

**San Diego Association of Governments
Ocean Beach Estuary Enhancement Project
The San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF)
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: 04/01/24 – 06/30/24
Submission Date: 07/22/24
SANDAG Contract Number: S1125510**

Quarterly Status Report Overview

PLEASE DO NOT CHANGE OR ALTER THE FORMATTING OF THIS DOCUMENT! SANDAG has developed a standardized grant monitoring and tracking program for the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) Land Management Grant Program. The purpose is to collect information on individual projects and the grant program as a whole for reporting to the Regional Habitat Conservation Taskforce, SANDAG Policy Advisory Committees, and the SANDAG Board of Directors. SANDAG monitors grantees through invoices, progress reports, performance measures, and designated photograph points. These standardized reporting templates and instructions for submittal are included below.

Work Performed this Period:

1. Task 1 - Invasive Removal and Habitat Restoration

This quarter, staff supported City of San Diego staff in responding to the remaining questions for the Coastal Development Permit from the Coastal Commission, which is the remaining hurdle for expanding invasive removal further into the habitat area. As of the end of this quarter, City staff believe there are no outstanding questions and the project is just waiting to be scheduled on an upcoming Coastal Commission agenda.

In cooperation with the City Ranger, SDRPF staff also hosted three invasive removal events in Q2 for members of the community. These events still helped remove dozens of cubic yards of biomass and reduced seed bank of invasive plants.

- April 16: 12 volunteers spent 1.5 hours for a combined 18 volunteer hours primarily removing crown daisies (*Glebionis coronaria*) that was encroaching on the existing trails of the project area. This was a family friendly event with 5 youth and 7 adults.
- May 3: staff hosted 37 volunteers for 2 hours for a combined 74 volunteer hours to continue removing crown daisies, sea rocket (*Cakile maritima*) and curly dock (*Rumex crispus*) from within the existing trails of the project area.
- May 19, staff hosted 14 volunteers for 3 hours for a combined 42 volunteer hours helped remove crown daisies, sea rocket and curly dock. This event was part of San Diego River Days and also included an outreach component described under Task 3.

Photos 1-3: volunteers limited invasive removal to maintenance on the existing trail while we await permits to work within the habitat area, such as at this event on May 3.



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Photos 4-5: Volunteers in action at invasive removal events, removing invasive plants for disposal off-site



Photo 6: Volunteer group photo



14% complete.

2. Task 2 - Access Control

No field work has been completed for this task while project partners await permits to begin installing the access control fencing.

SDRPF staff and San Diego Audubon partners continued to meet with the City of San Diego (the lead applicant for the permits) about the permit process. Based on the unanticipated delay in received permits, staff also worked with San Diego Audubon Society to review cost estimates for fencing installation and review strategy to complete this work within budget. Volunteers also supported the City Ranger by replacing some sections of rope on the old, existing fencing, in order to prevent unauthorized access during the final months before the new fencing goes in.

Project partners at San Diego Audubon also planned for outreach to community partners to update them on the project later this summer.

3% complete.

3. Task 3 - Community Engagement, Education and Outreach

Community engagement staff continued planning and leading outreach events and worked with organizations in the Ocean Beach/Point Loma community to continue work on establishing a visible, long-term presence at the River Mouth. SDRPF education staff hosted a community event in partnership with San Diego Audubon Society to raise awareness in visitors to the adjacent Dog Beach about how dog-owners can help protect endangered birds and plants. The first of these events, Fur & Feathers Living Together, was held on May 19, 2024 (concurrent with a volunteer invasive removal event).

This program illustrated the importance of this diverse river habitat. From Dog Beach to the protected Estuary, participants learned about the endangered birds that use the river as a stopping ground during their migratory route and how to protect these species. The participants made a print of their dog's paw out of dough to create a lasting imprint of the impact the dog might make. SDRPF created a bird guide to accompany the guided walks and put signs up to show that Wagging Tails Stay on Trails and to encourage dog owners to have their dogs play at the beach but leave the protected areas to the birds.

In addition, staff held one field trip in cooperation with project partners for local summer program students, engaging 50 students in hands on education about this important ecosystem.

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Photo 7: Community members participate in Fur and Feathers activity



Photos 8-10: Photos of responsible dog-walking were taken at the event for use in public awareness communications for the project



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In addition, outreach partners from the San Diego Audubon Society held one railwatching and docent program per week at the River Mouth between April and June, engaging 6 volunteer docents.

37% complete.

4. Task 4 – Monitoring

This quarter, SDRPF implemented multiple community science bioblitz events to document the flora and fauna present across different habitat types in the project area. The events took place on April 26th for the City Nature Challenge and June 22 for Snapshot Cal Coast. During these two events, ten volunteers contributed a combined total of 20 hours. Volunteers and staff observed 82 different species with 150 observations during the April BioBlitz, and 65 species and 141 observations on June 22.

In addition to conducting two bioblitz events with volunteers, SDRPF staff and interns participated with the City of San Diego to conduct two rare plant monitoring surveys; Nuttall's acmispon (*Acmispon prostratus*) and salt marsh bird's beak (*Chloropyron maritimum*). Additionally, SDRPF conducted a rare plant survey for coastal woolly heads (*Nemacaulis denudata*), a 1B.2 class species on May 20.

The City of San Diego submitted the data for the first two surveys to the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP) and SDRPF submitted the coastal woolly heads survey to SDMMP. During our coastal woolly heads survey SDRPF staff and interns observed 5,458 individuals in our 10m x 10m plot. We also mapped the maximum extent for coastal woolly heads, which is primarily focused around the upper coastal dune sections of the project area (see Figure 1).

