



# Alhambra Watershed Council Goals 2017

This document was developed by the Alhambra Watershed Council in a collaborative effort and reflects the Council's watershed goals, possible actions to achieve the goals, and potential hurdles that may need to be overcome.

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### WATERSHED GOALS

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- 1 Reduce flood damage and conserve stormwater.
- 2 Prevent excessive erosion, conserve soil resources, and protect property.
- 3 Explore appropriate fire regime for a healthy watershed.
- 4 Protect and improve water quality.
- 5 Encourage coordination of City and County general and specific plans using the watershed as a planning unit.
- 6 Support economically and environmentally sustainable land uses, while recognizing private property rights.
- 7 Promote a sense of watershed community.
- 8 Maintain and restore fish and wildlife habitat and native plant communities.
- 9 Maintain and enhance the quality of life by providing increased opportunities to appreciate and enjoy watershed resources.

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#### Alhambra Watershed Council (AWC) Mission Statement:

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1	Reduce flood damage and conserve stormwater.	Provide flood protection, increase groundwater recharge and summer flows, improve riparian habitat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage City to join the Community Rating System, and achieve a rating of 6.</li> <li>• Encourage land uses that decrease the amount of impervious surfaces.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of low impact development in the watershed by both public and private entities.</li> <li>• Establish drainage plan to manage flood flows from the Franklin Hills and other similar areas.</li> <li>• Establish plans to manage overflows of flood waters from the creek.</li> <li>• Improve interactions with/and between public agencies to address local flooding issues.</li> <li>• Promote the watershed as the planning area for analyzing flooding and water conservation issues.</li> <li>• Purchase a floodway corridor for creek capacity and enhancement.</li> <li>• Reduce rate and volume of runoff.</li> <li>• Reestablish floodplains and restore proper functioning condition to creeks.</li> <li>• Work with the City to determine the impact of sea level rise on community flooding.</li> <li>• Support economically and environmentally sustainable land uses, while recognizing private property rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of how runoff functions in the hydrological cycle.</li> <li>• Development, esp. paved (impervious) surfaces, and building in flood plain make flooding worse.</li> <li>• Traditional flood control practices and structures (culverts; straight, narrow concrete channels) may exacerbate flooding downstream of the structures.</li> </ul>

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2	Prevent excessive erosion, conserve soil resources, and protect property.	Conserve fertile and abundant soil resources, while reducing sediment into waterways, and protecting property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to remedy erosion and sediment problems from identified sources.</li> <li>• Develop a sediment resource study to identify and assess areas of excessive erosion and sources of sediment. Determine baseline rate.</li> <li>• Minimize erosion and property loss from creekside residences.</li> <li>• Minimize erosion and sediment load from construction activities.</li> <li>• Minimize soil loss from orchards, vineyards, and ranches.</li> <li>• Promote and implement erosion and sediment reduction methods and projects. Use these projects to provide information to the public about erosion and sediment reduction.</li> <li>• Reduce erosion of creek banks in the watershed.</li> <li>• Reduce shoreline erosion along the Martinez shoreline.</li> <li>• Use a systems approach to restoration, using techniques based on hydrogeomorphology and adaptive management.</li> <li>• Work with land managers/owners in upper watershed to develop grazing management plans to reduce sediment production.</li> <li>• Work with the National Parks Service to do a sediment source study that could be replicated in the watershed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of natural soil processes and how to augment natural features of watershed to conserve soil.</li> <li>• Exposed soil on slopes, and in urban and construction areas, suffer from high levels of erosion.</li> <li>• Poorly designed fire roads contribute greatly to erosion.</li> <li>• Mismanaged grazing areas lead to loss of vegetation and erosion.</li> <li>• Widespread, invasive exotic vegetation does not bind soil as well as displaced native plants, allowing greater levels of erosion to occur.</li> <li>• Creek banks altered for flood control purposes disrupt natural flows, causing bank failure and erosion.</li> <li>• Paved surfaces cause greater and more rapid runoff during storms, causing higher levels of erosion.</li> </ul>

