

SWAMP Inland Beaches Proposal

A primary tenant of the Clean Water Act is the protection and restoration of fishable and swimmable waters. The safety of California's beaches for swimming is a concern for water quality managers and the public. Swimming safety is assessed by using standardized field and laboratory procedures to measure levels of indicator bacteria in areas where body contact occurs. California's coastal beaches are routinely monitored by a coordinated network of public health agencies and results are captured by the Beach Watch databased and made publicly available via the Safe to Swim Portal (http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/safe_to_swim/; and others). There is no coordinated, statewide program to monitor inland beaches for swimming safety. This puts public health at risk.

SWAMP proposes the following actions:

1. **Inland Beaches Work Group** – form an Inland Beaches work group to oversee SWAMP actions and to connect to other agencies and related efforts (e.g. statewide bacteria objective/regional board efforts); Anticipated resources needs – staff time
2. **Safe to Swim Portal Upgrade**
 - A. **Add inland beaches data to the Safe to Swim Portal**; Anticipated resource needs – staff time (SWAMP & IT staff)
 - B. **Data Interpretation and Visualization** – Develop appropriate methods to interpret the monitoring data and present the results to the public in a meaningful manner. Examples for coastal beach swimming safety data presented in the Safe to Swim Portal include:
 1. Letter grades and color codes (Heal the Bay Ocean Beach Report Card; Waterkeeper Swim Guide)
 2. Swimming advisories (closures/postings) from county health agencies
 3. Comparison of raw data with appropriate thresholds
 4. Display of waters impaired for the contact recreation beneficial use
3. **Incentives to Get Data into CEDEN** – ensure that all bacterial indicator data collected by the Water Boards and their contractors are captured in CEDEN; coordinate with regulatory and financial assistance programs to route relevant permittee, grantee, and watershed monitoring program data into CEDEN; Anticipated resource needs – staff time (SWAMP, CEDEN, & WB Program staff)
4. **Statewide Monitoring Framework** – statewide monitoring strategy for inland beaches to serve as a framework for coordination and uniformity throughout the state (FHAB strategy an example) Anticipated resource needs – combination of staff time and contract funds
5. **Field SOP** – field sampling for both beach assessments and ambient monitoring; Anticipated resources needs – staff time or contract funds
6. **Method Comparison** – compile bacteria analysis methods; evaluate strengths and weaknesses, develop guidance for project managers; Anticipated resource needs – staff time and contract funds
7. **Source Tracking** – compile source tracking methodologies, develop guidance document; Anticipated resources needs – combination of staff time and contract funds