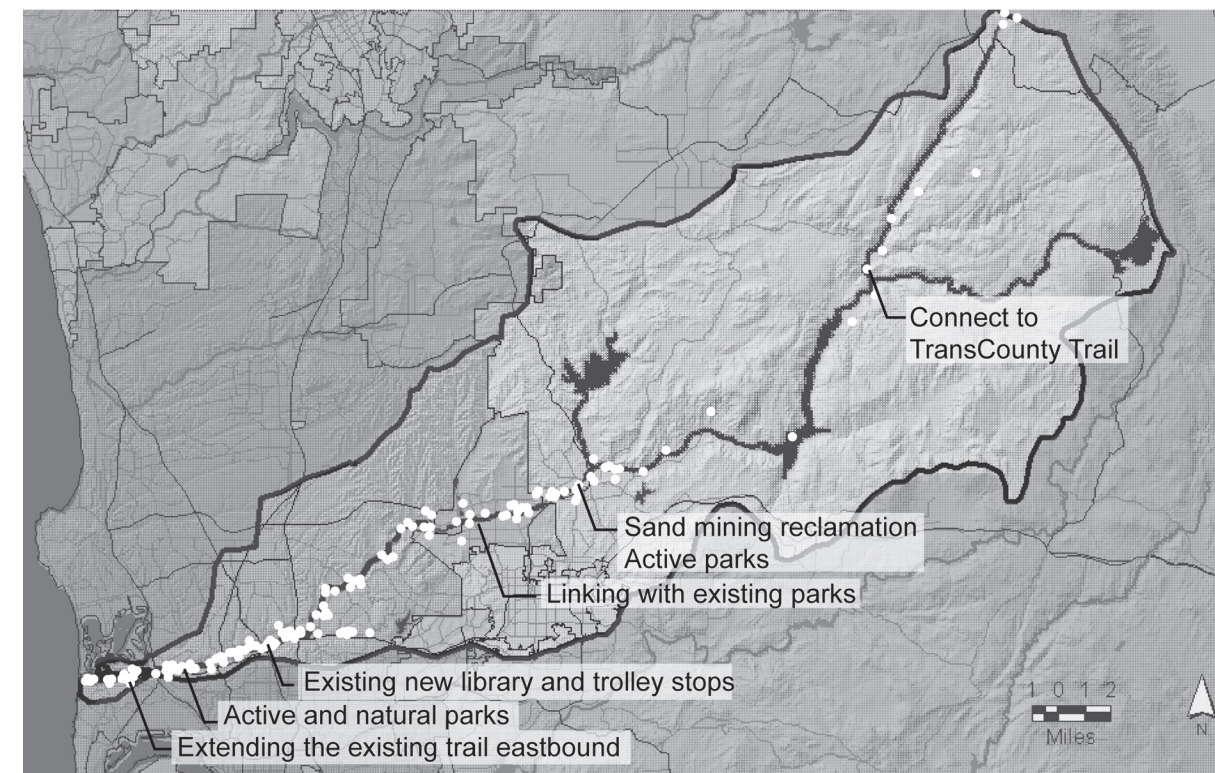


Community Involvement



Community meeting in Lakeside



Opportunities for the river park gathered from community meetings

WORKSHOPS

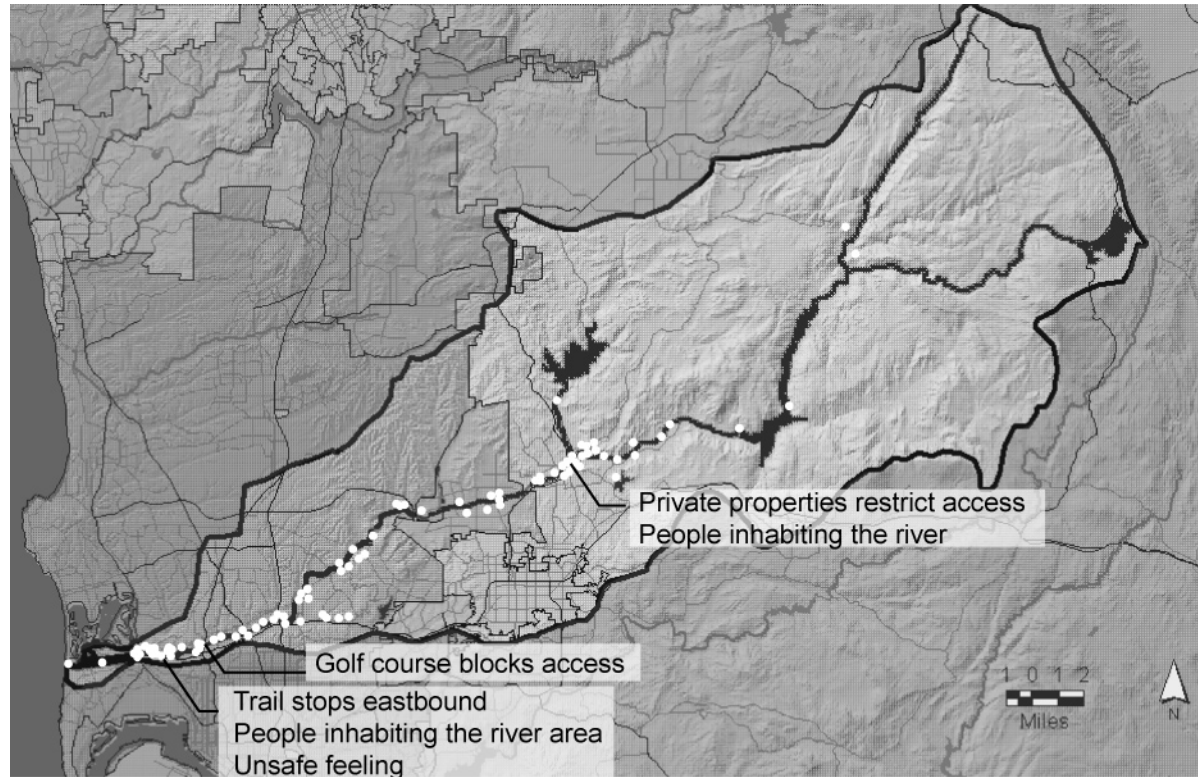
In order to create a comprehensive plan reflecting of the community's desires and needs for the San Diego River Park, workshops were held to gather information. Over one hundred people participated in these meetings in February, 2002, expressing their vision for the river park. The first workshop was held on February 15th with the San Diego River Coalition at Tecalote Nature Center. The second and third workshops, publicly advertised and open to all interested community members, were held in the cities of San Diego and Lakeside on February 21st and 28th, respectively. The meetings began with a vision gathering exercise where everyone participated as a whole and then attendees broke into smaller

groups for mapping exercises to highlight the opportunities and constraints for a river park. A survey was handed out to offer a forum for private responses and a map of favorite places along the river was plotted.

The visioning exercise asked the attendees to voice what they would like to see for their river park. Visions were stated by participants and written on large paper for the group to view. Patterns in responses were then assessed by allowing each community member to vote, by placing a sticker by their choices, for their two favorite visions. Of the visions that were most popular, enhancing recreational opportunities, improving water

quality, preserving natural habitat and access to educational opportunities were a common thread. (Please refer to Appendix C1 for a complete list of visions).

The mapping exercises looked at the river in terms of the seven reaches. The participants were asked to choose a group based on the reach in which they were most familiar or interested. Group members were asked to map and describe what they saw as opportunities and constraints for the proposed San Diego River Park. When opportunities were mapped, the responses were rich and covered the entire project area with possibilities. The highlights from east to west, included connecting with the Trans-County Trail



Constraints for the river park expressed at community meetings



Community meeting in San Diego

above the reservoir, sand mine reclamation, active parks, the new library in Mission Valley, trolley stops, active and natural parks, and extending existing trails eastbound from Mission Bay.

