

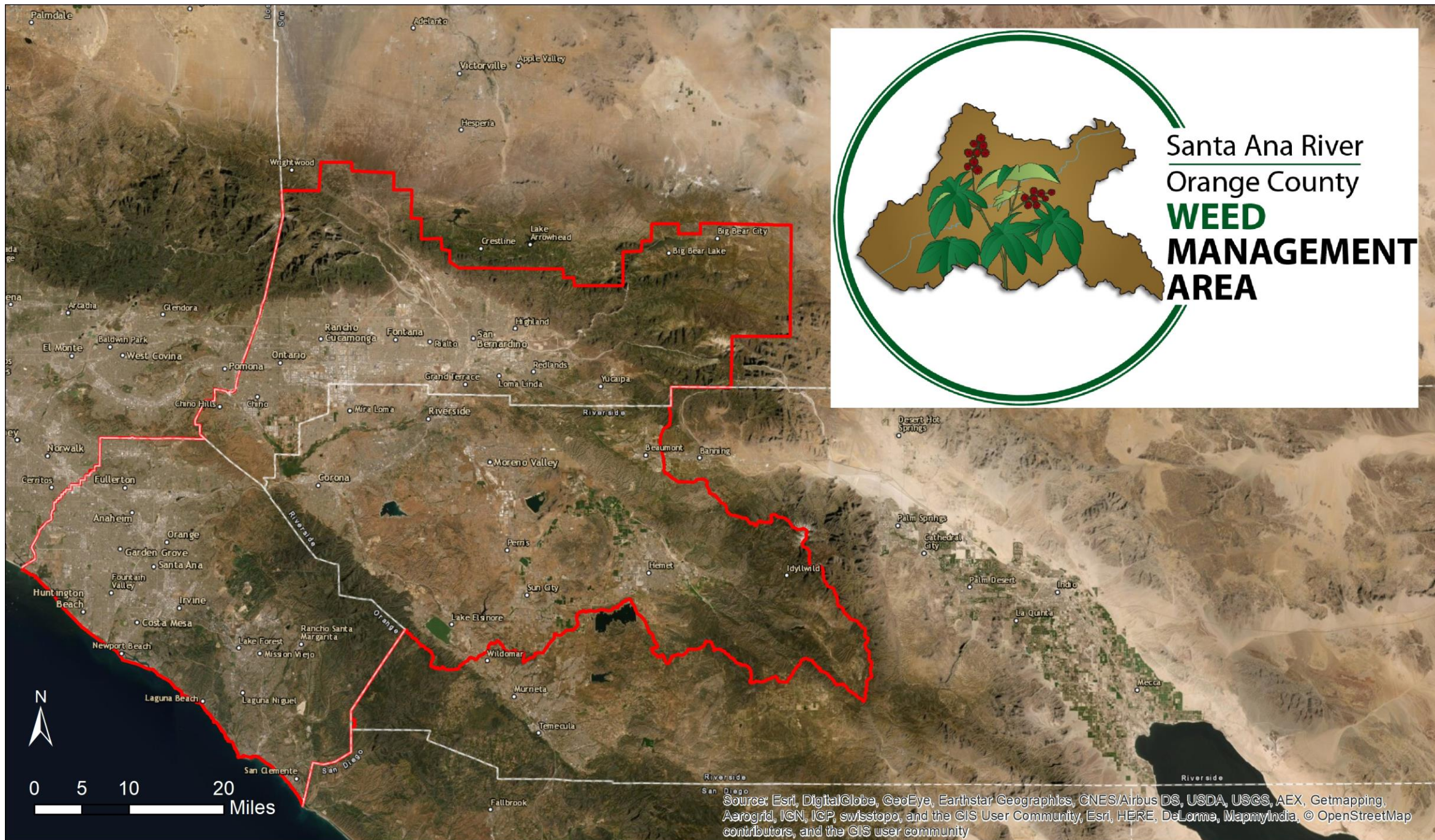
Santa Ana River – Orange County Weed Management Area

2021-22 Organizational Overview

Shani Pynn – RCRC

Matt Major – OC Parks

Brian Glenn – OC Public Works



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community

How we started

- Formed in 2003
 - Initial funding through CDFA + SAWA
 - Currently mainly a coordination group
- Watershed-based = Ecological boundaries
 - Great for tackling spreading weeds
- Watershed-based = Extra complexity...
 - Multiple counties
 - Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino
 - Split counties
 - Riverside and San Bernardino have more than one WMA each
 - More coordination necessary

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area

9/23/2003

Participants

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made and entered into by and among, the Santa Ana Watershed Association, Army Corps of Engineers, CA Dept of Fish and Game, Fish and Wildlife Service, San Bernardino National Forest, Cleveland National Forest, San Bernardino Ag Commissioner's Office, Riverside County Ag Commissioner's Office, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Riverside County Park & Open Space, CA Dept of Forestry, BLM, California Native Plant Society, among others as amended.

