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## **STATE OF THE BAY Conference on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> Focuses on Water in Five-Year Progress on Restoring, Protecting Santa Monica Bay**

### **California Natural Resources Agency Secretary John Laird to Keynote**

#### **Registration Now Open, Space is Limited**

Los Angeles, CA (August 13, 2015) – Water—perhaps the earth’s most transformative substance—is the common thread through all the presentations and panels at the upcoming [“State of the Bay 2015” conference](#) on September 9, 2015. The conference—reflecting on the upcoming *State of the Bay 2015* report—occurs every five years, offering presentations on the progress of restoring and protecting Santa Monica Bay and its watershed, which is home to millions of Angelenos and visitors. The conference features the great amount of work and research that is conducted in LA and southern California to protect and restore our natural resources, adapt to climate change and face the challenges and opportunities associated with water supply in a time of enduring drought.

Both the conference and report are produced jointly by The Bay Foundation (TBF), the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC), and the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies at LMU. The conference will be held at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in the new Life Sciences Building. [Registration](#) is now open.

Prof. Richard Ambrose, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, will set the stage for the day’s presentations and panels with the morning Plenary Presentation. Ambrose is Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee that leads the multi-year collaborative effort of study, with participation of outside experts and several partner agencies and organizations, to produce the *State of the Bay 2015* report. The report will be available for free online beginning the day of the conference.

California’s Natural Resources Agency [Secretary John Laird](#) will present the lunchtime keynote address to the audience of scientists, academics, municipalities, agencies and community members. He will discuss the state’s drought and water conservation efforts, and provide a state perspective on the importance of protecting and restoring natural resources and adapting to climate change.



Presenters and panelists will discuss findings and ideas from the report's latest research, assessments, and case studies during multiple concurrent sessions focusing on the following topics:

- Water Resources: Adapting to Impacts of Climate Change
- Water Quality: New Challenges and Innovative Solutions
- Urban Watersheds: Connecting Cities to Nature
- Marine Resources: Restoring Healthy Oceans for All

"This conference brings to life our upcoming State of the Bay Report, reflecting an incredible amount of study and discussion occurring over the last five years by our Technical Advisory Committee about Santa Monica Bay's issues and its condition," states TBF Executive Director Tom Ford. "This is one of our best opportunities to bring together great minds from across the State to focus on the near future of water, wildlife, and the health of our local environment, from the top of our ridgelines to the bottom of the ocean floor. To that end, I can't think of anyone more appropriate, and we are honored that Secretary Laird will be our keynote speaker emphasizing the importance of life and water."

Click [HERE](#) to view the Agenda. Conference highlights include:

- "Water Management Strategies and the Impacts of Climate Change" (10:30am) will offer presentations on what efforts have been made at the State and local level to promote new ways of managing our limited water resources in response to the drought and impacts of climate change. One presentation will feature the State Coastal Conservancy's Climate Ready grant program. The next will present City of Los Angeles' new effort to bring all city departments together to develop and implement a comprehensive plan to achieve water sustainability by 2040. Last, Prof. Stanley Grant of UC Irvine will explain what our State and City are learning and adopting from Australia's response to its Millennium Drought.
- "WMP and EWMP – New Opportunities and Challenges" (2:30pm) panel discussion will review an unprecedented course of action for the Los Angeles region. The LARWQCB has provided the County and all cities in the County the opportunity to develop and implement a watershed management plan (WMP) or an enhanced watershed management plan (EWMP) to meet their requirements as permittees under the Los Angeles County Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit. Considered a game changer, this will propel the wide adoption of low impact development (LID) practices, green streets, and regional, multi-benefit stormwater retention projects, which will not only reduce storm water pollution but also help to increase local water supply. The newly developed WMPs and EWMPs draw from the knowledge gained through the development and implementation of these landscape approaches to water management, in LA and elsewhere, but nothing has been proposed on this [EWMP] scale in the United States.
- "Sustaining and Restoring Biodiversity in an Urban Environment" (2:30pm) panel discussion will advance the effort initiated by City of Los Angeles Councilmember Paul



Koretz with The Bay Foundation's support and participation, to protect and improve biodiversity in the City's urban environment. This is based on the recognition that our region is one of the 35 recognized biodiversity hotspots on the planet, that there are still a lot of native habitats and wildlife even in the dense urban environment, and that biodiverse landscape provide multiple benefits to residents. The effort aims to increase the awareness and promote best practices through research, outreach, citizen science projects, etc. The panel discussion will review the need, best strategies and next steps to push these efforts forward.

