

SAN DIEGO REGIONAL BEACH SAND PROJECT FACT SHEET

Restoring a priceless resource

Sun, sand, and surf are images San Diegans and people around the world think of when they hear names like Oceanside, Carlsbad, Moonlight Beach, Fletcher Cove, Torrey Pines, and Imperial Beach. But the image quickly fades when residents and visitors alike discover that sand is missing from many of the region's beaches.



RBSP I photos for Imperial Beach before, after, and March 2010

That's one of the reasons why residents and community leaders from coastal areas and inland neighborhoods are again making a concerted effort to place sand onto the critically eroded beaches along the region's shoreline.

In 2001, the SANDAG Regional Beach Sand Project (RBSP I) dredged 2.1 million cubic yards of clean, beach quality sand from offshore and placed it on 12 eroded beaches from Imperial Beach to Oceanside.

In spring 2012, the Regional Beach Sand Project II (RBSP II) will widen beaches by adding millions of cubic yards of clean sand to eroded shorelines. It is the second major public works effort being coordinated by local governments, working together through SANDAG.

Why beach nourishment?

The region's beaches have been steadily eroding for the past 20 years. Sand that once flowed down rivers to preserve our beaches is no longer making that trip because of the development throughout the region, and water supply and flood control projects needed to support that development.



Oceanside at present

Some beaches are stripped of sand and during the next few decades, most of our beaches will be too narrow to enjoy unless positive action is taken, starting now.

The RBSP II will benefit the region's environment and economy and, most all, its overall quality of life. As the beaches continue to erode and become increasingly narrow, recreational opportunities are restricted. A unique and highly valued environment disappears. The important visitor industry component of the local, state, and national economies is constrained. In addition, private and public development and infrastructure are subject to increased damage from storms.

There are choices when it comes to protecting and restoring the region's coastline. Should we enhance the shoreline by restoring and maintaining wide sandy beaches, or armor it with heavy duty steel, rock, and concrete seawalls, or sacrifice it to the destructive forces of storm waves, flooding, and erosion?

The RBSP II is based upon the conclusion that beach sand restoration is the best

(Continued on reverse)



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Beachgoers enjoying RBSP I final product



Bulldozers and sand at Batiqitos RBSP I

*Source:
Great Lakes Dredging and
Dock Company*

strategy to pursue. Putting sand onto the region's beaches will provide environmental, economic, and recreational benefits for its residents and visitors.

But what happens to the sand after it is placed, won't it continue to erode? The answer is yes, the sand will eventually spread out over the region's entire 60-mile coastline. The San Diego coastline loses sand to various places including offshore to deeper water and inside the harbors and lagoons. These losses are not adequately offset by input from rivers, bluffs, and nourishment. So the losses exceed the gains each year and the sand volume is decreasing. The good news is that beach width gains from the 2001 RBSP I sustained for about four years on average and volumes sustained for about six years. And, as of 2008, there still appeared to be RBSP I sand in the system and this material will serve as a foundation for the RBSP II.

How are beaches restored?

The RBSP II will place sand on many of the region's beaches most likely from large deposits of sand located in 30 to 100 feet of water found within two miles of the shoreline.

Dredging sand from nearshore sources and pumping it to beaches is a technology that has proven reliable and effective all over the world. The nearshore sand sources must be tested to prove they will provide a quality source of material for the region's beaches that is compatible, such as similar size, texture, and color. The most cost-effective, highest-quality, and environmentally-suitable sources of sand will be used.

Beach building technology must be adapted to the specific geological and environmental challenges presented by our shoreline. The RBSP II takes into consideration all of the unique features of our region's coastline and will avoid sensitive reef habitats in the nearshore and make every effort to minimize impacts to our coastal environment.

What's next?

SANDAG wants your input! SANDAG is currently in the environmental phase of the project. The project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being prepared for public review in winter 2010.

If you would like more details about the RBSP II, receive the EIR, or provide input please contact SANDAG at (619) 699-0640, beachsand@sandag.org, or visit www.sandag.org/shoreline.