

Understanding Areas of Special Biological Significance.

The California State Water Resources Control Board created Areas of Special Biological Significance, where no pollutants are allowed to be discharged in order to help maintain high water quality within some of the most pristine and biologically diverse sections of California's coast. Today, there are 34 such areas—sometimes referred to as State Water Quality Protection Areas—in California. La Jolla is home to two. These ASBS encompass a large portion of the La Jolla Shores marine environment, which includes the La Jolla State Marine Conservation Area and the adjoining San Diego-Scripps State Marine Conservation Area.



Make a Difference...

You can also make a difference by embracing ocean stewardship in your daily life. As a resident, here are some steps you can take each day to improve La Jolla's coastal environment:

- Dispose of trash in proper receptacles
- Join a beach cleanup or pick up trash on your own
- Use a broom or wet mop instead of spraying or rinsing off your driveway or sidewalk
- Use cleaning products that contain less harmful compounds
- Keep your car in good repair to prevent oil or anti-freeze leaks
- Dispose of chemical wastes properly (follow the disposal instructions from your trash company)
- Keep informed of current events impacting our oceans through newspapers, internet or broadcast news

Working together, we can all make a difference in achieving a clean, healthy ocean environment at La Jolla Shores.

For more information on Areas of Special Biological Significance and The La Jolla Shores Coastal Watershed Management Plan, please visit www.sdcoastkeeper.org.



scripps.ucsd.edu



City of San Diego

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Areas of Special Biological Significance.

La Jolla, California



What's in your backyard?

As a resident of San Diego, you know that you live in one of the world's most beautiful coastal areas. Many of you have walked La Jolla's sandy beaches, fished off of local piers, sailed up the coast, or watched a brilliant sunset from the rocky coasts. You also probably know that the waters off the coast of La Jolla are home to a fantastic array of marine life. You may have seen some of these creatures—spiny lobsters, abalone, giant sea bass, vermilion rockfish, schools of leopard sharks—up close while wading, snorkeling or diving. Or maybe you were content to appreciate La Jolla's serene ocean beauty from shore. Regardless of how you choose to experience it, you know that this area is special. It's your own oceanic backyard. It's home. But did you know that this area was so ecologically significant—and so vulnerable to damage—that it is designated by the State of California as an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS)?

www.sdcoastkeeper.org



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Solving the Pollution Problem.

While clean ocean water is a necessary component of healthy oceans, our local water quality is under attack from a variety of pollution sources and related activities. In La Jolla, there are several factors that can negatively impact the health of the ASBS, including:



Discharge of Wastewater or Pollutants.

Inadvertent discharge of human sewage and waste from sewage treatment plants into marine areas can release dangerous bacteria into the ocean and alter the water's chemical composition. Chemical changes from pollutants can also poison marine life and deplete the amount of available oxygen in the water. As a result, wastewater and pollutant discharges are not allowed in any ASBS.

Litter.

La Jolla Shores is visited by approximately 2 million people each year. Unfortunately, many people leave their litter behind on the beach. Common debris items found at La Jolla Shores include plastic bags, beverage containers, food wrappers and straws. Cigarette butts are by far the most common litter item.



Stormwater Runoff.

As rain washes over streets, parking lots and lawns it picks up numerous pollutants, pesticides and other contaminants. Eventually, this stormwater makes its way to the ocean, sending a toxic cocktail into the sea. This type of pollution is of particular concern because it is difficult to pinpoint the exact source and hard to control. The discharge of stormwater into an ASBS is generally prohibited, and is only allowed if the discharge will not compromise protection of ocean waters for beneficial uses.

The La Jolla Shores marine environment—including ASBS—is particularly vulnerable to these hazards, especially stormwater and runoff pollution. Local beaches are often closed after heavy rains due to contamination, directly limiting your ability to enjoy your own oceanic backyard.

To solve the pollution problem in La Jolla's protected marine areas and promote stewardship of clean ocean water, Coastkeeper is working with Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the City of San Diego to implement the La Jolla Shores Coastal Watershed Management Plan. The Plan will be the blueprint for local actions to protect and improve water quality in the two ASBS off of La Jolla Shores. A collaborative watershed approach will be used to institute effective and efficient strategies to address pollution within this urban watershed that drains to both ASBS.



Photo courtesy of Douglas Pulsipher

Reaping the Benefits.

If implemented correctly, protected ocean areas like ASBS benefit both the people and coastal environment of San Diego by providing:

- Healthy, biologically diverse ocean ecosystems for future generations to enjoy
- Conservation and recovery of endangered and threatened marine species, such as the green abalone and rockfish found in the Marine Conservation Areas
- Relatively undisturbed environments for fish and other species to reproduce and flourish, which in turn helps to maintain healthy fisheries
- Areas where scientists can study undisturbed ecosystem functions and apply this knowledge to other impacted areas

What you can do...

Creating protected marine areas, such as the ASBS, has led to considerable ocean conservation gains. However, pollution is still an issue in La Jolla and more work must be done to ensure that regulations within these protected areas are followed and enforced. You can aid these efforts by:

- Following the regulations within ASBS and Marine Conservation Areas (for current regulations, please visit the California Department of Fish and Game web site at www.dfg.ca.gov)
- Supporting environmental groups that enforce the laws against polluters
- Donating your time and/or money to ocean conservation and education efforts
- Telling others about the need to conserve and protect these important areas



La Jolla Shores Beach

Scripps Pier