

CENTRAL COAST HEALTHY WATERSHEDS PROJECT

What is it?

The Central Coast Region is working on a Healthy Watersheds Project in close coordination with the San Diego Region's Environmental Report Card Project and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA's) Healthy Watersheds Initiative (HWI) project for California. The aim of the project is to broadly assess the health of watersheds to determine if they meet the Central Coast Regional goals of (1) healthy aquatic habitat, (2) proper land management, and (3) clean groundwater. The project is developing a scoring approach for multiple measures of health, including chemistry, biology and physical habitat data, which will result in color-coded report cards for Central Coast watersheds. This is similar to the approach developed by the Department of Environmental Protection in Massachusetts that is [currently being adapted](#) for use in the San Diego Region.

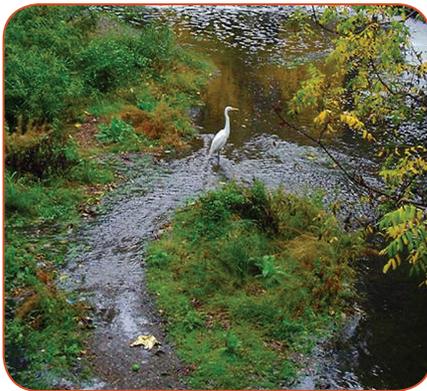
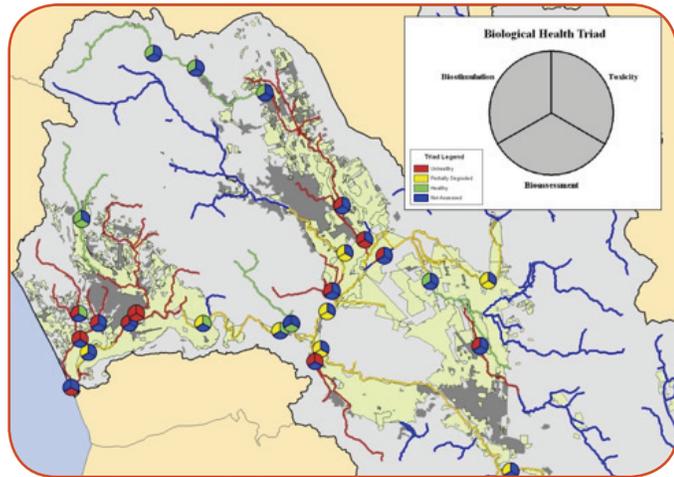


The project will build on the results of the California HWI project and will inform the California Monitoring Council's [Healthy Streams Portal](#). The California HWI effort is developing an integrated health assessment of the state's watersheds, utilizing the U.S. EPA healthy watershed framework, which incorporates landscape condition, habitat, hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, and biological conditions into assessment analysis. The Regional project will produce a more detailed, data-driven assessment within this framework to improve the spatial resolution and information content for Central Coast watersheds. It will also utilize the statewide assessment to characterize health in areas where additional data does not exist.

Why is it important?

The Central Coast Healthy Watersheds project will make complex and often inaccessible data more available to the general public, water quality managers, and decision makers in readily understandable formats that can improve decision making about water quality, habitat, and overall watershed health. Combining

multiple data types together into a single spatial and analytical framework will allow for more informed decisions about the impacts of water quality on overall watershed health.



How will this information be used?

The project will be available to the public online and in a series of SWAMP fact sheets and/or journal publications. Report cards, maps, and associated interpretive information will be available through the Central Coast Region's [CCAMP](#) website and the statewide [My Water Quality Portal](#). This information will be used to prioritize water quality problems, coordinate monitoring efforts, and guide decision making to better protect and restore California's water resources.

For more information, email Karen Worcester at kworcester@waterboards.ca.gov or call her at (805) 549-3333.