

Watershed Management **POSITION PAPER**

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POSITION STATEMENT

The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) defines watershed management as a holistic approach to managing land use changes through scientifically-based master planning techniques which promote land management that respects the natural flow of water on the land and maintains natural processes in altered landscapes.

IMPORTANCE TO THE SAN ANTONIO RIVER WATERSHED

Implementing appropriate watershed management techniques is important to achieve SARA's mission to sustain and enrich life in the San Antonio River Watershed as it maintains and establishes watershed integrity by striking a balance between the physical, chemical, biological and economic components of the watershed.



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SUMMARY

A watershed is all of the land area that drains water to a common point, usually a river, stream or lake. SARA utilizes a watershed management approach to create holistic watershed master plans, by individual watershed (i.e. sub-watersheds within the whole of the San Antonio River Watershed), in order to respect the differences in land characteristics, while achieving similar goals.



SARA's watershed management approach is an ongoing cycle of steps that include:

- Planning: Determine the watershed unit and issues to be studied and identify the stakeholders and resource personnel;
- Data Collection: Collect routine water quality and quantity data at specific locations;
- Assessment and Targeting: Compare current water quality to state and federal standards or establish desired future conditions;
- Strategy Development: Develop goals and strategies to maintain or achieve water quality standards and meet future demands; and
- Implementation: Implement goals and strategies through public policy, best management practices (BMPs) and education. SARA will measure progress to make sure the implementation is results oriented.

The watershed master plans, developed with the watershed management approach identified above, take existing knowledge and utilize new computer modeling and decision matrices to develop infrastructure and best management practices (BMP) recommendations. SARA has been very active as the technical planning lead by making significant investments in collecting and maintaining watershed data and developing complex analytical tools and models to make scientifically sound watershed management recommendations. SARA will ensure that watershed master plans and models remain updated to reflect continual changes in land uses as well as to capture improvements in available data.

Through its intergovernmental and community relationships, SARA uses these watershed master plan recommendations to educate the public and influence decision makers regarding land use changes, investment in capital projects and modifications to development regulations within the basin.

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