

# TRACKS

A Publication of the Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends

September–November

2008

## Desired State for the Newport Bay Watershed

In the June–August 2007 issue of *Tracks* ([newportbay.org/trackwsr.pdf](http://newportbay.org/trackwsr.pdf)), adaptive management principles were explored in the context of a sustainable Newport Bay Watershed. The importance of a comprehensive, integrated management plan building upon the long-established collaborative efforts of numerous public, private and non-profit partners was emphasized.

In the September–November 2007 issue ([newportbay.org/track3q7.pdf](http://newportbay.org/track3q7.pdf)), it was suggested that the

extent to which integrated management will be achieved will depend on the extent to which common ground is recognized. Many win-win opportunities are missed because stakeholders do not realize how each can benefit from the same program or project, if suitably designed and implemented. The following four primary stakeholder constituencies were noted:

- Civic leaders and municipal departments focused on providing for the welfare of the community.
- Water companies focused on providing water reliably and efficiently to acceptable standards.
- Property owners and developers focused on the value of their assets and costs to maintain.
- Environmental advocates focused on maintaining functional and sustainable ecosystems.

And the following collective, holistic vision of the four constituencies with respect to watershed management was presented:

*Public and private lands in the Newport Bay Watershed will be managed holistically to sustain healthy ecosystems, protect critical habitat and species, and allow the community to enjoy and be re-energized by their connection with nature, while at the same time safeguarding the health and welfare of the community, maintaining the long-term reliability of water supplies, and protecting the value of property.*

Input has been sought from various stakeholders in order to establish specific criteria that will define, from each constituency's perspective, the "Desired State" for the watershed 20 years hence. Each Desired State definition will articulate soft, qualitative attributes indicative of the achievement of the vision.

From a Civic perspective the important attributes that define the Desired State are associated with sustainability, safety and health, and quality of life. The sustainability attributes address aspects of city planning such as growth management, neighborhood design, redevelopment, transportation, and green construction and technology. The safety and health attributes address items such as flood control, fire protection, vector control, and water quality, as well as potential local consequences of global climate change. The quality of life attributes address items such as sense of community, noise and light pollution, connection with nature, recreation, and environmental justice.

From a Water perspective the important attributes that define the Desired State are associated with water demand, water supply, water quality, and water management. Given the likely growing scarcity of imported water in combination with an increased population in the watershed, various measures, such as satellite-controlled irrigation systems will be needed to reduce per capita domestic and other uses. At the same time the long-term availability and reliability of local water supplies, including recycled water, will need to be improved.

From a Property perspective the important attributes that define the Desired State are associated with integrated approach planning and regulation, protecting property values, and controlling costs of ownership/ occupancy. The application of best management practices (BMPs) to prevent erosion, for example, help protect property values. In the case of satellite-controlled irrigation systems, the same BMP will likely provide substantial long-term savings on utility bills, too.

From an Ecological perspective the important attributes that define the Desired State are associated with native habitat preservation, stormwater management, and controlling pollution and other negative impacts at source.

A comprehensive draft document "Desired State for the Central Orange County (Newport Bay) Watershed Management Area" will soon be circulated for discussion by the Newport Bay Watershed Stakeholder Committee. If you would like to review and comment on the document, please send email request to [ds@newportbay.org](mailto:ds@newportbay.org)

Roger Mallett  
Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends



### NBNF Mission:

- To *preserve and restore* the ecosystems of Upper Newport Bay.
- To *educate* the public about the ecological value of the Bay and its watershed and help ensure compatible public use.

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# Global Warming

In the last issue of *Tracks* ([newportbay.org/track3q8.pdf](http://newportbay.org/track3q8.pdf)), climate change was discussed on a global level. In this article likely impacts here in California, and state and local initiatives to address the impacts are discussed.

For example, current projections suggest that sea levels are expected to rise between 4 and 36 inches over the next 100 years. An increase of 12 inches by 2050 translates into \$1.2 billion in levee improvements needed in the San Francisco Bay Delta and the San Joaquin Valley.

Snow pack loss could shrink California's winter businesses by over \$1 billion annually. Also, in the Central Valley, melting snow supplies summer water. Warmer temperatures would cause earlier snowmelt and reduce summer supplies even if rainfall increased during spring.

Sewage systems may be overwhelmed. Coastal airports such as San Francisco, and Santa Barbara may be vulnerable to flooding. Jetties and seawalls may need improvements to protect harbors used for shipping, recreation, and tourism.

