

# Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)

## Program Description

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- The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program, or SWAMP, is a statewide monitoring effort designed to assess the conditions of surface waters throughout the state of California. There is a statewide component to SWAMP as well as regional components that have been developed and implemented by the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards since 2000.
- The statewide component is currently being developed to monitor water quality in wadeable streams and to measure levels of pollutants in fish from lakes and reservoirs where people fish and consume their catch.
- In the San Francisco Bay Area, our regional SWAMP has conducted three types of monitoring:
  - SWAMP has measured contaminants in fish from ten reservoirs, Tomales Bay, and other coastal areas. These studies have led to fish consumption advisories that have been translated into multiple languages and posted to inform the public.
  - SWAMP has developed a rapid trash assessment protocol that has been used to measure trash in 14 watersheds. Studies took place after wet and dry seasons to determine sources of trash as well as accumulation levels.
  - SWAMP has used bioassessments, water and sediment chemistry and toxicity tests, as well as continuous monitoring probes for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, specific conductance, and depth to measure water quality in 34 watersheds throughout the region.
- Currently, the major goal of the Bay Area SWAMP is to develop a watershed monitoring coalition with stormwater programs and others to ensure collaborative, consistent, and high-quality watershed monitoring.
- When funding allows, SWAMP also hopes to capture monitoring information collected under state and regional Water Board programs such as TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load), Nonpoint Source, and Watershed Project Support. SWAMP does not conduct effluent or discharge monitoring, which are covered under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). Historical surface water monitoring programs have been included as part of SWAMP: State Mussel Watch, Toxic Substance Monitoring Program, Toxicity Testing Program, and Coastal Fish Contamination Program.
- High-quality data is a statewide priority for SWAMP. The SWAMP Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP) is being used as the statewide standard for all surface water monitoring conducted under various State grant programs. The plan can be found at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/swamp/qapp.html>.
- A SWAMP database has been developed. This database is linked to many other sources of data through the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN).
- All data collected by SWAMP will be used for the “Integrated Report” which includes the 303(d) list and 305(b) report.
- For more specific information on SWAMP visit the State Board’s SWAMP web page at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/swamp/>