



## DEVELOPMENT OF REPORT CARDS IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION FOR WATERSHED HEALTH

### What is it?

Environmental report cards are used to score the state of the environment. Although Heal the Bay already develops report cards for beach water quality, a report card system for watershed health is still missing in California. A report card system can accomplish several goals: (1) Through report cards, large and complex datasets can be easily understood. (2) Report cards can guide decisions made by water quality resource managers, stakeholders, and the public. (3) Report cards can be used to coordinate monitoring. (4) Report cards offer a transparent process of informing the public about environmental health.

The Department of Environmental Protection in Massachusetts developed a water quality report card system to report on ecosystem health. While this report card system has been successfully tested in the San Diego River watershed, a scientifically and statistically-sound scoring system is still needed for full implementation into the San Diego region. The scoring system will be vetted through a stakeholder process. It is planned to develop report cards for other watersheds in the San Diego region.

This project is closely coordinated with the Central Coast Regional Water Board's [watershed assessment project](#) and the work of the [Healthy Streams Partnership](#) (HSP) of the [California Water Quality Monitoring Council](#).

## Why is it important?

Report cards will make it easier for the general public, water quality managers, and decision makers to understand information about water quality and therefore help increase awareness of water quality issues impacting California's water resources.

## How will this information be used?

The report cards will be available on the San Diego Region SWAMP website and through the HSP's [Healthy Streams Portal](#). They will be used to prioritize water quality problems, coordinate monitoring efforts, and guide decision making. They will also help decision makers make informed management decisions to better protect and restore California's water resources.

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Preliminary San Diego River Report Card, 2005-2006

