



May 4, 2009

Eileen Maher
Environmental Services Department
Port of San Diego
3165 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Environmental Projects Benefiting San Diego Bay

Dear Ms. Maher:

On behalf of San Diego Coastkeeper (Coastkeeper), I am pleased to submit the attached proposal, "Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration," for consideration as an Environmental Project Benefiting San Diego Bay. Information about the project appears below and in more detail in the full proposal.

Project Title: Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration

Project Description: San Diego Coastkeeper is the region's largest and most effective nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring San Diego Bay and the region's coastal waters and watersheds. More than a decade of experience fighting to improve water quality in San Diego, County coupled with expertise in collaboration and new technologies make Coastkeeper the ideal organization to achieve the goals set forth in this proposal.

- 0) **Watershed Management/The Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition:** Increase membership in the Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition and enhance collaboration among stakeholders working to improve watershed management in the Chollas Creek/Pueblo watershed as the coordinator of the Coalition;
- 1) **Restore and Enhance Chollas Creek through the Empowerment of Local Communities:** Empower and motivate community members living near Chollas Creek through education and involvement such that over 250 community members and Port employees participate in water monitoring, restoration, and volunteer activities; and
- 2) **Innovative and Effective Environmental Education:** Improve environmental education by disseminating information about water quality and pollution prevention in Chollas Creek to over 1,500 local residents using multi-media outlets including a Watershed Report and an interactive online web site.

Project Manager: Karen Franz, Watershed Program Director, (619) 758-7743 extension 113 or karen@sdcoastkeeper.org

Grant Funding Request: \$ 50,000

Total Cost of Proposal: \$95,768

Timeline of Project: July 2009-June 2010

Benefit to San Diego Bay: Once a pristine waterbody flowing through the scrub of East San Diego County into the City and out to the Bay, the state of California designated Chollas Creek a 303(d)-impaired waterbody in 1998. As part of the Pueblo watershed, water that runs through Chollas Creek impacts five sites in San Diego Bay that have been classified toxic 'hot spots' by California's Bay Protection Toxic Cleanup Program. Improvements to water quality in Chollas Creek/Pueblo watershed through restoration and sustainable change in the behaviors of community members that lead to pollution directly improve the health of San Diego Bay. This advances the Port's goal of improving habitats—including the Bay eelgrass beds—in general and specifically those that support endangered Eastern Pacific Green Sea Turtles and California Least Terns.

Source of Matching Funds: Funding by the Port of San Diego will be leveraged with hundreds of hours that volunteers have committed to contribute during the grant period to support the Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition and associated activities. Without the financial backing of supporters like the Port of San Diego, the valuable time of these volunteers will become an opportunity lost. Additional matching funds come from a community enhancement grant from The San Diego Foundation (2008-2010 funding) and anticipated support from Prop 50 funds administered through the California Department of Water Resources (these funds have been secured but not received due to the state's fiscal crisis).

San Diego Coastkeeper is excited about the improvement to ecosystem and human health that can be achieved in Chollas Creek, the Pueblo watershed, and San Diego Bay if the Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project is fully implemented and we thank you for your consideration of the attached proposal. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (619) 758-7743 extension 102.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reznik
Executive Director

Attachment: Proposal

San Diego Coastkeeper
*Improving the Health of San Diego Bay through the
Chollas Creek Watershed Management & Community Restoration Project*

Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....	4
II. Project Narrative	5
III. Qualifying Experience	8
IV. Objectives of Grant Proposal	9
V. Cost Proposal	11
VI. Personnel	11
VII. Subconsultants	12
VIII. Non-Profit Status	12
IX. Applicant Disclosure	12
X. Agreement.....	12
XI. Conflict of Interest	12
XII. Additional Information	12
XIII. Attachment A: Organizational Chart	13

San Diego Coastkeeper

Improving the Health of San Diego Bay through the Chollas Creek Watershed Management & Community Restoration Project

I. Introduction

San Diego Coastkeeper (Coastkeeper) respectfully requests a grant of \$50,000 from the Port of San Diego Environmental Services Department to support its Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project from July 2009 – June 2010 as part of the funding of Environmental Projects Benefiting San Diego Bay. The Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project (Project) applies a source control approach to preventing the pollution of San Diego Bay (Bay) by implementing watershed management practices upstream of the Bay.