In mapping the constraints, with the same groups on the same base map, a majority of areas highlighted were in the Mission Valley area and the community of Lakeside. Some of the constraints listed focused on trail disconnection and the unsafe feeling created by people inhabiting the river floodplain. Another constraint was private property, including golf courses, which could disrupt a continual trail system. Often it seemed that the areas highlighted

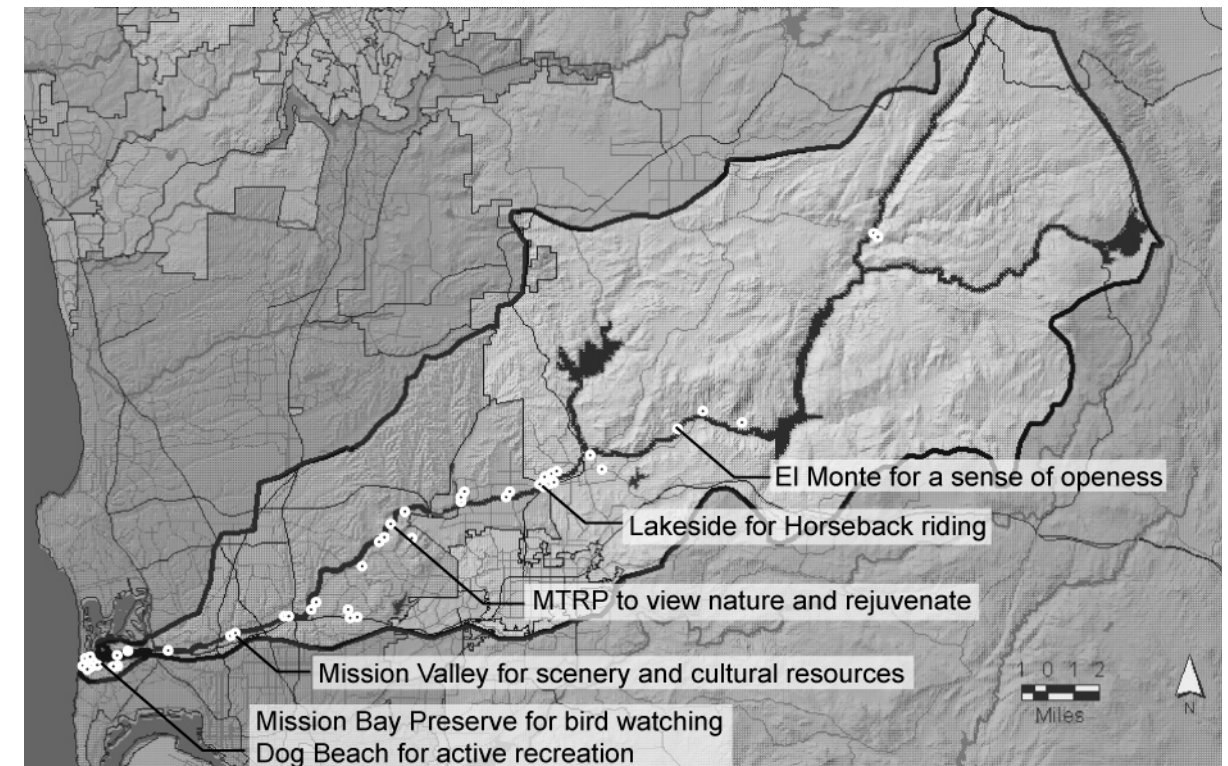
presented opportunities in their constraints. Where sand mines existed as constraints, opportunities were seen for reclamation in the future. Where trails were disconnected, opportunity was seen in future connections (Please see appendix C2 for a detailed summary of opportunities and constraints).

The survey consisted of three questions and provided a forum for the participants to record their thoughts privately. The first survey question asked whether or not the respondent currently visited the river, and if not, why. Most did not respond, as they were regular visitors, but those who did cited lack of legal access and safety concerns as the main reasons for

not visiting. The next question asked if they did visit the river, where they went and for what reason. The most common reason was for hiking, birding, and horse-back riding. In accordance, the highest responses to the survey question asking what changes would increase their visits to the river, were continuous trails and access. The final survey question asked how the respondent would like to see the river for their children or grandchildren. Interestingly enough, it coincided nicely with the vision statements that were given at the beginning of the meetings. The top answer was natural habitat rich with bird-life. Next on the list were trails, recreation water activities, and better water quality.



