



CALIFORNIA WATER BOARDS

State Water Resources Control Board

Regional Water Quality Control Boards

Water Board Function: Monitoring and assessment (surveillance)

Water Board Program(s) Relevant to Function:

Monitoring and assessment is relevant to all of the Water Boards' regulatory programs and functions. Examples of Water Board monitoring and assessment activities include:

- Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)/SB 1070
- Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment (GAMA)
- Core Regulatory
- Stormwater
- San Francisco Estuary Institute/Regional Monitoring Program (SFEI/RMP; Region 2)
- Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP)--BIGHT '08
- Toxic Substances Monitoring Program (TSMP)
- Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP; Region 3)
- Toxic Hot Spot
- Mussel Watch
- Stream Team
- Clean Beaches Initiative (CBI)/AB 411
- Wetlands
- Clean Water Team

Problem/Issue Description:

The Water Boards engage in many water quality monitoring activities that involve various organizations, agencies and dischargers. These monitoring activities are directed at both ground water and surface water, and are funded and managed by a variety of sponsors. The Water Boards have particular interest in water quality monitoring that relates to regulation of waste discharges to waters of the State. For this purpose, there are specific monitoring programs for the State and Regional Boards. Conducting this monitoring in an efficient and effective manner is critical to our mission, yet it is increasingly challenging to direct, coordinate and implement these activities with available resources.

Monitoring of both ground water and surface water is necessary to:

- Assess discharger compliance
- Assess pollutants in the waste stream
- Assess discharge impacts to receiving waters
- Assess ambient water status and trends

Overview of Function:

Water Quality Monitoring conducted by the Water Boards is intended to accomplish several critical elements of the regulatory process. It is used to assess discharger compliance with regulatory requirements concerning waste sources, conveyance, treatment and impacts to receiving waters. It is also used to assess the effectiveness of the regulatory efforts by examining the ambient water conditions to reveal the status and trends of water quality related factors.

Water Quality Monitoring is brought to bear in an iterative process of planning, implementation, data collection and analysis to systematically measure performance of the dischargers, using regulatory permits and directives to ensure that needed monitoring is conducted. Monitoring results are compared with permit requirements derived from water quality and beneficial use standards prescribed in monitoring and reporting plans adopted or authorized by the Regional and State Boards.

Role of Water Board Staff:

[Please see Water Board Staff Roles for SWAMP, GAMA, permit monitoring requirements, and citizens monitoring under binder tab 15]

Role of Regional Board Members:

Imposes monitoring and assessment requirements through permits and investigative orders. Requires investigation of water quality resulting from waste discharges. *[Also see Board Member Roles for SWAMP, GAMA, permit monitoring requirements, and citizens monitoring under binder tab 15]*

Role of State Board Members:

Reviews petitions from Regional Board requirements and conducts statewide monitoring and assessments programs. Requires investigation of water quality resulting from waste discharges. *[Also see Board Member Roles for SWAMP, GAMA, permit monitoring requirements, and citizens monitoring under binder tab 15]*

Primary Issues of Concern:

From the perspective of the San Diego Regional Board experience:

Monitoring and surveillance information is not functionally integrated into the Board's overall regulatory programs due to variety of inadequacies in its compliance monitoring requirements and internal report review, the lack of ambient monitoring, and the lack of a functional data management system. As a result, the Regional Board is unable to efficiently assure discharger compliance with regulatory requirements and effectively measure the performance and success of its own regulatory activities. To accomplish this, specific issues to be addressed are:

- Discharger compliance monitoring requirements are not systematically reviewed and updated. They are inadequately planned, reviewed, and assessed.
- Ambient monitoring requirements are significantly insufficient, poorly planned, and not properly assessed.

- The Regional Board lacks access to a functional geo-referenced data management system with capabilities for user input; data collection, storage, retrieval, data analysis, effective reporting, and public web-based access.
- Monitoring and surveillance information needs to be functionally integrated into the Board's mainstream regulatory programs.
- Monitoring and surveillance information needs to be effectively communicated and routinely used to inform and support regulatory decision-makers at all levels (staff to Board members; within and outside the organization).

Definition of Key Terms:

None.