

PARTNERS



ABOUT THE COVER

"Teamwork" is the theme of this year's Progress Update. The cover is a metaphor for the way the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project operates — people "pulling together" to restore and protect the Bay as both a valued resource for people, and as a healthy environment for fish, plants, and wildlife that live in its waters and along its shores.

Progress Update '92 focuses on urban runoff pollution. This pollution source is a prime example of the type of significant problem that can be resolved through a cooperative venture such as the SMBRP.

COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTION

*By James Strock, Secretary,
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California has long been a world leader in environmental improvement. Now, with the establishment of the California Environmental Protection Agency, we are poised for new action that will maintain California's high environmental standards in the most cost-effective manner. In these times of heightened economic sensitivities and intense competition over limited fiscal resources, government cannot do it alone. We must all work together to develop solutions.

Governor Wilson, in calling for the creation of Cal-EPA, said that it should "seek consensus with and support from the national government, other parts of state and local government, the legislature, industry, agriculture, environmental groups, and concerned citizens." Clearly, a cooperative process is vital if we are to solve the state's environmental problems. Encouraging input from interested parties during decision-making promotes a true partnership and leads to more innovative and effective solutions.

Solving our environmental problems will not be easy. Environmental protection involves numerous interests and complex jurisdictions, and this makes decision-making and consensus-building difficult. Fortunately, we are witnessing a new era of environmental protection in California. New partnerships, forged partly by the demands of regulation but mainly by public pressure and awareness, are addressing our most complex and controversial environmental problems. By working together, these groups are discovering that broad-based input into the decision-making process promotes public-private partnerships and leads to real-world solutions. This concept has come to be known as "Cooperative Environmental Management."

Cooperative Environmental Management is a relatively new entry in the lexicon of environmental protection. The phrase describes a framework and process for consensus-building. It also connotes a positive spirit that often devel-

ops when different parties give and take in order to make common progress. An excellent example of Cooperative Environmental Management in the area of coastal protection is the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project (SMBRP).

The SMBRP faces the monumental task of developing a comprehensive management plan for restoring Santa Monica Bay. The Project has encouraged diverse interests to participate, bringing to the table a unique coalition of government, environmentalists, scientists, industry, and the public. The SMBRP works cooperatively, minimizing the polarization and confrontation that often plagues multi-party negotiations. The group has resolved many issues, building consensus for actions and providing the impetus and cooperative spirit needed to complete a comprehensive Bay Restoration Plan.

The Project anticipates that the Cooperative Environmental Management model will have a positive impact on long-term funding for the Bay Restoration Plan. Achieving cooperation among project members adds backbone to their commitments to help implement the plan. The Project's unique membership and consensus-oriented policy development process should ensure success in attracting needed implementation funds.

The SMBRP's management approach also keeps it on the leading edge of evolving environmental practices. Because it brings about healthy competition and, most importantly, because it invites a sharing of resources (including data, methods, and practices), Cooperative Environmental Management encourages creativity and innovation.

Innovation and public involvement promise a bright future for the Bay Restoration Plan, so that when we speak of creating ownership of the solutions, we speak not only of current residents, but also of future generations. Cal-EPA applauds the efforts of the SMBRP and looks forward to its role as partner in the Plan's implementation.



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In 1972, Congress enacted the Federal Clean Water Act "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters."

