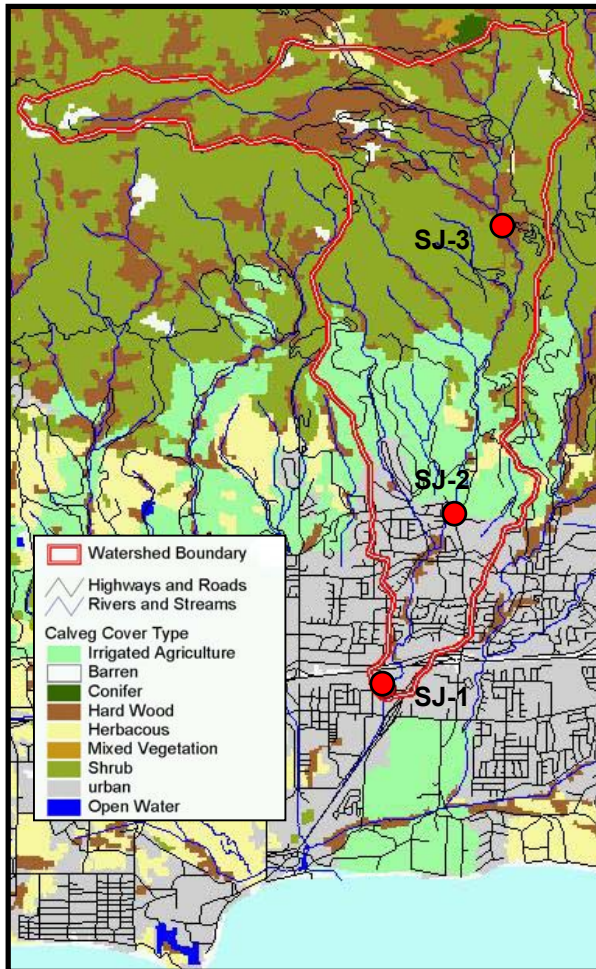


FIGURE 5: SAN JOSE CREEK WATERSHED



The San Jose Creek watershed has a land use pattern that is typical along the South Coast. Upstream mountainous portions of the watershed are almost entirely natural open space. The upper reaches of San Jose Creek (e.g., SJ-3) are relatively pristine, and support a diverse native flora and fauna including steelhead trout and California newts. Downstream in the foothills, agriculture tightly encroaches upon the creek, which has been subject to altered geomorphology and hydrology, increased fine sediment inputs, and degraded water quality. Despite these impacts, the middle reaches (e.g., SJ-2) still have a natural creek bed and banks and a corridor of mature riparian vegetation. Flora and fauna are still fairly diverse, and mostly native. Further downstream the coastal plain is largely urban. As is typical in urban streams, the lower reaches (e.g., SJ-1) are heavily degraded and fragmented due to encroaching urban uses, road crossings, flood control structures, routine channel and bank disturbance, altered hydrology from impervious surfaces, water pollution, non-native plant invasions, etc. Biological integrity and diversity is also greatly diminished.

