



CURRENTS

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

Summer 2004



Train the Trainer Workshops

By Pam Buford and Beth Doolittle-Norby, CVRWQCB

In June, the State Water Resources Control Board's Citizen Monitoring Program conducted Train-the Trainer Workshops in Redding and Fresno. The workshops were co-hosted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Redding and Fresno offices.



Over 40 folks participated, including watershed coordinators from many local watershed groups and Resource Conservation Districts. In addition, several resource agency staff participated, along with high school science teachers.

Participants received a large binder entitled the "Guidance Compendium for Watershed Monitoring and Assessment". The compendium contains a wealth of information about citizen water quality monitoring and other watershed-

related information. Erick Burres, Revital Katznelson and Holly Sheradin, members of the SWRCB Clean Water Team, provided a majority of the in-depth class training. Local watershed programs were also highlighted by local watershed representatives, including a summary of citizen monitoring activities on Pit River and Bear Creek in Shasta County and Camp Pashayan



along the San Joaquin River. Hands-on instrument training was provided, using various field sampling equipment to sample pH, temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity.

The Train the Trainer workshops were very well received by all participants. This course is highly recommended to those interested in learning more about citizen water quality monitoring programs. &



Inside this issue:

<i>Train the Trainer Workshops</i>	1
<i>Surfers' Water-Quality Tests Catch Safety Wave</i>	2
<i>Bush Administration Commits \$15 Million</i>	3
<i>Encouraging Smart Growth</i>	3
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	4
<i>Izaak Walton League Revamps Clean Water Action Kit</i>	5
<i>Contact Information</i>	5



Surfers' Water-Quality Tests Catch Safety Wave

By Lisa M. Krieger, San Jose Mercury News



HALF MOON BAY – It was only after surfer Ed Larenas and his friends emerged from the water at Linda Mar Beach in Pacifica one recent winter that they saw the sign: "Warning, These Waters Are Contaminated." "It was a rude awakening," he said. "For some reason the signs were pointing toward the beach. We saw them when we were walking back to the parking lot."

Frustrated by contamination warnings that offer too little information too late, Larenas and fellow members of the San Mateo County chapter of the Surfrider Foundation this week opened a water-quality testing lab in El Granada, near Half Moon Bay.

Volunteers plan to sample and analyze seawater in the lab every Monday, then promptly post the results on the group's website, in local surf shops, newspapers and other public locations. Test results will be entered in a database, to detect any trends. Because the lab is so close to the beach, the turnaround time is faster than county water testing, which is mandated by law. So information can get to those who need it most: surfers and swimmers.

By testing and publicizing water quality, good or bad, Surfrider members seek to keep people healthy. Pollution levels in coastal waters fluctuate so wildly that any significant delay in monitoring and reporting can misrepresent the status of the beach.

But their larger goal, they add, is to draw attention to the plight of ocean pollution, and ultimately inspire more aggressive protection.

"They can get accurate water quality information to beachgoers, which helps raise the level of

awareness about contaminated water," said David Beckman, who directs the Coastal Water Quality Project for the National Resources Defense Council.

The lab is the latest of about two dozen such facilities created and run by members of the Surfrider Foundation, a national nonprofit organization working to preserve oceans and beaches. The Santa Cruz chapter monitors as many as 20 sites weekly in its lab, opened in 1991.

Surfers raised \$10,000 to transform the vermin-infested garage into a clean, well-lit lab with incubators, autoclaves and other equipment. Samples are analyzed for bacteria like *E. coli* and enterococcus, both of which can cause illness. In recent years, local beaches have been plagued by repeated closings, usually caused by runoff of animal waste and leaking septic tanks.



Pacifica State Beach, Linda Mar Section

Half Moon Bay Mayor Mike Ferreira said, "I've never seen a more effective use of government funding and property. They've developed an abandoned piece of property. Its a wonderful leverage of a small amount of money, thanks to lots of volunteers. The Surfrider volunteers include a biochemist, a professor of biology at San Francisco State University, a land-use planner and several engineers. ♪

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Phone: (760) 944-3564

For more information, please go to:
<http://www.surfrider.org>

Bush Administration Commits \$15 Million to Protect and Restore America's Watersheds

