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 agenda for Bay restoration known as the Bay Plan. The Commission is committed to a restored and healthy Bay, and works to achieve broad consensus and implement innovative policies and projects based on the best available science.

As one of twenty-eight National Estuary Programs, the Commission is also part of a national network of similar organizations working in some of the country’s most important coastal waters.
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am happy to share with you the results of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission’s work for the year 2006.

One of the Commission’s great strengths is the ability to leverage funding through partnerships. In the last year, we awarded $13.8 million in Proposition 50 funds: over $5 million to projects that will reduce bacteria at beaches, and over $8 million to restore stream and wetland habitat - projects that would not have been possible without funding from the Bay Restoration Commission. Those dollars also leveraged $27 million from local and federal sources through matching funds. This is just one example of how we are using limited existing resources to bring much more to the table. With the recent approval of Proposition 84 by voters and the money made available through that bond measure, we will be continuing our mission to bring resources together for Santa Monica Bay restoration.

In 2006, we launched a number of new programs, embracing innovative approaches to restoration and environmental assessment.

We initiated a stakeholder process in the South Bay for identifying projects to address local water quality and habitat issues, and our Technical Advisory Committee took on the monumental task of developing a comprehensive plan for monitoring environmental health in the Bay. I highlight these two efforts because both called for a high level of stakeholder involvement and trust in our organization, and both were initiated and completed within just one year. Both projects also resulted in important actions taken by the Bay Restoration Commission and its stakeholders. Efforts are now underway to secure funding for high priority restoration and monitoring projects identified through these processes.

Our stakeholder-driven mission and technical expertise makes us ideal to represent our broad coalition of Governing Board members and stakeholders on regional decision-making and planning bodies, such as the LA County-wide IRWMP Leadership Committee and regional subcommittees, and the Ballona Wetlands restoration working group, among many others. Our participation in these groups ensures that the combined voices of our leadership are heard on important issues that impact pollution prevention and habitat restoration throughout the region.

We hope that this report reflects the unique role the Bay Restoration Commission plays in accelerating Bay and watershed restoration.

In looking back on 2006, I’d also like to take the opportunity to thank our many stakeholders and partners, whose dedication and commitment to the mission of Bay restoration makes what we do possible.

Thank you for your interest and support and here’s to a productive and successful 2007!

Sincerely,

Shelley Luce
Executive Director
TWENTY YEARS AGO, a handful of forward-looking organizations and individuals looked at a Bay threatened by urban runoff, development, dumping, and overharvesting, and believed that things could be different.

Thanks to their efforts, the U.S. EPA and the State of California in 1988 recognized Santa Monica Bay as one of the country’s “nationally significant” estuaries, and mandated its protection and restoration. We have been at work in the Bay ever since.

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project was formed in 1988, and charged with developing a plan to ensure the long-term health of the 266-square mile Bay and its watershed. That plan, known as the Bay Plan, won state and federal approval in 1995. In 2003, the Bay Restoration Project formally became the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, an independent non-regulatory state entity.

Today, the Commission continues the mission of the Bay Restoration Project, and the ambitious agenda of the Bay Plan.

At the heart of what we do is a shared vision for a restored and healthy Bay. The Bay Restoration Commission embodies a commitment to broad consensus, wise policy, and good science. Over the years, we have secured and leveraged millions of dollars in resources for restoration and brokered lasting partnerships across unlikely sectors. We are proud to promote and fund state-of-the-art science and policy, new technologies, and innovative methods for public education and outreach.

Under the umbrella of our shared vision, the Commission has brought together a unique coalition of elected officials, agencies, scientists, user groups, industries, and environmental organizations, represented in our Governing Board. Sitting at one table, this coalition is working to make our vision for the Bay a reality. It is work that is already making a difference.

