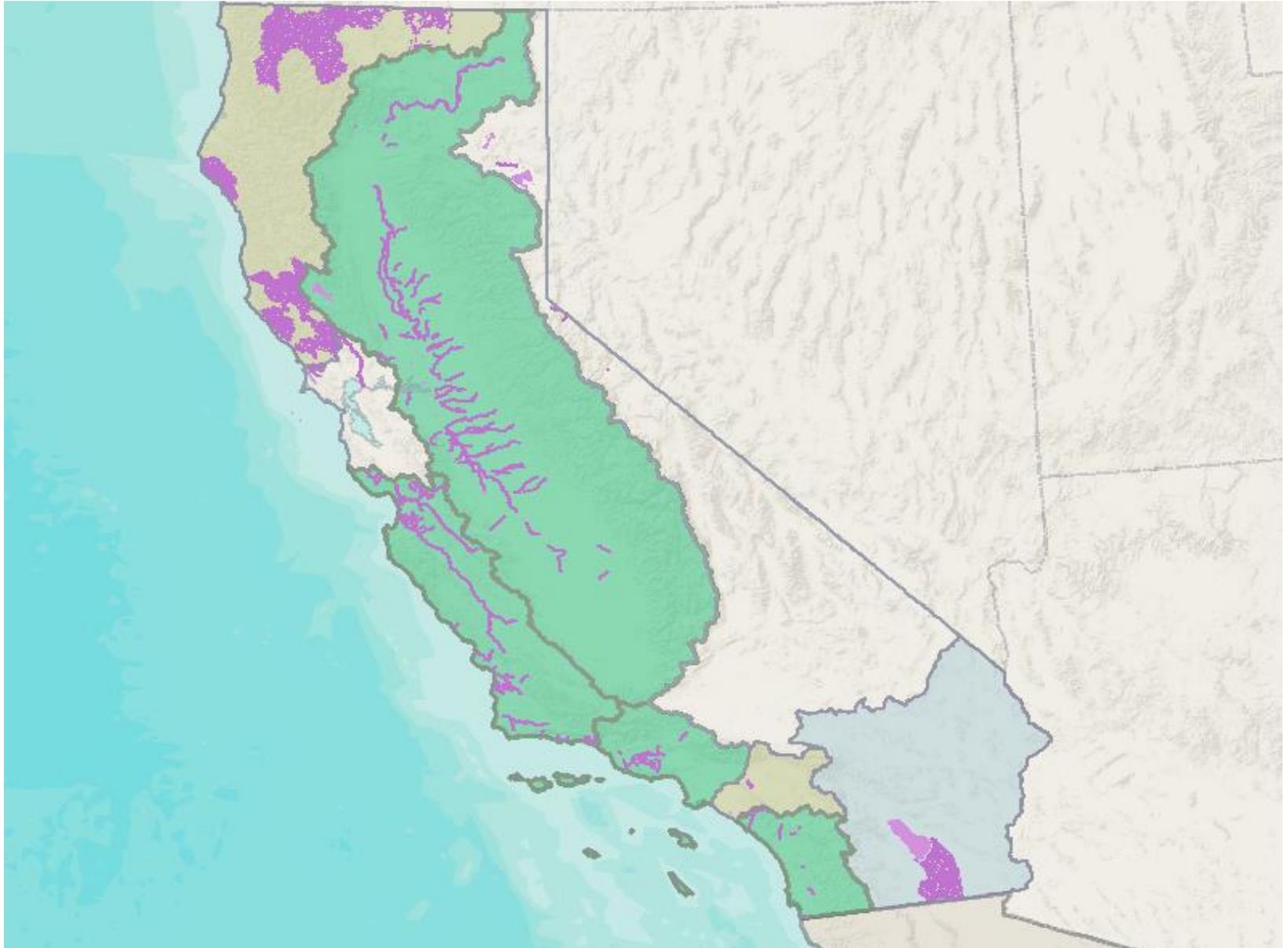


**STATE AND REGIONAL WATER BOARDS,
NATIONAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT,
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
PARTNERSHIP**

**IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM TEAM CONCEPT
AND
NATIONAL WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE**

SCOPE AND STATUS OF ILRP



ILRP ONGOING AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Initial phase of development
 - Grower enrollment
 - Public education and outreach
 - Ambient monitoring and assessment
 - Stakeholder committees
- Second phase of development
 - Monitoring data collection and assessment
 - Identify priority areas
 - Management Plan development
 - BMP implementation
 - Performance monitoring
 - Team Concept
 - National Water Quality Initiative Projects
 - ILRP Water Quality Improvement Projects

ILRP TEAM CONCEPT

- Agricultural related discharges
 - Complex and diffuse
 - Many stakeholders
- Team Concept
 - Much expertise
 - Multi-agency partnership
 - Third-Party Groups
 - Water Quality Improvement Projects
 - National Water Quality Initiative



2008 Farm Bill Conservation Programs

Alan Forkey

Natural Resources Conservation Service



Farm Bill Conservation Title II

- 1985 Conservation Compliance
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- 1990 Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
- 1996 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
- 2002 Conservation Security Program (CSP)
Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
Farm & Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP)
- 2008 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)
Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Funding is targeted to a broad range of resource concerns established through a public input process.
- Part of the emphasis of EQIP is to help farmers and ranchers comply with environmental regulations through voluntary conservation.
- Includes national, state and local priorities:
 - Nationally: Chief of the NRCS solicits recommendations from agriculture and environmental groups.
 - State: NRCS State Conservationist solicits recommendations from the State Technical Advisory Committee.
 - Locally: NRCS District Conservationist solicits recommendations from the Local Working Group.
 - Good opportunity for Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program coordinators to collaborate to identify priority projects

