

**San Diego Association of Governments
Ocean Beach Estuary Enhancement Project
The San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF)
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: 01/01/26 – 3/31/26
Submission Date: 04/21/26
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 advanced habitat restoration by expanding invasive plant removal efforts across the project area. We also introduced a third monthly weekend event to engage a larger volunteer base. Together with volunteers, we targeted annual weeds, concentrating work in plots where sensitive native species, like Nuttall's acmispou, salt marsh bird's beak and coast woolly heads, are most abundant. These efforts aim to reduce competition from invasive plants and promote further establishment of the rare native plants. In addition to invasive removal, we also hosted two large planting projects. In partnership with the San Diego Bird Alliance, volunteers supported the planting of 140 one gallon native California plants from Native West, in addition to spreading ten pounds of native seed. In a subsequent event, volunteers helped plant 160 coast woolly heads cultivated by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance in coordination with the City of San Diego (see Photos 1, 2, 3 and 4). These planting events were placed in areas to repair disturbance from now closed social trails and in bare areas where invasive species removal has been conducted.

Primary non-native annual weeds targeted for removal included crown daisy (*Glebionis coronaria*), devil's thorn (*Rumex spinosus*), European sea rocket (*Cakile maritima*), prickly Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), in addition to European sea lavender (*Limonium duriusculum*).

Photos 1-2: Volunteers hand-pulling annual weeds and planting native species..



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Photos 3-4: Volunteers hand-pulling annual weeds



The San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF) hosted 11 restoration events this quarter, engaging 329 community volunteers who contributed a combined 923 service hours. These events provided both an opportunity for impact, but also opportunities to teach community members about these important ecosystems and how humans can steward these special lands and avoid action that harm habitats (see Photos 5, 6, 7 and 8).

In addition, project partners at the San Diego Bird Alliance (SDBA) held monthly restoration events to remove weeds, water plants, and conduct public outreach.

The removal work completed this quarter is especially timely as we head into the rainy season where we are starting to see rare native seedlings looking for space and nutrients to establish. These efforts are essential to promoting a more resilient, biodiverse, and functional ecosystem.

Photos 5-6: Group photos of volunteers before and during Q1 restoration events



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Photos 7-8: Group photos of volunteers before and during Q1 restoration events



81% complete

2. Task 2 - Access Control

As previously reported, installation of new fencing was fully completed in the end of 2025. In this quarter, damaged wooden slats along the existing fence were repaired or replaced on a regular basis to prevent further vandalism and reinforce boundaries, which protects the most sensitive habitat areas (see Photos 9 and 10).

Photos 9-10: Access control fence was maintained by volunteer leaders



98% complete

3. Task 3 - Community Engagement, Education and Outreach

SDRPF hosted several education and outreach activities in the first quarter of 2026. In conjunction with volunteer events, staff set up an outreach table and spoke to visitors to Dog Beach and the River Mouth, trail users along the San Diego River Trail and neighbors to the project area. During these activities, staff raised awareness about the project, about the ecological importance of the area, and worked to recruit for upcoming volunteer activities.

In addition, the SDRPF education team conducted an estuary field trip on March 11 and a community education event on March 14. Through these programs, students and community members were introduced to the ecological importance of estuarine habitats and the need to balance use with conservation. Participants explored how this shared environment supports a wide range of species and learned about the impacts of human activity on sensitive ecosystems.

A key focus of both events was protecting vulnerable wildlife, including the Ridgway's rail, western snowy plover and least tern. SDRPF emphasized responsible recreation practices, particularly the importance of keeping dogs under control and on designated paths to prevent disturbance to nesting and foraging habitats. Participants were also encouraged to engage in wildlife observation and identification as a way to build personal connections to the ecosystem. Together, these efforts increased awareness of biodiversity, promoted stewardship, and reinforced the message that while the estuary is a space for all to enjoy, it must be protected to ensure the survival of its most sensitive species (see Photos 11-12).

Photos 11-12: Community members learn about the biodiversity that rely on the habitats of the project area



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Project partners from the San Diego Bird Alliance held 3 monthly docent shifts in Q4, during which they conducted public outreach and education in the project area. They also collected observational data about human/dog disturbance. The SDBA eBird chcklists from these events are here:

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S293917400> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S293917394>.

83% complete.

4. Task 4 - Monitoring

SDRPF's Research & Restoration interns participated in photomonitoring of the general habitat conditions of the San Diego River Estuary in 16 different locations (see Photos 13-14, and Figure 1).

Photos 13-14: Sample photomonitoring from location #2, comparing 10/14/2025 to 1/27/2026.



Figure 1. Photomonitoring locations in and around the project area



In addition, SDBA staff organized 3 railwatching programs from January to March, and increased community outreach during these events.

85% complete

5. Task 5 - Administration

Project administration this quarter included submitting our eleventh invoice and progress report, and working with SANDAG and the San Diego Bird Alliance 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

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San Diego and San Diego Birding Alliance at least monthly about the permits, collaboration on events, and coordination on dealing with maintenance issues.

Budget projections and remaining expenditures were reviewed, as well as remaining match to ensure strategy in place to complete by the end of the project.

89% 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.

Building on our efforts this quarter, SDRPF staff will work with interns and volunteers to continue removing annual weeds that have been emerging with the recent warming temperatures. This will create space and less competition for the next germination cycle of rare native species. We plan to continue this active management and removal of non-native invasive species in the next quarter. Finally, we will continue to monitor and document progress and changes within the San Diego River Estuary project area with our photomonitoring efforts.

Staff will prepare final report materials and compile deliverables during the last quarter.

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).

Some vandalism and damage to the fencing persisted during this period. In response, we conducted frequent site checks, repaired or replaced damaged wooden slats promptly, and removed trash and debris as needed. Community outreach and volunteer involvement remained central to the project. Several monitoring activities and educational events were carried out to keep the public engaged and informed.

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Additional outreach efforts are planned as we prepare for next quarter's activities and ongoing stewardship.

Also, as previously mentioned, as we approach the end of this grant period, we are reviewing the remaining funds and match. We will contact SANDAG staff to adjust match targets between tasks in order to meet overall project match.

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.

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

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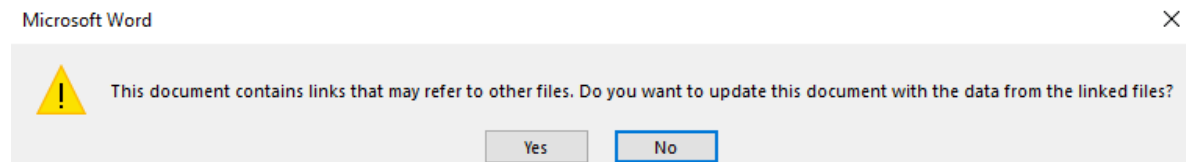
(Exhibit D) during the term of the project. More details on Performance Measures and Grant Recovery Plans are outlined in the Grant Agreements.

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.