Montrose Settlements Restoration Program

Restoration Highlights, 2001-2011

Celebrating 10 Years of Restoration Planning and Progress in Southern California!

In 2011, the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program (MSRP) celebrates its tenth year since development of the program. This special edition newsletter highlights some of the major restoration activities since the program was initiated in 2001.

MSRP has been through many changes since 2001, but our mission to restore marine wildlife and fishing activities harmed by DDT and PCBs in Southern California remains at the forefront. Communicating this mission and our restoration accomplishments to the public is also a major component of the program. MSRP and restoration partners are highly dedicated to the recovery of marine wildlife and habitat injured by these chemicals. Their hard work will benefit these ecosystems for many years to come.

History

MSRP was created following the settlement of a lawsuit of impacts to the natural environment caused by the release of DDT and PCBs into the marine ecosystem in Southern California. Local factories produced hundreds of millions of pounds of these chemicals and released them into the ocean through a wastewater outfall pipe located offshore of the Palos Verdes peninsula. Releases of these chemicals led to impacts on marine life, and reduced fishing activities because of fish contamination. The release of these chemicals ended 40 years ago but the chemicals still remain on the ocean bottom and continue to impact wildlife. The U.S. government and the State of California sued the responsible parties and the case was finally settled in 2000. The settlement provided approximately $30 million to restore current and past injuries to bald eagles, seabirds, peregrine falcons, fishing, and fish habitat.

"What I discovered was that everything which meant most to me as a naturalist was being threatened, and that nothing I could do would be more important."

-Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

Highlights

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MSRP Ten Restoration Milestones

1. *In 2006, the first **bald eagle** chick hatches naturally on Santa Cruz Island- a first in over 50 years!*
2. *Fifteen bald eagle nests discovered on the Channel Islands in 2010.*
3. *Biologists and volunteers plant over **17,000** native plants on Santa Barbara Island and Scorpion Rock restoring nesting habitat for several species of seabirds.*
4. *Feral cats are removed from San Nicolas Island to protect nesting seabirds and the unique island ecosystem.*
5. *Biologists record a small Cassin's Auklet population in 2009 on Santa Barbara Island and document nesting in one of the restoration sites in 2010.*
6. *California Halibut benefit from **67 acres** of newly restored nursery habitat in Magnolia Marsh in Huntington Beach.*
7. *A fish contamination study in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency surveyed **22 fish species**. The data is used to provide critical updates to fish consumption advisories.*
8. *Two popular fishing outreach products, including a comic book and fish identification card, have safe fishing tips and are available in three languages: **English, Spanish, and Chinese**.*
9. *The Channel Islands are surveyed for the presence of breeding peregrine falcons in 2007.*
10. *Three interactive kiosks about MSRP's restoration programs are developed and placed in nature centers and aquaria in Southern California.*

Santa Barbara Island: A Seabird Haven

Santa Barbara Island is a world apart. Only one square mile in area, it is the smallest island in the Channel Islands National Park. The island has no land predators, which makes it a haven for seabirds. One bird that makes Santa Barbara Island its home is the rare Xantus's Murrelet. In fact, Santa Barbara Island has the largest colony of Xantus's Murrelets in the United States. This bird takes the term seabird to new limits. Murrelet's spend almost their entire lives at sea, only coming to land to lay their eggs and hatch their young. Their chicks live up to being a seabird as well, by spending only two days on the island, after which they tumble into the ocean to join their parents—even before they can fly! Another species that once called Santa Barbara Island its home is the Cassin's Auklet. A member of the Alcid Family, the same grouping as the Xantus's Murrelet, this tiny seabird was almost completely eliminated from the island by feral cats that preyed on the adults and chicks.

MSRP is working to restore the populations of these rare seabirds and their habitats. DDT released into the ocean near the Palos Verdes shelf spread through the food chain and caused eggshell thinning in seabirds on the Channel Islands. The eggs became so thin that when the adults would sit on the eggs to warm them they would break. MSRP is using settlements funds to restore these threatened seabirds.

