



**Surface Water Ambient Monitoring
Program: Bioaccumulation Monitoring
Program Realignment
Communication and Outreach Plan
for the San Diego Region**

June 2023

Acknowledgements

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

The below table defines acronyms and abbreviations that are used throughout this document.

Acronym or Abbreviation	Definition
CDPH	<u>C</u> alifornia <u>D</u> epartment of <u>P</u> ublic <u>H</u> ealth
DIT	Water Board's <u>D</u> ivision of <u>I</u> nformation <u>T</u> echnology
Committee	San Diego Region Realignment Advisory <u>C</u> ommittee
OEHHA	California <u>O</u> ffice of <u>E</u> nvironmental <u>H</u> ealth <u>H</u> azard <u>A</u> ssessment
OPP	Water Board's <u>O</u> ffice of <u>P</u> ublic <u>P</u> articipation
Program	SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring <u>P</u> rogram
Regional Boards	Nine <u>R</u> egional Water Quality Control <u>B</u> oards in California: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Region 1: North Coast Region ● Region 2: San Francisco Bay Region ● Region 3: Central Coast Region ● Region 4: Los Angeles Region ● Region 5: Central Valley Region ● Region 6: Lahontan Region ● Region 7: Colorado River Region ● Region 8: Santa Ana Region ● Region 9: San Diego Region
San Diego Region	<u>S</u> an <u>D</u> iego <u>R</u> egional Water Quality Control Board
State Board	California <u>S</u> tate Water Resources Control <u>B</u> oard
STEW	<u>S</u> afe to <u>E</u> at <u>W</u> orkgroup
SWAMP	<u>S</u> urface <u>W</u> ater <u>A</u> mbient <u>M</u> onitoring <u>P</u> rogram
SWAMP IQ	<u>S</u> WAMP <u>I</u> nformation Management and <u>Q</u> uality Assurance Center
tribe(s)	California Native American <u>T</u> ribe(s)
Water Boards	California State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards, collectively

Introduction

The preservation, enhancement, and restoration of California's water resources is vital to the health and well-being of all Californians, California Native American Tribes (tribes), the economy, and the environment for present and future generations. When first established in 2006, the mission of the State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Water Boards) [Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program](#) (Program) was to provide statewide monitoring data and information that could be used to:

- Assess and contribute to the protection and restoration of fishing and aquatic life beneficial uses that are impacted by the bioaccumulation of pollutants in California's waterbodies, and
- Assess the human health risks associated with the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California's freshwater and coastal ecosystems, and use that information to support the development of advisories that would inform consumers of significant health risks associated with the consumption of particular species.

The Program has realized several successes, such as establishing comprehensive, statewide bioaccumulation monitoring methodologies and assessments that began to answer the question: "Is it safe to eat fish and shellfish from our waters?", and forming the [Safe to Eat Workgroup](#) (STEW; formerly Bioaccumulation Oversight Group [BOG]).

Program staff and STEW recognize that the original Program plans were ambitious given their limited resources, and that there are some discrepancies between the Program vision and its current design. While data have been generated and used to inform [fish consumption advisories](#) throughout the state, significant data and information gaps remain regarding the question: "Is it safe to eat fish and shellfish from our waters?" Particularly important gaps exist for waterbodies or species that are important for subsistence by historically underrepresented communities, as well as Tribal tradition, culture, and subsistence.

To address these gaps, the Program has begun a [Realignment process](#) within the boundaries of the [San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board](#) (San Diego Region). A [San Diego Region Realignment Advisory Committee](#) (Committee) was formed in 2021 and has already provided region-specific advice about which species, pollutants, and locations should be monitored (see the [2022 Monitoring and Analysis Workplan](#)).

Communication and Outreach Plan Purpose

During the first five Committee meetings, Committee members noted their general support for Program activities and the usefulness of the Program's data and resulting information (e.g., fish advisories). However, Committee members strongly encouraged closing substantial gaps that still exist when it comes to ensuring the Program's data and resulting information reach communities in the San Diego Region that are most impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California's freshwater and coastal ecosystems. In this way, the Committee has advised the Realignment effort to include changes to not just Program monitoring, but also Program communication and outreach, which resulted in this Plan.

The purpose of this Communication and Outreach Plan is to document the gaps and describe the recommendations for improvement that the Committee members have indicated as being a priority for Program realignment moving forward.

