



Fact Sheet

Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Realignment

Program Realignment Overview

The [State of California's Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program](#) (Program) was established in 2006 with a mission to conduct comprehensive, statewide monitoring to assess whether fish and shellfish found in California's streams, lakes, and coastal areas are safe to eat by measuring the concentrations of pollutants in their tissue. The Program is implemented by the State Water Resources Control Board's [Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program](#) (SWAMP).

In 2020, SWAMP evaluated the Program and determined that, although it has had several successes since it began in 2006, to fully align with and achieve its original mission it must address two key issues:

- 1) The Program needs to better collaborate and connect and other Water Boards Divisions, Regions, and programs.
- 2) Significant data and information gaps remain in answering the question: "Is it safe to eat fish and shellfish from our waters?", especially for waterbodies or species that are important for subsistence by traditionally underrepresented communities, as well as tribal traditions, culture, and subsistence.

To address these issues, the Program will undergo a realignment process beginning in 2021. Successful implementation of the Program realignment requires intentional actions. Therefore, the realignment will be conducted in a phased approach in each Water Board Region and will tap into complementary efforts such as regional sampling plans, fish consumption advisory development, and tribal beneficial use designation.

Realignment Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee will be formed in each Region and will be an essential part of accomplishing the goals of the Realignment Plan, including to "focus on incorporating community perspectives and needs into Program efforts with the aim of improving the Program's monitoring efforts and ensuring those data and information are useful and used by the Water Boards, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, the public, subsistence-dependent communities, and Tribes."



Each Region's Advisory Committee will be composed of representatives from:

- Tribal governments or advocates
- Community-based organizations
- State and federal agencies involved in protecting water quality or human health, habitat restoration or resource management

What is the purpose of the Advisory Committee?

The purpose of each Advisory Committee is to provide region-specific advice about which species, pollutants, and locations should be monitored in the future, how to best produce open and accessible data and information gained from monitoring efforts, and how to best use and communicate the findings of the monitoring.

A specific goal of each Advisory Committee will be to promote inclusion and equity into the monitoring process by engaging traditionally underrepresented communities and California Tribes and addressing information needs relating to fish and shellfish consumption by these groups.

What is the benefit of joining the Advisory Committee?

Advisory Committee members will have the opportunity to share their expertise and experience related to species, pollutants, and locations that are important for the mission, tradition, culture, and subsistence of the communities or agencies they represent. More specifically, they will:

- Highlight and prioritize needs or data and information gaps that are important to their community that may not otherwise be identified through the regular monitoring process. Realignment funds will be used to sample species, pollutants, and locations that the Advisory Committee deems most important. This initial effort will produce information faster than the Program's regular monitoring schedule.
- Shape the future of the Program in their region so that it better serves their communities.
- Advisory Committee members representing tribal governments or community-based organizations will be compensated for their time and contributions.

Additional Resources

- [Program Realignment Website](#)
- [Program Realignment Executive Summary](#)
- [Full Program Realignment Plan](#)
- For questions, please reach out to the Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Coordinator, Anna Holder, at: Anna.Holder@waterboards.ca.gov or (916) 341-5096

