

THE CALIFORNIA WATER BOARDS' STORM WATER STRATEGY INITIATIVE – Spring-Fall 2014 (June 5, 2014)

Storm water management plays a vital role in the quality and availability of water in California. While urban storm water runoff is a significant contributor to water pollution in many parts of the state, it is also a largely untapped water source. As California's population grows and climate change continues, effective storm water management will become even more urgently needed. The California Water Boards (Water Boards) seek to shift regulation and management of storm water to better focus on incentive-driven multiple-benefit approaches that achieve tangible results in terms of both improved water quality and supply.

Over the next several months, the Water Boards will engage with stakeholders through a collaborative process to identify and discuss storm water program issues and potential approaches to address them. The product of this collaboration will be a prioritized list of potential Water Board actions. From the list of potential actions, the Water Boards will identify those actions they will pursue through development of specific work plans. Development of work plans will be the second phase of the project.

Potential actions will focus on the following three main elements:

- Utilize storm water as a resource – Treating storm water as a resource improves water quality and supply, by protecting and restoring key watershed processes such as overland flow, groundwater recharge, and pollutant uptake. When done properly it can help reduce flooding, mitigate storm water pollution, enhance habitat, and improve water use efficiency¹.
- Remove storm water pollutants by true source control – True source control is preventing introduction of pollutants into the environment through product bans, product substitutions, legislative phase outs, and coordination with other agencies. True source control is aimed at preventing use of pollutants instead of removing them from storm water through treatment.
- Improve Water Board program efficiency and effectiveness – Improving program efficiency and effectiveness will increase the rate of productivity while concurrently achieving progress towards desired environmental outcomes of improved water quality, reliable water supply, and healthy watersheds.

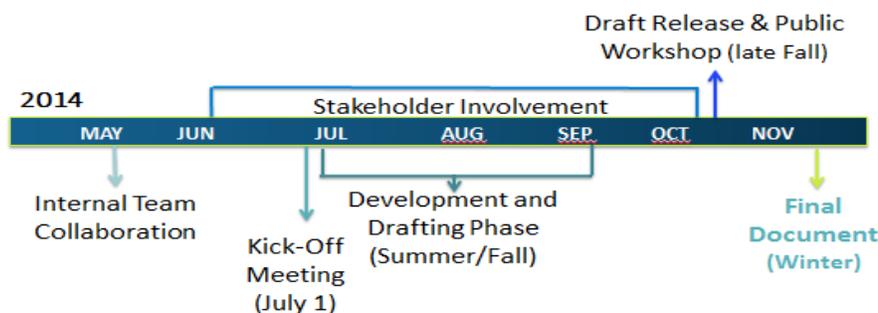


Figure 1 - Timeline for Storm Water Strategic Workplan Initiative

For more information please visit our webpage:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/strategy_initiative.shtml or contact Greg Gearheart (greg.gearheart@waterboards.ca.gov or 916-341-5892) or Ali Dunn (ali.dunn@waterboards.ca.gov or 916-341-6899).

¹ "Water use efficiency" is a measure of water use and is generally associated with conservation principles. Water use efficiency measures include urban and agricultural water conservation to manage water demands, and development of new local water supplies through water recycling and storm water capture. See also California Department of Water Resources' page dedicated to it, [here](#), and the Water Boards' fact sheet on it, [here](#).