Murrelets and auklets need the structure and cover provided by native plant communities for nesting habitat. The native shrubs on Santa Barbara Island have been decimated by decades of introduced grazers, and non-native plants now prevent the few remaining native stands from recolonizing the island. One of the goals of this project is to remove the non-native plants at selected areas that serve as high quality nesting habitat. Biologists are then restoring the habitat by planting native species. This work is not easy by any means. All native plants are grown from seed on the island and it takes six to eight months to grow a mature plant. One of the challenges to growing these plants is that Santa Barbara is a desert island with no water source. All the water that is needed for the native plants must be transported by Park Service boat, and moved onto the island by crane in large 400 gallon tanks. Biologists then distribute the water by hand or helicopter to the nursery and then each restoration site. A permanent nursery was recently constructed on the island that incorporated water saving techniques to reduce the amount of water that needs to be sent to the island. The materials for this restoration project are transported by helicopter or on foot up a steep half mile trek.

Santa Barbara Island is one of the few islands where these Murrelets and Auklets nest under native shrubs.

It will take at least five years for the plants to be ready for seabirds to use as nesting habitat. Meanwhile, biologists are using a technique known as social attraction to encourage nesting of Cassin's Auklets on the island. This method involves broadcasting Auklet sounds using a system powered by solar energy.

This important restoration work would not be possible without the assistance of our dedicated volunteers. To date, volunteers have contributed over 10,000 hours of hard work: weeding the restoration sites and planting native species. The amount of work accomplished since 2007 has been impressive—over 15,000 plants have been put in the ground and a total of five acres of habitat are being restored.

Although it will take several years before the native plants have grown enough to provide the best nesting habitat, there are initial signs of success. In 2009, biologists discovered the first nesting Cassin's Auklet on Santa Barbara Island since the 1990s! Biologists also documented Cassin's Auklets flying close to where sounds of these seabirds are being broadcast. The restoration work will continue over the next several years and with the on-going support of our volunteers and dedicated staff—the island will be returned to the seabird haven it once was.

-Jennifer Boyce
NOAA

Scorpion Rock Restoration

Since 2007, MSRP biologists have been restoring seabird habitat on Scorpion Rock, a one acre rock off the coast of *Santa Cruz Island*.

This rock is an important nesting ground for the Cassin's Auklet, a seabird with a declining population since the 1800's. Volunteers have helped to place over *6,000* plants in the ground!

Bald Eagles Returning to the Channel Islands

In the spring of 2006, elated biologists, program staff and dedicated web camera viewers were thrilled to see a tiny Bald Eagle chick appear in a large nest that was built in the top of a 30-foot tree near Pelican Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. This groundbreaking milestone marked the first successful nesting of bald eagles on the Northern Channel Islands in over 50 years! The parents of this first chick were a female known as K-26 and a male K-10 that were hatched as part of a captive breeding program at the San Francisco Zoo (SF Zoo) and released on Catalina Island in 2001 and 2002. Biologists placed large wing markers containing a letter and number on the eagles before they were released on the islands. All eagle chicks receive a wing marker before they fledge from the Channel Islands as well. These wing markers allow biologists to track individual eagles to measure success of their restoration efforts.

Bald Eagles once nested on all of the California Channel Islands. Bald Eagles disappeared from the Channel Islands by the early 1960s, due to human impacts, primarily DDT pollution. Millions of pounds of DDT and PCBs released into the ocean off the Palos Verdes Peninsula between the 1940s and the 1970s continue to move through the food chain. The effects of these chemicals are magnified, causing Bald Eagles to lay thin-shelled eggs that either dehydrate or break in the nest. The last known nesting by Bald Eagles was in 1950 on Santa Rosa Island.