Authority

The parties are entering into this MOU pursuant to the California Food and Agricultural Code, Section 7272(b), which states:

"A 'weed management area' (WMA) is a local organization that brings together all interested landowners, land managers (private, city, county, state, federal), special districts, and the public in a county or other geographical area for the purpose of coordinating and combining their actions and expertise to deal with their common weed control problems. The organization shall function under the authority of a mutually developed memorandum of understanding and subject to statutory and regulatory requirements. A weed management area may be voluntarily governed by a chairperson or a steering committee."

Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to establish a weed management area and define the terms and conditions under which the Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA will cooperate and coordinate activities necessary to prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive non-native plants within the Santa Ana River and Orange County watersheds.

Overview

Integrated weed management is a system used to plan and recommend selected methods of management to prevent, contain or control undesirable plant species or group of species using all available strategies and techniques. Together these strategies and techniques are economically and environmentally more effective than any single option. The elements of integrated management include:

- Education and Awareness
- Prevention and Early Detection
- Inventory
- Control (physical/mechanical, biological, chemical, cultural)
- Monitoring and Evaluation

...t, damage or liability arising out of the performance of its responsibilities pursuant to this MOU.

...h party shall perform its responsibilities and activities described herein as an independent party and not as an officer, agent, servant, or employee of any of the other parties hereto. Each party shall be solely responsible for the acts and omissions of its officers, agents, employees, contractors, and subcontractors, if any. Nothing herein shall be considered as creating a partnership or joint venture between the parties.

Conditions: In consideration of the above premises, the parties agree to perform the following activities as follows:

Signing this document:

Support the WMA through active participation, including, but not limited to: attending meetings, providing input in regards to selection of target non-native plants and control activities, and dissemination of information about WMA activities throughout the party's agency or organization if applicable. Work with the WMA, public agencies, and private landowners to control invasive non-native plant infestations on properties in the Santa Ana River and Orange County watersheds.

Cooperate with the WMA, individuals and agencies on control and prevention programs for invasive non-native plants.

Aid (providing access, assistance, etc.) in conducting surveys and identifying invasive non-native plant sites throughout the watersheds.

Support the education of the public, growers, ranchers, businesses, and agencies about invasive non-native plants, their identification, and methods of control and prevention.

Promote and implement elements of integrated weed management to prevent the establishment and spread of invasive non-native plants in the Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA.

Cooperate in the development of grant proposals to fund local weed management programs.

Effective Date

Witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this MOU as of the dates set forth below.

...of invasive non-native plants are found in the Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA. An integrated strategy to manage these populations could minimize their effects and prevent future infestations of undesirable plant species.

...t
...ly agreed upon and understood by and among the parties to this MOU that:

...chairperson shall make decisions on matters affecting the weed management area. The chairperson shall consider input from all parties to this MOU in these decisions.

...parties will initially meet at least three times per year to provide input to the chairperson.

...WMA staff shall meet to develop and document a coordinated plan to control invasive non-native plant infestations within the Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA using the elements of integrated weed management.

...MOU may be revised as necessary, by mutual consent of the parties, by execution of a written amendment signed and dated by all parties.

...MOU in no way restricts any party from participation in similar agreements or activities with other public or private entities.

...ested landowners, land managers (private, city, county, state and federal), special districts, and the public in Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA become part of the Santa Ana River and Orange County WMA by execution of the signature page entitled "Agreement to Join the Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the Santa Ana River and Orange County Weed Management Area" attached as Exhibit A. The executed signature page shall be provided to the chairperson for distribution to all parties to this MOU. The return of the signature page shall be accomplished by certified mail to the chairperson.

...MOU shall be effective upon execution by a minimum of two (2) parties. Any party may terminate their participation in this MOU at any time by providing written notice to the chairperson.

...MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this MOU will be handled in accordance with the laws, regulations, and procedures applicable to each governmental agency, private landowner, or other participant, including those for government procurement and printing. Such matters will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority.