Behind the headlines, we are bringing together the people, resources, knowledge, and science that enable change.
Santa Monica Bay is a place of convergence—stand on its edge on any given morning, and you will see the meeting of sand and surf, fresh water and salt, beach-goer and beach wildlife, surfer and sea. This is a place on which millions of people, thousands of species of wildlife, and acres of unique and sensitive natural landscapes depend.

Twenty years later, tremendous strides have been made. Tumors and other diseases once commonly found on fish are now rarely observed. Levels of harmful contaminants have fallen, and most seafood species are now safe to eat.

There is still much to be done. In the pages that follow, you will find stories and examples of how our approach to Bay restoration is continuing to create change. Behind the headlines, we are bringing together the people, resources, knowledge, and science that enable change. The Commission today still represents the shared aspirations of organizations and individuals who believe that things can be different.
LESS THAN 300 YEARS AGO, the Los Angeles River and dozens of streams meandered through broad valleys to the Bay. Flowing through the center of our watershed, Ballona creek was fed by a lacy network of streams from the Hollywood and Baldwin Hills, running into large inland “cienegas” and coastal wetlands. Today, nearly a third of our watershed is beneath concrete. In a region where our natural streams have been built over, redirected, and paved through, how do we translate this historical vision of our watershed into a technically-sound reality in the present day?

It is a question that the Bay Restoration Commission is now looking to tackle. With Natural Channel Design, Inc., the Commission has developed the Los Angeles Regional Curve, which provides a new framework for restoring streams to their natural function. The Regional Curve is an empirically-derived equation that allows engineers and architects to determine the optimal width, depth, and area at which local waterways find their natural equilibrium—carrying water and sediment through the watershed without excessive erosion over time.

In July, the Commission invited engineers, stream restoration professionals, and restoration advocates to a Natural Channel Design training. Twenty-five attendees spent three days studying bankfull channels and their indicators, and incorporating the Regional Curve into restoration design.

Restored streams and natural channels in the Los Angeles area will bring back an incredible menu of ecosystem services: the natural recharge of aquifers, restoration of fisheries and natural habitat, passive treatment of pollutants, and natural stormwater detention. We envision a Los Angeles that embraces natural processes—the ultimate vision of a sustainable city. Alongside our partner agencies and organizations, we are excited to be carrying that vision forward.

A Regional Curve

Once a meandering natural waterway, Ballona Creek was paved in the 1930s as part of the flood control system. The Bay Restoration Commission is the local sponsor of an Army Corps ecosystem restoration feasibility study. Together with our partners we are looking for opportunities to restore natural functions to the creek.
A SMALL DROP OF OIL in an ocean of water may not seem like much. But many small drops can add up. Small spills and leaks from routine boat operation and maintenance discharge an estimated 137 million gallons of oil into the world’s navigable waters annually. To compound the problem, oil is toxic to aquatic organisms in concentrations as low as 0.1 to 0.5 parts per million. That’s just a pint of oil in 250,000 gallons of water.

The Bay is home to nearly 7,500 docked recreational boats and the largest man-made small craft harbor in the world. Boating represents a potentially significant non-point source of oil pollution, sitting right on the waters of the Bay. Through its Boater Education Program, the Bay Restoration Commission is working to keep small spills of oil out of the water. In 2001, we began implementation of a long-term program for capturing, collecting and recycling oil from recreational watercraft.

Through the program, oil absorbents—soft pads and pillows which absorb oil but repel water—are distributed to boat owners for use around engine compartments, during routine maintenance, and in the clean up of small accidental spills. Boat owners take used pads to local collection sites, where they can be exchanged for new ones, free of charge. A private hauler reclaims and re-refines the oil collected from the pads, and the pads themselves are recycled into new absorbents. Over time, the program sought to secure stable, permanent funding for each site and transition operation to private marinas and local government.

Five years later, we are completing the transition of the last pad exchange location in Santa Monica Bay to operation by the County of Los Angeles. We continue to work on sites outside of the Bay in the greater Los Angeles Region.

Since its inception, the pad exchange program has collected an estimated 217 gallons of oil annually. Each year, gallons of oil are being kept out of the water, one small drop at a time. A little goes a long way.

