



# baywire

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

## BAYWIRE April - May 2015 Edition

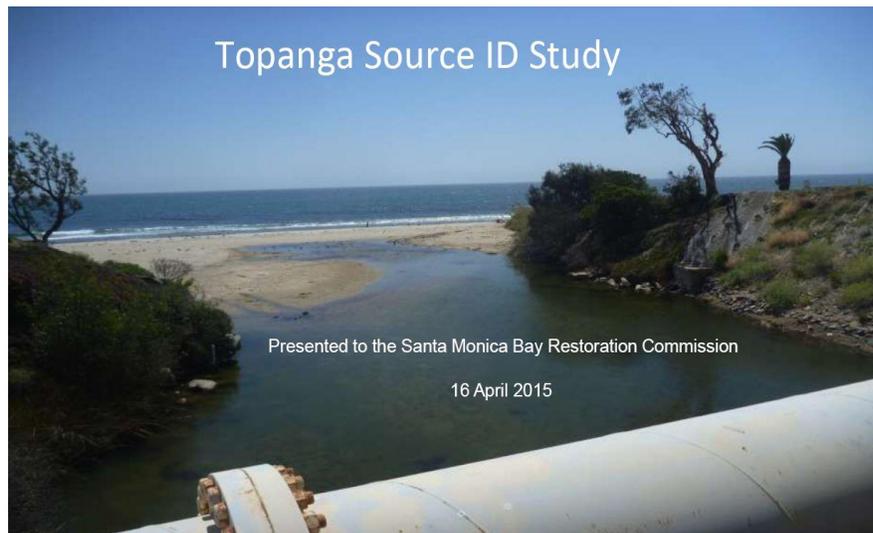
### Topanga Source Identification Study Presented at the April SMBRC Governing Board Meeting

Rosi Dagit, Sr. Conservation Biologist, RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains and Dr. Jenny Jay, UCLA Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering presented a comprehensive study of the water quality in and around Topanga Beach at the April Governing Board meeting.

Why has Topanga Beach had poor water quality for almost ten years? Between 2012-2014 a team from the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains and Dr. Jenny Jay's lab at UCLA set out to find answers using a combination of state of the art fecal indicator bacteria (FIB) microbial source tracking techniques coupled with more traditional standard surface water

sampling methods that included benthic macroinvertebrates (BMI), soft algae and diatoms in addition to nutrients and bacteria analysis. Starting in the upper watershed below town, monthly and storm event samples were collected from the town downstream to the beach, in Topanga Lagoon, and both up and downcoast of the lagoon mouth.

By process of elimination, it was determined that at present, Topanga Lagoon was the main contributor of FIB when it was connected to the ocean. Septic systems along PCH, the lifeguard station bathrooms, and upper watershed sources were not found to contribute to FIB problems at Topanga Beach. The dynamic nutrient and bacterial cycling within Topanga Creek as water flowed downstream from the town supports a natural community of organisms that to date, have been able to absorb inputs from upstream, although the drought may be causing shifts in the BMI



community. Human associated DNA was found in ~14% of samples and in some cases was associated with observed “direct deposits” of human waste from transients. As expected, gulls were also a consistent source of FIB in both the ocean and lagoon. We also learned that dogs were significant contributors to the FIB, and that increased education and outreach efforts by LA County to enforce the no dogs on the beach rule could potentially help reduce exceedances.

This study was funded by a grant from Los Angeles County District 3 Supervisor Yaroslavsky, and augmented with funds provided by the State Water Resource Control Board Source Identification Source Protocol Project (SIPP).

A slide presentation of the study is available on the [SMBRC website](#) and the entire report is available at [www.rcdsmm.org](http://www.rcdsmm.org).

### **Culver City Curbs Urban Runoff**

The City of Culver City has completed a city-wide urban runoff Best Management Practices (BMP) treatment train designed to help enhance water quality in Ballona Creek, and Santa Monica Bay’s beaches and coastal waters, said Steve Finton, a former civil engineer for the City, in his presentation to the SMBRC Governing Board in April.

