

Project Title: Los Osos Seeps Monitoring

Organization: Bay Foundation of Morro Bay and Morro Bay National Estuary Program

Location: Morro Bay Estuary, San Luis Obispo County

Estimated Project Cost: \$26,750

SEP request: \$26,750

Project Description:

Bacteria and nutrient contamination is a priority problem facing Morro Bay estuary. In response to impairment of local creeks and the bay, nutrient and pathogen TMDLs have already been established. Seeps, located along the bay shoreline in Los Osos, are areas where freshwater breaks through to the surface. Historical monitoring of these sites for both TMDL develop and shellfish monitoring have regularly recorded high levels of pathogens, in both the wet and dry seasons.

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program's Volunteer Monitoring Program (VMP) has been conducting monitoring in the Morro Bay watershed for over ten years. The organization, in partnership with the MBNEP, provide opportunities for citizen monitors to create a valuable long-term dataset and become stewards of the watershed.

The proposed SEP would use funds to develop and implement a long-term volunteer-based monitoring effort to track water quality in local seeps. The SEP funds would be used to:

- Oversee volunteer coordination and sample handling for monthly sample collection at four seeps locations over a four-year time period
- Fund laboratory analysis of samples for total coliform, fecal coliform and nitrates as nitrogen
- Develop annual monitoring reports and a final project report

The MBNEP is willing to help coordinate the effort and manage the SEP funds, and has restoration funds that may be available if additional funding is needed.

The MBNEP's VMP is an established monitoring program. All monitoring efforts are described in the program's Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP) that undergoes annual updates and approval by EPA. The VMP is currently working through the process to obtain SWAMP-approval. Volunteer sample collectors would be recruited and trained by VMP staff. Samples would then be delivered to ELAP-certified labs for analysis for total coliform, fecal coliform and nitrates as nitrogen. All data management and analysis would be conducted by VMP staff, who would also generate the project reports.

As part of the project, the MBNEP will provide regular reporting to the Regional Board, the California Department of Health Services Marine Biotoxin Program, the Los Osos Community Services District, the SLO County Public Health Agency, and any other entity interested in the data. Reporting will include the analytical results in annual reports and a final report summarizing the effort.

This proposed project is not independently required of any discharger or proposed as mitigation to offset the impacts of any project. In theory, other agencies might undertake this project regardless of these supplemental funds, but the reality is that most agencies lack the funding and staff to conduct this type of monitoring.

Project Budget:

Task	Requested SEP Funds	Notes
Laboratory analysis	\$14,400	Nitrates, fecal and total coliform
Mileage	\$277	Sample delivery to laboratory
MBNEP staff time	\$10,000	Monitoring coordination, data management and data analysis and reporting
Total Direct Costs	\$24,677	
Administrative fee (6%)	\$1,605	
Contingency	\$468	Mileage and laboratory costs subject to increase
TOTAL SEP Cost	\$26,750	

The Bay Foundation of Morro Bay is the incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation that administers the Morro Bay National Estuary Program and will be the legal recipient of the funds. Both the Bay Foundation board and the MBNEP Committees will oversee staff's efforts on the projects. The Bay Foundation charges an administrative fee of 6% on grants and other pass through funds they receive. Note that this is independent of charging for MBNEP staff time and expenses towards these efforts.

The actual costs will depend on how many of the targeted seep sites are sampled each month. At least one of the sites is seasonal and only flows during the wet season. The MBNEP is committed to contributing the needed funds towards this effort in the event the costs are greater than currently anticipated.

Project Timeline:

Task	Schedule
Begin sampling of seeps	Within two months of award of funds
Complete annual report for first year of sampling	Within 14 months of start of monitoring
Complete annual report for second year of	Within 26 months of start of

sampling	monitoring
Complete annual report for third year of sampling	Within 38 months of start of monitoring
Complete annual report for fourth year of sampling	Within 50 months of start of monitoring
Final monitoring report	Within 52 months of start of monitoring

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