

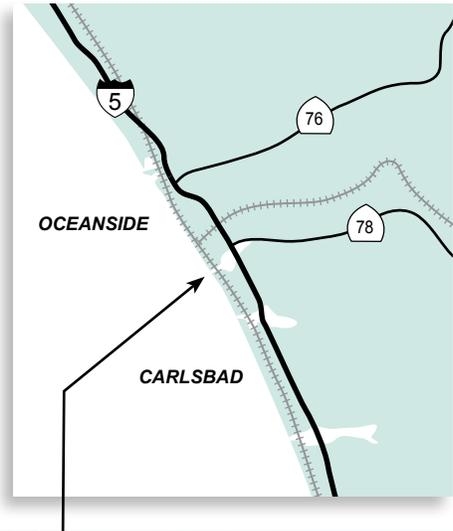
BUENA VISTA LAGOON ENHANCEMENT PROJECT FACT SHEET



The Project

Buena Vista Lagoon is located in northern San Diego County, within the cities of Oceanside and Carlsbad. It encompasses approximately 220 acres, extending to the coastline from just east of Interstate 5 (I-5). Buena Vista Lagoon is a freshwater lagoon in Southern California, protected from tidal influence by a beach berm and a man-made barrier known as a weir, located at the lagoon mouth.

Over many decades, the health of the lagoon has declined due to natural and man-made causes. Numerous federal, state and local



agencies and organizations have cooperated in the past in an effort to gain consensus on a solution.

In July 2012, SANDAG was asked to serve as the new lead agency for the environmental review process for the Buena Vista Lagoon Enhancement Project. The SANDAG Transportation Committee approved the request, in recognition of the lagoon's regional value and the importance of resolving long-term management questions.

The Buena Vista Lagoon Enhancement Project includes engineering studies and the

preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) to analyze possible approaches to the enhancement of the lagoon. A minimum of four alternatives are proposed for evaluation: three enhancement alternatives (freshwater, saltwater, and a saltwater/freshwater hybrid regime) and a no project alternative. Through the EIR process, SANDAG plans to engage stakeholders and the public in considering potential solutions. If the process results in the selection of a preferred enhancement alternative, then SANDAG may lead the implementation of that alternative.

(Continued on reverse)



401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 699-1900
Fax (619) 699-1905
sandag.org





The Need

The Buena Vista Lagoon is notable as one of the six coastal lagoons that contribute to the scenic quality of the North Coast Corridor, and it serves as an environmental landmark between Oceanside and Carlsbad. In 1968, the State of California designated Buena Vista Lagoon as the state's first Ecological Reserve, acknowledging the lagoon's significance as a home to a diverse range of plant and animal species.

The lagoon's significant biological value arises from its approximately 220 acres of wetland habitat, which is home to more than 100 bird, 18 mammal, and 14 amphibian and reptile species. During spring and fall migrations, many more bird species visit the lagoon, yielding a total count of more than 200 observed bird species. The cities of Oceanside and Carlsbad also have included lagoon preservation in their subarea plans under the San Diego County Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan.

Sedimentation and water quality issues have raised questions about Buena Vista Lagoon's long-term ecological health. Over time, the increased sediment and nutrient loading from urban development, sewage spills, and restricted circulation from highway and railroad bridges and the weir have degraded the lagoon. These conditions have diminished the lagoon's value to fish and wildlife, as well as human use.

Corridor Strategy

SANDAG and Caltrans are working to implement a balanced transportation system for the region's North Coast Corridor (NCC), which spans from La Jolla to Oceanside, in order to provide travel choices for the future while enhancing the quality of life for local residents. Three primary components make up the program – the I-5 Express Lanes Project,

coastal rail and transit enhancements, and environmental protection and coastal access improvements. The program represents a \$6.5 billion investment in the San Diego economy over the next 40 years, including more than \$200 million to preserve and enhance sensitive coastal habitat and improve coastal access. The North Coast Corridor Program is included in *TransNet*, the voter-approved, half-cent sales tax initiative that helps fund transportation projects in the region.

Future enhancements to the Buena Vista Lagoon could serve as mitigation for potential impacts from the I-5 and rail improvements. The Buena Vista Lagoon is included as a potential project in the Caltrans/SANDAG 2013 North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan, approved by the California Coastal Commission in August 2014.

Project Status

The scoping period for the EIR took place in May 2013. Public review of the Draft EIR and a public workshop are anticipated for spring 2015. The timing of any future enhancement efforts will depend on which alternative is selected and the proposed funding sources.

Project Funding

SANDAG has committed \$800,000 in *TransNet* funds for the Buena Vista Lagoon environmental review process. Additionally, the cities of Oceanside and Carlsbad each contributed \$100,000 toward the study. Funding for implementation of a potential enhancement project will be explored after completion of the EIR process and selection of a preferred alternative by SANDAG.

For More Information

KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/BVLagoon