

# MSRP PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Rubberlip surfperch  
(*Rhacochilus toxotes*)

Xantus's murrelet  
(*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*)

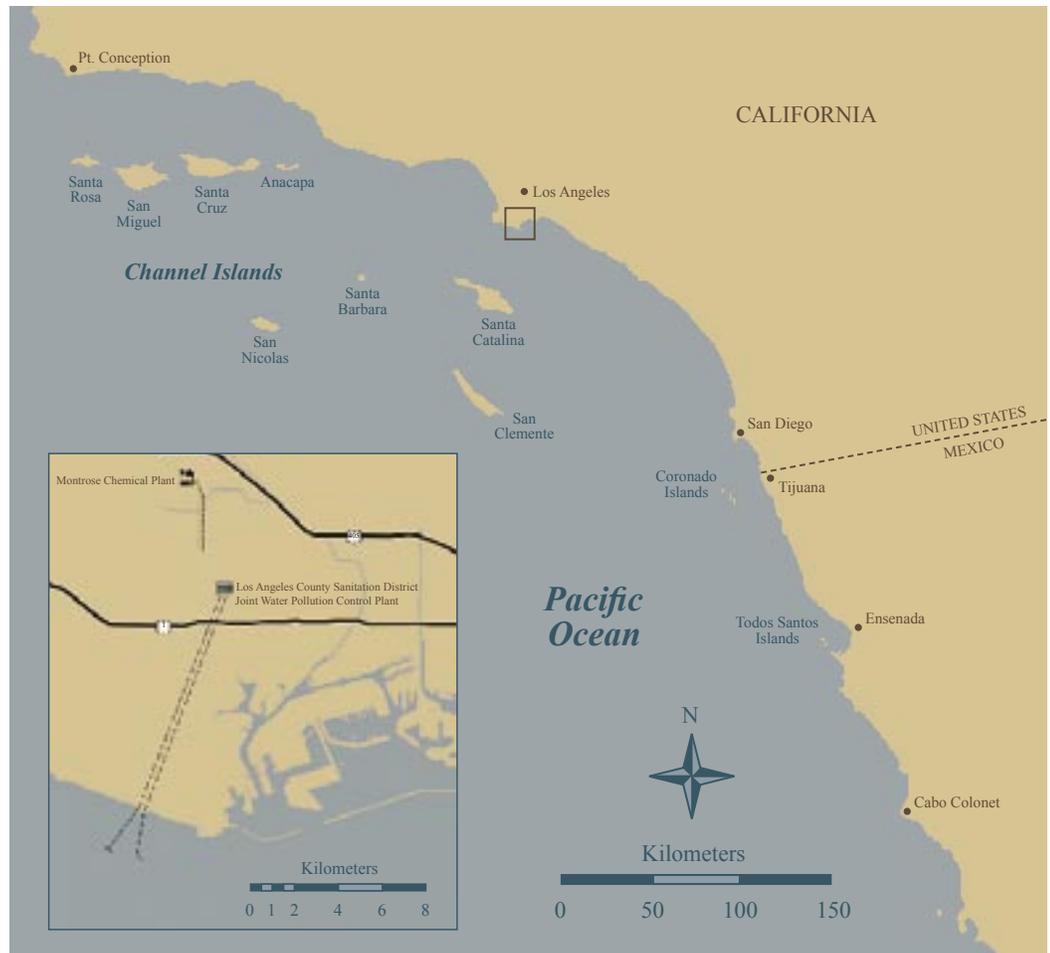
## *Program History*

From the late 1940s to the early 1970s, millions of pounds of DDTs and PCBs were discharged from industrial sources through a wastewater outfall into the ocean near Los Angeles. Large quantities of these chemicals remain in the marine environment and continue to harm birds and impair fishing in the Southern California Bight (see map).

Throughout the U.S., DDTs in the food of bald eagles and peregrine falcons have caused these birds to lay thin-shelled eggs that desiccate or break during incubation. Bald eagles reintroduced to Catalina Island have had difficulty hatching

their eggs without human assistance. In addition, some species of seabirds in the Bight exhibited high levels of DDTs. For certain species of fish contaminated with high levels of DDTs and PCBs near Los Angeles, the State of California has issued fish consumption advisories. The State has also banned commercial fishing for white croaker near the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

The State and Federal governments initiated action against Montrose Chemical Corporation and the other polluters responsible for the injuries. In December 2001, a final settlement was signed, ending ten years of litigation.



