baywire | NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE SANTA MONICA BAY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

2019 Annual Report

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Santa Monica Bay Enthusiast,

Welcome to the 2019 Annual Report of the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program. Our collective cutting-edge community inspired work results in improved water quality, protection of public health, preservation of wildlife and ecosystems, and solutions to climate change across coastal Los Angeles County. The projects you'll learn about involve thousands of people whose efforts, at home, at work, or through volunteerism and philanthropy advance our cause for a resilient and splendid future.

I arrived in Los Angeles in 1998 and fell in love with this city and its environment. The work of Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program has enabled me, for twenty years, to engage Angelenos interested in keeping our coast vibrant, healthy, and accessible. I am proud of our many accomplishments, and grateful for the hard work of our partners. In closing, I am fortunate to be involved in this impactful work and encourage you to get involved. Please join our efforts and share in the satisfaction that you contributed to a brighter Los Angeles.

Thank you for taking the time to read our report. I hope to see you at our many events and meetings.

Sincerely,

Tom Ford
Director, Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program

2019 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Boater Education Program

This is a multi-faceted program designed to engage the Southern California boating community to reduce and eliminate boating-related ocean pollution. In 2019, the program continued to publish "The Changing Tide" statewide newsletters, annual tide books, and published the 5th edition of the popular Southern California Boater's Guide. Through the Honey Pot Day program, mobile sewage pumpouts are offered; in 2019, 110 boaters participated, and 2,160 gallons of sewage were properly disposed. The program also produced and distributed 3,150 Boater Kits and trained 89 Dockwalker volunteers. The Pumpout Nav app has been updated to include sewage dump stations and floating restrooms in addition to sewage pumpout stations. TBF and San Francisco Estuary Partnership, in partnership with California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways, was awarded the 'Outstanding Service Award' for the Pumpout Nav app at the States Organization for Boating Access.

Dockwalker volunteers are enthusiastic to learn how oil absorbents work.

Proposition 84 Grant Program

SMBRC was originally allocated $18 million in state funding for projects including coastal watershed contamination prevention and coastal and marine habitat restoration. Three projects were under construction in 2019.

- The **Rancho Palos Verdes SMB Catch Basin Inserts Project** retrofits and installs over 1,200 Connector Pipe Screen (CPS) units in existing catch basins in an approximately 14 sq. mile area across three cities in the Palos Verdes Peninsula Watershed draining to Santa Monica Bay.
- The **Westwood Neighborhood Greenway Project** by the City of Los Angeles will divert and capture dry-weather flow from a storm drain that captures runoff from 2,400 acres of drainage area into two parallel bioswales to improve water quality in the receiving waters (Sepulveda Channel, Ballona Estuary and Santa Monica Bay Beaches). The project is expected to capture 67,000 to 340,000 gallons per day of urban runoff, and the "first flush" of the storm from a 2,400-acre drainage area during storm events.
- The **Ladera Park Water Quality Enhancement Project** by the Los Angeles County Public Works will treat, store, and infiltrate the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume of 5.1 acre-feet of stormwater runoff and all the non-stormwater runoff from a 110-acre tributary area through a combination of pre-treatment, retention, and infiltration facilities.

One project was in the planning, design, and engineering phase in 2019.

- The **Culver Boulevard Realignment and Stormwater Infiltration/Retention Regional Project** by the City of Culver City will capture and treat the 85th percentile, 24-hour design storm runoff from a drainage area of 800 acres using a belowground infiltration/retention basin, infiltrate runoff from 647 acres, and retain and treat the remaining 153 acres for reuse as irrigation for the street median. The project will capture a maximum of 42.79 acre-feet of runoff during a storm event, and 100% of the dry weather flow from the drainage area.

LAX Dunes Restoration

In partnership with Los Angeles World Airports and Friends of the LAX Dunes, TBF conducted monthly volunteer restoration events at the LAX Dunes to remove invasive vegetation and teach the local community about the importance and resilience of coastal dune systems. Additionally, TBF coordinated biological monitoring activities and lead partners in larger-scale invasive plant removal efforts. In 2019, 766 volunteers completed over 2,000 hours and pulled over 850 bags of invasive, non-native vegetation. Additionally, the program had volunteer participants from nearly 200 unique zip codes, with many of them from disadvantaged communities. The third and final report for the Coastal Dune Community Stewardship Project was produced in March 2019. In August, TBF initiated a new three-year agreement with City of Los Angeles to conduct restoration activities and scientific monitoring in the northern 48-acre area and expand into the central 52-acre dune area.

