



Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project

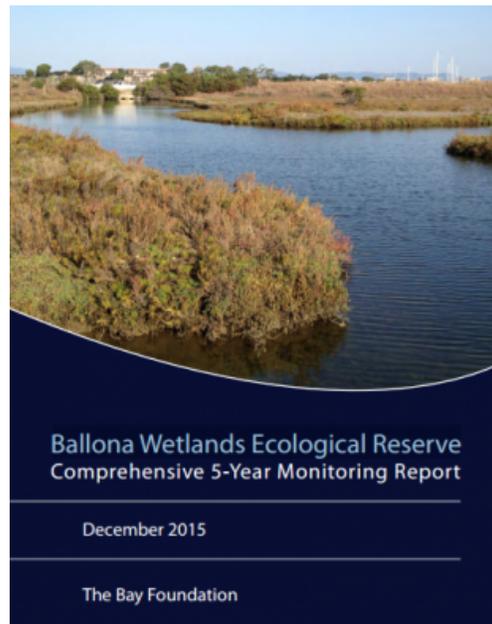
Advancing ecosystem health. Connecting communities with nature.



Spring 2016

Ballona 5-Year Monitoring Report Released!

In 2009, The Bay Foundation (TBF) initiated a long-term monitoring program to assess the ecological condition of the Reserve with support from State Coastal Conservancy and CDFW. The program was developed to comprehensively survey the biological, chemical, and physical characteristics needed to inform the state's restoration planning process at the Reserve, as well as to develop baseline information and data to assist long-term and regional monitoring programs. This final, five-year report presents data collected during all five years of the monitoring program and compares results across years to evaluate trends over time.



The report's overriding conclusion drawn from the data is that the Reserve is experiencing slowly deteriorating conditions across most of the areas that are hydrologically disconnected from tidal influence. These areas are disconnected largely due to the presence of the Ballona Creek levees, along with the large amount of sediment—approximately 3.1 million cubic yards—dumped on what was

historic wetlands. These two key negative impacts have caused a lack of connection to water sources that would normally flow in and out of wetlands, and a continued influx of non-native and invasive vegetation, such as mustard and iceplant.

[FULL REPORT HERE](#)

[Focused Iceplant eXtraction at Ballona \("FIX Ballona"\) to Begin this Summer](#)

The California Coastal Commission approved a permit at their March meeting for TBF's project, in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, to remove invasive iceplant from a targeted three-acre area within the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. The project, which is based on community participation, will utilize solarization techniques to desiccate the iceplant over a two-month period, by spreading black tarps over patches of iceplant to dry it out and give native species a chance to grow in its place.



Removing iceplant, which is widely known as a creeping invasive plant, will help protect the remaining native flora that will be critical to reestablishing vegetation on the Reserve in the future. Iceplant reduces biodiversity and competes directly with native wetland species. Its removal, and subsequent introduction of native wetland species, will increase the health and condition of the wetland habitats in the Reserve.

Stay tuned to be involved in a public event this summer!

[CDFW & Partners Clean Up the Reserve](#)

[California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) (CDFW) continues to repair or replace perimeter fencing, remove debris left by the homeless and illegal construction dumping, and CDFW wildlife officers patrol the wetlands and perimeter in

partnership with LAPD, LACSD, and Mountain Resource Conservation Authority (MRCA) Rangers. To date, approximately 50 repairs have been made to the fence line, with about 600 feet replaced, and 45 tons of debris has been removed. Drone use, illegal dog walking, camping and trespassing remain ongoing issues at the Reserve. If any unusual or concerning activities are witnessed at BWER, please contact CALTIP at 1-888-334-2258, or submit anonymous tips to CDFW using tip411, which enables the public to text message an anonymous tip to wildlife officers and lets the officers respond back creating an anonymous two-way conversation. **Anyone with a cell phone may send an anonymous tip to CDFW by texting "CALTIP", followed by a space and the message, to 847411 (tip411).**



The photos below are a small example of the problems faced throughout the Reserve.



Debris clean-up crew (Photo: E. Read & Assoc.)



Fence repair (Photo: CDFW)



Large debris (Photo: CDFW)

9 Restoration Principles to Support Health Wetlands

Over 95% of coastal wetlands have been lost to development and infill in Los Angeles County. Of those that remain, many have been impaired, lost functions, and are badly in need of restoration. A diverse group of environmental organizations including Heal the Bay, Friends of Ballona Wetlands, Surfrider

Foundation, Friends of the Los Angeles River, and many others endorsed a set of Nine Wetland Restoration Principles that all successful projects should follow.



To restore natural processes and functions to an impaired wetland, a project must have clear goals; thorough knowledge of the site's history, its current conditions, and how climate change and sea-level rise will impact its future; detailed baseline monitoring; public access that is compatible with restoration goals; and involvement with interested stakeholders. The Ballona Restoration Project is a great local example of the implementation of these principles.

For a complete list of the **Nine Principles**, please click [here](#).

Ballona in the News

Argonaut ONLINE: "Killing Plants to Save the Wetlands" ([LINK](#))

Daily Breeze: "Conservationists Target Ice Plant Invading Ballona Wetlands" ([LINK](#))



(Photo: L. Fimiani)

LMU | Center for Urban Resilience's blog: Dr. Edith Read's latest paper, "A Flora of the Ballona Wetlands and Environs" has been published in the Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences. ([LINK](#))

Public Events

Friends of the Ballona Wetlands

Habitat Restoration Volunteer Days are the fourth Saturday of each month!

April 23, 2016 -- special Earth Day event

Click [HERE](#) for more information (PDF) and [HERE](#) for map.

Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority
Explore Ballona Wetlands! Drop by for a guided tour of Ballona Wetlands. Walk the trail, see new sights, and deepen your understanding of the wetlands with hand-on activities.



April 16th, May 21st, and June 18th

Tour starts at 10am and 11am.

Meet at the Fiji Gateway [[MAP](#)]

Questions: 310-858-7272 x 131 | LAMountains.com

Restoration Update

The project partners anticipate releasing the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) around the middle of summer 2016.

Project Schedule

August 2012

Initial Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation

August 16, 2012

Scoping Meeting

August - October 2012

Scoping Comment Period

January 2013

Revised Notice of Preparation (for a Visitor Education Center, which since has been withdrawn from the Project)

January - March 2013

Second Scoping Comment Period (for the now withdrawn Visitor Education Center)

Spring 2013 - Winter 2015

Prepare Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR)

Spring 2015 - Spring 2016

Internal Agency Review & Revision of Administrative Draft EIS/EIR

Summer 2016

Release Draft EIS/EIR for Public Review

Summer 2016

Public Comment Period, including Public Comment Meeting on the Draft EIS/EIR
(specific date TBD)

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