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The Los Angeles River Watershed Monitoring Program: 15 Years of Comprehensive Assessment

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Watershed Monitoring
Program:

15 Years of Comprehensive Stream Assessment

Dr. Yareli Sanchez
Council for Watershed Health



COUNCIL FOR
WATERSHED
HEALTH



The Los Angeles River Watershed Monitoring Program



- Watershed wide monitoring program established in 2008
- Complements and coordinates with statewide and regional programs

Objectives

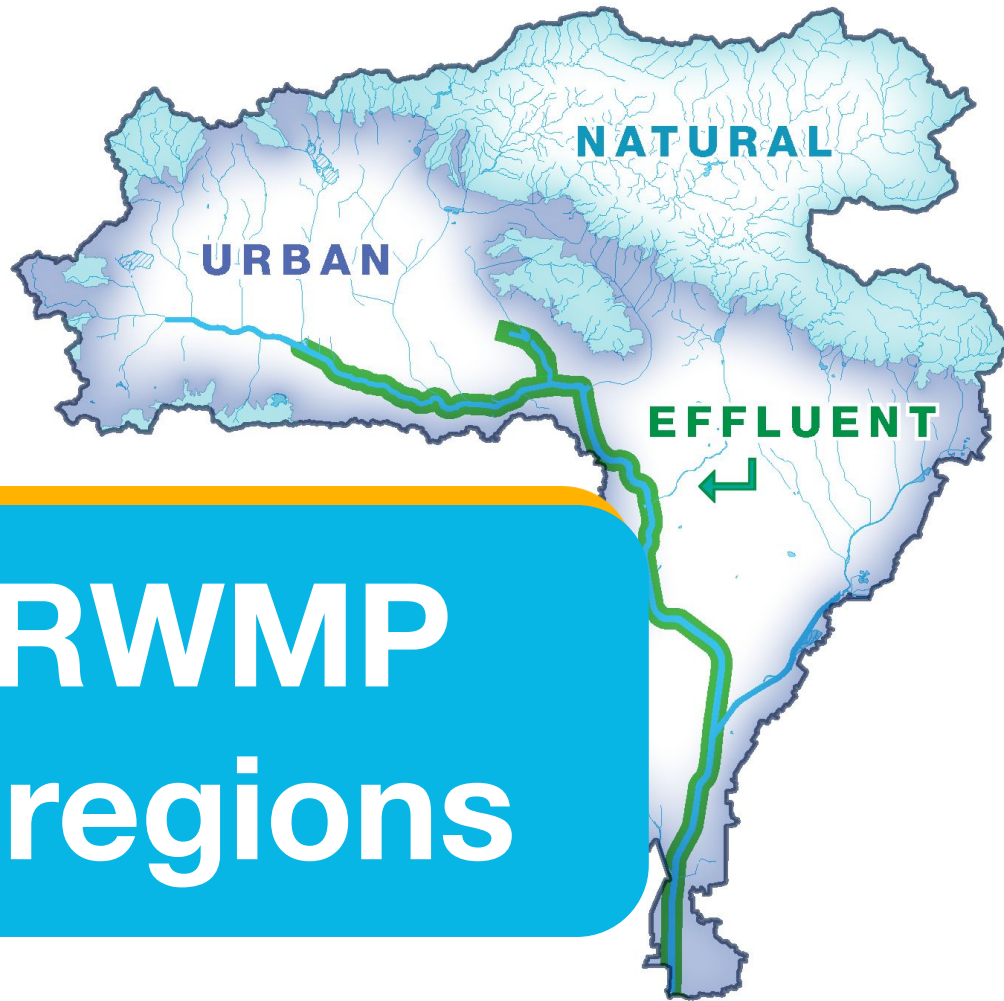
1. Provide a more complete understanding of the watershed and how it is changing
2. Create a program that is responsive to the priorities of managers, river stakeholders, and the public.



Guiding Questions

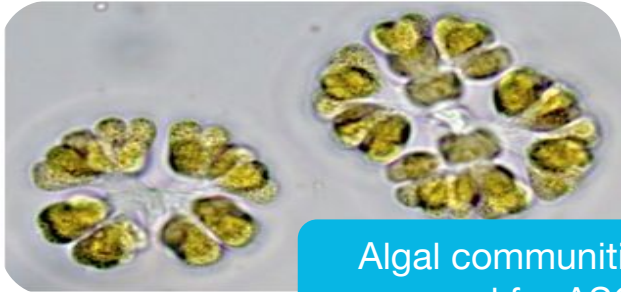
1. What is the condition of streams in the watershed?
2. Are conditions at areas of unique interest getting better or worse?
3. Are receiving waters near discharge meeting water quality objectives?
4. Is it safe to recreate in the River and its streams?
5. Are locally caught fish safe to eat?