While boating is vital to the local economy and an iconic recreational use of the Bay, sewage, oil, debris, and toxic paints and cleaners from boats can degrade very thing that makes boating here so special—the Bay itself. The Bay Restoration Commission is continuing to work with boat owners, marinas, and local governments to protect environmental quality in Marina del Rey and King Harbor.
The South Bay stretches along the southern portion of the Santa Monica Bay coastline, and is home to unique sandy dune, beach bluff, and rocky intertidal habitats. Its busy piers, beach bikepaths, world class surf breaks, and wide sandy beaches speak to the coastal lifestyle of Southern California and the importance of the Bay to its beach communities.

A Vision for the South Bay

THE SOUTHERN PORTION of the Bay and watershed—commonly known as the South Bay—is an area characterized by wide beaches, rolling sandy dunes, beach bluffs, and scenic cliffs dropping into unique rocky intertidal zones. In considering what Bay restoration might mean in the South Bay, these communities saw the need to create a comprehensive vision for restoration that could embrace the natural features of their own local landscape.

In 2006, the Bay Restoration Commission brought together minds from local governments, agencies, businesses, and environmental groups from local communities to articulate a vision for Bay restoration in the South Bay. With the help of Stephen Groner Associates, the group put together an ambitious list of projects for a restored Bay, envisioning a South Bay with sustained populations of abalone, restored beach bluffs, sand dunes, and canyons, a system of diversions for treating stormwater runoff, and beaches safe for surfing and swimming year-round.

Big things can happen at the most local level. Based on the list of projects created and recommended by the group, the Bay Restoration Commission funded a pilot “Clean Bay” restaurant certification program. Restaurants can make a significant difference for water quality by reducing litter from food waste and outdoor smoking areas, and ensuring that waste grease doesn’t clog sewer lines. The program rewards restaurants for adopting best practices that reduce the impact of their businesses on the Bay. To date, over 100 restaurants have been certified. The program is the first in Southern California, and one of the first of its kind in the nation.
**Aquatic Invaders: New Zealand Mudsnauls**

Located just 35 miles outside Los Angeles, Malibu Creek watershed is the second-largest watershed draining to Santa Monica Bay. Largely undeveloped—currently only 12% of the area supports development—the watershed provides critical habitat for many native species, including the endangered steelhead trout.

So when the invasive New Zealand mudsnail (Potamopyrgus antipodarum) was discovered there in May 2006, the Bay Restoration Commission lost no time in coordinating and funding the response.

New Zealand mudsnails reproduce parthenogenetically (by cloning), and a single snail is capable of producing a colony of 40 million in the course of just one year. Unchecked, these small snails form dense colonies and can completely cover a stream bed, wreaking havoc on stream ecosystems.

Rapid response is critical to heading off the threats posed by highly invasive species. Thanks to its flexible organization and ability to allocate funds quickly, the Commission was able to respond to the mudsnail invasion decisively and rapidly. With a group of partner agencies and organizations, a number of data collection, coordination, and educational efforts were initiated and funded within just a few weeks of the mudsnail discovery. A 44-site “snail survey” was conducted, establishing the extent of the mudsnail invasion in the Santa Monica Mountains. A comprehensive literature review on snail biology, ecological impacts, decontamination methods, and eradication programs was completed. Agreements to adopt “mudsnail decontamination” procedures were made with stream monitoring groups. Efforts to educate the public on preventing the spread of mudsnails kicked off with the production of trailhead signage, a 2-minute PSA, and the launch of www.mudsnails.com.

While there is no known way to eradicate mudsnails once they have been found in a water body, we are hopeful that the rapid initial response to the mudsnail, and the continued efforts of the Commission and its partners to stem its spread, will lead to containment of the current invasion. As new methods for eradication are found, we can perhaps look forward to a Malibu Creek once again free of invasive mudsnails.
THE BAY AND ITS WATERSHED form a complex system, a web of relationships in which processes, people, politics, landscapes, and living organisms interact. In this environment, good science can inform good policy, good design, and good management. The assimilation of sound ecosystem data into decision-making processes can mean the difference between success and failure.

