Public Release of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Data Portal (*Lilian Busse*)

The San Diego Regional Board released the San Diego Regional Water Quality Data Portal (Portal) on its website on March, 21, 2011. To access the portal, click here: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb9/water_issues/programs/swamp/index.shtml

The San Diego Regional Board, the municipal stormwater copermittees, non-profit organizations, and other regional stakeholders collect a wide range of water quality data. The legacy media and methods used to maintain this data makes it difficult to access and use this data. The Portal, developed in partnership with the San Diego River Park Foundation and EcoLayers, Inc., is the first step in bringing together a core set of water quality data to demonstrate the application of web technologies to improve access and use of this data in a easy to understand visual format that is available to the general public and key stakeholders. The development of the Portal was funded by the Cleanup and Abatement Account. This effort is one among other ongoing efforts in California to improve dissemination and use of water quality data. This Portal is focused on regional San Diego data and will evolve to meet the needs to local stakeholders and watersheds.

The Portal, hosted on the EcoLayers software platform, differs from traditional web-based approaches in some significant ways:

- It recognizes that the public is not homogenous but in fact includes individuals having a wide range of needs, skills and experience. The goal is to allow users to personalize their use of common content online so as to meet the unique needs of the broadest intended audience.
- To enhance the use, and hence the value, of this information, the core EcoLayers software platform can support a wide range of sophisticated online information sharing, collaboration and decision support tools. Examples include the ability to integrate analytics and modeling with data from different stakeholders and monitoring programs. These capabilities may be added in the future based on stakeholder needs and funding availability.

Over the next several months, feedback and comments from stakeholders will be reviewed for incorporating into the current or future enhancements of the Portal. Funding from the Cleanup and Abatement Account will end in August 2011. The San Diego Regional Board may continue to provide additional funding for operations over the next year. During that time, project partners will also explore mechanisms to make the Portal economically self-sustaining through local stakeholder involvement.