Rising sea levels will significantly affect coastal wetlands, because most are within a few feet of sea level. As the sea rises, these wetlands will move inland, and overall acreage of wetlands may be reduced due to constraints by existing development. Tidal rivers, estuaries, and relatively flat shoreline habitats will be more prone to flooding and erosion damage. More severe storm surges from the ocean, combined with higher river runoff, could significantly increase flood levels by more than the rise in sea level alone. Beach erosion would decrease habitat for beach-dependent species, such as seals, shorebirds, and endangered species like the snowy plover and least tern.

Coastal wetlands may become increasingly brackish as seawater inundates freshwater wetlands. New brackish and freshwater wetland areas will be created as seawater inundates low lying inland areas or as the freshwater table is pushed upward by the higher stand of seawater. Historic wetland migration may not keep pace with accelerating rates of sea-level rise because of upstream impoundments and bulk-headed boundaries, i.e. highways, urban areas, and other products of development.

And finally, climate change will magnify the influences of other threats. Rising energy demands may result in a push for increased oil and gas development in the western states, resulting in increased habitat loss and fragmentation on lands surrounding protected areas.

The impacts are many, but California has responded to the situation by signing into law AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, in September of 2006. The Act caps California's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at 1990 levels by 2020, and represents the first state-wide

program in the U.S. to cap all GHG emissions from major industries that includes penalties for non-compliance. The Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency has been directed to coordinate a Climate Action Team (CAT) to implement global warming emission reduction programs and report on progress to meet statewide targets. The CAT is comprised of 14 agencies divided into 11 sub-groups to assist the Air Resources Board with their scoping plan. Per the Executive Order, the first CAT report to the Governor was released in March 2006, with subsequent reports every two years thereafter.

Other significant actions:

- Creation of the California Climate Action Registry, a private non-profit organization originally formed by the State of California in 2001. Current and charter members are as diverse as the cities of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the Irvine Ranch Water District, The Nature Conservancy, and Hewlett Packard. The Registry serves as a voluntary greenhouse gas registry to protect and promote early actions to reduce GHG emissions by organizations.
- The Western Climate Initiative was launched in February 2007. The founding governors in Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington have since been joined by the governors of Utah and Montana, and by the Premiers of British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario. Other US and Mexican states and Canadian provinces have joined as observers. WCI is working to develop regional strategies to address climate change.
- The U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement was signed in June 2005. Over 100 California cities and counties have signed on, including seven in Orange County: Aliso Viejo, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, and Santa Ana.
- The City of Newport Beach now stipulates that Environmental Impact Reports possess a global warming requirement, and has formed a Green Building Committee made up of members of the Environmental Quality Affairs Committee and the General Plan Implementation Committee.

Dealing with the effects of climate change demands coordinated efforts. California state government is rising to the challenge. Having informed, participatory public and business sectors is essential in designing and implementing solutions—some 'off the shelf,' others necessitating new or improved technology—to address the crisis before us.

*Amy Litton, Naturalist*



## ***Additional Information***

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<http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/>

State of California Climate Change Portal

<http://www.climateactionregistry.org/>

California Climate Action Registry

<http://www.westernclimateinitiative.org/>

Western Climate Initiative

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/climatechange/activities/elkhornslough.html>

California Department of Fish & Game: Spotlight on Elkhorn Slough

<http://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/index.html>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife



# Upper Newport Bay Calendar of Events

September–November 2008

## Steward Days—Every Wednesday, 9:00–11:00 a.m.

Support the Bay's unique genetics at our restoration sites by collecting seeds & propagating plants. Learn how to grow natives in your backyard, attract wildlife and conserve water. For information call (949) 640-0286. Location code: BBSC

## Kayak Tours—Every Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–Noon at the Dunes

Join a trained naturalist for a guided kayak tour of the Back Bay. Meet at the Newport Dunes Resort. \$15/person, 8 & up. \$10/NBNF members. Be prepared to get wet. Reservations (949) 923-2269. Location code: NDR

## Kayak Tours—Every Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–Noon at the NAC

Join a trained naturalist for a guided kayak tour of the Back Bay. Meet at the Newport Aquatic Center. \$15/person, 8 and up. \$10/NBNF members. Be prepared to get wet. Reservations (949) 923-2269. Location code: NAC

## Fishing for Science—Friday, Sept. 5, 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Fish for rays, sharks and fish off our dock after a barbeque dinner and a quick preparatory lesson. Fee is \$25 per person. Ages 8–16. For information and registration contact the Sea Base at (949) 642-5031. Location Code: BBSC.

