

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What does MSU do?

The Monitoring and Stewardship Unit (MSU) facilitates the design of protocols to monitor and evaluate the long-term outcomes of bond-funded projects. Once these evaluation protocols are established (with support and input from relevant stakeholders), the MSU will support and guide the collection, storage, and analysis of project-level data to inform an adaptive management process regarding future bond investments.

## 2. What is monitoring?

Monitoring refers to collecting data from the same experiment across multiple points in time and/or at multiple locations. For more information, see the glossary in the “About MSU” page.

## 3. Who is currently responsible for conducting project monitoring?

Currently, responsibility for collecting monitoring data is determined by the individual funding program. Throughout upcoming stakeholder engagement processes, the necessary roles required for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and performance of CNRA’s bond-funded projects will be determined.

For more details on the stakeholder engagement process, please see “Monitoring and Evaluation of California Natural Resources Agency Investments”.

## 4. What kinds of projects are currently monitored?

Currently, individual funding programs or projects determine what projects are monitored. MSU is interested in collecting information about projects that affect some physical change to the State’s natural resources. MSU will working with stakeholders during the upcoming engagement processes to ensure recommended monitoring protocols for different projects reflect the work of that project.

For more details on the stakeholder engagement process, please see “Monitoring and Evaluation of California Natural Resources Agency Investments”.

## 5. How are monitoring data currently evaluated?

Currently, non-financial project evaluation is determined by the individual funding program or project management staff. Throughout upcoming engagement processes, MSU will work with stakeholders to determine the most effective evaluation protocols.

For more details on the stakeholder engagement process, please see “Monitoring and Evaluation of California Natural Resources Agency Investments”.

## **6. Why is it important to monitor?**

Monitoring and evaluation can generate knowledge about whether a project’s outcomes and performance continues as expected, or whether some change is required to meet or maintain those intended outcomes. Regular monitoring enables project and program managers to track changes and potentially anticipate how changes, such as those caused by climate change, might impact project performance. Knowledge of project performance is a key component of adaptive management, which may help resource managers deal with increasing climate instability and reduce irreversible damages to projects.

## **7. Why should we spend more money monitoring when we could spend those funds on more projects?**

Monitoring and evaluation are necessary to know whether the State’s investments are achieving their intended outcomes and to know with more confidence how effective management practices are across geographic areas. This information can be used to adaptively manage projects, respond to threats to a project area, inform the design of future related projects, and determine priority areas for future investments.

## **8. How will the analysis of project performance be used?**

Analyzing the performance of projects will create a range of opportunities for comparison of management practices, understanding trends, and determining the efficiency and effectiveness of certain management protocols that can help inform adaptive management scenarios.

## **9. Will data be publicly available?**

The MSU intends to host all collected monitoring data and other accessible relevant information on a public data storage platform. Sensitive or private information will not be posted publicly. The final location and process for accessing and storing data will be determined through a forthcoming stakeholder engagement process.

## **10. How is a bond created?**

A state general obligation bond must be approved by voters at a 55% majority.<sup>1</sup> A bond acts as a loan to the government to perform some specific purpose described in the appropriating statute. The public may purchase bonds which are then paid back in full by the State of California at a specific interest rate on a specified date. [For more information.](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> State Treasurer’s Office (STO)

## 11. How can bond funds be spent?

Bond funds are spent according to statute, which specifies how and how much funding will be spent on a particular effort.

A cost is allowable if it is:

- a. Necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of the project award.
- b. Agrees with any limitations or exclusions set forth in the terms and conditions of the project award as to types or amounts of cost items.
- c. Authorized and not prohibited under applicable laws and regulations, policies and procedures.
- d. Determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- e. Not included as a cost or used to meet cost sharing or cost matching requirements of any other project award, unless authorized.
- f. Adequately supported with documentation.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87