The Bay Restoration Commission is working to make data on the Bay available for decision makers, connecting current science to current problems. In partnership with researchers from the UCLA Institute of the Environment, the Bay Restoration Commission has developed a database of over 1,700 studies conducted in Santa Monica Bay. Of these, over 1,100 have been summarized and analyzed. The database categorizes research by type, by time period, by place, by habitat type, and by subject (i.e., type of organism, process, pollutant studied). Researchers are now working with members of the Bay Restoration Commission’s Technical Advisory Committee to link the science in these studies to current threats faced by Bay ecosystems—identifying information gaps, and exploring applications of existing data to crucial issues like stormwater pollution, coastal development, and algal blooms.

Where Science and Management Meet

The majority of the reports, papers, and other sources are unpublished or not indexed in other online databases, speaking both to the value and uniqueness of this database for those working in Santa Monica Bay. The database is now available online to local policymakers, stakeholders, advocates, and environmental managers.

We are coming upon a period in which we will face an array of crucial decisions. Decision-makers will determine how TMDL mandates are met, how coastal wetlands will be restored, and what a regional system of marine reserves should look like. Natural change is occurring simultaneously. Oceanographic regime shifts and climate change will have an impact on habitats and the composition of living communities of the Bay. We are committed to good science as an enduring mandate for Bay restoration. The stakes are high. What we do now, and how we do it, will impact the Bay for years to come.
Looking Back

The stories you have seen here represent only a small portion of the work done by the Bay Restoration Commission in 2006. We chose these highlights because they embody what we do best: leveraging resources, getting funding where it’s needed, brokering partnerships, and pushing state-of-the-art science, policy, and management.

In this fiscal year, the Bay Restoration Commission also oversaw the allocation of $3.8 million in state bond monies. This year, with money provided by the Commission, 10.5 miles of streams, more than 110 acres of terrestrial habitat, 31 acres of wetland and lagoon habitat, and over 1/3 of an acre of Bay kelp canopy are being restored. Fourteen systems for infiltrating or diverting and treating stormwater—ranging from low flow diversions to permeable parking lots—are being constructed, keeping millions of gallons of contaminated runoff out of the Bay.

In the areas of science and policy, the Bay Restoration Commission provided vital funding for a new research initiative to assess bottlenose dolphin populations in the Bay. We brought scientists together to develop a comprehensive plan for monitoring the health of Bay ecosystems, and worked with local officials to assess the potential for creating official development “buffer zones” around creeks and streams.

The Bay Restoration Commission was elected to the leadership committee for the Los Angeles County Integrated Water Management Plan, and continued its participation with a number of other local and state advisory boards, including the California Clean Beaches Initiative, and the Malibu Creek Watershed Council. We are also continuing our work with the Ballona Creek Task Force and the Ballona Wetlands Restoration working group, where we are leaders in both the technical and consensus-building aspects in the complex task of restoring these important urban environments, and the Malibu Legacy Park technical advisory committee, to which we bring our years of technical and policy experience in septic system impacts to the sensitive Malibu Creek and Lagoon system. In partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy, we hired a full-time coordinator to facilitate restoration planning for the ecologically-important 1,087 acre Ballona wetlands.

Meetings of our Governing Board and Technical Advisory Committee regularly brought together elected representatives, agency officials, environmental managers, business representatives, environmental organizations, scientists and other experts to talk about issues facing the Bay. This on-going dialogue is one of the key charges of the Commission, and will continue in 2007 and beyond.

...leveraging resources, getting funding where it’s needed, brokering partnerships, and pushing state-of-the-art science, policy, and management.
Great challenges are in front of us. And great opportunities.

