

## Who we are...

The Morro Bay Volunteer Monitoring Program provides citizen monitors with opportunities to get out on the creeks and bay to collect long-term monitoring data for the Morro Bay watershed.

The volunteer-generated data is used to evaluate the success of resource management efforts and to track the health of a unique natural resource. The program also strives to increase public understanding and involvement in the Morro Bay estuary and its watershed.

## Volunteers Needed



### Seeking Bacteria Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help monitor bacteria at local creek sites. Requires approximately 2 hours per month.

### Water Quality Monitors Needed

Join a water quality team and monitor a local creek site. Requires approximately one and a half hours each month.

### Spring Macro Monitoring

This important effort to collect macroinvertebrate samples and gather data on the health of habitat in local creeks is expected to begin in mid-April. Each trip takes approximately four hours.

## Contact us...

Morro Bay National Estuary Program  
601 Embarcadero, Suite 11  
Morro Bay, CA 93442

Phone: 805-772-3834, ex. 15

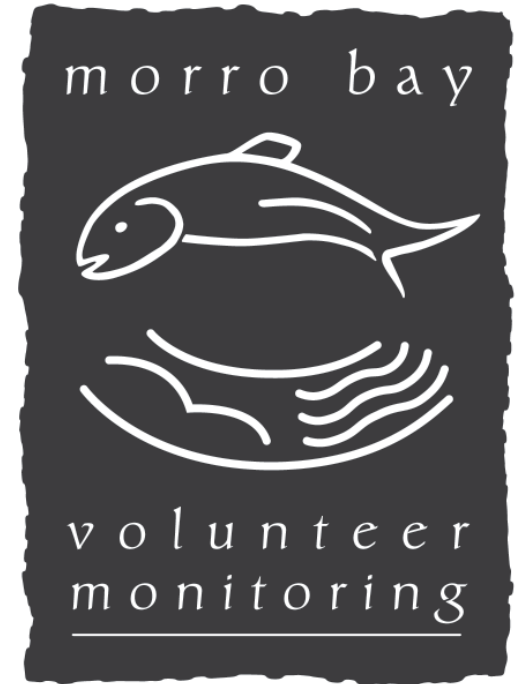
Email: [annieg@mbnep.org](mailto:annieg@mbnep.org)

## How to find us...

We are located in the Morro Bay National Estuary Program offices at 601 Embarcadero, Suite 11, in Morro Bay. To reach us from Highway 1, exit at Morro Bay Boulevard and head west. Turn left onto Main and then right onto Marina. We are upstairs in the Marina Square building on the corner of Embarcadero and Marina, across the street from the aquarium.



Funding for this project has been provided in full or in part through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the SWRCB, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.



Monitor the Health  
of the Bay and  
Local Creeks

Make a  
Difference

Morro Bay Volunteer Monitoring Program  
Morro Bay National Estuary Program  
601 Embarcadero, Suite 11  
Morro Bay, CA 93442  
Phone: 805-772-3834

# Why is monitoring important?

If you live, work or recreate on the Central Coast, you recognize that this is a unique place with abundant resources. Small towns, agriculture and rangeland are all neighbors to local creeks that drain into the Morro Bay Estuary, which is a critical habitat for two dozen endangered species and over 200 species of birds. Unfortunately, many of our everyday activities can impact water quality in creeks and the bay.

In the Morro Bay watershed, six impacts of concern have been identified:

- Sedimentation
- Pathogen levels
- Nutrient levels
- Loss of freshwater flow
- Habitat loss
- Heavy metals and toxins

Many projects have already been implemented to protect and restore local habitats. Monitoring helps determine if specific projects have successfully reduced these impacts.

Your efforts as a monitor are vital to the study of the health of the bay and local creeks. The data you collect is used by many local organizations and agencies including the Regional Water Quality Control Board, SLO County Public Health Dept, CA Dept of Fish and Game, CA Dept of Public Health, California Polytechnic University, SLO, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

# Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities

## Dawn Patrol

Enjoy the sunrise as you spend your morning kayaking through the bay to collect data on oxygen, temperature and water clarity.

## Creek Samplers

Enjoy getting off the main road and into a local creek where you will use test kits and digital meters to monitor what's flowing out of our hills and into our bay.

## Bac Attackers

If scientific lab work interests you then participate in bacteria monitoring where you collect samples from the bay and creeks and conduct analysis using EPA-certified methods.

## Algae Surveys

Take pleasure in hiking around the watershed while you take photographs to document the distribution and diversity of macroalgae.

## Plankton Pullers

Net yourself some marine phytoplankton then take a microscopic look to identify plankton diversity and help the state Department of Public Health track toxic blooms.

## Urban Watch

Patrol storm drains in bayside communities to track dry season runoff into the bay. Use simple test kits and meters to collect data that will aid local agencies in identifying and halting these discharges which drain untreated into Morro Bay.

# Seasonal Volunteer Opportunities

## Stream Profilers

Each summer you have the opportunity to see parts of the watershed that most people don't have access to by helping survey stream profiles to monitor channel and bank erosion.

## First Flush Sampling

Volunteers are needed to be on-call to help capture stormwater runoff from the first storm of the season, likely to be in October. Trainings are held in September.

## Shorebird Monitoring

Get out those spotting scopes each spring and fall and join other experienced birders to conduct counts of local and migratory shorebirds utilizing Morro Bay.

## Eelgrass Monitoring

Monitor eelgrass health each fall on transects located throughout the bay and paddle to eelgrass beds to assist in baywide mapping efforts.



## How to volunteer...

The program offers a variety of monitoring opportunities to fit many different interests. The time commitment can be as little as two hours per month, and volunteering can take place on the weekends or after work hours. See [www.mbnep.org/volunt.htm](http://www.mbnep.org/volunt.htm) for more details.