(Des Moines, Iowa - July 19, 2004) USEPA announced 14 watersheds eligible for \$15 million from USEPA's Targeted Watersheds Grant Program. The Targeted Watersheds Grant Program began in 2003 to encourage successful community-based approaches to protect and restore the nation's watersheds. This competitive grant program provides resources to those watershed organizations whose restoration plans set clear goals and objectives with special consideration given to water quality monitoring, innovation (e.g., market-based water quality trading), a public education component and strong community support. The 2004 selected watersheds are:

- Nashua River, Massachusetts and New Hampshire
- Ipswich River, Massachusetts
- Passaic River, New Jersey
- Schuylkill River, Pennsylvania
- Cape Fear, North Carolina
- Sangamon River, Illinois
- Kalamazoo River, Michigan
- Fourche Creek, Arkansas
- Upper Mississippi River, Iowa
- Bear River, Utah, Idaho and Wyoming
- Lake Tahoe, California and Nevada**
- Siuslaw River, Oregon
- Dungeness River, Washington
- Kenai River, Alaska

Of the 115 proposals nominated nationally, only 14 were accepted for funding. In USEPA Region 9, there were 12 nominations that were submitted for consideration and one was selected for funding (Lake Tahoe). ☺



Lake Tahoe: Logan Shoal Vista Point off of Route 50.

Information about these projects and the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/twg>

For more on The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, please visit: <http://www.oceancommission.gov/documents/prelimreport/welcome.html>

Contact: John Millett,
millett.john@epa.gov



Encouraging Smart Growth

Smart Growth EPA is releasing a new report that will help communities protect water resources and achieve smart growth. The report presents 75 innovative approaches such as redeveloping abandoned properties, encouraging rooftop gardens, allowing shared parking, and promoting tree planting. Growth and development, including the loss of woodlands, meadowlands, and wetlands, can have adverse effects on water resources. Increases in developed land, including lawns and paved surfaces, can increase polluted run-off. To address these and other impacts, state and local governments are developing smarter approaches to growth. They are looking for, and

using, policies and tools that enhance existing neighborhoods, improve schools, protect drinking water, and provide attractive housing and transportation choices. The 75 approaches in this report will help state and local governments and water quality professionals achieve their smart growth and water quality goals. ☺

To receive a free copy of the report, email: ncepimal@one.net or call 1-800-490-9198 and request EPA publication 231-R-04-002

For more information go to USEPA website: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/>

Izaak Walton League Issues Revamped Clean Water Action Kit

Gaithersburg, MD (June 16, 2004) - The Izaak Walton League has issued its all-new, totally revised and updated Watershed Stewardship Action Kit for clean water advocates. This is a multi-faceted tool for anyone who is interested in getting involved in protecting streams and rivers in their community.

Citizen involvement in watershed protection and conservation activities has proven to have measurable, positive results on the quality of the nation's waters. Hands-on involvement in stream and wetland conservation projects gives communities concrete tools to help restore the nation's watersheds.

The toolkit includes a number of fact sheets on wetlands, the Clean Water Act, and watershed action plans. It also provides background on

how to develop, fund, conduct, and get publicity for watershed protection projects in local communities. It also includes a list of relevant publications from the EPA with directions on how they can be acquired. 

To get the toolkit go to:
www.iwla.org/merchant2/merchant.mv and click on Books, or click on the "search" button and type in "watershed stewardship action kit".

For more information contact:
Gwyn Rowland, Director, Watershed Programs
(301) 548-0150
Email: sos@iwla.org



Contact Information:

Clean Water Team Contact:

**Central Valley and Sierra
(Regions 5 & 6)**
Holly Sheradin
(916) 341-5466
E-mail: Sherh@swrcb.ca.gov

**North & Central Coast
(Regions 1,2, & 3)**
Revital Katznelson
(510) 622-2470
E-mail: rk@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov

**South Coast & Colorado River Basin
(Regions 4, 7, 8, & 9)**
Erick Burres
(213) 576-6788
E-mail: eburres@rb4.swrcb.ca.gov

*Editing & Designing:
Fawn Sheradin*

Clean Water Team E-Mail:
CWTmail@dwq.swrcb.ca.gov

Clean Water Team Web Site:
www.swrcb.ca.gov/nps/volunteer.html

California State Water Resources Control Board:

1001 I Street, 15th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 341-5455
Fax: (916) 341-5470

