



Fish Contamination Education Collaborative Partners Meeting

7 May 2025

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

A.K. Warren Water Resource Facility

Operation Auditorium

[24501 S Figueroa St, Carson, CA 90745](https://www.lacsd.org/24501-S-Figueroa-St-Carson-CA-90745)

Attendees*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9:

Renee Jordan Ward**
John Chesnutt
Maria Rodriguez**
Erica Yelensky

EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. (EA):
Evana Newberry**

Daniel B. Stephens & Associates (DBS&A):

Heather Hackstedde**
Matias Gibertoni**
Noah Aparicio

Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD):
Chi-Li Tang

California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA):

Tran Pham Huyen

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

Lt. Michael Vicknair
Dan Waligora

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH):

Alberto Rivadeneyra**

State Water Resources Control Board (SRWCB):

Luke Ginger

Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission:

Caitlin Gray

California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC):

Chinh Sheow
Daniel Cordero**

Chinese Christian Herald Crusade (CCHC)

Shelly Chen

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

Emily Duncan
Xiaofei Cui

University of Southern California (USC):

Linda Chilton

Heal the Bay

Zoe Collins**

*Total attendees = 22

**In-person attendance



Meeting Purpose

Bring FCEC partners together to meet new members and provide updates on program activities.

Discussion Points

The meeting progressed through the following discussion points:

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

- Importance of Partners meeting and reducing the consumption of contaminated fish.
- Judy Huang (EPA) retires. Renee will take on this role and also keep her existing role.
- Draft Community Involvement Plan - conceptual site model discussion
 - Zip code analysis used to populate angler demographics:
 - San Pedro (Hispanic)
 - Hawthorne (Hispanic)
 - Monterey Park (Asian)

Community Involvement Plan Q&A

Evana (EA) question for EPA:

Q: Are there any ecological risk considerations and eco-stakeholders considered under the new CIP?

A: Plan is still in development, and does include food web dynamics, but focuses more-so on how those impact community/human health risks.

Dan (CDFW) question for EPA:

Q: We are currently seeing mortalities in sea birds caused by domoic acid. Are there any known comorbidities between domoic acid and PCBs/DDT?

A: Not aware of comorbidity studies between domoic acid and PCBs/DDT. Part of involvement plan includes looking at food web dynamics. Currently aware that there are birds and marine mammals that have/are experiencing DDT/PCB exposures.

Luke (SRWCB) question for EPA:

Q: What are the goals of the Community Involvement Plan?

A: The Community Involvement Plan serves as a living public document that identifies the communities affected and includes EPA commitments to involve those affected communities. The CIPs are typically in place for Superfund sites.

2. Program Update - Renee Jordan Ward (EPA)

- LA Wildfires (January 2025) lead to mandatory pause in all outreach from January 6-14th and variable pause in outreach through February 16th.
 - New pier signs installed in phases.
 - Phase 1 (Piers):
 - Completed: Cabrillo, Redondo, Hermosa, Santa Monica,
 - In Progress: Venice, Manhattan Beach, Seal Beach, Belmont, Pier J
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- Phase 2:
 - Tentative: Playa Del Rey Beach, Rocky Point, Royal Palms/White's Point, Torrance Beach, Ballona South, Dockweiler State Beach, El Segundo Beach (jetty), Marina Del Rey Pier
- Transition to electronic tally forms for angler outreach underway
- 2023-2024 Annual Reports posted to pvsfish.org
- Outreach educator lanyards in use
 - Anglers observed to be scanning QR codes on lanyards, tip cards, and signage
- Spring newsletter will be posted to the website in May 2025