This Communication and Outreach Plan has been developed to address the gaps Committee members have indicated as being a priority now given current Program capacity and resources, but also with the intention of being an adaptable and living document so it can be revised and updated as the Program evolves and the needs of the tribes and communities the Program is meant to serve change over time.

Primary Audience

The Program will implement this Plan. The primary audience for this Plan includes those that could provide guidance, support, or resources towards implementing the tasks identified in this Plan so that there is shared understanding and support of the strategic actions, priorities, and timelines identified in this Plan.

Goals, Objectives & Actions

Goals: The overarching goals of our communication and outreach efforts are to:

1. increase awareness of existing Program data, information, resources, and efforts, and
2. make it easier for anyone interested in or impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California's freshwater and coastal ecosystems to access, understand, use, and plug-in to those resources.

Objectives: The Committee has identified and prioritized three objectives that they see as critical to achieving the above goals:

1. Make messaging, communication, and engagement around fish advisories more clear, accessible, and understandable.
2. Make SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program data and information more accessible, and understandable. *Specific recommendations included centering interactive dashboards (or similar tools) on the website, which make interpreting data and information easy for non-technical audiences.*
3. Make messaging, communication, and engagement around how tribes and communities can participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes more clear, accessible, and understandable.

Actions: The actions outlined below describe the specific tasks the Program will undertake to achieve the goals of this Plan, the Realignment, and the broader Program mission.

How Actions Are Structured

Each action will be associated with one of the above objectives, and the following information will be provided for each action:

Description: Brief description of the task that the Program is committed to working on.

Challenges: Existing barriers that need to be addressed to successfully implement the action.

Potential Partners: A list of organizations that the Program may engage to request guidance, insight, support and/or partnership during action implementation.

Time frame: Due to the limited availability of Program resources (e.g., dedicated personnel, staff time, funding), the implementation of actions will occur in two-time frame categories:

- **Early Action:** actions that will start, continue, or be completed in 2023.
- **Future Action:** actions that will *not* start or be completed until *after* 2023.

Product(s): A list of discrete deliverable(s) that will be produced through implementation of the action.

Status Category and Description: The status category and a brief description of the status of action implementation at the time of publication of the Plan. Status categories include:

1. Implementation has not yet started
2. Implementation has begun, but is currently on hold
3. Implementation has begun, and is undergoing early preparation and scoping
4. Implementation is in progress
5. Implementation is complete

Connection to other Strategic Plans: This work is related to several other strategic efforts at the Water Board. In this section, references to specific goals and/or priorities identified in those strategic documents will be provided. The strategic documents that will be referenced include:

- [Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan](#) (2023-2025)
- [Water Board Strategic Data Action Plan](#)
- [SWAMP Strategic Action Plan](#) (2020-2023)
- [SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan](#) (2020-2023)

See the [Summary of Actions section](#) for an overview of all actions in this plan, including a table with each Action, Time frame to start or continue the action, Current Status Category and Time frame to complete the action.

Objective 1: Make messaging, communication, and engagement around fish advisories more clear, accessible, and understandable

The [Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment \(OEHHA\)](#) is the lead state agency for the assessment of health risks posed by environmental contaminants. OEHHA uses Program data to develop site specific and statewide [fish advisories](#), which contain guidelines that recommend how often one can safely eat fish caught from water bodies in California. These advisories can be tremendously helpful and a critical communication tool.

As useful as fish advisories can be, Committee Members noted that messaging, communication, and engagement around fish advisories could be improved to make the information in the advisories easier to access and understand so consumers can more effectively use them to make informed consumption decisions.

Action 1.1. Develop resources to make it easier for non-scientific audiences to understand, access, and use existing fish advisories

<p>Description</p>	<p>Currently, all fish advisories are available on the OEHHA website. However, not all people who fish may be aware that advisories exist, how to access advisories for water bodies near to them (virtually or physically near water bodies), or how to interpret advisories in a way that aligns with their subsistence, sustenance, or cultural fish or shellfish consumption practices.</p> <p>OEHHA has developed some resources to address these challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fish advisory web page and map ● Guidance on how to follow advisories ● Tips for Catching, Preparing, and Cooking Fish and Shellfish <p>For this action, the Program will develop additional resources that build on and complement OEHHA’s efforts, with the intention of getting the valuable information into the hands of those who need it most.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p><i>The Program does not have extensive professional public health communication resources in-house, nor does it have established connections or relationships with tribes and communities in the San Diego Region (outside of the Committee). Incorporating the public health education subject matter expertise and the wisdom and expertise that comes from the lived experience of community and tribal fishers into these resources will be critical to making sure they are well received and used by fishers. Doing so will require the time and expertise of partners.</i></p>

