San Gabriel River Regional Monitoring Program

http://lasgrwc2.org/programsandprojects/sgrrmp.aspx

OVERVIEW

The San Gabriel River Regional Monitoring Program (SGRRMP) was developed during 2004 by multiple stakeholders representing major permittees, regulatory and management agencies, and conservation groups. Development of the program was motivated by a permit condition for the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. The program seeks to increase awareness of issues at the watershed scale and improve the coordination and integration of monitoring efforts for both compliance and ambient conditions.

The SGRRMP is a watershed-scale counterpart to existing larger-scale regional monitoring efforts in the southern California region that seek to address questions ands concerns about regional conditions and trends (State Water Resources Control Board **Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program**, U.S. EPA's Western Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program, and the Southern California Bight Project). Incorporation of local and site-specific issues within a broader watershed-scale perspective is unique to the SGRRMP among efforts in the San Gabriel Watershed. By considering ways to improve overall cost effectiveness of monitoring efforts in the watershed, the plan includes reductions of redundancies within and between existing monitoring programs. Efforts within the program include targeted monitoring of contaminants of concern and adjustment of monitoring locations and sampling frequencies to better respond to management priorities. The SGRRMP design workgroup identified five core questions for the regional program:

1. What is the environmental health of streams in the overall watershed?
2. Are the conditions at areas of unique importance getting better or worse?
3. Are receiving waters near discharges meeting water quality objectives?
4. Are local fish safe to eat?
5. Is body contact recreation safe?

The monitoring program is designed to effectively and efficiently answer these core questions to achieve multiple objectives. The resulting program is a multi-level monitoring framework that combines probabilistic and targeted sampling for water quality, toxicity, and bio-assessment.

Implementation of the monitoring program was initiated in 2005 by the work group to address Questions 1 and 2. By 2007, indicators to answer all five questions had been collected and evaluated. Initial results illustrate clear patterns between the upper (undeveloped) portions and the lower (developed) portions of the watershed in terms of water quality and habitat condition. Results of the ambient assessment provide context for evaluating water quality and stream conditions below permitted discharge locations. Finally, the results will help identify areas where expanded monitoring or special studies should be focused.