3. Pier Angler Outreach Updates - Renee Jordan Ward (EPA), Evana Newberry (EA)

- Renee Jordan Ward (EPA) provided an overview of the Pier Angler Outreach conducted by Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Heal the Bay, and DBS&A during the August 2024 – February 2025 reporting period, as follows:
- 9 piers were addressed collectively: Santa Monica, Venice, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Rainbow Harbor, Pier J, Belmont Pier, Seal Beach, Cabrillo Pier.
- Modified angler outreach schedule (launched July 2024) continues
 - Piers visited weekly during various times Monday – Sunday.
 - Goal of the schedule change was to try to get more representative information from across all days and times, and to be able to evaluate that data specific to each pier to see if this might be used for increasing outreach effectiveness.
- Evening outreach conducted at Venice and Redondo Piers 1x/week
- Outreach covers an estimated 43 miles of coastline
- A total of 5,234 anglers were contacted, which includes: 2,361 new anglers.
 - 4,233 anglers agreed to speak.
 - 2,427 reported being aware of contamination (46%).
 - Daytime Outreach:
 - 1,830 (48%) New anglers
 - 1,921 (51%) Aware of contamination
 - Evening Outreach:
 - 531 (46%) New anglers
 - 506 (44%) Aware of contamination
 - Cabrillo Pier busiest pier for daytime outreach
 - Redondo Pier busiest pier for evening outreach
 - 1,910 tip cards were handed out in the following languages:
 - English - 1,725
 - Spanish - 156
 - Chinese - 23
 - Vietnamese – 6



- Most reported awareness sources are the angler outreach teams (1) and pier signs (2). Awareness sources breakdown includes:
 - DNC pier signage (14.7%)
 - Pier angler outreach (74.9%)
 - Tip-cards (1.7%)
 - Internet, media, friend/family, and other (8.7%)
 - Community events (0%)
 - Seasonal trends continue to be observed (more anglers during the summer, less during the winter).
 - Reported awareness is down from previous year. The discussion included considerations that may be due to change in approach regarding awareness. Anglers who relay they are aware of fish contamination but are not aware of contamination specific to PV Shelf (DDT and PCBs) are reported as “not aware”.
 - The redesigned tip cards distributed to anglers starting in October 2024 have been well received.
 - 402 zip codes provided between August 2024 - February 2025
 - 2,308 anglers provided zip codes
 - 31 counties represented, including:
 - Los Angeles County (1,867)
 - Orange (146), San Bernardino (117), Riverside (64), and Ventura (23)
 - 14 zip codes provided from outside U.S. (Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Mexico, Russia, Ukraine)
 - DBS&A and Cabrillo Outreach Observations:
 - Belmont and Redondo Beach Piers are consistently the most active, while Rainbow Harbor is consistently the least active.
 - Belmont and Redondo piers are the only piers that sell bait on site
 - AOP team has become the most cited source of awareness, where in the past it has been signage
 - Continued outreach efforts are necessary, as large numbers of anglers remain unaware of contamination issues
 - Replacement DNC signs may impact reported awareness sources and are hoped to increase reported awareness.
 - Routine anglers typically more aware than new anglers
 - 50 pier sign locations inspected during routine angler outreach
 - 28 - good condition (including 25 new signs)
 - 2 - fair condition
 - 5 - poor condition
 - 15 - missing
 - LACDPH installed new signs at Cabrillo Pier, Redondo Pier, Hermosa Pier, and Santa Monica Pier, and Venice Pier is complete (or will be shortly)
 - LACDPH provided 20 DNC signs to Renee and Evana who will be meeting with the city contacts for Seal Beach Pier, Pier J, Manhattan and Rainbow Harbor Piers during this May trip to get new signs installed at these locations (these locations are not covered by LACDPH).
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4. Community Outreach Update (Evana Newberry (EA), Heather Hackstedde (DBS&A), Shelly Chen (CCHC))

- Participation at outreach events in early 2025 were cancelled due to the wildfire emergency and evacuations in Los Angeles County.
- Outreach partners attended 6 community events since the last FCEC meeting, with over 17,000 attendees and 1,000+ interactions with the FCEC booths.
- Limited awareness of contamination was reported by attendees.

DBS&A (Heather Hackstedde):

- 3 outreach events at the Aquarium of the Pacific since December 2024:
 - Noche De Estrellas - March 21
 - Children's Festival - March 29-30
 - Earth Day - April 26-27
- Observations:
 - Outreach Materials:
 - In the fishing game, some fish have stronger magnets than others, leading to the same species being caught repeatedly; fixing this soon!
 - Anglers like the fish ID cards and expressed intentions to display them in fishing vessels
 - In the current booth setup, the tri-fold display board does not stand up to strong winds
 - Several guests expressed awareness of contamination due to having seen the documentary "Out of Plain Sight"
- Recommendation: the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's Exploration Center would be a good location for a permanent interactive FCEC outreach installation.

