



Canyon Enhancement Planning (CEP)

Stakeholder Orientation Sheet

San Diego Canyonlands

Goals

San Diego Canyonlands (SDCL) is a young non-profit organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of San Diego's 150+ unique urban canyons. Our [Canyon Enhancement Planning Program \(CEP\)](#) is aimed at promoting and planning visual and physical canyon access, connections into communities, habitat restoration, resource conservation, environment-based education, and ecologically sensitive recreation. Consequently, we seek a *balance* of restored nature and human enjoyment (including educational opportunities) within the canyons.

For example, we want to create safe access to and through the canyons for people to enjoy nature, as well as connections or shortcuts to other neighborhoods, schools, services and activity centers. To balance this amount of human activity in the canyons with the needs of wildlife and sometimes endangered species, we can restore areas where un-approved trails have been established in order to reduce habitat fragmentation and erosion and provide an improved environment for wildlife.

Background

SDCL has established a CEP [Committee](#) and created a [CEP Guide](#) (aimed at helping community stakeholders) that outlines the protocols/process to facilitate a systems approach to enhance and integrate our unique natural open spaces with the fabric of the urban environment. In 2009, four canyons in central City Heights (Manzanita-Lexington, Hollywood, Swan and 47th Street Canyons) were chosen to be the CEP pilot/test project area. The program created a Canyon Enhancement Action Plans for each canyon, and funding has been secured to implement many of the planned enhancement projects. Following on this success, SDCL is now expanding/implementing the CEP program throughout San Diego, [canyon-by-canyon](#).

Steps

- ✓ Begin to build/bolster local interest/support and volunteer stewardship ("Friends") of the targeted canyon/creek area through guided tours and restoration/cleanup events. Recruit leadership.
- ✓ Map existing canyon conditions for analysis & opportunities assessment, to be used during planning.
- ➔ • **Stakeholder Planning Workshops: Create a stakeholder group, engage civic and planning groups, and conduct a series of workshops for input aimed at creating an "Enhancement Action Plan" for the targeted canyon/creek area.**
- Continue to build/bolster local support and "Friends" groups to implement projects. Assist "Friends" leadership.
- Implement Enhancement Action Plan components/projects using a combination of volunteer stewardship, other local support, and project funding.
 - Seek and obtain any necessary permits/approval to implement planned projects/components.
 - Seek and obtain funding for major planned improvements.

Enhancement Action Plan Components

The goal of the Enhancement Action Plan is to identify ways to increase safety, identify what trails are desirable to keep/improve and which should be closed, identify areas for habitat restoration, how to integrate the canyon/creek area with developed parks and other public/community areas, address erosion problems, etc.

A Note on Land Jurisdiction

- Most of the planned projects resulting from the CEP program will be on City of San Diego open space land and will require agreement with and approvals from key community stakeholders and planning groups, including the Park & Recreation Department (including the Open Space Division), Development Services Department, and City Council.
- Land in our canyons is considered "Environmentally Sensitive Land". There are regulations that are designed to protect wildlife and the natural values of these areas that must be complied with during both planning and implementation. The resource agencies (including the US Fish & Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Army Corps of Engineers when wetlands are involved) are key stakeholders and may require permits for some proposed canyon enhancement projects.
- Private land owners can and are encouraged to play a role in this planning effort, but it should be clear that this effort will not use private land without agreement with the land owners.

More info at: www.sdcanyonlands.org/cep