The majority of the toxins and debris entering San Diego Bay originate in the creeks and rivers that terminate there. Some of these impacts are a direct result of intentional human behavior such as littering, and dumping trash and pollutants like automobile oil into creeks. Other pollutants are a consequence of the land use associated with the dense urbanized residential and industrial zones which characterize the Chollas Creek Watershed. Toxins are flushed into the creek during rain events and by irresponsible water management practices throughout the watershed, including over-irrigation and car washing.

Chollas Creek is a principal conduit for urban runoff, trash, and toxins reaching San Diego Bay. By some estimates the most toxic waterbody in San Diego County, Chollas Creek feeds the Bay with a stream of contaminants that include cadmium, copper, zinc, lead, and water containing high coliform counts. The impact is so significant that one of five “toxic hot spots” designated by California’s Bay Protection Toxic Cleanup Program is located where Chollas Creek pours into San Diego Bay. At this same location, portions of the Bay are identified in the 2002 Clean Water Act 303(d) listing as impaired due to sediment toxicity and benthic community effects, all of which have a direct negative impact on achieving healthy wildlife habitats such as the eelgrass beds that resident Eastern Pacific Green Sea Turtles depend upon.

San Diego Coastkeeper is the region’s largest and most effective nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring San Diego Bay and the region’s coastal waters and watersheds. More than a decade of experience fighting to improve water quality in San Diego, County coupled with expertise in collaboration and new technologies make Coastkeeper the ideal organization to achieve the goals set forth in this proposal. The Port’s support of the Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project will allow Coastkeeper to achieve the following:

- 1) Watershed Management/The Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition:** Increase membership in the Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition and enhance collaboration among stakeholders working to improve watershed management in the Chollas Creek/Pueblo watershed as the coordinator of the Coalition;

- 2) **Restore and Enhance Chollas Creek through the Empowerment of Local Communities:** Empower and motivate community members living in the highly-industrialized, economically disadvantaged neighborhoods near Chollas Creek through education and involvement such that over 250 community members participate in water monitoring, restoration, and volunteer activities; and
- 3) **Innovative and Effective Environmental Education:** Improve environmental education by disseminating information about water quality and pollution prevention in Chollas Creek to over 1,500 local residents using multi-media outlets including a Watershed Report and an interactive online web site.

The Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project addresses not only regulatory standards, but strives to improve the environmental health of the Pueblo watershed such that water flowing through Chollas Creek to San Diego Bay and the surrounding tidelands improves those ecosystems. Coastkeeper moves beyond monitoring adherence to minimally harmful standards, to instead bring about behavioral changes and the locally-based advocacy and vigilance that will ensure sustainable improvement.

II. Project Narrative

With the support of the Port of San Diego Environmental Services Department, the Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project will reduce threats to human health and natural environments in the Pueblo watershed and, therefore, help protect and restore San Diego Bay. Rivers and creeks, like Chollas Creek, significantly impact not only to the flow of water to San Diego Bay, but also contribute toxins and pollutants collected upstream. Chollas Creek, as well as neighboring Paleta and Switzer creeks, is among the most polluted waterbodies in San Diego County, making the Pueblo watershed one of the region's most impaired, unhealthy watersheds in which to reside. The watershed's poor water quality is largely due to the highly developed, industrialized, urban nature of this coastal locality, situated directly adjacent to San Diego Bay.