...party shall maintain its own insurance coverage, through commercial insurance, self-insurance or a combination thereof, against any claim, expense,

Where we are

- Coordination
 - Varied activity levels
 - Interconnected land managers are very active
 - Some active more locally, yet less available without funding benefit
- Funding environment is structured differently
 - State funding through Ag Commissioners directly
 - Grants etc. can be inconsistent and require quick turnaround
- Prioritization
 - Long standing and high impact priorities
 - More comprehensive priorities could aid decision making, funding

What does this look like?

- Advance notice of weeds coming down the watershed
- Easier information on that hard to kill species
- Collaborative workshops
- Working together to address shared goals

Santa Maria feverfew (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) project in San Diego Creek watershed



Photos: Brian Glenn, OC Public Works

What we're up to

- Coordination
 - Organizing...
 - Increase benefit to partners...
- Funding
 - Work closely with Ag Commissioners
 - Strategic plan...
- Prioritization
 - More comprehensive lists and plans



Current High Priority Species

- Stinknet (*Oncosiphon piliferum*) - Moving east to west through the WMA. Special concern for sensitive species management.
- *Arundo donax* – In the Santa Ana River and tributaries. Propagates downstream
- EDRR species:

Common name	Botanical name
Santa Maria feverfew	<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i>
Star-thistle	<i>Centaurea diluta</i>
Canary Island St. John's wort	<i>Hypericum canariense</i>
Egyptian knapweed	<i>Volutaria tubuliflora</i>
Yellow starthistle	<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>
	<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i>
Perennial veldt grass	<i>Ehrharta calycina</i>



