

Santa Clarita Water Divison

---

STRATEGIC PLAN

2010





*Santa Clarita Valley's  
renowned Oak tree*

## Santa Clarita Water Division Strategic Plan 2010

---

# contents

Division Overview . . . . .	1
Strategic Plan Framework . . . . .	4
Mission Statement. . . . .	5
Values. . . . .	5
Goals and Strategic Objectives. . . . .	7
<b>Appendices</b>	
A SCWD Organizational Structure . . . . .	10
B SCWD Action Plan. . . . .	11



# strategic plan 2010

## DIVISION OVERVIEW

The mission of the Santa Clarita Water Division (SCWD) is to provide reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost to its customers. SCWD is located in the northwestern portion of Los Angeles County, approximately 35 miles from downtown Los Angeles.

SCWD is one of four retail water purveyors in the Castaic Lake Water Agency's wholesale service area (see *Figure 1 on the following page*). The Division's service area covers an area of approximately 56 square miles, including the unincorporated communities of Saugus, Canyon Country and West Newhall, and portions of the City of Santa Clarita.

### A Brief History

The Santa Clarita Water Division was originally organized as the Santa Clarita Water Company in 1973 through a merger between the Bouquet Water Company and Solemint Water Company. In

1999, Castaic Lake Water Agency acquired the Company, with the goal of improving management of the Valley's groundwater resources, integrating water resources planning and promoting conjunctive use of the Valley's water supply. Overall benefits of this acquisition to Agency and SCWD customers have included:

- Improved water supply reliability
- Strengthened drought protection
- Enhanced water quality
- Optimal use of water and infrastructure

