

2011-2012

INLAND EMPIRE
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

annual
report

INLAND EMPIRE



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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President's Message

The Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD) is a public agency and product of two formerly independent entities, the Inland Empire West and East Valley RCDs. Consolidated in 2005, the IERCD territory encompasses nearly 1,300 square miles across more than 35 cities and unincorporated regions of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The staff includes six employees, and is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors comprised of District landowners appointed by the County of San Bernardino Board of Supervisors. Together, Board and staff work to preserve and enhance the natural resources existing within District boundaries for the benefit of area wildlife, vegetation, and people in accordance with the District's mission of correlating natural habitat health to the quality of life. Work performed in accordance

with this mission includes conservation of open space, restoration of area wildlands, and facilitation of an array of outreach opportunities for the residents of the IERCD service area.

In the 2011-12 reporting period, significant progress was achieved in all areas of IERCD mission and goals, due to the diligence of the District Board and staff. The IERCD's mitigation and easement program continued to expand, with one conservation easement recorded over 53-acres of mixed habitat, two agreements executed for 4.5-acres of enhancement and restoration work, and acceptance of deposit funds to begin performance of preparation tasks on four new pending projects. Non-mitigation restoration and enhancement work was also performed, including over 40-acres of new removal of invasive vegetation combined with maintenance and monitoring over 1,200 acres of previously treated areas. The District's education department continued to perform at its peak, despite being reduced by one part-time position since the previous fiscal year. A total of 24,404 residents were reached with IERCD outreach programming, including 19,704 students in 777 classrooms and an additional 4,700 at 37 community events.

The District will seek continued progress in all aspects of its conservation work in the 2012-13 fiscal year, through refinement of department protocols, information gathering at trainings and conferences, and expansion of partner entities capable of assisting the IERCD in performing critical functions at an increasingly efficient rate. The improved functionality of District wildlands from this work provides countless benefits to all dependent species, and remains the central mission of the IERCD.

District Directors

Paul Williams, President

Cheryl Avent, Vice-President

Tim Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer

Terrie Andrews

Brad Buller

Alison Mathisen

Sybrand Vander-Dussen (Through 2/1/12)

IERCD Staff

Mandy Parkes, District Manager

Katherine Heer, Project Manager

Amy Bonczewski, Education Coordinator

Quinn Cypher, Field Ecologist (Starting 8/1/11)

Katherine Warren, Administrative Assistant

Shari Tindall, Education Assistant

NRCS Staff

Kimberly Lary, District Conservationist

Sarah Ulloa, Soil Conservationist



District Priorities

“TO PROMOTE THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF LIFE”



View of Mill Creek, located on the east end of the District



Great blue heron on the Santa Ana River

In February of 2012, the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District Board of Directors, staff and NRCS partners participated in a strategic planning session to determine collective thought on priority goals, programs and projects in the shared service area. Assisted by a seasoned session facilitator familiar with resource conservation districts, all participants worked through a series of steps toward identifying the issues most critical within the District's 825,000-A boundary.

Following the development of this list of District priorities, meeting attendees created a series of short and long-term task lists for each category, with corresponding staff identified to ensure work completion. All of this information was finalized and compiled into a single strategic plan document to serve as a guide for determination of task importance and timeline for implementation. Progress on these department-specific priorities will be evaluated in the 2013-14 fiscal year, with corresponding revisions made to edit existing and identify new desired tasks to be accomplished in that reporting period. In recognition of the finalization of priority resource concerns for the IERCD, Board and staff have worked to re-structure the format of the annual report. Going forward content will be organized according to these critical areas of focus, as a method for highlighting successes as well as work to be done in the following fiscal year.

1. CONSERVATION EDUCATION & STEWARDS

Goals for the Conservation Education and Stewards Priority Area include specific numerical increases in the number of education programs conducted, the number of people reached by the programming, as well as the number of people engaged in conservation work on an annual basis.

2. NATIVE HABITAT HEALTH

Goals for the Native Habitat Health Priority Area include specific increases in the number of people served, the number of acres treated and the number of acres of native habitat conserved on an annual basis.

3. WATER CONSERVATION & QUALITY

Goals for this priority area include specific increases in both water conserved through targeted partnerships and a rise in total residents reached with the message of the need for water quality and quantity improvement by IERCD education programs on an annual basis.

4. RECYCLING & REUSE

Goals for this priority area include a demonstrated increase in the number of District sponsored clean-up events and the number of businesses reached in the service area with the recycling message.

5. AIR QUALITY

Goals include a demonstrated increase in the number of trees planted by IERCD and corresponding improved air quality on an annual basis.

6. EDUCATION CENTER

Goals for the priority area include the establishment of a list of viable locations for the center, potential partner agencies, and measurable progress toward center realization on an annual basis.

7. FINANCIAL STABILITY

Goals for this priority include a specific increase in the number of grants applied for and received by the District, the number of long-term contracts for service provision and the number of fee-for-service programs and related revenue streams on an annual basis.

Conservation Education & Stewards:

During the 2011-2012 reporting period, the Education Department performed 777 presentations to schools and community groups resulting in approximately 19,704 residents reached by IERCD's conservation message. An additional 4,700 residents were reached at an array of events attended by District staff. Currently, the District offers eight conservation-themed educational programs, with detailed descriptions following below.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY

The Water Use Efficiency program uses an interactive model and trivia game to teach students about origins of local drinking water and use patterns, to provide an overview of water transport throughout the state, and to emphasize the importance of and methods for water use efficiency.

TOIL OF SOIL

The Toil of Soil program uses soil sieves to assist participants in discovering and discussing the components and properties of soil, the way that soil is formed, and its importance for food production and environmental sustainability.

BACKYARD CONSERVATION

The Backyard Conservation program takes students on a tour through the habitat present in individual backyards and neighborhoods, and provides methods for attracting and sustaining local wildlife including the creation of a recycled-materials bird feeder.

STORMWATER POLLUTION

The Stormwater Pollution program teaches students about non-point source (NPS) Pollution through

the use of an interactive Enviroscape® watershed model, where they can see the effects of refuse entering waterways. Students also learn about the water cycle and the local sources that provide water to District residents.

GROWING NATIVE

The Growing Native program emphasizes the importance of protecting and including new California native plants in natural and man-made landscapes. Students participate in an interactive discussion and activity on the benefits to soil, wildlife, and water provided by native plants, followed by planting a take-home native seed of their own.

