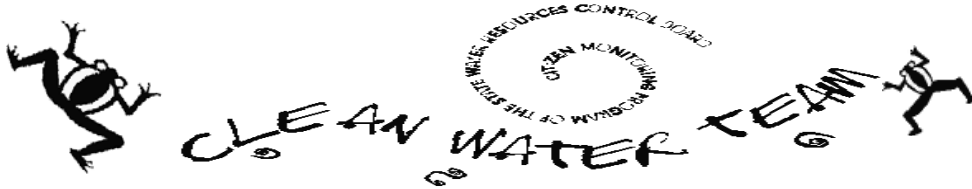




CURRENTS

Citizen Monitoring Program Newsletter of the California State Water Resources Control Board

Winter 2004



“Hold On To Your Butt”: Newport Beach Clean Up Event

Edited by Fawn Sheradin, SWRCB



Newport Beach, CA held a “Hold On To Your Butt” beach clean up on November 15, 2003. A total of 165 volunteers picked up approximately 10,000 cigarette butts, after the beach was cleaned and raked the day before. During this event individuals were able to see first hand that cigarette litter is a major problem and a serious concern for the environment.

The results, including all of the butts were presented to the Newport Beach City Council on November 25, 2003.

For further questions or comments please contact: Ananya Mullane, Youth Program Coordinator, Earth Resource Foundation at 949-645-5163 or fax 949-645-5173

Facts:

Worldwide, smokers toss at least 4.5 trillion cigarette butts each year. Cigarettes are the most littered item in the world. Cigarette butts are a danger to wildlife and have been found in the stomachs of fish, birds, and



other marine animals. Cigarette butts contain concentrated toxic chemicals and (acetate) plastic that is **not** biodegradable.

For more information go to: www.cigarettelitter.org, or www.litterbutt.com



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California 2003 Nonpoint Source (NPS) Conference: Restoring Clean Water Synopsis of the Citizen Monitoring Connection

By Lauma Jurkevics, SWRCB



California held its second biennial NPS Conference in November. A variety of land use planners, water quality agency folks, and nonprofit environmental

organizations attended the conference held in the city of Ventura. The location of the conference provided folks with the opportunity to see the variety of potential runoff sources, from urban development and marinas to agriculture and industry. The conference itself further enlightened us to the progress and challenges of on-the-ground projects that prevent NPS pollution, that restore impaired water bodies, and that add to our own knowledge base to promote innovation and partnerships.

Of particular interest to Citizen Monitors was the session, "Successful Volunteer Monitoring," moderated by Erick Burres, Citizen Monitoring Coordinator of the SWRCB's Clean Water Team. Cynthia Mallett, San Luis Rey Watershed Coordinator with the Mission Resource Conservation District, presented the work accomplished by the *San Diego Stream Team*. This citizen-based volunteer organization evaluates the health of San Diego County rivers and streams by collecting and identifying benthic macroinvertebrates. With this information, biologists and water quality experts can determine the quality of the water being assessed.

The next speaker was Captain Charles Moore, founder of the Algalita Marine Research Foundation. His topic was, *Move Over Plankton, Here Comes Plastic!* His volunteers, who snorkel to collect plastic debris and fragments in the mid-Pacific Gyre, have provided information to suggest the plastic debris mass is six times higher than that of plankton, the latter being an important food source for marine life. What is disturbing is that marine life and birds eat this plastic, which is often the size of plankton. This

consumption of plastic could impact the viability of the food web and the health of the animals affected. Although work is now being done with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project and the California Coastal Commission to assess and reduce sources of plastic and trash in southern California's coastal waters, the plastics found in the mid-Pacific Gyre go beyond California's coastal waters. This problem is more on an international scale – an outreach challenge whereby environmental issues may not always be the top priority for those concerned.



The final presentation was given by Bridget Hoover, Coordinator for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation, and Tamara Doan, Program Manager for the Coastal Watershed Council. They provided an overview of the *2003 Coast Wide Snapshot Day – An Experiment in Coordinated Citizen Monitoring*. They partnered with eight regional monitoring coordinators, as well as agency staff (such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Coastal Commission, and SWRCB's Clean Water Team), to implement California's largest citizen water quality monitoring event in May 2003.



Citizen monitoring was also represented in the poster session. Angie Berra, Beachkeeper Program Director and Staff Biologist with the Santa Monica Baykeeper, presented a poster

on *Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring & TMDLs*. The Beachkeeper program uses volunteers who photograph storm drains and collect water quality samples for bacteriological analysis. The data serve *(continued on page 3)*

(continued from page 2)

as a baseline to contribute towards the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for Santa Monica Bay beaches. Ross Clark, with the California Coastal Commission, presented a synopsis of the 2003 *Coast Wide Snapshot Day*, discussed above. The SWRCB's Clean Water Team presented a poster on *The Power of Citizens in Local Watersheds*, which included an extensive California map identifying a vast distribution of local watershed groups and links with impaired water bodies.

