

State Water Resources Control Board

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STATE WATER BOARD AWARDS OVER FOUR MILLION DOLLARS TO LOS ANGELES AREA TO CURB BEACH POLLUTION

Sacramento - The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has approved five grants totaling \$4.1 million that will go mainly to the city and county of Los Angeles to help keep urban runoff from polluting the ocean along Santa Monica Bay beaches during dry-weather months. Terry Tamminen, Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA), will speak at the formal presentation ceremony on May 7 at Will Rogers State Beach in Pacific Palisades.

Funding for the projects comes from the Clean Beaches Initiative, part of Proposition 13, the Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection and Flood Protection Act of 2000. Passed by voters, the \$1.97 billion bond program funds projects that protect the State's waterways, beaches, and drinking water. Some of the grant money also comes from The Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act of 2002, Proposition 40. (Proposition funds are not part of the State's General Fund.)

Terry Tamminen, Secretary for Environmental Protection and a strong proponent of the Clean Beaches Initiative observed, "Clean Beaches projects are construction projects which demonstrate sustained, long-term water quality protection benefits. These projects get to the causes of beach closures and use diversion, repairs and treatment to alleviate bacterial contamination and keep our beaches open."

One of the grants, for a lesser amount, has been earmarked for a Southern California research project, to monitor the effectiveness of these type of state grant projects and to devise a way to reduce bacteria levels in difficult areas, such as enclosed bays.

"Reducing the public health threat created by contaminated urban runoff has been a priority of Cal/EPA for many years. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's standard of zero trash in our rivers and creeks compliments these Clean Beach Projects. Congratulations to each of the grant recipients. I look forward to joining you at the dedication ceremony when construction of these important projects is complete," said Fran Diamond, Chair of the Los Angeles Regional Board.

The Clean Beaches Initiative provided \$35 million for coastal cleanup projects throughout the state, to alleviate the health hazards and beach postings and closures caused by non-point source pollution. Proposition 40 also contributed funds for Clean Beach projects, bringing the total funding of non-point source pollution to \$76 million. Non-point source pollution is urban runoff contaminated by pesticides, fertilizers, animal wastes, oil, grease, sediments, and other toxics used in our everyday lives.

Background Information for Projects Receiving Grants

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District. The District will receive two \$550 thousand grants for the construction of the County's low flow diversion project. Both projects will prevent contaminated urban runoff from reaching Dockweiler and Will Rogers State Beaches and shoreline waters by diverting the flow to the City of Los Angeles's sanitary sewer. These projects will help improve coastal water quality, reduce the number of dry weather beach warnings and closures, and protect public health. Both projects are located in Los Angeles County with one at the intersection of Vista Del Mar and Century Boulevard at Dockweiler State Beach and the other at 16321 Pacific Coast Highway in Pacific Palisades at Will Rogers State Beach. The Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act provided the funds from Proposition 40 for these grants.

The Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project (SCCWRP). SCCWRP will receive a \$250,000 grant for the Clean Beach Monitoring and Circulation Project. The first goal of the project involves an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of projects funded by the Clean Beaches Initiative. The second goal of the project will be to develop effective strategies and methods for improving bacterial water quality at the most difficult locations – enclosed bays. The Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act provided the funds from Proposition 40 for this grant.

The County of Los Angeles' Department of Beaches and Harbors. The County will receive a \$1,750,000 grant for the second phase of the Marina (Mother's) Beach Water Quality Improvement Project. The County will use the grant to address chronic bacterial contamination at Marina Beach. The project will have two parts consisting of redirecting local urban and storm water runoff from Basin D where Marina Beach is located and installing water circulation pumps within Basin D to reduce the density of bacteria in Basin D waters. These two parts of the project are expected to reduce postings at Marina Beach. The project is located in the County of Los Angeles. The grant money was appropriated in the Budget Act of 2001 using funds from the Costa-Machado Water Act of 2000, Coastal Nonpoint Source Control Program.

The City of Los Angeles. The City will receive a \$1,050,000 grant for replacement of defective drainage and sewer pipes and repair bird exclusion structures at Inner Cabrillo Beach to reduce the number of violations of bacterial water quality standards at the beach. The grant money was appropriated in the Budget Act of 2001 using funds from the Costa-Machado Water Act of 2000, Coastal Nonpoint Source Control Program.

Here are a few additional facts:

- The County of Los Angeles is a popular beach destination. Beachgoers have contributed more than \$60 billion to California's economy in a single year.
- The County experiences a significant number of beach closures due to high concentrations of indicator bacteria. Based on Los Angeles County data, the beaches were closed 33.6 Beach- Mile Days (BMD's) in 2000, 34.06 BMD's in 2001, 0 BMD's in 2002, and 6 BMD's in 2003.
- Urban runoff contains bacteria-laden animal waste, lawn & garden fertilizers, gas & oil from cars, and plastic trash.

- Health hazards from bacteria contamination can affect swimmers, surfers, and beach goers.
- When a beach is closed due to contamination, the economic effect can be devastating to local business owners.
- Diverting urban runoff to a waste water treatment plant will help prevent this contamination from occurring.

Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program

The State Water Resources Control Board has been tasked with the distribution of funds for the Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program. The Budget Act of 2001 allocated \$32.3 million of Proposition 13 funds to implement projects to prevent bacterial contamination from causing the closure of California beaches. To further the effort, \$46 million from Proposition 40, the Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act of 2002 was appropriated to help organizations – local, public, and non-profit – implement projects that assist in coastal water quality protection.

Clean Beaches funding was used for the following types of projects:

- Diverting or treating urban runoff (the most common use of CBI grant funds.)
- Implementing Best Management Practices to reduce or eliminate sources.
- Implementing circulation improvements.
- Conducting studies to determine source(s) and evaluate alternative corrective actions followed by implementation of corrective actions.

For additional information on the CBI Grant Program, please visit the State Water Resources Control Board's website at

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/cwphome/beaches/index.html>.