WONDERS OF WETLANDS

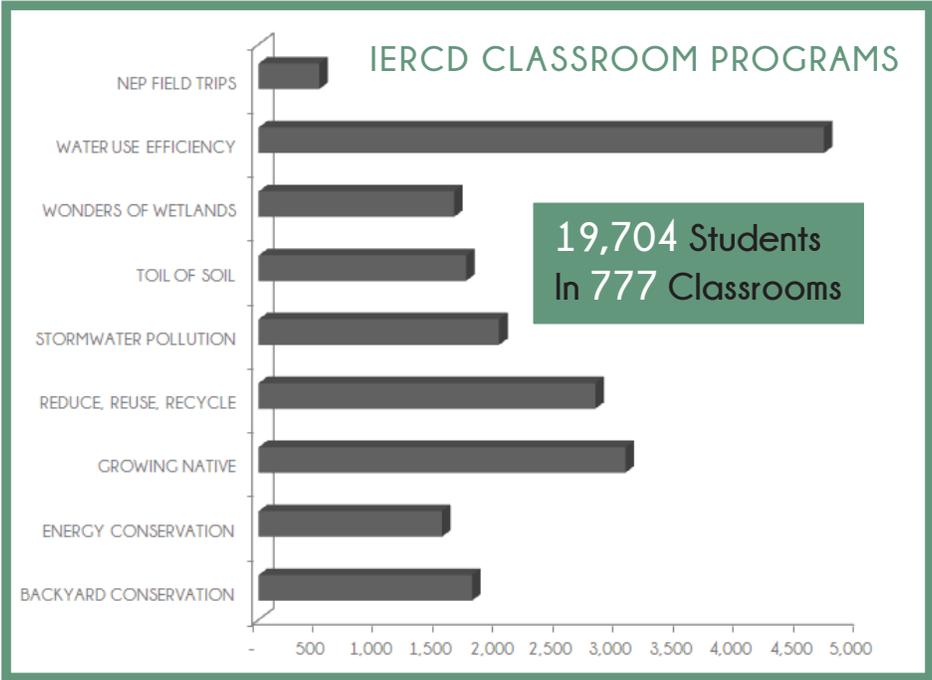
The Wonders of Wetlands program introduces students to the many functions and features of a wetland, including water quality improvement, nesting space, and stopovers for wildlife during migratory journeys.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

The Reduce, Reuse, Recycle program educates students on the wise use of our resources through the implementation of these three very important actions; main program points include reduction in personal refuse generation, the implementation of home recycling programs, and an introduction to composting.

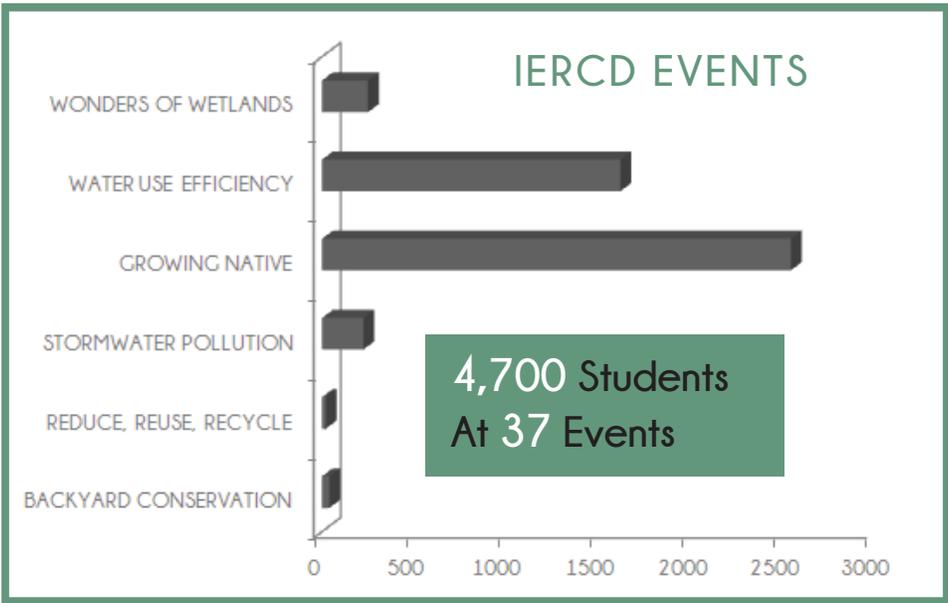
ENERGY CONSERVATION

The Energy Conservation program illustrates sources of residential and commercial energy while highlighting methods of conservation for participating students.



24,404

The Total Number of Students Reached With Classroom Programs, Field Trips & Events in 2011-2012



CAPS

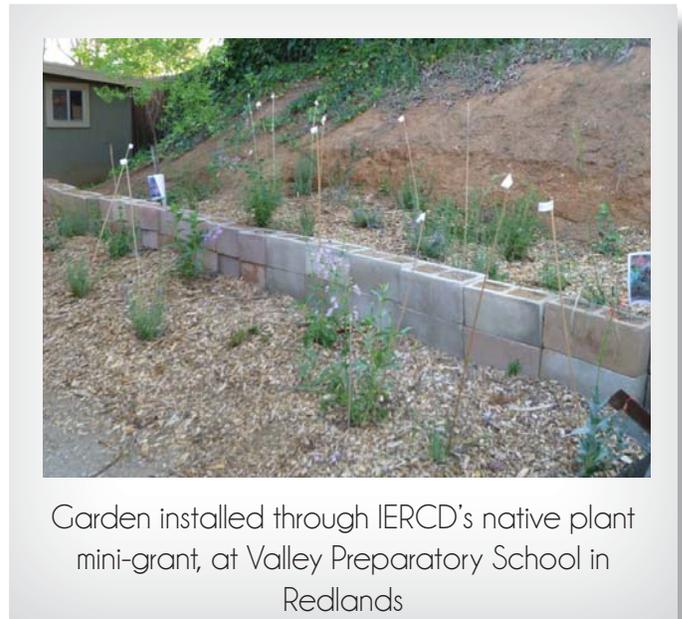
The Creative Before and After School Programs for Success (CAPS) is offered by the San Bernardino City Unified School District, and strives to enhance the academic, social, and emotional development of its participating students. During this reporting period, the IERCD presented 42 environmental education programs to approximately 1,050 students of varying ages on multiple campuses throughout the school district. Vital information regarding topics including water conservation, the value of wetland habitats, and reducing energy consumption was dispersed through the District's involvement with the CAPS programs. Funding for conducting these programs is made possible through a grant from the Sempra Energy Foundation (SEF), the non-profit arm of the southern California energy provider and is further detailed on Page 18 of this document.

