



baywire

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

BAYWIRE **October-November 2011 Edition**

Coastal Cleanup Day Makes Waves in Marina del Rey!

It was a record-breaking Coastal Clean Up Day in Marina del Rey this year. Our partner, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, hosted the Marina del Rey In-Water Kayak Cleanup on the morning of September 17. A record 167 volunteers came together to rid marina waters of 425 pounds of ocean-bound trash and debris through scuba, kayak, and land cleanup sites. Among the throng of kayak volunteers were Assembly woman Julia Brownley and City of Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom.

Equipped with reusable nets, gloves, and buckets, the volunteers collected, weighed, and disposed of trash and recyclables with a zero-waste impact. The Foundation was proud to accommodate more volunteers this year than ever before thanks to the addition of our enthusiastic new sponsors.

We would like to thank the following sponsors for making this the largest, most successful Coastal Cleanup Day yet: UCLA Marina Aquatic Center, Cobra Kayaks, Boat Rentals of America, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches & Harbors, Boys & Girls Club of Venice, Sport Chalet, Marina Harbor Anchorage, S & K Dive Service, Inc., Hornblower Cruises & Events, Adventure 16, Islands, The Cheesecake Factory, The Counter, Library Alehouse, Kleen Kanteen, Tai India Palace, Catalina Island Conservancy, Peet's Coffee & Tea, Panera Bread, Hot Dog on a Stick, Trader Joe's, Ralphs, Nauti, and many committed individual donors.

SMBRC Approves Amendments to its Memorandum of Understanding

The SMBRC unanimously approved amendments to its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at its October meeting, clarifying the roles of the SMBRC Governing Board and its advisory committees.

Highlights of the MOU changes include re-naming the SMBRC's advisory body as the "Watershed Advisory Council" and specifying how an interested party may join that council. The MOU also expanded the Governing Board's voting membership by including an additional At-Large member, an additional Business Entity member from the local tourism industry, and including previously non-voting members as voting members.

The amended MOU is easier to read and understand. If you are interested in viewing the MOU, you will find it on our website at www.smbrc.ca.gov.

Water Quality and Pollution Reduction Funding Initiative is Underway

An effort to fund pollution reduction in the Santa Monica Bay Watershed and beyond is underway. The Los Angeles County Flood Control District has launched an effort to achieve sustainable funding for building, operating and managing stormwater leading the way. Presenting to the Governing Board at its October meeting, Russ Bryden, a civil engineer in the Watershed Management Division of the Flood Control District, discussed the merits of the LA County Clean Water, Clean Beach Initiative.

The LA County Clean Water, Clean Beaches Initiative is a comprehensive effort to clean up our waterways in accordance with the federal Clean Water Act. Rivers, lakes, creeks, streams, beaches and coastal waters in the Los Angeles area are contaminated by health-threatening pollutants at levels above established public health standards.

To meet the clean water challenge, said Bryden, the Flood Control District is proposing a new Water Quality Improvement Program to manage stormwater and urban runoff. The Program is intended to reduce pollution and flooding, maximize groundwater resources, and protect—and where feasible, restore—habitat associated with water quality projects and programs.

The Flood Control District is developing an ordinance that proposes a Clean Water, Clean Beaches parcel fee. The fee would allocate funding to regional Watershed Authority Groups and local municipalities to initiate, plan, design, construct, implement, operate, and maintain water quality improvement projects and programs. As with all fees, taxes, and assessments, Bryden noted, this Clean Water, Clean Beaches parcel fee must be approved by the public through the Proposition 218 election process.

For more information, go to <http://ladpw.org/lacfed/wqfi/>, or send an email to: wqfi.info@dpw.lacounty.gov.

Successful National Estuaries Program Conference!

“The best ANEP conference ever,” was the buzz among participants as we wrapped up the annual Association of National Estuaries Program (ANEP) conference, which was held in our watershed from October 16 – 20 this year.

Directors and staff from the 28 National Estuary Programs (NEPs), as well as staff from USEPA Region IX and around the country, descended on the Santa Monica Bay watershed to discuss a broad range of topics, focused this year on meaningful tools for measuring and reporting NEP accomplishments and improving program management.

SMBRC staff was proud to showcase our cutting-edge environmental restoration projects to our colleagues from around the country. The events included kayaking in the restored kelp forest off the Palos Verdes peninsula, early morning bird-watching at Ballona

wetlands, a detailed discussion and tour of the Ballona Creek Rain Gardens, and an interpretive talk at Malibu Lagoon and Legacy Park.

Many thanks to Governing Board members and our project partners who participated in the conference, met and gave talks, and guided the field trips, and a special thank you to all staff for a great team effort!

The SMBRF is Restoring Fish Habitat: Let's Talk Abalone and Urchins!

Our partner, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, has recently expanded its marine habitat protection and restoration work. In August, the Foundation's Marine Program began collecting data on the population genetics of southern California's green abalone (*Haliotis fulgens*) through a partnership with the NOAA Restoration Center, NOAA Office of Protected Resources, Vantuna Research Group, and other southern California environmental non-profit organizations. The project is supported by NOAA, which will use these data to design a green abalone restoration program with low risk of genetic diversity loss and disease. This work comes on the heels of the Foundation's work to establish marine protected areas off Malibu and Palos Verdes and our successful kelp restoration projects (in partnership with Santa Monica Baykeeper). Ultimately, we all hope to see green abalone, once again ambushing drift kelp on the rocky reefs of the Santa Monica Bay.

Earlier this year, the Marine Program developed a pilot study to collect data on sea urchin gonads, which are an excellent measure of secondary production in kelp forests and of the value of a healthy kelp forest to fisheries. The study was conducted in partnership with Santa Monica Baykeeper, Vantuna Research Group, and Loyola Marymount University and supported by California Sea Grant. Because it included lab work, it provided another opportunity for the Marine Program to engage students participating in the Foundation's internship and volunteer program through the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies (a joint project of SMBRF and LMU). This pilot study was so successful that, come February, we will begin collecting similar data at rocky reefs throughout southern California with support from USC Sea Grant.

For more information, contact Tom Ford at tford@santamonicabay.org.

Check Out Our New Website!

The SMBRC has a new website: 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 Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, will continue to support the existing website at www.santamonicabay.org which will retain links to Foundation activities, reports, and other information.

If you have any questions or comments, contact Scott Valor at svalor@santamonicabay.org.