Potential Partners	OEHHA, Committee Members, STEW, OPP
Time frame	Early Action: at a minimum, drafts of resources will be shared for review by partners in 2023. Ideally, resources will be drafted, reviewed, finalized, and published in 2023.
Product(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update existing Program and STEW web pages to make resources related to fish advisories easier to find ● Create new web pages with guidance and easy to understand explanations of how advisories are developed, and how consumers can more effectively use them to make informed consumption decisions ● Create fact sheet(s) or flyers (i.e., printable materials) that can easily be distributed to people who fish, and that provide easy to understand guidance on how consumers can more effectively use advisories to make informed consumption decisions
Status Category and Description	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>Program and STEW web page updates and the creation of new web pages is already in process and under internal review. Currently, the Program anticipates web page updates to be complete by the end of June 2023. Current web pages under development answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How is bioaccumulation data used to protect human health in CA? ● What are the risks of eating contaminated fish and shellfish? How can I reduce my risk? ● What are California Fish Advisories and where can I find them? ● How does OEHHA develop California Fish Advisories? ● What water quality goals/objectives/thresholds exist for the safety of eating fish and shellfish in California? ● What is the difference between a threshold? OEHHA Fish Contaminant Goals (FCG)? OEHHA Advisory Tissue Levels (ATL)? How are they calculated? How are they used? <p>Web page content will be sent to partners for review when available, revised as needed, and then published.</p> <p>Fact sheets/flyers will reuse and remix reviewed web page content as appropriate before being sent out for review and feedback.</p>

<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results. & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.1</i>. Improve content and accessibility of Program and STEW web pages</p>
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Action 1.2. Share Committee feedback about current fish advisory messaging and assumptions with OEHHA and other related partners

<p>Description</p>	<p>This Committee has highlighted helpful and specific concerns, points of confusion, or issues they see with existing fish advisory messaging and assumptions.</p> <p>For this action, the Program will compile these recommendations and share them with OEHHA and other related partners.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>None at this time.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Committee Members, OEHHA, CDPH</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: Committee feedback and recommendations pertaining to current fish advisory messaging and assumptions will be added to the Committee Recommendations document and shared with OEHHA and other related partners in 2023.</p>
<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Committee Recommendations document
<p>Status</p>	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>Recommendations provided during 2021 Committee meetings have already been added to the document. Currently, the Program anticipates 2022 recommendations to be added by the end of June 2023, and 2023 recommendations will be added by the end of December 2023.</p>

<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3c</i>: Consult, collaborate, and partner with BIPOC communities in decision-making processes</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Priority 2</i>. Establish and maintain effective coordination and communication systems and processes & <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes</p>
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Action 1.3. Strengthen partnerships with OEHHA and related partners and begin discussions to determine the extent to which consumption advisories and associated messaging can be revised and/or developed to better serve communities that are most impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California’s freshwater and coastal ecosystems

<p>Description</p>	<p>Understanding the extent to which Program partners are able to incorporate feedback identified as part of Action 1.2 into existing systems and processes will take time, continued conversations, and ongoing partnership.</p> <p>For this action, the Program is committed to initiating conversations with potential partners and nurturing long-term conversations and relationships with partners, as appropriate.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>Elements of this Action, and the advice provided by the Committee, engage with activities conducted by other agencies under different authorities, workflows, and processes. For this reason, the Program cannot commit to adopting some of this advice, rather, the Program can and is committed to initiating conversations, exploring options, and supporting solutions with those partners.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>OEHHA, CDPH</p>

Time frame	<p>Early Action: The Program has already set up and hosted preliminary, introductory meetings and conversations with individuals in both OEHHA and CDPH. Next steps include requesting and scheduling additional meetings to discuss options and implementation scoping.</p> <p>Future Action: as the Realignment effort continues elsewhere in California, and as early-action engagements develop, the Program will provide annual updates about progress on this Action during STEW Meetings and through the STEW email list. Committee members are welcome to join any and all STEW meetings and opt in to the mailing list.</p>
Product(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emails and meeting invitations to partners ● Others to be determined based on conversations
Status	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>Currently, the Program plans on sending partners invitations to additional meetings to discuss options and implementation scoping in 2023.</p>
Connection to other Strategic Plans	<p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Priority 2</i>. Establish and maintain effective coordination and communication systems and processes</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes</p>

Objective 2: Make SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program data and information more accessible, and understandable

The Program, with the guidance of the STEW, has been conducting bioaccumulation monitoring surveys since 2007 in California’s lakes and reservoirs, rivers and streams, and coastal areas. The resulting Program data have been used, in whole or in part, to:

- develop [OEHHA fish advisories](#),
- assess and categorize California water bodies as part of the state’s [Integrated Report](#),
- develop [Statewide Mercury Provisions](#)
- establish a [Statewide Mercury Control Program for Reservoirs](#)

While all these accomplishments can be celebrated, it can still be difficult for data and resulting information to effectively reach tribes and communities that are most impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California’s freshwater and coastal ecosystems.