CONTAINER GARDENS GRANT

Water Use Efficiency programs assist the IERCD in furthering awareness of the need to conserve water in the Inland Empire. Accordingly, the District is working to increase total number of programs performed annually, and in 2011-12 began offering free resource-efficiency portable gardens to any classroom requesting this particular presentation. The portable gardens include a container, soil and plants, and IERCD educators provided both planting assistance and follow-up programming regarding the need to reduce personal water use. Their promotion in conjunction with water conservation programming stems from their efficient use of water, and the educator's ability to use them to demonstrate the benefits of resource conservation during plant development. The gardens will be available to teachers through the next reporting period until supplies have been exhausted.

NATIVE PLANT GARDEN MINI-GRANT

In recent years, the IERCD has completed installation of individual native plant gardens throughout its service area in cities including Calimesa, Fontana, and San Bernardino. This fiscal year, the District decided to formalize these efforts by establishing a Mini-Grant program for native plant gardens. Applicants can request up to \$250 in plants, mulch, and rock for small native installation projects, and will receive assistance from the District on design, planting, and follow-up care and maintenance. To ensure students understand the ecological significance of these installations, IERCD educators provide presentations on corresponding content in all classrooms planning to participate in garden creation. Multiple applications were received in this reporting period, with installation and program performance scheduled for the 2013-14 fiscal year.



SPEAK-OFF

The 2011 Speak-Off took place on September 29th, at the Mary Vagle Nature Center in the City of Fontana. This is an annual speech competition

for high school students, based on a rotating topic and hosted by resource conservation districts throughout the state of California. The 2011 theme was *“What can resource conservation districts do to help bridge sustainable conservation practices with food safety practices?”* and participating students were evaluated on the content, length, and relevance of their speeches by a panel of four judges. First place winner Ricki Tindall from Citrus Valley High School went on to speak at the regional resource conservation district meeting and then on to the State Speak-Off in Stockton.

previous settlers and indigenous tribes. There is a 3.25-mile loop with interpretive signage detailing the location’s ecological and cultural significance meandering through the site, which serves as the basis for the trips. Students in grades 2nd-12th grade have the option of a short hike, consisting of 1 mile, or a long hike, consisting of the full 3.25 mile loop with standards-correlated activities including a scavenger hunt, gathering GPS data, working with compasses, and/or engaging in seed collection and plant identification. During the reporting period of 2011-2012, the IERCD conducted 9 fieldtrips.



2011 IERCD Speak-Off contestants



Students at the NEP taking part in free field trip opportunities

NORTH ETIWANDA PRESERVE FIELD TRIPS

The IERCD and the San Bernardino County Special Districts Department have partnered to develop a comprehensive field trip program to the North Etiwanda Preserve (NEP), a 1,200-acre in-perpetuity conserved property located in the foothills above the City of Rancho Cucamonga. The NEP is home to the threatened Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub (RAFSS) plant community and rare and/or threatened wildlife species, in addition to relics from

NATIVE PLANT WORKSHOPS

In the 2011-2012 reporting period, the IERCD initiated the presentation of native plant workshops throughout its service area. Five workshops were conducted, consisting of detailed information on the topics of native plant species, benefits of native plants, planting guidelines, process of converting a traditional landscape to native species, and soil structures. All 160 attendees were given informational take-away flyers and brochures to

aid them in their own projects and to assist them in continuing their education on the aforementioned topics. At the culmination of each event, multiple native plant species highlighted in the presentation were raffled off to participants. These presentations provide a great opportunity for District staff to interact with the community as well provide a forum for questions and specialized attention for those who attend.

VALLEY PREP SCHOOL PLANTING DAY

In May, the IERCD sponsored a two-day event focusing on California native plants and water conservation at Valley Preparatory School in Redlands. The District's education department began by presenting on the importance of native plants in the local landscape, methods for saving water, and the connection between this content and the native plant garden to be installed with the help of IERCD staff on their campus the following day. At the end of each presentation the students planted locally-propagated California

poppy seeds to take home, and discussed ideas for personal resource conservation. The next day, the District returned with plants, tools, and staff to assist students in the site prep and plant installation required for garden creation. Banning-based native plant nursery Wild California provided native species including penstemon and blue-eyed grass for planting by Valley Prep's environmental studies elective class, and also provided the school with information on long-term care and maintenance for optimum plant health and garden success.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

In September, the District partnered with the Mary Vagle Nature Center (MVNC) to plan for the annual celebration of National Public Lands Day (NPLD), a nation-wide event highlighting the importance and uses of area public open spaces. The District participates each year through sponsoring a landscaping project on the grounds of the Center, including the 2011 event when volunteers planted Native American food and medicine gardens. The resulting habitats are cared for by Center staff and serves as a demonstration space with which to educate local residents on water-wise landscaping.



Students participating in planting day at Valley Prep School



Volunteers at the 2011 National Public Lands Day Event

IERCD/NRCS OPEN HOUSE

In August of the 2011-2012 fiscal year the IERCD and NRCS held their first joint annual Open House including food, music, IERCD general booths, IERCD educational booths, and NRCS informational displays. To accompany the tables, staff constructed visual aids for the public to view, which included large-scale pictures with written descriptions to illustrate the status and project progress of multiple IERCD projects and programs to attendees. NRCS staffers also had large surveying equipment on display for the visitors to see and experiment with. The event served as a great way for past and present partners of both the IERCD and NRCS to celebrate partnerships within the community. It also gave the Redlands office a chance to show the public where the office is located.

themed campus and community wide event with multiple vendors and explorative seminars free of charge. The IERCD participated in several ways through hosting a “Low Water-Use Yard & Garden” workshop, staffing an informational booth, and leading a tour of the partially District-funded campus water wise garden. The workshop detailed specific information on using drought tolerant and native plant species while also touching on soil type, climate, and troubleshooting common problems, and the booth featured free native seed planting and informational guides for all interested participants. The tour given covered the entirety of the on-site climate-appropriate garden, and highlighted all six regions of the demonstration space as well as the benefits and care needs of native and drought-tolerant plants.



IERCD and NRCS open house displays

ECO-FEST

This spring, the Cal State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) sponsored and hosted its first annual EcoFest, which consisted of an environmentally

BIG BEAR PEBBLE PLAIN

The Big Bear Pebble Plain Wildland Park Committee is a conservation taskforce working towards conservation of the unique pebble plain plant habitat, a rare plant community endemic to Big Bear whose considerable diversity is currently threatened by impacts from development and recreational activities. Various local organizations, including the Big Bear Education Trust, the San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust, the Sierra Club, and the United States Forest Service, are working towards large-scale conservation of functional and restoration of degraded pebble plain acreage, with plans for an eventual onsite learning center. The IERCD is also working directly with the City and USFS to provide protection for this habitat through the creation of mitigation opportunities for pebble plain restoration within Big Bear Valley.

