

# The Watermark

Newsletter of the Coastal Watershed Council

Autumn 2005

## Urban Watch Program Summary

by **Emily Bucher**

The Urban Watch Monitoring Program is now underway in its second month, and CWC is happy to welcome Program Coordinator Emily Bucher and Volunteer Coordinator Jackie McCloud to the team!

This year Urban Watch is being held in the cities of Capitola, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, Monterey, and Pacific Grove. Trained volunteers work together to monitor storm drain outfalls throughout the summer for common urban pol-

lutants like detergent, chlorine and ammonia-nitrogen. In Santa Cruz, volunteers are monitoring six sites per area, twice a week, and with four groups of volunteers for each city, the sites are monitored consistently every week. So far, the general trends we have seen in our program have shown detections of detergents (in every city) along with copper being detected in Scotts Valley. We hope that we don't find detections, but when we do, we are pleased that we have this program in place to help make

a difference in the health of our local watersheds. This year, we have two UCSC interns, Kevin Israel and Apollonia (Polly) Helm. Kevin is working with the Live Oak Urban Watch Program while Polly is working closely with the Scotts Valley program. Both are incredible additions to the Urban Watch staff and to CWC and we are very happy to have them both on board.

Urban Watch Coordinators Maris Sidenstecker in Monterey, and Bridget Hoover in Pacific Grove, are working with Urban Watch volunteers to monitor storm drains discharging into the Bay in Monterey County. The Urban Watch program in Monterey and Pacific Grove is running smoothly. Over 25 volunteers are sampling storm drains on a weekly basis. The results so far this year are looking good with a few exceptions of high detergent concentrations and regular sightings of trash.

Urban Watch is supported by the hard work, enthusiasm, and dedication of our many volunteers. We are continually grateful for all of the volunteer hours that they have contributed toward protecting the local watersheds.

In Santa Cruz County we still need more volunteers to fill out the Urban Watch teams. Please consider signing up for the last few months of summer and send any interested folks our way! This is a great opportunity to participate in keeping the Monterey Bay healthy and

clean while learning valuable water monitoring techniques. Please contact Emily Bucher for more information at [urbanwatch@coastalws.org](mailto:urbanwatch@coastalws.org). ●

### It's time to start training for the First Flush!

◆ **First Flush** is an annual event where volunteers monitor the Urban Watch monitoring sites during the first significant rain event each fall.

Water samples are collected at storm drain outfalls and tested for bacteria, nutrients and metals...day or night! Data gathered in this program is provided to all interested community members and public agencies to assist their efforts in formulating watershed restoration and education policies.

**Classroom trainings will be held:**

◆ **Tuesday September 20th from 6:30-9:00pm in Monterey County**

◆ **Wednesday September 21st from 6:30-9:00pm in Santa Cruz County.**

**All Cities In-Field training and "dry-run" monitoring will be held:**

◆ **Saturday, September 24th from 9:00am-12:00pm.**

Please RSVP to get the details:

In Santa Cruz County contact Emily Bucher at (831) 464-9200 or write to [urbanwatch@coastalws.org](mailto:urbanwatch@coastalws.org).

In Monterey County contact Bridget Hoover at (831) 883-9303 or write to [bhoover@monitoringnetwork.org](mailto:bhoover@monitoringnetwork.org)



*New staffers Kevin Isreal and Jackie McCloud*

# Letter from the Co-Chair

The Fall Equinox is right around the corner. I cannot help but be inspired by this season as a time of balance, between work and harvest, between light and dark. This season asks us to reflect on our balance as human communities within the natural communities that support our lives here on earth. It helps us notice where we are out of balance and to discover those ways we can return to a sustainable relationship with our waters and land.

As part of the Coastal Watershed Team, you carry the awareness of this delicate balance with you every day. You notice the ways that we both nurture and harm our watersheds as we go about our lives. You inform others with your knowledge, and keep a close eye on the creeks, streams and gutters of your watershed to keep the learning alive in your family, at your

work, and in our community.

Thank you for stewarding our coastal watersheds in this way! Your efforts make CWC's achievements possible. I know you will cheer with me when you read this newsletter's report on our successful watershed programs. I invite you to act upon your enthusiasm by participating in our First Flush event trainings and program, also outlined in this newsletter.

Community and environmental change is ever more needed, and you make that achievement possible. Be inspired, take action, and get out and enjoy your watershed during these last summer days of long light.

In gratitude,



Kirsten Liske

## Watershed Updates

### **Santa Cruz County RCD** *Reported by Carey Cooper*

The Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (SCCRCD) has expanded their Rural Road Erosion Control Assistance Program, with funding from the Coastal Conservancy and the State Water Resources Control Board. This year's program will be focused in two additional watersheds, Soquel Creek and Aptos/Valencia Creek, in addition to the San Lorenzo River watershed. The program components include private road erosion control assessments conducted by Pacific Watershed Associates; project design, permitting and implementation cost-share assistance; educational outreach and technical assistance through workshops, project tours, newsletters and technical trainings; and sediment load reduction and photo-monitoring conducted by the Coastal Watershed Council with assistance from Balance Hydrologics. For further information about the SCCRCD's Roads Program please contact Carey Cooper or Jennifer Stern at (831) 464-2950.

