

**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

A key goal of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) is to provide water resource protection, enhancement, and restoration while balancing economic and environmental impacts. This will be done using an integrated planning approach called the Watershed Management Initiative (WMI). The main ideas that define the WMI and distinguish it from previous efforts are as follows:

1. Target watersheds are identified and prioritized primarily on the basis of water quality within individual watersheds (geographic drainage areas used for management purposes). Unique solutions are developed for each watershed that consider all local conditions and pollution sources and rely on the input and involvement of local stakeholders.
2. Historically, the SWRCB's programs have functioned on a statewide and/or regionwide basis. This has worked reasonably well for controlling conventional pollutants from point sources, but has not proven adequate to address nonpoint sources of pollution. The WMI will better coordinate our existing efforts to regulate point source problems along with our efforts to address challenges from the threat of nonpoint source pollution. This involves establishing working relationships between staff who previously worked only within a single program.
3. The RWQCBs participate as members of the local stakeholder groups. In conjunction with the SWRCB, they work to coordinate the actions of other governmental agencies and programs to best assist the local groups. Better coordination of the many overlapping state and federal activities, especially those involving regulations and funding, is critical to the success of local groups.

The current focus of the WMI is on the development of watershed management strategies at each of the Regional Boards. These strategies will emphasize regulatory coordination and flexibility to focus on the most important problems (i.e. targeted watershed activities). These strategies are contained in each Regional Board's Chapter of the statewide integrated plan. The SWRCB and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency each have their own Chapters that lay out how they can best support local watershed efforts as well as coordinate their efforts with the Regional Boards.

For further information on the Watershed Management Initiative, contact Ken Coulter at the Nonpoint Source Section, State Water Resources Control Board, phone number (916) 657-0682.