

Mr. John Robertus  
February 3, 2009  
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board  
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100  
San Diego, CA 92123-4340

Re: Complaint R9-2005-0265

Dear Mr. Robertus,

The Carlsbad Watershed Network (CWN) is writing in support of the Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) submitted by the City of Escondido in conjunction with The Escondido Creek Conservancy. This project would provide significant water quality benefits to the watershed through the preservation of over 13 acres of riparian and upland habitat on or adjacent to the Escondido Creek.

The Carlsbad Watershed Network was formed by a coalition of non-profit conservancy groups dedicated to the protection of the four Northern San Diego County coastal lagoons and their watersheds. The group of six non-profits convened in 1997 and organized itself through a memorandum of agreement in February 1998. The CWN works collaboratively with the cities and agencies in the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit (CHU) to protect, restore, and enhance the quality and beneficial uses of water, habitats, and other natural resources of the watersheds of the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit and the adjacent coastal shoreline

This SEP would preserve these lands as open space in perpetuity through the use of a conservation easement. CWN recognizes that conservation easements provide on the ground benefits to the watershed through the prevention of future development and related runoff and pollutants. This preventative approach in water quality management is far superior to the historical approach of addressing pollution and sedimentation after it occurs. The natural absorption and filtration services provided by these lands have been proven to be among the most effective storm water management techniques. The scarcity of undeveloped landscapes in this region underscores the importance of preserving these parcels.

The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove area has been recognized as a biologically unique area with some of the last remaining coastal sage scrub in North San Diego County. The preservation of these parcels will provide significant benefits for the watershed, including improved water quality of Escondido Creek and improved habitat for numerous threatened plant and animal species. For all of these reasons, CWN urges you to adopt the proposed SEP.

Sincerely,

Jay Klopfenstein, Current Chairperson

Carlsbad Watershed Network - <http://www.carlsbadwatershednetwork.org>

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