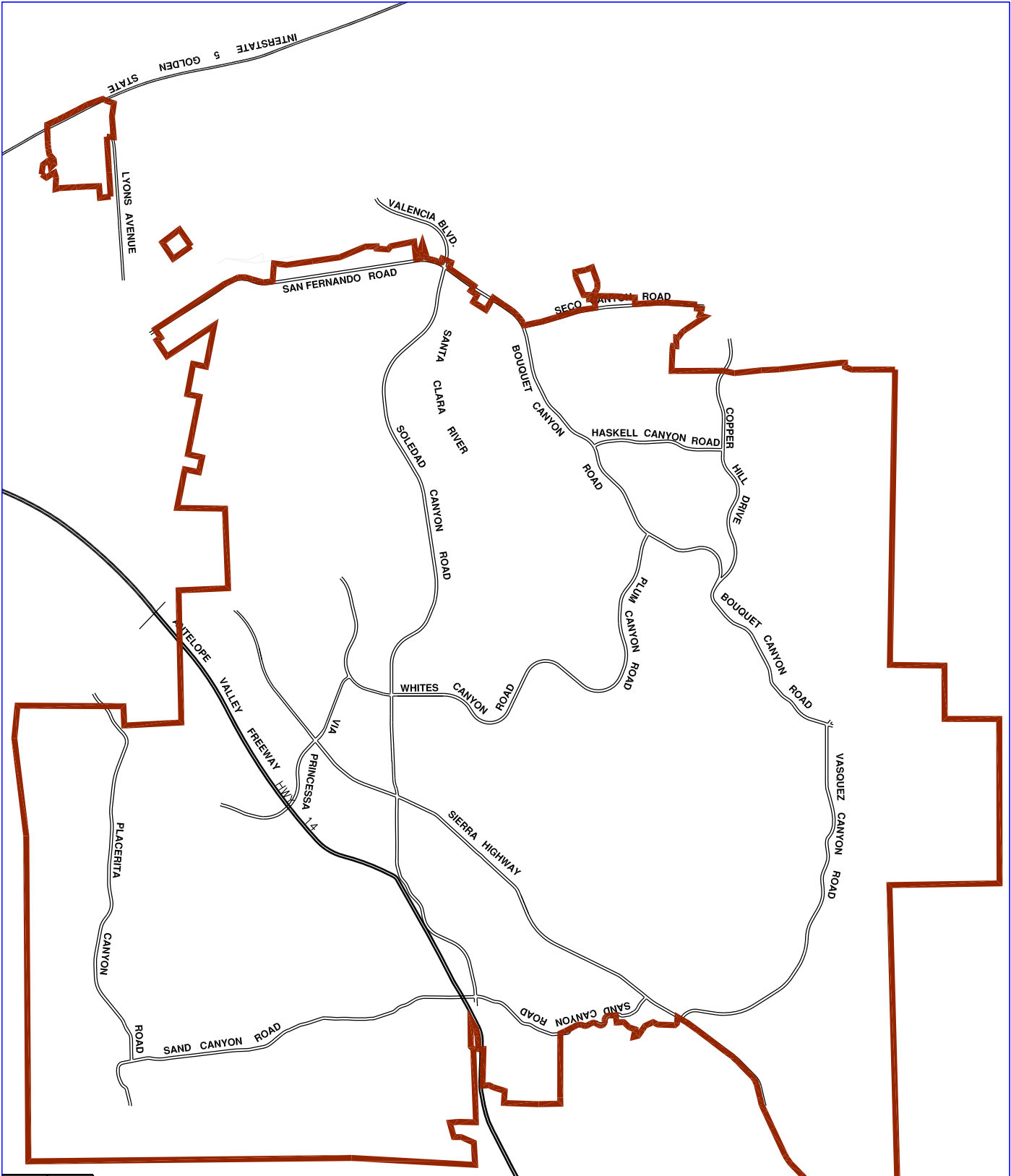
### SCWD Today

Today, the SCWD is the second largest water retailer in the Santa Clarita Valley and serves a population of approximately 111,000. The Division's top ten customers include:

- G.H. Palmer Properties
- City of Santa Clarita
- Hart School District

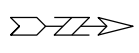
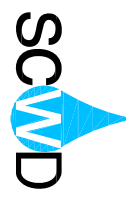


Castaic Lake



SANTA CLARITA WATER DIVISION  
2010

SERVICE AREA MAP



- Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation
- American Beauty HOA
- Mariposa and Plum Canyon (HOAs)
- Saugus Union School District
- Pacific Crest HOA
- Sand Canyon Oaks
- Canyon View Estates

Collectively, these customers represent less than 12.5 percent of the Division’s annual revenues, with the vast majority of total revenues coming from the many residents, small businesses and other land-owners throughout the service area.

The Division is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors that has sole authority to set water rates for the service area. SCWD and CLWA share a single Board of Directors. The Division currently has 51 employees. See Appendix A for the SCWD organizational structure.

### Water Supply Sources and Facilities

SCWD water supplies include local groundwater and water imported by the Castaic Lake Water Agency. Groundwater constitutes about 40 percent of its water supply and comes from local wells that extend into the Alluvial Aquifer and Saugus Formation.



*A Division employee conducts routine maintenance.*

During FY 2010/11, it is estimated that the SCWD will provide 29,800 acre-feet (AF) of water to its customers, serving approximately 28,000 connections.

The Division’s major facilities consist of:

- Forty-seven water storage tanks with a total capacity of 72 million gallons (MG)
- Fourteen groundwater production wells
- Over 300 miles of pipeline
- Twenty-eight booster stations
- Twelve imported water turnouts



CLWA Open House 2010

Over the years, the Division has taken important steps to strengthen water conservation programs with the goal of maximizing the availability of its existing water supplies. In 2009, CLWA began implementation of a valleywide Water Use Efficiency Strategic Plan and selected consultants to execute key conservation programs for residential landscape, commercial industrial and institutional customers.

Recently, SCWD and the other local water purveyors completed a study analyzing the supply yield of the Valley's groundwater basin. The analysis concluded that the region's current operating plan is sustainable, and that groundwater use can

continue at current rates without the risk of overdrafting groundwater from the basins.

In May 2010, CLWA began operation of a new facility and over 3.5 miles of new pipelines to clean up perchlorate contamination of certain portions of the service area's aquifers. This facility is removing perchlorate from the groundwater and preventing it from migrating further into local aquifers.