**The Coming Year**

There is more to come in 2007. In the coming year, we will release a comprehensive Bay monitoring plan and a first-of-its-kind study on sewage waste from private recreational watercraft. We will be working to develop a suite of environmental indicators for a report card on Bay health, and creating a technical framework to support the process of designating Marine Protected Areas in our region. We plan to initiate a new round of public education (PIE) mini-grants, and release a new journal publication on science and policy issues affecting Santa Monica Bay.

At the polls in November, the people of California again said “yes” to clean water and restored waterways, authorizing a $5.4 billion Clean Water, Parks and Coastal Protection bond. The vote affirmed the shared hope of people in this state for restored water resources, and California as a place where people and animals coexist in a renewed natural landscape. Up to $63 million of the bond issue has been allocated specifically for projects in Santa Monica Bay, with $18 million to be overseen by the Bay Restoration Commission.

**And Beyond**

We are entering a time of historic change. We face the mandate of tough new water quality standards, in the context of rising population growth. We must create new areas of protection in our ocean, while preserving historic fisheries for fishing. We will tackle stream restoration and flood protection together, in the second-most populous metropolitan area in the country. We will need to think about the intersection between air quality and water quality, and the accessibility of open, natural places to everyone in our region.

For all of those working in Santa Monica Bay, this is an exciting time to be at work. Great challenges are in front of us. And great opportunities. We are looking forward to all that is ahead.
**FINANCIAL SUMMARY (October 1, 2005 - September 30, 2006)**

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation and the Santa Monica Bay Authority partner with the Commission to make funds and resources available for restoration of the Santa Monica Bay and its watershed. Provided below is the financial summary for all three partners to reflect the total resources made available through these partnerships for the work of preserving, protecting, and restoring the Bay.

### Table: Financial Summary

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<th>Authority (SMBRA) (a)</th>
<th>Foundation (SMBRF)</th>
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<td>Bond Monies (b)</td>
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### Foundation Assets and Liabilities (c)

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<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
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<td>1,398,483</td>
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</table>

|                        |              |                        |            |
| **LIABILITIES**        |              |                        |            |
| Accounts Payable       | 34,030       | -                      | 34,030     |
| Accrued Liabilities    | 12,935       | -                      | 12,935     |
| Deferred Revenue       | 48,500       | -                      | 48,500     |
| **Total Liabilities**  | 95,465       | -                      | 95,465     |

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<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td>1,398,483</td>
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</table>

(a) The financial summary provided for the Commission and the JPA were not prepared by a certified public accountant, but by administrative staff at the Commission. The numbers provided here are intended to provide a general overview of the resources of the Commission and JPA, and do not necessarily meet GAP standards.

(b) Bond monies are held in account by the CA State Coastal Conservancy and the CA State Water Resources Control Board for projects in Santa Monica Bay. The Bay Commission is responsible for soliciting, selecting, and overseeing the projects funded by these monies. The amount reported here reflects the total amount allocated by the Bay Restoration Commission in FY 06 for projects in the Bay and watershed.

(c) Assets and liabilities are provided for the Foundation only.
SO MUCH DEPENDS ON THE BAY. The open water of the Bay creates the western border of Los Angeles’ sprawling urban landscape, down to which all water in the area flows. The Bay is a cornerstone of the local ecology, on which unique and sensitive wetlands, sand dunes, kelp forests, lagoons, and stream systems depend. More than 5,000 species of plants and animals—at least ten of which are endangered or threatened—make their home in the Bay’s watershed and coastal waters. Millions of people in Southern California—and beyond—rely on the Bay for work and for play. Surfing, diving, fishing, boating, and beach-going generate millions of dollars to the local economy. An estimated 45 million people visit the beaches of the Bay each year.

If we depend on the Bay, the Bay also depends on us. It is why the call for stewardship has been growing ever louder. Over the last century, urbanization and development have destroyed more than 95 percent of the Bay’s historic coastal wetlands and degraded much of the remaining 5 percent. Pesticides dumped from chemical plants have created a legacy of contaminated sediments in the southern portion of the Bay. Contaminated storm water continues to close beaches to surfers and swimmers during the winter months.