## Walking Tour—Saturday, Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, 9:00 a.m.

Join a trained Naturalist for a 2 hour walk along Back Bay Drive. Bring binoculars and sun protection. Free. No reservations needed. For information call (949) 923-2269. Location code: BBSC

## Marine Life Inventory—Saturday, Sept. 6, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, 8:30–Noon

Marine biology students ages 8 and up are invited to participate in a variety of hands-on marine life monitoring programs in Newport Bay with the Dept. of Fish and Game. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Free. Reservations (949) 640-9956. Location code: BBSC

## Shellmaker Discovery Tour—Saturday, Sept. 6, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, 9–10:30 a.m.

Join a Naturalist to learn about Shellmaker Island's rich history; the future of the Back Bay Science Center; and discover unusual and endangered plants, birds and crab habitats. No reservations required. No latecomers. Free. Information (949) 640-9956. Location code: BBSC

## Shark Camp at the Bay—Saturday, Sept. 6, 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Learn about the lives of sharks and rays while eating dinner around the campfire. Then help catch, tag and release them off our dock. Fee is \$25. Ages 7–16. Information and reservations (949) 642-5031. Location Code: BBSC.

## Astronomy Night—Saturday, Sept. 6, 7:00–9:00 p.m.

Join members of the O. C. Astronomers for an inspirational tour of the night sky including observation with telescopes. Family program. No fee; suggested donation of \$2/person. Registration (949) 923-2275 or unbic@ocparks.com. Location code: IC

## Twilight Canoe Tour with Barbecue—Saturday, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, 4:00–7:00 p.m.

Join Naturalists and Sea Scouts for a beautiful canoe tour of the Reserve followed by a cookout at the Newport Aquatic Center. Fee is \$30. Reservations required (949) 642-5031. Ages 10 and up. Location Code: NAC.

## 2nd Sundays Restoration Program—Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, 9:00 a.m.–Noon

Join the staff at the MIC to enhance the Nature Preserve habitat with non-native plant removal, native plantings and Butterfly Garden maintenance. Reservations (949) 923-2297. Location code: IC

## Big Canyon Walking Tour—Saturday, Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 25, 9:00 a.m.

Join a trained Naturalist for a 2 hour walk along Big Canyon Trail and vicinity. Bring binoculars and sun protection. Free. No reservations needed. For information call (949) 923-2269. Location code: Big Canyon parking lot.

## ROOTS Restoration Teamwork—Saturday, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, 9:00 a.m.–Noon

Help restore Back Bay habitat by installing and maintaining native plants while learning about wetland ecology. Reservations required. Refreshments, tools provided. (949) 640-0286 for information, reservations and location.

## Family Fun Walk—Sunday, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Join park staff for a guided nature walk through the bay. Explore the beauty of the bay and discuss its rich natural history. Programs take place on various trails. All ages. Registration required. Free. Rain cancels. Phone (949) 923-2275 or email unbic@ocparks.com. Location code: IC

## Friends of Newport Bay Walking Tour—Saturday, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, 9:00, 9:15, 9:30, 9:45, 10:00, 10:15 a.m.

Walk along the Back Bay listening to Naturalists and visiting Interpretive Stations featuring natural history specialists. Free. No reservations required. Information (949) 923-2269. Location code: VP

*For all of the following, call (949) 923-2275 to register or email unbic@ocparks.com. \$5 per child. Location code: IC*

### Toddler Time (Ages 2–5)

10:30–11:15 a.m. for ages 2–5 years. Join park staff for a parent-child experience with stories, movement and hands-on fun.

"Miraculous Moths!"—Wednesday, Sept. 3

"Burrowing Buds"—Wednesday, Sept. 10

"Kid's Clean Up"—Wednesday, Sept. 17

"Autumn Adventures"—Wednesday, Sept. 24

"What's That Cat?"—Wednesday, Oct. 1

"Arachnids Around Us"—Wednesday, Oct. 22

"Nocturnal Night Life"—Wednesday, Oct. 29

"Bats are not Batty"—Wednesday, Nov. 5

"Leap for Leaves"—Wednesday, Nov. 12

"Fabulous Flightless Fowl"—Wednesday, Nov. 26

### Bayside Buddies (Ages 5–8)

3:30–4:30 p.m. for ages 5–8. Come discover the natural history of the bay through crafts, hands-on activities and nature walks.

