

# SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK SEDIMENT TMDL PROJECT PLAN

**Waterbody:** San Francisquito Creek  
**Pollutant** Siltation/Sediment  
**Beneficial Uses:** Cold freshwater habitat (COLD), fish migration (MIGR), preservation of rare and endangered species (RARE), fish spawning (SPWN), warm freshwater habitat (WARM), and water contact recreation (REC1), noncontact water recreation (REC2)  
**Water Quality Objectives:** Turbidity, sediment, suspended material, and settleable material  
**Receiving Water:** San Francisco Bay  
**Watershed Location:** South Bay/ San Mateo and Santa Clara counties  
**Watershed Area:** 41 square miles  
**TMDL Completion Date:** June 2005  
**Contact Person:** Sandia Potter, phone: (510) 622-2426, e-mail: smp@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov

## Major Milestones, Products and Completion Dates:

Milestone/Product	Fiscal Year	Completion Date
Establish Technical Advisory Committee	01-02	November 2001
Management Measure Analysis	02-03	September 2002
Sediment Assessment and Reduction Plan	02-03	June 2003
Linkage analysis & Numeric targets	03-04	Jan 2004
Preliminary TMDL Project Report	03-04	June 2004
Final TMDL Project Report	04-05	September 2004
Basin Plan Amendment	04-05	June 2005

## Approach:

The San Francisquito Creek TMDL focuses on defining the water quality problems and how they relate to impacts to fish populations. Once the water quality problems and beneficial use impairments are better understood, the TMDL will focus on implementation to correct the impairment.

The primary focus of the San Francisquito Creek TMDL will be to identify physical, chemical, and biological factors influencing the decline of native fish populations. We will conduct studies to explore the role of erosion and sedimentation in the decline in native fish populations and sources of sediment identified. A sediment budget analysis will be undertaken to determine the source and quantity of sediment inputs to the channel and to understand transport of sediment in the stream system.

**Problem Statement.** San Francisquito Creek was listed as impaired by sediment/siltation based

primarily on a decline in native fish populations. The cause of fish population decline is not well understood but elevated sediment is thought to be a primary or secondary cause. Historic land alterations and past or current land uses in the watershed contribute to water quality degradation by increasing erosion, causing direct channel alteration, increasing runoff, and altering riparian habitat and flow. Direct channel alterations in San Francisquito Creek and its tributaries consist of channel relocation, changes in channel geometry, constrictions at bridges and culverts, and small dams and weirs. These changes have resulted in simplification of channel geometry and hydraulic alterations that affect the location of erosion and deposition of sediment in the stream system.

**Source Analysis.** A sediment budget analysis will be conducted to define sediment sources, quantify impacts to aquatic habitat and flood conveyance, and set priorities for sites for erosion control measures.

The sediment budget will quantify and characterize natural and human sources of sediment and describe sediment transport within the watershed. Analysis will include the identification of upslope sediment sources, such as roads, mass wasting, and historic and current land use practices. This study is being funded under Proposition 13 and is scheduled to begin in October 2002 with a final report due in summer 2003. A Technical Advisory Committee has been established and a scope of work has been defined.

#### ***Linkage Analysis /Numeric Targets/***

***Allocations.*** The methodology for conducting a linkage analysis will be based on results of the sediment budget analysis. Numeric targets will be established to determine the amount of pollution reduction required to meet water quality objectives. An allocation plan may be developed based on the results of technical analysis. Allocations may be according to land use type and/or major dischargers, or may require an overall percent reduction of nonpoint source pollution. The linkage analysis and allocations will be prepared after completion of the sediment budget analysis and will be included in the Draft TMDL Project Report.

***Implementation Plan/Monitoring Evaluation.*** The Implementation Plan will be based on the *Plan for California's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program* and will include specific measures to control nonpoint source pollution from public and private land. Existing management measures in each city, town, and county within the watershed will be inventoried and evaluated. Gaps in local regulation of waterways and water quality will be identified. The implementation plan is likely to include measures to protect stream banks, promote shaded aquatic habitat, and reduce sediment in San Francisquito Creek and its tributaries. The implementation plan will identify actions for various parties to undertake to better protect water quality and encourage nonpoint source pollution controls, stream protection, and riparian and wetland restoration and monitoring to determine when management measures are effective. The TMDL

efforts are being coordinated with activities of the Watershed Division, including certifications under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, urban stormwater permits, construction-related National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, and regulation of waste dischargers, including septic systems.

#### **Issues:**

***Funding.*** Securing funding to complete watershed assessment and water quality monitoring in accordance with the overall TMDL schedule remains a challenge.

***Stakeholder Coordination*** We will continue to coordinate the efforts of local stakeholders, such as the Joint Powers Authority, watershed council, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, cities and counties, and major landowners such as Stanford University.

***Land Access.*** We will continue to face the challenges of securing landowner acceptance and land access.

#### **Stakeholder Participation:**

We attend meetings with various stakeholder groups including the San Francisquito Creek Council, the Joint Powers authority, and local permittees. These meetings are attended by a number of local and regional agencies, creek advocates, and landowners. We also participate in the Technical Advisory Committee that is overseeing the Proposition 13 Sediment Source Assessment and Reduction study. Our role is to oversee the TMDL process; provide technical review; facilitate and provide funding; prepare TMDL reports and Basin Plan amendments; and support local watershed efforts to improve water quality and habitat. We also attend meetings of the FishNet 4C (Fishery Network of the Central California Coastal Counties) to coordinate with other federal and state agencies, such as the California Department of Fish and Game and the National Marine Fisheries Service.