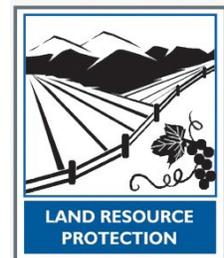
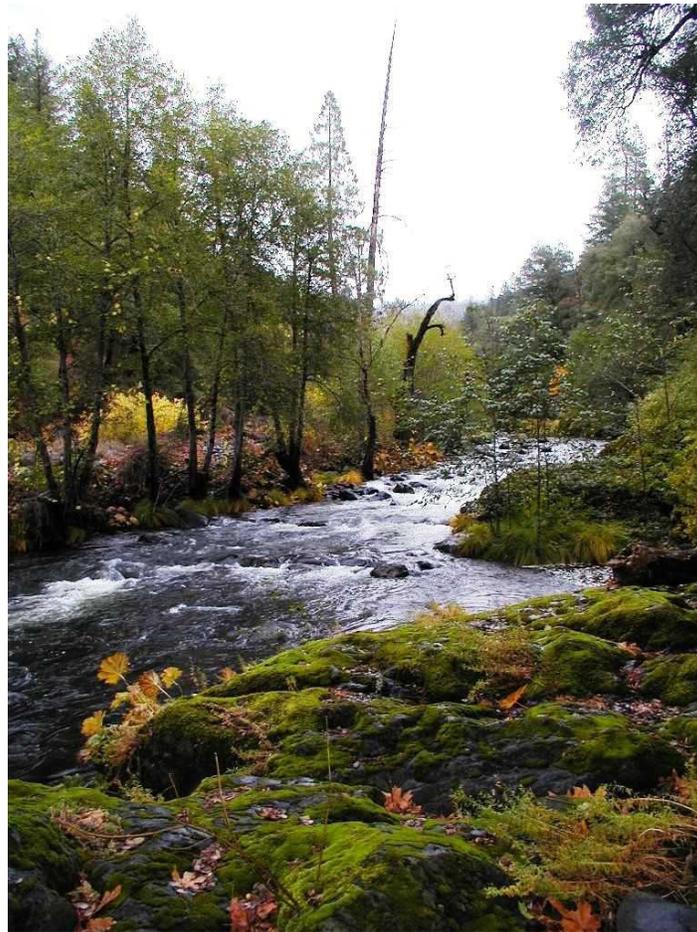


**California Department of Conservation  
2004 - 2007  
Watershed Coordinator Grant Program**



**Final Report  
July 1, 2008  
California Bay-Delta Authority  
Interagency Agreement #4600002373**

# Department of Conservation

## Watershed Coordinator Grant Program Report

### 2004 - 2007 Overview

The Watershed Coordinator Grant Program (WCGP) was established by the Legislature in the Budget Act of 2000 to fund Watershed Coordinator positions throughout the state. The purpose of the program was to improve impaired watersheds throughout California by providing support for watershed improvement efforts at a local level. This highly successful program demonstrates that Watershed Coordinators are very effective and extremely valuable. By facilitating collaboration among diverse stakeholders across the watershed, coordinators were able to build coalitions for watershed work with thousands of partners including government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, landowners, and individuals. In addition to building consensus, the coordinators contributed significantly to the success of many other state programs including the CALFED Watershed Program, CDFA noxious weed programs, CDFFP fire safe programs, IWMB Farm and Ranch Clean Up Program, SWQCB Water Quality Grant Programs, and DFG salmon enhancement programs. Using a coordinated, local approach to watershed planning and management, resulted in highly successful and sustainable watershed improvements.

#### **Statewide Benefits of the Program**

Because of the work of the coordinators, thousands of citizens and hundreds of private firms and public agencies that had not previously been involved with watershed management plans or improvement projects are now involved and actively engaged at the local level. Also, over \$47 million in additional funding has been acquired for watershed improvement projects statewide. All of this contributes to improving the overall health of the state's watersheds throughout the Bay-Delta. Some of the additional funding obtained for on-the-ground projects will result in watershed improvements for years to come.

Furthermore, this program is one part of an overall strategy for watershed management in California, and should not be viewed in isolation. A statewide study of watershed partnerships, conducted by the Resources Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board, found that a key gap in watershed management was in building the local capacity to develop and implement projects. The WCGP, if implemented over the long term, would work to fill that gap.