Mapping exercises were done to gather the community's input



Summary of "Favorite Places" expressed at the community meetings

A separate map charted community members' favorite places along the river. Workshop participants were invited to visit this mapping station at some point during the evening to mark and describe their choice. Favorite places were well dispersed along the entire length of the river. The most concentrated responses were Dog Beach for active recreation, Mission Bay Park for bird watching, Mission Valley for scenery and cultural resources, Mission Trails Regional Park for nature viewing and rejuvenation, Lakeside for horseback riding, and El Monte, in the Reservoir to 67 Freeway reach, for its openness.

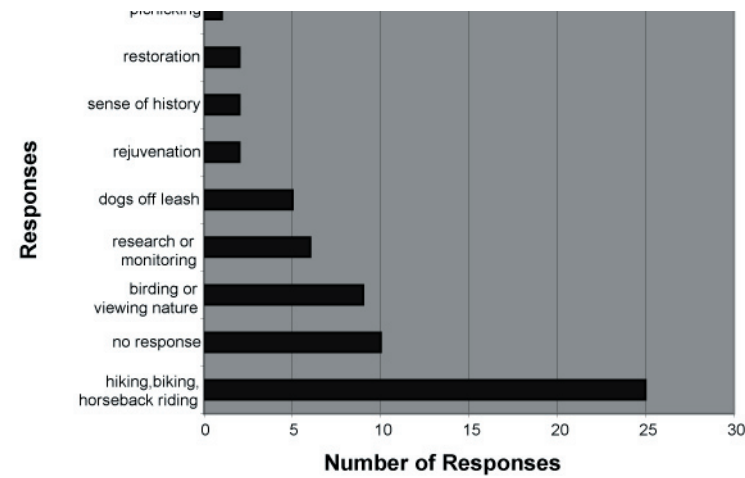
The community workshops were invaluable in providing information about how the community sees the future of the San Diego River Park, and this information was used to help generate the planning goals and objectives driving the design portion of this project.

OTHER INVOLVEMENT

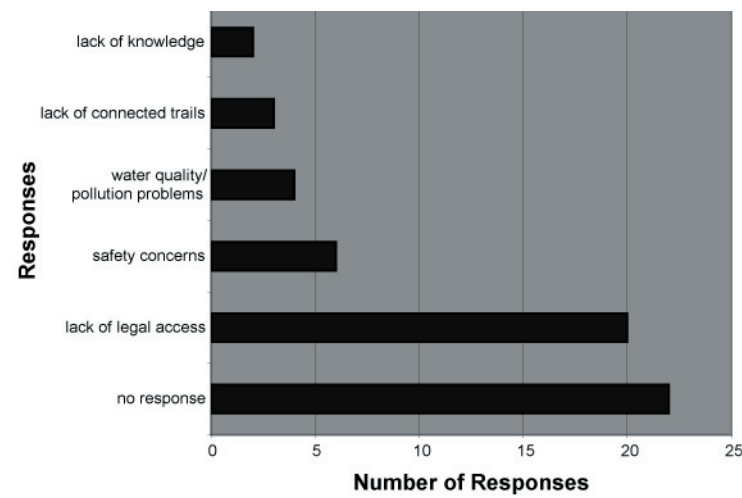
In addition to the community workshops, there were a series of presentations to local groups who are focusing on San Diego River issues. There was also tremendous input, support and professional advice from many local experts who donated their time and knowledge on detailed scientific, planning and design related issues.

Presentations:

