



# Santa Clara River Steelhead Coalition

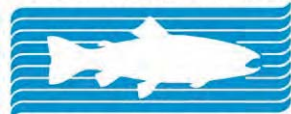
California Riparian Summit

October 18, 2017



Santa Clara River  
Steelhead Coalition

CALIFORNIA TROUT



FISH · WATER · PEOPLE



1. CalTrout Projects and Model
2. Southern California Steelhead
3. CalTrout SoCal Region
4. CalTrout local Strategies





# 1. CalTrout Projects

Established in 1971, California Trout is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure there are abundant wild fish thriving in healthy waters for a better California.

Solving complex resources issues while balancing the needs of wild fish and people.





## Our model of Work:

- California focused, embedded in **key geographies**, where wild fish influence communities
- Science based and **solution oriented**
- Credibility and trust provide opportunity to work with **diverse interests**
- Proof of concept project success, **establish precedent**, that can be scaled up



## 2. Southern California steelhead

100 years ago, Southern California was famous for its steelhead runs

Santa Ynez River - ~ 11,000 adult fish

Santa Clara River - ~ 9,000 adult fish

Ventura River - ~ 5,000 adult fish

Steelhead fishing in the region was enormously popular with men, women and children

**Annual steelhead runs in Southern California have declined precipitously from 32,000-46,000 returning adults to less than ~500.**





## State of Salmonids II: Southern steelhead

### ***Level of Concern: CRITICAL***

Southern steelhead populations are in danger of extinction within the next 25-50 years due to anthropogenic and environmental impacts threatening their recovery. Since its listing in 1997, abundance has continued to decline to precariously low levels.

***Top 3 Threats:*** Major Dams, Urbanization, Estuary Alteration.

***Actions:*** Water Conservation, Manage both resident Rainbow Trout with Southern steelhead as part of DPS, Fish Passage Remediation, CMP, Non-native species removal.

**Science-based report released:  
45% of California's salmon, steelhead,  
and trout will be extinct within 50 years.**

We have an opportunity to reverse this trajectory – the good news is that 31 of our 32 salmonids still persist, but we must act now. CalTrout's projects are leading the way and with your help we can return our native fish to resilience.

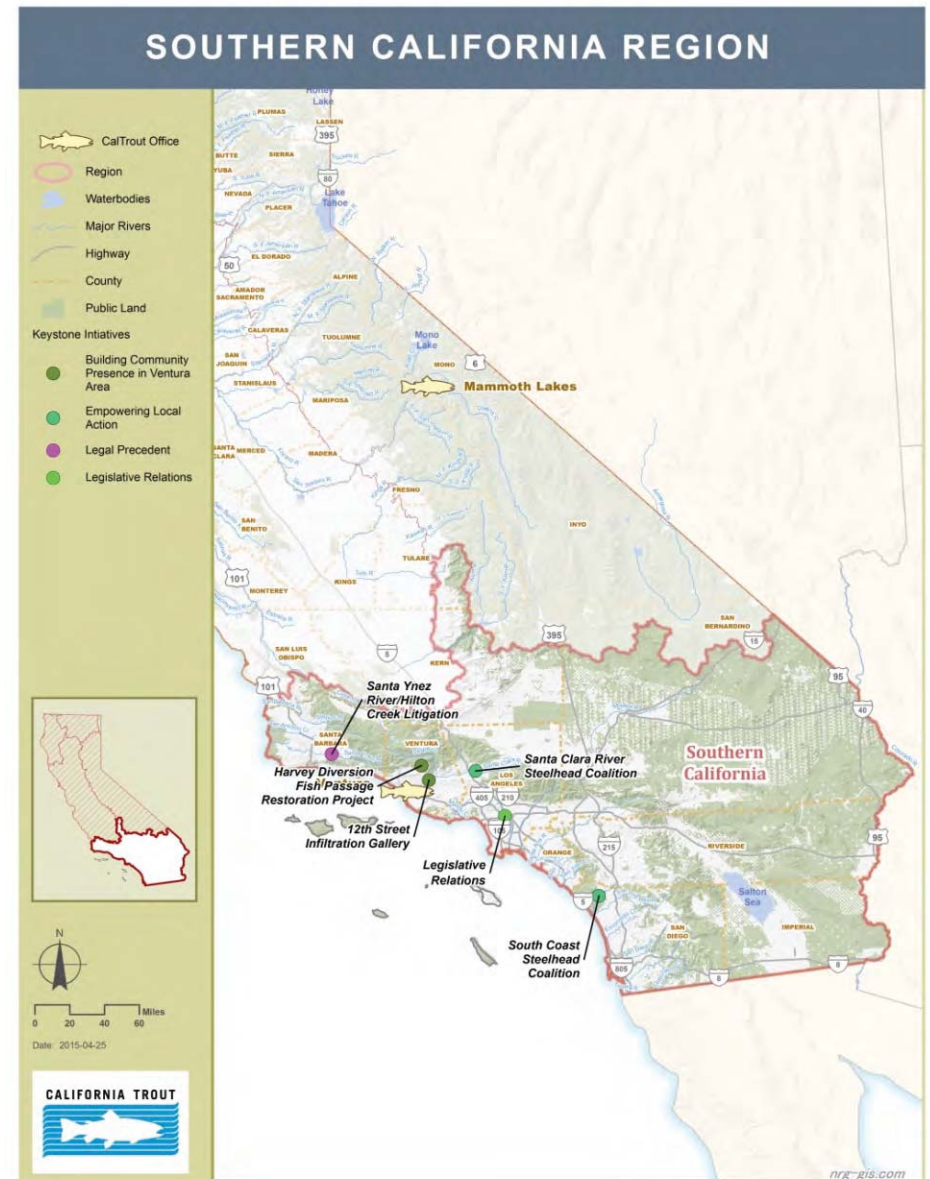
**Which fish species are in hot water?**      **What is threatening their survival?**      **What's being done? How can you help?**

