

SAN DIEGUITO LAGOON RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE *Final phase of San Dieguito River Dredging to begin in February*

PUBLIC INFORMATION FACT SHEET

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The San Dieguito Wetlands Restoration Project is about to enter its final stretch of construction. A five month dredging project will begin in mid-February to remove 80,000 cubic yards of sand from the San Dieguito River channel to allow for better exchange of water from the ocean and the newly restored ecosystem. Clearing the channel of sand on the east and west sides of Jimmy Durante Bridge will allow tidal flows to reach the newly created wetlands to make them naturally sustainable and support increasing fish and birds populations, and native vegetation. Restoration team members are working to nourish and protect the restored wetlands after constructing the deep lagoon on the west side of I-5 and the mudflats on the east side of I-5.



Example of dredge for San Dieguito River

Dredging the Channel

Dredge equipment will be placed into the water in the area east of Jimmy Durante Bridge in early February in preparation for the dredge operation which is expected to start by mid-February through May. The public should expect to see a floating dredge (which looks like a small boat) placed into the inlet channel and operating between the hours of 7:00 am – 7:00 pm on weekdays and 9:00 am – 7:00 pm on Saturdays. The dredge will primarily operate in the area to the east of Jimmy Durante Bridge between the bend in the river and Grand Avenue Bridge.

The specialized dredge is ideal for the San Dieguito Restoration Project because it is small, operates with minimum emissions and makes very little noise in comparison to other dredge equipment. The dredge will pump the sand to a stockpile area where it will be dried and placed on California least tern nesting sites and other upland areas on the east side of I-5. Once

the upland areas have received the sand from the river bottom, top soil will be placed and planted with native habitat.

To the west of Jimmy Durante Bridge excavators and front end loaders will be used to remove the sand in the channel. The same process of sand removal and placement has been used in past years to open the river mouth. The sand in this area is considered high quality beach sand and will be placed on the beaches near the river inlet.



Project Design Considerations

The over-all design of the 150 acres of mixed-use, wetland habitat depends on the daily flows of incoming ocean water to the newly created wetlands that nourish the deep water lagoon and mudflats. During daily tides, hundreds of millions of gallons of fresh, ocean water bring fish, plankton and other nutrients into the new wetlands to reinvigorate the ecosystem. However, sand has accumulated over the last several decades in the channel and blocks some of this tidal water from reaching the back portions of the wetland. Therefore, it is essential to the project to remove the sand that has accumulated in the channel to make the wetlands fully functional. Evidence of the benefits of the already established flows was quickly seen. Scientists saw an explosion of fish in the new lagoon west of I-5 and have documented a tripling of bird species since construction started in 2006. Once the sand that is blocking the channel is removed, scientists expect to see more colonization of fish, invertebrate and vegetation throughout the wetlands.

Environmental Protection During Construction

Minimizing interference with any migratory and endangered bird nesting activity is one of the most important operational components to the dredge operation. Project biologists will work cooperatively with US Fish and Wildlife and California Fish and Game to monitor the site during construction for any nesting activities in order to protect birds.

Additional information about the San Dieguito Wetland Restoration Project is available at www.sce.com/wetlands.