### **San Lorenzo River Area** *Reported by Kate Stafford,* *Education and Outreach* *Coordinator for the* *Environmental Committee of the* *Valley Woman's Club*

The annual San Lorenzo Valley River & Road clean-up will take place on October

*continued on back page*



*Monterey volunteers Bonnie Van Hise, Jason Nachamkin and Warren Yogi analyze summer storm drain discharges.*

#### **COASTAL WATERSHED COUNCIL**

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# CWC 2005 Program Update

by *Tamara Doan*

In 2005 the Coastal Watershed Council is spending a lot of time out in the field conducting important monitoring programs across the Monterey Bay!

**Clean Streams** moves to Salinas! Working to support the Monterey Bay Citizen Monitoring Network (Network) CWC is kick-starting a new citizen monitoring effort in Salinas. This program will monitor both stream and storm drains in the Santa Rita Creek watershed, and discharges to and water quality in the Reclamation Ditch which runs through the City. This program will run for 18 months, is just getting under way, and currently needs volunteers. Contact Tamara at CWC (831-464-9200), or Bridget Hoover at the Network (831-883-9303) to sign up today!

**The Monterey Bay Regional Urban Watch Program** is currently under way with over 60 volunteers monitoring storm drain discharges across the Bay with programs running in the Monterey, Pacific Grove, Capitola, Scotts Valley and the Live Oak areas. Started in 1997, the program expanded this year to include two new areas sponsored by the County of Santa Cruz through a Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention grant adding both Scotts Valley and Live Oak to the regional program in 2005. In Scotts Valley, we're monitoring discharges from the storm drain system entering Carbonera Creek from both the Scotts Valley Drive side, and from the drains along the east side of Highway 17. In Live Oak, we've selected 6 drainages and storm drain pipes which receive urban run-off from the residential areas and commercial corridors from Sunny Cove to the 41st Ave area. Like all of the storm drains we monitor, these flows enter our local streams and ultimately discharge directly to the Bay. If it's not raining, what's coming out of your

storm drain? See the Urban Watch Program update for more information!

Each year we end the Urban Watch program monitoring with the **First Flush** event. For the sixth year we'll be conducting this valuable program with our good friend Bridget Hoover of the Network and we look forward to coordinating volunteers in the five Urban Watch cities listed above, in the City of Santa Cruz, and the Half Moon Bay area. This program draws a lot of praise, and interest from data users across the central coast. During the first significant rain of the fall, day or night, volunteers will monitor water quality at selected storm drains and collect samples which will be processed at labs across the Monterey Bay for bacteria, nutrients, and metals, among other things. This data is not collected by any other agency in these locations and is eagerly anticipated by many. This program needs almost 100 volunteers across all 7 target areas—so see the ad on the front page of this newsletter to get involved!

Continuing in 2005 and 2006, CWC staff will be working in San Lorenzo, Soquel and Aptos watersheds, to conduct photo documentation with our long time partner the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's **Rural Road Erosion Control Assistance Program**. Working with participants of this great program CWC staff will document the conditions of their roads before, during and after implementation of road improvement projects like culvert replacements, road bank stabilization, re-grading and re-sloping of road surfaces. Additionally, this year CWC is working with Balance Hydrologics staff, Shawn Chartrand and Brian Hastings, to conduct 'Sediment Load Reduction' analysis monitoring around these projects to evaluate how much sediment is reduced from entering the streams and impacting salmonid habitat and general water

quality conditions in our area. Contact Carey Cooper of the Santa Cruz County RCD to learn more about this program! (831-464-2950)

Lastly, the Community Foundation for Monterey County and the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board awarded a grant to CWC to conduct water quality **Technical Training Workshops** in northern Monterey County for the agricultural community. We are very excited about this new opportunity and look forward to working with our Monterey County partners; the RCD of Monterey County, Agricultural Land Based Training Association (ALBA), the Network and the Agriculture Water Quality Coordinator from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, as well as the greater agricultural community from Moss Landing to Salinas. In this program CWC will be hosting technical workshops for agricultural operators and technical advisors to promote sound monitoring programs, standardized quality assurance procedures, and the collection and storage of their water quality data. The first workshops will be offered in the late winter months of 2006. Stay tuned to learn more about this program! ●

*Thank You!*

**CWC thanks the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County and the Stocker Family Fund for a \$5,000 grant. These funds will be directed to CWC's organizational excellence program in strategic planning and fund development activities.**



*The mission of the Coastal Watershed Council is to preserve and protect coastal watersheds through community stewardship, education, and monitoring. With your support, we continue our programs to keep the water in our streams and ocean clean for everyone. Please renew your membership or donate today!*



P.O. Box 1459  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
PHONE: 831-464-9200  
FAX: 831-464-9214  
[www.coastal-watershed.org](http://www.coastal-watershed.org)