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# MSRP PROGRAM DETAILS



Peregrine falcon  
(*Falco peregrinus*)

Bald eagle  
(*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

### Cleanup and Restoration

Following Superfund law, the funds will be used for two different kinds of activities:

1. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control will use a share of the funds to reduce the exposure of people and wildlife to DDTs and PCBs. For example, these agencies are considering several remediation, or “cleanup,” options, and are conducting additional efforts to prevent commercial catch of and reduce public consumption of contaminated fish. For more information, contact EPA at (800) 231-3075.
2. The Natural Resource Trustees, through the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program (MSRP), will use approximately \$38 million to restore natural resources harmed by the DDTs and PCBs.

### Who are the Natural Resource Trustees?

The Natural Resource Trustees are a group of six federal and state resource agencies that together administer the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program. These agencies are:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- National Park Service;
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- California Department of Fish and Game;
- California Department of Parks and Recreation; and
- California State Lands Commission.

## WHAT ARE DDTs AND PCBs?

DDTs and PCBs are toxic mixtures of chemicals that are very slow to break down in the environment. The chemicals can accumulate in plants and animals and move through the food web to become more concentrated in higher predators. Human health problems associated with increased exposure to DDTs and PCBs include cancer and liver disease.

**DDTs** are a mixture of six related chemicals. DDT was once one of the most widely used pesticides in the world, and one of the largest DDT factories was located in Torrance, CA. EPA banned the use of DDT in 1972.

**PCBs** are a group of 209 related oil-like chemicals first manufactured in 1929. These chemicals, found to be good insulators and stable when exposed to heat and pressure, had many different industrial uses, including making paints, transformer coolants, and hydraulic fluids. EPA banned the manufacture of PCBs in 1979.



DDT, once considered a miracle chemical, was banned by the US EPA in 1973.



# MSRP PROGRAM DETAILS

## Taking Action

As detailed in the MSRP Final Restoration Plan, the Trustees have committed \$25 million for a series of 4 data studies and 10 restoration projects during the first phase of restoration implementation (see chart below, and descriptions on back page). In approximately 5 years, several uncertainties should be resolved, including the outcome of the EPA's site remediation decision. The Trustees will then assess their progress and allocate the remaining restoration funds.

## Data Studies

As a part of the first phase of restoration, the Trustees have funded four data studies to help guide restoration.

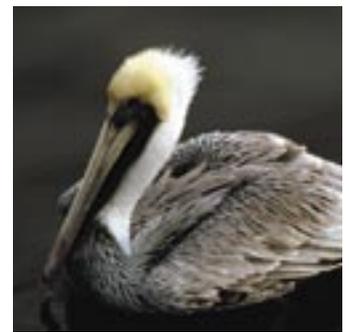
The Northern Channel Islands Feasibility Study was initiated in 2002 to determine whether bald eagles reintroduced to the Northern Channel Islands might have greater reproductive success than birds on Catalina Island, which continue to exhibit reproductive problems associated with high levels of contamination.

In 2004, MSRP funded a Peregrine Falcon Survey on Catalina Island to determine

whether peregrine falcons were beginning to re-colonize the southern Channel Islands (as they have begun to on the northern islands). Two pairs of falcons were observed nesting on the island, though no evidence of egg laying was observed.

Together, MSRP and EPA conducted an Angler Survey to gather information on local fishing and fish consumption practices. Responses are being used to fill information gaps from other such studies. The resulting database will include information on ethnicities, awareness of advisories, and fishing preferences, and will be used to plan future restoration and outreach efforts.

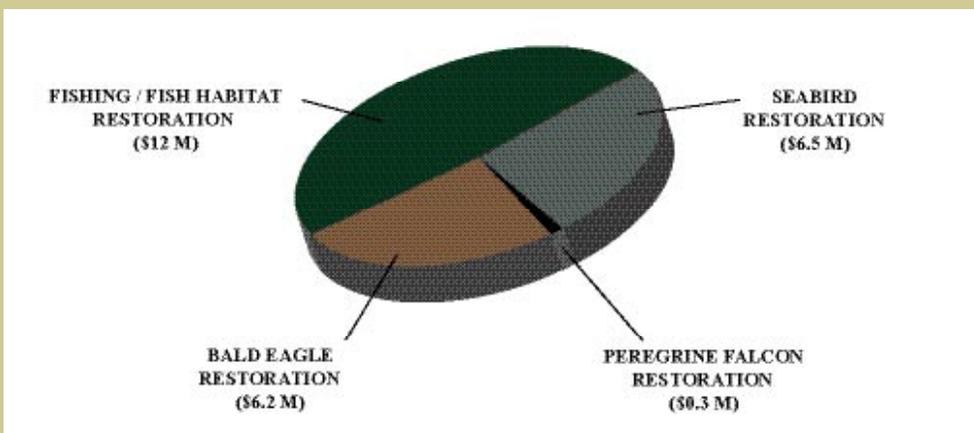
MSRP and EPA are also collaborating on a Fish Contamination Survey off the Southern California coast. Fish have been analyzed for DDTs, PCBs, and other chemicals, to provide a comprehensive assessment of fish contamination in the Southern California coastal region. The data will be used by several agencies to plan restoration projects; update fish consumption advisories, bag limits, and the commercial catch ban on white croaker; and evaluate potential cleanup actions for the affected area.