"Recycling Remedies"—Tuesday, Sept. 9

"Fall Festival"—Tuesday, Sept. 23

"That's a Hoot"—Tuesday, Oct. 21

"Boas of the Bay"—Tuesday, Nov. 4

"Nature's Harvest"—Tuesday, Nov. 18

### Wild! Tales (Ages 2–7)

10:30–11:15 a.m. Come visit the park staff for story-telling fun. Learn more about the natural history of the Bay through crafts, hands-on activities and nature walks.

"The Shark Who Was Afraid of Everything"—Tuesday, Sept. 2

"What is the Moon?"—Tuesday, Sept. 16

"The Barn Owls"—Tuesday, Sept. 30

"Whispers in the Woods"—Tuesday, Oct. 21

"Stellaluna"—Tuesday, Oct. 28

"Hey Little Ant"—Tuesday, Nov. 4

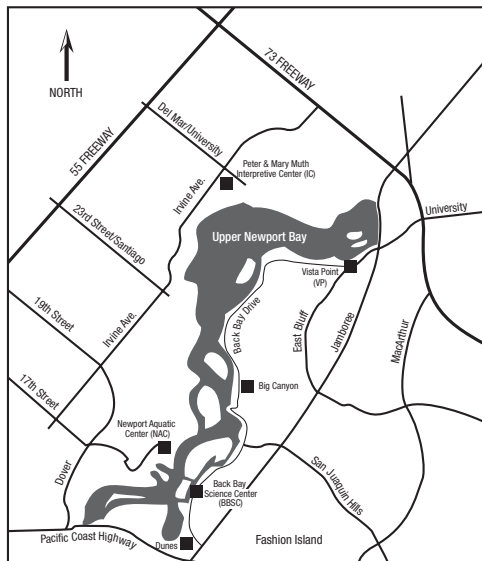
"Quiet Night"—Tuesday, Nov. 18

"Hello Harvest Moon"—Tuesday, Nov. 25

### Conservation Club (Ages 5–10)

3:30–4:30 p.m. for ages 5–10. Come work with park staff to help establish a habitat for UNB wildlife. Learn about the importance of native plants and water conservation. Be prepared to get down and dirty. Free.

Tuesday afternoon—Sept. 2, Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 25



### WEB SITES

Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends: [www.newportbay.org](http://www.newportbay.org)  
 Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center: [www.ocparks.com/unbic](http://www.ocparks.com/unbic)  
 Back Bay Science Center: [www.backbaysciencecenter.org](http://www.backbaysciencecenter.org)  
 California Coastal Commission: [www.coastal.ca.gov](http://www.coastal.ca.gov)

### LOCATION KEY

Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center (IC)  
 2301 University Drive  
 Newport Beach, CA 92660

Back Bay Science Center (BBSC)  
 600 Shellmaker  
 Newport Beach, CA 92660

### TRACKS CREDITS

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Newport Aquatic Center (NAC)  
 1 Whitecliffs Drive  
 Newport Beach, CA 92660

## 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Coastal Cleanup Day at Upper Newport Bay

**When:** Saturday, Sept. 20 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center  
 2301 University Drive (at Irvine Ave.)

Organized by Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends; Orange County Harbors, Beaches & Parks; and California Dept. of Fish and Game. This is the one day of the year we are able to enter many sensitive areas of Upper Newport Bay to remove harmful and unsightly trash. Please come and help us.

Free lunch.  
 Families welcome.

General Information:  
 (949) 923-2269 or  
[newportbay.org](http://newportbay.org)

Group (10+) Registration:  
 (949) 923-2295

Water Cleanup Registration:  
 (949) 640-9956



## 40th Anniversary of Friends Tours and Opening of Vista Point

**When:** Saturday, October 11 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.  
**Where:** Vista Point, corner of Back Bay Drive and Eastbluff Drive, Newport Beach. (See Map)



We will celebrate 40 years of "Friends" Nature Tours and acknowledge the contribution of the Robinsons and other Friends in preserving Upper Newport Bay during the official opening of Vista Point at 9:00 a.m. Tours follow.

For information call (949) 923-2269 or visit [newportbay.org](http://newportbay.org)