



# baywire

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

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## Governing Board Fills Malibu Creek Cities Vacancy

By unanimous vote, the Governing Board elected Malibu City Council Member John Sibert to the board. Council Member Sibert will serve as a voting member of the Governing Board for the remainder of the 2008-2009 term. On the board, he represents the Malibu Creek watershed cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and Westlake Village. Welcome aboard, John!

## New Technical Advisory Committee Member Appointed

The Governing Board appointed Ranier Hoenicke to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at its February meeting. Dr. Hoenicke is the interim Executive Director of the San Francisco Estuary Institute, an organization with which the Commission's TAC has greatly benefited due to past collaboration and information exchange.

Dr. Hoenicke played a key role in helping expand the National Estuary Program to Southern California and establish the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project (SMBRP), the predecessor of the Bay Restoration Commission. He served as lead scientist for the SMBRP until he first joined the San Francisco Estuary Institute in 1994. After a two-year stint in the Office of the California Resources Secretary, where he spearheaded the development of a comprehensive landscape assessment program and the use of scientific criteria in making conservation investment decisions. He returned to the Institute in 2004.

Dr. Hoenicke received his B.S. in Agricultural Sciences from the University of Bonn, Germany, and his Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of California at Davis. After completing a postdoctoral fellowship at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, he coordinated field logistics for EPA's National Acid Precipitation Program.

## Governing Board Discusses Potential County-Wide Fee to Address Water Quality Issues

To address the ongoing water quality issues facing a growing Los Angeles County, State Assembly Member (and Governing Board member) Julia Brownley introduced Assembly Bill 139 this legislative session. Sponsored by the LA County Flood Control District, the bill would authorize the County to put to local voters the decision to determine whether or not they are willing to be assessed a fee that could be applied to water quality and other infrastructure issues in the region.

According to the District, the complexity of the District's drainage infrastructure calls for a state-of-the-art flood protection, water quality and water conservation system. Due to the constraints of Proposition 218, passed by voters in 1996, no property tax or fee could be levied on a group of property owners without their consent through a ballot measure. A property-related fee must be approved by either at least 2/3 of the registered voters at a general election or by simple majority of those ballots that are returned

## MEETING UPDATE

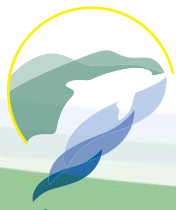
- *Malibu Creek Cities Vacancy Filled*
- *Technical Advisory Committee Member Appointed*
- *Potential County-Wide Fee to Address Water Quality Issues Discussed*
- *Marine Protected Area Presentation*
- *Options for Palos Verdes Shelf Cleanup Presentation*

## SAVE the DATE

2009 Governing Board meetings will be held on:

*Apr 16*  
*Jun 18*  
*Aug 20*  
*Oct 15*  
*Dec 17*

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by the affected property owners through a mail ballot election. Assembly Member Brownley's bill would authorize that election to take place.

Governing Board members took no action on the bill, but a lively discussion among the various city, county, and regional representatives on the Commission ensued. Issues raised include how the cities and county might share revenues, what environmental issues need to be addressed, and what decision-making mechanisms might be put into place assuming that the voters approve the fee.

Because the potential water quality improvements from such a fee are consistent with the Commission's Bay Restoration Plan, Governing Board members and staff will be closely following AB 139 as it makes its way through the legislative process.

## Marine Protected Area Presentation

The Bay Restoration Commission's work on understanding and potentially establishing a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Southern California was presented by TAC Chair Dr. Rich Ambrose and the Commission's Marine Policy Specialist, Lia Protopapadakis. Dr. Ambrose informed the Governing Board about the science behind MPAs. He noted that the State of California has committed to establishing MPAs because they have been shown to improve the otherwise declining beneficial uses from the ocean. Dr. Ambrose also noted how water quality can impact the effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas.

Ms. Protopapadakis explained the Bay Restoration Commission's ongoing involvement in studying and potentially establishing an MPA in the region. Among other things, she noted that MPAs can promote healthy marine ecosystems, which enhances tourism. She also noted that the establishment process is stakeholder based.

For more information on the Bay Restoration Commission's work in on this issue, go to [santamonicabay.org](http://santamonicabay.org).

## Options for Palos Verdes Shelf Cleanup Presented

US EPA Superfund Program's latest proposal to remediate historical contamination of the Palos Verdes Shelf was presented to the Governing Board by EPA Region 9's Federal Facilities & Site Cleanup Branch Chief Mike Montgomery and Remedial Project Manager Carmen White.

Mr. Montgomery gave a brief overview on the history and current condition of contamination at the site. The contamination came from discharge of DDT by a manufacturing plant near Torrance, as well as PCBs from several other industries discharged through the sewer system that emptied into the Pacific Ocean off White Point on the Palos Verdes Shelf (PVS). Though significantly decreased from the historical levels, high levels of DDT and PCBs continue to move from contaminated sediments into the water, enter the food chain, and accumulate in fish tissues, which may be consumed by and harm other marine life or humans who feed on them.

Ms. White then presented the latest results of EPA's evaluation on the feasibility of various measures aimed at reducing the ecological and human health risks posed by these contaminants. Options under consideration include continued implementation of ongoing institutional control measures, which involves risk communication, enforcement of fishing restrictions, and monitoring. Engineering solutions to isolate the contaminated sediments through capping are also being proposed. EPA plans to select a preferred option and release it for public comments very soon.

Bay Restoration Commission staff continually monitors EPA's efforts and will provide updates as efforts progress.