RESTORING BALD EAGLES

We are back now!
Check out our amazing story of recovery on The Channel Islands!

Check out the Bald Eagle cam and see them in action!
http://chil.vcoe.org/eagle_cam.htm

If you love the magic of this brochure, take it home and bring the magic with you!
Visit www.MontroseRestoration.gov/ to play on your home computer.

What are DDTs and PCBs?

They are toxic mixtures of chemicals that breakdown very slowly in the environment. DDT was once a widely used pesticide in the United States. One of the largest DDT manufacturing factories, owned by the Montrose Chemical Corporation, was located in Torrance, CA. PCBs are a group of chemicals that are resistant to heat and pressure. They were used by many companies for making products such as paints and for cooling electronic parts.

Where did they come from?

Most of the DDTs and PCBs contaminating the marine environment near Los Angeles came from companies that dumped their waste products into the local sewer system many years ago.

Wastewater from these factories was discharged into the ocean through pipes offshore of the Palos Verdes peninsula. Although releases of DDTs and PCBs ended in the 1970s, over 100 tons of these chemicals still contaminate the sediments and living organisms of the Southern California marine environment.

How has DDT contamination affected the Eagle?

The Decline of Bald Eagles

Animals at the top of the food web, such as bald eagles, can feed on food (like fish) contaminated with DDT and its breakdown products. They then build up high concentrations of these chemicals. Such build up causes many bird species, including eagles, to lay thin-shelled eggs that dry out or break during incubation. The negative effects from DDT was one of the reasons bald eagles disappeared from the Channel Islands by the early 1960s.

What is being done?

Restoring Bald Eagles to the Channel Islands Efforts to restore bald eagles to the Channel Islands began in 1980 on Catalina Island. The Montrose Settlements Restoration Program (MSRP) partnered with the Institute for Wildlife Studies (IWS) to implement a similar restoration effort on the northern Channel Islands. As part of this effort, biologists released 61 young eagles on Santa Cruz Island. Today biologists continue to monitor the exposure of the eagles to DDT and their ability to successfully reproduce.

MSRP AND IWS Celebrated a Major Milestone The program has celebrated major restoration milestones on all of the islands where bald eagles are currently nesting. A few short years after the program began two chicks hatched naturally in a nest on Santa Cruz Island. This marked the first time in over 50 years that bald eagles reproduced on the Channel Islands unaided by humans. The following year two chicks hatched unassisted on Catalina Island after over 25 years of restoration efforts. Recently, two chicks hatched on Santa Rosa Island for the first time in 60 years.

A Growing Population Approximately 67 bald eagles can now be found among the Channel Islands. As the bald eagle population continues to recover, we can expect more nests across the Channel Islands in years to come.