



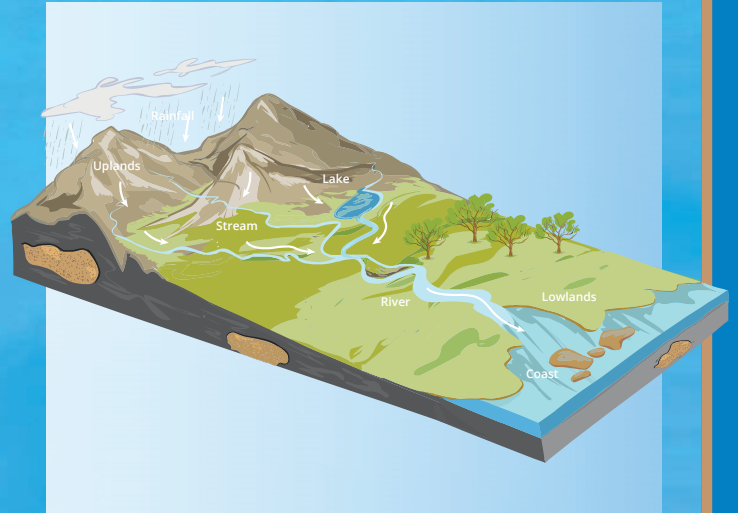
THINK BLUE[®]
SAN DIEGO

San Diego River

WATERSHED

what is a watershed?

Watersheds are land areas that funnel water to a common low point – usually a stream, lake, river or out to the ocean. When it rains, water flows down from areas of higher elevation following the natural shape of the land. Along the way, rainwater and urban runoff collect and deposit trash, sediment, heavy metals, fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants into our local waterways. These pollutants degrade water quality, damage property and harm the health of nearby residents and wildlife. Everyone lives within a watershed, and preventing pollution and contamination from entering our local waterways is everyone's responsibility.



what is a storm drain?

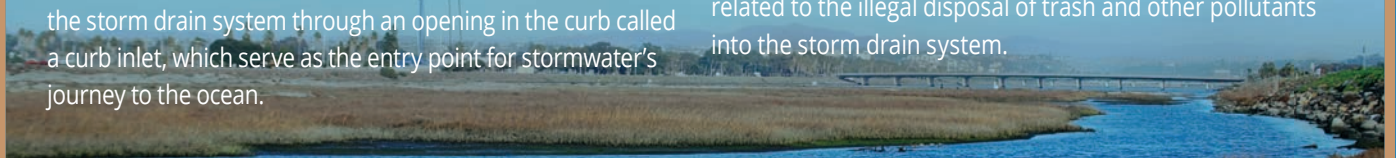


Storm drains collect rain water to help prevent flooding in our communities. The storm drain system includes a vast network of underground pipes and open channels that take water away from streets and other developed areas. Water enters

the storm drain system through an opening in the curb called a curb inlet, which serve as the entry point for stormwater's journey to the ocean.

Water in the storm drain system receives no treatment or filtering and is separate from the sewer system. All water in the storm drain system eventually flows to our rivers, creeks, bays and the ocean – along with the pollutants it carries.

Keeping pollutants out of storm drains helps preserve our environment and improve water quality in the San Diego River Watershed. It can also help you avoid costly fines related to the illegal disposal of trash and other pollutants into the storm drain system.