Click to explore the online version of CalTrout's beautifully illustrated 95-page report.



### 3. CalTrout SoCal Region

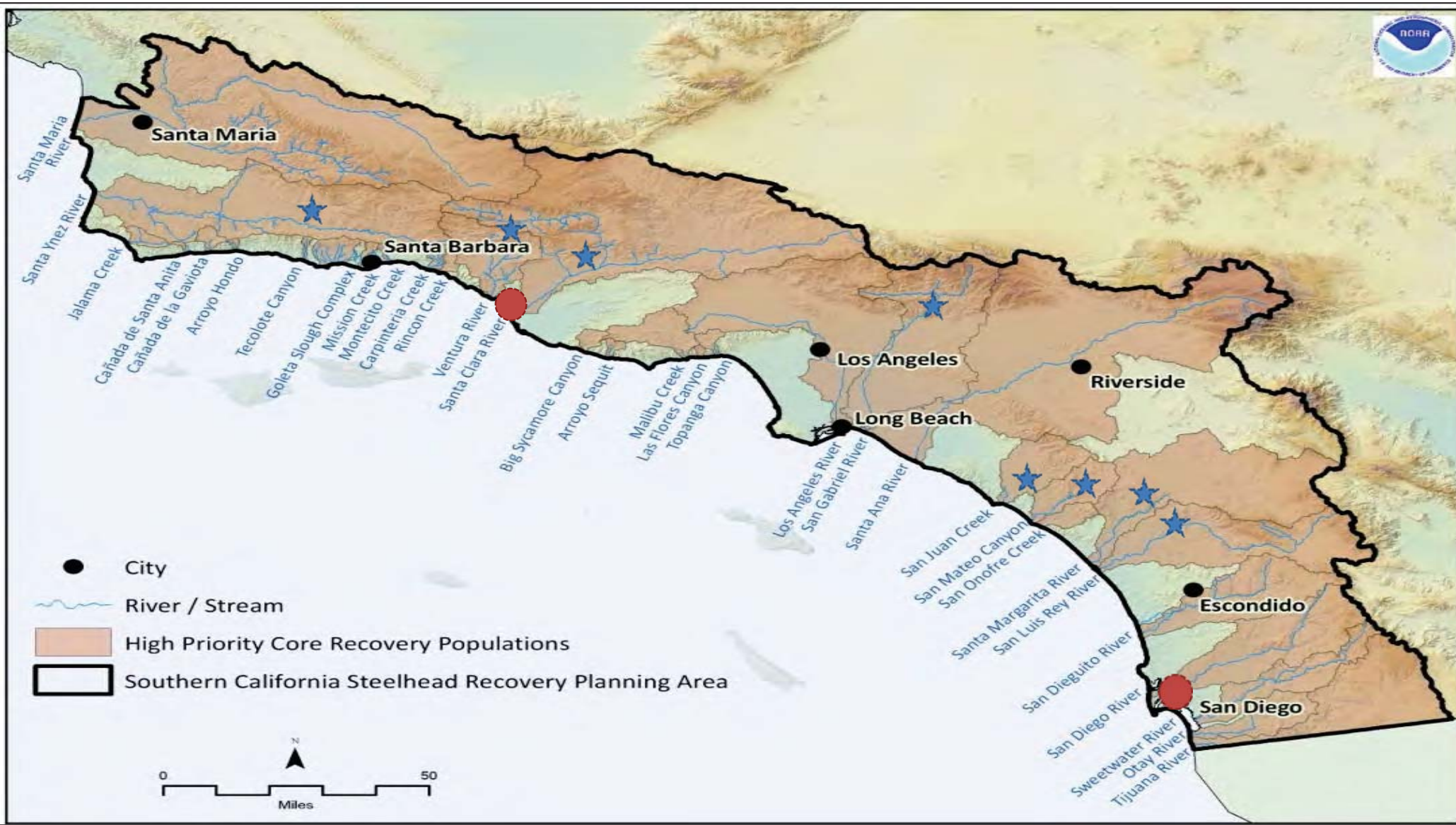
The regional goal is to leverage CalTrout's sustained presence in SoCal to increase awareness of state water issues amongst SoCal legislators, establish legal precedent on important statewide fish and water issues, establish CalTrout as a leader on state/local fish and water issues, and empower local groups to restore Southern steelhead and its habitat.



