

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

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Snapshot Day 2001 Gets a Wider View!

By Tamara Clinard, Coastal Watershed Council



Snapshot Day 2001 on April 21st was once again the largest water quality monitoring event in California history. 125 volunteers monitored 168 sites on 110 different waterbodies over more than 300 miles of California's coast in 4 counties on one morning! This Sanctuary-wide event was coordinated by Tamara Clinard of the Coastal Watershed Council and Bridget Hoover of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network. Primary funding for this event came from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Water Quality

Protection Program and the California Coastal Commission's 'Whale Tail' funds. During this single day of monitoring, volunteers tested for dissolved oxygen, pH, air and water temperature, conductivity, and turbidity in the field. They also collected samples and sent them to ten participating labs for bacteriological counts (fecal coliforms or E. coli) and for nutrient analyses. The data were entered into special forms on-line and loaded, via a spreadsheet Project File, into the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) database to be displayed on the Internet after validation.

Volunteers received training in water quality testing protocols to ensure the quality of their data. That year, most of the instruments went through calibration and accuracy checks with detailed documentation to help track data quality information. The organizers also met with the labs prior to the event and coordinated the standardization of the tests between the different facilities so results could be compared

more readily. The training and diligence of the volunteers in the field, along with the additional equipment calibration and tracking protocols and cooperation between the labs, greatly enhance the reliability and quality of this event's data.

The list of "Thank You's" to be handed out is too long to mention here, but first on the list are volunteers themselves! Without the efforts and concern of these citizens this day would not have happened. Then there are the trainers, coordinators, data managers, sponsors, champions, laboratory workers, equipment lenders, feeders, cruise captain...

The list is long indeed and includes volunteers and staff of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Morro Bay Foundation, the Clean Water Team - Citizen Monitoring Program of the State Water Resources Control Board, the California Coastal Commission, The Ocean Conservancy, Sanctuary Cruises, the US Environmental Protection Agency-Region 9 Laboratory, San Mateo County Environmental Health Division Laboratory, Calera Creek Water Recycling

Plant, County of Santa Cruz Department of Environmental Health Services Agency Laboratory, City of Watsonville Laboratory, California State University-Monterey Bay (CSUMB) Watershed Institute Laboratory, Monterey Bay Analytical Laboratory, Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency Laboratory, Big Creek Reserve, San Luis Obispo County Public Health Laboratory, and the Creek Environmental Laboratory.

We hope all the participants of Snapshot Day 2001 had a great time out in the creeks that spring! ♦

Latest Snapshot Event:
April 20, 2002

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/monitoringnetwork/>



SWRCB Staff Participates in Annual 2002 Nature Bowl!

By Mary Tappel, SWRCB



It was a windy, but clear and beautiful spring afternoon in the Central Valley for this year's Nature Bowl. The snow capped Sierras were clearly visible behind Sacramento's skyline from the Vic Fazio Yolo Basin Wetlands office and demonstration wetlands habitat where this year's

Nature Bowl was held March 14th.

Dozens of excited third and fourth graders, accompanied by proud teachers and parents, played, explored, studied, and most importantly, learned from the wetlands and exhibits in the morning, and competed to answer correctly nature questions. This annual learning through fun and competition event lets "kids be kids" and successfully encourages both learning and leadership by emphasizing timely environmental topics.

In the afternoon, it was the fifth and sixth graders' turn. Having worked for many years with youth, I wasn't surprised by their speed or ingenuity, but rather by their degree of seriousness, which impressed me. As their answer recorder, I simply couldn't keep up, and the wind didn't help. Thankfully, the event was well organized enough to make up

for my inexperience and wind-challenged efforts.

The Vic Fazio Wetlands and the exhibits and demonstration wetlands at the Yolo Basin Wetlands office nearby are well worth visiting. ♦

Santa Monica Bay's Storm Drains: "Beach Keeper Report"

By Julie Barr, California Coast Keeper

The Santa Monica BayKeeper's BeachKeeper Program has recently released its first report "A Snapshot of the Bay: BeachKeeper Storm Drain Report." This report summarizes the program's history, goals, and assessment of data collected over the past several years.