Quiz
Question

Stinknet (*Oncosiphon piluferum*) in Orange County



Photo: James Bailey



Photo: Maura Hay

Arundo donax removal in Aliso Creek watershed



Before



After



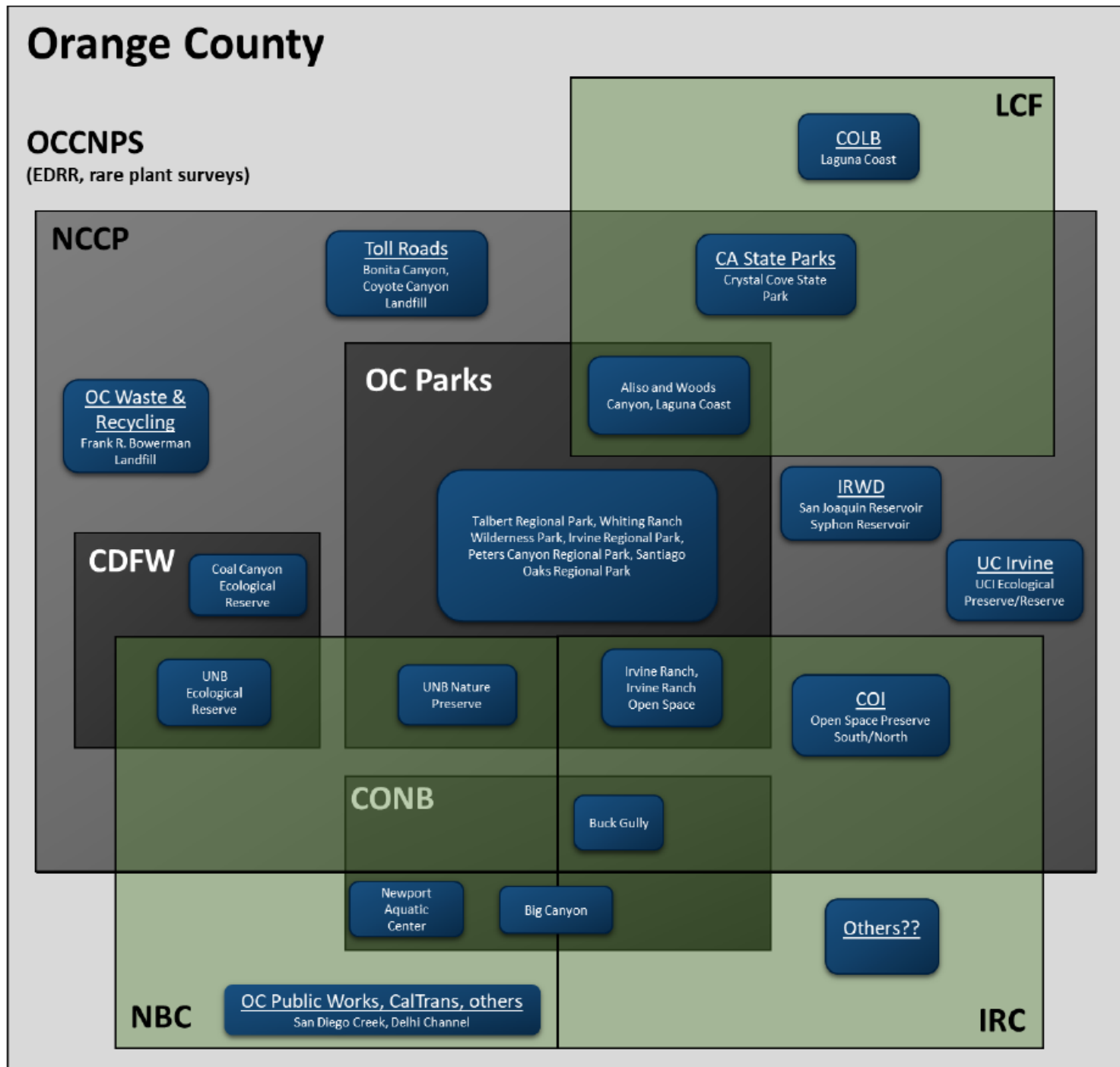
Photos: Laguna Canyon Foundation

Goals of the WMA

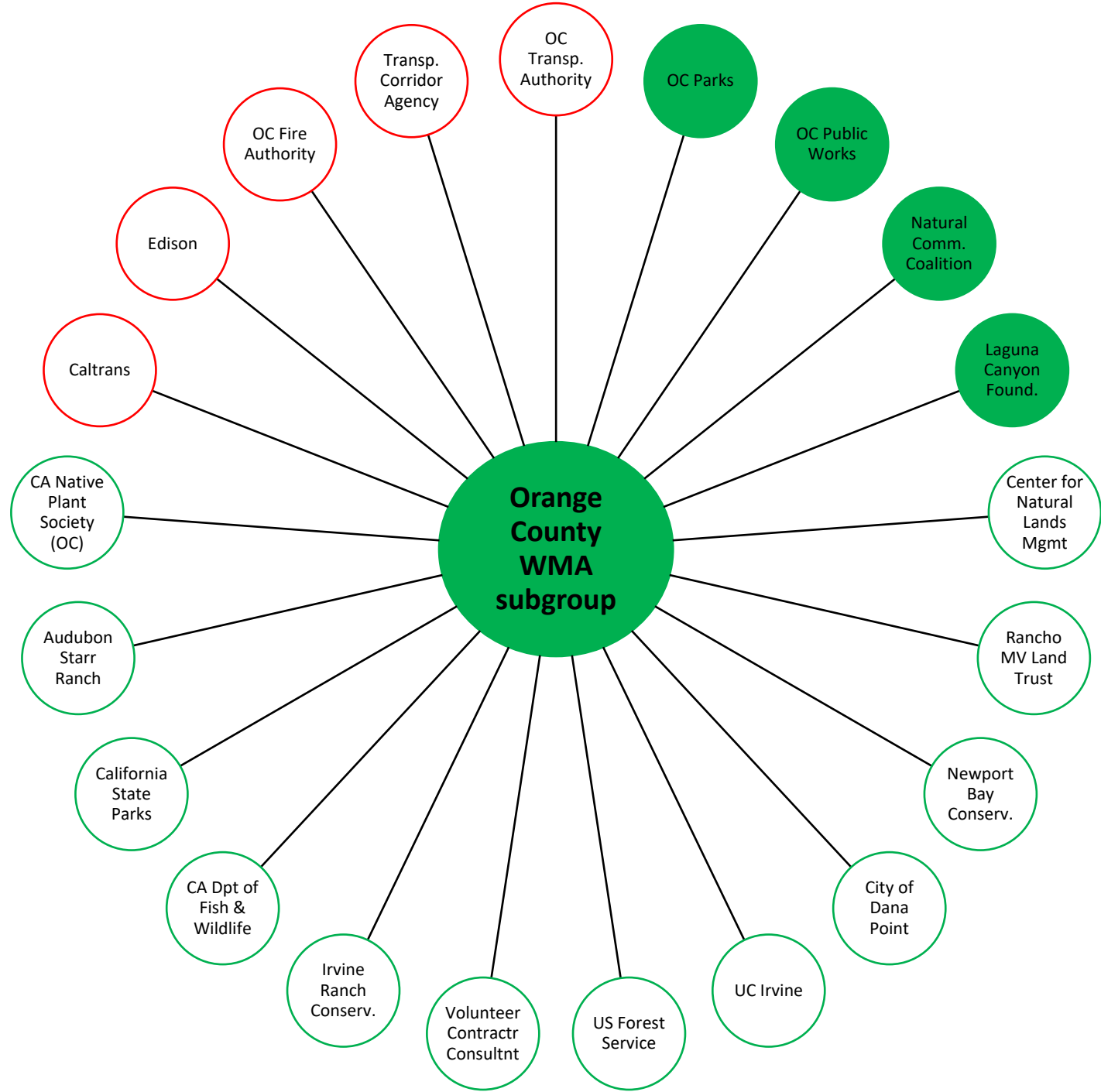
- Sharing information and expertise (RCDs, non-profits, contractors, local govt, academia, etc.)
 - problem-solving for weed work
- Shared Prioritization
 - Collectively picking our battles
- Coordination (esp. with aquatic resources)
 - watershed approach (OC is downstream)
- Capture and use available funding effectively
 - Variety of partners to apply for grants: RCDs, non-profits, local governments

