

State Water Resources Control Board

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STATE WATER BOARD APPROVES \$2.155 MILLION IN GRANTS TO PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S "THREATENED" BEACHES *Grants to Four California Communities from Proposition 13 Funds*

SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board today announced four California communities will receive grants totaling \$2.155 million, as part of the Governor's Clean Beaches Initiative.

The Board approved grants to the City of Coronado, the City of Newport Beach, the County of Los Angeles and the County of Ventura for various projects that will help combat contaminated ocean water, which threatens California's world-renowned beaches.

Clean Beaches Initiative grants are funded by Proposition 13 (the Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection and Flood Protection Act of 2000), a \$1.97 billion bond program passed by voters to fund projects to protect the state's waterways.

"The public health and economic threat to our beaches by polluted runoff is real," said State Water Resources Control Board Chairman Arthur G. Baggett, Jr. "These grants help state and local agencies address contamination, making our beaches safer, and ensuring the economic vitality of coastal communities."

Southern California beaches each year attract 175 million visitors, who spend more than \$1.5 billion during their visits. On a typical summer day, some of the more popular beaches attract 75,000 people. When a beach is closed due to contamination, the economic effect can be devastating to local business owners and dangerous to public health.

The following grants were approved today:

- **City of Coronado (\$1 million)** – City of Coronado for funding of the Dry/Wet Weather Diversion Structures.

The City of Coronado Island is located at the mouth of the San Diego Harbor. The Island is a coastal beach community with 28 miles of waterfront and beaches. More than 2.5 million people visit the beaches annually. The waters off Coronado Island have been classified as impaired since 1998 because of bacterial contamination.

- **City of Newport Beach (\$200,000)** – Newport Bay Diversions and surface water treatment systems.

Newport Beach and Newport Bay are the most frequently visited beaches in Orange County with 8.9 million visitors each year. In 2001, there were beach postings covering more than 550 Beach-Mile Days. Two swimming areas in the Bay accounted for more than 80 percent of the postings.

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- **County of Los Angeles (\$250,000) – County of Los Angeles Funding of Phase I of the Marina Beach Project to reduce bacterial contamination.**

Marina Beach lies at the northwestern end of Marina Del Rey and has about 200,000 visitors a year. The County of Los Angeles will use \$250,000 to improve beach water quality at Marina Beach (known as Mother's Beach). The Beach earned its nickname because of its calm waters suitable for swimming by families and small children. In 2001, there were signs continually warning beach goers of bacterial contamination. The County is proposing to implement a two-phase project. Phase 1 will investigate water circulation in the Harbor and options for increasing circulation.

- **County of Ventura/Kiddie and Hobie Beaches (\$705,000) –Funding to reduce bacterial contamination at Channel Islands (Phase 1).**

Kiddie and Hobie Beaches are adjacent to one another and are in the southwest corner near the entrance of the Channel Islands Harbor. The Army Corps of Engineers created the Beaches during construction of the harbor in the early 1960s. In 2001, the Beaches were posted with signs warning beach goers of bacterial contamination. The County is proposing to implement a two-phase project. Phase 1 will investigate the potential effectiveness and costs of a water circulation system.

The Clean Beaches Initiative was one of Governor Davis' key environmental projects included in the Governor's 2001-2002 Budget signed last July. The Budget provides \$32 million for coastal cleanup projects throughout the state and reduction of the number of beach closure days caused by nonpoint source pollution. (These funds were allocated from Proposition 13 bond monies.)