Long-term monitoring results from the City of San Diego and San Diego Coastkeeper have shown copper, lead, zinc, cadmium and coliform bacteria contaminate the Pueblo watershed's surface water, benthic sediments and wildlife habitats. The Pueblo watershed, with 13 different identified beneficial uses, warrants highest priority for addressing:

- **Severely Deteriorated Water Quality:** The state of California has designated Chollas Creek as a 303(d)-impaired waterbody. Five sites in San Diego Bay are impacted by runoff from the Pueblo watershed and have been classified as toxic "hot spots" by California's Bay Protection Toxic Cleanup Program. Such upstream factors greatly hinder the restoration and protection of essential habitats like the eelgrass beds that the Port is working so hard to protect; and
- **Threats to Human Health:** Chollas Creek and San Diego Bay offer local residents destinations to escape the urban environment and enjoy an outdoor setting and to supplement their diet with the fish that populate Bay waters. We seek to ensure that these environments do not mask threats to human health due to water contact or fish that is unhealthful to eat due to water pollution. Toxic urban runoff directly affects human health, particularly as toxins can be deposited directly into San Diego Bay, which is frequented by

boaters, anglers, and water enthusiasts. Due to poor water quality, human contact with water in the creek and Bay while boating, kayaking or fishing is considered so hazardous that it prompted the Port of San Diego to re-post fish consumption warnings along the Bayfront in 2006.

The urgent need for action is clear. Coastkeeper proposes to harness the effort of an impressive array of community groups and agencies currently active in the Pueblo watershed to restore the natural habitat and educate residents about their impact on the natural environment and dangers associated with the polluted water in their backyards. During the proposed grant period, Coastkeeper will:

1) **Watershed Management/The Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition:** Despite past successes, activities in the watershed are too often done in isolation, which hinders comprehensive, watershed-wide changes. In January 2009, Coastkeeper created a partnership among representatives from ten community groups and agencies, including the Port of San Diego, to launch the Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition. Coastkeeper aims to achieve the following during the grant period:

- Coordinate six bi-monthly Coalition meetings;
- Increase Coalition membership by 30%;
- Facilitate communication and collaboration resulting in government, business, and community partnerships that produce 4 joint events; and
- Track progress towards the goals established by the Coalition (Increase public awareness and community stewardship; Be an information center for activities within the Chollas Creek watershed; and Utilize resources effectively by coordinating events, activities, and restoration efforts) and report on that progress in June 2010.

2) **Restore and Enhance Chollas Creek through the Empowerment of Local Communities:** Engaging and empowering local communities to play an active role in protecting their environment and own health is critically important. Area residents live in some of the most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in San Diego, including Barrio Logan, Encanto and Harbor. The watershed's poor water quality is largely due to the highly-developed, industrialized, urban nature of this coastal locality, situated directly adjacent to San Diego Bay. Unfortunately, education and outreach often does not reach these neighborhoods leading to inability to participate in pollution prevention and speak out against industrial practices that impact their environmental and personal health. With the support of the Port of San Diego, Coastkeeper will implement the following strategies:

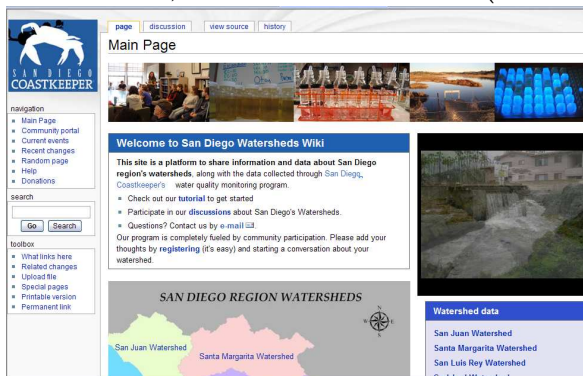
- *Community Outreach:* Four quarterly public meetings will engage the community in education and debate, address concerns, and motivate volunteers. Meetings will reach at least 1,000 community members and generate 50 volunteers. In support of the Coalition goal to increase collaboration, Coastkeeper will partner with the Coalition of Neighborhood Councils, the Alternative Health Network, and the Network for a Healthy California to conduct at least 4 community events.