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3	Explore appropriate fire regime for a healthy watershed.	Restore a healthy and abundant ecosystem, while reducing fire damage and erosion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the efforts of the Fire Safe Council to help landowners create a defensible space around their homes and reduce the fire fuel load on their properties.</li> <li>• Review and comment on the Management Plan of the Upper Watershed by the East Bay Regional Parks District.</li> <li>• Encourage the implementation of beneficial aspects of the East Bay Regional Parks District and the National Parks Service Management Plan throughout the watershed.</li> <li>• Support implementation of a coordinated fire management plan for the watershed in cooperation with public agencies that comply with agency mandates.</li> <li>• Support use of sustainable management practices for fire fuel load management.</li> <li>• Work with the landscape industry to promote the design, installation, and maintenance of landscapes that align with fire safe principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houses and other infrastructures in fire-vulnerable areas make the use of fire management techniques, such as controlled burns and grazing more difficult.</li> <li>• Lack of information and other assistance for landowners who wish to implement sustainable management practices and fire-safe landscaping.</li> <li>• Exotic annual grasses now covering large areas make the landscape vulnerable to burning over a longer period of time during the year than the original perennial bunchgrasses.</li> <li>• Fire suppression allows large buildup of fuel, causing hot, destructive fires to occur rather than smaller, benign periodic fires that reduce fuel buildup and encourage plant growth.</li> </ul>

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4	Protect and improve water quality.	Encourage and promote a healthier aquatic habitat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify sources of pollution and refer them to the City or County.</li> <li>• Pursue ongoing water quality testing, , monitoring, assessment, and research, and support water quality testing if developed by others</li> <li>• Promote the appropriate use of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program in the watershed.</li> <li>• Protect water quality and quantity during agricultural activities.</li> <li>• Reduce illegal dumping.</li> <li>• Reduce non-point source pollution.</li> <li>• Reduce stormwater pollution from construction-related activities.</li> <li>• Work with the Contra Costa County Agriculture Department to provide information to fruit tree owners about potential biological threats and healthy ways to combat them.</li> <li>• Inform the public of the current water quality of the creek.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate understanding of importance of overall ecological health of the watershed in maintaining clean and abundant water supplies.</li> <li>• Sediment from excessive erosion in creek channels or uplands.</li> <li>• Pollution hazards from point sources: illegal dumping of oil, antifreeze, paint, solvents; draining of gray water, pool water, vehicle-washing facilities, etc., into streams or sewer drains.</li> <li>• Pollution from other non-point sources in watershed: commercial waste, livestock and pet waste, residential &amp; landscaping runoff (including pesticides, chemicals, fertilizers), automobiles, streets &amp; parking lots.</li> <li>• Pollution from accidents: transport of hazardous materials on railroads and highway, sewage pipes.</li> <li>• Possible heavy metal contamination (legacy pollutants).</li> </ul>

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5	Encourage coordination of City and County general and specific plans using the watershed as a planning unit.	Provides a sensible and effective planning area for issues related to streamflow and watershed health. While encouraging consistent development and application of policy within watershed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the Watershed Council and the watershed plan as resources that can be used to coordinate watershed planning and management with City, County and other agencies.</li> <li>• Promote the adoption of reaches of creeks by neighborhoods/businesses located on them to enhance stream and riparian habitat and monitor their health.</li> <li>• Request City/County to notify the Watershed Council of any policy documents, such as general plans, and specific plans that impact the watershed.</li> <li>• Summarize and coordinate City, County, regional, state, Federal plans for climate change.</li> <li>• Support improvement of the municipal and regulatory permitting process to help ensure that watershed health issues are comprehensively met.</li> <li>• Support the continuation of the Stream Assessment Project to identify indicators for monitoring of watershed health.</li> <li>• Encourage City/County to incorporate a Watershed Element into their General Plan, and the City/County Plans to be consistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of how runoff functions in the hydrologic cycle.</li> <li>• Paved (impervious) surfaces, and building in the flood plain making flooding worse.</li> <li>• Traditional flood control practices and structures (culverts; straight, narrow concrete channels) may exacerbate flooding downstream of the structures.</li> </ul>