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## Watershed Updates

CONTINUED

8th! A project of the Environmental Committee of the San Lorenzo Valley, a part of the Valley Women's Club, it's a direct way you can care for our waters & wildlife. Call (831) 338-1728 for more information. [www.vwcweb.org](http://www.vwcweb.org)

And, on October 29th & 30, there will be a two-day Conference on "Healthy Rivers, Happy Fish" about our local fish, their habitats, & challenges. Speakers and presentations on Saturday the 29th and field trip/site visits on Sunday the 30th. A Project of Citizens for Responsible Forest Management. Contact Jodi Frediani at (831) 426-1697 & website: [www.crfm.org](http://www.crfm.org)

### **What's up in Arana Gulch Watershed?** *Reported by Bobbie Haver, AGWA Coordinator*

Arana is the pilot watershed that CWC monitored in 1998. Since then the watershed group Arana Gulch Watershed Alliance (AGWA) has actively engaged in

watershed restoration and stewardship. The Arana Watershed Assessment and Enhancement Plan was published in 2002. There have been restoration projects and sediment basin clearings each year. Although there has not been water monitoring conducted since 2000 there is a stream gage in place near the fish ladder restoration project. Data has been collect-

ed since 2003. An old friend to CWC, Arana hopes to continue partnering with CWC in future monitoring of restoration projects. Stay tuned. You can read more on our web site [www.aranagulch.org](http://www.aranagulch.org) or come by the office, first door on the left as you head to CWC, 345 Lake Avenue Suite E. Bobbie Haver, Watershed Coordinator, invites you to stop in and say hi. ●



*Urban watch volunteers Isabella Tromba and Tamara Meyers check the 30th Avenue storm drain in Live Oak.*

# NPS and You!

by **Tamara Doan,**  
**Director of Programs**

One of the primary water quality concerns in our area is what's called Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS). Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, NPS comes from many diffuse sources, and in our area is transported to our local streams and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary by rainfall and excess irrigation waters moving over paved surfaces and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up natural and human-induced pollutants, depositing them into rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and even our underground sources of drinking water. This pollution includes fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas; oil, grease, and toxic chemicals from our cars and yards; sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding stream-banks; salt from irrigation practices and acid drainage from abandoned mines; and bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes, and faulty septic systems.

No fingers pointing to factory end pipes here folks, it's just you and me!

Yes, you! That oil drip under your car that you never get around to fixing; the excess soap from washing your car in the driveway...that's now running down to the corner storm drain; discharges of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides that enter our local waterways from excess applications for that 'super' green lawn or brightly blooming azaleas...all cause health problems for aquatic organism and wildlife, as well as endanger stream-walkers and beach-goers.

What can you do to personally improve water quality and reduce non-point source pollution?

- Keep litter, pet wastes, leaves, and debris out of street gutters and storm drains-these outlets drain directly to streams, rivers, wetlands and the ocean.

- Apply lawn and garden chemicals sparingly and according to directions; store them inside; and dispose of them, usu-

ally free of charge, through your county's "Household Hazardous Waste" program.

- Dispose of used oil, antifreeze, paints, and other household chemicals properly, not in storm sewers or drains. If your community does not already have a program for collecting household hazardous wastes, ask your local government to establish one. For local Monterey Bay Area information, see Ecology Action's web site: [http://ecoact.org/Programs/Pollution\\_Prevention/Household\\_Hazardous\\_Waste/index.htm](http://ecoact.org/Programs/Pollution_Prevention/Household_Hazardous_Waste/index.htm)

- Clean up spilled brake fluid, oil, grease, and antifreeze. Do not hose them into the street where they can eventually reach local streams and the ocean.

- If you use water-based paints, rinse paint brushes in the sink. For oil-based paints, filter and reuse paint thinner. Dispose of all used paints and materials through a hazardous waste collection program. Never clean brushes or pour paint in the gutter or storm drain.

- Control soil erosion on your property by planting ground cover and stabilizing erosion-prone areas.

- Encourage local government officials to develop construction erosion/sediment control ordinances in your community.

- Have your septic system inspected and pumped, at a minimum, every 3-5 years so that it operates properly.

- Don't dump cleaning water or solutions into gutters or storm drains; be sure to pour excess or waste water down the sewer system. Purchase household detergents and cleaners that are low in phosphorous to reduce the amount of nutrients discharged into streams and coastal waters.



*Volunteer Tamara Meyers monitoring for NPS*

And remember, "biodegradable" cleaners and detergents need time to 'biodegrade'...they cannot be released straight to the storm drains or streams. Without time to percolate through the ground, they are no better for the environment than the commercial products you are replacing!

- Encourage your family and community to follow these simple steps of personal responsibility to protect water quality in our local streams and ocean.

- Get involved!

CWC operates numerous citizen based water quality programs annually: Snapshot Day, Clean Streams, Urban Watch, and First Flush are the heart of our efforts. The Snapshot Day event and the ongoing Clean Streams program both monitor water quality in stream habitats, while the Urban Watch program and the First Flush event monitor urban run-off from roads and paved surfaces, entering our local streams and the Monterey Bay. Join one of these programs today!

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