

## PRE-PROPOSAL PROJECT SUMMARY

### 1. Project Name: SAN DIEGO RIVER REVOLVING FUND PROJECT

2. Type of Project     \_\_\_X\_\_\_ Acquisition     \_\_\_\_\_ Planning     \_\_\_\_\_ Restoration/ Enhancement

### 3. Project summary (1-2 sentences -- specify key action(s) to be undertaken):

Provide funds to cover all up-front costs (e.g., appraisals and option agreements) necessary to secure the properties and conservation easements described in the pre-proposal entitled "*San Diego River Acquisitions Project*" dated December 31, 2004. All funds for up-front costs are "re-paid to the Revolving Fund" at the time the remaining funds (for the full acquisition) become available from the "*San Diego River Acquisitions Project*" Grant.

4. Location:

County:	San Diego County
Watershed:	San Diego River
State Senate District (#):	36, 39
State Assembly District (#):	66, 76, 77, 78

5. Acreage:

Total acreage of project area:	Unknown
Acres of existing (pre-project) wetland habitat:	Unknown
Acres of post-project wetland habitat:	Unknown
Feet of stream corridor (if applicable):	Unknown

6. Budget Summary:

Total project cost:	\$15,000,000
Amount requested from WRP <sup>1</sup> :	\$ 9,000,000
Anticipated Matching Funds:	\$ 6,000,000

7. Contact Information:

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### Project Description

The Revolving Fund Project will provide funds to cover all up-front costs necessary to secure the properties and conservation easements described in the pre-proposal entitled "*San Diego River Acquisitions Project*" dated December 31, 2004. Up-front costs typically include appraisals and option agreements as needed to hold the properties. All funds for up-front costs are "re-paid to the Revolving Fund" at the time the remaining funds (for the full acquisition) become available from the "*San Diego River Acquisitions Project*" Grant. Although the Acquisitions Project Grant covers all necessary costs related to acquisition, it is not typically available during the early stages to cover front-end appraisal fees and option agreements. The Revolving Fund facilitates the acquisition by "loaning" the funds needed to secure the property or easement to the purchasing entity.

In addition to achieving the objectives of WRP Regional Strategy and Project Evaluation Criteria, the Revolving Fund project indirectly implements (in part) the stated purposes of the San Diego River Conservancy Act and the Conservancy's upcoming Strategic Plan by ensuring properties identified in the Acquisitions Project are secured. The Revolving Fund project is also consistent with relevant Multiple Species Conservation Plans/Natural Communities Conservation Plans; San Diego's Integrated Regional Water Management Program (currently under development); and numerous existing state and local planning documents.<sup>2</sup>

**Project Evaluation Criteria:** Check all that apply and provide a brief description.

**Ecological Criteria**

- Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems
- Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.
- Recover native habitat and species diversity.

**Policy Criteria**

- Prevent future degradation/loss of wetland resources
- Integrate wetlands recovery with other public objectives.
- Promote education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watersheds.
- Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California.

Facilitation of strategic property acquisitions and conservation easements indirectly protects the San Diego River from its two greatest threats, urban development and hydromodification. If development and hydromodification are prevented (or substantially reduced) through acquisition, the River's coastal wetlands and riparian ecosystems will be preserved and restored, native habitat and species diversity will recover, and future degradation and loss of wetlands will be prevented. The selection criteria specified in the Acquisitions proposal also indirectly ensure that project partners acquire the (available) lands with the greatest potential for promoting education, science, recreation, access, and other public objectives (e.g. protection of municipal water supplies, groundwater recharge, assimilation of pollutants, and flood management etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> When the San Diego River Conservancy Act was signed into law, it created a new State Agency and bestowed upon the San Diego River the special status of a public resource of "statewide significance". The function of a State Conservancy is to focus the authority, policy, and most importantly, the resources of the State of California on a highly valued local resource of statewide significance. Accordingly, most state conservancies received a specific line item allocation in one or more of the recent State Bond Acts (Propositions 12, 13, 40 or 50). However, since the San Diego River Conservancy was not in existence at the time, it did not receive a line item allocation. For this reason, the Acquisitions and supporting Revolving Fund projects represent excellent candidates for Wetlands Recovery Project funding (which is primarily state funding).

<sup>2</sup> The San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan, City of San Diego's Draft River Park Master Plan, County's Draft San Diego River Watershed Plan, Santee's River Park Plan, SANDAG'S Regional Growth Management Plan (WQ Element), Regional Board's Basin Plan and Watershed Management Initiative Chapter, and California's Non-Point Source Plan. This project will also (in part) indirectly facilitate implementation of the San Diego Regional Board's "TMDLs for Bacteria Impaired Waters" and eventually result in the attainment of bacteria water quality standards in the lower reaches of the San Diego River, estuary, and one tributary.