Native Habitat Health:

INVASIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

One of the central IERCD annual goals is the improvement of sustained biological health, both within the District's service area and the surrounding Santa Ana River watershed. Obstacles to the realization of this goal range from compromised soil health to large-scale population growth and corresponding spikes in critical resource demand; however, one of the largest barriers to habitat equilibrium is the presence of aggressive species of invasive vegetation. Primary concerns with such species include the out-competition of native vegetation, the accelerated uptake of available nutrients and water, the failure to provide suitable habitat for local wildlife, and the increased probability of local fire and flood. These species presently affect millions of acres of open space in the State of California, resulting in multiple resource agencies and conservation districts making their eradication a top organizational priority.

Throughout the lifetime of its removal work, the IERCD board and staff have worked diligently to identify acreages of invasive plants located throughout the watershed that need initial treatment, follow-up herbicide treatment, and/or ongoing maintenance. Following this process, the District uses a variety of funding consisting of grant, mitigation, and general IERCD monies, to pay for the initial removal, followed by on-going maintenance of removal areas of target populations. This work has continued through the 2011-12 reporting period, due to the long-lasting benefits from the conversion of areas dominated by non-native plants to naturally occurring, climate-appropriate California native species. The following summaries and tables detail work performed in

invasive vegetation management, made possible by both grants/general District monies and through acquisition of mitigation funds.



San Timoteo Creek enhanced through invasive revegetation management

GENERAL INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL

The IERCD has historically focused its general removal efforts on core invasives considered most problematic in this region including tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), castorbean (*Ricinus communis*), and salt cedar (*Tamarix spp.*); however, the plant most often targeted for eradication has been giant cane (*Arundo donax*). The presence of giant cane in natural systems often compromises water quality, marginalizes the survival of already threatened species, contributes to erosion issues as a result of its impermeable, clumped growth patterns, and transpires water at a rate three times that of native vegetation. The prioritization of *Arundo donax* has resulted in multiple individual population removals, primarily consisting of those in or adjacent to riparian

habitats. Since beginning its removal program, the District has performed the eradication of over 1,050-acres of this species over 14 separate project sites, resulting in a savings of 960 million gallons of water annually. Due to the expiration of the federal funding previously providing the support for these projects, the IERCD has worked with partner agency SAWA to transfer many of these projects to its long-term management program.

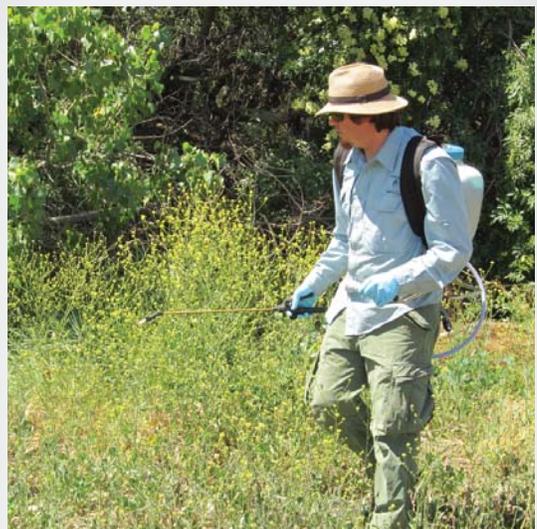
By the 2011-12 fiscal year, the majority of local populations of *Arundo donax* had been removed from the District's service area. For this reason, the board and staff of the IERCD expanded the number of species slated for removal to include additional non-natives proving to be problematic within District boundaries. Additional focal species in this reporting period included perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) and yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), both of which have become increasingly widespread in critical areas of the IERCD service area. The table on the following page summarizes acreages of both active removals as well as former removal areas that are now actively maintained and monitored, funded through grant or IERCD general fund monies.

MITIGATION - FUNDED INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL

The service area maintained by the IERCD is spread over approximately 825,000-acres of property in the Inland Empire, one of the fastest growing regions in the county. Development projects are conducted throughout this area in order to serve this growing number of residents, producing unavoidable and often irreversible impacts to local wildlife, vegetation, and habitat. However, there is a variety of environmental legislation dictating that such impacts must be tempered with the preservation, and/or enhancement of like habitat to ensure continued local biological sustainability,

collectively known as mitigation projects. Their conceptualization, execution, and long-term management are performed by public and private entities such as the IERCD, a special district empowered to manage such projects due to its creation under Division IX of the Public Resources Code.

While mitigation projects can include everything from passive site monitoring to intensive habitat creation, most do involve some degree of enhancement, defined as invasive vegetation management and performed to stabilize and/or increase local biological functionality. All of IERCD's current mitigation assignments have required vegetation management components, ranging from simple population identification and mapping to active removal to ensuring the long-term health of former removal sites. Tasks performed in the 2011-12 reporting period are listed in the following table, organized according to individual mitigation project site. Mitigation-related land conservation and active restoration projects are detailed in Table B.



IERCD field ecologist treating invasive species mustard and yellow starthistle

MITIGATION-FUNDED LONG TERM CONSERVATION

The mitigation-related assignment of in-perpetuity maintenance and monitoring over a conserved property typically falls into one of two categories. The first involves work performed to at least maintain and possibly improve a defined area in its existing natural state, while the second focuses on more active care of one or more created upland, riparian, and/or wetland habitat areas. Tasks associated with the former typically consist of establishment of a baseline condition of the property in Year I of monitoring, followed by performance of annual measures to preserve its condition at the time it is placed into conservation. Created sites often demand increased attention due to the combination of typically foreign soils, plant materials, and considerable artificial irrigation used to establish the required habitat. Current and pending IERCD conserved mitigation properties are summarized in Table A below.



