

# The Story of SCCWRP

---

Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Established 1969



In the years leading up to SCCWRP's formation, several events motivated greater support for environmental protection.



Pacific Sardine Fishery Collapse  
(late 1940s-early 1950s)



Decline of Palos  
Verdes Kelp Beds  
(late 1950s-early  
1960s)



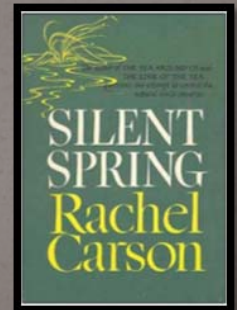
Fish Tumors



Santa Barbara Oil Spill (January 1969)



Decline of  
Brown  
Pelicans due  
to DDT





The idea for SCCWRP was conceptualized on a retreat, anticipating enactment of the Clean Water Act and a shift to effluent-based standards.



**Dr. Erman A. Pearson**  
Professor of Environmental Engineering  
University of California, Berkeley

Pearson  
started the  
discussion



**John D. Parkhurst**  
Chief Engineer and General Manager  
County Sanitation Districts of Los  
Angeles County



**Charles Carry**  
Chief Engineer and General Manager  
County Sanitation Districts of Los  
Angeles County

Parkhurst  
asked Carry to  
draft a plan



In mid-1969, SCCWRP was born as a “joint powers authority”, pooling the resources of five local sanitation districts.



