



# baywire

News and Updates from the Governing Board of  
the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission

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## Bay Restoration Commission Support Ballona Wetland Restoration Planning

The long-term, science-based plan to return the Ballona Wetlands into a thriving ecological reserve was discussed by the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) Governing Board, which then passed a resolution expressing their strong support for the planning process.

Executive Director Shelley Luce noted that the restoration effort is now entering the California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act (CEQA/NEPA) Phase. These laws require participating agencies to identify environmental impacts and, if possible, to avoid or mitigate those impacts. A multi-disciplinary team lead by the ICF International consulting firm will begin this process. Dr. Luce stated that the restoration work may begin in 2012, depending on permitting and other CEQA/NEPA requirements.

The public process has included 20 open meetings and a design charette, with significant public discussion and input, and six public meetings of a Science Advisory Committee. The public input received

was used by the Science Advisory Committee and a consulting team to develop the restoration design alternatives that will be analyzed under CEQA/NEPA.

The SMBRC resolution in support of the restoration design process highlighted some of the key issues addressed in the public and science advisory meetings. These include, among others: the highly degraded status of the existing wetland habitats; the paucity of many ecological and hydrological functions due to historical dredge spoil, channelization, and other human impacts; and that one goal of restoration is a healthy, natural ecosystem that provides increased habitat for native species, enhanced migratory refuge for birds, improved aquatic habitat, and a safe haven for endangered and threatened species.

The resolution also noted that the restoration will help to improve regional air and water quality, enhance flood control capability, improve public recreational opportunities, and generate new educational resources.

## Celebrating 20 Years of Dedication to the SMBRC: Thank You Guangyu Wang!

The Bay Restoration Commission proudly celebrates 20 years of devoted work by our Deputy Director, Dr. Guangyu Wang. Dr. Wang has been with the Bay Restoration Commission since it started as the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project, and has contributed to its growth and successful efforts to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay and watershed.

Knowledgeable, thoughtful, creative, broad-thinking, dedicated to the Bay, and opinionated on important issues, Dr. Wang is known as a technical expert and a problem solver, one who is easily approached and always willing to help others. Dr. Wang's invaluable service to the organization was honored at the Bay Restoration Commission's October meeting. Current and former Governing Board members, staff, and colleagues

from his 20 years of service came to share their appreciation and wish him well. State Senator Fran Pavley and Redondo Beach Mayor Mike Gin also presented Dr. Wang with commendations for his great efforts.

Congratulations Guangyu. We look forward to 20 more years of working with you!

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## MEETING UPDATE

- *SMBRC Supports Ballona Wetland Restoration Planning*
- *Celebrating 20 Years of Dedication to the SMBRC: Thank You Guangyu Wang*
- *Malibu Surfrider Beach- First World Surfing Reserve*
- *SMBRC Appoints Two Members to Partner JPA*
- *Ballona Wetlands Science & Research Symposium*
- *Rainwater Harvesting Symposium Showcases Water Conservation Potential*
- *In Memoriam: State Senator Jenny Oropeza*

## SAVE the DATE

2010 Governing Board meetings will be held on:

- *December 16*

For more information on the CEQA/NEPA process or the restoration of the Ballona Wetlands in general, please contact Diana Hurlbert at [dhurlbert@santamonicabay.org](mailto:dhurlbert@santamonicabay.org)

## Malibu Surfrider Beach Dedicated as the First World Surfing Reserve

Malibu Surfrider Beach was dedicated as the first World Surfing Reserve (WSR) on October 9, 2010. Michael Blum, President of the Malibu Surfing Association (a Bay Watershed Council member organization) presented a slide show about the dedication and on WSRs in general at the October Governing Board meeting.

Inspired by UNESCO's World Heritage Site program, WSRs help the surfing community identify and preserve surfing heritage through their important surf breaks. WSRs also promote to the general public a greater understanding of the culture of surfing and their value to area economies.

Mr. Blum noted that while the designation as a WSR carries no legal mandate and does not interfere with municipal, state, or federal regulatory oversight of the area, the designation establishes and celebrates the unique value of the Malibu coastal environment and aims to enhance efforts to maintain the pristine nature of the area for future generations.