---

## STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

---

This Plan reflects the Division's commitment to its sustainable future and the beginning stages of its engagement in ongoing strategic planning moving forward. Over-arching strategic planning objectives include:

- Improving CLWA's working relationship with the local water purveyors
- Bringing greater operational focus to SCWD customer service and customer relations
- Opening lines of communication between SCWD and key partners and other water purveyors
- Continuing to use staff resources of CLWA and SCWD effectively

FIGURE 2: STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK



**Plan Framework Overview**

The SCWD Strategic Plan serves as a blueprint for decision-making for the upcoming budget fiscal year. This plan identifies the Division’s mission statement, values, strategic plan goals, and strategic objectives needed to continue to improve operations and management of SCWD’s resources and assets.

The Strategic Plan Framework graphic depicts the relationship between the Strategic Plan elements. The mission describes the broad purpose of the Division and its role within the Santa Clarita Valley. Values describe the norms and qualities of the Division and are the basis from which each Division staff member should be operating, reflecting both its mission and values.

The goals and strategic objectives describe the direction of the Division and are organized according to six goal areas: Water Resources Management, Conservation, Financial Administration, Organizational Effectiveness, Infrastructure, and Customer Service and Communications.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Santa Clarita Water Division is to provide reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost to our customers.

**VALUES**

The values established through the Division’s “Investment in Excellence” program and developed in consultation with the Board of Directors describe the basic behaviors, attributes, principles and beliefs that guide all SCWD staff. The “Investment in Excellence”



Neighborhood in SCWD service area

program helps enhance the culture and strengthen the work environment defined by these values.

***TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More)***

We are an effective, confident and organized group. We respect one another and successfully work through the issues and obstacles presented before us.

***Appearance***

We are prideful and steadfast representatives of our company. Our employees and water facilities create an impressive perception to our customers.

***Personal Accountability***

We are extremely productive and contribute ourselves to working toward solutions. We use good, sound judgment and accept the outcome of our decisions.

***Work Ethic***

We exercise great interpersonal skills and utilize our initiative and dependability to enforce our commitment to internal and external customer service.

***Quality***

We exhibit excellence in our work and work environment.

***Camaraderie***

We have a self-realized desire to work together as a team. We care for and willingly help each other in any given situation. We respect and enjoy working with our colleagues.

***Professionalism***

We optimize our efficiencies. We are an experienced and competent team that leads by positive example.

***Communication***

We acknowledge and listen to one another. We respect others' beliefs and judgments by focusing on the common interests rather than the differences.

**Honesty**

We provide dependable internal and external customer service with sincerity and integrity.

**Trustworthiness**

We rely on assisting one another in our daily tasks to provide the highest quality water and most dependable service to our customers.

**Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction and confidence are central to our success as a retail water purveyor.



**GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

SCWD’s strategic planning focuses on six goal areas that provide the direction required to achieve the Division mission. Strategic objectives are identified for each goal area. The SCWD Action Plan, found in Appendix B, articulates the activities identified to advance the goals and objectives during the current fiscal year.

**A. Water Resources Management**

Coordinate, facilitate, plan and support efficient utilization of SCWD water supplies to meet long-term service area needs.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**A1. Groundwater**

*Continue to improve management of local groundwater sources and maintain the “60/40 blend” of imported water supplies and groundwater.*

**A2. Recycled Water**

*Focus on recycled water as a key component of water supply.*

**A3. Saugus Formation**

*Work with Valencia Water Company on issues related to Saugus Formation access.*

*Water conservation is of utmost importance in the Santa Clarita Valley.*



Field crews install an altitude valve at Honby South tank site.

## B. Conservation

Prioritize protection of our finite water supply in all Division operations.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### B1. Outreach

Make SCWD “the face of conservation” by improving integration of conservation and outreach.

#### B2. Measurable Progress

Achieve 20 percent conservation by 2020.

#### B3. Staffing

Provide sufficient staffing to achieve conservation targets.

#### B4. Water Rates

Establish water rates based on the availability of water supply and usage.

## C. Financial Administration

Maintain a long-range, open, stable and well-planned financial condition, so that current and future water users are given fair and equitable rates and charges.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### C1. Management Tools

Implement the use of new financial management software.