Elements of the treatment train include the installation of 1054 catch basin trash screens; the installation of 95 trash/recycling receptacles, construction of rain gardens at 4 locations; and development of urban run-off educational material. These BMP’s work in concert to prevent pollutants originating in the Culver City, such as trash, metals, automotive fluids (oil, gasoline, antifreeze), and chemical wastes (paint, pesticides, fertilizers) from polluting Ballona Creek and the Santa Monica Bay.



The City found the BMPs to be very effective in removing pollutants based on preliminary monitoring results. The catch basin screens have prevented approximately 34.5 tons of trash and organic material from reaching Ballona Creek, and approximately 19 tons of recyclable material and 28 tons of trash were collected from trash/recycling receptacles. The four rain gardens have helped prevent polluted urban runoff, including bacteria and toxics such as dissolved metals, from reaching Ballona Creek.

The City hopes to duplicate the success of these projects as it embarks on the implementation of Enhanced Watershed Programs for Ballona Creek and Marina del Rey. Funding for the project was provided with Proposition 50 funds, which were awarded by the State Water Resources Control Board, as recommended by the SMBRC.

### **Boater Program is Deep Cleaning the Boating Season!**

The Bay Foundation's Boater & Outreach Education Program is very busy right now as boating season gets underway. First, free Dockwalker workshops have trained volunteers from Ventura to San Diego since March on how to promote and educate boaters on environmentally-sound boating practices in Southern California. The workshops are provided by The Bay Foundation (TBF), the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways, and the California Coastal Commission's Boating Clean and Green Program, in partnership with the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the US Power Squadron.

Volunteer Dockwalkers literally walk the docks, conducting face-to-face boater education and distributing boater kits, which provide educational resources and pollution prevention tools to boaters. Since 2000, over 700 Dockwalkers throughout California have distributed more than 100,000 boater kits at local marinas, boat launch ramps, fuel docks, boat shows, and special events. Trainings have been held in Dana Pt., Long Beach, San Diego and Ventura.

In addition, TBF has opened four new Absorbent Pad Exchanges (Exchange) for recreational boaters in Los Angeles and San Diego counties. Funding for these free Exchanges is provided by a grant from the state's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, or CalRecycle. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the oil from a single oil change (1 gallon) can ruin one million gallons of drinking water, the supply for 50 people in one year. The Bay Foundation's Exchanges feature free recycling of fuel and oil-soaked absorbent pads, and distribution of free absorbent pads.

For the full press release on the Absorbent Pad Exchanges, including their locations, please click [HERE](#).

Contact Contact Victoria Gambale at (213) 620-2271, [vgambale@santamonicabay.org](mailto:vgambale@santamonicabay.org), with questions on either of these programs!

### **Annual Report 2014: Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program**

The Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (SMBNEP) 2014 Annual Report has been released and is available on both the [SMBRC](#) and [The Bay Foundation](#) websites. This year's report is the first with a letter from new Executive Director Tom Ford, and includes an outline of our positive five-year review from the US EPA. There is a summary of accomplishments and ongoing projects, and highlighted project reports on the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies, wetlands scientific monitoring, the kelp restoration project, new websites, Boater's Guide app, research supporting California Halibut & other collaborations.

Please be sure to check out the Report at either of the links above.

## In The News

The media continue to highlight some our programs and staff, including:

Culver City's storm water treatment BMPs--using Prop 50 funds awarded by the State Water Resources Control Board, as recommended by the SMBRC—were highlighted in the Culver City Observer (2/23), on the front page of Pacific Blue (2/27), and on Earth Day, in [CityWatchLA](#).

Dr. Guangyu Wang's [second](#) (on Wetlands) and [third](#) (on Saving Water) interviews aired on KSCI's "Midday Buzz", a major daily talk show for the Chinese community in the Los Angeles region. (Note: in Mandarin).

