

Bolsa Chica Conservancy



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Contact: Patrick W. Brenden
Chief Executive Officer
Bolsa Chica Conservancy
714-309-2618 (cell)
patrickb@bolsachica.org

Huntington Beach Desalination Plant to Preserve, Enhance and Restore Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve

Poseidon Water will fund inlet maintenance for underfunded restoration project

Huntington Beach, Calif. (July 7, 2020) – In conjunction with the operation of its proposed Huntington Beach Desalination Project, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a final draft permit on June 30th that requires Poseidon Water to assume responsibility for the preservation, enhancement and restoration of the Ecological Reserve (Bolsa Chica) wetlands. The Regional Board is scheduled to vote on the Permit July 30th.

This preservation action – helping maintain a functioning ocean inlet – is the lifeblood of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve wetlands, which is the largest saltwater marsh between Monterey Bay and the Tijuana River Estuary and home to two state-designated Marine Life Protection Areas. Additional enhancement and restoration plans implemented by Poseidon will expand the footprint and function of the historic wetlands.

Bolsa Chica, owned by the state of California, is an approximately 1,500-acre coastal estuary located in Huntington Beach, Orange County, California. The Bolsa Chica wetlands serve a variety of vital functions including; natural flood control, organic water purification, land erosion control, as well as providing migratory flyways for birds through Orange County and critical habitats to over 1,100 species, including 50 endangered fish and wildlife species. More than 30,000 people visit the Reserve each year for recreational activities, educational tours, and wildlife watching.

While much work has been done to restore and maintain the wetlands, the funds earmarked to preserve the wetlands have been depleted. California has already lost 91 percent of its wetlands - more than any other state - and the Bolsa Chica Lowlands are the last remaining large-scale wetlands in the state south of Monterey.