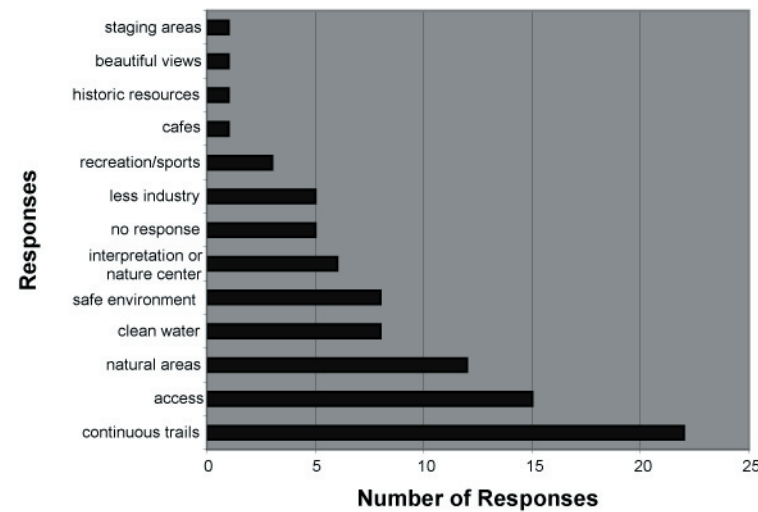
- January 19, 2002 San Diego River Coalition
- January 25, 2002 Select Committee on Park and River Restoration, Hosted by California State Assemblymember Christine Kehoe
- April 5, 2002 Select Committee on Park and River Restoration, Hosted by Assemblymember Christine Kehoe
- April 19, 2002 San Diego River Watershed Workgroup, Hosted by Teresa Brownyard
- May 3, 2002 San Diego River Park Coalition, Hosted by San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy



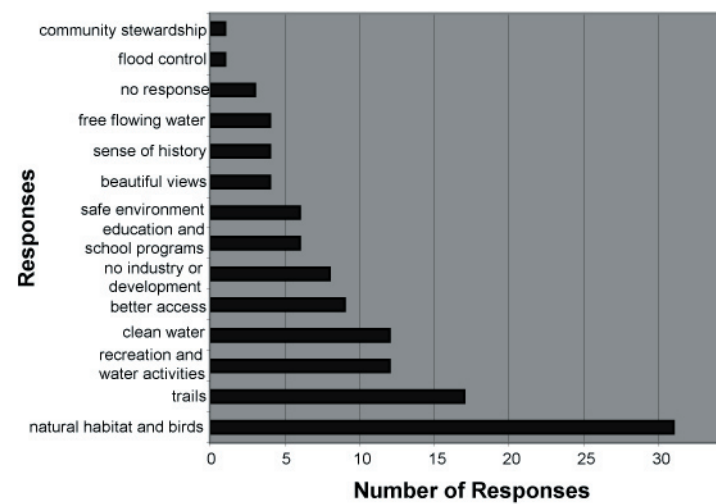
Question: If you do visit the river now, why do you go?
(no response was given by those that do not visit)



Question: If you do not visit the river, why not?
(no response was given by those that do visit)



Question: What changes would encourage you to visit the river more often?



Question: How would you like to see for your children and grandchildren?

Professional Contacts:

- Matt Bohan, County of San Diego
Department of Parks and Recreation
- Dr. Howard Chang, San Diego State University
- Dr. Lynn Christenson, County of San Diego Historian
- Diane Coombs, San Dieguito River Park
- Jeff Harkness, City of San Diego
Department of Park and Recreation

- James Hubble, Artist, Santa Ysabel, California
- Mike Kelly, Friends of Mission Valley Preserve
- Michael Klein, Klein-Edwards Professional Services
- Melanie Kush, City of Santee Department of Planning
- Jerry Lester, Lakeside Land Company
- Jim Peugh, Friends of Famosa Slough
- Michael Porter, Region Water Quality Control Board

- Dr. Greg Pregill, University of San Diego
- Dr. Phil Pryde, San Diego State University
- Dr. Ron Quinn, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
- Geoffrey Smith, Sierra Club, San Diego Chapter
- Bill White, California History and Culture Society

In addition to workshops, presentations and meetings, members of the project team were invited by Mike Porter of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, to attend a seminar hosted by Ann Riley, author of *Restoring Streams in Cities*. The workshop was held on March 25 and 26, 2002, and included participants from the City of San Diego, San Diego County, local policy makers and agencies. The seminar focused on new methods for riverbank restoration based on restoring and maintaining natural stream processes rather than channelization which, by altering the natural length and slope of streams, leads to increased problems of erosion and maintenance. The concepts and ideas presented in this seminar influenced planning decisions in this document and helped to guide decisions in the formulation of the Conceptual Plan.