Sensitive Species monitoring as part of mitigation requirements

Table A: Long-Term Conservation Mitigation Projects			
Project	Location	Mitigation Type	Size (A)
Centex Sycamore Heights	Chino Hills	Open Space Preservation	25
Goose Creek	Santa Ana River	Open Space Preservation	53
Joseph Nicholas Homes	Redlands	Created Habitat Preservation	6
ProLogis Logistics	Coopers Creek/ Beaumont	Created Habitat Preservation	8.45
Prologis Ontario	Etiwanda Channel	Created Habitat Preservation	4
Total:			96.45 Acres

MITIGATION-FUNDED ACTIVE RESTORATION

This final category of mitigation assignments requires the completion of active restoration tasks over properties appropriate for placement. It involves the completion of long-term preservation and invasive vegetation removal that defines conservation and enhancement projects as well as revegetation of sites with native plants through irrigation, active maintenance, and long-term site management. In the 2011-12 fiscal year, the IERCD performed significant preparation over each of its project sites where active restoration projects will be placed, with the actual revegetation slated to occur in the next reporting period. Work completed varied depending on the site and included but was not limited to vegetation surveying, soil composition determination, irrigation design, and plant palette creation and contract-growing arrangement with local native plant nurseries. In the 2012-13 reporting period, site preparation will continue through late fall/early winter, when plant installation is scheduled for all District restoration sites.

Table B: IERCD General Invasive Vegetation Management - New Removal				
Common Name	Type	Scientific Name	Location	Size
Castorbean	General	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	San Bernardino	<1 Acre
Tree of heaven	General	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Lytle Creek	<1 Acre
Tree of heaven	Mitigation	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Yucaipa	<1 Acre
Tree of heaven	General	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	San Timoteo Creek	1.3 Acres
Giant cane	Mitigation	<i>Arundo donax</i>	San Bernardino	<1 Acre
Yellow starthistle	Mitigation	<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	San Timoteo Creek	30 Acres
Perennial pepperweed	General	<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	San Timoteo Creek	9 Acres
Castorbean	General	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Lytle Creek	<1 Acre
IERCD General Invasive Vegetation Management - Maintained Former Removal Areas				
Common Name	Type	Scientific Name	Location	Size
Giant cane	General	<i>Arundo donax</i>	East Twin Creek	84 Acres
Giant cane	General	<i>Arundo donax</i>	Upper Santa Ana River, Phase I	300 Acres
Giant cane	General	<i>Arundo donax</i>	Upper Santa Ana River, Phase II	19 Acres
Giant cane	Mitigation	<i>Arundo donax</i>	Devil's Canyon	300 Acres
Tree of heaven, Giant cane, Pampas grass, Salt cedar	Mitigation	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i> , <i>Arundo donax</i> , <i>Cortaderia selloana</i> , <i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Cajon Pass	500 Acres

Table C: Current Active Restoration Mitigations		
Project	Restoration Site	Size (A)
Alabama St. Culvert	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	0.11
Centerpointe	Cienega Property, San Timoteo Creek	1.02
ESRI	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	2.96
Nevada Business Park	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	0.003
ProLogis Logistics	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	0.55
Reach 3B	Oak Valley Property, San Timoteo Creek	2
RCFCD -Day Creek Section VI, Phase II	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	4.1
Riverside Flume	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	1
SoCal Gas - Smith Creek	Cienega Property, San Timoteo Creek	0.42
YVWD - San Tim Outfall	Goose Creek Conservation Easement	0.005
Total:		12.17 Acres

Water Conservation & Quality:

The service area of the Inland Empire RCD is contained within an arid region of southern California, home to a skyrocketing population with a corresponding demand for water. This continued influx of permanent residents combined with rising water needs resulted in water use efficiency mandates handed down by the State of California; as a result, local cities, counties and water agencies were required to facilitate individual ratepayer reduction in personal water usage by 20% by 2020. In response, multiple local water providers began partnering with the IERCD on the facilitation of this outreach, primarily through the performance of Water Use Efficiency classroom programs and participation in conservation-themed community events. The effectiveness of these partnerships was made possible due to the combination of water providers' considerable knowledge and resources, in combination with IERCD's ability to connect with the community to deliver the water conservation message. In the 2011-12 reporting period, the IERCD maintained education/outreach relationships with the following providers:

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT (SBVMWD/VALLEY DISTRICT)

This District is a wholesaler headquartered in the City of San Bernardino, and the entity with which the IERCD has had the longest relationship. Historically the IERCD has performed youth education programs focusing on the role of Valley District in area water provision as well as methods for personal water use reduction; however, in the 2011-12 reporting period, the two agencies expanded their relationship to include development of adult outreach programming and IERCD attendance at outreach events including the Inland Empire Garden

Friendly fairs and the opening of the San Bernardino City community garden. In the 2012-13 fiscal year, the IERCD will begin performance of adult outreach programs in area community facilities in addition to maintenance of current levels of youth presentations and event participation.

YUCAIPA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT (YVWD)

The partnership between the Inland Empire RCD and the YVWD began in 2007, with the introduction of water conservation education programming to schools in the Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District. In addition to these programs, the IERCD partnered with the YVWD on multiple community events including the annual Iris Festival and solar boat races, and has periodically worked with individual schools on special topic presentations. In the 2011-12 fiscal year, the education department continued performing programs in YVWD's service area, and introduced two mini-grant programs for schools in the YCJUSD; these gave teachers the opportunity to receive a water-wise container garden with plants, or the opportunity to vegetate a small area of the campus with native plants in exchange for requesting a water use efficiency program.

CITY OF SAN BERNARDINO

In 2011, the IERCD received a request from the City of San Bernardino's Municipal Water Department, to initiate steps for the establishment of contracted water use efficiency programs to area schools on behalf of this Department. A contract was signed in January of 2012 requesting performance of 100 programs over the next 12 months, and the IERCD education department has been prioritizing these presentations since then, for a total of 35 programs

performed through the end of this fiscal year. In addition to programs, the IERCD also worked with the Department on outreach events including a City-wide water conservation calendar contest which generated hundreds of entries and will be an annual event going forward from 2011-12.

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SBVWCD)

In the 2011-12 reporting year, the IERCD and San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (SBVWCD) began working on a number of potential collaborative projects, primarily the performance of IERCD environmental education programming within the service area of the water conservation district. A potential contract was created and in the 2012-13 fiscal year, the IERCD expects this partnership will move forward into contract execution and subsequent performance of programs within the joint service areas of the two entities.

HIGH VALLEYS WATER DISTRICT

In August of 2011, the IERCD was invited by local native plant nursery Wild California to participate in the installation of a water-wise demonstration garden on the property of the High Valleys Water District in the Twin Pines region of Riverside County. Working with Alliance for Youth Employment Skills (AYES), the IERCD provided funding for plant materials for the garden. The resulting space is comprised entirely of native plants with intermittent rock features, and remains accessible for study by all residents interested in conversion of landscaping into climate-appropriate California native plants.

