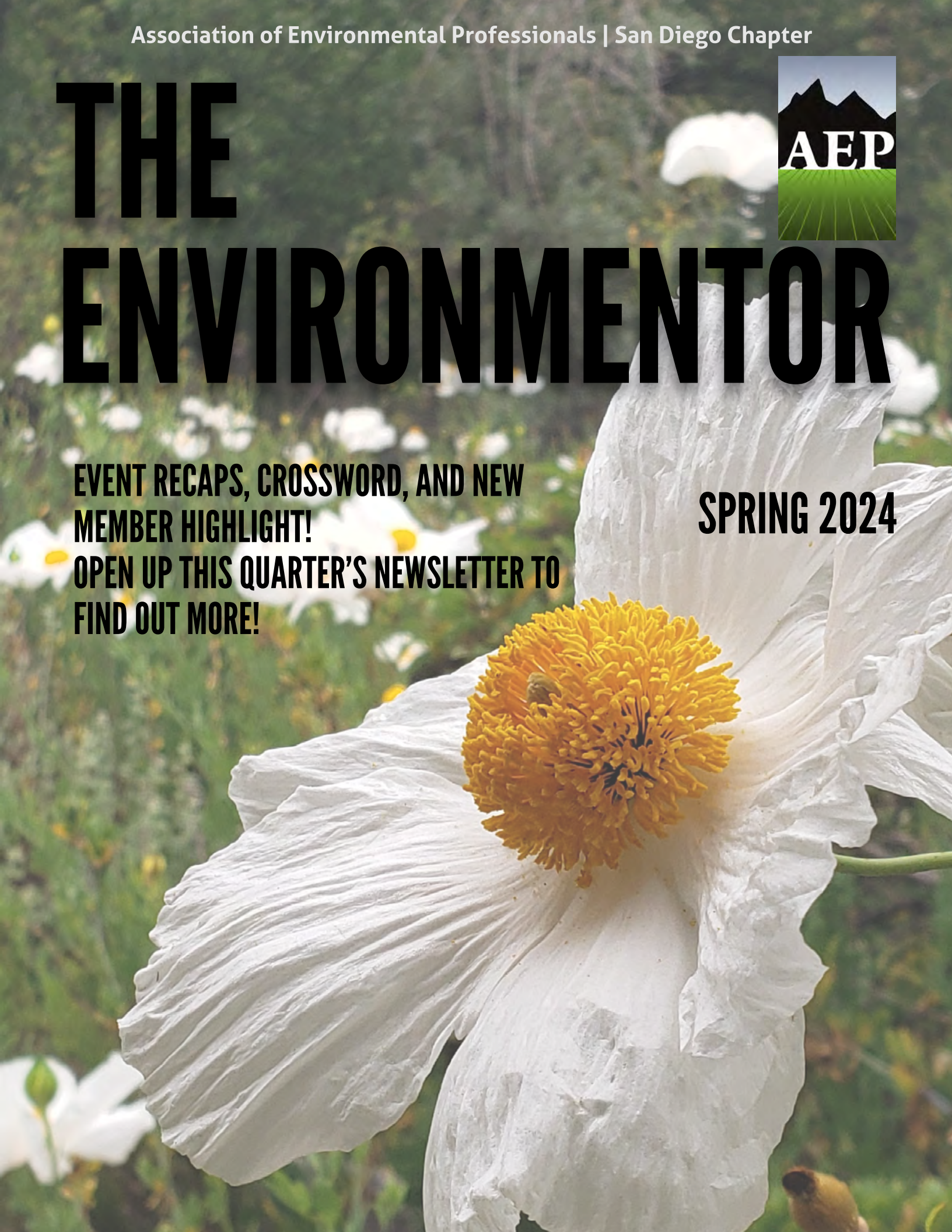




THE ENVIRONMENTOR

**EVENT RECAPS, CROSSWORD, AND NEW MEMBER HIGHLIGHT!
OPEN UP THIS QUARTER'S NEWSLETTER TO FIND OUT MORE!**

SPRING 2024





MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

BY KELSEY HAWKINS, SAN DIEGO AEP PRESIDENT

Hello and Happy Spring! We have been starting off the year strong with various events. We kicked off 2024 with our annual joint holiday party with APA. It took place at Bali Hai with beautiful views of the San Diego harbor. There were delicious appetizers, fun raffle prizes, a photo booth, and great networking opportunities. A HUGE THANK YOU to our wonderful sponsors for collectively raising about \$14,000! In February, we hosted the Advanced CEQA Workshop at Marina Village, which focused on CEQA hot topics and the latest court cases and legislative updates. We had fantastic attendance and great audience participation throughout the workshop. In March, we commenced student programming with an in person Resume Workshop at the University of San Diego, where students received tips for bolstering their resumes to fit