The Institute for Wildlife Studies (IWS), in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Catalina Island Conservancy, began a reintroduction program on Catalina Island in 1980. From 1980 to 1986, 33 bald eagles were released onto Catalina Island in an effort to reestablish the species on the island. Some of these birds matured and formed breeding pairs. In 1987, the first eggs laid by the reintroduced birds broke. Analyses revealed that high DDT contaminant levels likely caused the failures. The DDT and associated waste products that remained in the environment were still affecting Bald Eagle reproduction. In 1989, biologists began increased efforts to help sustain the reintroduced population, since the birds could not do so on their own. Biologists climbed into the nests and carefully replaced real eggs with fake ones. The eggs were then brought back to an incubation facility where they were kept warm until the eggs hatched. If chicks hatched, they were fostered back into nests. If too few hatched, captive-born chicks from the SF Zoo were fostered into the nests. Since 1980, more than 100 Bald Eagles were released or fostered into nests on Catalina Island.

In 2002, MSRP initiated a study to determine whether bald eagles reintroduced to the Northern Channel Islands might have greater success hatching chicks than those on Catalina Island. A total of 61 eagles were released from hacking towers on Santa Cruz Island form 2002 to 2006. The eagles came either from the SF Zoo or from wild nests near Juneau, Alaska. The chicks were held in the towers until they where 12 weeks old. The birds were closely monitored following their release to track their survival. The chicks were outfitted with blue wing markers with unique numbers and satellite transmitters. The satellite transmitters allowed the project to track the movements of the released birds. One of the birds traveled as far as Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming before returning to Santa Cruz Island.

The last known nesting by Bald Eagles was in 1950 on Santa Rosa Island.

The success on Santa Cruz Island has continued since the first breeding in 2006. The birds at the Pelican Harbor nest have hatched chicks every year. Additional nests have been discovered on Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Islands. In 2010, between 9-15 eggs were laid on Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Islands of which six chicks hatched; all of which survived to leave the nest. As of December 2010, there are an estimated 34 eagles that currently make the Northern Channel Islands their home.

In 2007, encouraged by the successful breeding of the eagles on the Northern Channel Islands, IWS decided to leave the eggs in two nests on Catalina Island, Pinnacle Rock and Seal Rock, to see if DDT levels were low enough to allow the birds to hatch on their own. In the spring, the project reached another milestone when each nest hatched two chicks –marking the first hatching of eagles unaided by humans on Catalina Island in over 30 years!! Both sets of parents were long-time residents of the

Bald Eagle Story Continued...

a wild nest in British Columbia released on the islands in 1986 and K-92 was an 8-year old female from the captive breeding program at the SF Zoo released in 1999. The Seal Rock's pair was a 14-year old female,K-34, who was released on the island in 1993 and a 15-year old male, K-25, hatched from an egg taken from the West End nest on Catalina Island and then fostered into the Pinnacle Rock nest in 1992.

Since this initial success, the IWS has decided to let all the eagle pairs on Catalina Island incubate their eggs unaided by human intervention. The results have been impressive. In 2010, a total of seven pairs nested on the island laying 12-16 eggs. Of the eggs laid, 9 chicks hatched and all survived to fledge from the nest.

It will take several more years of monitoring to determine if the reintroductions have created a sustainable Bald Eagle population on the Channel Islands. Monitoring of nesting success and contaminant levels will continue for many years to come. However, the positive results we have seen so far on these islands indicate the program has been successful in restoring this national symbol and important component of the Channel Islands ecosystem!

-Jennifer Boyce
NOAA

Bald Eagle Webcam

In partnership with the Ventura County Office of Education, MSRP placed a *Bald Eagle Webcam* at Pelican Harbor on Santa Cruz Island in 2006. The Webcam has gained popularity with over 122,000 visitors watching in 2010.

