

# Urban Agriculture in South-west San Diego



**RESOURCE**  
CONSERVATION



**DISTRICT**  
Greater San Diego County



**“To protect, conserve, and restore our natural resources through education, information, and technical assistance programs.”**



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# **The RCD of Greater San Diego County**

**Serving the greater San Diego community since 1941.**



- **Covers nearly 2,900 square miles.**
- **From the Pacific Ocean east to the Imperial County line, south to the US-Mexico border.**
- **Region encompasses mountains, deserts, forests, and coast.**
- **Includes urban, agricultural, and suburban areas.**
- **Densely populated with 3.32 million people living in the county as of 2016.**
- **Largest number of small scale farms (>10 acres) in the Nation.**

# Programs

## EDUCATION

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Watershed Education

School Gardens

Milkweed for Monarchs

Conservation Scholarship

Range Camp Sponsorship

SLEWS and Explorers

Speak-Off Competition

## CONSERVATION & GARDENING

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Tijuana River Valley Community  
Garden

Carbon Farm Planning

Pollinator Habitat Creation

Invasive Species Removal

## FIRE PREVENTION

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Defensible Space Assistance  
Programs

Community and Private  
Chipping

Wildland Urban Interface  
Trainings

Fire Safe Council of San Diego  
County

# Tijuana River Valley Community Garden



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**Managed by  
the RCD since  
the garden  
opened in  
2002**

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**Recent  
expansion to  
210 garden  
plots  
measuring  
30x30'**

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**Garden hosts  
workshops,  
clean-up days,  
volunteer  
groups, and  
public events  
like the Soil  
Shindig**

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**Native  
pollinator  
hedgerow  
planted in  
January 2018**

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**6 quarter acre  
plots intended  
for beginner  
farmers, plus  
one plot for  
demonstration  
and education**



# 2017-18 garden expansion

- **Funded by two grants: NACD and SD County's NRP**
- **Workshops and outreach with new and existing gardeners, and local farmers**
- **72 new 30x30 plots (210 total)**
- **Larger plots to support beginner farmers and urban ag**
  - 6 quarter-acre plots as starter plots
  - 1 quarter-acre plot for learning and demonstration
- **Native pollinator hedgerow**
- **New water meter**
- **All gardeners encouraged to use drip – have drip kits to share**
- **Shipping container for equipment and tools storage**
- **New garden sign & interpretive signage**





# Quarter acre plots

- **Starter plots for beginning farmers / growers**
- **3 of 6 rented**
- **WEEDS**
- **1 started growing, site prep done on other 2**
- **Certified producer**
- **Potential for on site farm stand**
- **Sharing resources**







# Carbon Farming

**Farming that uses climate-smart agricultural practices that lead to long-term storage of carbon from the atmosphere in soil and vegetation.**

**Some benefits:**

- **Increased soil organic matter**
- **Increased water-holding capacity**
  - **Increased plant yields**

34 NRCS-recognized practices including compost application, mulching, cover crops, hedgerows, no-till / low-till.

# Carbon Farming Demonstration Plot

- **¼ acre research and demonstration plot**
- **Funded by CDFA Healthy Soils Program**
- **Aim: to support farmers to implement climate-friendly practices that benefit both production and the environment.**
- **Testing 3 carbon farming practices (compost, mulching, two cover crops)**
- **Farmer outreach events, first on November 17 as a part of our annual Soil Shindig**
- **New Head Gardener hired and started in August**



# Hedgerow

- **Planted in January during a garden work day – about 20 gardeners participated.**
- **350 feet long with 26 species of native flowering trees and shrubs. 4 rows.**
- **Varying bloom times and heights.**
- **Challenges: weeds, critters**
- **Benefits: carbon sequestration, habitat for pollinators and other beneficials, little to no supplemental water once established.**
- **Maintenance at other garden work days.**





# New compost hub

- **Managing garden green waste continues to be a challenge.**
- **Potential to partner with an external organization, Food 2 Soil, to become a compost hub. use to create compost.**
- **Garden members would pay to participate – can also bring food scraps from home.**
- **Whole process managed by Food 2 Soil program graduate and their interns.**
- **Compost is distributed to members; surplus is sold to the community.**





# Thank you!

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