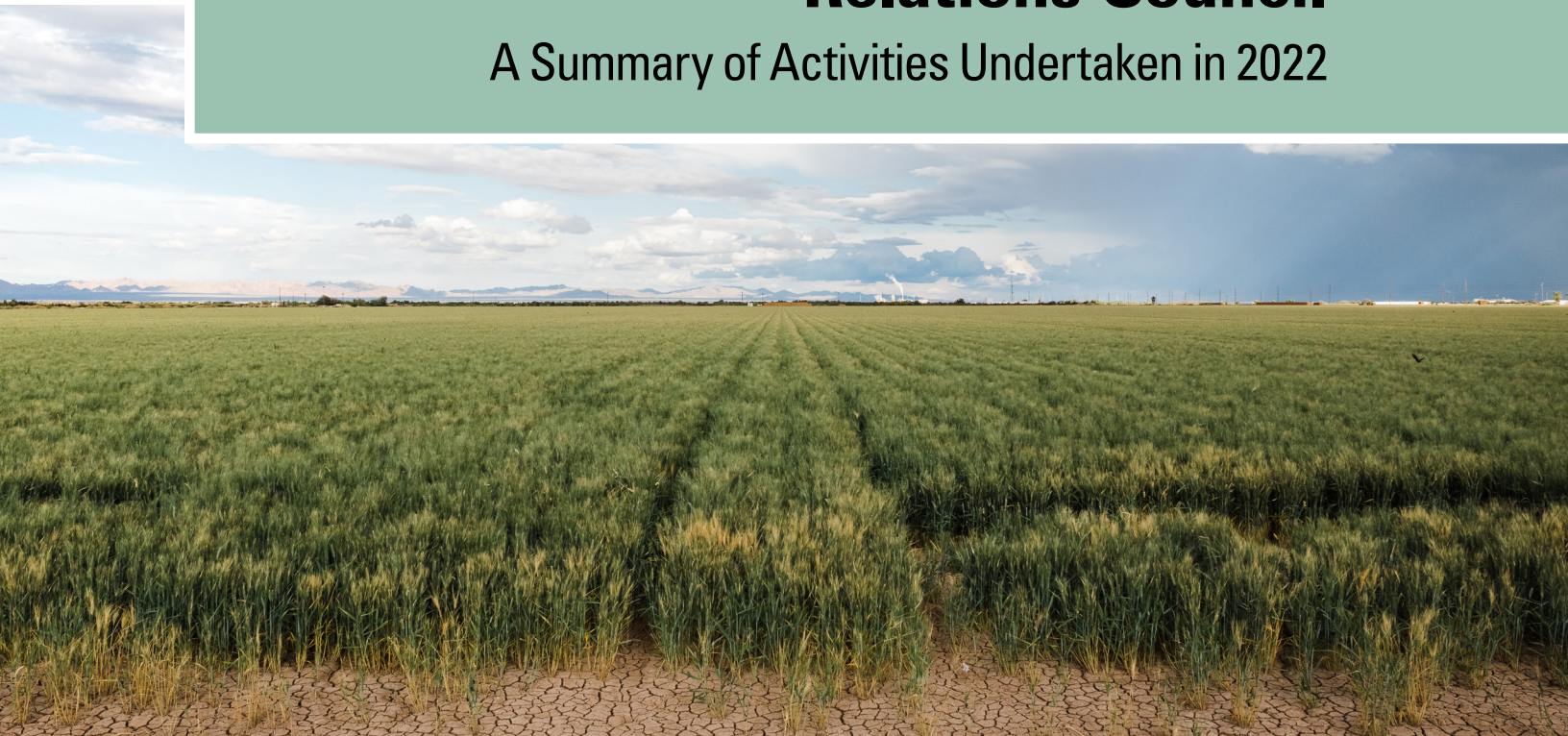


2022

Annual Report

The California-Mexico Border Relations Council

A Summary of Activities Undertaken in 2022



Published in March 2024





Council Member Agencies:

California Environmental Protection Agency
California Health and Human Services Agency
California Natural Resources Agency
California State Transportation Agency
California Department of Food and Agriculture
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (ex-officio)

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Yana Garcia
Secretary for Environmental Protection



The California-Mexico Border Relations Council is the central organizational body that coordinates interagency projects, programs, initiatives, and partnerships along the California-Mexico border. It also serves as a representative body of the State of California whose goal is to continue to develop and enhance cross-border relations between California and Mexico.

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Welcome

Dear Honorable Members of the Legislature,

The California-Mexico border region shares family, culture, community, workforce, and countless economic and environmental resources. These connections create a shared sense of urgency to build a sustainable and resilient cross-border economy.

The California-Mexico Border Relations Council provides a critical forum for cross-border collaboration, allowing us to make important progress toward decreasing environmental burdens, addressing transboundary flows, and improving communication and engagement with impacted communities.

Strengthening our binational relationships and addressing our shared environmental challenges remain top priorities for California, as evidenced by the significant strides the California-Mexico Border Relations Council made in 2022, including:

- In July 2022, U.S. and Mexican federal agency representatives signed the Statement of Intent which serves as a binational framework identifying a number of projects to stem the flow of transboundary pollution in the San Diego/Tijuana region. The second binational agreement, Minute 328, was also signed by the US and Mexican sections of the International and Boundary Water Commissions (IBWC and CILA, respectively) on July 19, 2022 as the first step in binational implementation of the Statement of Intent framework and includes operations and maintenance cost-sharing for the proposed expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (ITP).
- The California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency invested over \$200 million to support safe, stable, and affordable housing in Imperial and San Diego Counties.
- The State Water Board and Regional Water Boards continued efforts to improve transboundary flows through various trash and water quality projects in the New River and Tijuana River Valley.
- The California Department of Food and Agriculture continued partnering with Mexico to address pests of mutual concern.
- Federal, state, and local officials in the U.S. and Mexico joined the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to break ground for the new Otay Mesa East Port of Entry for the California-Baja California region.



- The Office of Binational Border Health tracked over 2,600 binational cases reported by local health jurisdictions in California. This allowed for the exchange of epidemiological information and joint work with Mexico to take public health action. The office continues to run the California Border Infectious Disease Program to track infectious diseases and respiratory illnesses.
- The California Office of Emergency Services distributed over two million personal protective equipment items to Mexican Consulates, which were later distributed to communities and hospitals in need. Its Unified Border Coordination Group also provided humanitarian assistance to almost 500,000 asylum-seeking migrants entering California from the Mexico border.
- The Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development International Affairs and Trade re-engaged the Commission of the Californias (ComCal), hosting a tri-state hybrid convening and conducting extensive engagement on the Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

As this 2022 report illustrates, the California-Mexico Border Relations Council continues to play a vital role in addressing cross-cutting concerns affecting our border communities. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 3021 (Statutes of 2006), I am sharing this annual report of the California-Mexico Border Relations Council. We eagerly anticipate our continued cross-border collaboration as we work to accomplish more together

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Yana Garcia".

