How do you start collaborating with a watershed group?

What is a collaboration and how does it work?

- **Collaboration: A cooperative arrangement in which two or more parties (which may or may not have any previous relationship) work jointly towards a common goal**
- **Find an organization with strengths that complement your project**

Collaboration = Partnership

- **Share resources**
  - ✓ **Office space**
  - ✓ **Staff**
  - ✓ **Equipment**

- **Provide in-kind services**
- **Provide linkages to additional funding sources**

What are the benefits of collaborating?

Engage local stakeholders

Save money and time

Gain local knowledge and trust

Involve specialists

Increase funding opportunities

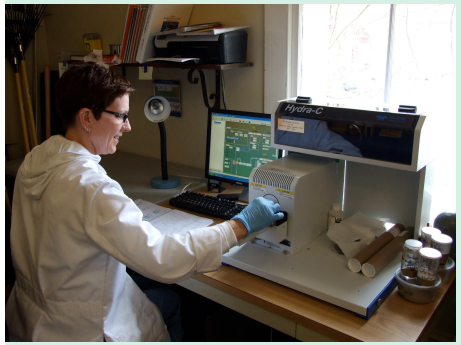
Resource sharing

Diversify ideas and perspectives

Why are collaborations needed?

- Shrinking financial resources
- Increased demand upon natural resources
- Leveraging resources and specialties
- Need for accurate, meaningful, actionable data
- Integrated efforts

Community Groups Have Many Purposes



Arcade Creek Project

American River Parkway Foundation

Science

Education

Advocacy

Outreach

Stewardship

PARK ADVOCACY DAY

March 12, 2013

Main Uses of Citizen Monitoring Data

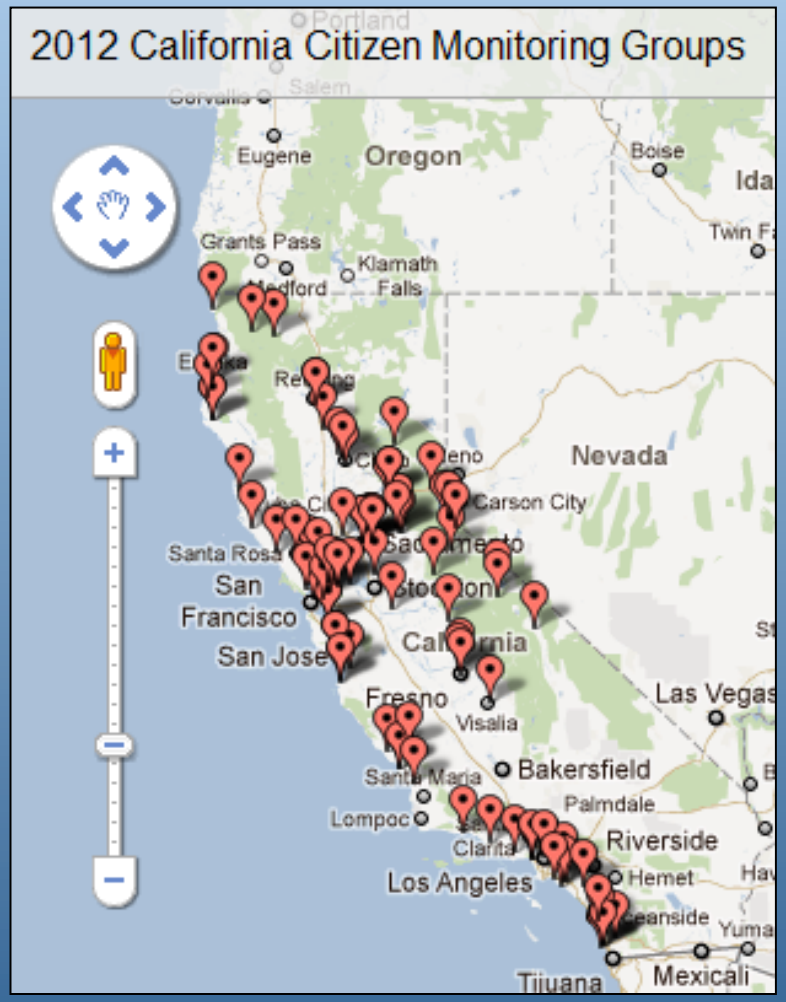
- **Water Quality or Watershed Education**
- **Document Existing Conditions**
- **Problem Identification**
- **Local Decisions**

Successful Programs Make A Difference

- Involve people in real science
- Raise awareness
- Create an informed constituency
- Promote individual actions for water quality protection
- Provide information on places where no one else is looking
- Identify & solve problems locally

So, how do you find a group to work with?

