



April 29, 2009

Eileen Maher
Environmental Services Department
Unified Port of San Diego
3165 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101



Dear Eileen,

On behalf of WILDCOAST, I would like to thank you for the Unified Port of San Diego's continued support of our Sea Turtle and Clean Water Campaigns.

Thanks to the Port's support, thousands of San Diego area children and their families have learned about sea turtle conservation and the protection of other ocean and coastal wildlife. Your support of WILDCOAST's Clean Water Campaign has resulted in steps being taken to assess and stop ocean pollution associated with the Tijuana River and to educate port-area residents as to the associated health and environmental issues.

Attached to this letter is our report detailing our work during the past 6 months funded by the Port through Grant #52481-01. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Port as we address the environmental challenges of the South Bay.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please call me at 619-423-86665, ext. 202.

Again, many thanks.

Sincerely,

Serge Dedina, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Enc: Report for Grant #52481-01
Fall 2009 WILDCOAST newsletter
"Sick from the Surf" health outreach card (WILDCOAST partnership with IB Health Center and San Diego State University's Graduate School of Public Health)

Unified Port of San Diego
WiLDCOAST Grant Progress Report
#52481-01
April 29, 2009

With support from the Unified Port of San Diego, WiLDCOAST's Clean Water Campaign is working to provide outreach and water quality health education to underserved communities who regularly practice ocean recreation at South San Diego beaches, increase the number and leadership capacity of clean water advocates, and actively halt pollution sources in the Tijuana River watershed. To date, WiLDCOAST's campaign has reached over 10,000 South San Diego County ocean users with water quality health information.

The "I Love San Diego Sea Turtles and Wildlife Project," has educated more than 300 kindergarteners and elementary school students through a partnership with Port-partner schools using our bilingual guide, "Wetlands Neighbors/Humedales Vecinos." Additionally, WiLDCOAST has educated thousands of port-area adults and children through the successful media campaign utilizing Latino celebrity spokespeople, El Hijo del Santo, Los Tigres del Norte, and Mana thanks to funding from the Unified Port of San Diego.

Objective 1: Bring the sea turtle education activities to over 1,000 Port-Partner kindergarteners, in addition to several other schools and community groups in and around San Diego Bay.

Milestones:

- Between October 2008 and April 2009, WiLDCOAST gave presentations and conducted hands-on activities to over 300 kindergarteners, elementary school students and community groups in and around San Diego Bay. The objective of these bilingual presentations is to raise awareness about endangered wildlife conservation in the region.
- The 2008-2009 "Defiende El Mar" campaign continued to take advantage of Latino celebrities to make the wildlife conservation message WiLDCOAST continued the partnership with popular music groups "Los Tigres del Norte," and "Maná" as well as the Mexican legendary wrestler, El Hijo del Santo, to reach a broad Latino audience and make the campaign an ongoing successful conservation effort.
- WiLDCOAST continued to distribute two educational comic books featuring El Hijo del Santo; one about storm water pollution and the other one about marine protected areas. More than 1000 comic books and 1500 posters and

flyers have been distributed through partner organizations and public events in California, particularly in the San Diego – Tijuana border region.

Objective 2: Reach 2,500 3rd and 4th graders in the San Diego Bay area based on the “Wetland Neighbors” educational booklet and activities.

Milestones:

- One thousand copies of the book and five hundred CDs with the book files in a PDF format were distributed throughout the region in partnership with San Diego Natural History Museum, the Chula Vista Nature Center, the Tijuana River Estuarine Reserve, schools in South San Diego Bay, Aquatic Adventures, schools in Tijuana and various popular events and environmental fairs.
- During 2008 and 2009, WiLDCOAST has continued to reach out to more than 40,000 people in the local Hispanic population at community events like Earth Fair in Balboa Park, the Imperial Beach’s Annual Sandcastle Competition, Latino Expo, Fiesta del Sol in Barrio Logan, the Chula Vista Nature Center’s Wildlife Day Celebration, local Farmer’s markets, family events and Expoambiente in Tijuana.

Objective 3: Conduct a community needs assessment to determine the level of awareness and prioritization of reducing the health threat of Tijuana River pollution.

Milestones:

- WiLDCOAST is working with San Diego State’s Graduate School of Public Health to test fish caught from the Imperial Beach Pier for contamination. The laboratory results for the 9 fish fillet samples submitted have all tested low for heavy metals and chlorinated pesticides.
- We continued to work with the County’s Department of Environmental Health to disseminate ocean illness surveys in English and Spanish through our website and the popular website Surflife.com.
- Between October 2008 and April 2009, WiLDCOAST trained 30 local high school students as ocean recreation and pier fishing surveyors. These efforts led to the collection of 142 ocean recreation and pier fisher surveys bringing the total collected for the grant period to 352 surveys from South San Diego ocean users in English, Spanish and Tagalog. Preliminary survey analysis shows that a majority of active ocean users in Imperial Beach are aware of the health threat posed by contaminated water from the Tijuana River during wet weather events.