Committee members strongly encouraged closing substantial gaps that still exist and to make Program data and information more accessible and understandable.

Action 2.1. Make interactive dashboards (or similar tools) more prominent and easier to find on the Program and STEW websites

Description	<p>The Committee has elevated and prioritized a specific recommendation to center interactive dashboards (or similar tools) on the website, which can make interpreting data and information easy for non-technical audiences.</p> <p>For this action, the Program will update existing Program and STEW web pages to make interactive dashboards (or similar tools) more prominent and easier to find.</p>
Challenges	None at this time.
Potential Partners	DIT, Committee Members, San Diego Region, STEW
Time frame	Early Action: The Program has already begun the internal web page update process, and anticipates the updates associated with this action to be completed in 2023.
Product(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update existing Program and STEW web pages to make interactive dashboards (or similar tools) more prominent and easier to find
Status	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>Program and STEW web page updates are already in process and under internal review. Currently, the Program anticipates web page updates to be complete by the end of June 2023. Existing interactive dashboards that will be part of this update include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safe to Eat Portal ● SWAMP Data Dashboard <p>Web page content will be sent to partners for review when available, revised as needed, and then published.</p>

<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications.</p> <p>Water Board Strategic Data Action Plan <i>Priority 1</i>. Increase the availability of our data to the public</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.1</i>. Improve content and accessibility of Program and STEW web pages</p>
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Action 2.2. Incorporate SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program data into the SWAMP Data Dashboard

<p>Description</p>	<p>An interactive SWAMP Data Dashboard is in development. The goal of this resource is to summarize and display all monitoring data that has been collected by all of SWAMP’s statewide and regional monitoring programs.</p> <p>For this action, the Program will work closely with the developers of the dashboard and guide the development of the Program page and associated analyses and visualizations within the dashboard, so it elegantly visualizes and summarizes all data collected by the Program.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>The main challenge will be related to SWAMP and Program staff having time to work on this action.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>SWAMP, Committee Members, STEW, Regional Boards (including the San Diego Region)</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: The Program will work with SWAMP partners to begin implementation of this action in 2023. The Program anticipates that the action will not be completed until sometime in 2024.</p>

<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWAMP Data Dashboard Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program page with contextualized visualizations ● Update existing Program and STEW web pages to make interactive SWAMP Data Dashboard Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program page more prominent and easier to find
<p>Status</p>	<p>1. Implementation has not yet started</p> <p>SWAMP and Program staff discussed general ideas in 2020, but a lot has changed in terms of general SWAMP Data Dashboard development, options, and limitations since then. New conversations on the needs and scope of this action must happen for the Program to consider implementation of this action actively underway.</p> <p>The draft SWAMP Data Dashboard Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program page will be sent to partners for review when available, revised as needed, and then published.</p>
<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications.</p> <p>Water Board Strategic Data Action Plan <i>Priority 1</i>. Increase the availability of our data to the public</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan: <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.3</i>. Develop the BOG Page of the SWAMP Data Dashboard</p>

Action 2.3. Update and modernize the existing Safe to Eat Portal

<p>Description</p>	<p>The Safe to Eat Portal on the Water Quality Monitoring Council web page displays a screenshot of an link to the OEHHA California Fish Advisory Map. Another Safe to Eat Portal, which was developed with guidance from the STEW, displays statewide fish contaminant data from the Program and other sources through 2017. Neither portal adequately or clearly answers the question: Is it safe to eat fish and shellfish from our waters?</p> <p>For this action, the Program will consolidate and streamline existing “Safe to Eat Portal” resources, update and modernize the existing Safe to Eat Portal data visualization and update the Program and STEW web pages accordingly.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>The main challenge will be Program staff having time to work on this action. Program staff are committed to making updates, but the reality of juggling other duties might mean that updates don't occur as quickly as we would like.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>SWAMP, Committee Members, STEW, Regional Boards (including the San Diego Region), OEHHA</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: The Program will work with SWAMP partners to begin implementation of this action in 2023, and hope to, at a minimum, have a complete draft of all revisions complete by October 2023. The Program anticipates that the action will not be completed until sometime in 2024.</p> <p>Future Action: When complete, the State will undertake a broad public and media outreach effort to announce the update.</p>
<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update existing Program and STEW web pages to streamline and reduce confusion around current streamline existing “Safe to Eat Portal” web page resources, and make the existing interactive Safe to Eat Portal data visualization more prominent and easier to find ● Updated Safe to Eat Portal data visualization with more recent data as well as contextualized data and visualizations