the specific job description. Finally, the last week in March a majority of the San Diego Board gathered together at the State AEP Conference, which was held in Anaheim. The day before the conference Board members from all over the State participated in the Annual Summit, where we discussed common issues, brainstormed new ideas, and set goals for the year. Afterwards we participated in the State Conference hosted at the beautiful Marriott Anaheim Resort. There were several interesting and innovative panels, followed by networking happy hours, and even an appearance by the famous AEP Jam Band! Looking forward to continuing to host some fantastic events the rest of the year.

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2024 AEP/APA HOLIDAY PARTY

Written by: Melissa Whittemore

On the evening of January 25, 2024, the San Diego chapters of AEP and APA gathered for their annual winter holiday celebration at Bali Hai. Nearly 200 environmental and planning professionals and college students attended the party, bringing a total of 215 pounds of canned foods for donation to the San Diego Food Bank as part of AEP/APA's seventh annual food drive. Thank you to Ninyo and Moore for donating the most canned food items!

The evening was filled with tropical drinks, plenty of hors d'oeuvres, good music, and great conversations, giving AEP and APA members opportunities to connect, while enjoying the event's photo booth and nearly a dozen fantastic raffle prizes. Thank you to all who purchased raffle tickets, which help sponsor AEP's scholarship funds.

Thank you all our party sponsors, including: RECON, HELIX Environmental Planning, ASM Affiliates, ESA, Great Ecology, LLG, RICK Engineering, Rincon Consultants, RRM Design Group, Dudek, Fehr & Peers, HDR, Michael Baker International, MIG, Ninyo & Morre, WSP, Garden Communities, and Ascent. AEP truly couldn't have thrown such an amazing and fun event without the help of each of our party sponsors!

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STUDENT RESUME WORKSHOP

Written by: Shelby Bocks

Students and professionals gathered at the University of San Diego on March 13th for the first student event of 2024 – a resume workshop. During the event, students met with professionals from the San Diego AEP Chapter who reviewed their resumes and provided career advice. A presentation on general resume tips was also given to students and provided an opportunity for group discussion about resume and career questions. Students shared insights from the professionals they had met with earlier in the event and helped one another improve their resumes.

The professionals that attended had a wide variety of experiences and specialties. Each student was able to meet with multiple professionals to learn about potential career paths and gain insights into the hiring process. Multiple students commented that they learned about a new potential area of focus within the environmental profession and were excited to look further into potential career options. We look forward to continuing to connect with our local students during the upcoming CEQA Practicum.

Thank you again to all of the professionals who volunteered their time to engage with our students!



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2024 CEQA ADVANCED WORKSHOP

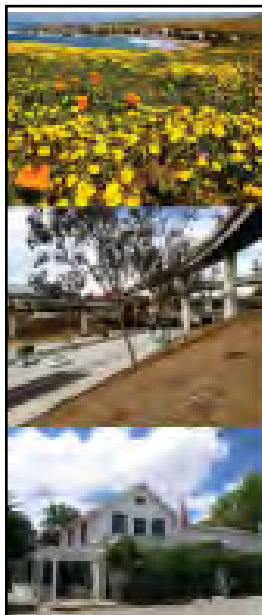
Written by: Julia Norris

On February 8th, the San Diego Chapter hosted the Advanced CEQA Workshop, drawing 125 professionals from various sectors keen on deepening their understanding of CEQA regulations and practices. The workshop provided attendees with a wealth of knowledge and practical tools to enhance their CEQA compliance efforts. From legal updates to practical implementation strategies, participants gained valuable insights from industry leaders and regulatory experts, equipping them with the resources needed to navigate CEQA requirements effectively.