Eagle enthusiasts also add their voices to an online discussion forum that has *1,610* members currently registered. These members engage in citizen science by *providing detailed nest observations that biologists use for* ***monitoring***.

http://chil.vcoe.org/eagle_cam.htm

Restoration of San Nicolas Island Seabirds

San Nicolas Island is an important island ecosystem and a nesting area for a variety of seabirds and shorebirds, including western gulls, Brandt's cormorants, and federally threatened western snowy plovers. In recent times, nesting seabirds that utilize offshore nesting areas such as San Nicolas Island have faced an increasing number of impacts from human activities. Impacts range from the dumping of contaminants into the ocean to changes in the ecological balance of wildlife from the introduction of non-native species including cats, black rats, sheep, rabbits, and goats. Nesting seabirds on the Channel Islands were impacted by DDT that was released into the ocean on the Palos Verdes shelf. As a result, MSRP identified the removal of feral cats from San Nicolas Island as a priority project to restore seabirds from these impacts.

Cats were most likely brought to the island in the early 1950s by members of the military for companionship and for use in keeping down the mouse population near human habitation areas. These cats were left on the island when personnel returned to the mainland. Efficient hunters, generations of offspring of the original cats have lived in a feral state, preying upon seabird eggs, chicks, and even adult seabirds. The feral cats also compete with the island fox - a state listed threatened species - for native deer mice, which is one of the primary food sources for the fox. The cats also prey upon the federally threatened island night lizard.

San Nicolas Island is currently owned by the U.S. Navy and utilized for military activities. The U.S. Navy has controlled the population of feral cats on San Nicolas Island since the 1980s as part of its ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship. The U.S. Navy did not have the funding or expertise to carry out permanent removal of the cats. When approached by MSRP about a comprehensive program to remove all of the feral cats, the U.S. Navy was supportive and signed on as a cooperating partner. MSRP prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) that discussed various options for accomplishing the project. The document was released for public review and comment in May 2008.

MSRP outlined a multi-faceted approach to remove the cats, including trapping using specially modified padded leghold live traps, specialized dogs to track cat scent, and limited hunting. More than 5,000 handwritten and electronic comments on the project were submitted, many of which expressed opposition to the project and the proposed euthanasia of adult feral cats. The proposed plan took into account numerous factors, including difficulties in finding a facility to take in adult feral cats, the safety of specialists on the island who would have to remove feral cats from the traps, the potential for disease transmissions to cats, other animals, and possibly humans on the mainland; the U.S. Navy's prohibition on the implementation of Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) on lands it owns or manages; and the importance of completing the project in a reasonable timeframe.

The Humane Society of the United States (The HSUS) was one of several animal welfare groups that submitted substantial comments on the project. Although not supportive of euthanizing the adult cats, and disagreeing with the methods of capturing the cats, The HSUS extended an open invitation to meet with MSRP to discuss possible alternatives.

In September 2008, several members of The HSUS accompanied MSRP members on a visit to San Nicolas Island. The HSUS wanted all the feral cats to be given a chance to live in peace on the mainland in an appropriate facility. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Navy, and The HSUS in December 2008. Under the terms of the MOA, The HSUS assumed financial responsibility for the transportation and permanent care of healthy cats captured on San Nicolas Island.

"By partnering with The HSUS, we effectively achieved a balance of many different interests and found a solution that was supported by the public and the agencies."

Beginning in June 2009, the first full year of the restoration project was initiated. Island Conservation, a non-profit organization experienced in restoring island ecosystems by removing non-native species, was selected by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete this challenging project. Once removed from a trap, each feral cat was transported to a fully equipped mobile hospital, developed by the Institute for Wildlife Studies (IWS), on San Nicolas Island and was given an

San Nicolas Island Story Continued...

trapped and showed sign of injury. As an extra effort to care for foxes during this project, IWS treated foxes on the island for any non-trap related injuries as well. Another step that was taken to prevent injury of trapped foxes included the use of a system that immediately alerted biologists when a particular trap was sprung and allowed for a rapid response time.