- *Walk-the-Watershed Restoration Events.* Hands-on environmental education in residents' backyard ecosystems will engage them in interpretive walks, practicing pollution prevention measures, and habitat restoration that removes debris and bolsters the population of native plant species. Event activities are geared toward improving ecosystem health and motivating behavioral changes. In collaboration with Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek, Coastkeeper will engage 250 participants from the Chollas Creek community in the 2009 Walk the Watershed event, which we project will remove 500 pounds of trash from the watershed.
- *Community Volunteer Water Monitoring.* Substantial data have been collected for Chollas Creek, but significant gaps still exist to fully research the health of the Creek and identify and evaluate strategies to reduce pollution. In addition to bridging this data gap, volunteer water monitoring can be a vital tool for educating and engaging local residents in watershed stewardship. Coastkeeper will recruit 50 volunteers to conduct monthly Watershed Monitoring events that will generate water quality data that meets regulatory standards and will be publicly available via the Coastkeeper website to educate the public and policy makers about the state of water quality in Chollas, Switzer, and Paleta Creeks.

3) **Innovative and Effective Environmental Education:** Improving access to environmental information about water quality, the resulting threats to human health, and pollution prevention measures that can be implemented by members of the Chollas Creek community is an essential contributor to sustainable change. During the grant period Coastkeeper proposes to produce two distinct communication tools to disseminate that information:

- *A comprehensive Watershed Report* produced in hard-copy and electronically will be distributed to over 1,500 people through outreach events, to approximately 7,000 people through our electronic newsletter, and available on our public web site that receives 2 million hits annually. The report will include information about toxicity levels, bacteria counts, the amount and types of debris (trash) present in the watershed and the likely or determined sources of those pollutants. Language will be easily accessible to laypeople—particularly those who experienced some element of outreach conducted by Coastkeeper or another member of the Coalition—and accompanied by recommendations for simple behavioral adjustments to address the pollution, such as proper disposal of automobile fluids and household trash.
- *An innovative, collaborative online tool* (a “wiki”) that permits users to access watershed



information including geographic parameters, water quality data, and links to research. Anyone who accesses the site and registers will be able to contribute articles, images, and their own commentary. This online wiki creates a forum in which anyone with an insight, concern, or

question can interact with other interested individuals to exchange knowledge and, ideally, generate new ideas to improve the health of Chollas Creek, San Diego Bay, and other watersheds.

Leveraging the Port’s Support

Funding by the Port of San Diego will be leveraged with hundreds of hours that volunteers have committed to contribute during the grant period to support the Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition and associated activities. Without the financial backing of supporters like the Port of San Diego, the valuable time of these volunteers will become an opportunity lost. Additional matching funds come from a community enhancement grant from The San Diego Foundation (2008-2010 funding) and anticipated support from Prop 50 funds administered through the California Department of Water Resources (these funds have been secured but not received due to the state’s fiscal crisis).

Conclusion

The Chollas Creek Watershed Management and Community Restoration Project is indispensable in the fight to restore the health of San Diego Bay. Critical natural habitats for commercially and recreationally important species and for those endangered species that rely on a healthy ecosystem in the Bay and surrounding tidelands benefit from measures taken within these habitats as well as upstream. Improvements to the highly-impaired Chollas Creek/Pueblo watershed create significant downstream positive impacts for human and ecosystem health. Even in the most economically stable of situations, we cannot afford to waste the time, energy, or the financial resources available to maintain and improve water quality in San Diego County. With the support of the Port of San Diego, San Diego Coastkeeper will provide the expertise and capacity necessary to coordinate effective and efficient watershed management in Chollas Creek and improve the quality of water flowing downstream to San Diego Bay and the surrounding tidelands.

III. Qualifying Experience

To execute the Chollas Creek Watershed and Community Restoration Project, San Diego Coastkeeper will utilize its skill in coordinating and collaborating with other organizations and agencies; conducting community engagement and education activities; and producing communication tools. The experience described below testifies to our ability to be successful.

