Carpinteria Creek Watershed Plan
March, 2005

Carpinteria Creek Watershed Plan

March, 2005

By Cachuma Resource Conservation District

& the Carpinteria Creek Watershed Coalition

For the California Department of Fish and Game

This watershed plan was made possible through Grant #P0150016 from the Department of Fish and Game, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the California Coastal Salmonid Recovery Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Carpinteria Creek is 15 square miles of high quality watershed that contributes runoff to a creek system which possesses the highest total habitat value and best restoration potential for endangered steelhead among all South Coast streams. In 2001, Carpinteria Creek Watershed Coalition was organized and began setting goals for the restoration of Carpinteria Creek. A major objective for restoration was the development of this watershed plan.

Historical, geographic and hydrologic characteristics of the watershed are described, based on existing documents and data. The Conception Coast Project provides an inventory of all of the significant steelhead passage barriers in the creek, and relevant portions of their report are included here. A survey of stream habitat conditions has been conducted for the endangered Southern California Steelhead Trout using Fish and Game protocols. Projects, both existing and proposed were inventoried. Water quality monitoring data, both historic, and current has been analyzed in relation to stream health.

Habitat for steelhead is pristine in the upper watershed. From the debris basins down to Highway 101, habitat is good when water is present. Habitat in the lower watershed from Highway 101 down to the ocean habitat is marginal due to poor water quality. In-stream habitat is lacking in the downstream reaches.

Several low-water crossing removal projects are being implemented. Discussions are underway to modify the two debris basins and to replace of pipe and wire revetment with bioengineered bank stabilization measures. A riparian modeling project is underway. Invasive weeds are being inventoried and proposals for eradication are being prepared. Agricultural property owners are preparing water quality management plans for private land in the watershed. The forest service has joined in discussion regarding fire protection for the upper watershed. Water quality monitoring will continue.

The Carpinteria Creek Watershed Coalition is crucial to carrying out all of the projects identified here. In the case of barrier removal projects, the Coalitions role will include organizing funding sources. The on-farm water quality management plans will benefit from the Coalition's education and outreach efforts. Water quality monitoring will be coordinated and reported by the Coalition.

Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES