

Restoration Project Planning and Permitting

San Diego Creek Trash Interceptor Newport Beach, CA

Clients:

City of Newport Beach
100 Civic Center Drive,
Newport Beach, CA 92660
Robert Stein, Engineer
949.644.3322

Burns and McDonnell

4225 Executive Square #500,
La Jolla, CA 92037
David Pohl, Project Manager
760.497.3318

Project Staff:

Eric Zahn, Christian Garcia, Sebastian De Leon,
Megan Wolff, Mark Hannaford

Focus: Coastal Wetlands Restoration Planning and Permitting; Construction Support & Monitoring; Habitat Assessment

Project Overview:

The City of Newport has been pursuing the installation of a Trash Interceptor within San Diego Creek just up the watershed from Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve. Tidal Influence was brought on to 1) perform a habitat assessment, 2) acquire the necessary regulatory permits, 3) develop a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), 4) ensure all revegetation designs and specifications are clearly show in the bid package, and 5) act as the biological monitor during construction.

Tidal Influence biologists performed a completed habitat assessment of the 2-acre creek segment. We mapped the existing vegetation alliances and created GIS maps to communicate the locations of intact native habitat versus areas infested with non-native vegetation. We also performed surveys for all wildlife including focused surveys for the endangered least Bell's vireo, endangered California gnatcatcher, and the threatened western pond turtle. This was all compiled in a report that was included in the permit applications. The permit applications also required that an HMMP be developed for the project.



We utilized our vegetation maps to determine the locations that needed enhancement and identified the areas to be restored based on the mitigation ratios presented in the Project's MND.

The project required us to pursue permits from the Army Corps of Engineers (Letter of Permission), State Water Board (401 certification), CDFW (Streambed Alteration Agreement), and Coastal Commission (CDP). We organized and hosted pre-application meetings with each of these agencies and coordinated with their staff throughout the permit application process. All permits were received for this project in advance of the anticipated construction start date.

We collaborated closely with the City's engineering design consultants to overlay the habitat mitigation areas into the projects design sheets. This also included developing a planting schedule. We developed the design specifications for the planting which included all of the details for the hydroseeding operation as well as the necessary soil amendments and the maintenance program.

Construction of this project started in September 2023 and Tidal Influence staff have been the Biological Monitors on-site during all construction activities that may impact biological resources or threaten rare species. We have been acting as the project's environmental compliance management team and ensuring that the City and their contractors adhere to all of the permit and CEQA conditions.

This project showcases Tidal Influence's ability to play a leadership role from the permitting and planning phase, through the design phase and into the construction phase.