowner, do you know that **YOU** could cut your water bills in **half** by doing just a couple of simple things? Make the “water challenge” pledge today and reduce your outdoor water use by 50%. It is really pretty simple to achieve – just take these two simple steps:

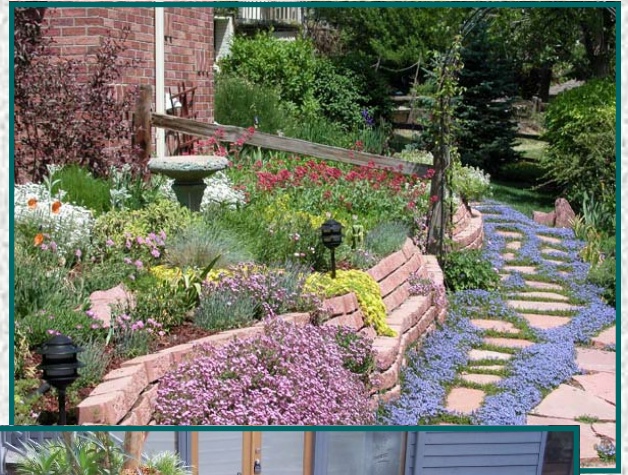
1. Implement efficient irrigation practices at your home – it could cut your outdoor water demands in half and save you bucks!
 - Fix broken sprinklers, or sprinklers that are sunken or crooked;
 - Cut away turf from growing around your sprinklers;
 - Check for sand and debris, which could plug up sprinklers;
 - Don’t water so long that you create ANY runoff; and
 - Also, use of a smart controller for your home irrigation system could provide significant savings.
2. Replace your “non-functional” grass with shrubs and trees; use grass for “functional” areas only.
 - Diversify your landscape with California Friendly® or Native plants – it adds more interest, requires little or no maintenance, garden pests may leave your garden alone, and going Native requires no expensive fertilizers/soil amendments!
 - Don’t grow grass with trees – grass competes for nutrients, soil and water, and guess what, over time, grass usually wins!





It isn't a scientific formula; it really is pretty simple, and everyone can take these steps! The chart above reflects outdoor water usage versus what plants really need.

Over-watering wastes our precious water supplies, and we pay big bucks for doing so. Do your landscaping and your pocketbook a favor - get away from outdoor watering daily – your landscape really doesn't need it! Enjoy the benefits from other landscaping options, like California Friendly® or native plants, which offer a variety of beautiful and unique color to your landscaping in a pest-free environment, without the hassle of high maintenance. You can't beat that for an option!



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