Yana Garcia
Secretary for Environmental Protection
Chair, California-Mexico Border Relations Council

Council Background

The California-Mexico border region has long-standing interconnectedness and interdependency. Both the U.S. and Mexico face challenges at the border resulting from rapid population growth, urbanization, industrial expansion, and increasing flows of international trade. In order to begin addressing these issues, legislation enacted in 1982 established the Office of California-Mexico Affairs within the California Technology, Trade, and Commerce Agency. However, Assembly Bill 1757 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 229, Statutes of 2003) ended the agency in 2003, and the duties of the agency were reassigned to other state entities. In 2004, the California Research Bureau released a report that listed more than 100 California-Mexico programs were operating across state agencies, with no organizing entity to coordinate interagency cooperation. The report was updated in 2017 and shows continued engagement with Mexico (the report can be found on the California State Library website: Programs and Projects Related to Mexico in California State Government). In 2006, Assembly Bill 3021 (Núñez, Chapter 621, Statutes of 2006; Government Code Sections 8710- 8713) was enacted to fill the need for statewide oversight and coordination of multi-agency involvement with Mexico. It created the California-Mexico Border Relations Council, which serves as the central organizing body that coordinates cross-border programs,

initiatives, projects and partnerships. The council is comprised of the leaders of eight state entities, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency serving in an ex-officio capacity. Collectively these entities are responsible for addressing a wide range of issues affecting the border relating to the environment, natural resources, transportation, human health, food and agriculture, emergency and consumer services, housing, and business and economic development. The council meets at least once a year to coordinate the activities of state agencies on California-Mexico border issues. In 2014, responsibilities of the council were modified by Assembly Bill 690 (Campos, Chapter 716, Statutes of 2014). The bill created Government Code Sections 99520-99524, which direct the actions of the council today. The council is legislatively mandated to:

The council is legislatively mandated to:

- Coordinate activities of state agencies that are related to crossborder programs, initiatives, projects, and partnerships that exist within state government, to improve the effectiveness of state and local efforts that are of concern between California and Mexico.
- Invite representatives of the State of Baja California and the Mexican government to participate in meetings.
- Establish policies to coordinate the collection and sharing of data related to cross-border issues among agencies.
- Establish the Border Region Solid Waste Working Group to develop and coordinate long-term solutions to address and remediate problems associated with waste tires, solid waste, and excessive sedimentation

along the border that cause the degradation of valuable estuarine and riparian habitats, and that threaten water quality and public health in the state.

- Identify and recommend to the Legislature changes in law needed to achieve the goals of Section 99523.
- Submit a report to the Legislature on the council's activities annually.

Council Members



Chair

Yana Garcia

Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)

calepa.ca.gov



Wade Crowfoot

Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)

resources.ca.gov



Mark Ghaly

Secretary, California Department of Health and Human Services (CHHS)

chhs.ca.gov



Nancy Ward

Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES)

caloes.ca.gov



Toks Omishakin

Secretary, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA)

calsta.ca.gov



Tomiquia Moss

Secretary, California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH)

bcsh.ca.gov



Dee Dee Myers

Director, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

business.ca.gov



Karen Ross

Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)

cdfa.ca.gov



Martha Guzman

Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) - Ex-officio

epa.gov

Executive Summary

Trade

Mexico remains the number one destination for California exports and number two overall trade partner. More than 13 percent of all U.S. exports to Mexico are from California. California's top exports to Mexico include computer and electronic products, transportation equipment, transportation equipment, and chemicals. California's top imports from Mexico are computer and electronic products and transportation equipment. California is the state of destination for over 13 percent of U.S. imports from Mexico.

The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) facilitated various trade initiatives with Mexico, including two outbound missions to Mexico City, one reverse trade mission, individual export assistance to California small businesses, and virtual exchanges to promote bilateral trade and investment. In 2022, GO-Biz continued to utilize the California State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) and cross border economic development funding to support small businesses in their market expansion to Mexico, which included cross-border e-commerce enhancement and trade mission participation. Trade missions included co-hosting a Mexico inbound aerospace summit in Los Angeles, supporting business participation in a Mexico infrastructure business conference in Mexico City, and support

for local California tourism authorities to participate in a Mexico LGBTQI+ Travel and Tourism Virtual Forum.

California maintains a Trade Americas desk in Mexico City through a partnership with the University of California's Casa de la Universidad de California in Mexico as a means of promoting two-way trade and further strengthening California's deep economic, political, and cultural relationship with the Americas, and in particular Mexico. The desk is utilized by California's Trade and Investment Representative for the Americas to promote mutual trade and investment in the Americas region.

Business, Consumer Services and Housing

The Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) continues to support border communities with a focus on providing funding to preserve and expand housing, protecting consumers, and safeguarding civil rights. Departments within BCSH continue to engage with border counterparts to improve licensing and consumer services, engage with the community to safeguard civil rights, and invest in border communities to provide safe and stable homes.

Environment

Various boards, departments, and offices within the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and California Natural Resources Agency (CRNA), as well as U.S. EPA, have made significant strides in the border region to improve air and water quality. With state investments in the cross-border New and Tijuana Rivers, Salton Sea, border-region parks, and cross-border air monitors, 2021 saw unprecedented first-time state investments in the millions of dollars in the border region.

Energy

CEC continues to engage with its counterpart the Baja California Energy Commission on electric system reliability, owing to our shared electric grid, and industrial efficiency, and with the adjacent border State of Sonora. CEC has continued to enjoy a fruitful partnership with Mexico's capital city, centered mostly around building energy efficiency. CEC continues to engage in the development of a lighting efficiency technology center in Guadalajara, through the auspices of an MOU renewed in 2022 with the Mexican State of Jalisco and engagement with UC-Davis and the Autonomous University of Guadalajara; the center has the potential to help in the realization of massive energy efficiency savings in Mexico and Latin America.

Agriculture

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) continues engagement and collaboration with border state counterparts on a wide variety of agricultural issues. CDFA maintains engagement with Mexico's Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) to further deliverables of a Memorandum of Understanding, signed in October 2019, addressing issues related to trade, climate, and plant/animal health.