<p>Status</p>	<p>3. Implementation has begun, and is undergoing early preparation and scoping</p> <p>The Program discussed general update ideas and began identifying data update needs in 2021. Before the Program goes further with implementation, we want to discuss the scope and vision of the SWAMP Data Dashboard to ensure the resources complement each other and messaging around the differences between the two resources is clear and consistent for staff and potential users. Once those conversations happen and distinctions are more clear, the Program will restart active implementation of this action.</p> <p>The draft updated Safe to Eat Portal data visualization will be sent to partners for review when available, revised as needed, and then published.</p>
<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications.</p> <p>Water Board Strategic Data Action Plan <i>Priority 1</i>. Increase the availability of our data to the public</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan: <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.3</i>. Develop the BOG Page of the SWAMP Data Dashboard</p>

Action 2.4. Add large tables provided in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program reports to the California Open Data Portal

<p>Description</p>	<p>Since 2007, the Program, with the guidance of the STEW, has been conducting bioaccumulation monitoring surveys focused on collecting and analyzing fish tissue for mercury, legacy pesticides, and other pollutants, such as PCBs, and assessing these data to provide insight into the safety of eating fish in California’s waterbodies. These surveys have been conducted in lakes and reservoirs, rivers and streams, and coastal waters of California.</p> <p>For all surveys, reports that summarize what data were collected are produced. These reports can often have long tables embedded in the main document or included as appendices, meaning that those who wish to study or otherwise work with the data do not have easy access to it.</p> <p>Users that are familiar with the public database (i.e., California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN)) that contains the raw Program survey data can view and download data as soon as it is made available. However, navigating CEDEN and replicating the analysis that it takes to develop the data summaries provided in reports can be difficult for even the more experienced data users.</p> <p>Program data available in CEDEN are also available on the California Open Data Portal. While accessing data can be slightly easier through this platform, the difficulty of replicating the analysis that it takes to develop the data summaries provided in reports remains.</p> <p>For this action, the Program commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● uploading reports (in PDF format) as well as summarized tables (in Excel or .csv formats) ● associating those uploads with the raw data ● developing and using a consistent upload naming convention so it is easy to search for content uploaded by the Program ● developing and using consistent tags to make it easy to filter search results and reduce the time it takes for the user to find what they are looking for. Example tags include, but are not limited to: “Bioaccumulation”, “Surface Water”, “Tissue”, and “fish”, “shellfish” or “bivalves”
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>None at this time.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>STEW, California Water Data Consortium</p>

Time frame	Future Action: Some of the Program’s internal processes and data workflows need to be adjusted before the start of this action; that work is already underway. The Program anticipates being able to begin this action in late-2024 or early-2025.
Product(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program survey reports and summarized tables uploaded to the California Open Data Portal
Status	1. Implementation has not yet started
Connection to other Strategic Plans	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 1a:</i> Water Boards data are accessible, equitable, and culturally relevant</p> <p>Water Board Strategic Data Action Plan <i>Priority 1.</i> Increase the availability of our data to the public & <i>Priority 3.</i> Transform our data into usable formats</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 1.6.</i> Adapt Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs and the public & <i>Priority 3.</i> Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan: <i>Action 1.4.</i> Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes</p>

Action 2.5. Conduct a linguistic isolation analysis for the San Diego Region and, to the extent that is logistically feasible, ensure future fact sheets and other resources are provided - at a minimum - in the top 3 non-English languages spoken in the region.