Water quality is another essential component of this priority area, and is addressed both in some of the content of the Water Use Efficiency and Stormwater Pollution education programs. This latter classroom

presentation involves the use of a 3-D model to illustrate the relationship between the connectivity of water and the spread of non-point source pollution in our watershed. This priority area calls for increases in total residents reached with the water quality message, and in the 2011-12 fiscal year, 80 Stormwater Pollution programs were performed to approximately 2,000 students. IERCD educators plan to meet or exceed this number in the coming fiscal year, through classroom presentations and program implementation at area community events.



City of San Bernardino poster contest winner with his sponsoring teacher



Grand opening of the San Bernardino City community garden

Recycling & Reuse:

OFFICE PROCEDURES UPDATE

In the 2011-12 reporting year, the IERCD revised its already environmentally conscious office standards to include detailed methodologies and practices in the Board-approved District Procedure and Policy Manual. These official policies include specific procedures on IERCD business goals, recycling, waste management, water use, paper use, energy conservation, purchasing, meeting planning, transportation, and the indoor environment of the office. Observation of these updated policies began immediately after adoption in July of 2011.

As part of the new IERCD green policies and initiatives, District staff participated in an extensive in-office recycling training program. Experts from the City of Highland came into the office to first perform an office recycling audit and second to both train staff thoroughly on proper office recycling practices and to enhance current IERCD Recycling education program content.

RRR CLASSROOM PROGRAMS

The IERCD Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) education program demonstrates methods of reduction of trash entering landfills through item reuse and recycling. In order to improve the recycling message that is being delivered during this last reporting year, educators tailored the RRR program for each specific community in the District. This was in response to the fact that different communities have different recycling standards and vary across the District's service area. Educators ensure that students know exactly what items can and cannot be recycled in their own communities. Educators performed 112 RRR programs to 2,800 students in this reporting period.

CA RESOURCE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION CHAPTER MEETING

In August of 2011, the IERCD district manager and education coordinator presented to members of the Inland Empire chapter of the California Resource Recovery Association. Along with other presenters, the IERCD highlighted District educational opportunities for inclusion of reducing/recycling content into regular classroom programming. IERCD staff demonstrated their "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" program for event attendees, and handed out packets of corresponding content including state standards-correlated lesson plans and pre/post program content to ensure student comprehension of lessons. Interested attendees that followed up on potential partnering with IERCD for provision of RRR services included the City of Ontario and County of San Bernardino.



Paper making as part of the RRR education program

Air Quality:

Many of IERCD's service area cities and counties are subjected to poor air quality as their position in the San Bernardino Valley often exposes them to pollution condensed against the mountains. With more residents projected to move to southern California in the next 50 years, the IERCD has identified air quality as critical for overall environ health, making it another critical District priority. In response, staff began developing content for an air quality-focused environmental education programs to add to the IERCD's current conservation presentation repertoire. The majority of the work performed in the 2011-2012 reporting period involved research and content/Science Standards for California Public Schools correlation, with the program slated to hit classrooms in January of 2013.

In a further effort to address air quality, IERCD applied for and was subsequently awarded a \$500 grant from the California Forest Foundation in September of 2011. The purpose of the grant was for the IERCD to plant trees on campuses in economically disadvantaged areas, met by the District through planting events in the 2011-2012 reporting period in the communities of Bloomington, Colton, Fontana, Jurupa, and San Bernardino. These tree plantings have evolved into significant school events, with multiple classrooms participating and IERCD staffers delivering both pre and post-event content to underscore the significance of the addition of the native tree to various campuses visited in the course of carrying out the grant's mission. The education department will continue to plant more trees in the 2012-2013 reporting period.



Student recipients of the California Forest Foundation Grant

Education Center:

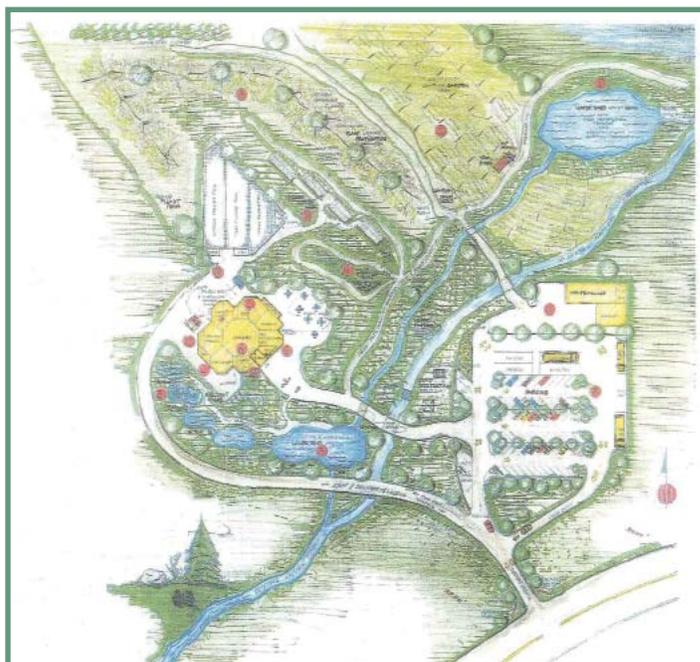
The Inland Empire Resource Conservation District is a public agency, and accordingly portions of the preservation, restoration, and outreach work performed to improve habitat stability within its boundaries are funded by San Bernardino County property tax dollars. As recipients of public monies, District board and staff are always working to increase their efficiency by streamlining operations and by partnering with other entities to reduce operational costs. In addition to these measures, in 2011-2012, District board and staff sought opportunities for development of an IERCD environmental education center emphasizing on-site resident services. When achieved, this facility will allow the IERCD to develop on-site public education programs and provide a central location for performance of education programming within the District's large service area. Both of these outcomes will reduce IERCD program facilitation costs while continuing to provide area residents with a growing repertoire of conservation, education, and lands rehabilitation services.

Prior to beginning the search for a site, the board and staff of the District worked together to develop goals for a future center including potential partners, building layout with "green" elements, desired timeline for implementation, and the need to remain located in the center of its service area. Following the conceptualization of desired building features, the IERCD's Environmental Education Center Committee discussed multiple potential sites and toured three of them; however, at this time, potential sites are still being researched and reviewed for consistency with IERCD Committee goals. The District will continue to seek opportunities for development of environmental education center locations in the next reporting period, primarily through a planned Board workshop and series of district manager

outreach presentations to potential partners. The considerable projected resident benefits will keep this task on the IERCD list of goals going forward through the 2012-13 fiscal year.