#### **Coordinators are Crucial for Successful Watershed Improvements**

Prior to the WCG program, relatively few of the state's watersheds had a Watershed Coordinator position identified and funded. For those few, results had been impressive, and those that were subsequently funded by the WCGP have been very successful. As the program has progressed, it has become increasingly apparent that stakeholder awareness, consensus building, and funding of projects is almost prohibitively difficult without a Watershed Coordinator position. Over the past several years, state government has designed bond funding and major programs, such as CALFED, that focus on locally-led solutions to resource issues on a watershed basis. Very few of these programs, if any, fund positions rather than strictly on-the-ground projects. Without funded Watershed Coordinator positions, many of these programs will find it difficult to get their grant dollars to local groups and have successful projects. Also, many watersheds will not be able to acquire funding offered by state, federal, or private grant programs for watershed improvements without the availability of a coordinator.

### High Level of Accountability

The Watershed Coordinator Grant Program is one of the few in the state that requires performance measures for grantees. Grantees are required to report quarterly progress on performance measures. As part of the management of the grant program, the DOC staff maintains regular contact with the Watershed Coordinators and conducts field visits to monitor progress on work plans and program objectives. Throughout the state, coordinators have confirmed that the program fulfills a great need.

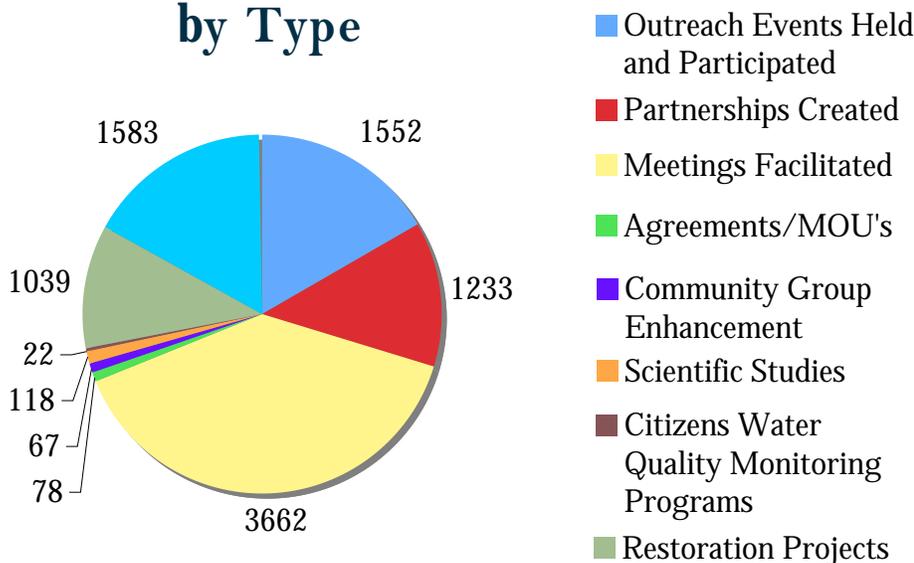
### Acting Locally to Solve Statewide Problems

By working on local high intensity problems within their watersheds, the Watershed Coordinators provide local solutions to statewide problems. The accumulated impact of local action is a cleaner, healthier, more intact environment for the State of California. Over 1039 on-the-ground restoration projects were accomplished by the Watershed Coordinators. Projects included 409 native plantings or invasive species removals, 132 community clean-up events, 68 storm water pollution reduction projects, and 353 individualized conservation plans for local landowners.

### Providing Scientific Information to Lead Habitat Restoration

Scientific analysis of watershed issues allows for a sound prioritization of watershed efforts. This leads to an efficient use of watershed energies, resources, and finances. Unlike other grant programs, the Watershed Coordinator grant allows the Coordinators to gather the needed scientific data to provide the highest quality results and an efficient use of taxpayer dollars. Over 115 studies were completed during the three years of the grant program. 34 water quality data sets were collected, 13 vegetation maps were created, 15 watershed assessments were completed, and 12 watershed inventories were compiled. This effort led to a better use of money to support local restoration efforts.