Overall, the conference provided an opportunity to share our successes and challenges, an opportunity to exchange ideas, and an opportunity to partner with others. So let's continue to improve at all fronts as we continue to tackle NPS pollution. ♪

Check out this interesting article about a CSU Sacramento professor called "Solar Water"

<http://www.csus.edu/news/120103solarWater.stm>

New!

Centralized Groundwater Website
The Groundwater Information Center
is a guide to programs, data, and
technical assistance offered by DWR.

<http://www.groundwater.water.ca.gov>

San Diego Students Celebrate World Water Monitoring Day

By Maile Horita, SWRCB

The first annual World Water Monitoring Day was celebrated in San Diego County on October 17, 2003 at Sweetwater Regional Park in Bonita, California. Fifth and Sixth grade students and teachers from Halecrest and Allen Elementary Schools were invited to take part in the event organized by the San Diego Citizen Watershed Monitoring Steering Committee. An interpretive walk with park rangers, hands-on learning at the e-Bus and Splash Lab, and a game of water jeopardy were facilitated by volunteers from the County of San Diego's Water Protection Program and Office of Education, San Diego State University and Southwestern College.

At three sites on Morrison Pond students took water samples using donated water testing kits to

measure turbidity, nitrites, dissolved oxygen, pH and temperature. The data was recorded to be reported later on the World Water Monitoring Day website.



A Park Ranger speaks to volunteers at Sweetwater Regional Park.

County Park Rangers led the students on interpretive walks around the park to speak about its history and beneficial uses, respect for the environment, and of the local flora and fauna. While walking and listening, the students gave the rangers a hand and had fun picking up trash along the paths.

At the end of the morning, snacks and goody bags full of pencils, bookmarks, decals and information on watersheds were passed out and students were thanked for participating in a successful World Water Monitoring Day event. ♪



South Yuba River Citizens League: 2003 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award Winner!

By Janet Cohen, Executive Director, SYRCL

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced the winners of the 2003 Governor's Environmental and Governor's Economic Leadership Awards on Monday, December 1st. The awards were presented at the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) Headquarters Building in Sacramento by Cal/EPA Secretary Terry Tamminen and Resources Agency Secretary Mike Chrisman. The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL), received the award in the Watershed and Ecosystem Restoration category for laudable efforts of restoring, enhancing, and improving California's watersheds, while promoting sustainable economic progress.

SYRCL was recognized as one of the largest, most effective watershed organizations in California. SYRCL's collaborative restoration efforts have helped attract more than \$110 million in state and federal restoration funds. The 20 year-old organization is well established, has proven to be successful and collaborative and has a very high degree of citizen involvement in watershed and ecosystem restoration.

SYRCL's Executive Director Janet Cohen told YubaNet.com: "We were thrilled to receive this highly competitive award from the Governor. It was an honor to receive this award on behalf of our thousands of members and volunteers. It's the icing on the cake of our 20th Anniversary year."

Recipients are chosen from throughout California for promoting excellence in compatible, sustainable economic development while protecting the environment and conserving natural resources. A panel of senior executives representing the State of California's environmental and resource programs evaluated all applications for strength in seven specific areas. Criteria considered in the competitive weighting of nominations included: economic progress, innovation, uniqueness, results, transferability, environmental impact, resource conservation impact, and environmental justice. This year's awards

recognize outstanding contributions by 24 businesses, organizations and government offices in seven award categories. ♪



From left to right: Beau Bridges, Mike Chrisman (Resources Agency Secretary), Michael Funk (SYRCL Board President), Janet Cohen (SYRCL Executive Director), Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Terry Tamminen (Secretary of California EPA), A.G. Kawamura (Secretary of California of Food and Agriculture)

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California Junior High School Among Take Pride in America & Presidential Award Winners Honored in Nation's Capital

Press Release by U.S. Department of Interior



On September 26, 2003, Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior, gave Chico Junior High School in Chico, California, one of 15 national Take Pride in America awards presented to individuals and groups. Teacher Donald Polen accepted the award for the 7th grade wetlands project at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. The volunteers were honored at the ceremony in Washington, D.C., for efforts in 2002 and as models for others to emulate under the Take Pride in America campaign, which encourages citizen stewardship of public lands and resources.

The national award honors the Chico Junior High School 7th grade for its participation in a field study and volunteer habitat restoration activity on the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. During the school year, the class took four wildlife refuge trips, giving approximately 400 students the opportunity to take part in 9 separate field studies. After completing the field investigations, the students used the information to determine where to plant hundreds of native willow tree cuttings to

provide the most beneficial habitat for the area birds and wildlife.

Take Pride in America is a national partnership that aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers to put their love of country to work to improve our national parks, wildlife refuges, public lands, cultural and historic sites, playgrounds, and other recreation areas.

For more information and a complete list of winners, go to www.takepride.gov



From left to right: John Brickland, Director of the President's USA Freedom Corps; Don Polen, Chico Junior High School science teacher and wetlands project coordinator accepting on behalf of the school; and Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior.

Teach Tahoe!