CCHC (Shelly Chen):

- 2 outreach events since December 2024:
 - CCHC Walkathon 2025 –April 26
 - City of Alhambra, 2025 Eco Fair –April 27
- Observations:
 - Majority of attendees Chinese speaking
 - Majority of patrons were unaware of contamination
 - Seniors express concern for fish in markets and restaurants

BPSOS (not in attendance, presented by Evana, EA): BPSOS is currently looking for suitable events for 2025.



Bait Shop Outreach (DBS&A) (Heather Hackstedde)

- Bait shop outreach conducted as follows:
 - 38 active bait shops (2 shops out of business since last bait shop outreach)
 - 3,305 tip cards distributed to 36 bait shops in the following languages:
 - English - 1,000
 - Spanish - 1,000
 - Chinese - 825
 - Vietnamese - 330
 - 75 English and 75 Spanish tip cards (old design) distributed to shops that requested additional materials
 - Bait shops at piers are not currently included in bait shop outreach. Including these shops during angler outreach may be beneficial to a broader angler and community awareness.

LACDPH Update (Renee Jordan Ward, EPA, for Alberto Rivadeneyra, LACDPH)

- Task 1: Public Health Nurse (PHN) Orientation (Ongoing)
 - Presentation to newly hired nurses at orientation - February 19, 2025
 - Provided educational resources for PHNs to distribute to patients and other interested community members
 - Task 2: Public Information Clearinghouse (Ongoing)
 - Continue to maintain and update LACDPH's Fish Contamination website <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/Eh/safety/fish-contamination.htm>
 - Fill requests for outreach materials, including:
 - CBOs
 - Health/Medical Professionals
 - General Public/Schools
 - County Departments
 - Task 3: Pier Signage (Ongoing)
 - New pier signs installed at Santa Monica Pier, Cabrillo Pier, White Point/Cabrillo Pier, Redondo Beach Pier, and Hermosa Beach Pier
 - Task 4: Outreach to Healthcare Providers (Paused)
 - Offer outreach to medical providers (targeting obstetric and pediatric providers)
 - Coordinate with nurses in the Child Health and Disability Program
 - Provide educational materials to community health clinics
 - Outreach to WIC centers
 - Participate in community public health outreach events
 - Distribute community toolkit to providers
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Community Outreach Q&A

Q: What is our response to those concerned about markets/restaurants/commercial fishing?

A: (Lt. Vicknair, CDFW) Current response is to monitor for commercial landings. Haven't seen any commercial landings for white croaker. Market inspections do not involve biologic testing, but do verify origins of fish (wholesaler vs lander). Paper trail of where fish are FROM.

Q: What are the limitations for sign placement along piers?

A: (Renee, EPA) There are different limitations for each pier in place by each city. Pier signage placement is coordinated with management for each pier.

5. Enforcement Outreach Update (Lt. Michael Vicknair, CDFW)

- No new updates for 2025; continue to try to use the updated forms during outreach.
- Standard patrols.
- New tip card is currently being distributed during CDFW outreach.

6. Program Proposals and FCEC Requests (Renee Jordan Ward, EPA)

- Plan to follow recommendations for other coastal sign locations (based on annual report). For example, EPA is considering removing signs at El Porto/El Segundo.
- Seeking additional input on other coastal locations (e.g. self-launch boat ramps).
- EPA would like to pause printing paper curriculum guides until the content is updated.
- Establish partnerships with the LA Unified School District
- Revive DNC sticker printing?

Program Proposals Q&A

Q: Have magnets been considered instead of stickers for DNC sticker print suggestion?

A: (Renee, EPA) Magnets can be considered. May want to check with bait shops to see which they would prefer, although stickers seem more versatile.

-Suggestion for DBS&A to check with bait shops for preference during next scheduled outreach.

-Suggestion for sticker print to include DNC signage image

7. FCEC Action Items (Renee Jordan Ward, EPA) and Open Forum

- Provide feedback (by May 9) on the Draft Community Involvement Plan
- Provide feedback and recommendations (by May 28) on:
 - additional pier sign placements
 - paper curriculum guides
 - stickers or other FCEC logo items

8. Adjournment