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- From this collaboration, NRCS allocates funds to address resource-based concerns on private agricultural operations:
 - Rangeland health
 - Water conservation
 - Agricultural Water Quality
 - Soil erosion
 - Dairy water quality
 - Soil health
 - Forest health
 - Air quality

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- In addition, NRCS has also established national, state and local initiatives to concentrate funds on regional landscape-level resource concerns:
 - Sage Grouse
 - Organic transition
 - Energy conservation
 - Salmon recovery
 - National air quality
 - National water quality
 - Tribal Initiatives

National Water Quality Initiative

- Originally funded in 2012 as a national EQIP initiative.
 - States were instructed to reserve a minimum of 5% of their general EQIP allocation to target water quality concerns. For CA, this represented \$2.578 million.
 - At least 1, but not more than 3 HUC-12 watersheds were to be selected for funding (CA received a waiver to allow 5 HUC-12's).
 - In California, NRCS solicited recommendations from the State Water Board and EPA.

National Water Quality Initiative

- Selection Criteria

- HUC-12 watersheds with 303d impairments related to nutrients (including low DO, algal growth and ammonia), and sediment (including turbidity)
- Existing partnership monitoring efforts, including baseline data, necessary to evaluate success.
- Potential to delist impaired water body.
- NRCS would also make an assessment of the level of landowner participation.
- ILRP was instrumental in meeting many of the criteria

National Water Quality Initiative

- Core and Supporting Practices
 - Core (partial list) – required to be offered
 - Cover Crops
 - Contour Buffer Strips
 - Residue & Tillage Management
 - Conservation Cover
 - Field Borders
 - Filter Strips
 - Grassed Waterways
 - Sediment Control Basins
 - Nutrient Management
 - Irrigation Water Management

National Water Quality Initiative

- Core and Supporting Practices
 - Supporting - optional
 - Structure for Water Control
 - Livestock Watering Facility
 - Access Road
 - Stream Crossing
 - Spring Development
 - Roof Runoff Structure
 - Waste Treatment Lagoon
 - Micro-irrigation

National Water Quality Initiative

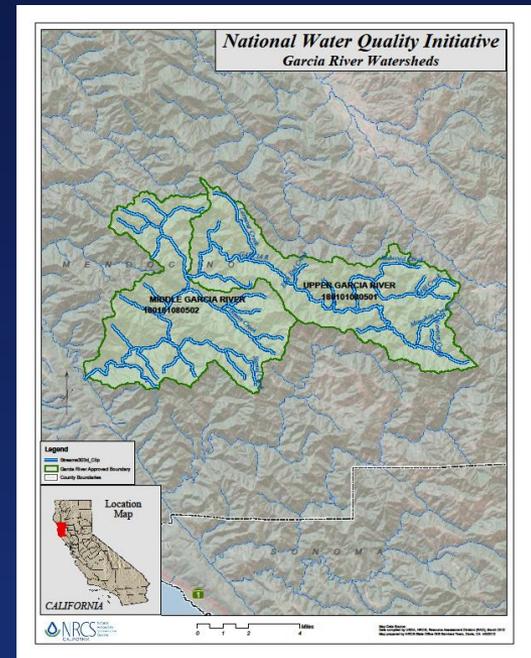
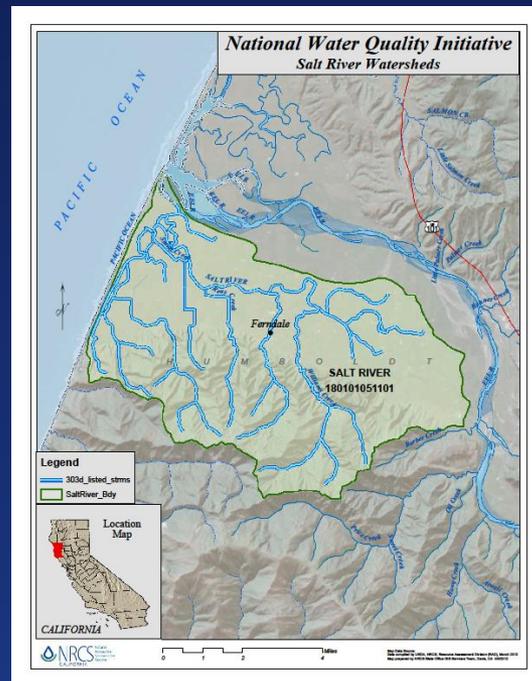
- Ranking and Evaluation Criteria
 - Proximity to 303d listed water bodies.
 - Percentage of treated acres within the watershed boundaries (>75 percent), and use of core practices.
 - Core practices being applied within a non-USDA water quality project area that addresses similar pollutants.
 - Soil hydrologic group (D – high runoff, or A – high infiltration).