Project (description below)	Dates Performed	Reference	Telephone
Coastal Cleanup Day	September 20, 2008	I Love a Clean San Diego	Morgan Justice-Black (619) 291-0103 ext 3003
Watershed Monitoring Program	Monthly	State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	Erick Burren Desk (213) 576-6788 Cell (213) 712-6862

Project (description below)	Dates Performed	Reference	Telephone
World Water Monitoring Day	October 2008	State Water Resources Control Board	Erick Burres Desk (213) 576-6788 Cell (213) 712-6862
		SD County Watershed Protection and Dept. of Education	Rachel Borgatti (858) 495-5413
Walk the Watershed	March (annually)	Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek	Liz Faddis 619-543-0430

Coastal Cleanup Day: Together with I Love a Clean San Diego, we coordinate thousands of San Diego volunteers to identify, track, and remove trash from over 70 inland and coastal clean-up sites that might otherwise have ended up in the ocean. We are engaged annually in efforts to protect our coastal resources through beach cleanups, water monitoring and other volunteer activities; and tens of thousands of children receive our hands-on and science-based Project SWELL curricula that teaches them to be better stewards of our natural environment.

Watershed Monitoring Program: Coastkeeper works with dozens of nonprofit and agency stakeholders to operate its Watershed Monitoring Program. Annually, 400 volunteers participate in monthly environmental science training events and collect water samples from ten of San Diego County's eleven watersheds. Twelve Lab Fellows make a long-term commitment to ensuring the success of the program and gain valuable experience in our lab, testing the samples.

World Water Monitoring Day: Conducted with the County Department of Education, Sister Schools of San Diego, San Diego Stream Team, the State Water Resources Control Board, and SDSU, World Water Monitoring Day engages school children from San Diego, Tijuana, and Rosarito in environmental education to excite them about personal interactions with the habitats that their actions impact and the knowledge necessary to act responsibly.

Walk-the-Watershed Restoration Events: In partnership with Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek, Coastkeeper organizes hands-on environmental education that engages residents to motivate behavioral changes through interpretive walks, practicing pollution prevention measures, and habitat restoration geared toward removing debris, and restoring native species.

IV. Objectives of Grant Proposal

Coastkeeper anticipates a multitude of benefits centered on the coordination between stakeholders in Chollas Creek. Together with our coordination of the Coalition, Coastkeeper will focus its efforts on the projects described in the table below.

Task	Description	Timeline	Partners
<i>1. Watershed Management/The Chollas Creek Watershed Coalition</i>			
1.1 Coalition Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six bi-monthly meetings Increase membership by 30% 	July 2009-June 2010	Coalition Members

Task	Description	Timeline	Partners
1.2 Enhance Coalition Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 collaborative events involving business, government, nonprofit organizations, and/or community • Track progress towards the goals established by the Coalition and report on that progress 	July 2009-June 2010	Coalition Members
2. Restore and Enhance Chollas Creek through the Empowerment of Local Communities			
2.1 Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 quarterly public meetings engage 1,000 community members in education and motivate 50 volunteers to participate in an outreach event • 4 outreach events in partnership with other organizations 	July 2009-June 2010 (qtrly) July 2009-June 2010	Coalition of Neighborhood Councils; Alt. Health Netwk.; Network for a Healthy California
2.2 Walk-the- Watershed Restoration Events	One annual event engages 250 residents in hands-on environmental education, including interpretive walks, practicing pollution prevention measures, and habitat restoration	March 2010	Groundwork San Diego- Chollas Creek
2.3 Community Volunteer Water Monitoring	50 volunteers participate in monthly Watershed Monitoring events that generate water quality data and engage community members in environmental stewardship	July 2009-June 2010	SWRCB
3. Innovative and Effective Environmental Education			
3.1 Watershed Report	Distribute a Watershed Report that explains water quality (e.g., toxicity, bacteria, debris), pollution sources, and pollution prevention in Chollas Creek to 1,500 residents at outreach events and 7,000 through our electronic newsletter	June 2010	Groundwork SD - Chollas Creek, County of San Diego and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
3.2 Online wiki	Launch an innovative, collaborative online tool (a "wiki") that permits users to access watershed information including geographic parameters, water quality data, and links to research and contribute their own articles, images, and commentary.	Summer 2009	County of San Diego and RWQCB