“Children are born naturalists. They explore the world with all of their senses, experiment in the environment, and communicate their discoveries to those around them.”

-Audobon Preschool



Financial Stability:

During the most recent IERCD strategic planning session, board and staff worked with a facilitator to determine the most critical areas within the District's overall mission on which to focus project work. The resulting six areas are discussed in Section I of this report and include Conservation Education and Stewards; Native Habitat Health; Water Conservation and Quality; Recycling and Reuse; Air Quality; and an Environmental Education Center. In addition to these identified priorities, the IERCD board and staff also established the need to maximize financial stability in each of these six areas of project work. Continuation of existing and development of new opportunities for prudent financial management will help to ensure long-term District sustainability without compromising its ability to perform critical conservation, restoration, and outreach work within its service area.

The IERCD employs a variety of methods for working toward long-term District financial self-sufficiency. These primarily consist of grant research, acquisition, and management, development of billable projects, and partner agency contribution trades, in addition to ongoing responsible funds management through cautious investment and budgeting, as well as conservative organization growth.

GRANTS

District and project management staff regularly work to research grant opportunities, both for sole IERCD projects as well as those in partnership with cities, other public agencies, and area non-profits. Once secured, funding requirements are internalized by appropriate staff for the purposes of adherence to standards and intention associated with individual

grants. In the 2011-12 fiscal year, the IERCD managed the following grant programs:

FEDERAL EARMARK FUNDING

Between reporting years 2003 and 2006, the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District received two separate federal grants supported by 41st District Congressman Jerry Lewis for the purposes of conducting conservation, restoration, education and outreach in the Santa Ana Watershed. The broad requirements of this money allowed the District to use the funds for a variety of work projected to have the largest impact on the IERCD service area and surrounding watershed. Key programs funded by these monies included the removal of invasive vegetation and replanting of native species, the performance of environmental education presentations to area residents and attendance at community events, the promotion of water conservation, and the long-term preservation of open spaces and wildlife corridors, among others. As a result of these tasks, multiple populations of non-native plants were eradicated and monitored including 1,057-acres of the highly invasive and water-using *Arundo donax*; 380,000 pounds of trash, recyclables, and greenwaste were removed from natural lands and routed to appropriate collection facilities; and an average of 11,000 students were reached with District programs including over 18,000 in over 800 classrooms in reporting years 2010-11 and 2011-12.

The work made possible by the provision of this grant funding has contributed to the increase in functionality of habitat and dependent environs within the IERCD service area. The expiration of

this grant money in the 2011-12 reporting period will have an impact on scale of future potential District projects; however, the work it has funded has created a foundation of biological sustainability which has and will continue to positively affect the Santa Ana River Watershed in its entirety.

HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND GRANT

In 2009, the IERCD partnered with the County of San Bernardino Special Districts Department to submit an application for Habitat Conservation Fund monies for the development and performance of outdoor education programs at the North Etiwanda Preserve (NEP). A total of \$100,000 was awarded in July of 2009 in addition to matching dollars from IERCD and SDD, and provided funds for conceptualization and performance of presentations focusing on the biological and cultural significance of the Preserve. The monies covered costs for staff time, travel, and materials associated with program development. 2010 marked conduction of the first "pilot" programs at the NEP for students ranging from 1st through 9th grades, with solicitation of feedback and subsequent content refinement taking place since then. Since these first outings, the IERCD education department has improved facilitation of the program through on-site training, partner meetings, and creation of a suite of pre and post-program content for concept introduction and reinforcement.

The Habitat Conservation Fund grant is for five years of program performance, during which time the IERCD hopes to continue improving both the structure of the presentation as well as further development of transportation opportunities to allow more students to participate. The monies have allowed the District to considerably expand performance of its environmental education programs to a larger audience in an entirely new venue, while at the same

time avoiding excessive general fund expense.

SEMPRA ENERGY GRANT

In 2008, the IERCD worked with partner agency the Santa Ana Watershed Association to submit a grant application to secure funds from Sempra for the performance of environmental education programs in an extremely disadvantaged portion of the IERCD service area. A total of \$25,000 was awarded for this work, and has been used to fund these programs which would otherwise be paid for out of the District's general fund. Topics presented include everything from Water-Use Efficiency to the Native Grow program, and will continue to be performed uninterrupted through at least the lifetime of the grant funding.

The continued application and receipt of grant monies will not only provide for ongoing performance of IERCD environmental education presentations, it will also allow for general fund monies to be banked for long-term organizational stability. For this reason, District staff will continue management of current grants, while also focusing on the research and acquisition of future funds.

DEVELOPMENT OF BILLABLE PROJECTS

In addition to grant monies, the IERCD board and staff also spend considerable time in development of other sources of funding for performance of District education and outreach programs. One of the primary methods of billable program development has been the creation of partnerships with multiple area water providers. These relationships are mutually beneficial as the District receives financial support for its education programs, while the providers benefit from performance of state-mandated outreach on their behalf. Once a formal agreement has been reached, the IERCD performs

water education programs to constituents within individual water provider service areas, focusing on that providers' role in water provision and conservation encouragement, and empowering audiences to begin new or increase current resource use efficiency. Water provider partners include:

- ◎ The City of San Bernardino: Youth Programs
- ◎ The San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD): Youth and Adult Programs
- ◎ The San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District: Youth Programs
- ◎ The Yucaipa Valley Water District: Youth Programs

In addition to current contracts, District staff are continually working to develop additional billable opportunities, including seeking out those available for funding additional IERCD content including "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." As with grant monies, long-term funding from billable programs will provide support for the District in continuing presentation performance while carefully managing its share of public dollars.

PARTNER AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS

One of the most critical sources of IERCD financial stability is its ever-expanding network of partner agencies willing to trade in-kind support services with the District to ensure efficient achievement of respective agency goals. The board and staff of the IERCD work to maintain existing and develop new relationships with multiple entities ranging from federal, state, and local government agencies as well as non-profit organizations and occasionally private firms. Services provided from one entity to another range from administrative support, biological tasks such as sensitive species determination

surveying and habitat restoration consultation, and assistance with public outreach and education events. Core District support partners include but are not limited to the United States Forest Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the counties of San Bernardino and Riverside, multiple service area cities and public agencies, and non-profits including the Redlands and Riverside Land Conservancies and perhaps most critical, the Santa Ana Watershed Association.



