Upper Guadalupe River Tributary Monitoring Program and Pilot Restoration Project

Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District

A volunteer performs monitoring work on Guadalupe Creek.

Award Amount
$47,000

Watershed
Guadalupe River Watershed

County
Santa Clara County

CALFED Region
Bay Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 14, 15, and 16
State Assembly: 27 and 28
State Senate: 11 and 15

Purpose

To develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring program for 12 upper Guadalupe River tributaries. The monitoring data will be used to select and develop a pilot restoration project for one section of degraded channel.

Project Goals

- Establish 12 permanent monitoring sites along upper Guadalupe River tributaries.
- Monitor flow conditions regularly and resurvey sites annually.
- Enhance data collection efforts with GIS and GPS computer equipment.
- Design a pilot restoration project at one selected stream site.
- Develop a proposal to implement the pilot restoration project.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

Establishing baseline conditions is a critical first step in developing local watershed management efforts. Only then can improvements in the watershed be quantitatively measured for success. By engaging the community in these data-gathering efforts, the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District is promoting local community involvement in the CALFED Program, enhancing local skills in watershed management, and building community capacity to assess and effectively manage a watershed that affects the Bay-Delta system. Overall, the project is building a foundation for improved watershed stewardship, including improved ecosystem quality, water quality, and water supply, and initiating the process of adaptive management in a watershed that contributes directly to the Bay-Delta system.

Project Overview

The Guadalupe River and its tributaries flow from the Santa Cruz Mountains and Santa Teresa Hills through the Santa Clara Valley and into San Francisco Bay. The US Environmental Protection Agency lists this watershed as severely impaired. A number of factors have contributed to this overall impairment, including urban development, pollution, erosion, flood control projects, water diversions, and land use practices.

The Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD) is implementing the Upper Guadalupe River Tributary Monitoring Program and Pilot Restoration Project to gather comprehensive data on the current stream characteristics and health of 12 Guadalupe River tributaries as well as to monitor trends in the tributaries' conditions over time. Students and community volunteers collect cross-section measurements and flow data at both undisturbed "reference sites" and at selected degraded "monitoring sites." This data collection effort will culminate in the design of a pilot restoration project and proposal for one of the degraded channels monitored by the GCRCD.

The data collected by the GCRCD and community volunteers are shared with the CALFED Program and other regional, national, and international databases. Data obtained from established reference sites also are used to support watershed assessment efforts and restoration project designs for disturbed and degraded areas of the watershed. This information is also useful to the Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative's Watershed Assessment work and the efforts of local environmental educational organizations.

Golf Creek, a tributary to the Guadalupe River, during a no-flow season.

Contact Information

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