Ventura County



City of LA



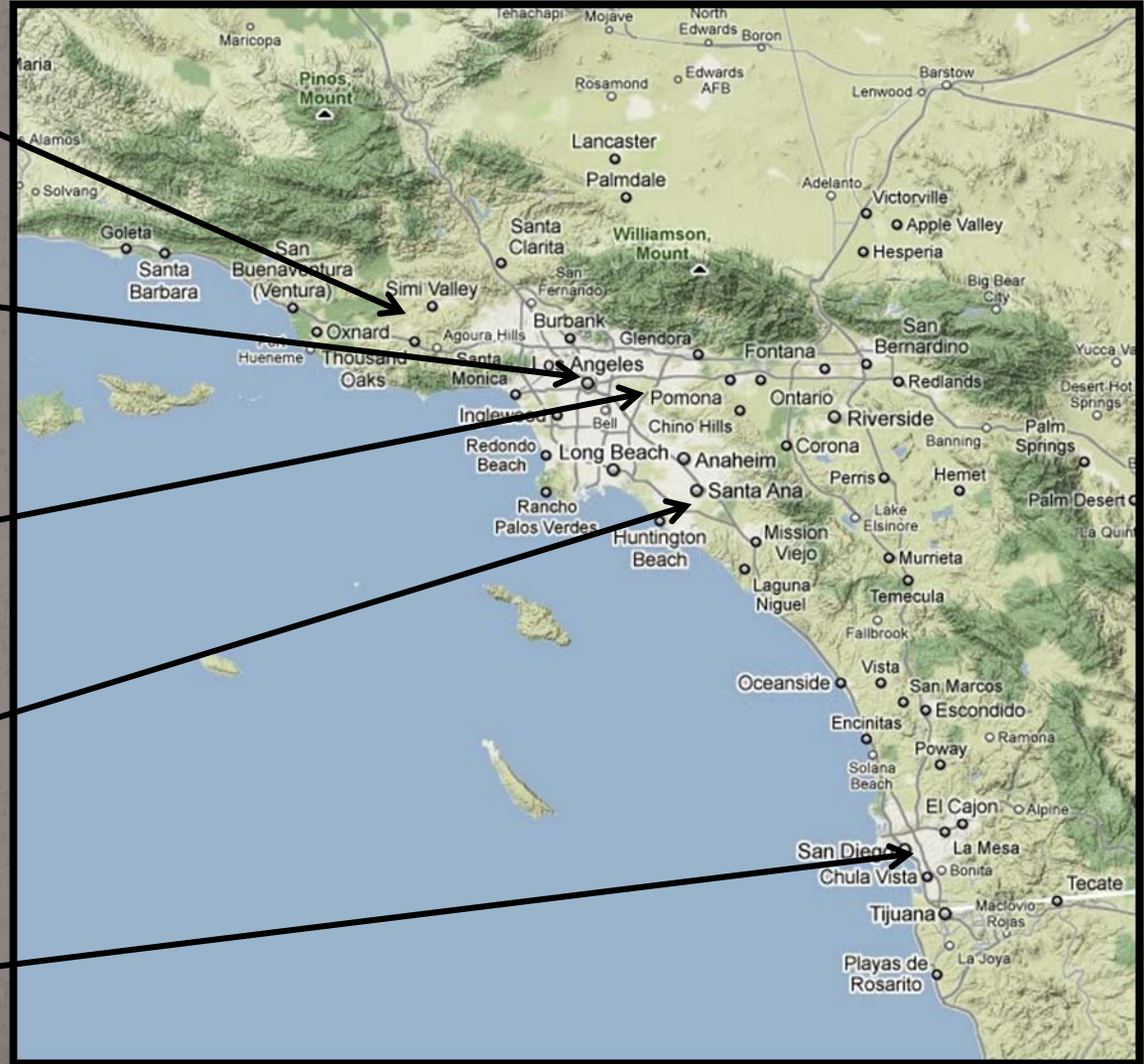
LA County



Orange County



City of San Diego

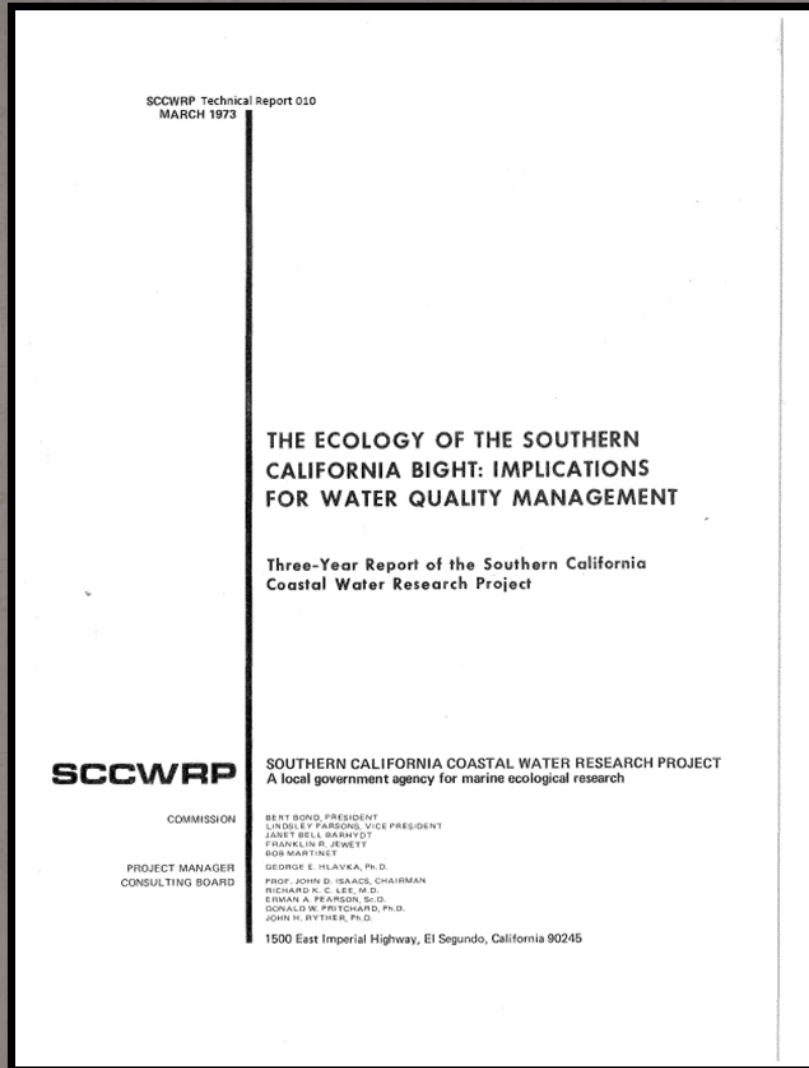






George Hlavka was hired as the “Project Manager” to conduct a 3-year study of wastewater discharge effects on marine ecology, working out of Westwood, California.

SCCWRP staff issued their 500+ page final report, entitled “Ecology of the Southern California Bight: Implications for water quality management”, in 1973.



“The perspective attained by the study on the broad area of man's effects on the Southern California Bight is of major importance, along with the specific findings, for the guidance of future marine related activities.”



Because questions remained, the Joint Powers Agreement has been amended more than 15 times, extending SCCWRP's existence through the present day.

**SEVENTH AMENDED  
JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT  
CONFIRMING THE CREATION OF  
AN AGENCY KNOWN AS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
COASTAL WATERS RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY**

This Amended Joint Powers Agreement which confirms the creation of an agency known as SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATERS RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY, commonly known as SCCWRP, is made and entered into effective the first day of July, 2009, by and between the City of Los Angeles, a municipal corporation ("Los Angeles"), the Orange County Sanitation District, a special district ("Orange County District"), the City of San Diego, a municipal corporation ("San Diego") and County Sanitation District No. 2 of Los Angeles County, a special district ("Los Angeles County District"), hereinafter "Signatories" (collectively) or "Signatory" (individually).