- **Use the Clean Water Team's map!**
- **Contact group by email/phone to initiate partnership**
- **Determine capacity, goals and level of involvement**



Science Based Stewardship

Citizen Action and Clean Water

- Awareness
- Education
- Action

Educators

- **Universities, Community Colleges, K-12**

Resource Conservation Districts

Land Owners

Farm Bureaus

Tribal Groups

Local Agencies

Non-Government Agencies

Grassroots volunteers

Advocacy Groups

Environmental Organizations

Sportsmen Organizations

LOCAL STEERING TEAMS & CONSORTIUMS

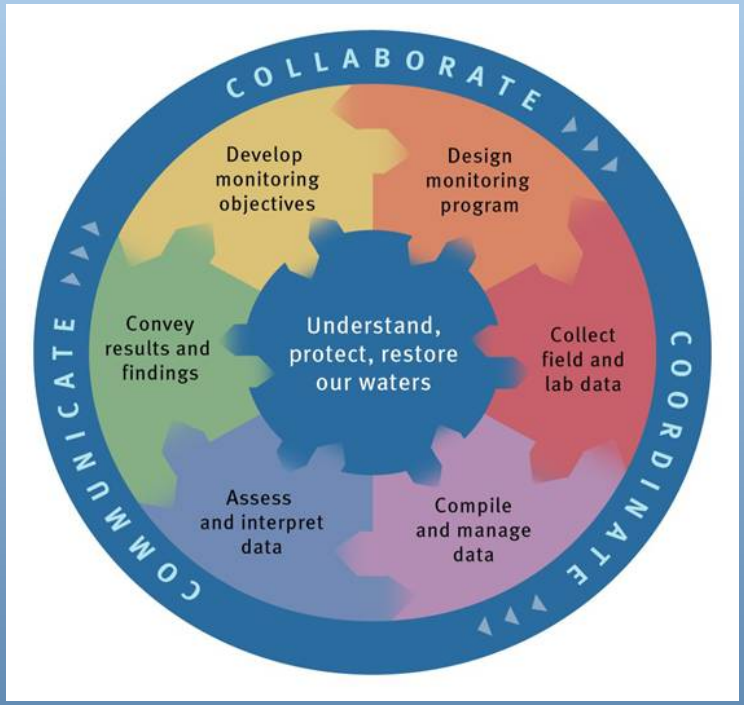
- Sacramento Area Creeks Council **www.saccreeks.org**
- California Watershed Network **www.watershednetwork.org**
- California Association of Resource Conservation Districts **www.carcd.org**
- Sierra Nevada Alliance **www.sierranevadaalliance.org**

First, Compile Information

- About the resource
- About the goals of the organization/community
- About current & past monitoring or research efforts
- About organizational capacity

Program Planning:
The Framework for Monitoring

- Assess the need
- Develop objectives
- Design your program
- Collect the data
- Compile and manage data
- Assess and interpret data
- Convey results and findings
- Evaluate your program



National Water Quality Monitoring Council "A Framework for Monitoring"

Needs Assessment

What type(s) of work will be done?

- Go through your organizational hierarchy and project plans. Make an assessment of the work and positions required to meet your goals.

How many people will you need?

Do you need a long term or short term partnership?

Do you, or will you, have the resources needed to manage these volunteers? Only use what can be supported.

Compiling Information

Important Questions to Consider

- **What environment?**
- **Why do you want to monitor it?**
- **Who will use the data?**
- **How will the data be used?**
- **How good do the data need to be?**
- **What variables will you monitor?**
- **What resources are available?**
- **Who can help you with your program?**
- **Has this monitoring ever been done before?**

Modified from EPA Volunteer Stream Monitoring Methods

Assessing What is Possible

Consider

- **Skills and knowledge**
- **Potential data uses and users**
- **Level of commitment**
- **Financial resources**

How will the data be used?