To provide long-term care for the adult cats the HSUS called on one of its cooperating partners – the Fund for Animals – manager of the Fund for Animals Wildlife Center in Ramona, California (Wildlife Center). The Wildlife Center became a permanent shelter for the cats. Working almost around-the-clock, staff from The HSUS and the Fund for Animals refurbished an existing cat sanctuary at the Wildlife Center to house up to 25 cats. With an added grant from DoGreatGood, a new, larger enclosure was built at the Wildlife Center to comfortably fit up to 100 cats.

By the end of November 2009, a total of 52 adult cats and 10 kittens were safely housed at the Wildlife Center. In keeping with MSRP's original commitment, all the kittens were socialized, spayed/neutered, and made available for adoption into private homes as indoor-only pets.

As the trapping effort continued fewer and fewer cats were caught. All trapping efforts were halted in February 2010, during the breeding season for the island fox. Two remaining cats were identified through the use of camera sensing equipment and were euthanized in June 2010. These cats could not be trapped because of the conflict with the island fox breeding season.

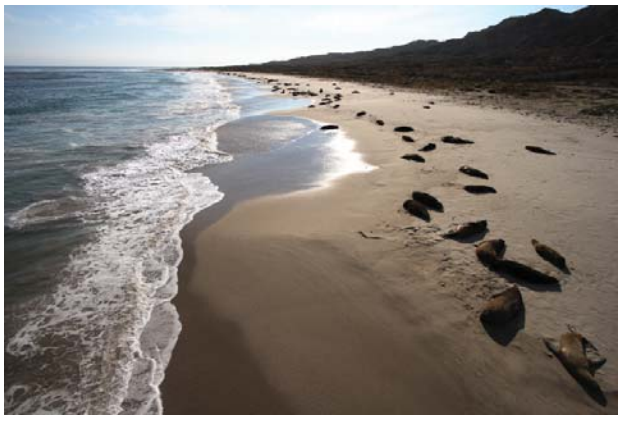
Starting in December 2009, IC placed a total of 52 remote sensing cameras in various locations on the Island to determine whether or not cats are present. Since the last known cat was removed in June 2010, more than 13,000 camera sensing nights have been logged without another cat being detected.

Monitoring will continue through 2011, and San Nicolas Island will be officially declared cat free in late 2011 or early 2012.

From dealing with irritable cats, to shifting removal activities around the island in accordance with the Navy's ongoing mission-essential activities, to coordinating transportation for the cats off the island and creating a safe home for them, all of the partners involved remained focused on finding solutions to problems. "When we began planning for this project six years ago, we did not anticipate it would turn out the way it did," said Annie Little, Fish and Wildlife Service biologist and project manager. "By partnering with The HSUS, we effectively achieved a balance of many different interests and found a solution that was supported by the public and the agencies."

MSRP biologists hope to see an increase in nesting seabirds on San Nicolas Island in the future with the removal of feral cats from the island. Island foxes, the endangered island night lizard, and the island ecosystem as a whole will benefit from this important project for years to come.

-Jane Hendron and Annie Little
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Wetlands Invite California Halibut

Coastal wetlands create an important connection between land and sea. The tranquil wetland waters are fed by the rhythmic rise and fall of the tides, which enriches the system with clean ocean water. Riding the ocean tides are sea creatures that live in the wetland habitats during the early parts of their lives where they eat and grow until they are large enough to venture out into the open sea. California Halibut, Smoothhound Sharks, Barred Sandbass, and Striped Mullet are just a few of the fish species that use wetlands during their early lives. Coastal wetlands are also a place where seabirds stop to rest and eat during their long migrations. Other birds use tidal wetlands as a place to build their nests or catch food for their young. Like the birds and fish, people are also drawn to wetlands to observe and enjoy the rich animal diversity and natural beauty of coastal wetland habitats.

