



Currents

Citizen Monitoring Program Newsletter of the California State Water Resources Control Board

Summer 2002



Students Participate in Lodi Citizen Monitoring Group

By Edgar Jaime and Raquel Gutierrez, SWRCB

Many cities and towns in California are fortunate enough to have citizens perform quality checks on their local watersheds. Mrs. Grant, who is a high school teacher in Lodi CA, is the leader of the Lodi Citizen Monitoring Group. Every second Friday of each month, a group of students along with teachers meet at Lodi Lake. From there, four teams are dispatched into various



Participants checking water quality of Lodi Lake.

locations along the Mokelumne River. Even though they do not have the best of equipment, their desire to help maintain good water quality outweighs their low budget. We, as State Water Resources



Testing for dissolved oxygen in Lodi

Control Board student assistants, had the opportunity to follow one of the groups.

Their first stop was at Hogg Lake, a stagnant,

duck-filled pond located on the outskirts of Lodi Lake. The leaders of the group did not do the sampling of the water. Their role was more of parental guidance than anything else. The students were the only participants in the actual sampling. Once the records at the first site were recorded, the group moved onto a private, residential beach type site located further along the river. In the end, we found the quality of the river's water was as good as hoped.!

Lodi Citizen Monitoring Group Contact:

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Creek Week Falls on the Beloved Earth Day

By Edgar Jaime and Raquel Gutierrez, SWRCB



Kids learning about watershed model

Every year, the Sacramento Urban Creeks Council sponsors a celebration entitled “Creek Week.”

Luckily, this year’s

celebration happened to fall on the much beloved ‘Earth Day.’ We had the opportunity to promote the Clean Water Team for the State Water Resource Control Board’s Division of Water Quality. At the event we set up a table and gave out pamphlets, door hangers and posters to the many people of the public who were gracious enough to attend.

We had a watershed model displayed to show the kids and other visitors the impact of everyday pollution from such contaminants as agriculture, storm drains, factories and construction sites.

While we were setting up the model, groups of volunteers went to a local stream to pick up trash to later make a piece of art from it. Stamps were given out to the kids in order

for them to receive a prize at the end of the day. Our duty for the stamp game was to reach out to the many kids that were there to learn about water quality. We asked them various questions that were simple enough for young kids to have a chance to answer correctly. Water quality to most kids may not be too important, but to this particular crowd it seemed to be an important factor. Not only were many people from the community at the event, but Dave Bender, a familiar face to most people in Sacramento from Channel 13 news, was present. He was also the host to the final day of the ‘Creek Week’ celebration. Together with a local band by the name of ‘Dan Electro Band’, Mr. Bender made the celebration a day that many will not soon forget.]

TMDL video is available online! Please visit:

www.itvisus/broadcast/techno/keepwaterclean/index.htm

Main Directory: www.itvisus.com

Note: Real Player or Media Player is required

San Andreas Canyon: Cooling Thoughts to a Warm Day

Marilyn MacKay, Mission Springs Water District

It was a warm June morning when I reported for monitoring duty at the San Andreas Canyon. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians had invited members of California’s Clean Water Team, the Regional Water Quality Control staff, and citizen monitors to participate in taking a “snapshot” of the water quality at the oasis in the canyon. After some initial training in the processes and equipment, we hiked to our first testing station and applied our newly-learned skills. Our readings for pH and other attributes indicated this water to be in outstanding good health.

The next set of readings at the

second testing station affirmed the first—indeed this water is in good shape.

Having access to high quality water is a given for us in Desert Hot Springs. In general, our quality of water life is a good one. Added to that is the protection that comes from the water sampling program conducted by Mission Springs Water District. However, spending that Saturday morning so close to the source of the water that flows to the oasis set my mind to thinking.

We know that we take superb water from the Mission Creek aquifer, but I began to wonder, “What is the water like as it starts its

journey off Mount San Geronio and the Little San Bernardino Mountains?” That led to the next question, “What would we find if we took our own ‘snapshot’ of the water in Mission Creek before it heads underground?”

We know that the water arriving in the aquifer has been through a natural percolation process that balances mineral content and gives the water its excellent taste. Surely, measuring the water for some of the same attributes as we

did at the oasis would yield some insightful information.

Perhaps on some nippy winter day in December when Mission Creek is running, a similar group of interested citizens will gather at its banks to learn first-hand about the part of our water’s journey that begins at the top of the watershed. It’s not too early to look for volunteers. Who’s up for the adventure?]

Central Coast Snapshot Day 2002: Down to a Science

By Revital Katznelson, SWRCB

Snapshot Day was a success for the third year in a row. This Sanctuary-wide event was coordinated by Bridget Hoover of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network and Tamara Doan of the Coastal Watershed Council, who worked out the logistics with local coordinators at four “Hubs” along the Sanctuary shoreline.