# CALIFORNIA TROUT



FISH · WATER · PEOPLE







## 4. CalTrout SoCal Strategies

- **Legislative Relations**
  - Annual Casting Call in Sacramento
  - In person meetings with legislators
  - Site Visits
  - Support letters for funding proposals
  - Policy and Advocacy – Parks Bond SB 5





- **Legal Precedent**

- Public Trust Doctrine
- Fish and Game Code 5937
- Endangered Species Act
- FERC Relicensing – Santa Felicia Dam & South State Water Project



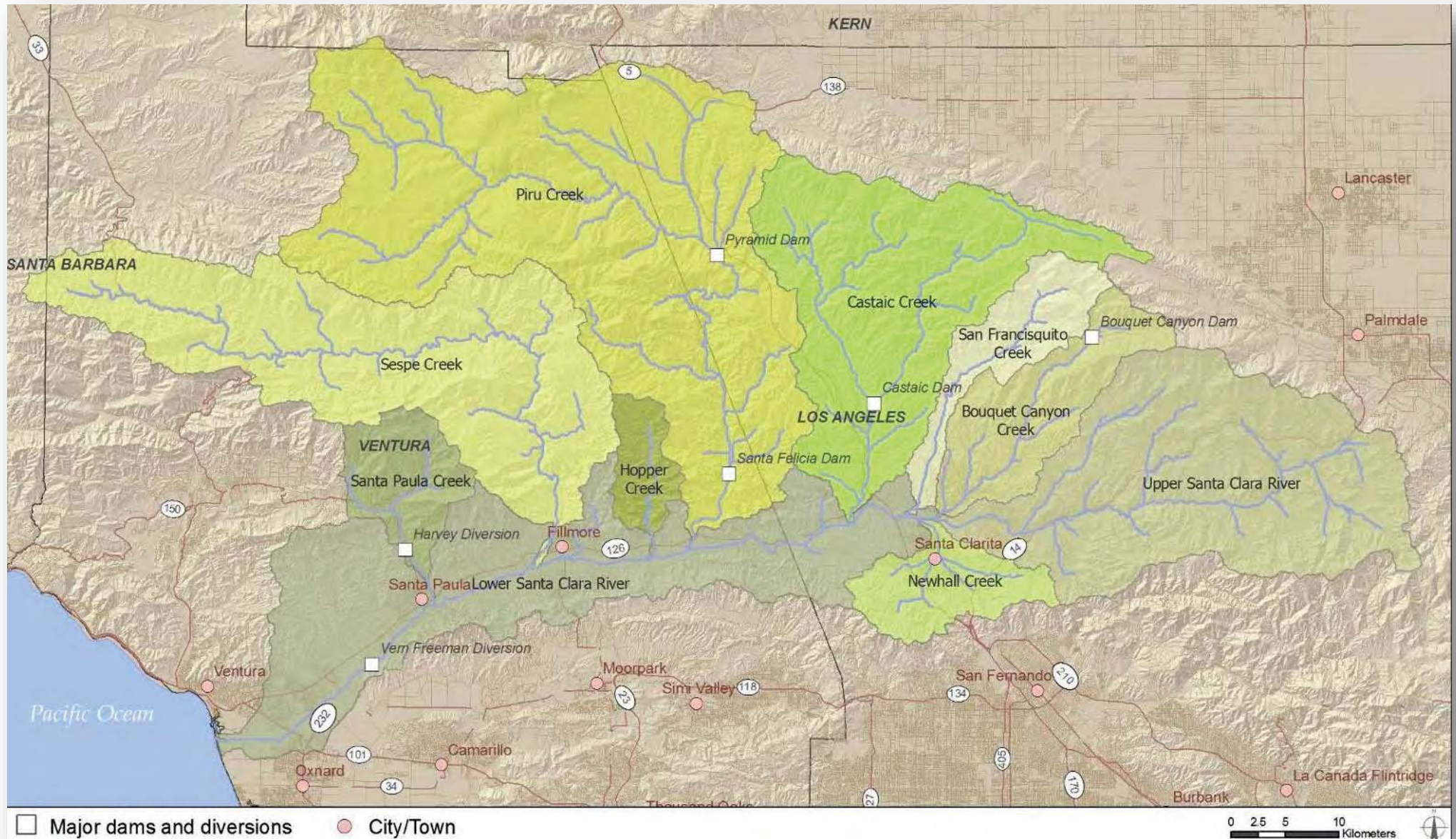


- **Empowering local action**

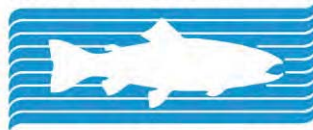
- Santa Clara River Steelhead Coalition
- South Coast Steelhead Coalition; co-chair Trout Unlimited
- Matilija Coalition and Dam Removal Funding Committee
- Fillmore and Piru Basins GSA Environmental Representative



Our mission is to protect and restore wild Southern California Steelhead and its habitat in the Santa Clara River watershed, which straddles both Ventura and Los Angeles Counties.



