



San Diego Wetlands

San Diego, CA



Agua Hedionda Lagoon



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http://ceres.ca.gov/wetlands/geo_info/so_cal/agua_hedionda.html



The Agua Hedionda Lagoon is unique among San Diego County lagoons, in that recreational and commercial uses are permitted; yet the lagoon is a healthy, tidal body, with a large wetlands supporting several endangered species.

The majority of the lagoon is owned and maintained by Cabrillo Power II, owners of a 900-megawatt power plant located on the outer segment of the lagoon. The entire 400-acre lagoon, created in 1954, was completely re-dredged in 1998/1999 to an average depth of 8 to 11 feet, significantly increasing tidal flushing. An extensive eelgrass planting program was initiated after the dredging, resulting in additional marine nursery areas.

The City of Carlsbad regulates boating on prescribed portions of the inner lagoon, and the YMCA operates a canoeing center. Two aquaculture facilities enjoy the tidal health of the lagoon—a white seabass research facility jointly managed by Hubbs/Seaworld and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and a commercial mussel growing facility. In 2000, CDFG expects to acquire 186 acres of wetland located at the eastern end of the lagoon for an Ecological Reserve. The Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation will open a 3800 sq. ft. Nature Center in 2001, with educational displays and foot access planned for the wetlands and lagoon.

The watershed is drained by the Agua Hedionda and Macario Creeks and is a component of the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit. The creeks are normally a trickle in the summer, but become sources of storm water runoff from continuing residential and commercial development. The lagoon and wetland form a major element of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Program and are connected by corridors to other elements of the program. The wetlands and surrounding slopes of coastal sage scrub provide habitat for sensitive species including the California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, light-footed Clapper rail, and others.

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