Early on April 20, as I drove into the Monterey Hub at the Watershed Institute (California State University of Monterey Bay) for Snapshot Day 2002, I saw a large group of volunteers getting a briefing for the day. I have seen some of the folks at the pre-Snapshot training sessions and at the Instrument Calibration Party we had a couple of weeks prior to the event; many of these folks were familiar to me from Snapshot 2001. The equipment kits were lined up against the fence, with posters identifying each team, the designated stations, and the associated equipment, and a clipboard with maps and forms the teams would need. I do not know if the “Hubsters” got any sleep that night (I hope they were helped by elves), but the kits were all ready to go!

The volunteer teams went to their designated stations, conducted field measurements (dissolved oxygen, temperature, conductivity, pH, and transparency/ turbidity), and collected a bunch of samples for coliform counts and nutrient analyses in the lab.

I was organizing the Institute’s conference room with the Hubsters, when the volunteers started streaming in; they were tanned and joyful and looked like they had a lot of fun! First, they stopped by the coolers and relinquished their samples while one Hubster filled out the Chain of Custody



Participants checking their kits in the “hub”

Then, they went to the equipment corner and returned the equipment while another Hubster checked the Instrument Identifications. From there they moved with their Field Data Sheets on to the Data Entry section where two computers were available, all set for electronic data entry. Two Hubsters were there, entering the data on the spot and asking the field operators for clarifications and follow up. Then we let them go home....



By the end of day, all data were clarified and captured! These data can be easily validated, given the calibration and accuracy check information we have this year.

Thank you, Bridget and Tamara; thank you, Hubsters; thank you, volunteers (all hundreds of you); and thank you, supporters (all scores of you), for making Snapshot Science Day happen!]

Seventy Sacramento Area Youth Win 2002 Creek Steward Award

By Mary Tappel, SWRCB

I was honored to learn that the Sacramento Urban Creek Council chose to recognize me and my Water Pollution Prevention Volunteers group for the annual Creek Steward Award. This award went to some seventy local youth for over ten years of watershed stewardship conducted by the community group. The group's water pollution prevention and creek wildlife appreciation activities over the years have included community outreach exhibits at well attended community events, classroom and youth group presentations, numerous creek, river, park, and neighborhood cleanups, storm drain stenciling, native riparian tree plantings, natural park maintenance, and even ecological management of beaver and riparian restoration plantings in creek and river parkways. Numerous cleanups and some of the ecological parkway restoration plantings management have taken place along the American River Parkway.

All this environmental justice friendly activity has taken place over the last fourteen years in the Sacramento area. These activities have involved many hundreds of youth and other community members from lower income multi-ethnic urban neighborhoods. The Creek Steward Award certificates were prepared for some seventy youth for years of sustained environmental efforts within the community. The State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) role in encouraging active community partnerships was highlighted by Deputy Director Tom Howard at the award presentation. His talk covered the Citizen Monitoring Program (Clean Water Team) and its



Local youth planting native riparian trees at Hagginwood Park near Arcade Creek



Tom Howard (first left) talked about Citizen Monitoring Program

relationship to other SWRCB 'clean water' efforts statewide.

The photos depict some of the thirteen local youth who were present April 12, 2002 to receive their certificates for 'Outstanding Environmental Community Service Effort'. Some 45-50 other certificates have been since distributed, with a few more to go. These certificates were designed to facilitate photocopying for

inclusion with future college, scholarship, and job applications.

The principle of Environmental Justice applies here as many hundreds of local youth and other community members become aware of their own local creek and river resources, their right to participate in environmental management decisions, the value of and need for their own stewardship efforts and achievements, and the likelihood of enjoying success

in improving the quality of natural resources in their own and downstream communities. The importance of communities working together in sustained efforts was highlighted at the award event by enlarged photos depicting many of the water pollution prevention activities. The extent of community buy-in over the

years for local water pollution prevention has ranged from very encouraging to amazing. The certificate presentation itself moved some of the audience to tears.]

For more information about any of these activities, call Tappel at (916) 925-1993 or tappm@swrcb.ca.gov

The Kern River Finds Friends

By Erick Burres, SWRCB



San Andreas Canyon

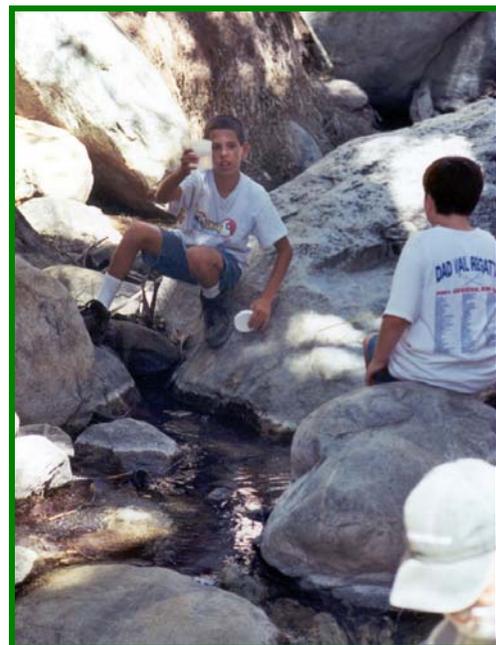
The Kern River begins high in the southern Sierra Mountains. It winds its way to the San Joaquin Valley and provides support to fisheries, rafting, camping, scenic viewsheds and so much more before it flows through the heart of Kern County's agriculture, energy fields, and the county's population center, Bakersfield.