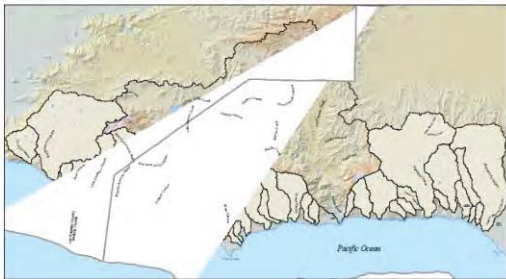
# CALIFORNIA TROUT



FISH · WATER · PEOPLE

## Santa Monica Mountains Steelhead Habitat Assessment Final Project Report

January 18, 2006



Submitted to:  
California Department of Fish and Game  
and California Coastal Conservancy -  
Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project

Submitted by:  
California Trout, Inc.  
870 Market Street, Suite 528  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA STEELHEAD RECOVERY PLAN



Southwest Regional Office  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Long Beach, CA

January 2012

## Santa Clara River Steelhead Trout: Assessment and Recovery Opportunities



December 2005

Prepared By:

**Matt Stoecker**

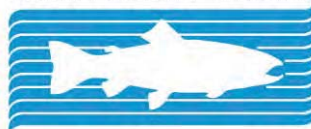
**STOECKER ECOLOGICAL**  
NATURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION SERVICES

