

## State Water Resources Control Board

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Contact: Myrlis L. Stockdale  
Tom Mays  
916-341-5254

### NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION CONFERENCE COMBATS WATER POLLUTION

**SACRAMENTO** — More than 300 water quality specialists, nonprofit organizations, landowners and others are meeting in Sacramento this week to demonstrate and exchange technical information about efforts to curb polluted runoff. Polluted runoff, or nonpoint source pollution (NPS), is the leading cause of water quality pollution in both California and the nation.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is hosting the California Nonpoint Source Conference that will be held October 23 - 25 at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, 300 J St.

SWRCB Chairman, Arthur G. Baggett, Jr., will open the sold-out conference on Tuesday discussing the successes in pollution prevention.

"Polluted runoff comes from every sector of our society, and it's up to each business owner, farmer, city manager and individual to aggressively stop it at its source," Baggett said. "The overwhelming response to this conference shows that we realize the importance of this effort to control pollution, and improve our state's waterways."

More than 40 speakers will discuss new projects underway throughout California funded by the Clean Water Act. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which administers these federal funds, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration approved the state polluted runoff control program last summer.

Other agencies participating in the conference include the California Coastal Commission, EPA, Regional Water Quality Control Boards and the Watershed Management Council. The conference will focus on the importance of developing community and agency partnerships and sharing new science and time-tested practices to curb pollution. Some examples:

- In the San Diego area, farmers are learning how to reduce high nutrient contents from irrigation runoff
- In Mariposa County, erosion control specialists are assisting builders and land owners in grading practices to prevent soil from washing into nearby waterways.
- In Humboldt Bay, a collaborative group of timber, agriculture, government and citizen groups are benefiting fish populations by diverting culverts, improving livestock fencing practices, replanting of vegetation and decommissioning eroding, unpaved roads.
- In Sonoma County, specialists are assisting vintners in grading and planting practices to stem sedimentation from hillside vineyards

Last year, EPA provided \$10 million to the SWRCB for the nation's first comprehensive NPS program focusing on both inland and coastal waters. To date, EPA has provided \$33 million for 240 projects in California involving impaired waters.

The State of California has provided \$22 million into programs to combat polluted runoff through Water Bond 2000.

Polluted runoff is caused by rainfall or melted snow moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and even our underground sources of drinking water.

Pollutants include: excess fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas; oil, grease and toxic chemicals from urban runoff and energy production; sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands and eroding streambanks; salt from irrigation practices and acid drainage from abandoned mines; bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes and faulty septic systems.

Attached please find information about nonpoint source pollution projects currently under way in your area.

See <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/nps/conference.html> to review the agenda, sponsors and logistics of the NPS Conference.

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