

# Supplemental Environment Project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

[What is a Supplemental Environment Project \(SEP\)?](#)

[Who provides Supplemental Environmental Projects?](#)

[How does a discharger choose a Supplemental Environmental Project?](#)

## What is a Supplemental Environment Project (SEP)?

Supplemental Environmental Projects, or SEPs, are projects that are implemented with funds assessed by Regional Water Quality Control Boards in response to violations of waste discharge requirements, discharge prohibitions, enforcement orders, or other orders of the Regional Board. These funds are assessed against dischargers through administrative civil liability complaints (ACLs).

Normally, assessments collected through the administrative civil liability complaint process are required by the California Water Code to be paid to the State Water Resources Control Board Cleanup and Abatement Account. The State Board administers the Cleanup and Abatement Account, and funds are used to address important water quality issues throughout the state.

However, the State Board's Enforcement Policy recognizes that portions of the assessments may be used for important and valuable water quality improvement projects within the Region in which the assessment was made, through implementation of SEPs. SEPs allow funds to remain in the local community.

Examples of SEPs include pollution prevention projects, environmental restoration programs, environmental auditing, public awareness and education activities, watershed assessments, watershed management facilitation services, and non-point source program implementation.

## Who provides Supplemental Environmental Projects?

Local organizations such as resource conservation districts, land trusts, cities and counties and private non-profits often provide SEPs. The Regional Board provides information on local organizations that provide SEPs on its website. The Regional Board maintains a continuous sign-up of organizations interested in providing SEPs.

## How does a discharger choose a Supplemental Environmental Project?

A discharger that wishes to request a SEP in lieu of paying a portion of an ACL to the Cleanup and Abatement Account should do the following:

1. Read the [General Criteria for Supplemental Environmental Projects](#) posted on the Regional Board website.
2. Review the [List of Project Providers](#) and identify a potential provider.
3. Contact the provider and discuss a specific project in detail.
4. Inform the Regional Board staff person responsible for the assessment that the discharger will be proposing a SEP and provide details of the proposal for preparation of a complete staff report to the Regional Board (Regional Board consideration of the SEP is subject to public comment and approval at a public hearing).