2012 HUC-12 Watersheds

Salt River Humboldt County

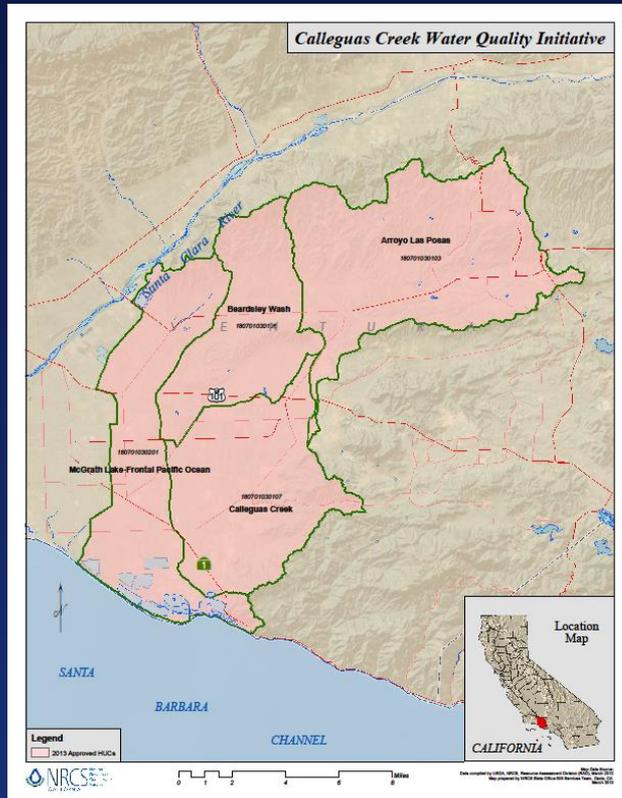


Calleguas Creek
Ventura County

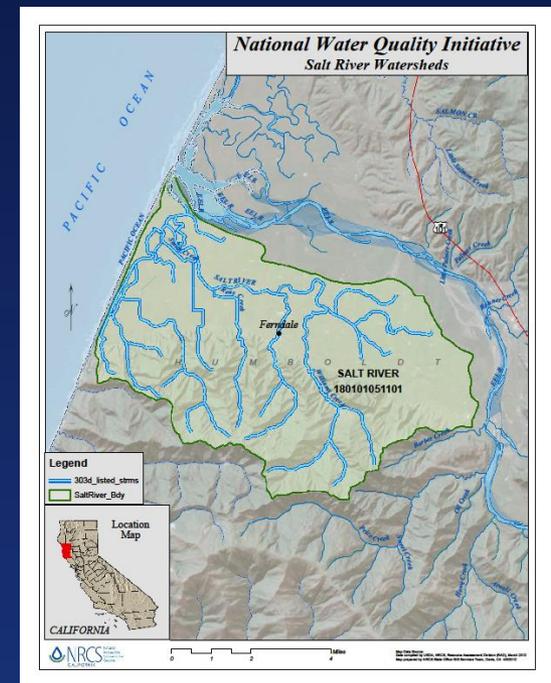


Garcia River
Mendocino County

2013 HUC-12 Watersheds



Calleguas Creek
Ventura County



Salt River
Humboldt County

Program Delivery: NRCS Implementation

- Program funding is an annual appropriation. All funds need to be obligated to landowner contracts within the federal fiscal year.
- Applications are accepted on a continuous basis, but established cutoff dates are used to make funding decision.
- Applicants are screened and ranked according to program objectives and the level of environmental benefits to be gained.
- Once applicants are selected for funding, they can begin applying practices outlined in a schedule of implementation. Most contracts are written for 2-3 year implementation schedules.

2012 Progress Summary

- Total of \$2,595,744 has been obligated to 26 landowner contracts.
 - Calleguas Creek 386 acres
 - Garcia River 23,900 acres
 - Salt River 4,213 acres
- Practices Funded
 - Calleguas (cropland) – Irrigation reservoirs, underground outlets, nutrient management, irrigation water management, grade stabilization structures.
 - Garcia (forestland) – Access roads, stream crossings, structures for water control.
 - Salt (forestland, dairy, pasture) – Access roads, roof runoff structures, stream crossings, structures for water control.

Heavy Use Protection and Roof Runoff Structures protect areas of concentrated livestock use and direct runoff to off-site protected areas.



Access Road
Renovation and Culvert



Stream Crossing



Questions?