In addition, San Diego Audubon Society organized one railwatching/docent program per week to record rail sightings and calls.

Photos are on the following pages.

38% complete.

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*Figure 1: Map documenting maximum extent for coastal woolly heads (*Nemacaulis denudata*) within the project area.*



Photo 11: BioBlitz volunteers photographing species



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*Photo 12: Group photo of project partners: City of San Diego, San Diego River Park Foundation, and San Diego Audubon after completing the rare plant survey for salt marsh bird's beak (*Chloropyron maritimum*)*



Photo 13: Interns assisting with rare plant monitoring for Nuttall's acmispon



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Photo 14-15: Interns assisting with rare plant monitoring for coast wooly-heads (Nemacaulis denudata)



5. Task 5 - Administration

Project administration this quarter included submitting our fourth invoice and progress report, and working with SANDAG and the San Diego Audubon Society to ensure compliance with various project requirements. Staff coordinated with the City of San Diego to document and report on their in-kind matching funds. Project admin also included other correspondence with partners and SANDAG, updating budgets and coordinating timesheets and reports both internally and from partner organizations.

In addition, staff continued to meet with the City of San Diego and SDAS at least monthly about the permits to enable this project. As previously reported, the invasive removal, fencing and some signage requires a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission. The City of San Diego (as the landowner) is the lead for this application, and SDAS and SDRPF named partners in completing the work.

After the Site Development Permit was approved last quarter, the City of San Diego submitted updates to the Coastal Commission, and together with partners, responded to questions from the Commission. By the end of the quarter, we believe that there are no outstanding questions, and we are just waiting to get on the Coastal Commission's agenda. We are hopeful we can get on the September agenda in order to limit further project delays. The City of San Diego will be advocating for this timeline with the Coastal Commission staff, on behalf of this project.

30% complete.

Provide the exact work start date, a description of the work completed under each task, and percent complete. Add additional tasks as necessary

Work Anticipated Next Period

This does not need to be task specific but should include a short paragraph or bullet point list of activities anticipated for next quarter.

Our biggest priority next period is getting the project scheduled for review at the earliest possible Coastal Commission meeting, in order to enable installation of the sand fence in September and October.

Until the permit is awarded, this work will be limited to the City of San Diego's current maintenance area around existing trails in the project area, but will be expanded into the habitat area as soon as allowable. We have tentative plans to start this work in October.

Community outreach and volunteer will continue with the monitoring and educational events planned.

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Issues to Note

Please provide a brief description of any issue(s) encountered during the reporting period and any steps taken to address the issue(s).

As discussed in the Task 5 report above, the permitting for the project is taking longer than anticipated. We are working with the City of San Diego (the permit applicant) to resolve the remaining questions to submit the final permit package for review and award.

Photographs & Figures

Photographs and figures are invaluable! Please include photos in the Quarterly Progress Reports and any figures (if applicable). Both photos and figures may be included throughout the document under corresponding tasks or at the end following the Issues to Note section. Photographs taken at the same place or photographic points (photo-points) can assist SANDAG staff in tracking the project's progress over time.

It is required that **Photographs include:**

- A before and after comparison sequence from the start to the completion of the project for photo points.
- A brief description of the corresponding tasks, date, and activity in the photograph.
- **A copy of each photograph included in the report submitted in a .jpeg or .png file format.**

It is required that **Figures include:**

- A caption with a brief description.

Photos are in document above and also submitted as separate files.

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SDMMP Project Page

To receive reimbursement for work conducted within the quarter, submission of Quarterly Progress, Annual, and Final Reports must be added to your project's Project Page on the SDMMP website. Add any necessary photographs to the photo carousel and fill out the photograph information. *Please contact Sarah McCutcheon (smccutcheon@usgs.gov) or Emily Perkins (eperkins@usgs.gov) if you are having trouble accessing or editing your project page.*

Project Performance Measures Instructions

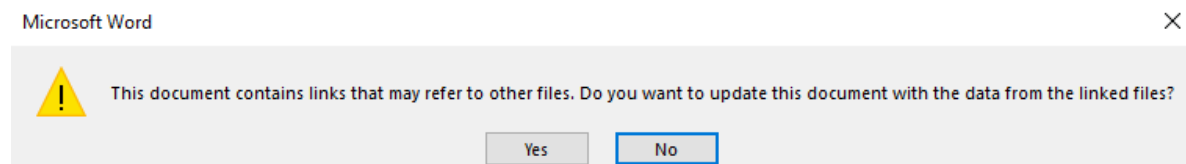
SANDAG will utilize the SANDAG Performance Measures to document compliance with the Project. Grantee's performance will be measured against the Performance Measures (Exhibit D) during the term of the project. More details on Performance Measures and Grant Recovery Plans are outlined in the Grant Agreements.

To access the **Project Performance Measures Excel Spreadsheet:**

- Simply double-click on the Excel icon located under the *Project Performance Measures* section.
 - An excel sheet will open, please fill out and then click save.
- Once the Excel spreadsheet is saved, please exit Excel and the spreadsheet will automatically update the icon in the Quarterly Progress Report Word document.

When opening the document with the **Project Performance Measures Excel Spreadsheet:**

- When you first open the Quarterly Progress Report Template, a warning message will open (image of the warning message below)
 - Click Yes to update the links in the document.



Performance Measures

Please include the Project's Performance Measures for each Quarterly Invoice and Progress Report in order to receive reimbursement.