



Colorado River Basin Region's Perennial and Intermittent Streams Bioassessment Study

What is it?

The Colorado River Basin Regional Board, in coordination with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) and the Department of Fish and Game, initiated bioassessment monitoring of targeted perennial and intermittent streams in 2013. Most of the sites had never been monitored by the Colorado River Basin Regional Board. In fall of 2013, field crews from both agencies successfully deployed pressure transducers at all 17 sites for the purpose of determining when and if these sites are drying up. The study is intended to characterize the chemical and biological health of these waters for the first time, and to understand how these waters are changing over time, given the unique conditions in such an arid climate. Monitoring will screen for indications of water quality and sediment degradation for aquatic life and related uses, and assess benthic community condition, habitat condition, and physical and chemical condition.



Why is it important?

The Colorado River Basin Region has few natural water bodies within its borders, and it is essential to protect these scarce and valuable resources for both the public and wildlife. The majority of these waters are pristine, and in order to keep them that way, it is necessary to establish a baseline reference from which all future monitoring efforts within the region can be developed. Currently, it is unknown whether or not these water bodies are protective of designated uses. It is therefore imperative that the water quality and biological quality of these waters be characterized and evaluated.

How will this information be used?

Monitoring is expected to run from 2013 through 2015 (funding permitting). This monitoring will provide much needed information about the current state of these waters and how they are adapting in a desert climate. The information will also be used by the California Perennial Streams Assessment (PSA) as part of its statewide assessment of perennial waters. Data from this monitoring will also compliment a geographic information system (GIS) mapping database that is [currently under development](#).

For more information, view the Ecological Condition Assessments of California's Perennial Wadeable Streams: Highlights from the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program's Perennial Streams Assessment (PSA) (2000-2007) report ([PDF](#)).