- "Beneath the Surface-Top to Bottom" (10:30am) presentations will focus on the living environment that is Santa Monica Bay, starting with ocean acidification (OA), an issue related to climate change and nutrient inputs to our coastal oceans. Concerns about how OA will affect organisms, in their relative health and distribution are of key interest. Next will be a focus on how ecological restoration can take barren reefs and, surprisingly fast, turn them back into kelp forests supporting hundreds of species while directly benefiting the local economy. Closing out the morning session is a talk regarding great white sharks in the Bay, where they are, what they're doing, why they're here.
- During the afternoon reception, a short tour of the brand new, state-of-the-art Life Sciences Building will be lead by one of the buildings architects, Arnold Swanborn of CO Architects. The building features renewable energy technology, solar screen, green roof, research garden, and other LEED designs.

The conference will review the day's discussions, looking forward, with a Plenary Panel entitled "The Bay in 2020" (3:30pm). Panelists will include elected officials, agency representatives and academic researchers, and will be moderated by TBF's Executive Director Tom Ford.

TBF and the SMBRC are partners in the [Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program](#) (SMBNEP); the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies is a joint program of TBF and the Seaver College of Science and Engineering at LMU. The upcoming *State of the Bay 2015* report will cover all major Bay habitats and a broad range of issues, which follow closely the three priority issues addressed by the SMBNEP's [Bay Restoration Plan](#) (BRP): water quality, natural resources, and benefits and values to humans.

#### **About The Bay Foundation (TBF)**

The Bay Foundation (TBF) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit environmental group founded in 1990 to contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the Santa Monica Bay (LA-Ventura county line to the Palos Verdes Peninsula) and local coastal waters. TBF and the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission are partners in the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (SMBNEP), one of 28 entities that comprise the National Estuary Program established pursuant to Section 320 of the Clean Water Act. TBF raises and expends funds for research, education, planning, cleanup efforts and other priorities identified in the SMBNEP's *Bay Restoration Plan*. As advocates for the Bay, TBF works collaboratively with a broad group of stakeholders, including government agencies, industry, environmental groups, and scientists, to implement innovative policies and projects that clean up the waterways, create green spaces and natural habitats in the Los Angeles region. TBF conducts research and mentors student interns and volunteers through its Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies at Loyola Marymount University. ([www.santamonicabay.org](http://www.santamonicabay.org))

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### **About the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission**

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) is a non-regulatory, locally-based state entity established by an act of the California Legislature in 2002. The SMBRC and non-profit The Bay Foundation are partners in the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (SMBNEP), one of 28 entities that comprise the National Estuary Program established pursuant to Section 320 of the Clean Water Act. The SMBRC is charged with overseeing and promoting the SMBNEP's *Bay Restoration Plan* by securing and leveraging funding to put solutions into action, building public-private partnerships, promoting cutting-edge research and technology, facilitating stakeholder-driven consensus processes, and raising public awareness. The SMBRC brings together local, state, and federal agencies, environmental groups, businesses, scientists, and members of the public on its 36-member Governing Board. The SMBRC is also supported by a Technical Advisory Committee, and a broad stakeholder body, the Watershed Advisory Council. ([www.smbrc.ca.gov](http://www.smbrc.ca.gov))

### **About Loyola Marymount University**

Located between the Pacific Ocean and downtown Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University is a comprehensive university offering 60 major programs, 36 master's degrees and a doctoral degree in education from four colleges, two schools and Loyola Law School. Founded in 1911, LMU is ranked third in "Best Regional Universities/West" by U.S. News & World Report. LMU is the largest Jesuit Catholic university for undergraduates on the West Coast with more than 5,900 undergraduate students and more than 3,000 graduate and law students. For more LMU news and events [please click HERE](#).

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