Answer research questions, educate the public and raise awareness

- **Engage watershed group in on-the-ground data collection:**

- Train in state protocols

- Loan equipment

- Provide lab services

- QC data

- Utilize watershed group's local connections to inform community! Conduct public workshops/ forums/news blasts

How are your data being used?

Education/ Awareness → **Problem ID, Assess Impairment, Local Decisions** → **Legal & Regulatory**

Increasing Time - Rigor - QA - Expense $$

Geoff Dates, River Network

What are the project goals?

- **Usually, organizations have very compatible/complimentary goals: improve the health of the local watershed and increase public knowledge and participation.**

Work together to define these goals before beginning a project.

FIND COMPATIBLE MISSIONS & SHARE THE INVESTMENT!

Monitoring and/or Study Design

Documents *What, How, When, Where* & *Who* for monitoring program

Describes rationale for, and specific approaches of monitoring efforts

✓ **Should flow out of the vision, goals and objectives**

✓ **Should objectively reflect resources**

✓ **Good design is critical for success!**

Goals and Objectives

Goal (Outcome) – what do you want to happen?

- **I want the community swimming safely in Deer Creek**

Objectives – Specific and measurable

- **Reduce bacterial counts in Deer Creek**
- **Reduce # of algal blooms in Deer Creek**
- **Reduce nitrate concentrations from wastewater treatment plant by 35%**

Revise as needed!

Monitoring Objectives- Examples of Questions

- What are the baseline water quality conditions?
- Did the project reduce nutrient loads?
- Did the project reduce sedimentation?

General Questions to Consider

- What types of environments might you be monitoring?
- What types of parameters might you be considering?
- What water quality impacts are associated with land uses in the area?

Attributes of a Well Designed Monitoring Program

- Up-front stakeholder buy-in
- Clear objectives
- Scientifically sound design
- Uses available information
- Comparable methods
- Indicates environmental condition
- Timely data evaluation
- Regular program evaluation and refinement
- Regular reporting

Training is a Process that Flows Throughout the Program

- Orientation (classroom)
- Monitoring Skills (class & field)
- Field visits by staff (field)
- QA/QC testing (lab or field)
- Annual refresher/ re-"certification"
- Advanced training

How do you fund the collaboration?

- **With limited available resources, creative, collaborative thinking is KEY!**

Volunteer Monitoring: Cost Effective - Not Cost Free

- **Staff (incredibly hard-working, usually underpaid)**
- **Field and lab equipment and supplies**
- **Laboratory space or analytical services**
- **Office space and supplies**
- **Communication and mailing**
- **Publications**
- **Conferences/workshops**
- **Transportation (personnel or samples)**
- **Insurance**
- **Special events/volunteer recognition**

Volunteer Effort As Match

Volunteer time can often be used as match

- **Document effort**
  - ✓ **Start/end time on data sheets**
  - ✓ **Survey average time per sampling event**
- **Identify acceptable 'hourly rate' equivalent**
  - ✓ **Independent Sector states current rate at $24.18 (2010) (www.IndependentSector.org)**

Keys to Funding Success

- **The more different funding sources you tap into, the more secure your financial base will be.**
- **Ongoing support can be harder to find than start-up funding. But monitoring by nature is long-term, so funding needs to be long-term – keep focused.**

More Keys to Funding Success

- **Whoever is using the data – whether it's a government agency, university or community – should be helping pay for it.**
- **In-kind support, such as donations of technical expertise, equipment or laboratory analysis can really help keep a program going!**

Creating project ideas for grants

- Revisit the organizations' goals
- What are some quantifiable outcomes?
- What are your organizations capable of achieving?
- What is your timeline?
- What is your budget?

Finding Funding

- **Watershed groups may be eligible for grant funding that government orgs are not, and vice versa**
- **Utilize this diversity and the collaborative component - most funding agencies LOVE broad-reaching projects with several organizations collaborating**
- **Consider providing/acquiring contracted work as consultants to save $$**

Funding Resources

- Philanthropy Digest
- Private Donors
- Grants.gov
- Agency websites/calendars (Forest Service, etc.)
- Local non-profit funding agencies (ex: Sierra Nevada Conservancy)
- Foundations


Questions???