



Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission

Bay Restoration Plan

2008 Update

Executive Summary

This document is a comprehensive update of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Plan (BRP). The original BRP was developed in 1995 by the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project (SMBRP), a National Estuary Program established by the State of California and U.S Environmental Protection Agency in recognition of the need to restore and protect Santa Monica Bay's priceless natural resources.

In 2003, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project formally became the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC), an independent non-regulatory state agency whose mission is to improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and protect the Bay's benefits and values. The SMBRC is a unique coalition of governments, environmentalists, scientists, industry and the public. As a National Estuary Program, we are charged by the USEPA to develop and implement a

Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for Bay protection and management, known as the Bay Restoration Plan (BRP).

Who We Are

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission is a public/private partnership - a locally based, independent state entity charged with the restoration and protection of Santa Monica Bay. Guided by a 35-member Governing Board representing a diversity of Bay stakeholders, the Commission oversees an ambitious restoration agenda, works to achieve broad consensus, and implements innovative policies and projects based on the best available science.

There have been remarkable achievements in implementing the first BRP since its adoption in 1995. The SMBRC and its partners have completed or made substantial progress in 47 out of 90 major action categories and achieved several historic milestones, most notably: upgrading wastewater treatment in Los Angeles City and County to full secondary treatment, improving beach water quality to protect human health, and the preserving Ballona wetlands and other open spaces.



While celebrating thirteen years of remarkable accomplishments, the SMBRC recognizes that many of the worthy objectives laid out in the original BRP have not been met, and that many roadblocks, difficulties, and challenges remain. At the same time, many new issues and challenges have emerged over the last thirteen years that need to be recognized and addressed with new strategies and actions.

Our Mission:

- **Improve water quality**
- **Conserve and rehabilitate natural resources**
- **Protect the bay's benefits and values**

The updated BRP lays out the most effective strategies for making substantial progress toward Bay restoration over the next ten to twenty years. The BRP presents a set of new and revised goals, objectives, and milestones that address ongoing issues and emerging challenges, reflecting the consensus of all SMBRC partners on the best strategies to achieve restoration of the precious resources of the Bay and its watershed.

The goals, objectives, and milestones included in the updated BRP are organized in three sections, consistent with our mission to "improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and protect the bay's benefits and values."

While the updated BRP includes programs/projects that the SMBRC will be directly responsible for implementing, most are ongoing or planned activities led by our many partner agencies and organizations. They are included in the BRP Update if they are deemed essential components of a comprehensive plan to address major issues of concern for Bay restoration. The roles of the SMBRC itself and all of our partners are clearly defined for each milestone as either *Lead*, *Participate*, *Facilitate*, *Promote*, or *Support*. Where SMBRC plays a lead role, our staff are directly involved in the ongoing operation of the project or program. In other cases SMBRC staff are participating or facilitating some of the activities led by another agency, promoting a program or project through policies and other means, or supporting a program or project with funding or other resources.

The summary below provides a snapshot of the goals, objectives, and milestones included in the SMBRC. It is not meant to be detailed, but provides an overview of the priorities and activities of the SMBRC's members and partners. The updated BRP is available at our website: www.santamonibay.org/



Priority Issue: Water Quality

Goal 1: Improve water quality through treatment or elimination of pollutant discharges regulated under the current federal and state regulatory framework.

Objectives:

- ❖ Attain water quality goals in TMDLs adopted for 303(d) listed waterbodies in the Santa Monica Bay watershed.
- ❖ Decrease nutrient loads to Malibu Creek, from both point and nonpoint sources to eliminate dissolved oxygen (DO) and algal impairments.
- ❖ Eliminate biological impacts of water intake and discharge from coastal power and desalination plants.
- ❖ Eliminate all harmful discharges to Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS).
- ❖ Improve and enhance the effectiveness of storm water pollution regulations.
- ❖ Develop a regional funding mechanism for storm water quality improvement.
- ❖ Enact and enforce residential, industrial, and commercial runoff prohibitions in local municipalities.
- ❖ Eliminate nonpoint pollution from on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS).

Goal 2: Improve water quality through pollution prevention and source control

Objectives:

- ❖ Increase pervious surfaces and stormwater infiltration by supporting green infrastructure.
- ❖ Restrict the use of disposable plastic products.
- ❖ Reduce aerial deposition of storm water pollutants to the watershed.
- ❖ Reduce pollutant loading from commercial and recreational boating activities.
- ❖ Reduce generation and discharge of trash, oil and grease, and other pollutants from commercial areas.
- ❖ Institutionalize and expand annual Coastal Cleanup.



- ❖ Increase public awareness through the Public Involvement and Education (PIE) mini-grant program.
- ❖ Evaluate the effectiveness of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for reduction of pollutant loading from storm water runoff and other nonpoint sources.

Goal 3: Address Potential Impacts of Emerging Contaminants.