Transportation

California's international border crossings processed more than 16.1 million pedestrian crossings, 30.2 million personal vehicles, and over 1.6 million commercial trucks and the development of a new Otay Mesa East Port of Entry continued in 2022. Congestion at the border has limited travel and economic growth, as well as contributed to the effects of climate change. The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA),

Caltrans, SANDAG, and the United States and Mexican Federal governments have partnered to address these challenges by designing an innovative border crossing facility, aiming to achieve a goal of an average wait time of 20 minutes and improve the safety, security, and efficiency of trade and travel between the United States and Mexico.

In August 2022, federal, state, and local officials in the United States and Mexico joined Caltrans and SANDAG to break ground for a new port of entry for the California-Baja California region, Otay Mesa East. Construction crews began building the foundations including grading, drainage, utility relocations, and new utility services that will be the next port of entry. The Otay Mesa East Port of Entry, a priority project for the United States and Mexico, aims to reduce wait times, increase economic efficiencies, cut emissions, and ensure the San Diego-Baja mega-region has the infrastructure it needs to continue its dynamic growth.

On October 24, 2022, the historic revenue sharing agreement was signed in Mexico City with federal and state representatives and a delegation of regional leaders joining SANDAG and Mexican officials at the event. The events were met with great enthusiasm by officials on both sides of the border and reinforce each country's shared commitment to deliver on their promise of opening an innovative new border crossing.

Health

In 2022, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) continued promoting health equity by monitoring binational infectious disease cases and collaborating with local stakeholders in the CA-Baja California border region and throughout California. In response to

infectious diseases, the CDPH Office of Binational Border Health (OBBH), under the Center for Infectious Diseases, worked closely with local health jurisdictions and stakeholders on binational notifications and surveillance activities, utilizing binational U.S.- Mexico protocols to streamline communication.

Safety

The Operation Stonegarden Grant (OPSG) funds are intended to enhance cooperation and coordination among local, tribal, territorial, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in a joint mission to secure the United States' borders along routes of ingress from international borders including travel corridors in states bordering Mexico and Canada, as well as states and territories with international water borders.

In 2022, Imperial County, San Diego County and Riverside County, were awarded OPSG grant funds in efforts to secure the United States' borders.

Emergency Management

The Governor's Office of Emergency Management (Cal OES), a leader in emergency management and homeland security, builds towards a safer more resilient California. This includes the California-Mexico border region by leveraging effective partnerships with federal, state, tribal, local, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and Mexican counterparts. This collaborative approach recognizes that disasters often transcend borders and require joint efforts. These efforts collectively underscore Cal OES's dedication to enhancing disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, with a strong focus on collaboration, communication, and inclusivity. The agency's commitment to working with Mexico is essential in ensuring the safety and well-being of the communities on both sides of the border.

Trade

Economic Ties

The California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) is the state's leader for job creation and economic development. In close partnership with Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis, the state's designated lead on international trade, the International Affairs and Trade team at GO-Biz supports economic development by promoting California exports, attracting foreign investment, and maintaining and developing California's global partnerships.¹ Ongoing engagement with Mexico is significant in each of these areas, as such the state has maintained its important collaboration with one of our most significant trade partners.

Foreign Investment

Mexico is California's 10th-largest source of foreign investment based on jobs supported, with 16,555 California jobs supported by 544 Mexican-owned businesses.² Mexican investment falls into several strategic sectors in California, professional services, wholesale and retail trade, and manufacturing. Geographically, jobs supported by Mexican-owned businesses span the state, including greater Los Angeles, San Diego/Imperial Counties, the Bay Area, the Inland Empire, and the greater Sacramento region. GO-Biz International works closely with the U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S.

Embassy in Mexico City to support Mexican businesses looking to expand in California. This included helping Mexican companies navigate regulatory requirements and incentives and making introductions to local partners statewide.

International Engagement

California supported several meaningful virtual and in-person engagements. California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis maintained and enhanced California's close ties with Mexico through high-level diplomatic engagement at the gubernatorial and consul general levels. This included extensive engagement on issues and efforts surrounding Otay Mesa East Port of Entry (OME POE). In February 2022, she convened a bilateral meeting between Mexican officials and San Diego regional counter parts to discuss the POE project. During this visit she also met with U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Ken Salazar, Governor Avila and other Mexican government officials from the federal, state, and local levels to participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for the OME POE. During this same visit, she signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the Otay Mesa East Port of Entry. In October 2022, she joined a delegation to Mexico City hosted by the San Diego Area Chamber of Commerce, which highlighted the critical efforts being undertaken on OME POE. She held additional meetings with Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Director General for North America, Roberto Velasco, and then Mexican Foreign Secretary Marcelo Ebrard. Throughout the year, she held meetings with various California based Consuls General of Mexico and provided remarks for various events such as the launch of the Mexico Vehicle Electrification Taskforce, COMCAL staff re-convening, and participated in the

annual Sacramento Mexico Advocacy Day events. She also participated in a visit to the border organized by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg.

In 2022, GO-Biz International re-engaged the Commission of the Californias (ComCal) by hosting a tri-state hybrid convening. Staff-level talks were held between California, Baja California, and Baja California Sur with the intention of reenergizing the Commission of the Californias following the COVID-19 pandemic and elections in both Mexican states that brought in new Governors and administrations. In addition to basic relationship building, the focus of the meeting was on California's planned transition towards zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) and the wide-ranging regional impacts it will have on our neighbors to the south, including Baja California and Baja California Sur, and how the three states can work together to promote the transition to ZEV technology. More than 100 state officials comprised of California and Baja California government convened in person at the Institute of the Americas at UC San Diego, with an additional 50+ from Baja Sur dialed in virtually. Officials discussed the following key areas/sectors with greatest implications: infrastructure, environmental protection, manufacturing, cross-border trade, tourism, equity, public health and emergency response, local air quality, and job creation. While the theme for this first convening was the zero-emission vehicle transition, an overall focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation in these issue areas was encouraged.

Business, Consumer Services, and Housing

The Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) is responsible for fostering an equitable and inclusive California by protecting consumers, upholding civil rights, and ensuring that all Californians have safe, stable, and dignified places to call home. Departments within BCSH continue to support border communities with a focus on providing funding to preserve and expand housing, consumer protections, and safeguarding civil rights.

Providing Safe and Stable Homes

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) helps to provide stable, safe homes affordable to veterans, seniors, young families, farm workers, tribes, people with disabilities, and individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Throughout 2022, HCD invested over \$212,000,000 in Imperial and San Diego Counties across a variety of programs like the California Housing Accelerator Program, the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program, the Homekey program, the Housing Navigators Program, and the Transitional Housing Program.

