



Stream Protection and Watershed Enhancement: Framework and Guiding Principles

October 1, 2013

- 1. Landowners will receive increased support** through improved education and assistance.
 - a. Retain an Outreach Coordinator who will provide public information through written materials, workshops and informational meeting about creek care issues important to landowners and serve as an ombudsman to assist landowners with permitting.
 - b. Complement and coordinate with ongoing efforts of the Marin Watershed Program and MCSTOPPP.
- 2. Stream Conservation Area is a special permit zone** that is important to watershed protection and requires low impact development. The SCA should incorporate a broad set of techniques to protect and enhance stream and riparian resources.
 - a. Account for the latest science: watershed planning, studies, map and information resources, and technology.
 - b. Complement other related regulations: State of CA Phase II stormwater, Native Tree Protection Ordinance, Anadromous Fish Stream Ordinance, Creek Permit, drainage setback, etc.
- 2. Headwaters are distinct** and will be the subject of additional scientific analysis. Any subsequent County Code or Countywide Plan amendments relating to ephemeral streams will recognize their unique function, characteristics, and vulnerabilities.
 - a. Critically evaluate the definition of ephemeral streams as well as current policies, practices and regulations to identify opportunities for protection of ephemeral stream functions.
 - b. Techniques for headwaters protection may differ from those applicable to perennial and intermittent streams but should be coordinated with existing permit procedures and best practices to the extent feasible.
- 3. Implement Program BIO-4.b Reevaluate SCA Boundaries** in the City-Centered Corridor and smaller parcels.
 - a. Review existing science including local watershed information and literature supporting standards to protect streams and regulate development.
 - b. Assess the effectiveness of current County standards. Consider stream functions on a watershed-level basis, including input from professionals such as a fluvial geomorphologist, hydrologist, wildlife biologist and vegetation ecologist, together with resource agencies and interested members of the public.

Guiding Principles:

- Future actions should contribute to the overall improvement of the watershed.
- Expand available tools for watershed stewardship, including education and incentives.
- Recognize the distinction between historic neighborhoods with smaller developed lots and those areas of the county with larger lots or vacant parcels.
- Achieve consistency and avoid redundancy with existing regulations.
- Support public and private investments that protect habitat and improve watershed health.
- The Countywide Plan establishes policy objectives while regulatory details are best suited to County Code.
- Avoid ambiguity and eliminate inconsistencies.