## Grant Outcomes by Type



## **Educating Citizens to Protect Their Own Watershed**

Private landowners play a key role in protecting the watershed. Unfortunately, many do not know what to do to create an environmentally friendly property. Watershed Coordinators work with all the landowners in their watershed to provide the information residents need to make a positive impact. Watershed Coordinators held 887 public outreach events including land management workshops, watershed celebrations, landscaping demonstrations, community forums, and restoration activities. To increase the effectiveness of outreach activities, the Watershed Coordinators created and distributed 1583 publications. Publications included 709 newspaper articles, 758 educational brochures and fliers, 61 technical documents, and 13 informational documents. Educating the local stakeholders provides a more informed citizenry that is better able to protect its resources, prevent future problems, and effectively manage future problems as they arise.

## **Partnerships**

Watershed Coordinators have built extensive networks of partnerships among community stakeholders and have facilitated collaborative decision-making between diverse private and public entities. They have developed an understanding of issues relevant to their local watersheds and have become an important resource to their communities. It has taken time to integrate themselves into the community, develop relationships, and establish a reputation for being reliable and getting things done. Over a period of years, the coordinators have developed an understanding of the watershed and how to best address local issues. After many years of persistent effort, momentum has grown and progress has accelerated dramatically.

Watershed Coordinators have made over 1230 partnerships, reached over 71,000 people, held over 3650 meetings, created and supported 67 community groups, and signed 78 cooperative agreements.



## **Creative Impacts**

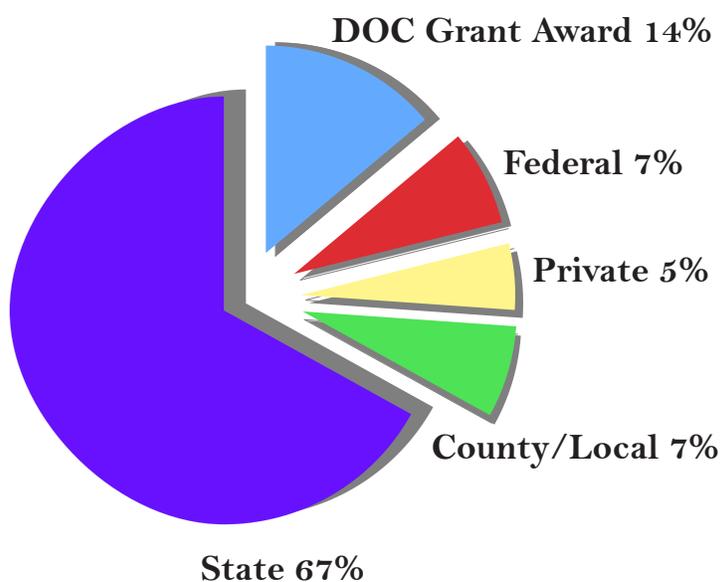
Because Watershed Coordinators work in local communities, they find creative solutions to traditional problems. Some of the creative projects not included in other categories include: a History of Water exhibit at the Pasadena Museum of History, building a native plant nursery, Native Plant Sales, Storm Drain Marking on 3000 Storm Drains, having Lodi designated a “sustainable city,” Youth Summit, Summer River Camp Program, Smokey Firesafe village at the Tehama county fairgrounds, Lending libraries of watershed info, watershed signage, and Watershed poster competitions.



## Acquiring Watershed Funding

The acquisition of additional funding to carry out planning and on-the-ground watershed projects is one of the most important successes of the WCGP. As the grants only cover the salary for coordinators and not project costs, funding for on-the-ground watershed improvement projects must be obtained by the coordinators through grant writing, match or fund raising. So far, the coordinators have been responsible for obtaining in excess of \$47 million in grants, contributions and matching funds to carry out future watershed work. The coordinators, through their grant efforts, have made locally-based organizations the prime delivery mechanism for

many state agency programs, such as numerous CALFED Programs, the Department of Fish and Game’s Coastal Salmon Program, the Department of Water Resources’ Urban Streams Restoration Program, and numerous other state programs. Without the WCGP, funds for these and other important programs may have gone unallocated or may have been transferred to other government agencies. Without the coordinators, it would have been more difficult for state agencies to meet their goals of funding and implementing locally-based watershed improvement projects.



### Overall Funding 614% Matched Funding

<b>Program Grant Awards</b>	<b>7,780,535</b>
<b>Matching Funds Secured</b>	
Federal	4,115,488
State	38,425,498
County/Local	4,194,873
Private	3,081,544
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,817,403</b>