The California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) program initiatives supported California-Mexico Border Relations through multiple programs: homeownership, lender training and

outreach, multifamily project financing, housing counseling and mortgage relief assistance. Through the Mortgage Relief program, 1,400 homeowners in San Diego and Imperial counties were assisted, with a total value of \$42 million through mortgage relief, property taxes, partial claim/loan deferral and reverse mortgage. The National Mortgage Settlement counseling program also provided housing counseling services to 4,950 clients in San Diego and Imperial counties.

Consumer Protections

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) protects California consumers through oversight, enforcement, and licensure of professions. The Department consists of 36 boards and bureaus that regulate over three million licenses in more than 250 various professions and occupations—including doctors, nurses and contractors, barbers, court reporters, and dental hygienists. DCA protects consumers by investigating and prosecuting complaints against its licensees, as well as by helping consumers learn how to protect themselves from scams and unqualified individuals. DCA boards and bureaus collaborated with the government of Mexico in the following ways:

- Representatives of the Bureau of Automotive Repair and California Air Resources Board met with representatives from the state of Baja California, Mexico to exchange information on air quality improvement programs ranging from Smog Check inspections, agricultural burn days, and ambient air quality monitoring.

- The Dental Board of California (DBC) is pursuing computer-based testing in Mexico. Specifically, it is seeking to have PSI, a test provider, administer the Dentist Law and Ethics (L&E) examination at sites used by non-DCA clients. Additionally, the American Board of Dental Examiners/Western Regional Examining Board offers exams for DBC's two foreign-approved schools in Mexico. DBC is looking for ways to eliminate challenges for applicants who cross the border to take the L&E exam.
- The Licensed Physicians and Dentists from Mexico Pilot Program (MPP) allows up to 30 licensed physicians specializing in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology from Mexico to practice medicine in California for a maximum of three years if certain requirements are met. These individuals are only authorized to work in specific nonprofit community health centers within California. The Medical Board of California (MBC) issued its first MPP license in July 2021.
- As required by law, the National Autonomous University of Mexico and the University of California (UC) Davis, are conjointly conducting an evaluation of the program overseen by the Board, which will include the quality of care provided by the physicians, the adaptability of the physicians to California medical standards, the impact on the working and administrative environment in

nonprofit community health centers and on interpersonal relations with co-workers, the response and approval by patients, the impact on cultural and linguistic services, and the increases in medical encounters provided by the physicians to limited-English-speaking patient populations and increases in the number of limited-English-speaking patients seeking health care services from nonprofit community health centers. On August 3, 2022, UC Davis submitted the first annual [progress report](#) to the Board.

Additionally, the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation (DFPI), and the San Bernardino Mexican Consulate partnered with La Comisión Nacional para la Protección y Defensa de los Usuarios de Servicios Financieros (CONDUSEF) to present at Mexico's National Week of Financial Education. The DFPI, the San Bernardino Mexican Consulate, Congressman Takano, Sister Cities Ensenada and Cuautla, International Relations Council, Riverside hosted a celebration to commemorate 200 years of friendship.

Safeguarding Civil Rights

Lastly, the Civil Rights Department (CRD) continues to safeguard civil rights and enforce laws against discrimination and hate violence. In San Diego and Imperial counties, CRD investigated more than 300 complaints of civil rights violations. CRD mediated or conciliated many of these complaints, securing \$705,737 and other types of relief in 73 settlements. Also in 2022, CRD launched the CA vs Hate Resource Line and Network to support victims of hate violence.

Environmental Protection

CalEPA's Border Affairs Program

CalEPA's Border Affairs Program promotes cooperation to help ensure a cleaner, safer, healthier, and more prosperous border region. The program is a collaborative effort among CalEPA and its boards, departments, and offices to address environmental issues on multiple fronts and coordinate efforts with other California state agencies, Tribal Nations in the border region, and federal, state, and local governments in the U.S. and Mexico. Accomplishments in 2022 include:

- California appropriated \$35 million for multiple projects benefitting water quality in the New River and Tijuana River Valley in 2021 and 2022.
- Under the U.S. EPA's Border 2025 Program, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) served as the Co-Chair for the San Diego-Tijuana Air Quality Task Force, while the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) serves as the Co-Chair for the Imperial-Mexicali Air Quality Task Force.
- The California Air Resources Board (CARB) delivered 50 Purple Air sensors to the City of Tijuana under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two entities.

- CalEPA updated its designation of disadvantaged communities (DACs) for purposes of informing the state's investment of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds and included, for the first time, lands under the control of federally recognized Tribes.
- The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board continued oversight of the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (U.S. IBWC) South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant and developed two Total Maximum Daily Loads for public review and comment.
- CalRecycle cleaned up 10,293 tires from the California-Mexico Border Region.

Air Quality

As a part of its overall mission of protecting public health, welfare, and ecological resources through the effective reduction of air pollutants, CARB has continued its work in the border region to improve air quality in 2022. CARB furthered this goal through core programmatic functions including the Assembly Bill 617 Community Air Protection Program, air quality planning and monitoring, rulemaking to facilitate the transition to medium and heavy duty zero-emission vehicles, enforcement actions and settlements to reduce harmful emissions, project investments, and community air grants.

Since its inception and through the end of 2022, CARB's [California Climate Investments](#) has implemented nearly \$529 million in new projects in the border region, which are expected to reduce approximately 3.172 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO₂e)

over project lifetimes. Around \$386.5 million (or 73%) of those investment funds went toward benefitting [priority populations](#) (Disadvantaged and Low-income communities and households) in the border region.

In February 2022, the CARB Board selected the [International Border Community](#), consisting of San Ysidro and Otay Mesa in San Diego, to develop both a Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) and a Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP). The SDAPCD convened a community steering committee to discuss the community's air quality concerns including heavy-duty and passenger vehicles, cross-border issues such as border wait times, odors and sewage from the Tijuana River, and other mobile sources like locomotives.

Under the U.S. EPA's Border 2025 Program, the SDAPCD serves as the Co-Chair for the San Diego-Tijuana Air Quality Task Force, while the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) serves as the Co-Chair for the Imperial-Mexicali Air Quality Task Force. Together, these Task Forces coordinate with local stakeholders and CARB to explore measures to improve border region air quality, and this collaboration can lead to binational coordination of actions to be included in CERPs and CAMPs in San Diego and Imperial. Additional activities conducted in the San Diego and Imperial border regions in 2022 are described further in [Appendix B: Additional Air Quality Efforts](#).