A movement is afoot in the Tahoe Basin to create a Teach Tahoe curriculum. Some funding is available to produce videos for teachers and perhaps create curriculum or activity kits. A plan of action is targeted for this spring and videos will go to production this summer. If you have opinions about what kind of materials you would like to see produced, please contact: [Jill Sarick at jill@adopt-a-watershed.org](mailto:jill@adopt-a-watershed.org)

Lodi Celebrates 31st Anniversary of the Federal Clean Water Act

By Kathy Grant, City of Lodi



In celebration of the 31st anniversary of the Federal Clean Water Act's passage on October 18, 1972, several activities took place in October throughout Lodi.

For the second year, the Lodi High School Environmental Club hosted a Storm Water Lift-Station Clean-Out student event. Trash was cleaned out of the storm water lift-station, it was sorted, counted, and classified.



Lodi High School Environmental Club sorting trash.



Heritage Elementary School, Clean-A-Curb Day.

Approximately 200 students from Heritage Elementary School participated in Clean-A-Curb Day. They cleaned around the school's surrounding neighborhood sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Lodi Storm Drain Detectives hosted Stephen Clark, Environmental Toxicologist. The water toxicology workshop used vigorous protocol to test various ambient waters around Lodi.



Bio-assessment workshop with Stephen Clark.

For more information about the programs mentioned, please contact: Kathy Grant, Watershed Education Coordinator, City of Lodi's Public Works Department at 209-339-8722 &

At a time when California water issues are making national headlines, water conservation continues to be an important way to create supply by stretching our resources.

Encouraging wise water use is easier than ever with low-cost media and materials developed by the California Water Awareness Campaign.

Available media include:

Artwork for business ads, billboards, print ads, and theater ads

Public service announcements for TV and radio

Consumer information booklets

Magnets, stickers, and education kits

To order materials or for more information, contact the California Water Awareness Campaign at 916-325-2596 or mail to: wac@acwanet.com or visit the website <http://www.wateraware.org>

Formed in 1987, Campaign members include approximately 300 water agencies, farm bureaus, cities, counties, and businesses.

Announcements of Upcoming Conferences:



Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

The Division of Water Quality (DWQ), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will hold a public scoping meeting regarding proposed amendments to the California Ocean Plan. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to seek input on the scope and content of the environmental information which should be included in the draft Functional Equivalent Document (FED) to be prepared for the proposed amendments.

The meeting will be held on **Friday, January 23, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cal/EPA Headquarters Building, Sierra Hearing Room, Second Floor, 1001 "I" Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.**

The informational document for the proposed amendments will be available on December 12, 2003, on our web site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/plnspols/oplans/>.

You may also receive a copy by writing or calling:
Jan Hisao, Division of Water Quality, State Water Resources Control Board, P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100, (916) 341-5568, FAX: (916) 341-5584, email: hisaj@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov.

Interested in signing up to receive further email notices and other information relative to the California Ocean Plan go to: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/plnspols/oplans/>

2004 National Monitoring Conference

May 17-20, 2004

Building and Sustaining
Successful Monitoring Programs
Chattanooga, Tennessee

A call for abstracts will be issued within the next few weeks. If you have additional questions about the conference or would like to be placed on a mailing list for information as it becomes available, contact the 2004 Monitoring Conference Coordinator at NWQMC2004@tetrattech-ffx.com or 410-356-8993.

For more information about the Council, visit <http://water.usgs.gov/wicp/acwi/monitoring/>

AEOE Spring 2004 Conference: "Teaching Outside the Lines" Call for Workshop Presenters

Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education April 30 - May 2, 2004 at Camp Hess Kramer, Malibu, California. Workshop proposals that address the theme of the conference are invited. Suggested topics for workshops include natural history, teaching methods, hands-on activities/ games, naturalist/ science skills, educational theory, career/ educational paths for environmental educators, program development, music, outdoor/ indoor and classroom curricula, science standards, reflective writing, group management, storytelling, stress management, and anything else pertinent to the field.

Submission Deadline: February 14, 2004

For more information and a presenter application please go to:

www.aeoe.org/conference/spr2004/presenter_app.html

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Clean Water Team Web Site:
www.swrcb.ca.gov/nps/volunteer.html

Clean Water Team Contact:

Statewide Citizen Monitoring Coordinator (Region 5 & 6 interim)

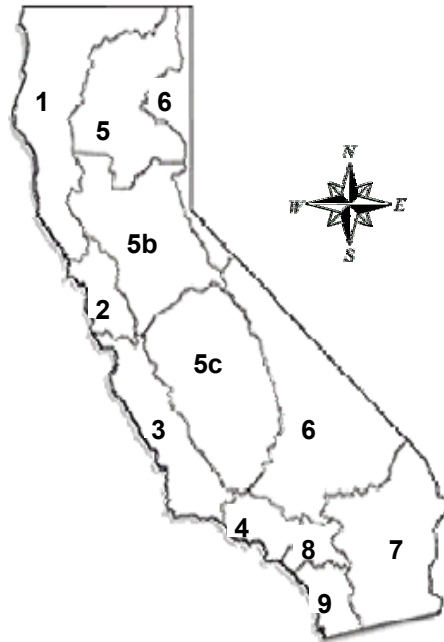
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