



## News for Immediate Release

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### Alluvial Fan Comments Sought

SACRAMENTO -- The Alluvial Fan Task Force today released guidance documents for a 30-day public review and comment period. The task force was authorized in 2004 by Assembly Bill 2141 to review the state of knowledge of alluvial fans, determine future research needs and prepare recommendations relating to alluvial fan floodplain management. In 2006, funding was secured through a Federal Emergency Management Agency Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning grant and Assembly Bill 466 authorized the state match. In December of 2007, DWR appointed 33 public members from the Southern California region to serve on the task force, including elected officials, local floodplain managers, developers, environmental interests and representatives from related state and federal agencies.

The task force was charged with examining issues related to the unique flood hazards associated with development on alluvial fans. An alluvial fan is formed where fast-flowing water spreads onto a flatter plain -- typically at the exit of a canyon. Principal hazards associated with alluvial fan flooding include high-velocity, debris-laden flows resulting from a series of storms, particularly following wildfires, in semi-arid regions. Task force members were also charged with developing tools that will assist communities where alluvial fans are present; preparing a voluntary locally-adopted model ordinance for communities subject to flooding on alluvial fans; and developing recommendations for future development on alluvial fans.

The guidance documents released today include a draft version of *The Integrated Approach for Sustainable Development on Alluvial Fans* which includes the tools and model ordinance and also a *Findings and Recommendations Report*. Neither recommends changing local, state or federal regulations for building within a floodplain. Rather, they provide a suite of tools that local governments and other stakeholders can use to evaluate hazards, resources, and site-specific issues in alluvial fan areas.

Development on alluvial fans can affect a community's public safety costs, future water supply, ongoing flood management costs and long-term environmental sustainability. The guidance documents encourage communities to consider flooding and other hazards, including wildfires; potential post-disaster clean-up costs; and the conservation of beneficial values of alluvial fans in their land use decision-making. The preferred approach for sustainable development on alluvial fans is to integrate flood management with sustainable land use in ways that are cost-effective to local communities.

Alluvial fans are increasingly being seen as local resources that can provide groundwater recharge, habitat, open space, aesthetic beauty and recreation as well as future development sites. Most undeveloped alluvial fans have the innate capacity to capture the ephemeral flow of rainwater that helps to recharge local groundwater basins. Southern California's capacity to retain historic rainwater recharge helps reduce dependency on imported water supplies for the region.

DWR partnered with the Water Resources Institute at California State University, San Bernardino (WRI-CSUSB) in March of 2007 to coordinate Task Force activities. The guidance documents can be downloaded at <http://aff.csusb.edu/> where directions for submitting comments until June 3, 2010 are provided. In late May, DWR and WRI-CSUSB will also host Webinars on the guidance documents and dates for the Webinars will be provided on the website soon.

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*The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.*

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