In [April](#) and July of 2022, CARB staff delivered a total of 50 Purple Air sensors to the City of Tijuana under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two entities. Under the MOU, CARB is tasked with assisting the City of Tijuana in establishing a network of 50 low-cost particulate matter (PM) sensors, as well as providing training.

Throughout 2022, CARB organized Zero-Emission Vehicle infrastructure-focused meetings with other state and local agencies, including CalEPA, the California Energy Commission, CalTrans, SANDAG, and others, to gather expertise on charging infrastructure plans and funding opportunities that could assist truck fleets. On November 30, 2022, CARB convened an in-person gathering with the office of San Diego County Supervisor and CARB Board Member Nora Vargas, Assemblymember David Alvarez, Trucking Associations from Baja, and others, to discuss the [Advanced Clean Fleet \(ACF\)](#) regulation.

In addition to ongoing investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide co-benefits, CARB also awarded over half-a-million dollars to community-based organizations in the border region in 2022.

For additional CARB actions in the border region in 2022, please visit [Appendix B: Additional Air Quality Efforts](#).

Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

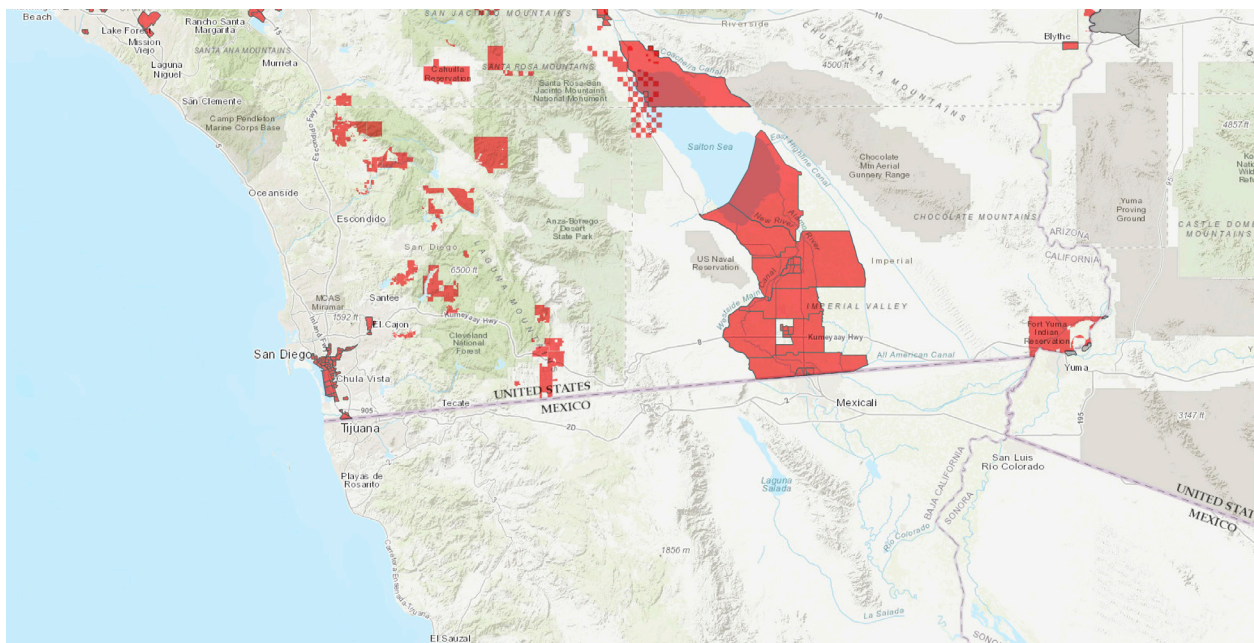
The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) is the lead entity within CalEPA for assessing health risks posed by environmental chemicals. OEHHA is helping to coordinate the Border Environmental Program's efforts to maintain a healthy environment for people in the California-Mexico border region.

OEHHA has developed CalEnviroScreen, an environmental justice screening tool developed that scores California's approximately 8,000 census tracts based on multiple indicators of pollution burden and population vulnerability to pollution's health effects. **The most current version of the tool**, was released in 2021 and includes the incorporation of pollution sources originating in Mexico on California communities located near the

border. Examples of border related data in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 include verified location and emissions data from larger Mexican facilities releasing toxic air contaminants that may be transported across the border region, as well as solid and hazardous waste facilities in Mexico that may pose environmental concerns to California communities.

Senate Bill 535 prioritizes disadvantaged communities DACs for the state's climate investments and charges CalEPA with defining them. CalEPA updated the designation of DACs in 2022. The current designation, like previous ones, includes communities that are heavily burdened by multiple sources of pollution, as identified by CalEnviroScreen, and also includes for the first time lands under the control of federally recognized Tribes, including tribes near or around the border with Mexico.

DACs near the Mexico Border are reflected below in red:



Fish Consumption Advisories Provided for the Border Region

OEHHA evaluates the health risks from chemical contaminants in fish recreationally caught from California waters and advises the public on which fish are safe to eat, those that should not be eaten, and those that should be consumed only in limited amounts. The fish advisories are posted on OEHHA's website in both English and Spanish and published in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Sport Fishing Regulations booklets under the "Public Health Advisory" section. OEHHA's fish advisories provide "safe eating

guidelines" to help people choose the safest fish to eat and avoid fish species with high levels of chemicals in them. They are based on sampling results for common fish species that people catch and eat from California water bodies. OEHHA published the following fish advisories in 2022 for communities near the Mexico-border:

- El Capitan Reservoir
- Lake Henshaw
- Lake Cuyamaca
- Sunbeam Lake

A map of fish advisories can be found at oehha.ca.gov/fish/ca-fishmap.

OEHHA publishes its fish advisories in Spanish (and other languages, as appropriate):



Mujeres
(18-49 Años)

Niños
(1-17 Años)



Mujeres
(50+ Años)

Hombres
(18+ Años)

GUIA PARA CONSUMIR PESCADO

del

EMBALSE DE EL CAPITAN

(CONDADO DE SAN DIEGO)

5 PORCIONES EN TOTAL A LA SEMANA

7 PORCIONES EN TOTAL A LA SEMANA

Coma el Pescado Bueno
Comer pescado que es bajo en sustancias químicas puede proporcionar beneficios para la salud de los niños y adultos.



Evite el Pescado Malo
Comer pescado con altos niveles de sustancias químicas como mercurio o PCBs puede causar problemas de salud en niños y adultos.



Elija el Pescado Mejor
Las sustancias químicas pueden ser más perjudiciales para los bebés por nacer y niños.



