

Director's Message: The Uniqueness of SCCWRP

The most frequent question I've been asked in the last year is why I moved cross-country to join SCCWRP. Those who ask need to envision SCCWRP as the unique organization that I see: a partnership in which the dischargers to the southern California ocean environment and the regulators of that discharge come together to jointly study and to understand the environment that their decisions and actions affect. I believe this kind of regulator/regulated partnership is unique in the country and is a model for the future.

The regional monitoring program that SCCWRP led in 1994 is testimony to the unique partnership and what it can accomplish. The regional survey involved sampling of 261 sites throughout the southern California Bight and is the most comprehensive environmental survey ever conducted in California's near-coastal waters. This unique effort resulted from regulators and regulated working together to integrate discharge monitoring requirements into a unified regional effort. The wealth of new scientific information that will come out of that survey, and the baseline that it establishes for judging our progress in environmental stewardship, is just beginning to surface in this year's annual report.

One of our challenges for the future will be to increase our communication so that a wider audience can share in our vision and in our accomplishments. Towards that goal, we unveiled a SCCWRP web site (www.sccwrp.org) in December of 1996 that I'm pleased to say was visited by nearly a thousand people in its first three months. We have restarted the SCCWRP seminar series (seminar speakers and titles are listed on our web site) that hopefully will welcome more scientists through our doors. We are also planning to reinstate the long-dormant SCCWRP Open House as a way of acquainting schoolchildren, environmental interest groups and other members of the general public with our activities and findings. We invite you to join us for these events (check the web page for updates) and in our vision of what SCCWRP can be.

Stephen B. Weisberg, Executive Director