and

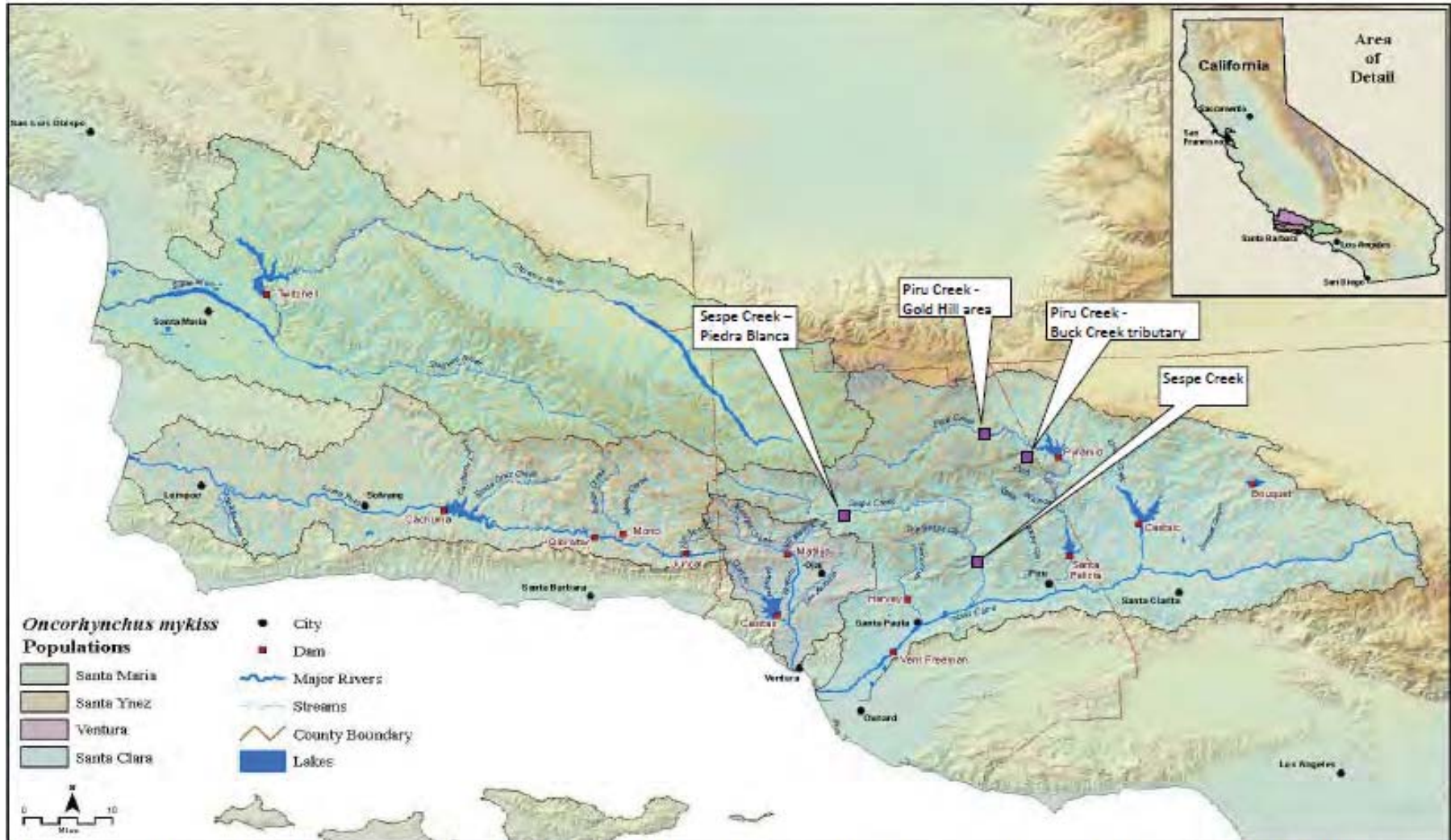
**Elise Kelley, Ph.D.**

University of California, Santa Barbara

Prepared For:  
The Santa Clara River Trustee Council and The Nature Conservancy



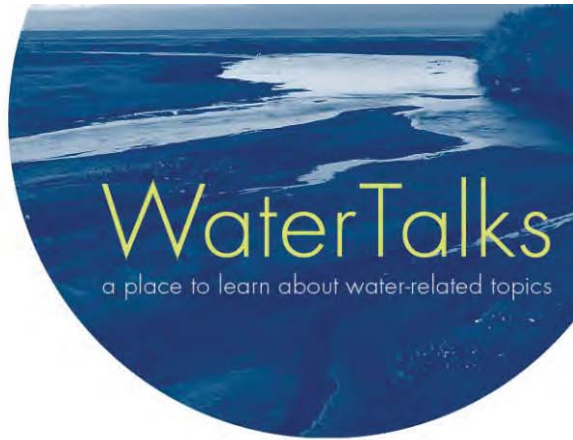
Northern End of Southern California RT Genetics Study Area (Monte Arido Highlands BPG):  
Piru Creek and Sespe Creek, tributaries of Santa Clara River



Map generated by Hunt and Associates for the 2008 Southern California Coast Steelhead Recovery Planning Area report for NOAA / NMFS (Mark Capelli, lead) and annotated to show results of Southern California rainbow trout tissue genetic analysis (Dr. Carlos Garza lab, NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center) for Trout Unlimited –San Diego study funded by Cal. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Grant Agreement P0950015.



- **Building Community Presence through on the ground projects**
  - *Santa Clara River Estuary Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Feasibility Study*
  - *Invasive Non-Native Plant Management - Habitat Restoration & Ecosystem Enhancement Project*
  - *Harvey Diversion Fish Passage Restoration Project (Phase I)*
  - *Sisar Creek Design Alternatives Assessment for steelhead passage*
  - *Rose Valley Lakes System Design Alternatives Analysis*
  
  - *Santa Clara River Steelhead Coalition – Water Talks Program*  
<http://caltrout.org/water-talks/>