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, many municipalities, and the community as a whole have expressed an interest over the findings presented in our report and want to work with us to reduce the high amounts of pollutants flowing from many of the storm drains in our bay.



Over the past year and a half, the BeachKeeper Program has updated its catalog



of the pictures and locations of over 360 drains in our watershed. Also, with the help of the Regional Board, we have obtained GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates of the drains and have produced GIS (Geographic Information System) maps showing their exact location. Currently, the California CoastKeeper is working on GIS technology so that we can keep the location of new drains and maps up to date as the program expands. The California CoastKeeper also developed our current database for our monitoring results. This database increased our program's QA/QC (Quality Assurance/Quality Control) standards and helped in the assessment of our data. The Regional Board plans to use the information collected through the program for upcoming regulatory issues, such as Total Maximum Daily Load allocations for pollutants in our waterways.

In the past two years, the BayKeeper has conducted seven snapshot sampling events. Our volunteers have walked many miles to collect over 500 water samples throughout these sampling events. We will continue to monitor these current drains and plan to expand our monitoring program into Ballona Creek. ♦

Snapshot Monitoring in the Lake Tahoe and Truckee River Watersheds

By Dominic Gregorio, SWRCB

The first annual Snapshot Day 2001 in the Lake Tahoe and Truckee River watersheds was held on June 2nd, 2001. Over 100 committed citizen volunteers, working closely with many water quality management agencies, participated in gathering water quality information in the form of visual assessments, photos, and water quality data at 44 locations.

This collaborative effort was planned and coordinated by the Citizen Monitoring Working Group of the Lake Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition (LTEEC). The Citizen Monitoring Working Group includes independent citizens and representatives from non-profit organizations, agencies, and the academic community. Organizations involved in planning this event included the Truckee River Aquatic Monitors, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, citizens at Fallen Leaf Lake, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Marine Research and Education, Tahoe Resource Conservation District, Incline Village General Improvement District, Sierra Club, California State Water Resources Control Board, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Tahoe Conservancy, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, U.S. Forest Service, University of



Nevada Reno Electrical Engineering Department, and the UC Davis Tahoe Research Group. The citizen monitoring program of the California State and Regional Boards is the *Clean Water Team*, and the participating volunteers in the Lake Tahoe and Truckee River watersheds adopted that moniker as well.

Water quality “Snapshots” are one-day, volunteer-based events designed to collect watershed information during one moment in time. Volunteer leaders are trained, and these leaders accompany teams of volunteers to various pre-determined sites to collect information relative to the health of our watersheds. The purpose of this effort was two-fold: to promote environmental education and stewardship, and to collect valuable water quality information. While there is a great deal of high quality agency and research monitoring taking place in the region, there is still insufficient information to adequately assess the status of some of the aquatic resources in the Truckee River and Lake Tahoe Basin watersheds. With proper training and quality assurance, community volunteers can help fill this void by providing valuable



information for watershed management and

Measurements made on Snapshot Day were designed to represent a single point in time and did not necessarily represent average conditions. Still, Snapshot Day was not only successful in engaging the public in active watershed stewardship, but it also provided much valuable data to the responsible agencies. Just one example was the collection of eighteen coliform samples over a wide area all on the same day. This was the first time that such a sampling effort was undertaken. The Lahontan Regional Board used the data from this effort to focus on "hotspots" for fecal coliform. Based on the Snapshot results additional samples were collected and analyzed, and appropriate regulatory action was taken. In one case, new control measures, implemented by an operator, resulted in improved water quality.

pollution prevention.

A great deal was learned during this first snapshot day, both by the volunteers and by the organizers as well. A corps of citizen monitors has now been trained and field-tested to assist the agencies in continuing water quality monitoring. They all plan to build on this initial effort to encourage continuing monitoring throughout the year, during runoff events, and on Snapshot Day 2002! ♦

Latest Snapshot Event:
May 4th, 2002
For more information, please visit:
<http://www.lteec.org/>

Important Date to Remember:




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 & Recruitment

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.







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