Coordination in a tri-county WMA

This conceptual figure illustrates the complexities of land management in Orange County (OC). The light gray box, in which all other components are nested within, represents the whole of Orange County. OC California Native Plant Society (CNPS) operates at this scale, surveying all areas at the County level. Nested within Orange County are the lands included within Central/Coastal Orange County Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP; medium gray). Lands covered by the NCCP have several land owners/managers, the most prominent shown in dark gray: OC Parks, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the City of Newport Beach (CONB). Nonprofit entities that contribute to land management efforts include Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF), Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC), and Newport Bay Conservancy (NBC), whose management extents are represented by translucent green boxes. Blue boxes represent specific parks, sites, or landmarks that are supported by the NCCP and various land managers/owners.






N = 16



Stuck at home during the pandemic??



Let's organize some virtual meetings and brainstorm!!

-  Steering committee organization
-  Actively participating organization
-  Desired but not currently participating

Current and Proposed Projects



Photo: Shani Pynn

	Project Name	Orange County	Current Lead(s)	Current Spatial Extent	Future Potential Lead Organizations	Future Potential Spatial Extent
1	Coordinated Annual Species Prioritization	✓	Natural Communities Coalition, CNPS – Orange County Chapter	Orange County+	NCC, CNPS-OC, SAROC WMA	SAROC WMA+
2	Coordinated Annual Early Detection Surveys	✓	Natural Communities Coalition	Central-Coastal NCCP/HCP	NCC, SAROC WMA	Orange County+
3	Coordinated Rapid Response Weed Control	✓	Natural Communities Coalition	Central-Coastal NCCP/HCP	NCC, SAROC WMA	Orange County+
4	Coordinated Annual Early Detection Species ID Training	✓	CNPS – Orange County Chapter	Orange County+	CNPS-OC, SAROC WMA	Orange County+
5	Coordinated Priority 1, 2, 3 Species Treatment				All, SAROC WMA	Orange County+
6	Boot cleaners and trailhead signage				DPR, OCP, LCF, IRC	Orange County+
7	Post-fire mapping + treatment				NCC, ?	Orange County+
8	Calflora Weed Manager Training Series				NCC, OCP, IRC	Orange County+
9	Calflora Weed Manager Southern California User Guide				OCP, NCC, IRC	Orange County+
10	Orange County Wildland Weed Control Guidelines				OCP	Orange County+
11	Quarterly funding updates				SAROC WMA	SAROC WMA+
12	Annual sustainability report				SAROC WMA	SAROC WMA+
13	Volunteer Coordination				SAROC WMA	SAROC WMA+
14	Annual field training event				SAROC WMA	SAROC WMA+