LARWMP Subregions

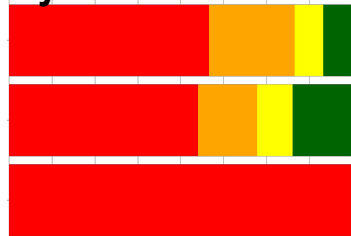
Q1: What is the condition of streams in the Watershed?



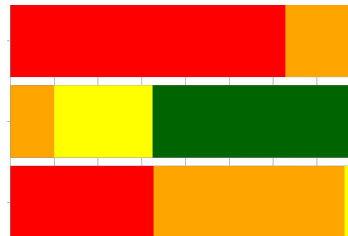
Algal communities are measured for ASCI score

54-72% of sites in the watershed are *in an altered condition*

Hybrid ASCI



CSCI

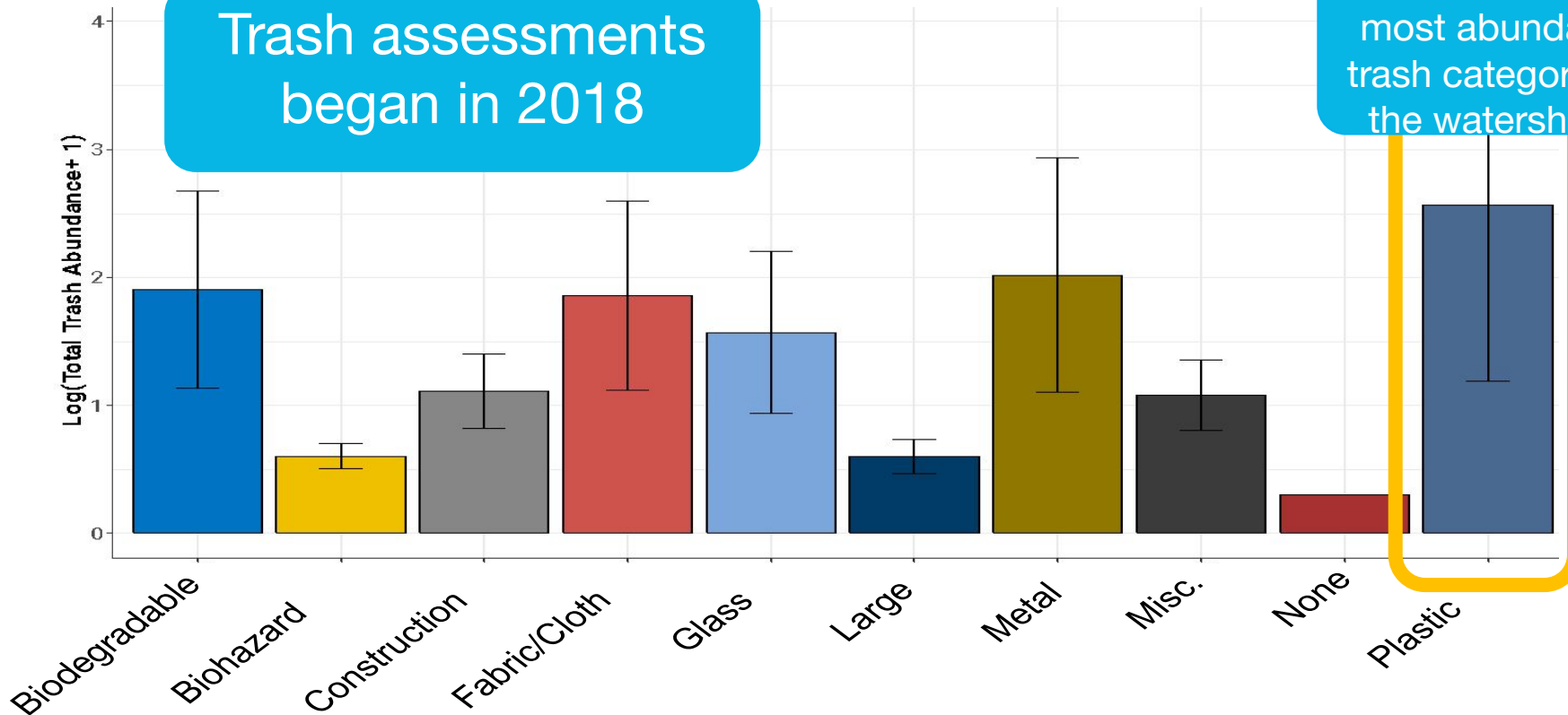


Benthic Macroinvertebrates measured for CSCI

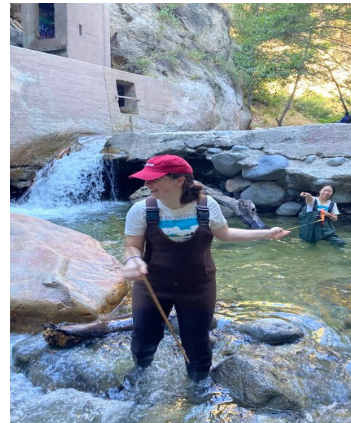
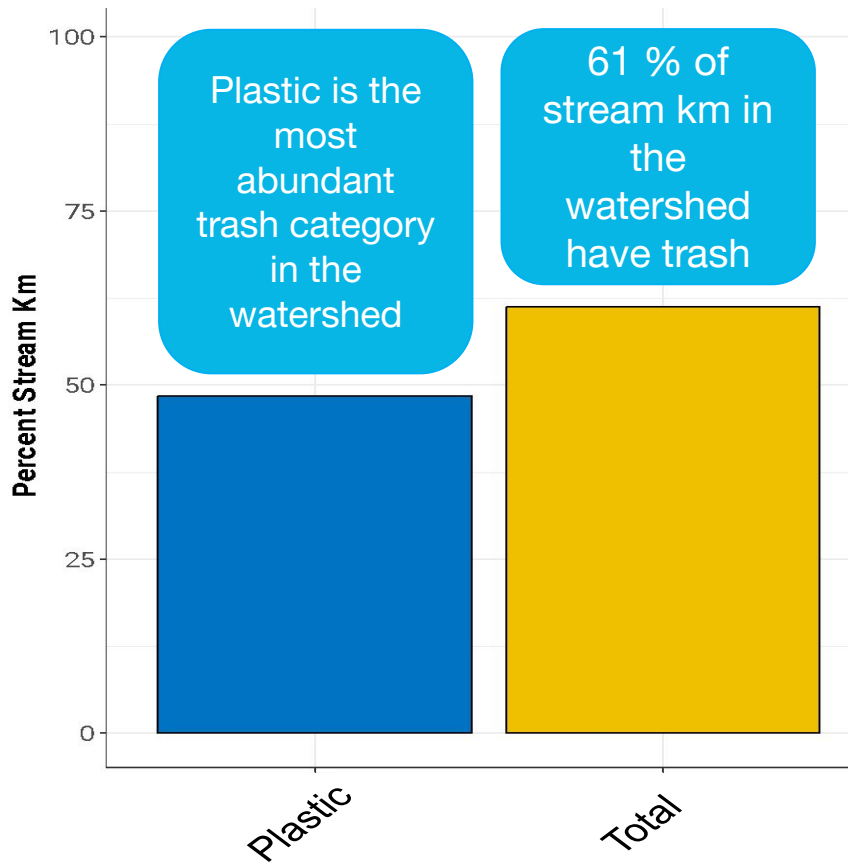
Q1: Stream Trash Assessments