about

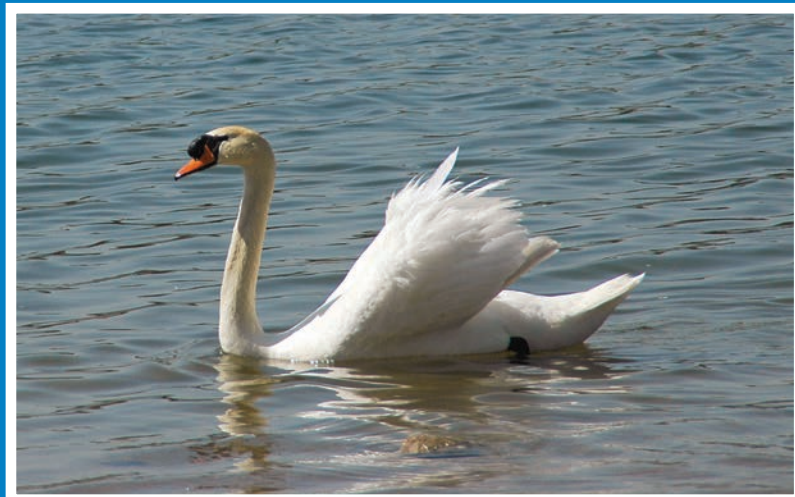
the San Diego River Watershed

The San Diego River Watershed begins near Santa Ysabel in the mountains of east San Diego County and funnels rainwater west to the El Capitan Reservoir, and through Lakeside, Santee and Mission Valley. The river eventually drains into the Pacific Ocean in Ocean Beach.

There are five reservoirs in the San Diego River Watershed supplying water to approximately 760,000 residents in the region. Mission Trails Regional Park, near the middle of the watershed, hosts a broad range of wildlife and provides habitat for a number of threatened and endangered species. The Famosa Slough and river estuary at the western end of the watershed are extremely productive coastal wetlands. Despite its vast area, the river's ecosystem has become

fragile in many places due to encroaching development and alterations of the river's natural course. It remains a very important ecosystem for the Least Bell's Vireo, Southwestern Flycatcher and other sensitive and endangered species.

The San Diego River Watershed encompasses approximately 433 square miles and connects portions of the cities of San Diego, El Cajon, La Mesa, Poway and Santee. The river's historic importance and central place in San Diego have attracted increasing support from community groups. The San Diego River Conservancy and the San Diego River Park Foundation are creating and supporting a new appreciation for the value and importance of our City's central watershed.



San Diego River Watershed



quick facts

Total Square Miles: 433

Total Population: 517,219

Cities in the Watershed:

Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa,
San Diego and Unincorporated
San Diego County

Water Supply Reservoirs:

Cuyamaca, San Vicente, El Capitan,
Lake Jennings and Lake Murray

Important Water Bodies:

San Diego River, Boulder Creek and
Santee Lakes

Major Receiving Water Body:

Pacific Ocean

Land Use Statistics:

Undeveloped = 44%

Open Space/ Recreational = 23%

Residential = 19%

Transportation = 6%

Other (Industrial, Commercial,
Agricultural, Water, Military & Public) = 8%

protect your watershed

Some water pollution problems can be traced to a specific location, such as a pipe or waste disposal site. However, most water quality problems are more difficult to isolate and control since they cannot be traced back to one specific source. Pollution problems like these are everyone's responsibility. The list below includes the most significant types and most likely sources of pollution in the San Diego River Watershed.

Pollutants of Concern

- Bacteria
- Nutrients
- Sediment

Likely Pollutant Sources

- Garbage, litter & debris
- Animal & yard waste
- Landscaping
- Home and garden activities





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To report stormwater pollution in San Diego, call the Think Blue Hotline:

619-527-7500

You can also use the Get It Done app at sandiego.gov/get-it-done.

thinkblue.org

 **ThinkBlueSanDiego**

 **ThinkBlueSD**

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Think Blue Tips

You can help protect the San Diego River Watershed by taking simple steps to prevent pollution:

- Properly dispose of trash and take large items to a landfill or recycling center
- Take household chemicals (paint, motor oil or household cleaners) to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center
- Pick up after your pet and properly dispose of waste in the trash
- Eliminate irrigation runoff – fix broken sprinklers and control over-spray
- Sweep up debris and dirt instead of using a hose to wash it away
- Use fertilizer sparingly – most plants need far less than typically given
- Wash vehicles on your lawn so the ground underneath can absorb the water
- Use pesticide alternatives like beneficial insects or non-toxic/biodegradable products
- Direct wash water onto landscaped areas or collect it using a wet/dry vacuum or mop for disposal into the sewer system
- Never dispose of ANY wastewater in a storm drain

