



Operating Desired Outcomes for Aliso Creek Watershed

This document contains reviewed and operational Desired Outcomes for the Aliso Creek Watershed Collaboration Group (Aliso Group). These are not yet final and approved by all stakeholders. Expected completion dates are not included because stakeholders felt they are either covered in other planning documents or not yet well-researched. These dates will be associated to key intermediate results as the Aliso Group continues to research, develop and support projects. Numbering is for easy reference only, not a prioritization of Desired Outcomes.

Scope of efforts

The Aliso Watershed Collaboration Group focuses on an integrated, comprehensive strategy of ecosystem services improvement for the whole Aliso Creek Watershed, balancing the environmental and social needs of the region. The group's overarching objectives are to enhance attractiveness of individual projects to funders, increase cost effectiveness and open the door to streamlined permitting.

Desired Outcomes

- **Desired Outcome #1: Ecosystem is functional and resilient**

Biological diversity of native species represents a reasonably achievable level subject to non-controllable drivers* for each reach. Native and ESA species are predominant, and invasive species are managed.

*Non-controllable drivers include climate change and macroeconomic conditions.

- **Desired Outcome #2: Coastal uses are restored and preserved**

The estuarine lagoon has healthy ecological function and beneficial uses such as recreation, public health and fishing are protected at beaches. Ecological function is supported by managing flows, reduced stormwater pollutant loads, and expanded habitat area.

- **Desired outcome #3: Balanced, local water supply enhancement**

Local water sources and recycling systems are supported, and in balance with ecological needs of the watershed.

- **Desired outcome #4: Supported infrastructure function**

Necessary infrastructure functions are provided by smart and innovative approaches that connect systems or leverage green infrastructure. Support includes protection from flood, erosion and fire hazards as well as updates to essential systems and removal of unneeded legacy systems.

- **Desired outcome #5: Improved public recreation and awareness**

The public is engaged, uses the area for outdoor enjoyment and supports efforts to enhance the Aliso watershed.



Essential Intermediate Result

One of the proposed Desired Outcomes has been recognized as an essential intermediate result that must be satisfied before desired outcomes can be sustainably achieved.

Functional creek geomorphology

Creek geomorphology supports sediment transport equilibrium, provides bank stability, and allows floodplain inundation, where appropriate, while protecting property and infrastructure. Wet weather flows from the upper watershed (developed areas) are minimized to the extent reasonably achievable given constraints associated with space and land ownership. Dry-weather flows are managed based on restoration objectives, and/or by maintaining perennial flow in reaches that provide recreation and native species.

Administrative Features of Aliso Creek Watershed Collaboration Group

The Aliso Creek Watershed Collaboration Group suggested a set of important administrative or programmatic features when brainstorming desired outcomes. These items are captured in the bullets below and will be important features of ongoing project efforts. It is important to note that the Aliso Creek Watershed Collaboration Group is focused on voluntary collaboration that leverages existing IRWM and other governance structures. The goal is to ensure no water resource issue is looked at in isolation.

- Develop a funding plan
- Leverage existing governance structures to approve, fund and implement multi-objective projects
- Determine agency lead for projects (large scale?), where necessary
- Establish a process that places scientists at the center as drivers of vision
 - Establish a science advisory group
 - Document baseline conditions
 - Plan for on-going monitoring
- Leverage existing studies
 - Fluvialtech study from 38 years ago
 - Flow ecology study currently underway
- Create a data repository
- Ensure the community is connected to the watershed
 - Informed, educated and passionate