



Fact Sheet

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCIES | www.MyWaterQuality.ca.gov

Where Are Our Wetlands and How Are They Doing?

Monitoring Council delivers redesigned "My Water Quality" Internet portal

Overview

The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) is unveiling a completely redesigned *My Water Quality* internet portal to connect decision makers and the public with water quality and ecosystem health information. The theme of this new portal is "Are Our Wetland Ecosystems Healthy?" View the new portal from California's *My Water Quality* website, www.MyWaterQuality.ca.gov, under "Are Our Aquatic Ecosystems Healthy?"

The new California Wetlands Portal includes interactive graphics, maps and monitoring data that focus on the location, extent and health of the state's wetland resources. A novel home page photo carousel provides insight into the myriad types of wetlands found in our state. The goal is to make this information as timely and user-friendly as possible.

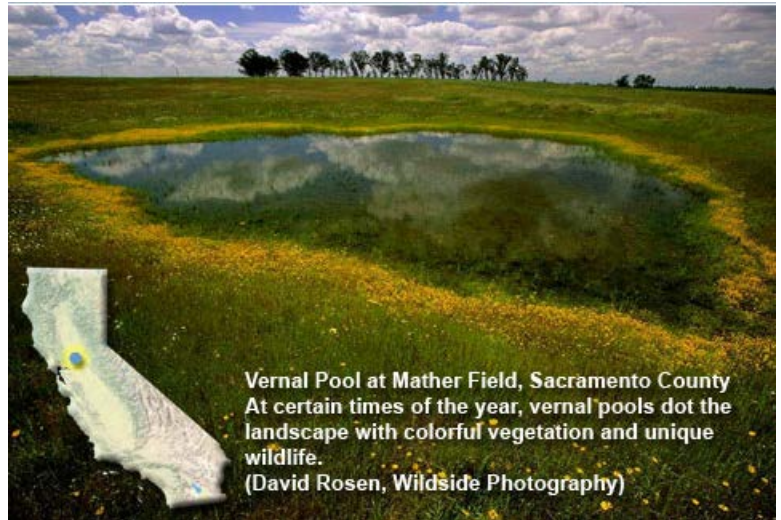
Data presented in the portal are housed in another new web-based tool called EcoAtlas. Targeted toward wetland practitioners, EcoAtlas provides an online resource for compiling maps and data about wetlands produced by numerous local, state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. www.ecoatlas.org

Why Are Wetlands Important?

Wetlands perform numerous functions and provide important services to society. They filter out water-borne pollutants, acting to cleanse our surface waters. They also serve to stabilize shorelines and provide storm and flood protection by creating natural barriers. At the same time, they provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife. The attractiveness of our wetlands makes them the focus of many recreational activities.



Death Valley National Park, playa
These salty pools dry out and fill up seasonally, getting their salts from the soil, not the ocean.
(National Parks Service)



Vernal Pool at Mather Field, Sacramento County
At certain times of the year, vernal pools dot the landscape with colorful vegetation and unique wildlife.
(David Rosen, Wildside Photography)

But California has lost much of its wetland acreage and remaining wetlands are threatened. Many governmental and non-governmental programs now exist to protect our wetlands.

Why Was This New Tool Developed?

Formed in 2007 by cooperative agreement between the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Agency, the California Water Quality Monitoring Council brings together water quality and ecosystem health information from a variety of organizations with special expertise in

wetland monitoring and assessment, coordinated through the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup. This collaborative workgroup facilitates dialogue and coordination among twenty-three state, federal, and local agencies and non-governmental organizations that monitor and assess our state's wetlands. Their new portal provides a way to make the information collected as part of this monitoring investment more readily accessible so that it can inform policies and management decisions. Furthermore, it allows the general public to access information about local and statewide resources that was compiled by public agencies with public resources.


In 2009, the Monitoring Council released its first two internet portals, *Is it Safe to Swim in Our Waters?* and *Is it Safe to Eat Fish and Shellfish from Our Waters?* In 2010 the first California Wetlands Portal was added and in 2012 the Healthy Streams Portal was launched. More portals are planned highlighting California's tide pools, estuaries, and drinking water resources.

How Do I Get More Information?

More information about the Monitoring Council and its recommended *Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy for California* are on the web at www.MyWaterQuality.ca.gov/monitoring_council.

Information about the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup is at www.MyWaterQuality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/wetland_workgroup.






State of California
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
CALIFORNIA WATER QUALITY MONITORING COUNCIL

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Office of Governor
Edmund G. Brown Jr.
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Welcome to My Water Quality

This web portal, supported by a wide variety of public and private organizations, presents California water quality monitoring data and assessment information that may be viewed across space and time. Initial web portal development concentrates on four theme areas, with web portals to be released one at a time. Click the [Contact Us](#) tab for more information.

The Monitoring Council seeks to provide multiple perspectives on water quality information and to highlight existing data gaps and inconsistencies in data collection and interpretation, thereby identifying areas for needed improvement in order to better address the public's questions. Questions and comments should be addressed through the [Contact Us](#) tab.

IS OUR WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Safe drinking water depends on a variety of chemical and biological factors regulated by a number of local, state, and federal agencies. [\[Future Portal\]](#)

IS IT SAFE TO SWIM IN OUR WATERS?

Swimming safety of our waters is linked to the levels of pathogens that have the potential to cause disease. [More >>](#)

IS IT SAFE TO EAT FISH AND SHELLFISH FROM OUR WATERS?

Aquatic organisms are able to accumulate certain pollutants from the water in which they live, sometimes reaching levels that could harm consumers. [More>>](#)

ARE OUR AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS HEALTHY?

The health of fish and other aquatic organisms and communities depends on the chemical, physical, and biological quality of the waters in which they live. [More>>](#)

WHAT STRESSORS AND PROCESSES AFFECT OUR WATER QUALITY?

Beneficial uses of our waters are affected by emerging contaminants, invasive species, trash, global warming, acidification, pollutant loads, and flow. [\[Future Portal\]](#)

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