<p>Description</p>	<p>California is one of the most linguistically diverse states in the country with more than 200 spoken languages. The U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 estimates indicate that 44% of Californians ages five and older speak a language other than English at home. To ensure the Program can connect and communicate with all Californians, we must advance language access to our resources and expand development of equitable and inclusive communications and engagement approaches.</p> <p>OPP supports all Water Boards programs with translating written documents such as meeting flyers, public notices, fact sheets, executive summaries, and more.</p> <p>In 2021, the Program began working with OPP to provide fact sheets and flyers posted on the website in the following languages: English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Hmong, Korean, and Tagalog.</p> <p>For this action, the Program will conduct a linguistic isolation analysis for the San Diego Region and work with OPP to get future fact sheets and other short (fewer than 5 pages) written documents provided - at a minimum - in the top 3 non-English languages spoken in the region.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>None at this time.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>OPP</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: The Program anticipates being able to complete and synthesize the results of a linguistic isolation analysis for the San Diego Region in 2023.</p> <p>The Program commits to ensuring future fact sheets and other resources are provided - at a minimum - in the top 3 non-English languages spoken in the region, although the publication of translated documents may not occur until after 2023.</p>
<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Linguistic isolation analysis for the San Diego Region, posted on the Realignment website

<p>Status</p>	<p>3. Implementation has begun, and is undergoing early preparation and scoping</p> <p>The Program conducted a cursory review of the Water Boards Linguistic Isolation Tool in 2021 and plans to review more recent data and summarize results in 2023.</p>
<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 1.6</i>. Adapt Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs and the public, <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan: <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes</p>

Objective 3: Make messaging, communication, and engagement around how tribes and communities can participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes more clear, accessible, and understandable

Since the program began developing the Realignment Plan in 2020, a suite of opportunities were set up to increase the ability of tribes and communities to participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities.

Although the Program conducted tribal and community outreach efforts in 2021 and 2022 to increase awareness of these opportunities, substantial gaps still exist that prevent the intended audiences of these outreach efforts to meaningfully receive that information and take action accordingly.

Committee members noted that messaging, communication, and engagement around how tribes and communities can participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes could be improved. Specific recommendations

involve making it easier for tribes and communities to find and access the associated information so they can review it and make informed decisions about what participation, engagement, and/or partnership with the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program means for them.

Action 3.1. Update existing Program and STEW web pages and/or create new web pages that make it easier for tribes and communities to find the information they need to assess whether participation, engagement, and/or partnership with the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program is a good fit for them.

<p>Description</p>	<p>Information on how tribes and communities can engage and partner with the Program is provided on the website. However, information is posted in different places and may be difficult to locate for tribes or communities that have only recently been introduced to the Program.</p> <p>For this action, the Program will streamline relevant information on existing Program and STEW web pages, and create new pages that make pertinent information more prominent and easier to find.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>None at this time.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>DIT, Committee Members, STEW</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: The Program has already begun the internal web page update process, and anticipates the updates associated with this action to be completed in 2023.</p>
<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update existing Program and STEW web pages to make resources related to how tribes and communities can participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes more clear, accessible, and understandable ● Create new web pages with guidance that is easy to understand and follow so tribes and communities can easily take the necessary steps to begin participating, engaging, and/or partnering in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes. ● Design both updated and new web pages so that they are accessible and easy to use on computers and other devices (e.g., mobile phones, tablets).

<p>Status</p>	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>Program and STEW web page updates and the creation of new web pages is already in process and under internal review. Currently, the Program anticipates web page updates to be complete by the end of June 2023. Current web pages under development answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is the appropriate contact for Program and/or STEW activities? ● How can I stay informed of current or upcoming Program and/or STEW activities? ● How can I get involved with Program and/or STEW activities? ● How can a California Native American Tribe or Tribal Organization request a meeting to learn more about Program and/or STEW activities? <p>Web page content will be sent to partners for review when available, revised as needed, and then published.</p>
<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications</p> <p>SWAMP Strategic Action Plan <i>Action 2.5</i> Update and maintain the SWAMP website to serve as a reliable source of information of up-to-date SWAMP monitoring activities and results. & <i>Priority 3</i>. Develop and share user-centered resources and tools</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.1</i>. Improve content and accessibility of Program and STEW web pages</p>