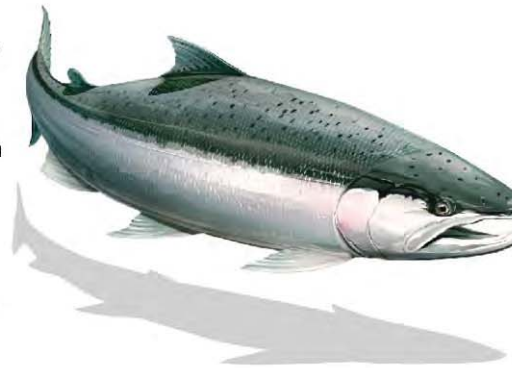
# Steelhead Life History

**With Mark Capelli** National Marine Fisheries Service  
**Rosi Dagit** Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains  
**Ethan Bell** Stillwater Sciences

**February 27, 2017**  
**6:30-9pm, WAV (Working Artist Ventura)**  
Community Room, Ground Floor, 175 S. Ventura Ave., Ventura CA 93001  
Street Parking

Steelhead are the anadromous, or ocean-going, form of rainbow trout which undergo a physiological change (smoltification) allowing them to live in both fresh water streams and the saltwater environment. Much of the Santa Clara River and several of its tributaries are listed as critical habitat for the federally listed Southern Steelhead.

**Find out why it's important for steelhead to return to their historical spawning and rearing grounds. Learn about what's being done to help and how you can participate.**



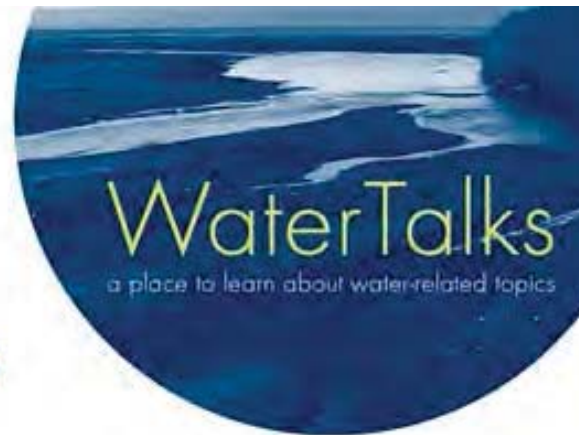
Mark Capelli has been a coastal environmental professional for over 35 years. He has had an exemplary career holding positions ranging from University of California, Santa Barbara faculty to California Coastal Commission analyst to current National Marine Fisheries Service Steelhead Recovery Coordinator for South-Central and Southern California.

**Contact Nina Danza: [ndanza@caltrout.org](mailto:ndanza@caltrout.org)**

Steelhead illustration by Paul Waters

The Water Talks program is an ongoing series of educational events designed to provide people a place to learn about water-related topics. The program goal is to increase informed participation in water management policy decisions by providing a place for community members to interact with experts who have a diverse range of perspectives and to develop common understanding. Water Talks is a program of the Santa Clara Steelhead Coalition led by California Trout.





# Clean Water for Fish, Farms and Families

With **Dr. Scott Hecht** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
**Jenny Newman** Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board  
**Nancy Broschart** Ventura County Farm Bureau

**March 27, 2017**

**6:30-9pm, Oxnard Performing Arts Center**

**Hueneme Room, 800 Hobson Street, Oxnard 93030**

In order to survive and grow, Southern steelhead need cool, clean water, and access to food. Riparian vegetation, which provides cover and shade, also needs good quality water to grow. Urbanization and agriculture have altered the landscape, producing contaminated surface runoff which degrades river water quality. This threatens habitat all along the Santa Clara River – from the headwaters to the sea.

**Find out more about water quality, the steps being taken to improve the situation and why clean water in the Santa Clara River watershed is vital to steelhead populations.**



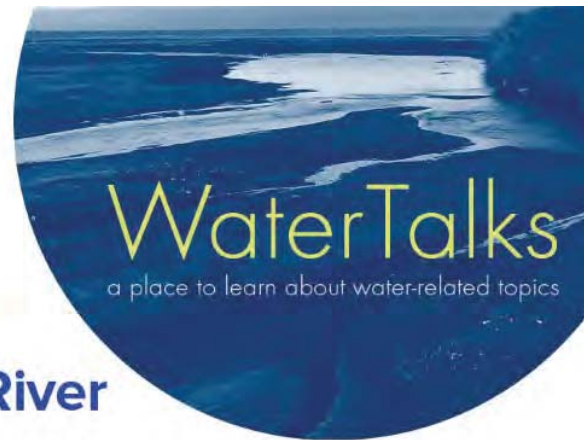
The Unchecked Santa Clara Estuary



For the past 14 years Dr. Scott Hecht has been working to determine the adverse effects of contaminants on threatened and endangered species, including Pacific salmon and steelhead. Currently, he is working with a national team of federal scientists and policy makers tasked with developing ecological risk assessments nationwide on all threatened and endangered species potentially exposed to registered pesticides.