WEB: WWW.CA.NRCS.USDA.GOV

EMAIL: ALAN.FORKEY@CA.USDA.GOV

PHONE: (530) 792-5653



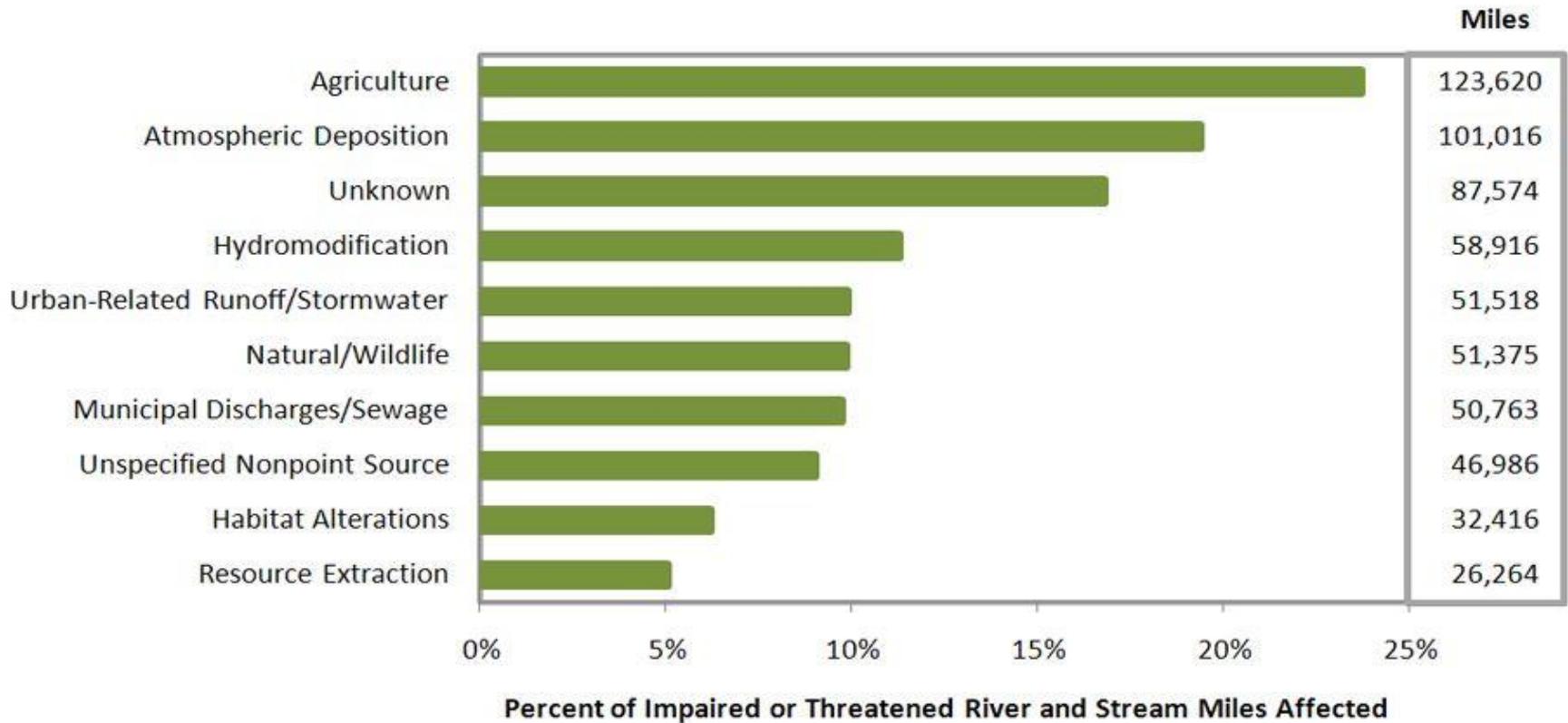
Salt River Watershed National Water Quality Initiative Collaborative Monitoring

