A photograph of two young girls running on a sandy beach towards the ocean. The girl on the left is wearing a white swimsuit and has her hair flying. The girl on the right is wearing a red swimsuit. They are both smiling and appear to be having fun. The ocean is a vibrant blue, and the sky is clear.

Safe to Swim Workgroup

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California State Water Resources Control Board

Safe to Swim Overview



- Accomplishments Review
 - Strategy, objectives, design
 - Indicators and methods
 - Data management
 - Consistency of assessment endpoints
 - Reporting
 - Program sustainability
- Workgroup Needs
- Participants

Program Strategy, Objectives, Design

- The purpose is to coordinate and present the monitoring and assessment of water quality issues affecting swimming safety
- Portal has created web pages to answer many safe to swim questions but -
 - Portal focus on ocean beaches.
 - Freshwater swimming information missing.
 - Data management problems cause information to be out of date.
- **Medium**

Indicators and Methods

- Consistent state water quality bacteria standards for ocean waters
 - Inconsistent use of fresh water indicators from region to region and even within regions.
 - Plan exists to adopt statewide fresh water indicators through new water quality standards based on EPA criteria.
- QA consistency addressed through SWAMP and AB 411.
- Rapid indicator methods in development.
- **Medium**

Data Management

- Uneven data quality in BeachWatch with some data duplication and mis-labeling of data.
 - Connectivity poor between BeachWatch and CEDEN.
 - Portal data limited to coastal waters due to data feed from BeachWatch.
 - Recent data currently unavailable in portal.
 - Contract to correct the above and move portal feed from CEDEN,
 - Developing mechanism to obtain coastal data in a more timely manner.
- General lack of access to data generated by citizen monitoring groups.
- **Low to Medium**

Consistency of Assessment Endpoints

- Inconsistent freshwater bacterial indicator objectives between regions and within regions.
- Plan to correct problem with statewide indicator standards through new rulemaking.
- Some inappropriate use of endpoints in SwimGuide.
- Score card approaches in Heal the Bay's Ocean Beach Report Card and SwimGuide need to be extended to freshwater data

Low to Medium

Reporting

- Portal has not been updated since it was launched in 2009.
- Delay in receiving lab results due to methods and reporting requirements; new rapid methods may improve timing.
- Delay in getting data into portals; improvements in BeachWatch data structure will help
- Inability to obtain freshwater data in a timely manner.
 - Delays cause NGOs to request data separately from county health officers, increasing inefficiency.
- Portal links to coastal county websites present most timely data.
- **Medium**

Program Sustainability

- Inconsistent workgroup leadership and commitment from member organizations.
- Coastal monitoring more sustainable due to continued funding.
- Freshwater monitoring,
 - relies on individual regional water board priorities
 - citizen monitoring efforts,
 - no statewide coordination nor consistent funding. – SWAMP funding to be cut?
- **Medium**

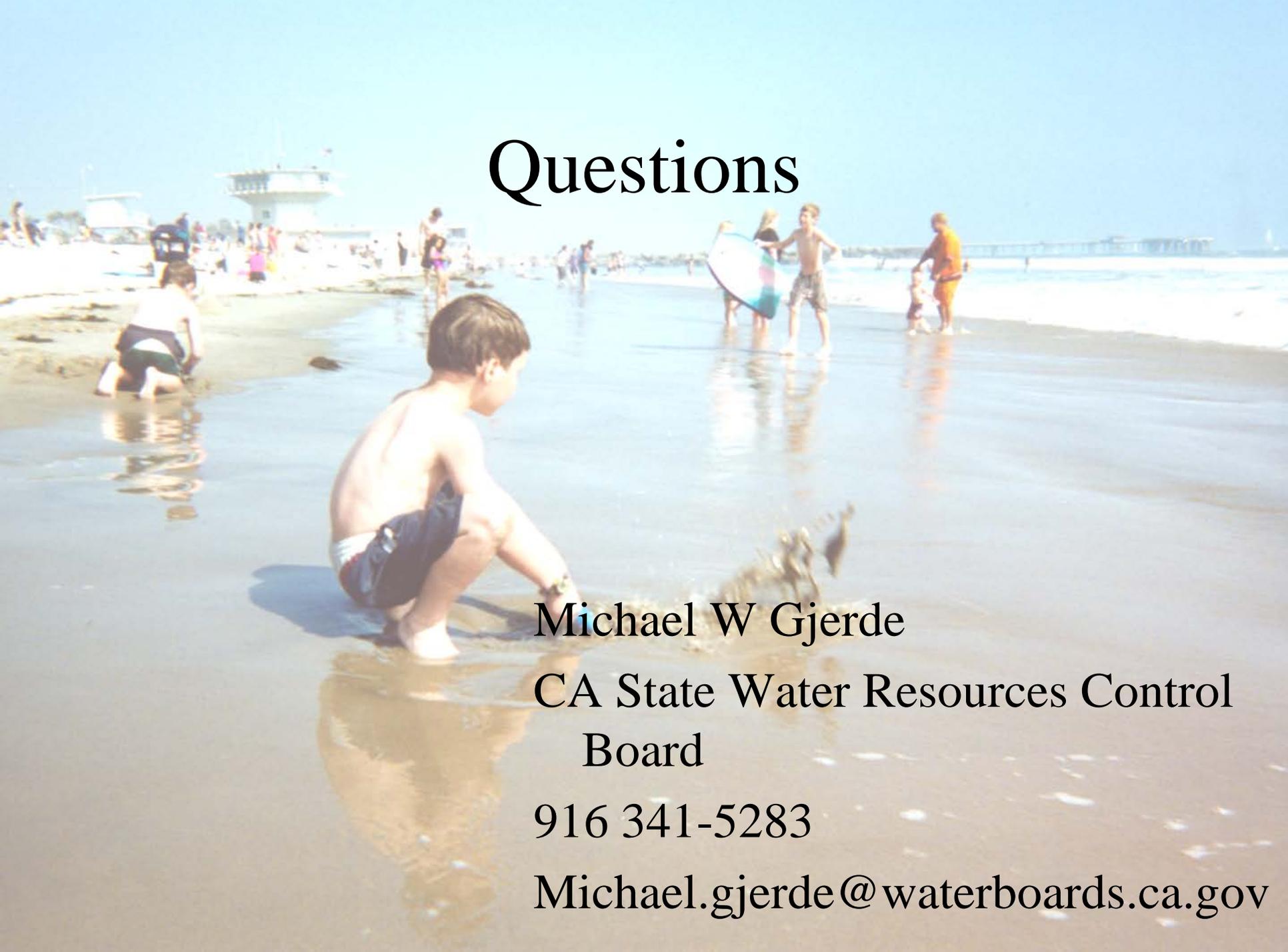
Explicit Workgroup Needs

- Consistent and sustained workgroup leadership and commitment of effort from Water Boards and others.
- Funding for workgroup efforts and portal development.
- Continued funding for monitoring, especially for freshwaters.
- Coordinated statewide freshwater swimming safety monitoring program.
- Improved data management system that includes timely data entry from multiple sources and transfer of data to portal.
- Continued development of smartphone apps to reach public more effectively."

Participation



- **Current Participation**
 - State Board – OIMA, DWQ, DIT
 - Regional Boards recently
 - NGO – Waterkeepers, Heal the Bay
 - County Environmental Health
- **Additional Participation**
 - Citizen monitoring groups
 - CA Department of Public Health



Questions

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