

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Detailed Park Planning History**

With the formation of the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) in June 1989, a vehicle was established that allowed for the comprehensive planning of the river valley with the full and joint cooperation of the six governmental agencies which have jurisdiction over portions of the study area (the Cities of San Diego, Del Mar, Solana Beach, Poway, and Escondido and the County of San Diego). The formation of the JPA as a separate agency provided for a centralized park planning effort, rather than the somewhat piecemeal planning effort that had occurred up until this time. Prior to the establishment of the JPA, individual agencies and individual departments within these agencies had prepared a variety of opportunities and constraints studies and planning documents to address specific segments of the San Dieguito River Park, but a comprehensive planning document had yet to be adopted. Through the efforts of all of these agencies, as well as many dedicated individuals, the JPA was ultimately formed, and a comprehensive planning document, the San Dieguito, River Valley Regional Open Space Park Concept Plan, was prepared.

The park's long planning history began in 1974 with the formation of the San Dieguito Lagoon Committee. This Committee was formed by the City of Del Mar for the purpose of revitalizing and managing the lagoon ecosystem west of I-5. Through the work of the San Dieguito Lagoon Committee with its founding chairperson, Dr. Nancy Weare; the City of Del Mar, under the leadership of then Planning Director William Healy; the Coastal Conservancy; the Coastal Commission; Department of Fish and Game; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, preparation of the San Dieguito Lagoon Resource Enhancement Program was completed in December, 1979. The Lagoon Enhancement Program was subsequently adopted or endorsed by all surrounding jurisdictions including the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, the City of Solana Beach and the City of Del Mar.

The primary purpose of the Lagoon Enhancement Program is to restore and enhance the San Dieguito Lagoon. The initial projects outlined in the Enhancement Program have been completed, and the results of these projects clearly demonstrate that the lagoon and its associated wetland habitats can be successfully restored. In 1987, the program was honored with an "orchid" for environmental design concepts by the Orchids and Onions Committee.

Also in 1979, the City of San Diego adopted its Progress Guide and General Plan, which designated the area of the river valley east of I-5 within the City of San Diego as open space and placed much of the valley east of I-5 within the urban reserve.

The San Dieguito River Study Draft Conceptual Master Plan was prepared by The Pekarek Group in March 1981 for the City of San Diego. This study is described in the plan text as "the first effort in creating a comprehensive land and water use plan for the San Dieguito River Valley," and as such the study focuses on the regional issues of water supply, pollution, flooding, water reclamation and land use. The primary objectives of the study were threefold: 1) to review and coordinate existing information about the study area, which included the 44 miles of the San Dieguito River Valley that extends from the Pacific Ocean in Del Mar to Sutherland

## *APPENDICES*

Reservoir; 2) to identify potential conflicts and impacts among the plans of different governmental agencies within the study area; and 3) to prepare a comprehensive plan which emphasizes the recreational potential of the Lake Hodges area and the use of reclaimed water in the study area. This study ultimately led to the development of the City of San Diego's San Dieguito River Regional Plan.

About the same time that the City of San Diego was preparing the San Dieguito River Study, the County of San Diego was preparing the San Dieguito River Plan. This plan was completed in December 1981 and adopted in concept by the County Board of Supervisors in March 1982. The purpose of the County's plan was to address issues of ultimate jurisdictional boundaries within the planning area, land use controls in the floodplain, continuation of agricultural practices, the use of Lake Hodges reservoir, provision of recreational uses, utility and road crossings of the river, development on steep slopes, and provisions for sand mining in the river valley. It was the County's intent that this plan supplement the adopted San Dieguito Community Plan, and that the County's General Plan be amended to incorporate a number of specific policies related to floodplain management, development on steep slopes, and utility and road crossings of floodplains.