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6	Support economically and environmentally sustainable land uses, while recognizing private property rights.	Natural resources of the watershed are economic assets, and if well managed, this will reduce conflict in the watershed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage diversification of the downtown economy, and its connection with the natural environment.</li> <li>• Encourage ranchers to apply sustainable range management practices using a watershed approach.</li> <li>• Encourage the design, installation and maintenance of economically and environmentally sustainable landscaping.</li> <li>• Promote the use of mulching and composting of organic waste.</li> <li>• Promote use of native and/or equivalent drought tolerant plants.</li> <li>• Share information with the public about rural land uses and their role in watershed community.</li> <li>• Support innovations to enhance and maintain the economic and environmental viability of agriculture.</li> <li>• Support management and restoration of stream and riparian areas for long-term environmental sustainability.</li> <li>• Work with East Bay Regional Parks District on land management issues.</li> <li>• Work with the Contra Costa County Agriculture Department to provide Integrated Pest Management information to property owners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate understanding of how environmental sustainability is essential for economic sustainability.</li> <li>• Lack of information and other assistance for landowners who wish to implement or improve the sustainability of their land use practices.</li> </ul>

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7	Promote a sense of watershed community.	Source of community pride and focus of neighborhood involvement and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate the public about the Alhambra Watershed Council and the Alhambra Creek Watershed Plan.</li> <li>• Facilitate and coordinate communication among members and groups of the watershed community.</li> <li>• Increase community awareness and understanding of the watershed’s physical and natural features, processes, people, and economy.</li> <li>• Promote and encourage research and management projects in the watershed.</li> <li>• Protect and restore natural streams and riparian buffers wherever possible.</li> <li>• Work with our partners, such as Friends of Alhambra Creek, New Leaf Collaborative (formerly New Leaf Academy), Mt. View Sanitary District, National Parks Service, East Bay Regional Parks District to increase awareness and activities.</li> <li>• Work with schools to educate and engage students in the watershed.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of the benefits of the watershed process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient understanding of watershed’s physical and natural features, processes, people, and economy.</li> <li>• Degraded and polluted natural areas, especially creek areas.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of current efforts (AWC and other groups; research and management projects) to assess and improve health of watershed.</li> <li>• Inadequate stakeholder participation in planning process.</li> </ul>

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8	Maintain and restore fish and wildlife habitat and native plant communities.	Improve and increase wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Increase recreational opportunities. Create a more resilient watershed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and protect endangered, threatened and diminishing species.</li> <li>• Reduce and control harmful exotic species.</li> <li>• Work with John Muir Land Trust to coordinate land preservation.</li> <li>• Identify opportunity areas along the creek and in the watershed where restoration and enhancement can occur.</li> <li>• Work with willing landowners and public land managers to encourage research and development and application of wildlife and native plant friendly farming, ranching, and land management practices.</li> <li>• Work with willing landowners and public land managers to maintain and restore native plant communities, natural habitats, native fish, and wildlife populations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of importance of wildlife habitat to quality of life in watershed for all occupants.</li> <li>• Lack of information and other assistance for landowners who choose to restore wildlife habitat.</li> <li>• Introduction of non-native plant species has extensively altered habitat, rendering habitat poor or uninhabitable for some wild animal species.</li> <li>• Reduction and degradation of habitat due to development. Continued urban encroachment into natural areas has further reduced and fragmented wildlife habitat.</li> </ul>

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9	Maintain and enhance quality of life by providing increased opportunities to appreciate and enjoy watershed resources.	Provide high quality of life, and educational and recreational opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate awareness of illegal dumping and its negative consequences in the watershed, especially in the creeks.</li> <li>• Enhance recreational opportunities for watershed residents to meet future anticipated expanding needs.</li> <li>• Help enhance awareness of the connection between the watershed and the people in it.</li> <li>• Maintain and preserve our ranching and agricultural heritage.</li> <li>• Work with existing organizations and agencies to find ways to voluntarily preserve open space.</li> <li>• Work with the City and County to strike an appropriate balance between development and open space preservation.</li> <li>• Work with agencies that own public lands to ensure there is public access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of how individual actions impact health of watershed.</li> <li>• Educational programs/materials focusing on the watershed not sufficiently developed and/or widely used.</li> <li>• Access to natural areas could be improved.</li> </ul>

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