At one time, a richly productive coastal wetland system stretched beneath the western bluffs of what is now the city of Costa Mesa. This wetland extended miles inland and covered almost 3,000 acres. Today, only about 180 acres of the wetland remains. The urban development of cities in this area, such as Huntington Beach, has dramatically reduced both natural habitat and wildlife populations. In 1985, a group of Huntington Beach residents formed the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy (HBWC) and started a 25-year campaign to acquire, protect, and restore a 118-acre remnant of the historic wetlands. Some of these residents are still members of HBWC.

The Huntington Beach Wetlands is made up of three submarshes (Talbert, Brookhurst, and Magnolia) that were cut off from tidal flow for more than 100 years. Together, they were at one time the wetlands that surrounded the end of the Santa Ana River. In 1989, the Talbert Marsh, which is closest to the ocean, was restored to full tidal flow. The initial success of the Talbert project paved the way to restoring the rest of the wetland, but it was a process that took decades to reach its conclusion.

In 2005, MSRP completed a restoration plan to restore habitats and resources injured by DDT and PCBs, harmful chemicals that were dumped into the ocean years ago. The restoration plan determined that restoring wetland habitats would compensate for the harm caused by DDTs and PCBs to fish habitat. After careful consideration of several different wetland restoration projects, the Huntington Beach Wetlands was selected for restoration. Nearly 20 years had passed since the Talbert Marsh was restored and although the tide continued to flow in and out, much of the tidal channel had filled with sand.

One goal of this project was for contractors to remove sand from the Talbert Marsh channel to reestablish a strong tidal connection to the ocean. MSRP also provided partial funding along with other partners, to connect the Brookhurst Marsh to ocean waters and full tidal flow. Work began in Talbert and Brookhurst Marshes in 2008, and in the spring of 2009, the levees that had separated the Brookhurst wetland from the ocean were opened and the tide filled the channels of the wetland for the first time in over a century. Only weeks later, young halibut and other fish were observed in the newly restored wetland.

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With the tremendous success of the MSRP funded restoration of the Talbert and Brookhurst marshes, the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy was granted funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration to complete the final phase of the restoration project – restoring the Magnolia Wetland section. Contractors began work in the fall of 2009 and in the spring of 2010, all three wetlands were restored. This was a cause for celebration by members of HBWC who were finally able to see the result of their hard work after 25 years!

-David Witting
NOAA

MSRP Outreach: Keeping Up With Technology

Experience California native wildlife in 3-D by visiting an MSRP kiosk at three different science centers and aquaria. Watch the underwater world of the wetlands in Huntington Beach by logging onto the MSRP fish webcam located at the Wetland & Wildlife Care Center. View Bald Eagles and their chicks live in their nests on the Channel Islands Live Bald Eagle webcam broadcasting from Santa Cruz Island. In recent years, MSRP has been incorporating technology into public outreach activities to engage people in important restoration projects taking place throughout Southern California.

Interactive Kiosks

The MSRP kiosk features 3-D images of a bald eagle flying into a nest, a white croaker fish eating a worm off the ocean floor, and a seabird called a Xantus's Murrelet in its nest on a rocky ledge. All of these animals are found in Southern California and represent different restoration projects that are being funded by MSRP.

What is unique about the MSRP kiosk is the 3-D images are interactive. The kiosk uses Augmented Reality software that puts the learning experience into the user's hands. When someone first steps in front of the kiosk they see themselves on the screen and are prompted to pick up a brochure. Once the camera sees the front image of one of three brochures a 3-D image of a bald eagle, fish, or seabird pops up onto the screen. During this time the kiosk visitor can zoom into the image or turn it around. After the animation has ended, a short video begins providing an overview of each restoration project. Visitors can take the brochures home with them and visit the MSRP website to download the interactive animations and use them on their home computers. The kiosk frame is made from sustainable materials including an eco-resin derived from kelp. The concept and design for the kiosk was developed by Pavement, a sustainable design consulting firm, and the 3-D animation was created by Total Immersion.