**Contact Nina Danza: [ndanza@caltrout.org](mailto:ndanza@caltrout.org)**

The Water Talks program is an ongoing series of educational events designed to provide people a place to learn about water-related topics. The program goal is to increase informed participation in water management policy decisions by providing a place for community members to interact with experts who have a diverse range of perspectives and to develop common understanding. Water Talks is a program of the Santa Clara Steelhead Coalition led by California Trout.



# Stewardship of the Santa Clara River and its Steelhead

With **Dan Wilson** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
**Sophie Parker** The Nature Conservancy  
**Wilma Tichelaar** National Resource Conservation Service

**April 27, 2017**  
**6:30-9pm, Santa Paula Train Depot**  
**200 N. 10th St., Santa Paula, CA**

Stewardship is an ethos centered on responsible planning and management of resources to protect and conserve biodiversity for the future – ranging from removing weeds to conserving water, restoring habitat, to managing streamflow and groundwater. Landowners can play a major role in freshwater stewardship. For Hedrick Ranch Nature Area stewardship means restoring 220 acres of farmland back to riparian habitat. In other situations, it may entail implementing sustainable best practice management proven to improve soil and water quality and benefitting both production and the environment.

**Find out about many successful stewardship initiatives like the Wild Salmon Center Salmon Strongholds, the Santa Clara River Parkway, and how Safe Harbor agreements can ease regulatory burden. Plus lots of other local programs and assistance.**



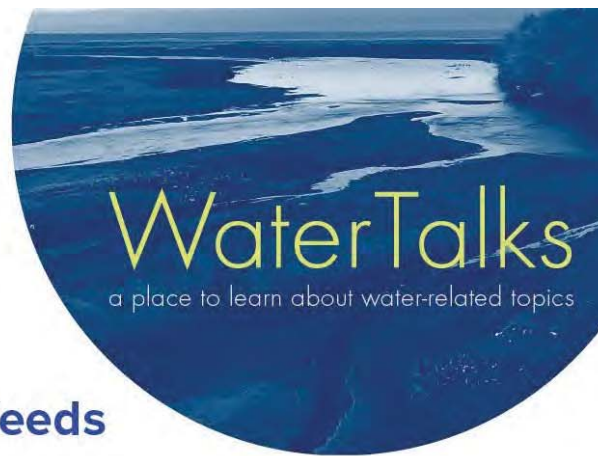
Volunteer Arundo eradication at Hedrick Ranch Nature Area



Dan Wilson is a fisheries biologist stationed since 2009 at NOAA Fisheries in Santa Rosa, California, where he works with stakeholders in Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin Counties to advance recovery of chinook salmon, steelhead and coho salmon. Dan was the lead negotiator and author of the Dry Creek Valley Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement. In his free time, Dan enjoys playing with his two daughters, running, bass fishing, and brewing beer.

**For details, contact Nina Danza: [ndanza@caltrout.org](mailto:ndanza@caltrout.org)**

The Water Talks program is an ongoing series of educational events designed to provide people a place to learn about water-related topics. The program goal is to increase informed participation in water management policy decisions by providing a place for community members to interact with experts who have a diverse range of perspectives and to develop common understanding of water related topics and increase informed participation in water management policy decisions. Water Talks is a program of the Santa Clara Steelhead Coalition led by California Trout.



# Invasion in My Backyard

## Managing Pests and Weeds to Benefit Fish

With **Joe Curti** Mountains Restoration Trust  
**Mickie Tang & Michelle Bennett** RIVRLab UC Santa Barbara

**May 25, 2017, 6:30-9pm at Patagonia**  
235 W. Santa Clara Street, Ventura, CA

The Santa Clara River riparian corridor is plagued with weeds and aquatic invasive species that degrade native fish habitat. These non-native plants animals are contributing to steelhead population declines. For example, *Arundo donax* (Giant Reed) aggressively displaces riparian vegetation resulting in disruption of ecosystem processes and loss of other important indigenous species, such as insects and amphibians that are important to steelhead growth. Invasive aquatic animals, such as sunfish, African clawed frog, and crayfish, outcompete steelhead for available food sources, directly prey on the native fish eggs, larva and steelhead smolts, and outcompete them for instream habitat. Warm temperatures associated with the drought and climate change also favor warm water adapted species. Shot Hole Borer has been identified in locations on the watershed. This species affects both agricultural trees and riparian vegetation.