Plateadito del Misisipi
(Mississippi Silverside)



Charrasco
(Sculpin)



Sábalo de Hilo
(Threadfin Shad)



Especies de Pez Luna
(Sunfish Species)



Especies de Róbalo Negro
(Black Bass Species)



Bagre Azul
(Blue Catfish)

Una Porción
Una porción de pescado es aproximadamente del tamaño y grosor de su mano. Dé a los niños porciones más pequeñas.




Para Adultos

Para Niños

La Oficina de Evaluación de Riesgos para la Salud Ambiental de California

web www.oehha.ca.gov/fish
email fish@oehha.ca.gov
phone (916) 324-7572
Spanish

Coma sólo el filete sin piel



Coma sólo la carne



Algunas sustancias químicas son más altas en la piel, la grasa y las tripas.

Water

The Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board regulate water quality in California along the California-Mexico border. Both Regional Boards made notable progress in 2022 to address pollution in transboundary rivers that flow from south to north.

Transboundary River Flows/ Water Quality

The Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRB Regional Water Board) continued to work cooperatively with U.S. EPA, the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), and Mexico to address New River pollution originating from Mexicali. The CRB Regional Water Board also worked to implement its regulatory programs to address New River pollution sources in the Imperial County, and to assist the City of Calexico with the implementation of the New River Improvement Project Strategic Plan.

New River

The CRB Regional Water Board regulates and monitors discharges into the New River by controlling pollution from:

1. nonpoint sources, mainly agriculture, by implementing total maximum daily loads and programs for agricultural runoff (Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program),
2. point sources, mainly wastewater treatment plants (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program), and
3. conducting monthly water quality monitoring.

The State Water Resources Control Board also committed funding the following projects to address water quality problems arising in the rivers crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.

To benefit the New River:

- Mexicali Fluye Project (Sonoran Institute, \$4,323,789)
- New River Improvement Project (City of Calexico, \$18,530,047)
- New River Preliminary Engineering Report (Imperial County, \$167,000)

Tijuana River

The decades long impacts of transboundary flows of sewage, industrial wastes, trash, and sediment are the top priority of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board). In 2022, the San Diego Water Board continued oversight of the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (U.S. IBWC) South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant and developed two Total Maximum Daily Loads for public review and comment. The San Diego Water Board led a joint local agency effort to ensure U.S. EPA and U.S. IBWC approved Minute 328 and the Binational Statement of Intent, the USMCA Programmatical Environmental Impacts Statement (PEIS) and final USMCA Record of Decision based on the priorities of the Recovery Team. Since 2019, California has invested more than \$32 million Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team projects in the Tijuana River Valley to mitigate border pollution. Collectively, full implementation of these projects are the most credible and durable solutions to the decades of environmental justice inequities and environmental impacts.

San Diego Water Board Actions

The San Diego Water Board's top environmental justice priority is the long-standing impacts to Disadvantaged Communities in South Bay San Diego from transboundary flows of pollution. The San Diego Water Board took the following actions in 2022:

- Amended the 2021 NPDES Permit for the U.S. IBWC South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (ITP).
- Agreed to settlement of the remaining lawsuit with U.S. IBWC to shift the focus to implementation of repairs and upgrades to the ITP and binational source and conveyance controls through Minute 320, Minute 328 and the Record of Decision on the USMCA Tijuana River Watershed program.
- Prepared Notices of Violation for the reported exceedances and continued deterioration of the ITP and failure to comply with the 2021 Cease-and-Desist Order.
- Approved a draft Integrated Report for State Water Resources Control Board consideration including new and continued listings of 55 water quality impaired waters in the Tijuana River watershed, estuary, and coastal waters impacted by transboundary pollution from discharges to the river, tributaries, and directly to the ocean in Mexico.
- Received \$175,000 from the San Diego River Conservancy to support the U.S. IBWC Minute 320 Binational Framework stakeholder process to address sediment, trash, and water quality in the Tijuana River Watershed.

Total Maximum Daily Loads

The San Diego Water Board has identified 55 impairments on the Clean Water Act section 303(d) list in the 2022 Integrated Report. Each of these listings will require Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) to address sources, conveyances, and controls to achieve load allocations to restore the impaired Tijuana River, Estuary, and coastal waters. A total of 10 multi constituent TMDLs will be needed to restore the impaired waters. In 2022, the San Diego Water Board finalized two draft TMDL Technical Reports for Bacterial Indicators and Pathogens and Solid Waste (trash). The load allocations will be implemented through the Record of Decision USMCA funded projects or alternatives.

Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team

The San Diego Water Board has led the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team (Recovery Team) since 2009. In 2012 and 2015, the San Diego Water Board adopted the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Strategy: Living with the Waters developed by the Recovery Team with 7 main work areas and over 27 projects. In 2015, the San Diego Water Board adopted a Five-Year Action Plan to advance 7 of the key Recovery Strategy projects. In 2022, the San Diego Water Board on behalf of the Recovery Team proposed three projects from the Action Plan for State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) consideration for funding through SB170. The three Five Year Action Plan projects awarded funding by the State Water Board are:

- Tijuana River Trash Boom (\$4.7 million, lead organization RCAC)
- Smuggler’s Gulch Improvement Project Augmentation (\$4.25 million, lead organization County of San Diego)
- Tijuana River Valley Hydrology and Habitat Restoration Project (\$2.0 million, lead organization County of San Diego).

Figure 1. Failed ITP Primary Settling Basins. Credit: Dave Gibson 08/15/2023



Figure 2. Tijuana River at the U.S. Mexico International Border (Credit: Morgan Rogers IBWC 7-31-23, submitted to Water Board, used with permission)



Figure 3. South Imperial Beach Closure Due to Transboundary Sewage. (Credit: Dave Gibson 9-21-23)



Waste Tires

CalRecycle is a department within CalEPA. Its Tire Management Program is faced with the challenge of diverting from disposal and safely managing more than 51 million reusable and waste tires generated each year in California. CalRecycle grant funds were used to cleanup 10,293 tires from the California-Mexico Border Region. Additionally, CalRecycle funded a study that identified illegal dumping sites. CalRecycle also provided training to US EPA and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, a department within CalEPA.

CalRecycle Border Tire Activities

CalRecycle's Tire Management Program is faced with the challenge of diverting or safely managing more than 51 million reusable and waste tires generated each year in California. Some of these tires are managed in the California-Mexico Border Region. CalRecycle's Five-Year Tire Plan outlines opportunities for work in the Border Region and can be found at <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/Publications/Download/1898>.

Figure 4. Photo of crew in high visibility gear cleaning up waste tires next to the border wall.