Sam Ziegler

Valentina Cabrera

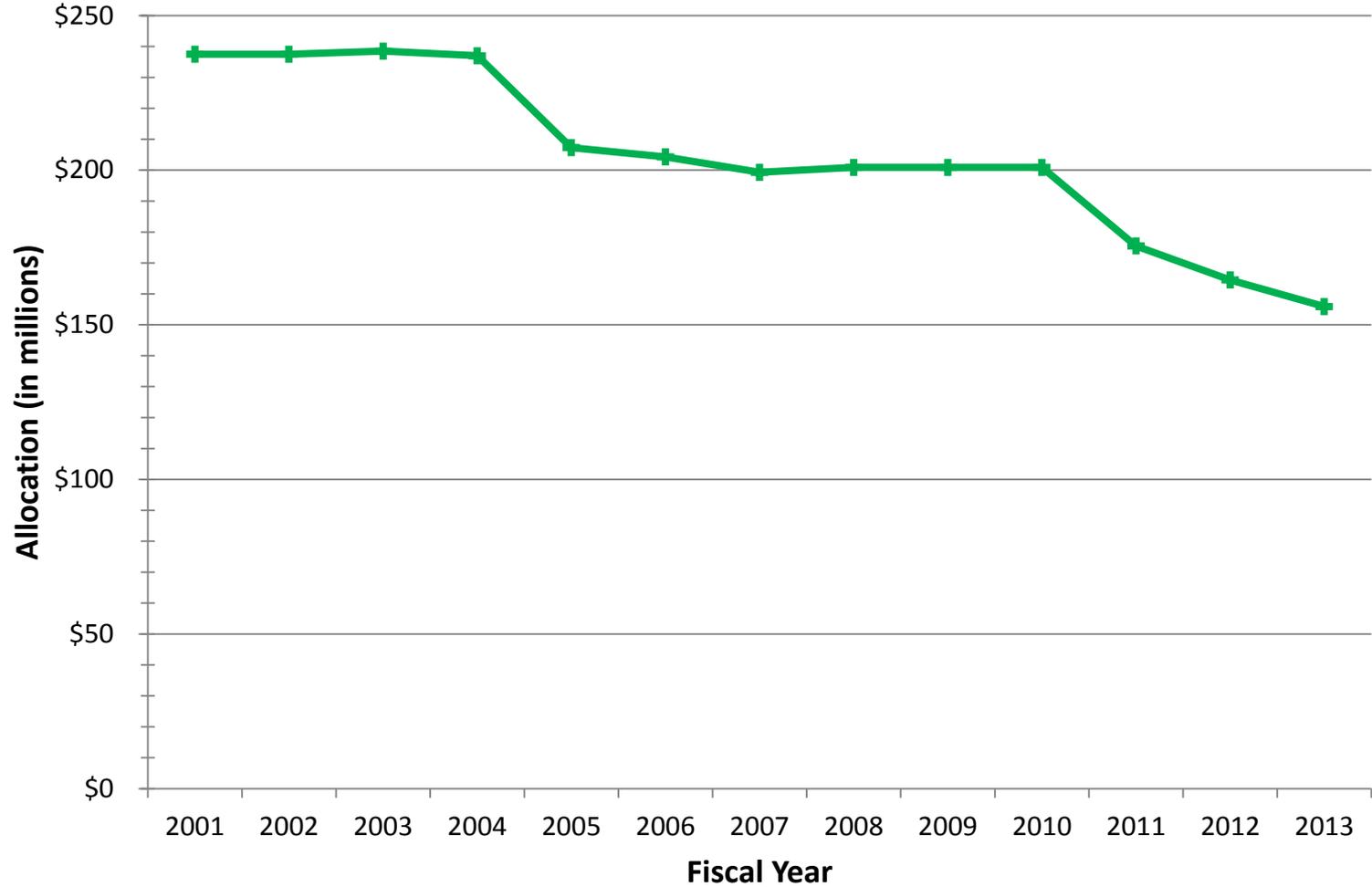
August 20, 2013

Nonpoint Sources Dominate the Nation's Impaired Waters



(Source: Draft CWA 305(b) National Water Quality Inventory: Report to Congress, 2010 Reporting Cycle)

CWA Section 319 Funding , 2001 - 2013



New Paradigm (*since 2003!*) Opportunistic to Performance-Based

- Watershed Plans/TMDLs –
A Roadmap for Water Quality Results
- 319 projects must be guided by watershed plans/TMDLS
 - Pollutant loads and sources
 - Practices needed to reduce loads and “critical areas” where practices will have greatest impact
 - Progress measures and monitoring results
- Experience shows this approach much more likely to improve water quality
 - NWQI opportunity to build & strengthen our partnerships
 - Increase resource leveraging, program coordination

- Selected in FY12 & FY13 for NWQI funds
- 2nd highest sediment yield in the world
- Monitoring is being done w/ NRCS, RCD, EPA, Regional Board cooperation
- Temperature and sediment TMDLs exist



