



NEWS RELEASE

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The Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy and the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program are holding a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday October 24 for a major wetlands restoration project. The ceremony, to be held at 10:00 AM adjacent to the soon-to-be-restored Brookhurst Marsh in Huntington Beach, will launch a restoration effort that will ultimately yield 140 acres of fully restored coastal wetland habitat along Pacific Coast Highway between Brookhurst Street and Newland Street.

The Huntington Beach Wetlands were once part of a large tidally influenced area encompassing almost 3,000 acres beneath the western bluffs of what is now Costa Mesa. Today only about 180 acres of that system remains. In 1989 the Conservancy acquired and restored 25 acres known as the Talbert Marsh.

Major funding for the restoration project is from the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program (MSRP) created in 2001 to plan and restore natural resources harmed by millions of pounds of DDT and PCBs released into the Southern California marine environment from the 1940s to the early 1970s.

Among other resources, fish habitat and recreational fishing were injured by the releases of DDT and PCBs. While the releases were terminated almost 40 years ago, these contaminants continue to harm fishing and fish habitat today.

Scientists view the Huntington Beach Wetlands restoration project as a vital link to restoring fish habitat in the Southern California marine environment. Wetlands provide nursery habitat for juvenile fish by providing food and shelter during their first year of life before they venture into the open ocean as adults.

AES Corporation, the County of Orange, and the City of Huntington Beach are also providing funding for the \$6.2 million restoration project.

MSRP is overseen by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the lead trustee, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, California Department of Fish and Game, California State Lands Commission, and California Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy, a non-profit land trust, was formed by a group of citizens in 1985 to acquire, restore and preserve the few remaining coastal wetlands in the Huntington Beach area.