The San Dieguito River Regional Plan, the first comprehensive land and water use plan for a 44-mile segment of the San Dieguito River Valley (from Del Mar to Lake Sutherland), was funded by the City of San Diego Water Utilities Department and prepared by the City Planning Department. The vision of this plan is to preserve those qualities that make the San Dieguito River Valley unique. To achieve this vision, the plan includes the following goals: 1) to preserve the function of the San Dieguito River basin as an open space corridor; 2) to protect and preserve significant natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources, including the integrity of the river basin; 3) insure compatibility between the various land uses; and 4) to preserve water quality and quantity. It was the City of San Diego's intent that this study serve as a guide for both development and conservation programs within the City, and that the goals of this plan be consistent with and complementary to the goals and policies of all jurisdictions that have an interest in the future of the San Dieguito River basin. The San Diego City Council adopted this plan on October 30, 1984.

As a result of the efforts of several concerned individuals, including Lyn Benn, Karen Berger, and Joyce Mattson, the San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, was founded on June 2, 1986. The Conservancy's mission statement calls for the Conservancy to conserve, restore, and enhance the entire San Dieguito River Valley system, including both the wetlands and uplands, for its scenic, open space, and recreational value, as well as for the scientific, historic, and educational opportunities that the area provides. The Conservancy's activities are directed toward supporting the planning efforts within the park through fundraising, acquisition, and education.

On December 22, 1986, the Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley was formed by Alice Goodkind, Poppy DeMarco-Dennis and Dr. Joanna Louis. The Friends is a non-profit 501(c)(4) organization whose purpose is to conserve, restore and enhance the scenic, ecological and open space resources of the river valley system, emphasizing the importance of ecological resources. In addition, the Friends support or oppose projects, private and public, which may affect the river valley.

## *APPENDICES*

Between 1986 and 1987, several committees were established to involve local citizens in the park planning effort. These committees included the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Park Advisory and Review Committee (RVRPARC) founded by San Diego Councilmember Abbe Wolfsheimer in early 1986, and the Upper San Dieguito River Valley (also known as the Santa Fe Valley) Working Group formed in March of 1987 by the County Board of Supervisors at the request of County Supervisor Susan Golding.

In addition to the efforts of these new committees, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3 (C-3) also took an active role in the development of the park. In fact, in April 1987 C-3 called for the creation of a Joint Powers Authority to create a regional open space greenbelt in the San Dieguito River Valley. It was as a result of the strong support from both C-3 and the San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy that SANDAG in June 1987 appointed an interjurisdictional task force known as the San Dieguito Regional Open Space Park Plan Executive Committee. This Committee was formed to ensure a park planning effort that would finally integrate the various park planning efforts of the various jurisdictions into one regional park plan.

The Executive Committee, which held its first meeting in August 1987, was composed of elected officials from the Cities of San Diego, Del Mar, Solana Beach, Escondido, and Poway and the County of San Diego. San Diego City Councilmember Abbe Wolfsheimer and County Supervisor Susan Golding were elected co-chairs of the Executive Committee. In November 1987, the Executive Committee appointed a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAQ) to advise them, and in May 1988, San Diego State University geography professor Philip R. Pryde was named chair of the CAC. The CAC continues to operate as a standing committee of the Joint Powers Authority. The CAC is composed of representatives from interested community planning groups, homeowner associations, property owners, environmental organizations, and other special interest groups.

Further planning for the enhancement of the San Dieguito Lagoon was initiated by the City of Del Mar's San Dieguito Lagoon Committee in 1987, and in 1989 the Conceptual Plan for the Expanded San Dieguito Lagoon Resource Enhancement Program was funded by the City of Del Mar and prepared by the San Dieguito Lagoon Committee and River Valley Committee with consultants The Spurlock Office and James Massey Enterprises. The objective of this plan was to focus on a restored San Dieguito Lagoon and to illustrate established goals for biologic and aesthetic enhancement of this rare and valuable natural resource. This plan was endorsed by the CAC and the Joint Powers Authority in 1989.

In 1988, the City of San Diego Parks & Recreation Department commissioned Estrada Land Planning to prepare a conceptual master plan for the area within the City's jurisdiction and/or ownership. This plan, which was never adopted, provides detailed resource and existing conditions information for the portion of the planning area that extends from the coast in Del Mar eastward to and including the Sutherland Reservoir.