Action 3.2. Continue Statewide Tribal Engagement efforts

<p>Description</p>	<p>In 2021, the Program began the Realignment process in the San Diego Region. Quickly after the start of that process, key learnings emerged, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is critical for each Regional Advisory Committee’s discussions to center around the perspectives, needs, and recommendations of Tribal and community-based organization representatives. 2. Significantly more time needs to be dedicated to holistic statewide outreach and engagement - particularly with tribes - before the start of a Region’s Realignment process. <p>The Program wanted to begin acting on these key learnings as soon as possible, particularly learning 2, and developed a Tribal Engagement Plan. The original purpose of the plan was to document our tribal engagement goals, as well as to articulate our planned approach, engagement methods, timelines, and plans to address potential challenges we may encounter throughout the process. The plan was originally meant to guide tribal engagement efforts that would take place, and were successfully implemented, between March and November 2022.</p> <p>For this action, the Program commits to continuing statewide tribal engagement efforts for the foreseeable future.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>The main challenge associated with this action will be related to Program staff having time to implement engagement activities. Program staff are committed to tribal engagement and relationship building throughout the state, but the reality of juggling other duties might mean that specific activities (i.e., mailing out letters or sending email through the Water Boards Tribal Matters email list) may not occur at the same intervals as described in the original Tribal Engagement Plan.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>OPP, Committee Members, STEW, Regional Boards</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Early Action: The Program anticipates being able to initiate Statewide Tribal Engagement efforts in January - March 2023.</p> <p>The Program does not envision a “completion” date for this action and intends to continue and evolve these efforts for the foreseeable future.</p>

<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letters and emails sent to Tribal governments and organizations with invitations to schedule a time to meet and connect with Program staff. ● Calendar invitations for meetings, which will include Zoom login information (if virtual) or meeting location address (if in-person), and a general (but flexible) meeting agenda ● Meeting notes that include meeting attendees, summary of discussion topics and learnings, list of agreed upon next steps and/or action items ● Presentations at tribal meetings, summits, conferences, or other events, upon request from tribes and/or approval from event organizers as well as Water Boards Training Academy and Program Management. ● Updated Tribal Engagement Plan that reflects the Program’s commitment to and anticipated implementation of long-term tribal engagement and relationship building.
<p>Status</p>	<p>4. Implementation is in progress</p> <p>The Program has continued to respond to meeting requests from tribal representatives and has continued conversations and meetings with existing tribal partners.</p> <p>The Program plans on sending out meeting invitations (via letter and email) to tribes throughout the state in early 2023 and scheduling introductory and/or informational meetings with tribal representatives as requested. See Objective 1 and Objective 2 of the Tribal Engagement Plan for more details.</p> <p>The program also plans on requesting to attend (and present, if appropriate) at the following tribal meetings, summits, conferences, or other events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● California Issues Workgroup Meeting (Feb, invited by meeting organizers) ● Tribal Water Summit (Apr, attendance only) ● Tribal EPA Region 9 Annual Conference (date to be determined)

<p>Connection to other Strategic Plans</p>	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications & <i>Goal 3c</i>: Consult, collaborate, and partner with BIPOC communities in decision-making processes</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.5</i>. Disseminate the utility of updated resources by presenting at conferences</p>
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Action 3.3. Begin statewide community engagement efforts

<p>Description</p>	<p>Similar to Action 3.2 above, the Program recognizes the importance of reaching out to, engaging with, and partnering with community-based organizations that are members of communities that are most impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California’s freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p> <p>For this action, the Program commits to developing and beginning to implement a more holistic, long-term community engagement plan.</p>
<p>Challenges</p>	<p>The main challenge associated with this action will be related to Program staff having time to implement engagement activities. Program staff are committed to community engagement and relationship building throughout the state, but the reality of juggling other duties might mean that specific activities may not occur as quickly or as frequently as we would like.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>OPP, Committee Members, STEW, Regional Boards</p>
<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Future Action: Some of the Program’s internal processes and workflows need to be adjusted before the start of this action; that work is already underway. The Program anticipates being able to begin this action in late-2024 or early-2025.</p>
<p>Product(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development of a Community Engagement Plan that reflects the Program’s commitment to and anticipated implementation of long-term community engagement and relationship building. ● Others to be determined based on the Community Engagement Plan

Status	1. Implementation has not yet started
Connection to other Strategic Plans	<p>Water Board Racial Equity Action Plan <i>Goal 3a</i>: Engage with BIPOC communities by providing effective language access services and accessible communications & <i>Goal 3c</i>: Consult, collaborate, and partner with BIPOC communities in decision-making processes</p> <p>SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Work Plan <i>Action 1.4</i>. Realign Program to address data and information needs of State Water Board programs, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and tribes & <i>Action 3.5</i>. Disseminate the utility of updated resources by presenting at conferences</p>

Summary of Actions

Due to the limited availability of Program resources (e.g., dedicated PY, staff time, funding), the implementation of actions will occur in two-time frame categories:

- **Early Action**: actions that will start, continue, or be completed in 2023.
- **Future Action**: actions that will *not* start, continue, or be completed until *after* 2023.