Community members work together to restore LAX Dunes.

Abalone Restoration

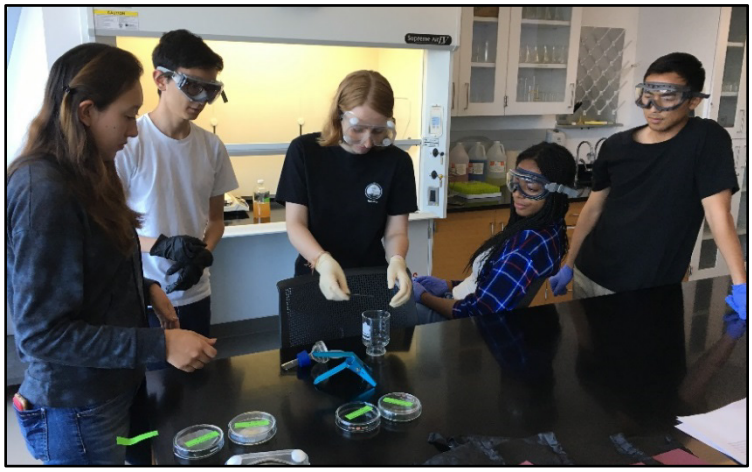
This project implements a multifaceted approach to research and method development to restore populations of abalone to Santa Monica Bay and adjacent coastal waters. In 2018 and 2019, construction phases for two abalone laboratories were completed at the Southern California Marine Institute (SCMI). In these laboratories, TBF advances research on captive and wild abalone care, spawning, and larval cultivation techniques. Additionally, the laboratories serve as a staging hub for outplant efforts off the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and provide additional holding

capacity for the white abalone captive propagation program. The focus of this work has been refined to support the recovery of the endangered white abalone that have experienced massive population declines during the past several decades. In August, over 1,600 white abalone were transported from Bodega Marine Lab to SCMI, later becoming the first of their species to be outplanted into the wild in November 2019. The site is closely monitored by TBF divers and project partners to track the movement and fate of outplanted abalone. Additional outplanting events are planned for spring and fall 2020.

Endangered White Abalone outplanted to Palos Verdes.
Photo: Adam Obaza

Microplastics Research

Plastic is the most prevalent type of marine debris found in our oceans, and microplastics are considered an emerging constituent of concern due to their ubiquitous presence in the environment, danger to marine life when ingested, and potential to bioaccumulate chemicals up the food web. In 2019, CRI continued refining a protocol to extract microplastics from sediments including infrared spectroscopy and while conducting this pilot study along Santa Monica Bay beaches. Ongoing partnership development with University of California Santa Barbara will continue to inform regional data gaps in the fate and transport conceptual model for microplastics in the nearshore environment and invertebrate community.



Students conduct microplastics research in Dr. Landry's laboratory at Loyola Marymount University.

Take a deeper dive into the partnerships and efforts of the SMBNEP access the

2019 SMBNEP SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Volunteer with Us!

Check TBF's Events Page for dates, times, brief descriptions, and who to contact.

TBF also works with corporations and other organizations for group volunteer days. Please contact Chris (cenyart@santamonicabay.org) if you'd like to plan such an event.

Financial Summary (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019) Click here

Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program – BOARDS & STAFF

The Bay Foundation Staff
SMBRC – Staff Assigned

The Bay Foundation Board of Directors
SMBRC Governing Board

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2020 SMBRC Governing Board Meeting Dates

- April 16
- June 18
- August 20
- October 15
- December 8

All meetings begin at 9:30 a.m. Meeting location: Del Rey Yacht Club 13900 Palawan Way Marina del Rey, CA 90292

Visit Our Websites

The Bay Foundation's website can be viewed at www.santamonicabay.org. It includes links to Foundation activities, reports, and other information.

Please check out the SMBRC website: www.smbrc.ca.gov. To streamline access to the Governing Board agendas, schedules, and staff reports, the website features only information that is most critical to following the month-to-month activities of the SMBRC. If you have any questions or comments, contact Dr. Guang-yu Wang at guangyu.wang@waterboards.ca.gov