Large Scale Eradication Arundo Donax

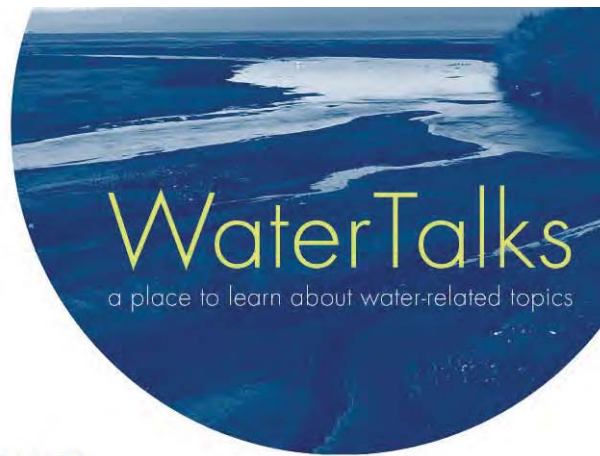
**Find out what non-native plant and animals are present, how they got here, and steps that are being taken to remove them and restore native habitat and protect our local biodiversity. The program is an excellent opportunity for students, residents and advocates to learn from science-based, solutions-oriented professionals involved with environmental management and stewardship.**



Joseph Curti is Aquatics Division Project Manager at Mountains Restoration Trust, working to protect the unique biodiversity of the Santa Monica Mountains. His UCLA Environmental Science and Conservation Biology degree has been used in a wide variety of work experience such as with brown bats, parasitic genetics and invasive species in southern California.

For details, contact Nina Danza: [ndanza@caltrout.org](mailto:ndanza@caltrout.org)

The Water Talks Series is an ongoing program of educational events designed to provide people a place to learn about water-related topics. The program goal is to increase informed participation in water management policy decisions by providing a place for community members to interact with experts who have a diverse range of perspectives and to develop common understanding. Water Talks is a program of the Santa Clara Steelhead Coalition led by California Trout.



# Connecting Headwaters to Ocean

## Designing for Fish Passage and Enhanced Instream Flow

With **Bill Trush** Humboldt State University, **Tom Hicks** Hicks Law and **Ed Wallace** Northwest Hydraulic Consultants

**June 29, 2017, 6:30-9pm at Patagonia**

**235 W. Santa Clara Street, Ventura, CA**

The Southern steelhead Recovery Plan identifies fish passage barriers and lack of instream flow as the two critical limiting factors to steelhead recovery in the Santa Clara River watershed. These factors must be resolved if the Santa Clara River and its major tributaries are to sustain the federally endangered Southern steelhead. Flow release and capture at Pyramid Dam, Santa Felicia Dam, and Freeman Diversion need to fit with natural rainfall occurrences so minimum instream depth is present during key steelhead life phases. Numerous structures built instream, ranging from simple road crossings to earthen diversions for agricultural irrigation, create impassable fish barriers and need improvement to allow the endangered species access to historic habitat. **Come and learn about changes to the Santa Clara River's historical hydrologic, strategies to enhance in-stream flow, and how multi-benefit water infrastructure projects can incorporate fish passage criteria and needs for steelhead recovery in the watershed.**



Santa Clara River at 12th Street. Photo: Candice Meneghin.



Bill Trush has been pursuing river ecology his entire life and is currently an adjunct professor in Humboldt State University's Department of Environmental Science and Management as well as serving as Co-Director of the University's River Institute. He is an expert in understanding how river ecosystems work and how to fix those that are damaged. A recent endeavor involves the study of differences between historically healthy Southern California rivers ecosystems annual hydrographs, and current hydrological changes that threaten steelhead populations.

**For details, contact Nina Danza: [ndanza@caltrout.org](mailto:ndanza@caltrout.org)**

The Water Talks Series is an ongoing program of educational events designed to provide people a place to learn about water-related topics. The program goal is to increase informed participation in water management policy decisions by providing a place for community members to interact with experts who have a diverse range of perspectives and to develop common understanding. Water Talks is a program of the Santa Clara Steelhead Coalition led by California Trout.



Santa Clara River  
Steelhead Coalition



Thank You!

Candice Meneghin

Conservation Program Manager, Southern California Region

(310) 890-2834

[cmeneghin@caltrout.org](mailto:cmeneghin@caltrout.org)



@SCRSC - Santa Clara Steelhead

Santa Clara River Steelhead Coalition

Santa\_Clara\_River\_Steelhead

[www.caltrout.org](http://www.caltrout.org)

Photo: Will Boucher