The San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority was officially established as a separate entity in June 1989, and was empowered by its member agencies (the County of San Diego and the Cities of Del Mar, Escondido, Poway, San Diego, and Solana Beach) to acquire, hold, and dispose of property for park purposes; to undertake overall planning for; and to plan, design, improve, operate, manage and maintain the San Dieguito River Valley

## *APPENDICES*

Regional Open Space Park. The JPA is further empowered to establish land use and development standard guidelines for the Park's focused planning area. The goals established by the Joint Powers Authority are as follows:

- To preserve land within the focused planning area of the San Dieguito River Valley as a regional open space greenbelt and park system that protects the natural waterways and the natural and cultural resources and sensitive lands and provides compatible recreational opportunities that do not damage sensitive lands;
- To use public land only for the benefit of the public, and for uses consistent with the goals of the Park; and
- To provide a continuous and coordinated system of preserved lands with a connecting corridor of walking, equestrian, and bicycle trails, spanning the entire river valley from the ocean to the river's source.

Over the years, many citizens have been involved in nurturing the vision of the San Dieguito River Park and their contributions have been invaluable. They include (with apologies to those whose names have been inadvertently omitted) Karen Berger, John Gillies, Bob Sensibaugh, Brooke Eisenberg, Nancy Weare, Ramona Salisbury-Kiltz, Emily Durbin, Alice Goodkind, Bob Long, Opal Trueblood and others too numerous to mention. Their tireless attendance from the earliest days at strategy meetings, drafting and redrafting language for the park's goals and objectives, and their advice on many occasions will be long remembered and deeply appreciated by those who benefit from the San Dieguito River Park. And, last but not least, the San Dieguito River Park would still be only a dream were it not for the leadership of the JPA's first co-chairs, Abbe Wolfsheimer and Susan Golding.

Volunteers have played an essential part in the development of the vision for the Park, and they continue to be intimately involved in the everyday workings of the Park. As a result of the tireless efforts of the Park volunteers, in particular Steve Berneberg and Max Kiltz, an oak grove has been established in the Bernardo Bay area with funding from the Rancho Bernardo Soroptimists, the Highland Valley Road Trail has been completed, trails are being maintained and signs and fences are being built. Through the efforts of the volunteer Speakers Bureau, especially Julie Hamilton and Carolyn Washington, organizations and groups throughout the County are being introduced to the Park. Scouts have cleaned graffiti from rocks in cultural site areas, and built bridges, benches and signs. A volunteer, Chris Donovan, is creating an Education Curriculum to use to reach out to children and their parents through the school system and scouting programs. Volunteer Gene Tandler has assisted JPA staff with office duties and researched historic resources in the Park. The Project Review Committee, chaired by Jan Fuchs, has spent long hours making site visits and reviewing proposed projects for consistency with the Park's goals. The Trails Committee, originally chaired by Peggy Gentry, and later by Max Kiltz, visited almost every part of the FPA on foot, horse or bicycle to document existing trails. These efforts led to the JPA Board's approval in concept of the "Coast to Crest" trail plan, an important step in implementing the JPA and member agencies' goals for the San Dieguito River Park.

Created in part to establish land use goals for the entire river valley, the Joint Powers Authority initiated the preparation of an overall Concept Plan for the focused planning area. The purpose

## *APPENDICES*

of the Concept Plan is to set forth the vision, goals, and objectives of the Park, as well as to establish the overall planning framework for future park development within the focused planning area. The Concept Plan represents the initial component of the planning process. It will be followed by the development of detailed master plans for individual planning areas. These future master plans will propose specific park amenities, establish policies for the restoration, enhancement, and/or preservation of sensitive resources, and address park maintenance and management policies.

The San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Concept Plan has been prepared for the purpose of blending together the concepts of each of the individual agencies, consistent with the goals and objectives adopted by the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Joint Powers Authority. The Spurlock Office, which prepared the preliminary Concept Plan, researched the existing plans and those being developed, conferred with the principal players, and held a number of public workshops in order to obtain a clear understanding of the existing goals and visions for the planning area. Based on this input, as well as the opportunities and constraints information provided in the accompanying Environmental Impact Report, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Joint Powers Authority, and its consultants developed the concepts proposed in this plan. Therefore, it is the Concept Plan that provides the vehicle for tying together all of these past planning efforts; and it is in the Concept Plan that the vision and goals for the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park are at last unified into one, comprehensive document.