Status Categories range from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating the implementation has not yet started and 5 indicating the action implementation is complete. Specific status categories and their associated descriptions include:

1. Implementation has not yet started
2. Implementation has begun, but is currently on hold
3. Implementation has begun, and is undergoing early preparation and scoping
4. Implementation is in progress
5. Implementation is complete

A summary of actions, current time frame categories, current status, anticipated completion time frame categories is provided below.

Objective 1: Make messaging, communication, and engagement around fish advisories more clear, accessible, and understandable

Action	Time frame to <i>start</i> or <i>continue</i> the action	Current Status Category	Time frame to <i>complete</i> the action
Action 1.1. Develop resources to make it easier for non-scientific audiences to understand, access, and use existing fish advisories	Early Action	4	Early Action
Action 1.2. Share Committee feedback about current fish advisory messaging and assumptions with OEHHA and other related partners	Early Action	4	Early Action
Action 1.3. Strengthen partnerships with OEHHA and related partners and begin discussions to determine the extent to which consumption advisories and associated messaging can be revised and/or developed to better serve communities that are most impacted by the consumption of contaminated fish and shellfish in California’s freshwater and coastal ecosystems	Early Action	4	Early Action <i>Note:</i> Implementation of solutions, if any, will likely be a Future Action

Objective 2: Make SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program data and information more accessible, and understandable

Action	Time frame to <u>start</u> or <u>continue</u> the action	Current Status Category	Time frame to <u>complete</u> the action
Action 2.1. Make interactive dashboards (or similar tools) more prominent and easier to find on the Program and STEW websites	Early Action	4	Early Action
Action 2.2. Incorporate SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program data into the SWAMP Data Dashboard	Early Action	1	Future Action
Action 2.3. Update and modernize the existing Safe to Eat Portal	Early Action	3	Future Action
Action 2.4. Add large tables provided in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program reports to the California Open Data Portal	Future Action	1	Future Action
Action 2.5. Conduct a linguistic isolation analysis for the San Diego Region and, to the extent that is logistically feasible, ensure future fact sheets and other resources are provided - at a minimum - in the top 3 non-English languages spoken in the region.	Early Action	3	Early Action <i>Note: Publication of translated documents will likely be a Future Action</i>

Objective 3: Make messaging, communication, and engagement around how tribes and communities can participate, engage, and partner in SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program activities and processes more clear, accessible, and understandable

Action	Time frame to <i>start</i> or <i>continue</i> the action	Current Status Category	Time frame to <i>complete</i> the action
Action 3.1. Update existing Program and STEW web pages and/or create new web pages that make it easier for tribes and communities to find the information they need to assess whether participation, engagement, and/or partnership with the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program is a good fit for them.	Early Action	4	Early Action
Action 3.2. Continue Statewide Tribal Engagement efforts	Early Action	4	Future Action <i>Note:</i> The Program does not envision a “completion” date and intends to continue these efforts for the foreseeable future.
Action 3.3. Begin statewide community engagement efforts	Future Action	1	Future Action

Evaluation & Assessment

Of the 11 Actions identified above, the Program anticipates that 9 (approximately 80%) will start or continue in 2023 and that 6 (approximately 55%) will be completed (in whole or in part) in 2023.

The Program will plan on providing oral and/or written updates on the progress of these actions during the 2023 Committee meetings as well as Safe to Eat Workgroup meetings in 2023 and beyond, as appropriate. As indicated in the action descriptions, many products associated with the above actions will be shared with the Committee and other potential partners for feedback, which will then be incorporated into products as appropriate.

Many of the above actions are also referenced in the [Program's 2020-2023 Work Plan](#). As the Program develops its next work plan, which will likely include strategic actions for 2024 - 2026, the Program will assess the completeness of these actions and describe any next steps or future iterations, as appropriate. It is anticipated that this updated Program Work Plan will be completed and published online in early 2024.

It is important to note that the Program sees many of the products associated with the above actions as “living” products, meaning that the Program intends on periodically reviewing the products well beyond 2023 and assessing the extent to which they are viewed (for online resources) and are useful and used by tribal and community partners. Based on these assessments, the Program intends on revising, updating, and iterating products as the needs of tribes and communities, and the capacity of the Program, evolve over time.

Contact Information

For questions about any topic discussed in this Communication and Outreach Plan, please contact the Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Coordinator and Program Realignment Lead, Anna Holder at: anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov or (916) 341-5096.