

 **THE PORT OF  
LONG BEACH** NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION \* 925 HARBOR PLAZA \* P.O. BOX 570 \* LONG BEACH CA 90801

**GOOD TIDINGS AT PORTS**  
**San Pedro Bay Marine Life Much More Plentiful**

Feb. 3, 2003

A recent study has found that marine life in San Pedro Bay has become much more abundant, so much so that the Port of Long Beach and the agencies that regulate the marine environment have had to re-assess the impact of port development in parts of the harbor once regarded as unhealthy and unproductive.

Based on the findings of the study, the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners voted unanimously Monday, Feb. 3, to revise a formula under which the port uses "credits" gained by restoring wetlands to compensate for the impact of new landfills in the harbor. This change doubles the number of mitigation "credits" the port will use to offset fills where the marine habitat is much improved.

"This is good news for San Pedro Bay," said port Executive Director Richard D. Steinke. "The study shows that the marine environment has dramatically improved in recent decades. While we know there is much more that has to be done, this shows that our environmental stewardship is greatly improving the habitat for marine life."

The recently completed "Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles Year 2000 Biological Baseline Study of San Pedro Bay" revealed that productivity and habitat quality in San Pedro Bay has increased markedly since the last comprehensive survey in 1976. Fish, plankton, "critters" living on the harbor bottom and those on pilings and breakwaters, kelp, algae and birds are now more plentiful and healthier. Eelgrass has developed in shallow waters. The study estimated that 44,591,000 fish belonging to 67 species make their home in San Pedro Bay.

The port originally reached accords in 1998 with federal and state environmental regulatory agencies, agreeing to restore the Bolsa Chica wetlands of Orange County in exchange for mitigation credits it could use to compensate for the development of new land in the harbor. The accords established a formula for using the credits. For development projects in the healthier areas of the harbor, the port was required to use twice as many credits as in less-healthy areas.

The revised agreement approved Monday revises the boundaries between the healthier and less-healthy areas, greatly increasing the areas considered healthy based on the findings of the recent study.

Contact: Art Wong,  
Media Relations Manager  
(562) 590-4123;  
wong@polb.com