- WiLDCOAST analyzed data from a community phone survey of 200 residents to measure the Imperial Beach community's knowledge of the environmental health issues resulting from Tijuana River pollution and how the community prioritizes this issue. Results show that 94% of respondents viewed water pollution as a problem for Imperial Beach and that reducing water pollution was a top priority for 75% of respondents.
- WiLDCOAST continued to widely disseminate the Issue Briefing document about Tijuana River pollution created with community members, researchers, and city and county officials. The issue briefing was distributed during Tijuana River tours, at community events, to local schools through presentations, and used to inform decision-makers on steps to reduce Tijuana River pollution and protect public health. In April, WiLDCOAST presented the Issue Briefing to the Governor's Cabinet, including Secretary of Resources Mike Chrisman and CalEPA Secretary Linda Adams.

Objective 4: By the end of 2008, provide water quality health education and outreach to 10,000 South San Diego County ocean users.

Milestones:

- During the third grant reporting period, WiLDCOAST continued to engage the local South Bay community in direct environmental health protection activities, including a cleanup event of the Tijuana River Valley in which 250 local students, their families, and local beach users removed a total of 6 tons of trash and tires from the watershed and the park's recreational trails. The Dempsey Holder Memorial Ocean Festival and Surf Contest brought an estimated 300 local residents to participate in a surf contest and environmental awards night recognizing the importance of "clean water leadership" to the health of the local community. Public outreach events in English and Spanish were held in Imperial Beach, San Diego, and Coronado. These events included the 2009 Kids for Clean Water surf contest, The Dempsey Holder Ocean Festival and cleanups in the Tijuana River Valley, Imperial Beach Pier, Tijuana Sloughs National Wildlife Refuge and Silver Strand State Beach. These events provided water quality health education and outreach to more than 2,300 people.
- In November, program staff spent the day filming and documenting the impact of the "First Flush", or first rain event of the winter, when cross border flows of trash and wastewater flow into the Tijuana River Valley and South County beaches. The resulting media was distributed to Water Board, City of San Diego and City of Imperial Beach staff, as well as local reporters. Surflife published a short story written by McCue on the health,

environmental, and economic impacts of Tijuana River pollution. To date this story has been read by more than 6,500 people.

- WiLDCOAST continued to work with local organizations and a network of local health care providers, public health experts and local schools to develop educational outreach materials to ocean users. Outreach has been done with pier fishers, surfers, and swimmers about the health risks associated with contact with water contaminated by the Tijuana River.
- Through a partnership with the Imperial Beach Health Center (IBHC) and San Diego State's Graduate School of Public Health, WiLDCOAST is working to provide local ocean users with health prevention and access to treatment information related to water quality concerns. One component of these efforts is the vaccination of 1,200 local ocean users who are at-risk for Hepatitis A through beach water contact. Media articles on these efforts in the Union-Tribune, FOX News, San Diego 10, and KPBS, have amplified WiLDCOAST's outreach efforts to an estimated 50,000 San Diego County ocean users.
- WiLDCOAST also continued work to recruit local high school students as Clean Water advocates. Staff gave water quality presentations to 280 students at San Ysidro, Southwest, and High Tech High School and discussed opportunities to participate in Clean Water advocacy. Several interested students were given additional information on getting involved in local water quality protection activities and Clean Water internship positions at WiLDCOAST.

OBJECTIVE 5: Identify, cultivate and build leadership capacity of 12 clean water advocates.

Milestones:

- From October 2008 to April 2009 WiLDCOAST led 16 tours of the Tijuana River Watershed for a total of 63 individuals, including policy-makers, stakeholders, and elected officials.
- WiLDCOAST continued to work with the Tijuana River Citizens' Council (TRCC), a dedicated group of 12 clean water advocates that represent a wide spectrum of the local community, including concerned parents, recreational fishers, local businessmen and high school surfers. More than 50% are bilingual/bicultural. The group has held weekly meetings since September 2008.
- On October 25, 2008 WiLDCOAST worked with the TRCC to organize a cleanup of the Tijuana River Regional Park. Over 250 residents from South

San Diego removed over 7 tons of trash and tires from the river park. Participants included youth, families, individuals, and business owners.

- On November 4, WiLDCOAST headed up to the State Capitol with members of the TRCC to attend a public Water Board hearing to advocate for funds to support the Beach Safety Program that provides counties across the state with funding to test water quality and post health advisories when necessary at local beaches. In September, San Diego County was forced to completely suspend their monitoring and advisory program after the Governor vetoed state funding. TRCC members Paloma Aguirre, Alfonso Lopez, Jay Novak, Greg Ansley and Joseph Dacong spoke from local experience about the importance of funding the Beach Safety Program and urged the Water Board to provide the needed funding. After the public comment period, the Water Board unanimously approved \$1.9 million in funding for the program.

Objective 6: Work through partnerships to eliminate 3 pollution sources.