WHEREAS, the Signatories entered into a Sixth Amended Joint Powers Agreement confirming the creation of an agency known as Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority, effective July 1, 2005;

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Signatories to provide for the continuation of SCCWRP pursuant to this Seventh Amended Joint Powers Agreement ("Agreement");

NOW, THEREFORE, the Signatories hereto do agree as follows:

**1. PURPOSE**

This Agreement provides for the continuation of a public entity separate and apart from the Signatories to this Agreement to administer this Agreement, the purpose of which is to increase the scientific knowledge of how treated wastewater discharges, stormwater discharges and other human activities interact to affect Southern California's coastal aquatic ecological systems, and thereby to ensure protection of these resources.

**2. CREATION OF SCCWRP**

Pursuant to Article 1, Chapter 5, Division 7, Title 1 Government Code (Sections 6500 et seq.), the parties hereby confirm the existence of an agency as a public entity, separate and apart from the Signatories to this Agreement to be known as SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATERS RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY (hereinafter "SCCWRP"). Such agency shall, through the Commission referred to below, administer and execute this Agreement.

**3. ORGANIZATION**

SCCWRP shall be governed by a ten-member Commission composed of representatives of public bodies with accountability for water quality management and aquatic protection in the Southern California Bight as follows:



Early research investigations involved fish pathologies, DDT, offshore water quality, sediment quality, and marine life communities.



Fish trawl surveys  
(1972-76)

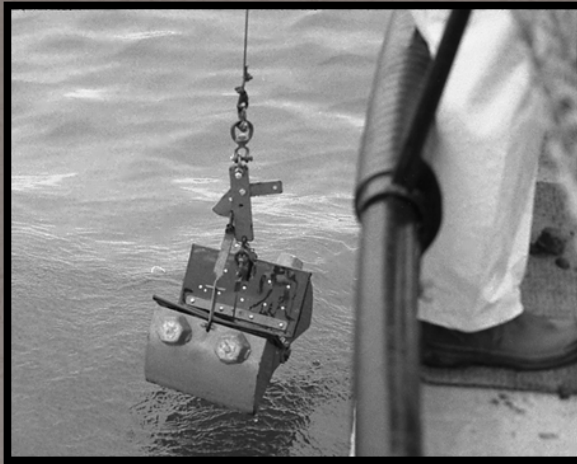


Fish  
Pathology  
Lab circa  
1974





Benthic  
invertebrate  
grab sampler  
(1974)



Diver survey at oil platform "Hilda" in  
Summerland (1975)



Underwater camera  
(circa 1978)



DDT Aerial Fallout  
Study (circa 1973)



Offshore water  
quality testing  
(circa 1976)



Sediment core  
retrieval (1981)



Four of the original members continue to sponsor SCCWRP today; others came and went from 1975-1990.



A neutral regulator-regulated paradigm was created when five regulatory agencies joined as members in 1990.