A Local Stewardship Council, made up of area surfers intimately familiar with and dedicated to surfing at Malibu, will be responsible for implementing a stewardship plan to protect Malibu's environmental, cultural, social and economic benefits.

Blum stated that WSRs are nominated through a selection process and currently there are dozens of proposed WSRs covering nearly every continent on the planet. He noted that aside from Malibu, there are eight surfing breaks on the mainland U.S. nominated for WSR status (six California, two on the East Coast).

Several SMBRC Governing Board members attended the October 9 dedication and noted their enthusiasm for the process. At the end of Mr. Blum's presentation, Governing Board noted that state and local entities, including the California Coastal Commission, the County of Los Angeles, and the City of Malibu approved resolutions supporting the designation. Based on this, SMBRC staff was directed to draft a resolution in support of the WSR designation. Consideration of the resolution will likely take place at the Governing Board's December 16, 2010 meeting.

Background on WSRs can be found at [www.savethewaves.org/node/309](http://www.savethewaves.org/node/309) . For further information, contact Scott Valor at [svalor@santamonicabay.org](mailto:svalor@santamonicabay.org) .

## SMBRC Appoints Two Governing Board Members to Partner JPA

Two Bay Restoration Commission Governing Board members were appointed to fill vacancies on the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Authority governing board at the October meeting. John Sibert, Malibu City Council member, and Richard Bloom, Santa Monica City Council member were unanimously appointed to fill the vacancies on the Authority's five-member board.

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Authority is a joint powers partnership between the Bay Restoration Commission and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. The Authority will oversee the Statewide Boater Education Program in coming years. The boater program, formerly a regional program, was expanded statewide at the request of the California Department of Boating and Waterways due to its ongoing success. For more information on the program, contact Grace Lee at [glee@santamonicabay.org](mailto:glee@santamonicabay.org) .

## Save the Date! Ballona Wetlands Science & Research Symposium Coming Up

All members of the public are cordially invited to attend the Bay Restoration Commission's free scientific symposium that will highlight current monitoring and research being conducted at wetlands in the region. Presenters will include wetland scientists from throughout California.

Hosted by Loyola Marymount University, the symposium will be held on Wednesday, December 8th, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at LMU's University Hall 1000.

## Rainwater Harvesting Symposium Showcases Water Conservation Potential

With a range of topics on rainwater harvesting from conservation to education to climate change/drought response to financial and regulatory matters, the Bay Restoration Commission's recent Rainwater Harvesting symposium was convened on October 13.

Over 70 people from a dozen cities, various local agencies, as well as non-profit representatives, water district employees, and several landscapers attended the event.

As the Los Angeles basin is particularly susceptible to water scarcity, the issues regarding the future of sustainable water use not only proved interesting, but revealed potential public/private partnerships for existing and future efforts in the region. Feedback following the symposium was positive and showed a desire for the Bay Restoration Commission to hold related conferences in the future.

Special thanks to Malcolm-Pirnie for sponsoring the event and to TreePeople which generously donated the use of its facility and provided an educational tour to attendees.

## In Memoriam: State Senator Jenny Oropeza

The Santa Monica Bay watershed region lost a strong advocate on October 20 with the passing of State Senator Jenny Oropeza. Senator Oropeza was a member of the SMBRC Governing Board and an avid supporter of establishing Marine Protected Areas in the Santa Monica Bay region.

Senator Oropeza also fought for increased funding for Fish and Game Enforcement, which has had direct positive effect on the efforts to restore the Ballona Wetlands.

“Things were much worse in Ballona before Fish and Game took ownership of the wetland,” noted SMBRC Executive Director Shelley Luce, commenting on the Senator’s conservation efforts. “The agency has been using that money to remove trash, secure the property’s perimeter, relocate homeless people, and educate citizens.”

Projects now at work thanks to Senator Oropeza’s efforts include new public access sites, which provide more eyes on the wetlands prevent clandestine dumping; organizing a Dump Watch program with local citizens to catch illegal dumpers in the act; and establishing ranger patrols to monitor the site.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Senator Oropeza. The October Governing Board meeting was adjourned in her memory.



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