Objectives:

- ❖ Institutionalize monitoring of emerging contaminants.
- ❖ Reduce loading of emerging contaminants in waterways.

Priority Issue: Natural Resources

Goal 4: Create and support policies and programs to protect natural resources.

Objectives:

- ❖ Develop and institute stream protection ordinances and/or policies.
- ❖ Evaluate potential Marine Protected Areas in the Bay.
- ❖ Evaluate and establish additional regulatory measures to protect fishery resources.
- ❖ Evaluate and address potential impacts of new pipelines and offshore energy development on the Bay.
- ❖ Evaluate potential impacts of climate change on Santa Monica Bay and develop mechanisms for mitigation and adaptation in the Bay and watershed.
- ❖ Facilitate and coordinate water quality improvement and habitat restoration programs in key subwatersheds.
- ❖ Implement a Comprehensive Bay Monitoring Program.

Goal 5: Acquire land for preservation of habitat and ecological services.

Objectives:

- ❖ Purchase 2000 acres of priority open space in the Santa Monica Mountains.
- ❖ Purchase priority parcels in urbanized areas of the watershed.

Goal 6: Manage invasive species.

Objectives:

- ❖ Achieve 303d listing for aquatic invasive species in Malibu Creek.



- ❖ Coordinate and fund public education and outreach on invasive species.
- ❖ Develop and adopt plan and policies for invasive species control and prevention.
- ❖ Ban importation and sale of selected invasive species.
- ❖ Fund and conduct invasive species removal programs and projects.

Goal 7: Restore wetlands, streams and riparian zones.

Objectives:

- ❖ Restore Ballona Wetlands.
- ❖ Restore Malibu Lagoon.
- ❖ Remove fish barriers and open 20 miles of stream habitat to migrating steelhead trout.
- ❖ Increase body of knowledge on local stream function including hydrology and geomorphology, especially urbanized streams.
- ❖ Restore urban streams, including daylighting culverted streams and removing cement channels.
- ❖ Restore Topanga Lagoon.
- ❖ Restore Grand Canal to improve water quality, increase wetlands habitat and public access, and remove invasive species.
- ❖ Restore Oxford Lagoon to provide native species habitat, improved water quality, and greater public access.
- ❖ Restore Del Rey Lagoon to improve water quality and increase wetlands habitat and public access.
- ❖ Evaluate feasibility of Trancas lagoon acquisition and restoration.

Goal 8: Restore coastal bluffs, dunes, and sandy beaches.

Objectives:

- ❖ Restore bluff habitat for El Segundo blue butterfly.
- ❖ Protect and manage sandy intertidal habitats.

Goal 9: Restore intertidal and subtidal habitats.

Objectives:

- ❖ Restore and monitor five acres of kelp forest.



- ❖ Protect and manage rocky intertidal habitat.
- ❖ Re-introduce and restore an abalone population.
- ❖ Assess and protect seagrass habitat.

Goal 10: Protect and restore open ocean and deep water habitats.

Objectives:

- ❖ Continue monitoring recovery of benthic habitats at POTW discharge outfalls.
- ❖ Update and expand knowledge of deep canyon and deep reef habitats.
- ❖ Assess harmful algal bloom and its causes and impacts on the Bay's ecosystem.

Priority Issue: Benefits and Values to Humans

Goal 11: Protect public health.

Objectives:

- ❖ Achieve zero beach closures and postings at Santa Monica Bay beaches.
- ❖ Develop and adopt new pathogen indicators and source identification tools.
- ❖ Improve public notification of beach water quality.
- ❖ Develop and issue new seafood consumption advisories and risk communication messages.
- ❖ Expand institutional control measures (enforcement, monitoring, and education) through coordination with partner agencies to reduce the risk of consumption of contaminated fish in high risk ethnic communities.
- ❖ Remediate contaminated sediments.

Goal 12: Maintain/increase natural flood protection through ecologically functioning floodplains and wetlands.

Objectives:

- ❖ Purchase and restore priority parcels to increase acreage of ecologically functioning floodplains and wetlands.
- ❖ Develop hydrology and hydraulic (H&H) standards for stream restoration projects in LA County.
- ❖ Decrease peak flood flows by increasing natural infiltration in developed areas.



Goal 13: Increase public access to beaches and open space.

Objectives:

- ❖ Increase public access to Santa Monica Mountains through purchase and enhancement of open space.
- ❖ Increase acreage and access to parks and open space in urbanized areas through purchase and conversion of private parcels.
- ❖ Increase public access points to Ballona Creek and wetlands.
- ❖ Increase public access to Santa Monica Bay beaches.

Goal 14: Conserve water and increase local water supply.

Objectives:

- ❖ Increase local water supplies.
- ❖ Enhance water conservation.
- ❖ Further upgrade wastewater treatment at POTWs to increase wastewater recycling and reuse.