California scorpionfish  
(*Scorpaena guttata*)

Brown pelican  
(*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

## TRUSTEES' FINAL PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE





**Construct artificial reefs and fishing access improvements.** Construct reefs to displace the highly contaminated fish that occupy existing soft-bottom habitats with reef and water-column-feeding fish that are lower in DDTs and PCBs. This project also includes facility improvements to encourage fishing in areas where habitat manipulation is performed, as well as provisions for monitoring fish on and around the reefs to determine project effectiveness and direct subsequent MSRP reef actions.

**Provide public information to restore lost fishing services.** Increase fishing services by developing and distributing reliable fish contamination information that enables the fishing public to make informed choices about where and for which species to fish. This project will build on efforts initiated by EPA's Fish Contamination Education Collaborative, as well as provide new opportunities for public outreach and education.

**Restore full tidal exchange wetlands.** Contribute funding to ongoing or planned larger-scale restoration of wetland and/or estuarine habitats that serve as nursery habitats for commonly caught coastal fish species.

**Augment funds for implementing Marine Protected Areas in California.** Supplement existing management and monitoring activities within the recently created Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to ensure they provide the best possible basis for further implementations of MPA networks throughout California. MSRP funds could be used for monitoring sub-tidal fish and groundfish, deep-water surveys, or the enforcement of MPA restrictions.

**Complete the NCI Bald Eagle Feasibility Study Before Deciding on Further Restoration Actions.**

Defer longer-term decisions on bald eagle restoration until the results of the Northern Channel Islands Bald Eagle Feasibility Study are known (in or around 2008). In the interim, the Trustees will focus efforts on the northern islands, which continue to hold the potential for long-term restoration, and suspend funding of the Santa Catalina Island Bald Eagle Program. When the results of the study become available, the Trustees will re-evaluate all potential options for bald eagle restoration, including measures that may be taken even if bald eagles are not able to reproduce on their own anywhere in the Channel Islands. The Trustees will then release a subsequent NEPA/CEQA document for public review and input.

**Monitor the recovery of peregrine falcons on the Channel Islands.**

Previous efforts conducted by other organizations have successfully aided the recovery of peregrine falcons on the Channel Islands, and the number of breeding pairs is steadily increasing. The goal of this project is to monitor the continued recovery of peregrine falcons throughout the Channel Islands through periodic surveys and contaminant analyses.

**Restore seabirds to San Miguel Island.**

San Miguel Island and its associated islets, Prince Island and Castle Rock, support regionally important and diverse seabird colonies, including one-third of the breeding seabirds in the Channel Islands. This project will enhance critical seabird nesting habitat by eradicating the introduced black rat and preventing future rodent introductions.

**Restore alcids to Santa Barbara Island.** Santa Barbara Island supports California's largest colony of state-threatened Xantus's murrelets, and once supported a sizable population of Cassin's auklets. This project will facilitate the recovery of these birds using social attraction and nesting habitat improvements.

**Restore seabirds to San Nicolas Island.**

Cats were first introduced to San Nicolas Island in the 1800s, and negative impacts from feral cats on island fauna, including seabirds, have been documented. The goal of this project is to eliminate feral cats and increase seabird colonies on the island by expanding U.S. Navy control efforts using methods that pose the least possible risk to the native state threatened island fox.

**Restore seabirds to Scorpion and**

**Orizaba Rocks.** Located off of Santa Cruz Island, these rocks are important nesting islands for burrow-nesting seabirds in California. This project will restore seabird habitat through habitat enhancement, social attraction and reductions in human disturbance.

**Restore seabirds to Baja California Pacific Islands (Coronado and**

**Todos Santos Islands).** These island groups historically supported many important colonies of seabirds, including Cassin's auklets, Xantus's murrelets, and California brown pelicans. Recent successful removals of introduced species from the islands have created opportunities to enhance the recovery of these seabirds within the Southern California Bight. Restoration actions will include social attraction, nest box installation, light shielding, and human disturbance reduction.