

WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM

Fact Sheet

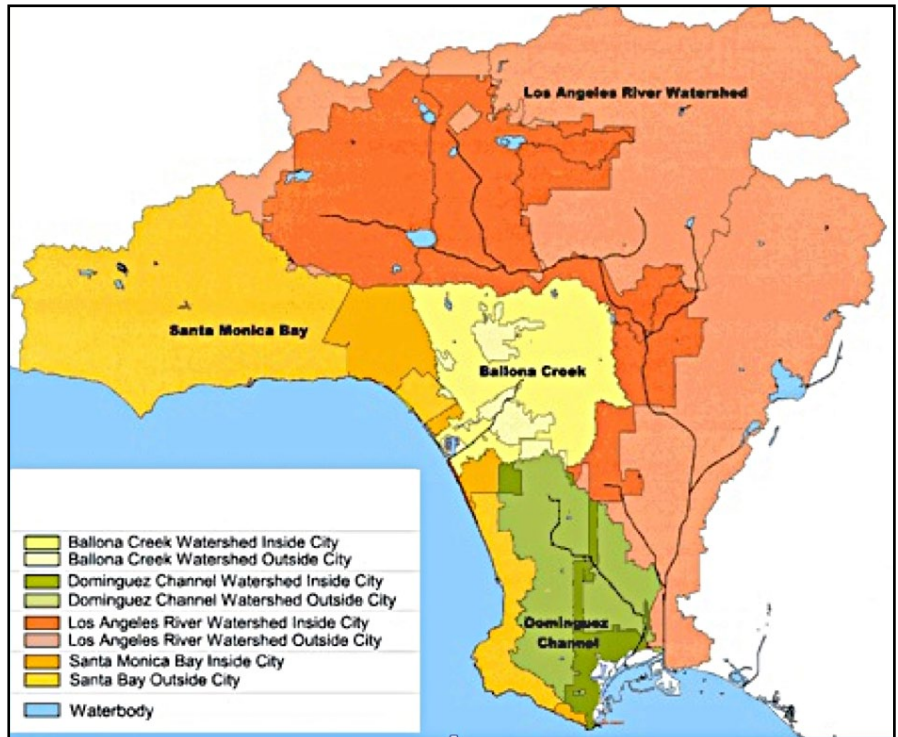
BACKGROUND

The City of Los Angeles is located in four major watersheds: Los Angeles River, Ballona Creek, Dominguez Channel and Santa Monica Bay. The water from these watersheds flows into San Pedro and Santa Monica Bays and then into the Pacific Ocean.

The term “watershed” describes all the land that drains to a common low point. Water moves through both underground and surface drainage pathways that converge into streams and rivers.

Stormwater runoff is the water from rain events that finds its way to the City’s streets, storm drain system, streams and rivers, beaches, wetlands, estuaries, bays and harbors. In Los Angeles, stormwater occurs almost entirely during the wet season. **Dry-weather runoff** is water that flows through the watersheds that is not associated with precipitation. This

includes natural sources such as groundwater seepage and springs and as anthropogenic sources of water such as landscape overwatering, car-washing, treated water from industrial facilities (each requiring a specific permit) and illegal connections to the stormwater system and illegal dumping.



EXISTING FACILITIES/PROGRAMS

The award-winning City of Los Angeles Sanitation (LA SAN) **Watershed Protection Program’s** mission is to protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters while complying with all stormwater management and pollution abatement regulations. It employs a multi-pronged approach utilizing **public education, engineering, enforcement** and **monitoring to ensure Los Angeles’ compliance** with federal, state and local regulations and to reduce the amount of stormwater pollution flowing into and through regional waterways, while providing multi-benefits that will improve water quality, augment water supply, reduce floods, enhance open space and habitats, and provide for climate resiliency, healthy neighborhoods and communities.

The City’s **public education** program utilizes school outreach, targeted point-of-purchase advertising, community events, engaging education materials and online social marketing components to educate Angelenos about the importance of keeping pollutants out of our local creeks, rivers, lakes and beaches.

City **engineers** develop and implement Green Infrastructure projects to capture trash, clean up urban runoff and retain storm water for beneficial uses. Funding from various federal, state and local grants and City voter-approved Proposition O provides for the construction of projects, which includes green streets and alleys, wetlands, local lake restoration, retention/detention, cisterns, rain barrels/rain gardens, rain harvesting and infiltration systems, coastal low-flow diversions and catch basin opening covers.

The City **monitors** urban runoff pollution issues in its four local watersheds. Each year, the program collects thousands of samples from open channels, coastline and the ocean and conducts tens of thousands of analyses to evaluate the impact of pollutants on the City's water bodies. Every day, City crews work to maintain the municipal storm drain system, cleaning annually, on average 100,000 catch basins and removing thousands of tons of trash from the City's municipal storm drain system, which is approximately 1,500 miles in length.

The City **ensures compliance** with mandates outlined in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (or NPDES) Municipal Storm Water Permit (MS4), which includes working with stakeholders in developing and adopting achievable Total Maximum Daily Load (or TMDL) regulations and creating monitoring and implementation plans for adopted TMDLs within the City's four watersheds and impacted water bodies to ensure Los Angeles' compliance. LA SAN, on behalf of the City of Los Angeles, is the MS4 Permit holder charged with the responsibility of complying with the permit provisions.

PLANNED FACILITIES/PROGRAMS

Municipalities, non-governmental organizations and community stakeholders throughout the watersheds in the County of Los Angeles are working collaboratively to develop Enhanced Watershed Management Plans (EWMPs) for each of LA's watersheds. The objectives of the EWMPs are to comply with water quality mandates, improve the quality of our rivers, creeks and beaches, and address current and future regional water supply issues.

LA SAN meets regularly as the lead and participant in five Watershed Management Groups covering the four primary watersheds and as the Marina Del Rey Watershed Management Area (WMA), a subwatershed of the Santa Monica

Bay WMA. Each WMG is developing a EWMP for their specific watershed. Each will identify current and future multi-benefit projects that will improve water quality, promote water conservation, enhance recreational opportunities, manage flood risk, improve local aesthetics, and support public education opportunities. They will include water quality priorities, watershed control measures, reasonable assurance analysis, the scheduling of projects and the monitoring, assessment and adaptive management of projects.

The EWMP process will put into the focus the top water quality priorities

and identify the control measures (Best Management Practices or BMPs) needed to address them. EWMPs will be completed by June 28, 2015 and will be updated every two years based on monitoring data collected and experience gained through BMP implementation.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

- o Enhanced efficiencies of linking planned activities (e.g., LA River Revitalization projects, LADWP stormwater capture projects) and watershed control measures
- o Balancing flow reductions downstream in receiving waters such as the LA River resulting from upstream capture/infiltration to meet EWMP commitments
- o Meeting coordinated commitments with WMG partners