The water/drought PSAs—"Desert Delivery" (over 12,000 views!) and the new "Pretend--produced by TBF with LADWP (both on [TBF's YouTube page](#)) continued to receive strong exposure through multiple outlets, including the hugely popular site [Upworthy.com](#), [KPCC](#), [EcoWatch](#), [SM Mirror](#), Friends of Ballona Wetlands blog, Sustainable SM e-News, many valuable social media posts by all the above and fellow non-profits, as well as e-Newsletters of Councilmembers Tom LaBonge, Mike Bonin, and Mitch Englander. In addition, Santa Monica's CityTV, City of Los Angeles' Ch. 35, Calabasas TV and the Public Cable Television Authority (serving Huntington Beach, Westminster, Fountain Valley and Stanton) have been airing them over the last month. (If we missed anyone, please let us know!) We thank them all.

The Boater Program's Dockwalker Trainings were highlighted by the [O.C. Register](#), [The Log](#) (News Briefs), the Grunion Gazette, the [Ventura County Reporter](#), and the Dana Pt. Harbor eNewsletter,

The NOAA/MSRP blog posted [an article](#) about how the restored kelp forests are providing an opportunity for biologists to place green abalone raised at The SEA Lab in Redondo Beach, into the newly restored kelp forest areas in PV.

SoCalWild blogger Brenda Rees visited SEA Lab to watch how the juvenile abalone are tagged and prepped for being outplanted – see her very visual post [HERE](#).

High Country News' extensive article on the Ballona Wetlands finally hit the newsstand, check out "The Los Angeles Wetland Wars" [HERE](#) (Note: you need to subscribe to HCN). Three days later, [The Argonaut published a Q&A](#) with TBF's Dir. of Watershed Programs Karina Johnston around the SCAS annual conference, her presentation there and being named to the SCAS Board (E.D. Tom Ford is on the Board), and a bit of an update on the Ballona Wetlands.

The [Daily Breeze](#) quoted Tom Ford in an article concerning the state of sea urchins in SoCal (vs. Central California) in relation to sea star die-off.

On [KTLA Morning News](#) for Earth Day, NOAA's Gabrielle Dorr spoke about the kelp restoration program during her presentation at Aquarium of the Pacific. (4<sup>th</sup> video segment of this page mentions TBF and the latest kelp project stats.)

And finally, again for Earth Day, [HauteLiving.com](#) selected the desk of Tom Ford for its regular "what's on the desk of" feature, which focuses on heads of companies, non-profits and other key players in the City.

### **Social Media IS Important and Fun!**

If you're a social media maven or even a dabbler, we ask that you engage, share and use our Social Media avenues.

**Facebook:** [“Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation”](#)

**Twitter:** [@SMBRF](#)

**Instagram:** Follow us at [@TheBayFoundation](#)

**YouTube:** [“The Bay Foundation”](#)

\*Please go that extra step and invite colleagues, friends and family to also Like or Follow.

Watch our FB for “Restaurant Thursdays”, and our Twitter for twice-weekly tips on water and energy conservation!

And did you know you can find a Clean Bay Restaurant certified by SMBRC on our site? Check out your local DINING option at

<http://www.santamonicabay.org/CleanRestaurants/cleanrestaurants.html>

### **2015 SMBRC Governing Board Meeting Dates**

The SMBRC Governing Board meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the even-numbered months from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Del Rey Yacht Club.

The remaining 2015 meeting dates are:

- June 18
- August 20
- October 15
- December 17

The Del Rey Yacht Club is located at 13900 Palawan Way, Marina del Rey CA 90292.

For additional information concerning any meeting, please contact Scott Valor at 310-922-2376 or by e-mail at [svalor@santamonicabay.org](mailto:svalor@santamonicabay.org) . You may also visit our website at

[www.smbrc.ca.gov](http://www.smbrc.ca.gov) .

### **Check Out Our Website**

Please check out SMBRC’s website: [www.smbrc.ca.gov](http://www.smbrc.ca.gov) . To streamline access to our Governing Board agendas, schedules, and staff reports, the new website features only information that is most critical to following the month-to-month activities of the SMBRC’s bodies.

The SMBRC’s partner, The Bay Foundation, has a new and improved website! Check it out at [www.santamonicabay.org](http://www.santamonicabay.org) . It includes links to Foundation activities, reports, and other information.

If you have any questions or comments, contact Scott Valor at [svalor@santamonicabay.org](mailto:svalor@santamonicabay.org) .