Milestones:

- WiLDCOAST worked with the City and County of San Diego to cleanup ocean-bound pollution in the Tijuana River Valley including areas of the County Regional Park.
- WiLDCOAST joined with San Diego City and State agencies and graduate students at the University of San Diego to break the “tire cycle” by which used tires exported legally to Tijuana from California are flushed back into sensitive habitats in the Tijuana River Valley. These efforts resulted in a proposed legislative fix at the state level to allow the Waste Board to better deal with the flow of waste tires into San Diego County from Mexico. In April, Program Manager Ben McCue testified at a Senate hearing in Sacramento about the environmental and public health impacts of waste tires in the Tijuana River Valley and South Bay coastal area.
- WiLDCOAST continued to help Engineers Without Borders and the Tijuana Estuary install a decentralized sewage treatment system for approximately 50 households in the Colonia of San Bernardo, Los Laureles, in Western Tijuana.
- WILDCOAST was also successful in working with Tijuana’s water agency to increase dialogue about the need for expanded sewage treatment and public health advisories for border beaches.

Unexpected Successes and Challenges:

WiLDCOAST's clean water work contributed to the creation of the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team, a group made up of the 23 local, state and federal agencies that are involved in efforts to reduce the pollution in the Tijuana River. The Regional Water Quality Control Board, who WiLDCOAST consistently directed advocacy efforts towards, was the lead in the group's creation. This is the first time that all of the agencies with jurisdiction in the Tijuana River Valley have come together in a concerted effort to reduce the impacts of the river's pollution on San Diego County border communities.

WiLDCOAST's partnership with the County of San Diego was strengthened through work together to secure funding for the recreational water quality monitoring and beach advisory program. WiLDCOAST organized the Tijuana River Citizens' Council to speak at a Sacramento hearing where the State Water Board approved interim funding to continue the program. Ben McCue, Program Manager for the Clean Water Campaign, was appointed by County Supervisor Greg Cox to the Department of Environmental Health Advisory Board to serve as the environmental organization representative.

WiLDCOAST has experienced slight challenges scheduling presentations with some of the partner schools in the Turtle Talks program. However, WiLDCOAST has continued to engage new schools, particularly with underserved communities in the South Bay area. A work poster handout for the "Turtle Talks" program is still under development for the next school year.

Changes in Program Staff:

Fernanda Schroeder has recently joined WiLDCOAST as an outreach coordinator. Fernanda attained a M.A. in Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego and a B.A. in Communications from California State University, San Marcos. Given her experience in outreach and her bilingual, bicultural background we believe she will be a great asset for our team.

Anticipated work for the next reporting period

The Sea Turtle program will continue to give presentations in Spanish and English to local member schools as required through out the year. New materials are being developed as handouts for students participating in the program. These will be work-posters reinforcing the presentation conservation message. The program will continue distributing the bilingual "Wetlands" workbooks and compact discs through partner organizations.

WiLDCOAST will continue to stay active in the efforts of the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team to reduce the flow of ocean-bound pollution and solid waste into San Diego County from Mexico. The Clean Water Campaign will continue to work with researchers from San Diego State and the Imperial Beach Health Center to

analyze the health risk to local fishers from consumption of fish caught off the Imperial Beach Pier. Additional laboratory testing is now being done on additional species as well as on the non-fillet parts of the fish that are commonly consumed. The results will be used to set safe fish consumption guidelines. The guidelines will be distributed in educational health outreach in English, Spanish, and Tagalog. WiLDCOAST also plans to complete and distribute the community survey report on knowledge and perceptions related to the health impacts associated with Tijuana River pollution.

Percentage of work complete

WiLDCOAST has completed 3/4 of the proposed objectives for the two-year grant period. We are on target to meet all of the grant objectives by October 2009.

Cumulative dollar costs incurred (to date)

	Grant	Expenditure
Personnel	\$7,000	\$5,250
Educational Materials	\$10,750	\$8,063
Equipment	\$2,500	\$1,875
Public Meetings and Events	\$5,250	\$3,938
Consultants	\$12,925	\$9,694
Program marketing	\$4,000	\$3,000
Staff and Partner Travel Expenses	\$7,575	\$5,681.25
Total	\$50,000	\$37,500

Additional Project Support

WiLDCOAST has secured grants for the Clean Water Now Campaign from The California Wellness Foundation through December 2010 and the California Endowment through 2009. The REI Foundation, Patagonia, and the Surf Industry Manufacturers' Association (SIMA) have also awarded WiLDCOAST grants to support coastal water quality protection activities. Additionally, WiLDCOAST, in partnership with the Imperial Beach Health Center (IBHC) and San Diego State's Graduate School of Public Health, was chosen to receive a Community Clinics

Initiative (CCI) TIDES Foundation grant. This two-year grant will support a community partnership between IBHC, WILD COAST, and San Diego State's Graduate School of Public Health to address water quality related health threats through data collection, community outreach/education and the provision of health services.

Additional documents:

We have attached the following "I love San Diego Sea Turtles and Wildlife" and "Clean Water Now" campaign materials to highlight the accomplishments so far:

- "Sick from the Surf" health outreach card
- WILD COAST Fall 2008 newsletter