In 2022, CalRecycle carried out the following activities in the California-Mexico Border Region:

- **Tire Clean Up on Federal Border Lands managed by the International Boundary & Water Commission** – CalRecycle and The Urban Corps of San Diego County participated in this waste tire cleanup in May 2022 and completed the work in June 2022. Urban Corps picked up 3,000 tires from the Tijuana border riverbed.
- **Initiation of Tire Clean Up on California Border Field State Park (Goat Canyon Project)** – CalRecycle and The Urban Corps of San Diego County began coordinating a cleanup of tires that washed into California Border Field State Park in Goat Canyon in 2022.
- **Tire Clean Up (TCU) Grants Awarded to San Diego County** – San Diego County utilized their CalRecycle TCU Grant to clean up the Smugglers Gulch site in the border region, collecting approximately 2,300 tires.
- **Tire Clean Up Grants Awarded to Imperial County** – Imperial County used their CalRecycle TCU 19th cycle grant from October through December 2022 to collect 4,993 tires in the county.

- **Used Tire Management Training to USEPA/DTSC Border Focus Groups** – CalRecycle presented training at the June 8, 2022, Border Hazardous Waste Virtual Workshop to USEPA/DTSC focus groups. CalRecycle provided a comprehensive, in-depth review of the California Tire Program that included targeted activities related to the California/Mexico border. Technical training topics included Used Tire Management options and Waste and Used Tire Hauler Registration and Manifesting.
- **Investigation of Illegal Tire Dumping Sites along the Southern California-Mexico Border** – CalRecycle undertook an investigation to identify and locate illegal tire dumping sites along the Southern California-Mexico border with the support of Geo-Logic Associates (GLA). The investigation was conducted in US side of the border region and consisted of information gathering through interviews with regional stakeholders and field assessments to locate illegal tire dumping sites.

In total, 21 illegal dumping sites were identified. Most sites involved few tires. The largest tire dump was in San Diego County on the Campo Band Indian Reservation with about 800 tires. A report was submitted by GLA to CalRecycle and published both in [English – Publication Summary](#) and [Spanish – Publication Summary](#).

CA State Parks also supported CalRecycle on agreements to haul off waste tires from Border Field State Park. The Goat Canyon Sediment Basin can capture up to 5,000 waste tires annually from cross-border flows.

Pesticides

Agricultural Surface Water Monitoring

The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is a department within CalEPA. In 2022, DPR's Surface Water Protection Program collected surface water samples at six sites in Imperial County as part of the Southern California agricultural monitoring study. Surface water monitoring typically occurs during two time periods—early April and again in October. This sampling included both edge of field monitoring sites (e.g., agricultural drainage ditches) as well as main river locations (New River, Alamo River).

Urban Surface Water Monitoring

DPR routinely monitors pesticide residue at three sites within San Diego County: one storm drain and one receiving water within the San Diego River watershed and one within the Chollas Creek watershed. Water sampling is conducted during one dry-season event (June or August) and one storm sampling event (first flush, early spring). In 2022, Samples were collected at the San Diego River storm drain and Cholla Creek sites during one storm event and the receiving water location within San Diego River during one dry season event.

Copper Marina Monitoring

DPR routinely monitors levels of dissolved copper (DCu) at Shelter Island Yacht Basin (SIYB) in San Diego County. The marina is part of the ongoing monitoring of DCu in Central and Southern California's coastal marinas. In 2022, ten sites were sampled at SIYB. The sampling occurred in mid-August, as this study is focused on measuring DCu concentrations during the summer months when the copper input from other sources is at a minimum.

43rd Annual Farm Workers Appreciation Breakfast

On December 2, 2022, DPR staff, Imperial County Agricultural Inspectors, and representatives from U.S. EPA Region 9 participated in the 43rd Annual Farm Workers Appreciation Breakfast to provide information and resources on pesticide safety, reporting methods, and labor rights to hundreds of fieldworkers from Mexicali and the Calexico/EI Centro area. This celebration is hosted by the California Employment Development Department to honor the thousands of farmworkers in Imperial County.

Toxics

CalEPA's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), through its San Diego Border Office, is responsible for tracking imported and exported hazardous wastes through its California/Mexico Border Program (Program). In 2022, emphasis was placed on tracking imported and exported wastes. The Program database shows that during 2022, DTSC received 13 export notifications. Notices were reviewed and the receiving California facilities were checked to assure that they were permitted to accept the wastes in question.

The DTSC San Diego Border Office also conducts coordinated inspections with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) at the Otay Mesa, San Diego County and Calexico East, Imperial County Ports of Entry. All northbound trucks importing hazardous waste and/or hazardous materials are inspected. During this reporting period, there were more than 1,663 trucks inspected, with seven Summary of Violations issued to importers of record and/or transporters.

Natural Resources

The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) advances international partnerships to promote access to natural resources, protect biodiversity, and build climate resilience. 2021 and ongoing California-Mexico border region achievements range from restoration projects, continued stewardship of Border Field State Park, and management of local projects and grants.

Border Field State Park

CA State Parks (CSP) operates the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR) through a strategic partnership that includes funding and oversight from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and program and project implementation with a non-profit partner, the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association (SWIA), and in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. These organizations leverage specific resources to implement the core programs of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) and to carry out core functions of the reserve associated with facilities, enforcement, staffing and land management. CSP and SWIA manage the TRNERR with direct allocations from NOAA as defined by the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) and with matching and additional funding sources; the USFWS does not receive funding through NOAA CZMA

but contributes to the management of the TRNERR with separate funding sources. The programs and Project described below provide a brief overview of some key initiatives focused on the U.S. and Mexico border for Calendar year 2022.

Fish and Wildlife

Throughout 2022, CDFW continued its coordination with the California-Mexico Border Relations Council and its stakeholders. In June 2022, CDFW awarded \$1,816,516 to River Partners for Phase 1 Finney-Ramer Unit Habitat Restoration Project; an Alamo River implementation project.

To date, CDFW has awarded approximately \$4 million under its cross-border priority, including \$2.2 million for three planning projects, and \$1.8 million for one implementation project. In 2017, CDFW awarded funds towards planning fill removal and restoration within Tijuana River Valley (Grantee: San Diego County). The Restoration Plan for this project is complete. The other three grants are on track and progressing as anticipated, as outlined below.

- **Tijuana River Valley Invasive Species Removal and Restoration Plan (Grantee: San Diego County Parks and Rec).** The project is midway through the grant term and the grantee continues to collaborate with permitting agencies, the public, and other interested stakeholders. All technical studies for the project are complete including the Jurisdictional Delineation, Cultural Report, Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Technical Letter, and Biology Technical Report. Final CEQA document and permits are expected to be complete in fiscal year 2023/24.