Stewardship is a call to all of us. By donating funds or volunteering time, by speaking out, by adopting policies that protect and improve the Bay, and by reaching out to our neighbors and our communities, we can all contribute to a restored and healthy Santa Monica Bay.

Stewardship is a call to all of us.
GOVERNING BOARD

Executive Committee

Richard Bloom*, Mayor, City of Santa Monica (Public Member, At-Large)
Tracy Egoscue*, Executive Director, Santa Monica Baykeeper (Public Member, Public Interest)
Mark Gold*, Executive Director, Heal the Bay (Public Member, Public Interest)
Sheila Kuehl, State Senator, 23rd District
H. David Nahai*, Chair, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jack Weiss*, Councilmember, City of Los Angeles District 5 (President, Bay Watershed Council)+
Don Wolfe*, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

Linda Adams*, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency
Angus Alexander, Los Angeles County Fire Department Lifeguard Division
Loris "Ryan" Broddrick, Director, California Department of Fish and Game
Julia Brownley, State Assemblymember, 41st District
Charles Caspary, President, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
Michael Chrisman*, Secretary California Resources Agency
Ruth Coleman, Director, California Department of Parks and Recreation
John Dorsey, Loyola Marymount University (SMBRC Technical Advisory Committee Chair)
Joe Edmiston, Executive Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Mike Gin*, Mayor, City of Redondo Beach (Representative, South Bay Cities)
Bob Hoffman, Assistant Regional Administrator for Habitat Conservation, NOAA Fisheries Southwest Division
Jeff Jennings*, Councilmember, City of Malibu (Public Member, At-Large)
Ted Lieu, State Assemblymember, 53rd District
Ann Notthoff*, California State Coastal Conservancy
Jenny Oropeza, State Senator, 28th District
Jovita Pajarillo, US EPA Region IX
Jeffrey Prang*, Councilmember, City of West Hollywood (Representative, Ballona Watershed Cities)
Rita Robinson*, Director, Los Angeles City Department of Public Works
Bill Rosendahl*, Councilmember, City of Los Angeles District 11
Marvin Sachse*, Brash Industries (Public Member, Business Interest)
Sandra Shewry, Director, California Department of Health Services
Rod Spackman, Chevron, Corp. (President, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation)
James Stahl*, General Manager, Los Angeles County Sanitation District
Antonio Villaraigosa*, Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Sara Wan, Commissioner*, California Coastal Commission
Dennis Washburn*, Mayor, City of Calabasas (Representative, Malibu Watershed Cities)
Stan Wisniewski, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors
Zev Yaroslavsky*, Supervisor, County of Los Angeles 3rd District (Representative, Board of Supervisors)

* Voting Member of the Governing Board, + Commission Chair

Shelley Luce, Executive Director
Guangyu Wang, Deputy Director
Scott Valor, Director of Government Affairs
Miwa Tamanaha, Communications Director
Joel Hanson, Administrative Director
Jack Topel, Environmental Scientist
Stefanie Hada, Environmental Scientist
Jessica Hall, Ballona Watershed Coordinator
Sean Bergquist, Ballona Wetlands Restoration Coordinator
Grace Lee, Boater Education Program Coordinator

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission is led by a 35-member Governing Board, consisting of 20 voting members, 11 non-voting members, and 4 legislative members. The Governing Board meets six times annually. The Governing Board also elects a 7-member Executive Committee which meets in the month prior to Governing Board meetings.

The Commission is advised by a Technical Advisory Committee, made up of scientists, engineers, and other other experts, which meets six times annually. The broad stakeholder advisory group of the Commission is the 74-member Bay Watershed Council, which convenes once a year.

A great thanks is owed to all those who participate in the Commission, and its mission to protect and restore Santa Monica Bay.