



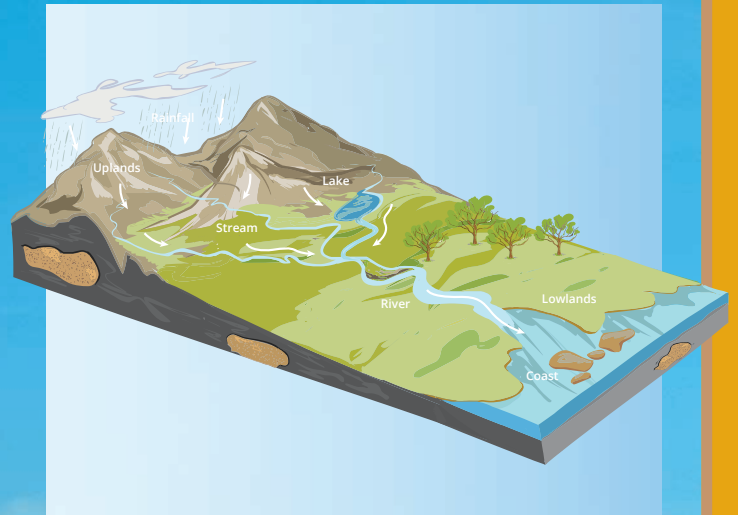
THINK BLUE[®]
SAN DIEGO

Tijuana 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?



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.

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

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 Tijuana 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 Tijuana River Watershed

The Tijuana River watershed encompasses approximately 1,750 square miles on either side of the California–Mexico border. Its water quality is the most severely impacted of any other large watershed in San Diego County. Although more than two-thirds of the watershed lies in Mexico, the river discharges to the Tijuana Estuary and Pacific Ocean on the United States side of the international border. The cities of Imperial Beach and San Diego as well as San Diego County all have portions of their jurisdictions within the watershed. The Mexican cities of Tijuana and Tecate also contribute to the flows. The current population of the entire watershed is approximately 2.8 million people.

The Tijuana River Watershed is classified as an impaired watershed by the State Water Resources Control Board due to a wide variety of water-quality problems. These problems are largely a result of agricultural sources (farmland runoff) in the U.S. and agricultural and non-agricultural sources in

Mexico. The Tijuana Estuary, a National Estuarine Sanctuary, supports a wide variety of endangered plants and animals and is threatened by urban inflows from the Tijuana River. These flows contain high concentrations of coliform bacteria, sediment, trace metals (copper, lead, zinc, chromium, nickel and cadmium), PCBs and other urban, agricultural and industrial pollutants.

In the United States, the Tijuana River watershed has a long network of streams including Pine Valley Creek, Cottonwood Creek and Campo Creek flowing from the foothills of the Laguna Mountains. Barrett Lake and Lake Morena are reservoirs within the watershed and used by the City of San Diego for potable water storage. Lake Rodriguez and El Carrizo Lake are the two reservoirs located in Mexico. As water flows west from these lakes and creeks, it eventually joins with the Tijuana River and enters the Tijuana Estuary where it flows into the Pacific Ocean.



Tijuana Watershed



quick facts

Total Square Miles: 1,750
Total Square Miles in U.S.: 467

Total Population: 2,800,000
Total Population in U.S.: 83,000

Cities in the Watershed:
Imperial Beach, San Diego,
Unincorporated San Diego County,
Tijuana and Tecate

Water Supply Reservoirs:
Barrett Lake, Lake Morena,
Lake Rodriguez and El Carrizo Lake

Important Water Bodies:
Tijuana Estuary, Tijuana River,
Cottonwood Creek, Pine Valley Creek
and Campo Creek

Major Receiving Water Body:
Pacific Ocean

Land Use Statistics in U.S.:
Undeveloped = 60%
Open Space/ Recreational = 27%
Residential = 8%
Roadways & Transportation = 2%
Other (Industrial, Office, Commercial,
Agricultural & Water) = 2%

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 Tijuana River Watershed.

Pollutants of Concern

- Bacteria/Pathogens
- Nutrients
- Pesticides
- Heavy metals

Likely Pollutant Sources

- Sewage overflow
- Garbage, litter & debris
- Animal & yard waste
- Agriculture & construction erosion
- Landscaping
- Home and garden activities
- Streets (car fluids & brake dust)
- Industrial facilities
- Illegal waste disposal



California State Parks





**THINK BLUE®
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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.

Think Blue Tips

You can help protect the Tijuana 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



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