

**San Diego Association of Governments
Ocean Beach Estuary Enhancement Project
The San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF)
Quarterly Progress Report
Reporting Period: 04/01/26 – 6/30/26
Submission Date: 07/18/26
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 final quarter marked the completion of habitat restoration activities across the project area under the TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program grant. Staff concluded invasive plant removal efforts, building on the season's restoration work to reduce competition from annual weeds and support the recovery of sensitive native species, including Nuttall's acmispou, Salt marsh bird's beak, and coast woolly heads. To expand community involvement and sustain restoration momentum, staff continued to host a third monthly weekend volunteer event (partnered with San Diego Surfrider), increasing opportunities for community members to contribute to conservation efforts.

Throughout the grant period, volunteers played an essential role in targeted invasive plant removal efforts within areas where rare native plants are most abundant. These collective efforts helped improve habitat conditions and promote the persistence of sensitive plant populations. In addition, the project included two large-scale native planting events. In partnership with the San Diego Bird Alliance, volunteers planted 140 one-gallon native California plants grown by Native West and distributed ten pounds of native seed across restoration areas. During a subsequent event, volunteers planted 160 coast woolly heads cultivated by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance in coordination with the City of San Diego. Together, these restoration activities represent the successful completion of the grant's habitat enhancement goals and demonstrate the continued impact of community-driven conservation efforts (see Photos 1-5).

Photos 1-2: Volunteers hand-pulling annual weeds



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Photos 3-5: Volunteers hand-pulling annual weeds and watering new plants in the upland habitat and salt marsh



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*), kikuyu grass (*Cenchrus clandestinus*) in addition to European sea lavender (*Limonium duriusculum*).

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In total, the San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF) hosted 20 restoration events this quarter, plus our project partners at the San Diego Bird Alliance (SDBA) continued their First Friday volunteer events this quarter to help maintain the habitat area, hosting 3 additional events this quarter. In combination with SDRPF volunteer docents providing ongoing independent stewardship of the project area, we engaged 328 community volunteers who contributed a combined 826 service hours. Not only was significant progress made in terms of reaching restoration goals, but these events served as educational opportunities for kids, college students, and adults alike, and were also joined by staff from County Supervisor Terra Lawson Remer's office. We raised awareness about the significant ecological value of native species and the negative impacts invasive plants pose on the surrounding ecosystem (see Photos 6-9).

Photos 6-9: Group photos of volunteers before and during Q2 restoration events



The invasive species removal work completed during this final quarter was especially timely, as warmer-than-average temperatures contributed to earlier flowering, seeding, and expansion of non-native invasive plants. By completing targeted removal efforts, the project reduced competition for resources and improved conditions for the successful establishment and persistence of native species. These actions have strengthened habitat resilience, supported greater

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biodiversity, and helped limit the future spread of invasive species as the season progresses. Together, these final restoration activities represent an important step toward maintaining a more functional and sustainable ecosystem beyond the grant period.

Finally, staff and project partners worked with experts to curate bird and plant information to create bird and plant ID signs to install throughout restoration area (see further discussion and photos under Task 3).

100% complete

2. Task 2 - Access Control

As we previously reported, the installation of new fencing was fully completed in 2025. In this final quarter, we continued to support volunteers in replacing and repairing damaged wooden slats along the existing fence on a regular basis to prevent further vandalism. Volunteers also replaced a damaged wooden 4x4 post. This project more securely reinforces boundaries and helps protect the sensitive habitat areas of the estuary (see Photos 10-13).

Photos 10-13: Existing fence being repaired by volunteers



100% complete

3. Task 3 - Community Engagement, Education and Outreach

In addition to conducting outreach during volunteer events and docent activities, we also worked on finalizing interpretive materials that will continue to educate visitors and the public beyond the end of the project. This included updating the project website: <https://sandiegoriver.org/rivermouth/> and creating interpretive materials.

SDRPF and SDBA staff created small signs to raise awareness about the area's birds, plants and other species. Species described on signs included:

- Rare, threatened and/or endangered species like:
 - Western snowy plover
 - Ridgway's rail
 - California least tern
 - Salt marsh bird's beak
 - Nuttall's acmispom
 - Coast woolly heads
 - Belding's savannah sparrow
 - Anthophora flavocincta (a native ground-dwelling bee, thought to be a pollinator of the salt marsh bird's beak)
- More common (and therefor likely to be spotted!) species also present an interpretive opportunity, and we included species like:
 - Western side-blotched lizard
 - Salt marsh moth
 - Honey-tailed striped sweat bee
 - Long-billed curlew
 - Little blue heron
 - Black phoebe
 - Red sand verbena
 - California brittlebush
 - Beach suncup

We are including the graphics for the SL and SO designated species as examples with this report, and a sample photo of the sign installed on the post (see Photo 14).

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Figure 1. Examples of rare plant and bird ID signs



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Photo 14: Example of bird and plant ID signs installed throughout the project area



Project partners at the San Diego Bird Alliance also held three community-focused events and one docent shift at the SD River Mouth between April and June, continuing to collect community science information about human/dog vs. natural disturbances, and continuing to answer the public's questions about the birds and habitats of this area. This data and these observations will be used to inform discussions about clarifying the off-leash dog area from the portion of the habitat where resting birds and rare plants are prioritized and dogs must be on-leash. They coordinated 51.5 hours of volunteer help from 13 volunteers during these four events.

100% 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 during the final quarter (see map of photomonitoring points in Figure 2 and Photos 15-16).

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Photos 15-16: Sample photomonitoring from location #2, comparing 10/14/2025 to 6/23/2026.



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Figure 2. Photomonitoring locations in and around the project area



Additionally, SDRPF staff and volunteers assisted the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP) with their annual rare plant monitoring on April 23 and April 29. The rare plant monitoring focused on the project site's three rare plants: Nuttall's acmispon (*Acmispon prostratus*), salt marsh bird's beak (*Chloropyron maritimum maritimum*), and coast wooly heads (*Nemaculis denudata*). Once processed later this year, this data will be uploaded to SDMMP, as it has in previous years.

100% complete

5. Task 5 - Administration

Project administration this quarter included submitting our twelfth 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. Staff continued to meet with the City of San Diego

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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 the project and deliverables. We also coordinated with all project partners to host SANDAG staff for a site visit.

100% 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.

This is the final quarter of the project, and this is the last quarterly report. Final reports will be submitted on time within 90 days of completion of project.

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).

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:

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- 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

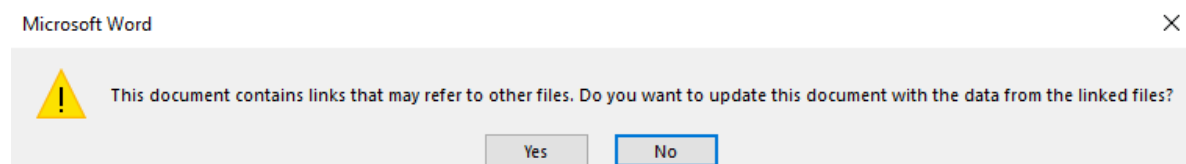
SANDAG will utilize the SANDAG Performance Measures to document compliance with the Project. Grantee's performance will be measured against the Performance Measures (Exhibit D) during the term of the project. More details on Performance Measures and Grant Recovery Plans are outlined in the Grant Agreements.

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.