Dairy roof paid for with NWQI



Dairy roof paid for with NWQI



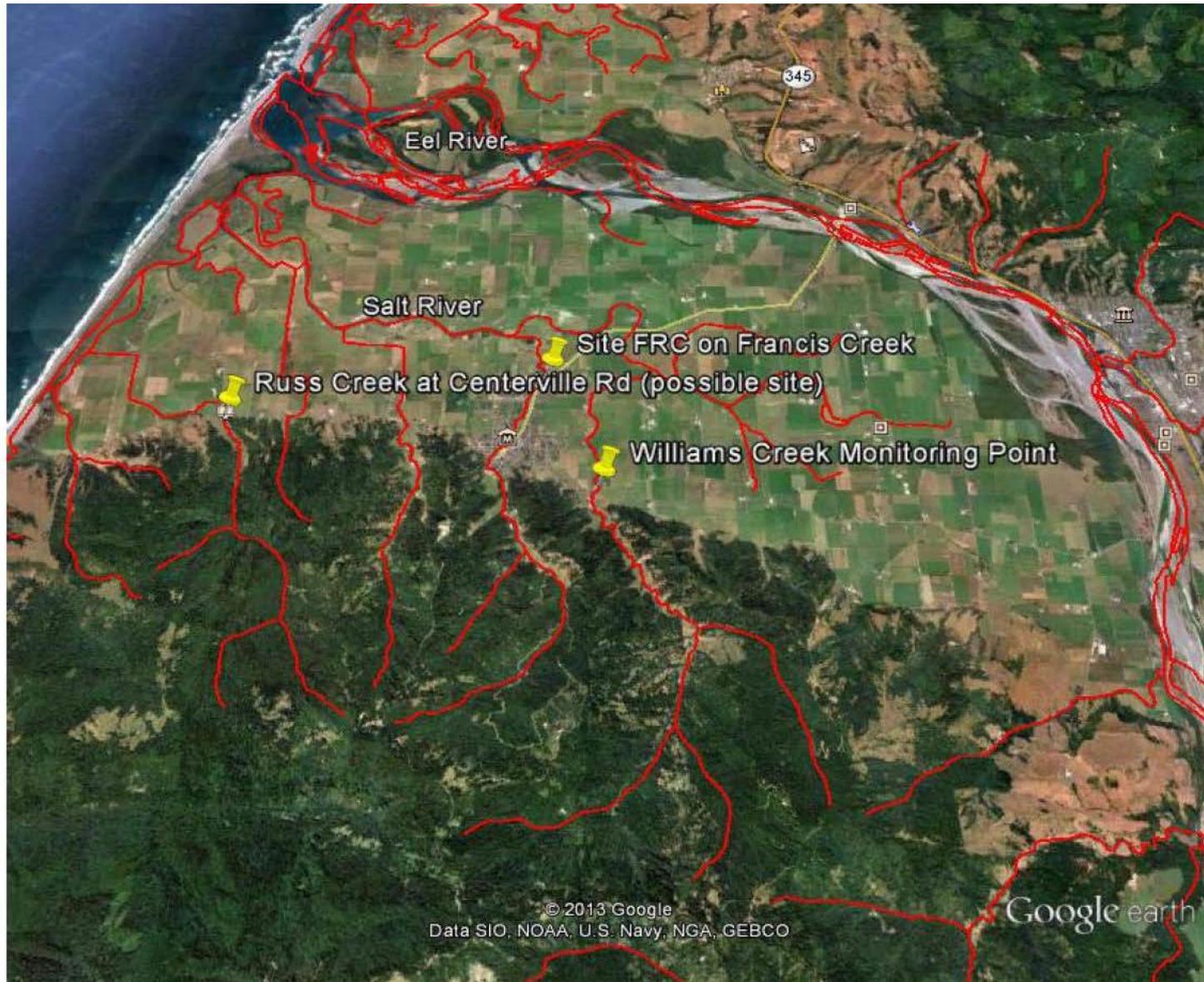
Williams Creek will be fenced w/ NWQI



Russ Creek Bridge paid for with NWQI



3 creeks will be monitored yearly



EPA will install sediment monitoring station on Russ Creek in Fall 2013



Parameters to be monitored

- Indicator bacteria: e. coli, enterococcus
- Nutrients: Nitrate, nitrite, ammonia, ortho phosphate, total phosphorus, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, dissolved organic carbon
- Total suspended solids, total dissolved solids, chloride
- Field parameters: dissolved oxygen, electrical conductivity, pH, temperature, turbidity
- Algae: periphyton chlorophyll
- Flow
- Physical Habitat parameters including vegetative cover
- Macro-invertebrates, collected in the June-August period.
- Photo monitoring





Touch Nuff
Disposable Nitrile
with Grip
Ansell
Water-Proof / Sun-Resistant
Gloves available in multiple colors

J.F. ROOY



EPA
Innovative

Touch N' Tuff
The powder on touch
Sans poudre
Ansell



NWQI – Calleguas Creek

Barbara Barry

Jenny Newman

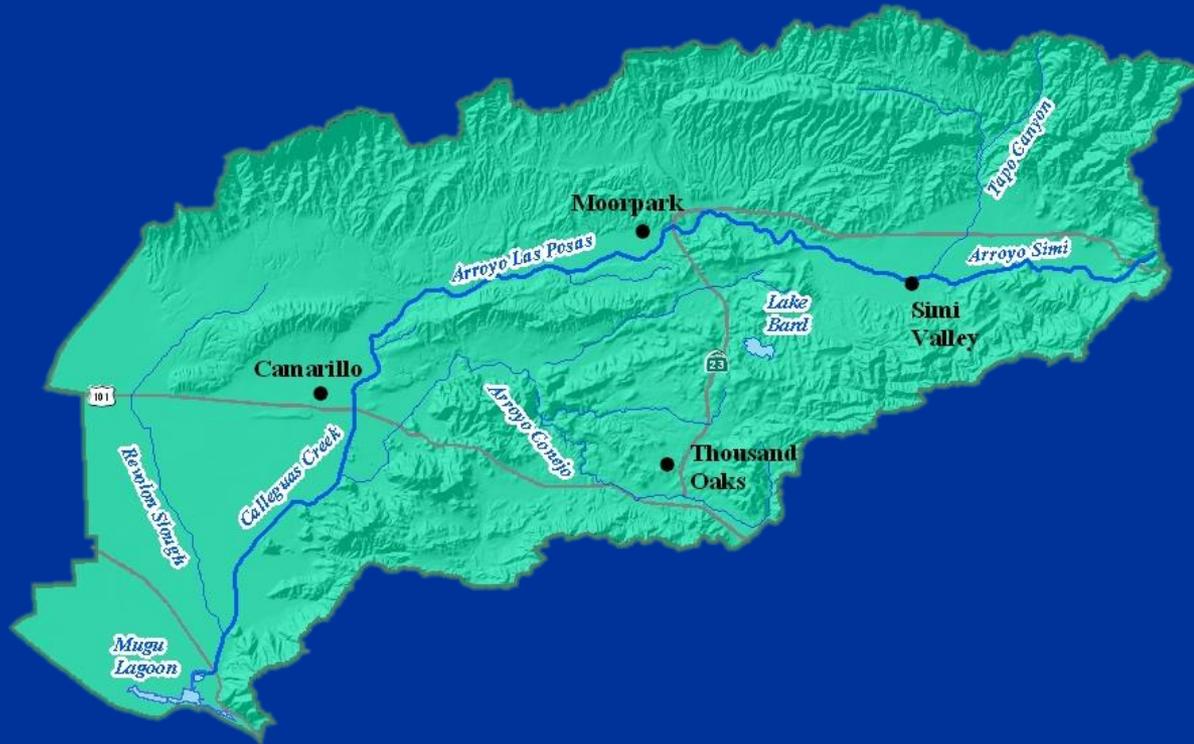
Los Angeles RWQCB

INITIAL PROPOSAL AND DEVELOPMENT

- Worked closely with State Board staff to help propose Calleguas Creek as watershed for NWQI funding
 - Impaired watershed
 - Relationships in place between RB staff and growers - ILRP
 - Monitoring program