Proposed Subcommittees

Prioritization
& Early
Detection

Rapid
Response &
Weed Control

Funding &
Organizational
Sustainability

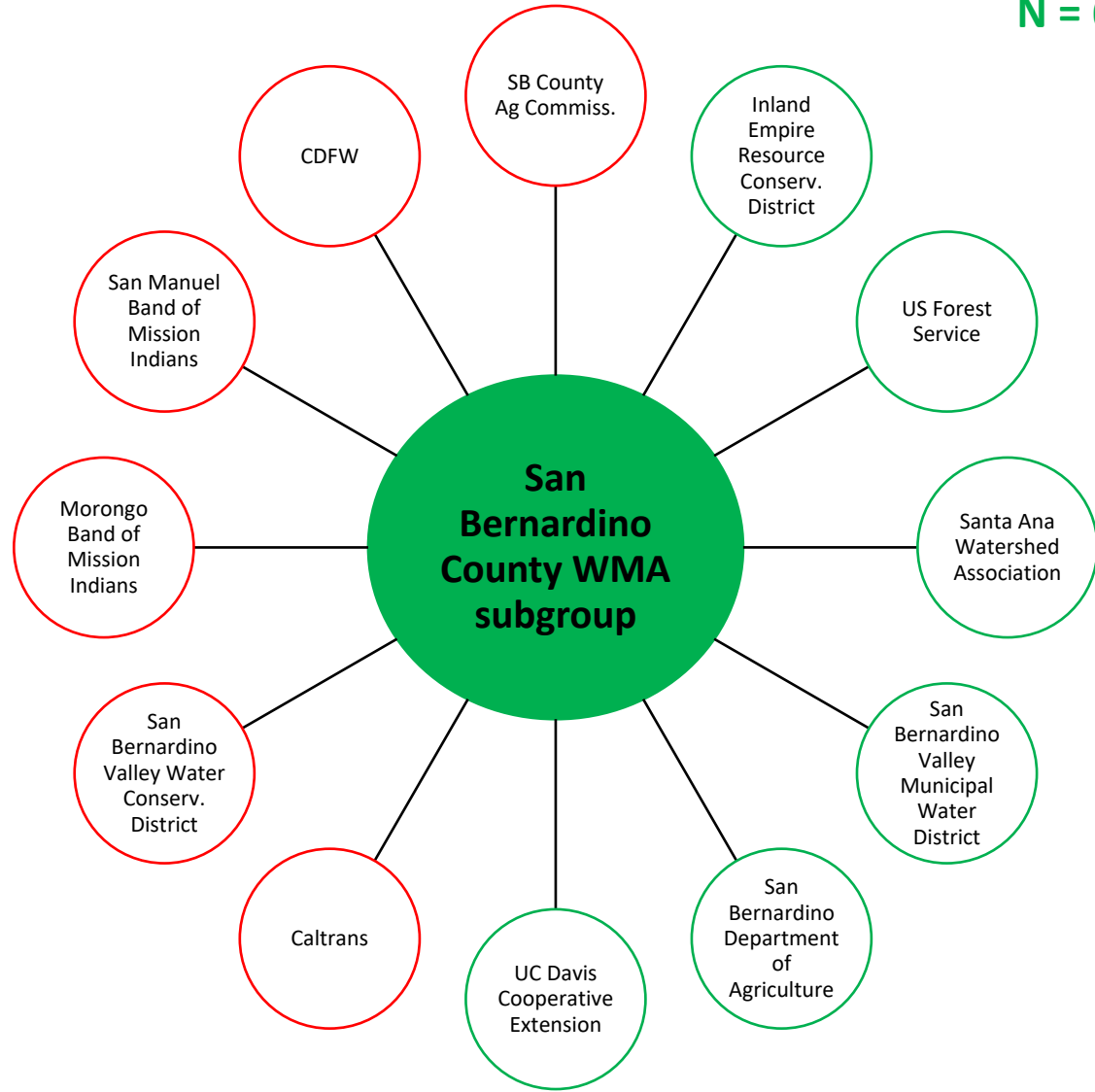
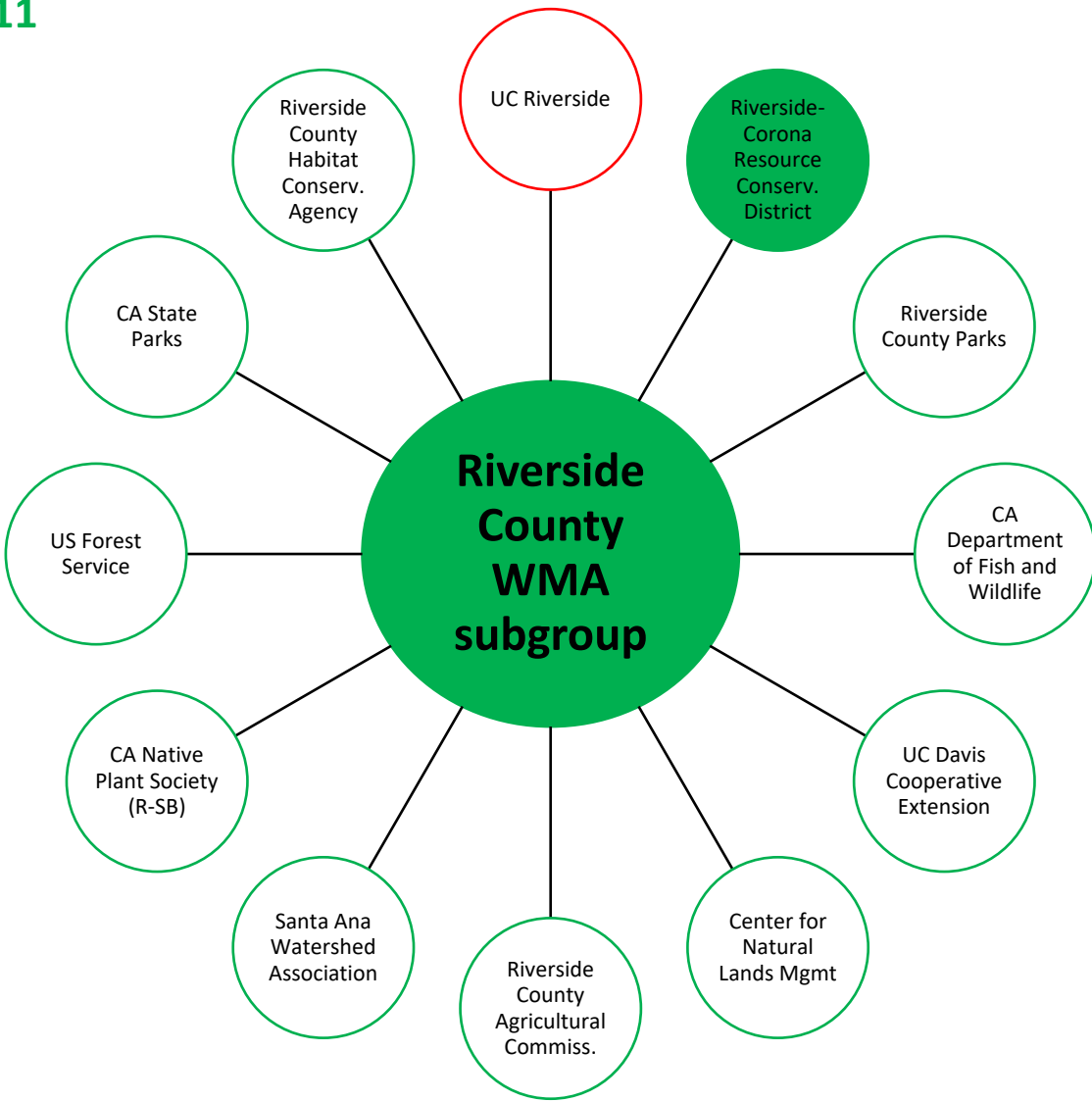
Outreach &
Education