#### C2. Consolidation

Consolidate Division functions when and where feasible.

#### C3. Technology

Implement new technologies to improve service and reliability.

#### C4. Staff

Continue to recruit the highest quality staff for SCWD positions.

#### C5. Reserves

Continue to build financial reserves.

## D. Organizational Effectiveness

Maintain a well-defined organizational structure that fosters SCWD’s culture and values.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### D1. Workforce Excellence

Recruit and retain the highest quality staff for SCWD positions.

#### D2. Education and Training

Provide educational and training opportunities including career-path, succession planning and other effective training opportunities.

#### D3. Safety

Provide a safe work environment.

#### D4. Work Environment

Provide a professional and

*excellent work environment for employees that encourages collaboration, integrity, team work and unity.*

**D5. Workplace Policies**

*Develop and maintain a well-defined organizational structure through clear and comprehensive policies and procedures.*

**E. Infrastructure**

Design, build, operate and maintain facilities and other infrastructure in a manner that is cost-effective, efficient, innovative, safe and secure.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**E1. Quality Infrastructure**

*Invest in new infrastructure and equipment as needed to ensure safe and cost-efficient operations.*

**E2. Water Master Plan**

*Implement the Water Master Plan.*

**E3. Infrastructure Management**

*Implement a technology-based infrastructure management plan.*

**F. Customer Service and Communications**

Provide consistent and excellent customer service and provide customers, community members and stakeholders with information in a clear, factual, interactive, open and timely manner.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**F1. Ongoing Communications**

*Maintain continuous, ongoing communications with retail customers.*

**F2. Customer Satisfaction**

*Continue to improve customer service and maintain a "commitment to excellence."*

**F3. Customer Surveys**

*Collect and track data related to customer satisfaction and analyze and respond proactively to trends.*

**F4. Best Practices**

*Explore and implement customer service and communications best practices, including innovative web-based and social marketing strategies.*

**F5. Informational Resource**

*Serve as a central technical and informational resource concerning water conservation in the SCWD service area.*