BACKGROUND

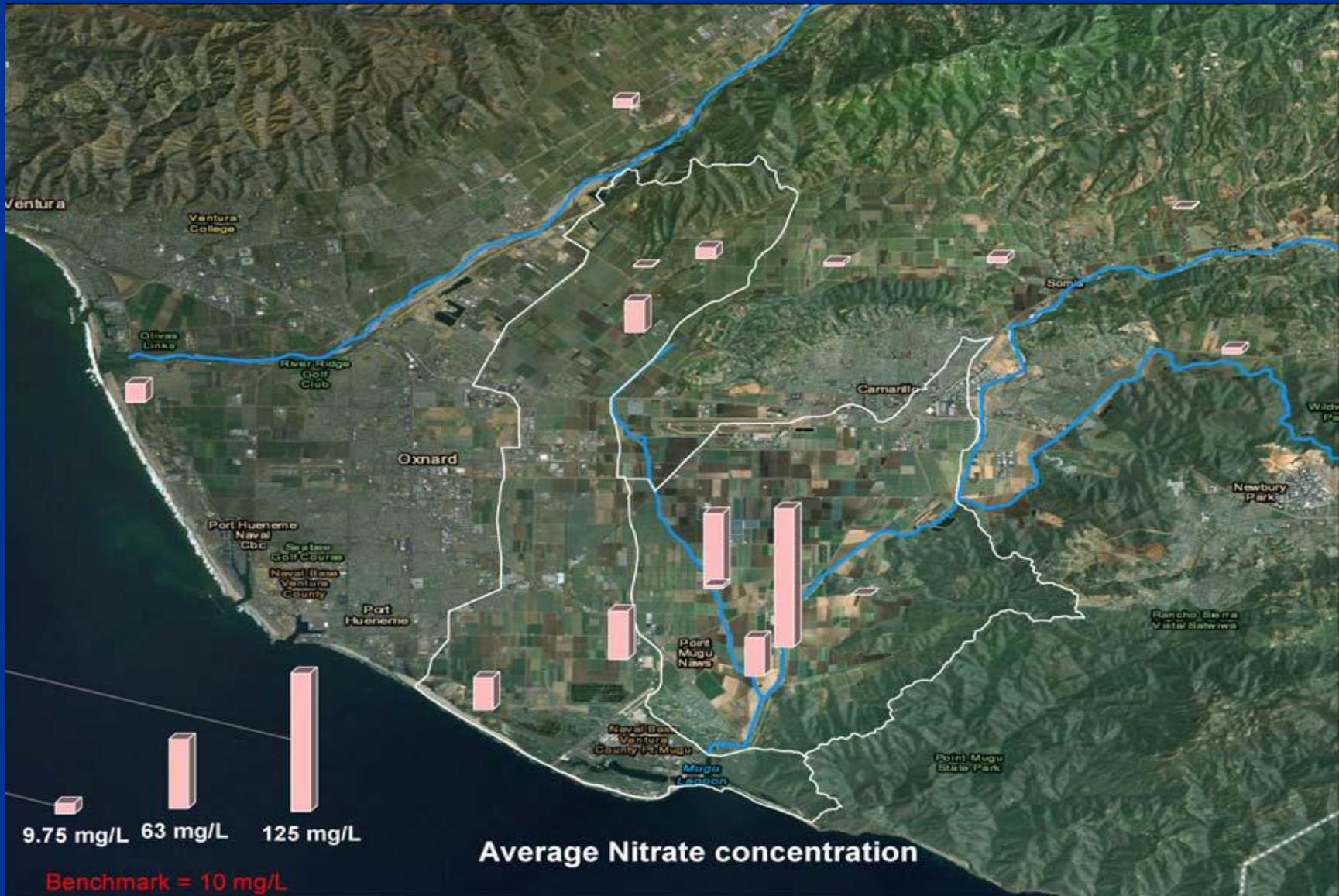
- Located in Ventura County
- Impaired watershed
 - All reaches impaired
 - Nearly 30 pollutants
 - 7 TMDLs