You can check out a kiosk at SEA Lab in Redondo Beach (**http://lacorps.org/sealab.php**), *Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro* (**www.cabrillomarineaquarium.org**), *and the California Science Center in Los Angeles* (**www.californiasciencecenter.org**)!

MSRP Webcams

Bald Eagle Webcam

Log onto the Bald Eagle webcam on your computer and you are instantly transported to Santa Cruz Island. Your computer speakers echo the sounds of wind rustling leaves and distant bird calls and sea lions barking. In the middle of the live video feed you see an eagle nest six feet across on the limb of a tree that is 30 feet up in the air. You can almost feel yourself sway with the tree limb as you watch it move on the screen. Depending on the time of year, you will see an eagle pair, an egg, or chicks in this nest. For the eagle enthusiasts, an eagle discussion forum provides an opportunity to engage in a daily chat, record nest observations that help biologists with monitoring, or read updates from field biologists that are working to restore bald eagles on the Channel Islands.

The bald eagle webcam is an important monitoring tool and outreach product that is used to engage the public in MSRP's efforts to restore bald eagles to the Channel Islands (see pgs. 2-3).

To view the live eagle webcam and to join other bald eagle enthusiasts on the discussion forum visit Channel Islands Live **http://chil.vcoe.org/eagle_cam.htm**

In the middle of the live video feed you see an eagle nest six feet across on the limb of a tree that is 30 feet up in the air.

Fish Webcam

Ever wonder what lurks below the surface of the water in a wetland? MSRP's fish webcam immerses you in Talbert Marsh of the Huntington Beach wetlands complex where neighboring marshes have recently been restored (see pg. 6). One of the most fascinating times to watch the fish webcam is during a tide change when schools of fish, shrimp, and other invertebrates pass by the camera in large numbers. The staff of MSRP has also found three species of blennies, small fish with long bodies that like to hide in burrows or reef cracks, living inside pipes that are holding the camera in place on the muddy bottom. With eelgrass swaying in the background during the summer and fall months it is an underwater oasis!

The fish webcam is an educational tool to show the connection between wetlands and the many marine species that inhabit these ecosystems. Wetlands provide shelter and food to many young fish species so they can grow and eventually move out to the open ocean.

To view the MSRP fish webcam visit our website .
www.montroserestoration.gov

-Gabrielle Dorr
NOAA

Looking Ahead: Phase II Restoration Plan

In October 2005, MSRP released a Final Restoration Plan for Phase I of the program. Now six years later, MSRP is preparing the Phase II Restoration Plan to be released in late 2011. MSRP decided on a two-phased approach to restoration planning in order to evaluate the success of the initial priority projects. In the second phase, MSRP will build on many of the Phase 1 restoration projects and dedicate the remaining restoration funds.

MSRP's Phase II Restoration Plan will report on the program accomplishments since 2005. Reflecting back on program successes is important at this stage of planning to see what has worked and which areas should continue to be funded.

MSRP is planning to hold several public meetings in Southern California later this year to hear your comments on our Phase II plan. We value your input and hope that you will be able to join us at these meetings.

For information about MSRP's upcoming public meetings visit our website and sign up for our newsletter!

www.montroserestoration.gov

"The Trustees will use the damages for restoration of injured natural resources, including bald eagles, peregrine falcons and other marine birds, fish and the habitats upon which they depend, as well as providing for implementation of restoration projects intended to compensate for lost use of natural resources."

–Final consent decree, United States of America and State of California v. Montrose Chemical Corporation et al.

MSRP Films-Check Them Out!

MSRP's films offer a ***close and personalized view*** of our restoration projects. The Huntington Beach Wetlands film shows the importance of wetlands to **people, fish, and birds** while also explaining how we can all do our part to help.

Our films about seabird restoration show volunteers working hard to help replant *Santa Barbara Island and Scorpion Rock* to restore nesting habitat. The films depict the challenges of working on these remote islands.

Look for our new **bald eagle restoration** film in 2011!

