

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT  
March 12, 2008

- ITEM: 8
- SUBJECT: Watershed Reports: Staff will present an overview of the Watershed Reports recently completed for each of our 11 major watersheds. (*Cynthia Gorham-Test*)
- PURPOSE: To bring these reports, and the important information they contain on water quality conditions and ecological health of our watersheds, to the attention of the Board and the public.
- PUBLIC NOTICE: This is an information item. There are no legal noticing requirements.
- DISCUSSION: The Watershed Reports document water quality conditions and ecological health in each of our eleven major watersheds (Supporting Document 1). These reports provide a management tool for focusing our time and resources as we implement our regulatory programs, and also provide a baseline from which we can chart future trends in water quality and beneficial use attainment by documenting the status of water quality and ecological health in our watersheds.
- These reports were prepared by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Program (SCCWRP), under contract to the San Diego Water Board, using data from multiple sources including data from our Storm Water Program, and from the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP). The types of data used in the assessments included water chemistry, water and sediment toxicity, benthic macroinvertebrate community structure, and physical habitat. Data from both the wet and dry season were evaluated. The ecological health of a watershed was evaluated using an Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI), chronic toxicity testing results, and water chemistry exceedences of thresholds for aquatic life.
- Most indicators showed evidence of moderate to severe widespread impacts in the different watersheds as shown in

Table 1 (Supporting Document 2). Table 1 provides dramatic evidence that the resources of the San Diego Region Watersheds have suffered moderate to severe impacts as shown in all four indicators. Although this conclusion is based on monitoring results from only a few monitoring stations in each watershed, the consistency of those results provides confidence in the conclusion.

The attached eleven abstracts (Supporting Document 3) provide additional detail regarding each of these watersheds.

All eleven of the Watershed Reports are posted on the San Diego Water Board website at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/swamp.html>.

KEY ISSUES:

1. The watershed reports provide a baseline from which trends in water quality and ecological health can be assessed.
2. All of our watersheds exhibited poor ecological conditions.

LEGAL CONCERNS:

None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

1. San Diego Region Watershed Map.
2. Ecological Health Indicators for Sample Sites in San Diego Region Watersheds.
3. Watershed Report Abstracts.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Continue water chemistry, toxicity, and bioassessment monitoring at SWAMP stations.
2. Increase monitoring frequency to at least once per year at each station.
3. Once received, implement the recommendations from SCCWRP on how to improve the San Diego Region's ambient monitoring program.
4. Use monitoring results as a management tool to determine where we should focus our time and resources.