Trash assessments began in 2018

Plastic is the most abundant trash category in the watershed



Q1: Stream Trash Assessments



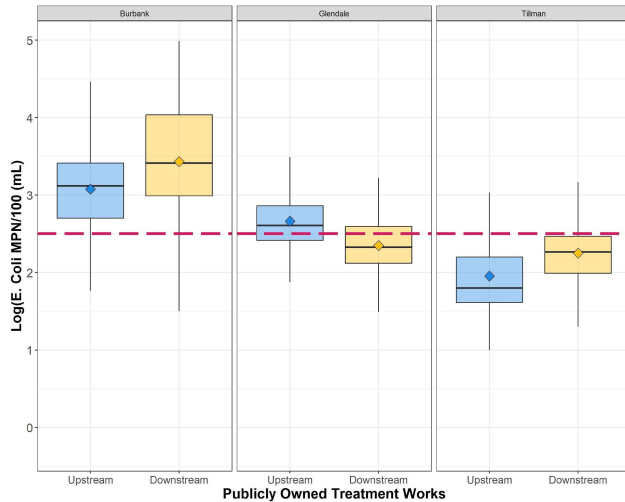
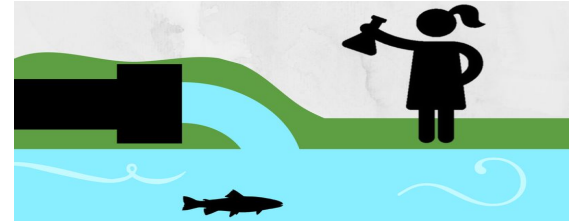
Q2: Are conditions at areas of unique interest getting better or worse?

Stratum	Site	CRAM Category	Trend
Lower Watershed	Golden Shore Wetlands (LALT 404)	Reference	Stable
	Arroyo Seco (LALT 450)	Reference	Stable
	Glendale Narrows (LALT 400)	Impaired	Stable
	Sepulveda Basin (LALT 405)	Impaired	Stable
	Eaton Wash (LALT 406)	Impaired	Stable
	Haines Creek Pools and Streams (LALT 407)	Reference	Stable
Upper Watershed	Tujunga Sensitive Habitat (LAUT 401)	Reference	Stable
	Upper Arroyo Seco (LALT 402)	Reference	Stable
	Alder Creek (LAUT 403)	Reference	Stable

- High value sites have stable riparian habitat condition

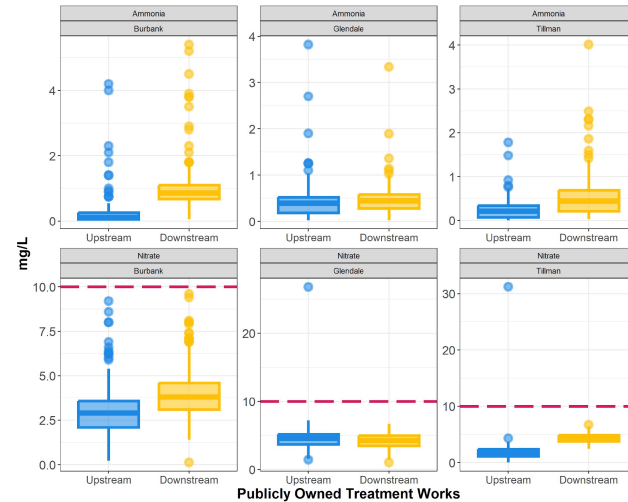


Q3: Are receiving waters near discharges meeting WQO?



Assumes single sample REC-1 standard

E. Coli
Elevated downstream of some POTWs



Nutrients
increase downstream of POTW but meeting regulatory water quality objectives

Q5: Are locally caught fish safe to eat?

GUIDE TO SAFELY CONSUME LOCAL FISH



MERCURY

1 LEGG LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE
ECHO PARK LAKE

1 LEGG LAKE

2 BELVEDERE LAKE

3 BELVEDERE LAKE

3 ECHO PARK LAKE
SEPULVEDA BASIN
LEGG LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE

3 SEPULVEDA BASIN
LAKE BALBOA
LEGG LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE
ECHO PARK LAKE

PCBs

2 ECHO PARK LAKE

3 LEGG LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE

3 LEGG LAKE

3 ECHO PARK LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE
LEGG LAKE
LAKE BALBOA

2 BELVEDERE LAKE
ECHO PARK LAKE

3 SEPULVEDA BASIN
LEGG LAKE

3 SEPULVEDA BASIN
LAKE BALBOA
LEGG LAKE
BELVEDERE LAKE
ECHO PARK LAKE

- Generally safe to eat in moderate amounts
- Recommended serving size vary depending on fish species and location
- OEHHA risk assessment was based on a meal size of 8 oz

Recommendations

- The L.A. River Watershed is ever evolving: more widescale implementation of stormwater best management practices, reduced flow due to increased water recycling, the implementation of park and habitat restoration projects, and a changing climate
- Monitoring is more important than ever, as it will capture the impacts of these changes and provide opportunity to better understand and manage our changing watershed.
- LARWMP program should coordinate closely with managers and communities that are interested in the health of their waterways