This past spring the Kern County Neighbors for Quality Air, Water and Growth along with California State University Bakersfield students spent a Saturday training to monitor the Kern River's water quality. The State's Citizen Monitoring Program provided training that gives volunteers the scientific knowledge to help their natural resources. California does not have the staff or money to continually test every single river, creek, lake or wetland in the state. These volunteers will be helping to bridge the data gap here on the Kern River.

The volunteers learned how to take a sample, take basic measurements, test for possible pollutants, and monitor streamside habitat. The Neighbors and

students have been monitoring since this past summer but citizen monitoring has yet to fully catch on within the San Joaquin. To further promote citizen monitoring, Pam Buford, an environmental scientist with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, has even joined the group on some of their monitoring days. The Neighbors are people living along the river and are most likely to notice pollution problems. They will be providing data to the Regional Board that will help them manage the river better.

Monitors, such as Mary Berglund who founded the project, believe that "there is potential for us to help problems that might not otherwise be caught at all." Richard Haverstock of Bakersfield also believes that "citizen involvement has always played the biggest part in environmental improvements". These friends hope to see the Kern River flow by the neighborhood with cleaner water and through a healthier environment.]



Volunteers taking samples from stream

Reference: Kerry Cavanaugh, "Citizens test waters for pollution program", The Bakersfield Californian.

LTEEC'S Clean Water Team hosted the 2nd annual Snapshot Day successfully!

More than 250 volunteers gathered on May 4 to collect important visual data and water quality samples from 113 locations. It represented the largest effort ever to collect data from the entire watershed at a single point in time. The collected data from this will be released in the Snapshot Day report this fall.

LTEEC Contact Information:

Web Site:

<http://www.lteec.org>

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What's next?

You are invited to the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act. See postcard below for more information:

AMERICA'S CLEAN WATER FOUNDATION

**HOLD THE DATE
OCTOBER 18, 2002**

**Year of Clean Water
NATIONAL WATER MONITORING DAY**

**★ 2002 ★
THE YEAR OF
CLEAN WATER
Celebration & Recommitment**

On October 18, 2002, volunteer monitoring programs, water quality agencies, students, and the general public are invited to test waters across the nation in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Everyone will test for temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity and enter their results into a national database. Data will be publicly available at www.yearofcleanwater.org.

The Year of Clean Water will also feature educational events, water festivals, and widespread press coverage.

To register testing sites, order low cost water testing kits (if needed), or find out more about Year of Clean Water events, visit www.yearofcleanwater.org. You can order kits or register your sites starting May 15, 2002.

ASIWPCA
Association of State and
Interstate Water Pollution
Control Administrators

EARTH
FORCE

EASI

earth day
network

RIVER

Sign up for Aquatic Ecological Assessment Workshops!

The Sustainable Land Stewardship (SLSI) in coordination with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) will be offering a 3-day Bioassessment Training at the TRPA office at Zephyr Cove, Nevada on **August 27, 28 & 29, 2002**. The instructor will be Jim Harrington, Environmental Scientist with California Department of Fish and Game. The training will cover a variety of topics, including one day of presentations on reference sites/ conditions, and sampling strategies and two days of field work at a local stream to collect macroinvertebrates and assess physical habitat for water quality. Cost for the training is \$300.00 per person, which includes a text book and refreshments. Several macroinvertebrate nets will be given away. Spaces are limited. Sign up today to enroll!

To register by e-mail or phone, please contact:

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333 W. Nye Lane
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(775) 687-4670 ext. 3158
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Environmental Justice Now!

Environmental justice is defined by state law as the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The State Water Board is ensuring that all its actions incorporate "Environmental Justice" concepts and is developing a formal plan that will provide further guidance on meeting "Environmental Justice" objectives.

For more information about environmental justice, please contact Adrian Perez at (916) 341-5881 or aperez@exec.swrcb.ca.gov

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Clean Water Team Web Site:

www.swrcb.ca.gov/nps/volunteer.html

Clean Water Team Contact:

Statewide Citizen Monitoring Coordinator (Region 5 & 6 interim)

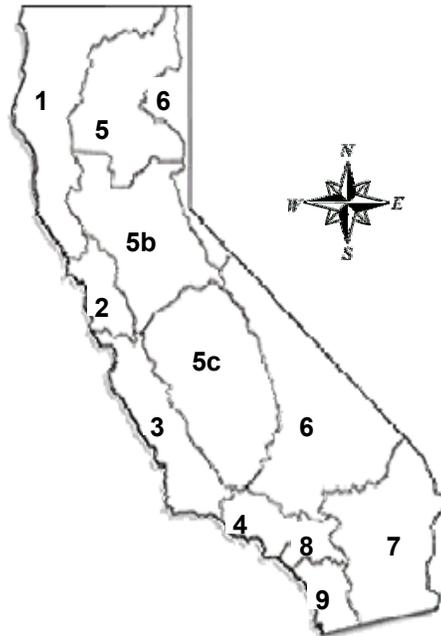
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