

Fact Sheet **Region 4**

# Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Overview

With more than 10 million residents, the Los Angeles Region is the most densely populated region in the state. Agriculture and open space exist alongside urban, residential, commercial and industrial areas. Open spaces in northern Los Angeles County are steadily giving way to residential communities. The Los Angeles Regional Board regulates over 1,000 point source discharges of wastewater.

The region has designated 10 watershed management areas. The Los Angeles and San Gabriel River watersheds are heavily urbanized in their lower stretches but retain largely undeveloped open space areas in their upper portions. The Santa Monica Bay Watershed contains a mixture of urbanized and more rural areas, all of which drain into Santa Monica Bay, a designated waterbody under the National Estuary Program. The Santa Clara River, Ventura River and Calleguas Creek watersheds contain many small urban centers, but also support large areas of agriculture. The Dominguez Channel Watershed is a heavily urbanized and industrialized area, which drains into Los Angeles Harbor which, in combination with Long Beach Harbor, forms the largest industrial port on the West Coast.



The Los Angeles Region encompasses all of the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, along with small portions of Kern and Santa Barbara counties and the drainages of five coastal islands (Anacapa, San Nicolas, Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina and San Clemente). The region also includes all coastal waters within three miles of the continental and island coastlines.

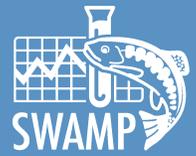
Most precipitation in the Los Angeles Region occurs during just a few major storms each year, averaging from about 15 inches annually in Ventura County to almost 40 inches in certain mountainous areas. Average rainfall is slightly lower in Los Angeles County, but varies widely between the valleys and the mountains.



### Water Facts

- 4,447 square miles of land, including offshore islands
- 1,115 miles of streams
- 12,107 acres of lakes
- 120 miles of coastline





## Los Angeles Region

### Vision and Goals for Monitoring

The goal of the Los Angeles Regional SWAMP is to monitor all waters throughout the Los Angeles Region and identify those with degraded water quality (so that we can focus on improving water quality in those areas) and those with high water quality (so that we can ensure that we maintain high quality in those areas). The two main objectives of the regional SWAMP are to:

- Assess whether beneficial uses in the region's inland, estuarine and coastal waters are being protected.
- Assess whether water quality conditions are getting better or worse over time.

The regional monitoring priorities to meet the objectives include plans to:

- Assess wadeable streams via triad approach: health of biological community (bioassessment), water column toxicity and water chemistry (conventional pollutants, trace metals, trace organics).
- Assess overall condition of large watersheds (Santa Clara River, Los Angeles River, San Gabriel River, Ventura River, Calleguas Creek, Santa Monica Bay creeks).
- Assess bioaccumulation of pollutants in fish in lakes/reservoirs and coastal waters.

### Program Activity

The region's recent monitoring and assessment accomplishments include:

- Monitoring of fish tissue contamination (mercury, DDT, PCB and other organics) in approximately 35 lakes and reservoirs throughout the region to assess whether fish are safe for humans to eat (OEHHA currently is evaluating this monitoring data to determine whether issuance of fish advisories/fish consumption guidelines is warranted for these waterbodies).
- Comprehensive monitoring of San Gabriel River watershed (8 years of monitoring) and Los Angeles River watershed (5 years of monitoring) in collaboration with other interested stakeholders

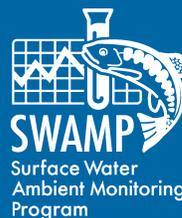
to evaluate whether it is safe to swim, whether it is safe to eat seafood, and to assess the health of biological communities.

- Monitoring of the ecological health of depressional wetlands throughout the region (in partnership with the Santa Ana and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Boards, as well as the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project).

### Collaborative Efforts

Regional Board staff is collaborating with other stakeholders to develop comprehensive monitoring programs for the Santa Clara River and Malibu Creek watersheds. Both efforts are patterned after the successful long-term monitoring programs developed for the San Gabriel and Los Angeles River watersheds. Funding will be provided through a combination of SWAMP monitoring funds, monitoring required under NPDES permits for the Saugus and Valencia Wastewater Treatment Plants and for the Municipal Stormwater Permits for Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. Sampling is expected to begin in 2013 or 2014.

Regional Board staff also is collaborating with the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition to assess the health of inland watersheds throughout Southern California. This monitoring program monitors biological communities (stream macroinvertebrates, algae), water column toxicity and water chemistry (nutrients, pesticides). The monitoring program will complete its fifth year of sampling in 2013. Interpretive reports are produced by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, which administers the program.



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