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**Media Contact:** Shannon Widor

714-667-9759 (office) or 714-438-9707 (cell)

[shannon.widor@ocpw.ocgov.com](mailto:shannon.widor@ocpw.ocgov.com)

## **Water Quality Plan Acceptance is a Significant Milestone for South Orange County Communities**

(Santa Ana, Calif.) – In a major step to improve the water quality of South Orange County's coastal areas and inland waterways, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) recently accepted the South Orange County Water Quality Improvement Plan (South OC WQIP) that lays a foundation for managing stormwater runoff for years to come.

The regional municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit issued by the Water Board regulates stormwater runoff from urbanized areas in the San Diego Region, which includes South Orange County, and requires the development and implementation of a Water Quality Improvement Plan for watershed management areas. On June 20, the Water Board accepted the South OC WQIP.

The South OC WQIP identifies high-priority water quality conditions, such as human pathogen health risks, stream erosion and unnatural water balance, and establishes goals, strategies and schedules for addressing them. Strategies to improve human pathogen risks focus on controlling sources of human waste. Stream restoration efforts will combat stream erosion. Eliminating dry weather runoff will help address unnatural water balance.

South OC WQIP goals include development of a Comprehensive Human Waste Source Reduction Strategy Work Plan within the first 12 months of WQIP implementation, reducing unnatural dry weather runoff flows by 10% by 2023 compared with current levels, and mitigating up to 23,000 linear feet of stream erosion by 2042.

The County of Orange and 11 cities of South Orange County developed the South OC WQIP over a two-year collaborative effort through a series of public stakeholder meetings.

The County of Orange and its partner cities are currently seeking partnership opportunities with additional key stakeholders within the South Orange County Watershed Management area to help reach the goals established in the South OC WQIP. The [South OC WQIP](#) is available on the Water Board's website.

For more information about the South OC WQIP, contact Cindy Rivers ([Cindy.Rivers@ocpw.ocgov.com](mailto:Cindy.Rivers@ocpw.ocgov.com)) or visit the [OC Watersheds website](#).

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