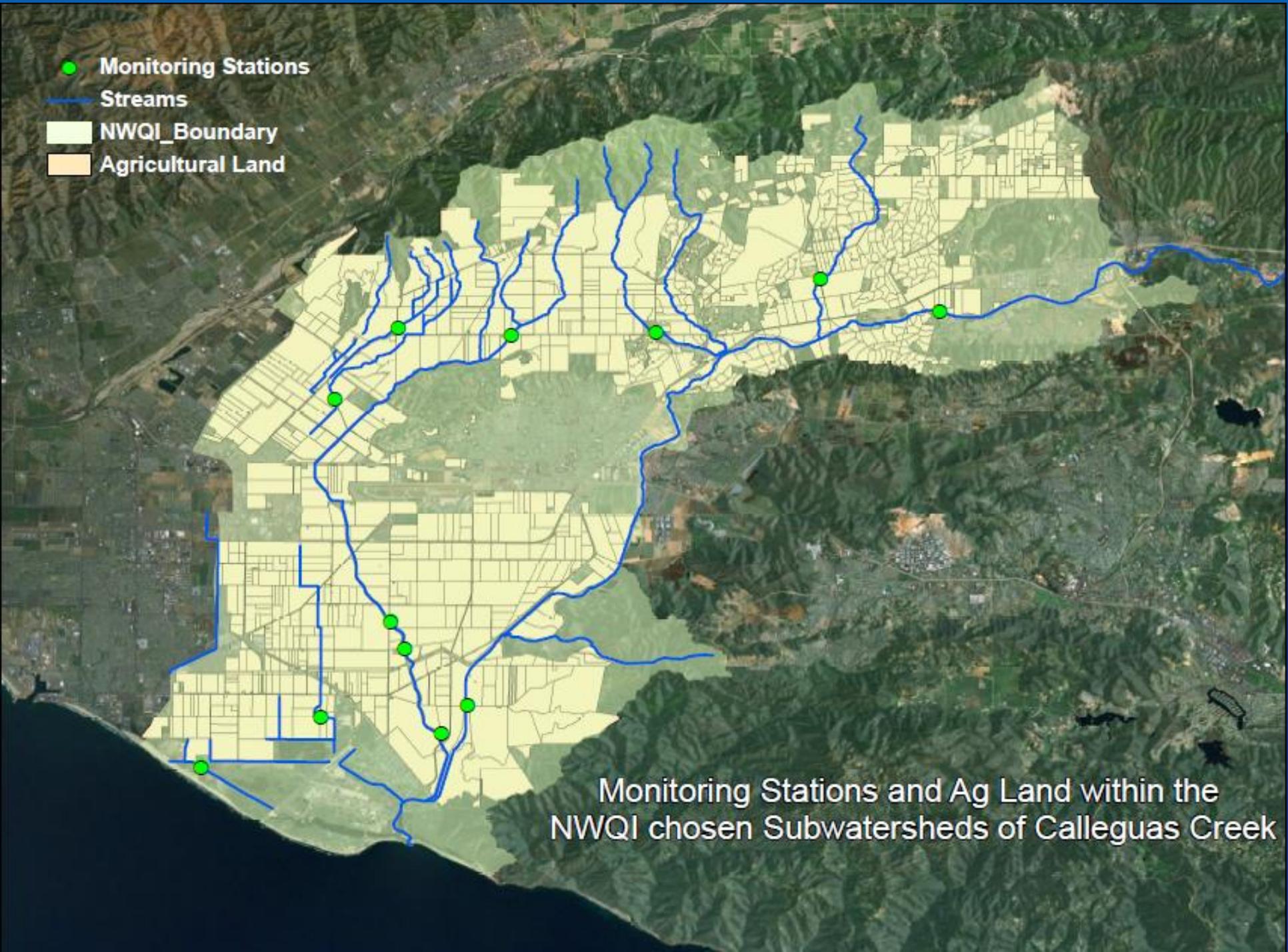
IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM

- Conditional Waiver for Irrigated Agricultural Lands – program has been running for 8 years
- Ventura County Agricultural Irrigated Lands Group (VCAILG) – association of growers complying with the ILRP
 - Represent nearly 90% of the growers in the Calleguas Creek watershed
- Monitoring in Calleguas Creek – 5 years of data

NITRATE CONCENTRATIONS



- Monitoring Stations
- Streams
- NWQI_Boundary
- Agricultural Land



Monitoring Stations and Ag Land within the NWQI chosen Subwatersheds of Calleguas Creek

COORDINATION WITH AGENCIES AND INFORMING GROWERS

- Close collaboration between NRCS staff and Regional Board
- Cultivated a relationship between NRCS, VCAILG, and the Ventura County RCD
- VCAILG spread the word
- BMP tour and networking



The following information is provided as a service to VCAILG members.

Funds available for water-quality projects

Applications are being accepted for \$2.5 million made available to Ventura County growers this year through a federal incentive program to improve water quality.

The funding is provided through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). EQIP is a voluntary program to promote agricultural production and environmental quality. The \$2.5 million in new assistance can be used for improvements in irrigation systems and and nutrient management (such as moisture sensors, irrigation upgrades and nutrient analysis) as well as traditional erosion-control projects.

The payments are limited to \$300,000 per person through 2014. Farmers will be reimbursed by direct deposit to a bank account of their choice for 50 percent to 90 percent of actual project costs. Disadvantaged farmers can receive an advance of up to 30 percent.

All VCAILG members who are considering irrigation or nutrient-management improvements in the near future are encouraged to download and submit the three-page [application](#) (consisting of 12 yes/no questions) before June 15 to be considered for this year's funding. Field visits by NRCS staff will help determine the specific projects chosen for assistance.

Implementation of Best Management Practices to address water-quality impacts from irrigation tailwater and storm runoff is a key requirement of the Conditional Waiver, which regulates agricultural discharges in Ventura County. The EQIP funding provides VCAILG members a cost-effective means of taking important steps to demonstrate commitment to improving water quality and complying with the waiver. Growers with operations in the Gallinas Creek watershed will be

VCGILG CONDITIONAL WAIVER FIELD TOUR IN OXNARD, CA. DETENTION BASIN AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT.



**EDUCATION REQUIREMENT FOR RB4 AG REGULATORY PROGRAM:
RCD DEMONSTRATED NITROGEN QUICK TEST OF IRRIGATION WATER AND FUNDING FOR BMPs.**



CONCLUSIONS

- Closer collaboration developed between
 - EPA
 - VCAILG
 - Local NRCS office
 - Farm Bureau
 - State Board
 - Regional Board staff
 - RCD
- Concentrated money/effort in a watershed with severe water quality impairments
- NWQI assistance essential in achieving ILRP goals
- Water quality improvements will be demonstrated through monitoring data

SUMMARY AND CLOSING REMARKS

46

- Multi-agency and stakeholder collaborative process to develop and implement water quality improvement projects can work.
- Team Concept/NWQI model will be promoted in other regions.
- Define agency roles and degree of support.