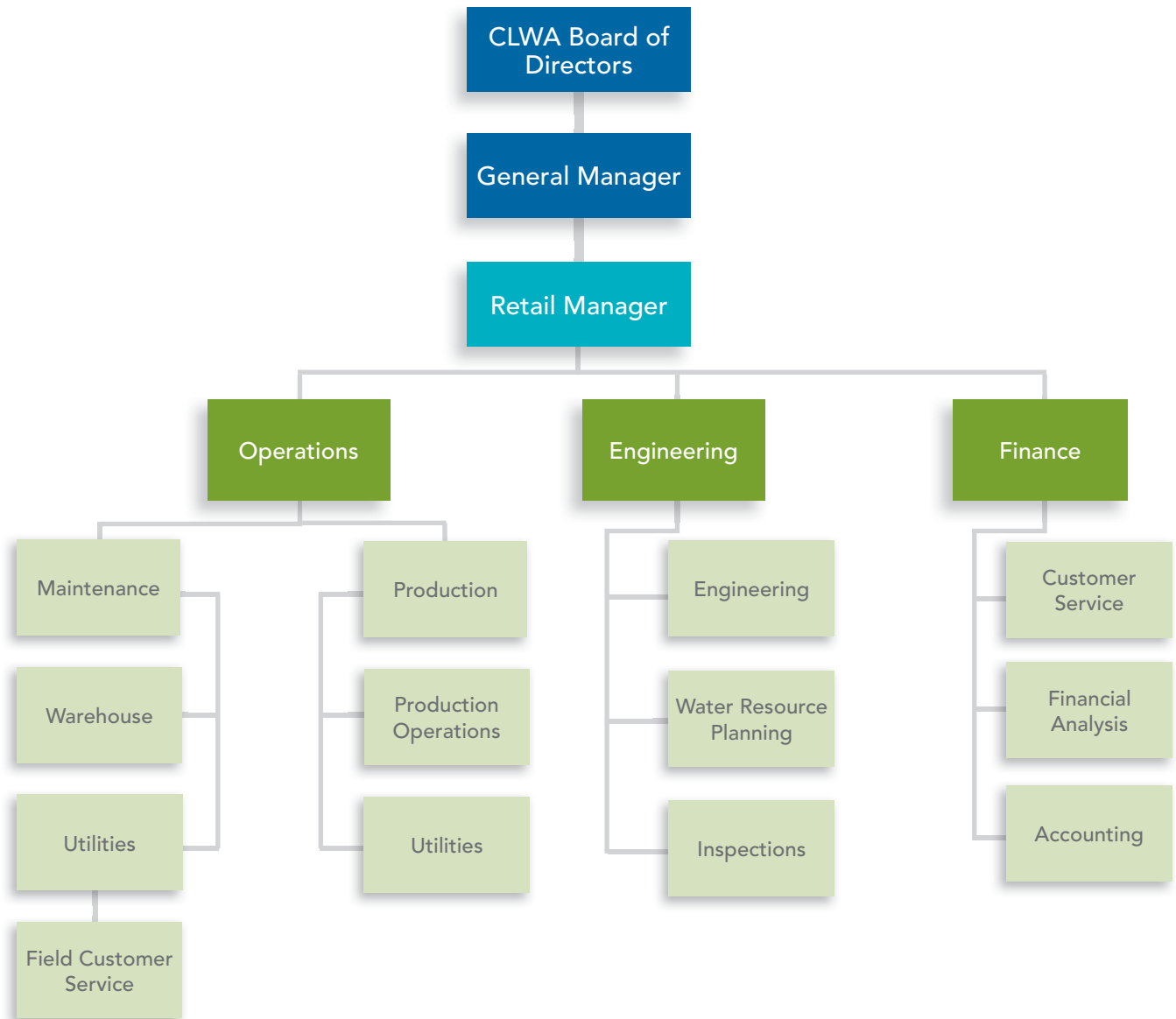
**F6. Agency Position**

*Expand and strengthen the public perception of the Agency as a credible, effective and reliable authority on water conservation.*



CLWA conservation education program.

## appendix A | SCWD Organization Structure



## appendix B | SCWD Action Plan

The actions included in the SCWD Action Plan are organized according to the departments responsible for their implementation. For each action, related Strategic Plan goals, target dates for completion and level of priority are identified. (See the Strategic Plan framework graphic on page 5 for an overview of goal areas.)

1. FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE			
ACTION	RELATED GOAL	TARGET DATE	PRIORITY
1.1 Perform a functional and an economic cost analysis of existing utility billing system to determine whether to upgrade it or to convert to new software and commence the implementation process.	C, D, F	June 2011	P1
1.2 Revise SCWD reserve fund policy to ensure sufficient coverage.	C, D	December 2010	P1
1.3 Develop and maintain proper project tracking mechanism to comply with Certificates of Participation Bonds Purchase Agreement and associated regulations.	C, D	Ongoing	P1

2. OPERATIONS			
ACTION	RELATED GOAL	TARGET DATE	PRIORITY
2.1 Propose operations facility upgrade to improve site efficiency, maintenance and safety.	A, D, E, F	July 2010	P1
2.2 Evaluate and identify preferred computerized management maintenance system to improve preventative maintenance and inventory tracking methods.	A, C, D, E	December 2010	P2
2.3 Evaluate and identify preferred Automated Meter Reading/ Automated Meter Infrastructure system to improve meter read efficiency, accuracy, conservation tracking and customer service.	A, B, C, D, E, F	June 2011	P3

3. ENGINEERING			
ACTION	RELATED GOAL	TARGET DATE	PRIORITY
3.1 Conduct an overall asset management analysis to develop and implement an advanced asset management system to support our infrastructure.	A, D, E	June 2011	P1

[This page intentionally left blank.]

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

B.J. Atkins

Thomas P. Campbell

Edward A. Colley

William Cooper

Dean D. Efstathiou

Robert J. DiPrimio

E.G. "Jerry" Gladbach

Peter Kavounas, Vice President

R.J. Kelly, President

Jacquelyn H. McMillan

William Peci

PREPARED BY



FOR



AUGUST 2010

Santa Clarita Water Divison

STRATEGIC PLAN

2010

