Beneficial Uses in Water Quality Regulation

Felicia Marcus
Chair, State Water Board
October 21, 2013
* Beneficial uses are an important part of establishing regulations to protect surface waters.
* The Water Boards utilize about 26 standardized beneficial use definitions.
* New beneficial use categories, or sub-categories, may be added by individual Regional Water Boards through a Basin Plan amendment.
* Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN)
* Agricultural Supply (AGR)
* Industrial Service Supply (IND)
* Water Contact Recreation (REC 1)
* Non-Contact Water Recreation (REC 2)
* Commercial and Sport Fishing (COMM)
* Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM)
* Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD)

Examples of Beneficial Uses
* **Native American Culture (CUL)** - Uses of water that support the cultural and/or traditional rights of indigenous people such as subsistence fishing and shellfish gathering, basket weaving and jewelry material collection, navigation to traditional ceremonial locations, and ceremonial uses.

* **Subsistence Fishing (FISH)** - Uses of water that support subsistence fishing.

**North Coast Regional Water Board**
The Water Board is currently working on a tribal subsistence fishing study in conjunction with UCDavis researchers and multiple tribes statewide. Data from that effort will assist with informing our upcoming Statewide Mercury Project and our TMDL work (Total Maximum Daily Loads).