



NEW REGIONAL MONITORING EFFORT INCLUDING ASBS AND STORMWATER PROGRAMS

What is it?

Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) staff are working with representatives from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the Central Coast Environmental Assessment Network, and area municipalities affected by the new Ocean Plan and Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) monitoring requirements to develop a plan for a regional monitoring approach that addresses multiple program requirements and answers important questions about the impact of discharges on Monterey Bay. The dialogue currently focuses on building a program that dovetails with the Central Coast Long-term Environmental Assessment Network's (CCLEAN) basic premise – to assess loads of pollutants entering the bay from various sources, and then to assess the impacts of these pollutants in the water column, sediment and shellfish tissue in the Bay. CCLEAN has traditionally investigated loading from point source discharges, along with discharges from creeks and rivers in the area. The program will build on this concept and add discharges from urban areas.

Why is it important?

SWAMP has supported development of regionalized monitoring approaches statewide. A regionalized approach can be more cost efficient than monitoring by each individual entity because of efficiencies of scale and design. A well-designed program can meet regulatory requirements while also addressing questions of regional importance. Data can be much more meaningful when placed in a regional context, especially when working with pollutants that have no clear criteria for protection of beneficial uses (such as emerging contaminants). For example, a regional program might want to understand the relative loading of PBDE (a fire retardant) to

the ocean, because studies have shown it to be bioaccumulating in sea otter tissue. In measuring the loads of this pollutant from each source (stormwater, river discharge, and point sources), it quickly becomes clear which sources are of most concern and thus efforts to control loads can be targeted to where they will be most effective. By building regionalized monitoring in coordination with SWAMP, we ensure that programs are collecting high quality data that is delivered into the California Environmental Data Exchange Network for access by scientists, policy makers, and the public.

How will this information be used?

Data generated by this new program will be used to understand the relative impacts of point and non-point sources of pollution to the Marine Sanctuary, to prioritize stormwater discharges for follow-up work, and to meet new regulatory requirements for the Ocean Plan and ASBS monitoring and existing receiving water requirements for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharges.

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