

# Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay

## FACT SHEET

The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board) is developing a Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay (Strategy) to guide the San Diego Water Board in making the most effective and efficient use of its resources when taking actions to assess, protect, and restore the health of the Bay.

A draft of the Strategy will be available for public review and comment in April 2015 prior to the San Diego Water Board's consideration in June 2015. The Strategy applies the framework of the Healthy Waters Chapter of the [Practical Vision](#) to San Diego Bay in pilot scale by laying out the following seven steps:



The Strategy also describes efforts to develop a monitoring coalition to implement a long-term bay-wide monitoring program that will collect information necessary to assess and regularly communicate the status of the health of the Bay (Step 2).

The San Diego Water Board will accomplish the Strategy objective by implementing the seven steps outlined in the Strategy and using its resources effectively and efficiently.

### Why focus on San Diego Bay?

San Diego Bay is the largest and most intensively used water body in the San Diego region. It provides a number of ecological functions, including spawning habitat for local fish species and a key stopping point for birds traveling along the Pacific Flyway.

The Bay also plays a vital role in supporting the region's growing population and sustaining the economy, providing recreation, navigation, commercial and even subsistence fishing.

The San Diego Water Board recognizes that the Bay's economic livelihood is largely reliant on the ecological well-being of the Bay.

### Objective of the Strategy

The fundamental objective of the Strategy is to achieve healthy waters in San Diego Bay. Healthy waters are waters that support the Bay's beneficial uses.





Key elements to successfully protecting the health of the Bay include:

Having clear overarching goals and established bay-wide priorities

Obtaining and understanding essential information

Working together, both within and outside the agency

Staying focused and remaining committed to the goals and priorities

### **Where are we now?**

A draft of the Strategy will be available for public review and comment in April 2015 prior to the San Diego Water Board's consideration in June 2015. If supported by a Board Resolution, staff will continue to implement the steps identified in the Strategy, in accordance with the schedule and milestones laid out in the San Diego Water Board's internal operational plans. The Strategy proposes, for Step 1, that the key uses of the Bay are recreation, human consumption of fish and shellfish, and habitat and ecosystem health. Implementation of Steps 2-7 may take several years, depending on the information available for the initial assessment and the strength of the monitoring coalition. Until Bay priorities have been established, goals have been set, and work has been realigned in keeping with those priorities and goals, the Board will proceed with its current San Diego Bay work through the lens of the Practical Vision.

### **Public Participation and Updates**

#### **Stakeholders may be asked to:**

- Provide information to help with the assessment of key areas;
- Comment on priorities or goals identified/proposed by the Water Board;
- Where priorities align, work with the Water Board towards a common goal;
- Participate in the development of a long-term bay-wide monitoring coalition; and/or
- Help track progress and publicly communicate bay-wide monitoring results.

#### **The San Diego Water Board will provide updates to the public on the health of the Bay, such as:**

- An annual workshop on the State of the (Health of the) Bay, reporting on the most current assessment results and the status of implementation of the Strategy;
- A "report card" that tracks status and trends of the health of the Bay; and
- Updates on our web site of progress toward achieving our goals.

The health of San Diego Bay requires a team effort. This Strategy is our commitment to a collaborative, outcome-focused approach that aligns our efforts with priorities for sustaining human uses and ecosystems in the Bay.

For future updates, subscribe to our "Healthy Waters: San Diego Bay" Lyris list at [waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/reg9\\_subscribe.shtml](http://waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg9_subscribe.shtml)