*Regional Boards:*  
Los Angeles Region  
Santa Ana Region  
San Diego Region

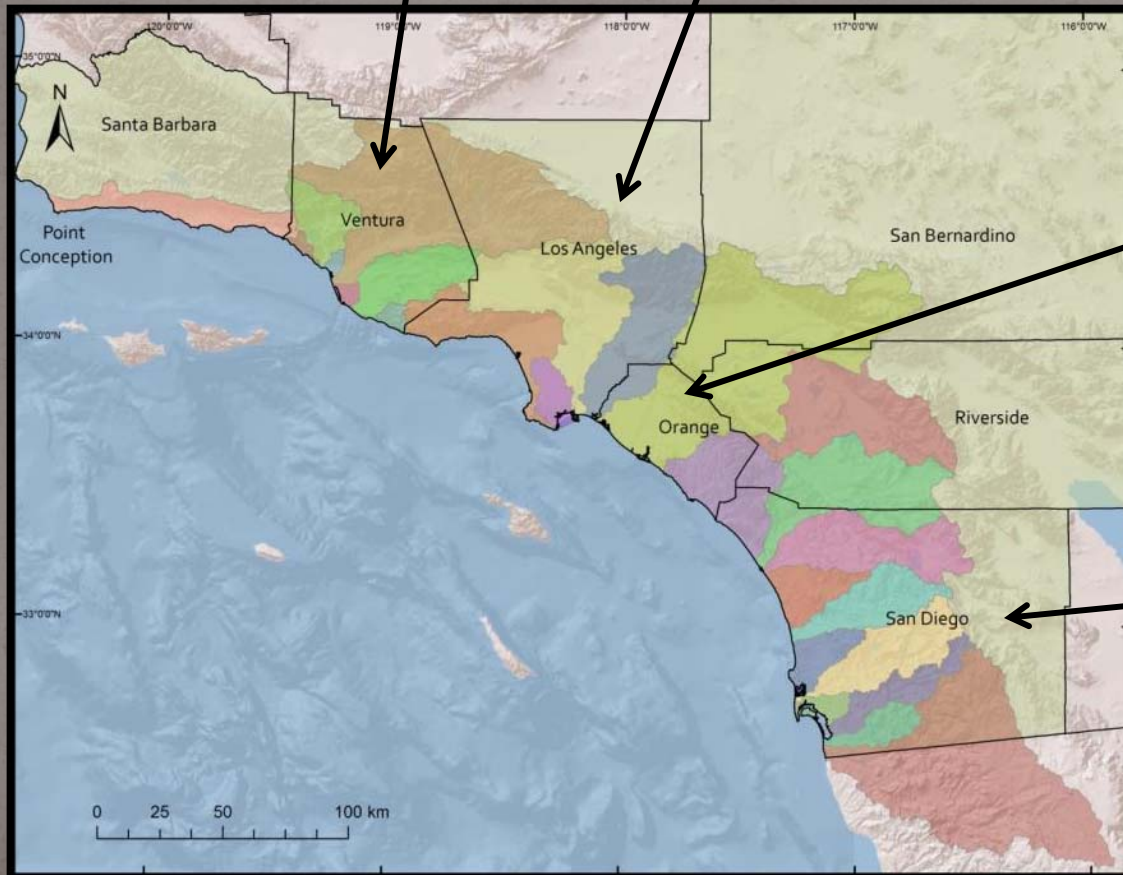


SCCWRP's initial research focus on marine environments expanded to aquatic ecosystems from coastal watersheds to the ocean.





With this shift in focus, four county stormwater/watershed management agencies were added to SCCWRP's membership in 2003.



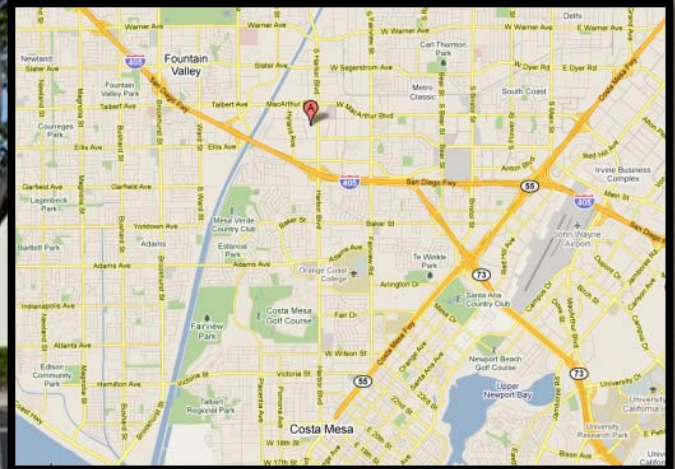


Over the years, SCCWRP offices moved to El Segundo, Long Beach, and Westminster.

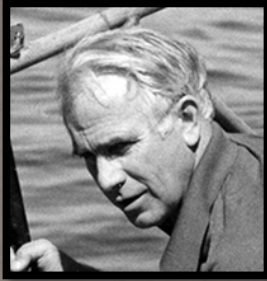




The current location in Costa Mesa was chosen as an accessible meeting place, convenient to the highway and regional airport.







Willard Bascom  
Project Manager  
1973-1985



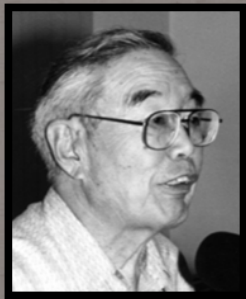
Jeffrey Cross  
Project/Executive Director  
1991-1995



Stephen Weisberg  
Executive Director  
1996-present



Jack Anderson  
Project Manager  
1985-1989



Frank Wada  
Acting Project Director  
1990-1991



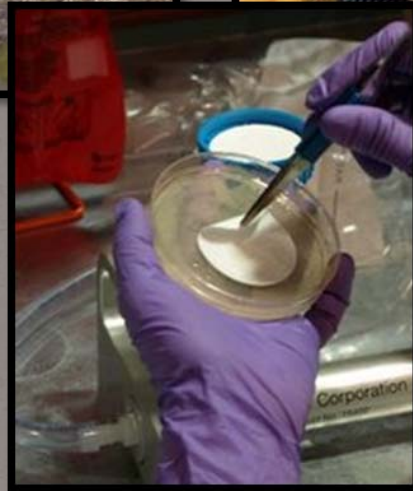
SCCWRP's leadership has changed five times since 1973, and the staff size has generally fluctuated between 20-50 people.



SCCWRP has grown into a national leader in water quality and aquatic habitat research, specializing in building consensus, promoting partnerships, and transitioning new technologies into application.







Current research foci include beach water quality, contaminants, regional monitoring, stormwater, nutrients, wetlands, bioassessment, and marine debris.