Speaker List:

- **Suzanne Varco**, environmental law expert, Varco & Rosenbaum Environmental Law Group.
- **Bob Stark**, Michael Baker International.
- **Andrea Contreras**, San Diego attorney.
- **Dahvia Lynch**, County of San Diego Planning & Development Services.
- **Elizabeth Shearer-Nguyen**, City of San Diego, Development Services.

The Workshop addressed numerous topics including critical legal updates, practical strategies for effectively addressing CEQA documents, CEQA litigation trends and best practices, a detailed exploration of CEQA's role in the county's planning and development processes, and insights into CEQA's application within the city's development framework.



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MEET A BOARD MEMBER: MELISSA WHITTEMORE



1. Please share your background, education, current employer, hobbies, etc.

I am currently working at AECOM as a Senior Environmental Planner/Project Manager and also as a Special Projects Manager for the California High-Speed Rail Authority. I have worked on a variety of projects; my current active projects include California High-Speed Rail and renewable energy development. I am also experienced in regulatory permitting requirements. As a southern California native, I enjoy the outdoors, including walking Sunset Cliffs and around the Ocean Beach community. I also enjoy hiking, whale watching, and volunteering for non-profit organizations, especially those focused on introducing students to careers in STEM, particularly girls and young women.

2. What made you want to get more involved and take a leadership position with AEP?

I have been a member of AEP since 2003 and have been volunteering at San Diego chapter events for years. I have always enjoyed mentoring and helping out students who are interested in STEM careers, and when the position for Co-Director of Student

Membership and Outreach on the AEP San Diego Board was available for 2024, I applied and am elated that I was elected to the role along with Shelby Bocks. She and I are making a great team and are excited to get the AEP Student Chapters running again at SDSU and UCSD, as well as continuing to coordinate with USD Student Chapter, working towards setting up a CSUSM Student Chapter, and gauging interest for AEP involvement at the local two-year colleges.

3. What advice would you give a recent graduate or young professional in the environmental industry?

Network, network, network! The best way to stand out among the hundreds of applicants is to meet people who work at that company who can let the hiring managers know they met you and that you would be a great addition to the company. How do you do that? Go to events held by AEP to connect with working professionals, ask them for their contact information and if you can connect with them after the event, then follow up with an email.

4. Share your favorite fun fact with us?

I still remember the "50 States" song I learned in fifth grade and can recite the 50 U.S. states in alphabetical order in less than 30 seconds.



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2024 AEP CONFERENCE

Written by: Kelsey Hawkins

The San Diego Board recently attended the State AEP Conference, held in Anaheim, California, from March 24 through March 27. The day before the conference, Board members from all over the State participated in the Annual Summit, where we discussed common issues, brainstormed new ideas, and set goals for the year.

Afterwards, we participated in the State Conference hosted at the beautiful JW Marriott Anaheim Resort just a couple blocks from Disneyland. The AEP Jam Band graced us with some fantastic tunes to kick off the conference.

There were several interesting and innovative panels on various CEQA hot topics including greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, air quality, vehicle miles traveled, wildfire and evacuation, renewable energy, CEQA streamlining, responses to comments, and case law and legislative updates. The evenings were filled with various networking events including the Opening Reception, 2024 Awards Program, and Wine and Cheese Reception.

There were also a couple mobile workshops offered exploring the Anaheim Historic District and Crystal Cove State Park. We also got to learn about some exciting projects happening within the City of Anaheim including the future vision for Disneyland with the Disneyland Forward project and the redevelopment of the land surrounding the Honda Center with the OCVIBE project.

It was another conference for the books, and we are already very much looking forward to next year!