Students from the Lytle Creek Conservation Club at a CAPS program



Seed collection during a NEP field trip

2011-2012 Financial Summary*

STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2012

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$3,736,280
Due from Other Governments	13,125
Interest Receivable	4,494
Taxes Receivable	121,969
Prepaid Expenditures	21,519
Restricted Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,390,982
Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	721,731
Total Assets	7,010,100

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	11,480
Deposits	22,497
Unearned Revenue	3,043
Compensated Absences payable	11,416
Total Liabilities	48,436

NET ASSETS

Invested in Capital Assets	721,731
Restricted for Mitigation Projects	1,476,155
Restricted for Easement Expenditures	914,827
Unrestricted	3,848,951
Total Net Assets	\$6,961,664

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2012

PROGRAM EXPENSES

Salaries and Benefits	\$354,669
Services and Supplies	380,540
Depreciation	7,946
Total Program Expenses	743,155

PROGRAM REVENUES

SAWA Projects	145,546
State Assistance	500
Federal Assistance	105,699
Mitigation Funds	330,533
Contributions from Private Sources-	223,000
Land Easement	
Total Program Revenues	805,278
Net Program Revenue (expense)	62,123

GENERAL REVENUES

Property Taxes	770,893
Investment Earnings	18,838
Other	104,219
Total General Revenues	893,950
Change in Net Assets	956,073
Net Assets- Beginning, as Restated	6,005,591
Net Assets- Ending	\$6,961,664

*These numbers are derived from audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2012 and are not a complete presentation in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. A complete audited financial statement is available upon request.

District Partners

THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

The District's central partner is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a federal agency and division of the USDA, with which IERCD shares an office. The Service employs a variety of technical and administrative staff including engineers, soil scientists, and archeologists, four of whom are stationed at the Redlands Field Office and partner with IERCD on public education seminars, landowner erosion assessments and mitigation project management.

The SANTA ANA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION (SAWA)

The Santa Ana Watershed Association (SAWA) is a non-profit organization working to improve biological health within its 2,800 square mile Santa Ana River Watershed service area. The District is one of five SAWA member agencies including three other RCDs and the Orange County Water District; accordingly, the IERCD often partners with SAWA on various conservation projects within their shared boundaries. Typical mutual efforts involve invasive vegetation eradication, sensitive species monitoring, and public education projects; by combining resources, both entities maximize biological benefit of these tasks while ensuring efficient financial management.

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME (CDFG)

One of IERCD's critical lands management partners is the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the State of California entity charged with the protection of streambed/bank and adjacent habitats and associated environs. CDFG assigns mitigation responsibilities in association with development-related impacts to natural habitat,

with the IERCD facilitating many of these projects within the District's service area boundaries. In this reporting period the IERCD continued monitoring of areas over which CDFG-requested invasive species eradication work has taken place, and is also working with Department environmental scientists on further refining the District's restoration program.

THE REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY (RCA)

The Regional Conservation Authority of Western Riverside County (RCA) is a Riverside County entity established to execute and manage the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) over the entirety of their service area. Part of this management involves purchasing and/or managing open spaces within the County including the Oak Valley property in San Timoteo Canyon over which IERCD is placing restoration projects. In the 2011-12 reporting period, the District worked extensively with RCA to plan for the site preparation and planting required for full restoration of degraded portions of the property, with actual implementation scheduled for next fiscal year. In addition to this work, the District and Authority have also partnered on invasive vegetation removal projects and on securing properties for inclusion in the MSHCP management plan.

THE RIVERSIDE LAND CONSERVANCY (RLC)

The Riverside Land Conservancy (RLC) is a nonprofit land management and conservation entity with holdings in multiple counties throughout southern California. IERCD and RLC have collaborated on invasive vegetation removal and public outreach and education projects. In the most recent reporting period, the Conservancy has allowed for placement of pending District mitigation projects onto its San

Timoteo Canyon Cienega property. Preparation for restoration work including extensive perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) removal has taken place in this fiscal year, with additional active restoration tasks slated for 2012-13.

WILD CALIFORNIA/ ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SKILLS (AYES)

This new partner of IERCD is located in Banning and is split into two separate entities, consisting of first a nursery working to develop native stock inventory at their expanding facility in Dysart Park. The other half of the organization is the Alliance for Youth Employment Skills (AYES), an entity that works with a local population of developmentally disabled youth on a variety of restoration projects. The IERCD has worked with Wild California on multiple lands management and public outreach and education events, and has worked with AYES on the creation of a water-wise native plant garden at the High Valleys Water District facility in the Twin Pines area of Riverside County. District partnering with Wild California is expected to increase in the next fiscal year, with the organization planning to provide much of the stock for the planned restoration work the IERCD will be carrying out on multiple properties in its service area.

THE REDLANDS CONSERVANCY

The Redlands Conservancy is a non-profit organization serving the historical, cultural and biological preservation needs of the City of Redlands through education, land conservation and promotion of public outdoor spaces and trails. IERCD and the Conservancy have historically partnered on annual public outreach events including the Trails at 10 Series, Kid's Day at Oakmont Park and the Emerald Jubilee. In the 2011-12 reporting period, the two organizations also worked together on the management of biological

resources within the Conservancy's conservation easement-encumbered property in San Timoteo Canyon.

THE MARY VAGLE NATURE CENTER (MVNC)

The Mary Vagle Nature Center (MVNC) is an environmental education facility located in the City of Fontana featuring native plant gardens, native and exotic animals on-site, and a series of youth and family conservation events and outreach programs. IERCD and the MVNC partner on a number of these, including the annual Arbor Day festival, summer environmental education camps and the development of an indoor/outdoor elementary school education program. The IERCD has assisted the MVNC with a series of sod conversion projects in conjunction with the Center's annual National Public Lands Day celebration; conversely, the Center assists the District with staff time and a venue for IERCD environmental education programming needs.

THE GROVE SCHOOL

The Grove School is a public charter school in the Redlands Unified School District that emphasizes hands-on learning through student participation in work required to operate a semi-active farm in southwest Redlands. The IERCD has collaborated on multiple levels with Grove School staff and students in this reporting period. Work has included the creation of a native plant nursery to propagate species for future restoration projects, built and maintained with participation from both entities. IERCD educators have also performed multiple educational programs on campus and off-site at the North Etiwanda Preserve. A series of trips highlighting restoration work in the nearby San Timoteo Creek are planned for Grove school student participation in the 2012-13 reporting period to further illustrate the importance of native plants for all participants.



INLAND EMPIRE



RESOURCE

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Additional Information is available by request or online at:

* 25864-K Business Center Drive, Redlands, Ca 92374 * (909) 799-7407 * www.iercd.org *

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