MSRP has its own **youtube channel**!
www.youtube.com/user/msrprestoration

Interview With MSRP Program Manager

Jennifer Boyce is currently the Program Manager for MSRP and is the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) representative on the Trustee Council for the program. She was hired by NOAA in 1999 as a Restoration Ecologist. Jennifer had an integral role in setting up the structure of MSRP before the program was developed. Jennifer is also a representative on five other councils that oversee restoration of the marine environment and wildlife from oil spills in California. This past summer she spent over 70 days in Louisiana as the one of three On-site Leads for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) at the Oil Spill Command Post for the Gulf Oil Spill.

What was your role in setting up the structure of MSRP?
We set up a small working group that consisted of representatives from the different agencies on the Trustee Council (TC). The group researched restoration trustee councils and programs from other large cases to see what kind of management structure they used. The team quickly determined that based on the size of the MSRP settlement, having the agencies allocate full-time staff to MSRP would be critical to the implementation of successful restoration projects.

The team developed a vision for the program that included program staff from the different agencies on the TC. The staff for MSRP includes a Program Manager from NOAA, the lead federal agency, a bird biologist from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a fish biologist that works closely with California Department of Fish and Game, a seabird biologist with the National Park Service, an Outreach Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant. I believe the Working Group's determination to provide full-time positions for the program has been critical to MSRP's success.

What has been the most challenging aspect of MSRP for you?
I would have to say navigating through the bureaucracy of the six agencies on the council has been the most challenging. There is a tremendous amount of process involved in getting the funds actually into the proper vehicle for on-the-ground restoration projects. But that is also part of what makes the work rewarding-seeing all the hard work by the MSRP TC and team members resulting in such important gains for the impacted resources through these projects.

How did the experience working with MSRP help you when working with the other councils?
I think all my work on the different Trustee Councils helped me gain experience that benefits all of them. On each council we may learn a new technique or restoration concepts that can be helpful to another council.

What has been your most memorable and fulfilling experience with MSRP?
Without a doubt the most rewarding experience is seeing the restoration concepts we developed during the writing of the Restoration Plan evolve into full fledged restoration projects that are making measurable impacts to the those resources so tremendously impacted by the releases of DDT and PCBs. I remember the day we saw that first little Bald Eagle chick in the nest at Pelican Harbor on the web cam- the council really struggled with deciding what was the right path forward in terms of eagle restoration. Seeing that the pair of eagles on Santa Cruz Island hatching a chick without human intervention was extremely rewarding. Also, being able to travel out to Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz Islands to participate in the seabird habitat restoration projects is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. For me it's all about the resources-the eagles, falcons, seabirds, and the fish and working together to see them recover.

What was it like working as one of the On-Site NRDA lead for the Gulf Oil Spill this past year?
Being a part of NOAA's unprecedented response to the Gulf Oil Spill has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my career. The Gulf Oil Spill was a spill of national significance and never before have the Federal and State agencies come together to launch a response of the magnitude and duration that was accomplished in Louisiana. The work was demanding and the hours were long, it was hot and we were all away from home for extended periods of time-all of those factors created a sense of camaraderie that we don't normally experience in our day to day work environments. I gained a tremendous amount of experience in terms of working within the Coast Guard Incident Command Structure, providing leadership to our NRDA team, and how to manage multiple field teams over a broad area and ensure their safety; all of which will be beneficial if we are faced with a large oil spill again.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
I would echo what I said above, seeing the resources recover and being a part of those important projects. Also, I am fortunate to work with great people, we have been lucky to have a great deal of consistency on the Trustee Council and the staff and that has created great trust among the program staff which makes my job much easier. I enjoy the diversity that my position allows-you can never predict what issues we may be challenged with on day to day basis-keeps it interesting!

What advice do you have for future biologists?
I would say to stay true to your dreams. It can be challenging at times, you may have to work extremely hard but if you can stick it out the rewards will be worth it!

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