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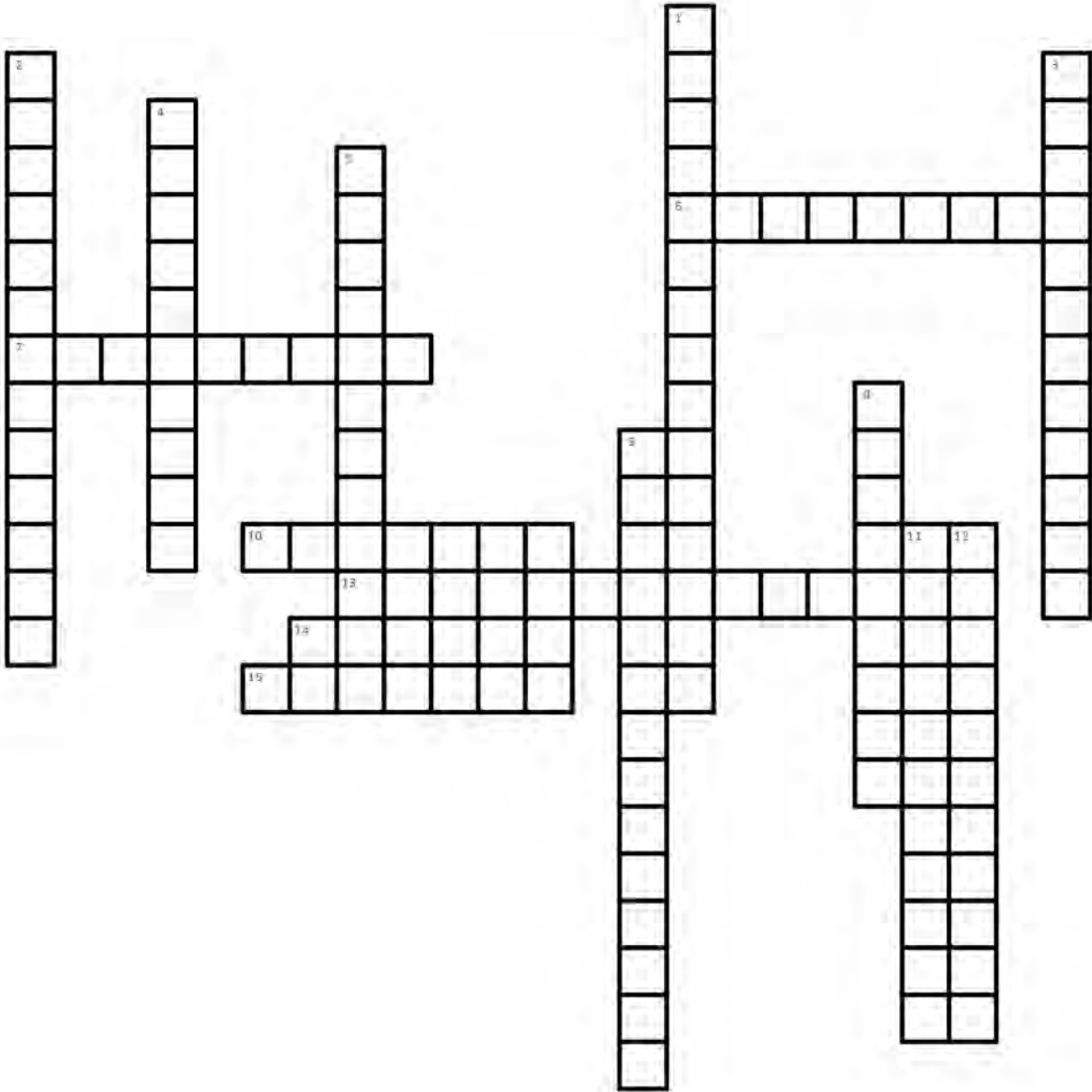
Environmental Planning Crossword

Across

- 6. Area of land drained by a river and its tributaries
- 7. Interconnected web of living and nonliving components
- 10. Low-lying area saturated with water and plants
- 13. Basic physical structures needed for society to function
- 14. Division of land into designated areas for specific use
- 15. Management and allocation of land for different purposes

Down

- 1. Sources of power that can be replenished naturally
- 2. Long-term alterations in global weather patterns
- 3. Variety of life forms within a given area
- 4. Area of land covered by grass, trees, or other vegetation
- 5. Preservation and protection of natural resources
- 8. Contamination of the environment with harmful substances
- 9. Capacity for long-term survival and resource management
- 11. Uncontrolled and rapid spread of cities and suburbs
- 12. Process of creating new or improved structures and systems



Answers: **Across:** 6. Watershed, 7. Ecosystem, 10. Wetland, 13. Infrastructure, 14. Zoning, 15. Land Use. **Down:** 1. Renewable Energy, 2. Climate Change, 3. Biodiversity, 4. Green Space, 5. Conservation, 8. Pollution, 9. Sustainability, 11. Urban Sprawl, 12. Development

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