

# Morro Bay National Estuary Program

Fall 1998

## Fast Facts

Located entirely within San Luis Obispo County, CA -- includes communities of Morro Bay, Los Osos, and Baywood Park.

48,000-acre watershed.

Supports most significant wetland system on state's south-central coast.

Essential link in Pacific Flyway, supporting one of state's largest waterfowl habitats.

Provides habitat for many endangered and threatened species.

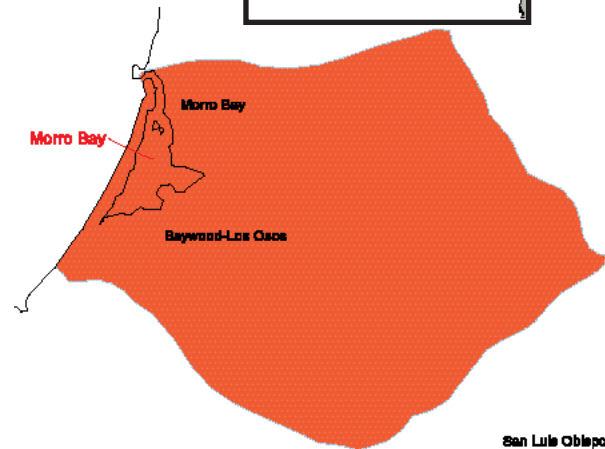
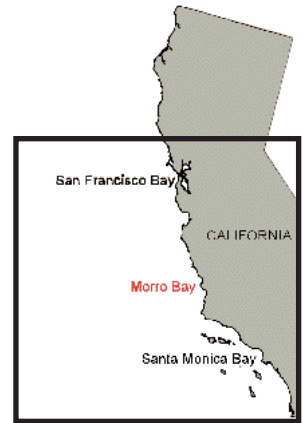
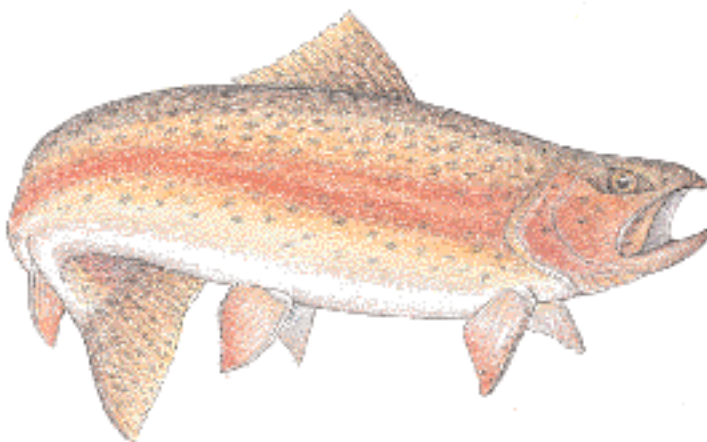


ASSOCIATION OF  
NATIONAL ESTUARY  
PROGRAMS

## Status Update & Next Steps

Morro Bay is facing the following priority problems:

- **Rapid Sedimentation:** The rate of sediment delivery has increased due to changes in land use, changes brought on by wildfire, changes in sediment deposition areas, and reduced circulation .
- **Increased Bacterial Concentrations:** Portions of shellfish harvesting lease areas are always restricted, and other areas are closed for several days following storm events.
- **Increased Nutrient Concentrations:** Agricultural land, grazing land, roadside, and lawn runoff are resulting in increased nutrient concentrations. Fertilizers, septic systems, and animal waste are believed to be contributing to this problem.
- **Freshwater Flow Reductions:** Increases in surface and groundwater diversions directly affect the quantity and timing of the flow of creeks into the bay, and the wildlife and botanic values associated with freshwater supply.



Morro Bay watershed. Courtesy of USEPA.

- **Increased Heavy Metal Concentrations:** Inactive mines in the upper watershed are believed to have contributed to high levels of heavy metals found in sediments eroding from these areas. Some mussel samples from the bay have toxic contamination.
- **Habitat Loss:** Development ensures steadily increasing eater population density and angling land use threaten water quality and wildlife habitat.

For more information regarding the Morro Bay NEP, call (805) 528-746, write us at 1400 Third Street, Osos, CA 93402, or email us at [oney.mbnepe@the.org](mailto:oney.mbnepe@the.org)



# Association of National Estuary Programs

The Association of National Estuary Program (ANEP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting responsible stewardship and a common vision for the preservation of our nation's bays and estuaries.

## ANEP's Mission

Bring consistency to estuarine data collection and management, and turn data into useful information that is consolidated into meaningful status and trends at the national scale. Ensure that data are reliable, objective, and goal-directed. Achieve recognition of the critical roles for continued monitoring and assessment.

Educate the public on the meaning and practical application of "responsible stewardship." Ensure that the public understands the long-term nature of solutions to the environmental problems now facing bays and estuaries.

Achieve mutual support and coordination among all coastal programs. Enhance communication among NEPs and between NEPs and other coastal programs. Report both successes and failures to Congress and the American public, while understanding that through 'adaptive management' we can achieve effective management of our nation's bays and estuaries.

Seek explicit congressional support and commitment to implement Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs). Capitalize on the hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours invested thus far, nationwide, and recognize the important role that Management Conferences play as a continuing forum for all stakeholders.

Achieve sufficient federal funding to strengthen the federal/state/local and public/private partnerships that have been fledged across the nation. Achieve stable funding for core program operations, project implementation, and local government pass-through dollars as incentive for regional, multi-jurisdictional cooperation.