Calflora

Information &
Research

N = 11

N = 6



Orange County Steering Committee Members

Brian Glenn (Orange County Public Works)
Matt Major (Orange County Parks)
Mendel Stewart (Natural Communities Coalition)
Josie Bennett (Laguna Canyon Foundation)

Riverside County Steering Committee Members

Shani Pynn (Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District)

San Bernardino County Steering Committee Members

TBD



Santa Ana River – Orange County WMA Coordinator

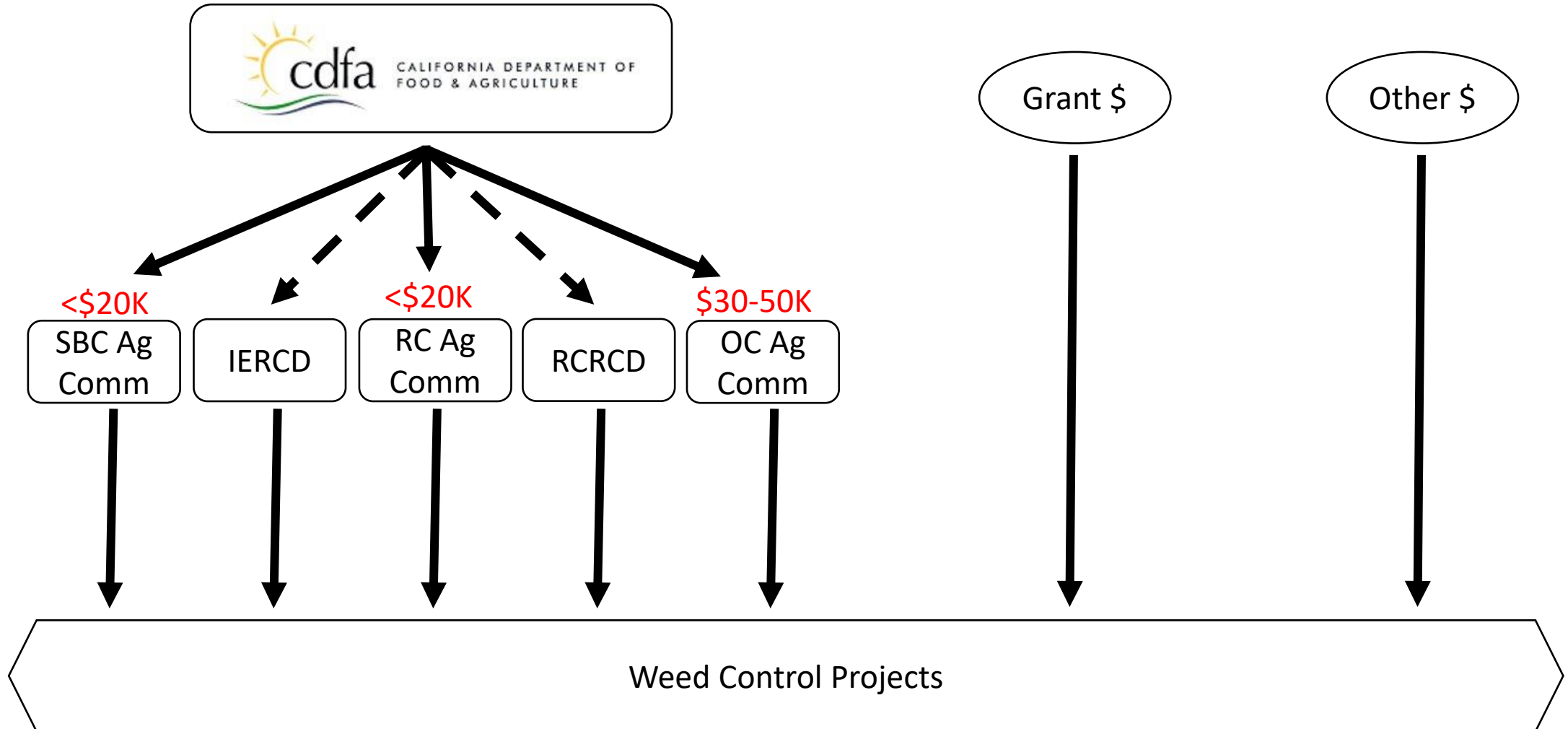
Shani Pynn (Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District)

Coordination Challenges for the SAROC WMA

- Large area with a diverse variety of habitats
 - It is difficult to define priorities both within watersheds and across the entire region simultaneously
- Broad membership takes time to respond
 - Coordinating quick turnarounds on time-sensitive funding opportunities is difficult (need to be prepared with subsets of priorities to address)
- Coordination across counties is a balancing act
 - There are different levels and types of input from partner organizations and areas with varying amounts of time, funding, etc.

Funding

How does funding work?



Funding Challenges

- County Agricultural Commissioners are the current point of contact for CDFA funding. How to organize around three Ag Comms?
- How to allocate/disperse funds between multiple counties and organizations within the SAROC WMA? How can we make funding as easy as possible?

Funding Challenges

- Funding opportunities may have short window
 - Quick turnaround
- What is the most effective workflow for selecting projects and providing funding for those projects?
- CDFA requires that a weed is “rated” for current grants
 - Many local threats are not currently rated
 - EDRR funding may present a challenge

Funding Questions

- What happens if money is made available and someone has projects that are shovel-ready? What is the decision-making process across county lines?
- Should subcommittees be organized at the level of county subgroups or the SAROC group?
- How do we develop a sustainable funding structure for the WMA?

Wrapping up

What are the end goals and benefits here?

- Shared information, expertise, and resources
- Collective priorities – WMA-wide and county-specific
 - Increased clarity for land managers
 - Shovel ready projects for funding opportunities
- Coordination on projects
 - More resources for challenging sites
 - More avenues for funding
- Clear funding plans and pathways
 - Rapid, effective action on high priority projects (quick!)

Roadmap



- Update MOU
 - Addition of new partners
- Increase benefits for partner involvement
- Consider development of a strategic plan
- Next WMA/subgroup meeting dates
- P.S. We are looking for input!!!