



ENVIRONMENT



PORT OF SAN DIEGO ENVIRONMENT

*Preserving San Diego Bay
for our children —
and other living things*

There is much to protect and manage:

thousands of acres of vital natural habitat, including salt marsh, tidal flats and undersea beds of eelgrass. Hundreds of species live in or around the Bay, from fish to birds to reptiles. The 3,500-acre San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, South Bay Unit contains 1,050 acres of working salt ponds, resting and feeding spots for migratory birds, and eelgrass habitats which provide food for the endangered Eastern Pacific green sea turtles.

The Bay is also a critical fish nursery: 67 percent of the fish in the Bay are juveniles. These fish are important. Some, like the anchovy, kelp bass and California halibut, are important commercial species. Others simply enrich the Bay's diversity, biological health and our enjoyment of it.



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San Diego Bay is a public treasure and trust.

ENVIRONMENT

environment



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Among the Bay's residents are nine species listed by the federal and/or state government as endangered or threatened, such as the Eastern Pacific green sea turtle (60 live in the Bay) and the California Least Tern, a delicate shorebird that nests on open sand dunes.

Protecting these animals and their habitats requires constant vigilance and effort. It demands diverse programs incorporating both the latest thinking and technologies of environmental science, and the inherent goodwill and deeds of citizens and visitors. It also entails a solid financial commitment and consistent educational outreach.

Among the many programs encouraged or led by the Port of San Diego are:

- **THE PORT'S ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE.** Comprised of representatives from academic, resource, regulatory and advocacy groups, the Environmental Committee was established to provide the Port with valuable input on its environmental programs. The group convenes regularly at meetings open to the public, and also evaluates and reviews projects eligible for funding from the Environmental Fund.
- **STORM WATER MANAGEMENT.** The urbanized areas around San Diego Bay and throughout its watershed require continual efforts to reduce or eliminate sources of pollution that can be carried by rainfall runoff to the Bay. The Port's Storm Water Management Program is a major element of the Port's commitment to preventing and reducing the discharge of polluted storm water into the Bay.

- **GREEN PORT PROGRAM.** In 2007, the Board of Port Commissioners adopted the Environmental Sustainability Policy, which provides guiding principles to achieve long-term environmental, societal and economic benefits through resource conservation, waste reduction and pollution prevention. The Green Port Program has been developed to support the goals of this policy. The program unifies the Port's sustainability goals in six key areas, including water, energy, air, sustainable development, sustainable business practices and waste management.
- **CLEAN AIR PROGRAM.** An integral part of the Green Port Program, the Clean Air Program is a voluntary effort to identify and control local Port-related sources of air pollution. The Port of San Diego is the first California port to voluntarily adopt a program of this type.
- **NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.** The Port is actively involved with protecting San Diego Bay's natural resources, such as salt marshes, tidal flats, bird nesting and foraging sites, eelgrass beds, and endangered and threatened species. The Port partners with agencies such as the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to promote ecologically minded development decisions, manage sensitive habitats and invasive species and support related scientific research.
- **REMEDIATION.** Periodically, regulations require the Port to conduct investigations of contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater at areas undergoing redevelopment. After an investigation, remediation projects may be necessary to protect human health and preserve the environment. The Port has spent millions of dollars on remediation projects, many of which involved cleaning up contamination that pre-dates the formation of the Port.

- **THE PORT ENVIRONMENTAL FUND.** Established in 2006 to finance projects to restore and maintain the Bay's natural habitats, the fund is supported by an annual contribution of one-half of one percent of the Port's projected gross revenue. Jump-started with \$5 million, first-year efforts included building underwater habitats to boost fish reproduction rates, removing abandoned debris, restoring salt marshes, erecting nesting platforms for ospreys, and conducting environmental outreach programs.
- **EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH.** The Port partners with local agencies and schools to increase knowledge of the history and ecosystems of the Bay, its current uses, its wildlife and related environmental protection programs. Several local non-profit organizations are involved in this program, which involves teaching the public about the importance of a healthy San Diego Bay and watershed.
- **PUBLIC EVENTS.** Bay clean-up days, where local volunteers clean up trash and debris both on the shore and beneath the Bay's surface, are held annually. Operation Clean Sweep, which is held in June, is organized by the San Diego Port Tenants association and sponsored by the Port of San Diego. Other events, such as California Coastal Clean-up Day, are also sponsored by the Port.



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