V. Cost Proposal

BUDGET: Chollas Creek Watershed Management & Community Restoration

Personnel	Rate (a)	Hours	Port of SD Request	Match (b)	Total
Watershed Program Director	\$ 85	220	\$ 18,700	\$ 14,880	\$ 33,580
Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator	65	220	14,300	4,940	19,240
GIS Analyst & Wiki Developer	40	300	12,000	4,940	16,940
Volunteer hours	21	600	-	12,750	12,750
<i>Subtotal Personnel</i>			\$45,000	\$37,510	\$82,510
Additional Expenses					
Event Expenses			\$ 2,000	\$ 500	\$ 2,500
Supplies			500	2,000	2,500
Mileage/Travel			500	500	1,000
Communications/Outreach			2,000	5,258	7,258
<i>Subtotal Additional</i>			\$5,000	\$8,258	\$13,258
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES			\$50,000	\$45,768	\$95,768

(a) Fully burdened personnel rates include overhead of 15%.

(b) Matching funds include San Diego Foundation (\$13,018) and Proposition 50 funds (\$20,000).

VI. Personnel

Primary contact: Karen Franz, Watershed Program Director

Phone (619) 758-7743 extension 113 or karen@sdcoastkeeper.org

Karen Franz, Watershed Program Director, joined San Diego Coastkeeper in January 2006 as Watershed Monitoring Program Director. As a part of her role at Coastkeeper, Karen works with volunteers to monitor San Diego's eleven coastal-draining watersheds. Each month, approximately 20 citizens are trained to gather data about the health of the county's waterways. Through this program, all data is collected and managed in accordance with EPA/State Water Resource Control Board standards to ensure that this data can be used by decision-makers for the purpose of improving impaired water bodies and protecting clean ones. Her role at Coastkeeper also includes stormwater management (e.g., pesticides, BMPs) and investigative water monitoring to identify pollution sources. Karen brings to Coastkeeper a broad multidisciplinary background and six years of project management experience, with research and practical experience in international development for water resource management and integrated water planning.

Sarah Blakeslee, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, joined Coastkeeper in August 2008 as the organization's first dedicated Volunteer Coordinator, focusing on the Watershed Monitoring Program and Community Based Social Marketing Program. Sarah is also the official captain of "Clean Sweep", Coastkeeper's pollution monitoring boat. Her people skills and experience with citizen volunteer cultivation methods are invaluable to Coastkeeper as we work to achieve community-driven water conservation.

Soumya Chennapragada, GIS Analyst & Wiki Developer since September 2008, is currently working on creating data interpretation maps for Coastkeeper's Water Quality Monitoring data using a GIS platform and developing the wiki site on San Diego region watersheds (www.sdwatersheds.org). Soumya holds a Bachelors of Technology degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering and has graduate level coursework emphasis in Water Resources Engineering.

Full resumes are available upon request. Please see Attachment A for the organizational chart.

VII. Subconsultants

Not applicable.

VIII. Non-Profit Status

Please see enclosure.

IX. Applicant Disclosure

Not applicable.

X. Agreement

San Diego Coastkeeper finds the sample agreement attached to the Port of San Diego Request For Proposals, including the insurance and indemnification clauses, acceptable.

XI. Conflict of Interest

San Diego Coastkeeper shall disclose to the Port if it is currently performing services of any kind for any person or entity that would conflict with the services to be provided to the Port under this agreement. Further, should San Diego Coastkeeper be selected pursuant to this RFP, San Diego Coastkeeper agrees that it will not perform services which would conflict with the services to be provided under this RFP.

XII. Additional Information

None

XIII. Attachment A: Organizational Chart