- **Alamo and New Rivers Riparian Habitat Restoration (Grantee: River Partners).** The grantee continued to meet with local stakeholders to develop a restoration plan for riparian habitat in the Imperial Valley. A detailed partner review of the draft Restoration Plan informed the project design, seed collection, plant palette, and phase planning of the salt cedar removal at the Finney-Ramer Unit. Additionally, this information will lead to more efficient project planning for additional projects along the New and Alamo Rivers for broad regional replication. River Partners continued to collect seeds and contact landowners for permission to collect additional seed in future, facilitating future implementation of restoration projects.
- **Phase 1 Finney-Ramer Unit Habitat Restoration Project (Grantee: River Partners).** Awarded in June 2022, this project is designed to replace invasive plant populations and bare ground with self-sustaining native vegetation that will provide high quality wildlife habitat, sequester carbon, and create local employment and recreational opportunities. Field trials incorporated in the Phase 1 Project will further refine techniques for the remaining phases and future additional landscape-scale restoration along the Alamo River. The project began with the grantee completing surveys of project fields, submitted permit applications, and collecting soil samples to calibrate a field preparation soil amendment application.

Looking Ahead

CDFW released an ongoing solicitation in late 2022 that includes a single application for multiple funding sources. Starting in Summer of 2023, additional Proposition 1 funding was made available under this rolling solicitation and the program continues to include a prioritization for projects to “Protect and Restore Cross-Border Urban Creeks and Watersheds.”

State Coastal Conservancy

The State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) has a 40+ year history of working side by side with land managers in the Tijuana River Valley to develop, plan, fund, implement, and manage conservation, restoration and public access projects. We continue to participate in multiple partnerships of state, federal and local stakeholders to achieve the strategic objectives of the Conservancy, as well as those of our partners. These partnerships include the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve Advisory Council, The Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team, The US-Mexico -Canada Agreement Eligible Public Entities Coordinating Group, and the Port of San Diego Environmental Advisory Council. The following is an update of SCC’s project efforts pertaining to the U.S. and Mexico border region for the 2022 calendar year. SCC staff contributes regularly to these projects.

Tijuana River Valley- Smuggler’s Gulch Improvements Project

In May of 2021, SCC granted \$10,000,000 to the County of San Diego to implement the Tijuana River Valley – Smuggler’s Gulch Improvements Project. The project consists of finalizing design and permitting followed by the installation of a permanent sediment basin and trash booms in a tributary to the Tijuana River, and improvements to an existing culvert

under Monument Road. When completed, the project is expected to reduce the movement of trash and sediment into the Tijuana River Valley and estuary as well as reduce localized flooding at Monument Road. This project is currently underway.

Tijuana River Valley Sediment Management Work Plan and Monitoring Program

In June of 2020, SCC granted \$500,000 to the City of Imperial Beach to prepare a sediment management work plan and monitoring program for the Tijuana River Valley. The project identified current and potential sources of excess sediment, as well as current and potential sediment re-use alternatives that might reduce management costs. It is a priority project of the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Strategy and will inform future capital projects as well as operations and maintenance of current and future projects. The project will be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program II Phase I

In 2017, SCC granted \$340,000 to Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Associations (SWIA) to support the preparation of a joint document Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for a project to restore roughly 80 acres of salt marsh within the estuary. This project is expected to wrap up in early 2023 before moving on to final design and permit acquisition. When implemented, this project will contribute to improved water quality and provide resilience to climate change.

Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration and Beneficial Re-use of Sediment Project

In 2017, SCC granted \$250,000 to the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) to prepare a restoration plan and conduct environmental review for the Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration Project. SCC augmented this grant with an additional \$250,000 in 2020. The Project consists of planning for the beneficial reuse of excess sediment excavated from flood control facilities and disturbed habitats in the Tijuana River Valley towards the reclamation of previously quarried slopes and restoration of the Nelson Sloan Quarry site. When implemented, the project will provide a cost-effective and more sustainable alternative for sediment management in the Tijuana River Valley. SCC staff are working with State Parks and San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a multi-jurisdictional operations agreement. This project is expected to be completed in 2023.

Ocean Protection Council

The Ocean Protection Council (OPC) has made multiple investments in the region and across San Diego County. Notable grant highlights made in 2022 include the following:

OPC granted funds totaling \$1,011,391 to the City of Oceanside for the implementation of the Loma Alta Slough Wetlands Enhancement Project, which will restore 5.8 acres of wetland habitat in Loma Alta Slough. This restoration project will provide multiple benefits by improving and restoring habitat for native species, providing increased habitat resiliency to sea-level rise, improving water quality in the Slough, and enhancing recreational enjoyment of the area. In addition to the restoration of nearshore and estuarine habitats, this project includes public access trails and educational signage features to promote community awareness of coastal wetland habitats and their ecological importance.

OPC augmented an existing grant with the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority (SCCWRP) to document the causal linkage of anthropogenic nutrient discharges to environmental effects, including net primary production, acidification, deoxygenation, and their biological consequences including the environmental effects of Mexico cross-border wastewater inputs. This project recognizes the California coast is vulnerable to ocean acidification and deoxygenation (OAH), which are exacerbated by global climate change. Decisions on management of local pollution sources, which can exacerbate these stressors, is a key line of inquiry to address OAH.

U.S. EPA

Border 2025

The U.S. EPA Pacific Southwest Office (Region 9) continued collaboration with CalEPA on the implementation of the five-year U.S.- Mexico Environmental Program, Border 2025, signed in May 2021. CalEPA is a co-chair of the California/Baja California Region, along with USEPA, Mexico's Secretariat for Environmental and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the State of Baja California's Secretary for Environment and Sustainable Development. Additional information can be found in the [Border 2025 Framework Document](#) or on our website: www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder.

Air Quality in the Border Region

The U.S. EPA awarded \$935,150 in Clean Air Act (CAA) funding to San Diego and Imperial County Air Districts and to the California Air Resources Board to do Border work. Some of this work included coordination of Border 2025 Task Force Meetings with partners and the public, the expansion of air quality monitoring in the Imperial-Mexicali airshed, and a project to estimate biomass burning in the San Diego-Tijuana airshed. Through the Clean School Bus (CSB) Program, U.S. EPA funded \$7,755,000 to replace a total of 21 school buses in three school districts with zero and low emission buses. In addition, \$2,615,928 in funding for community monitoring grants will be awarded to several Tribes in the Border Region and to other border agencies.

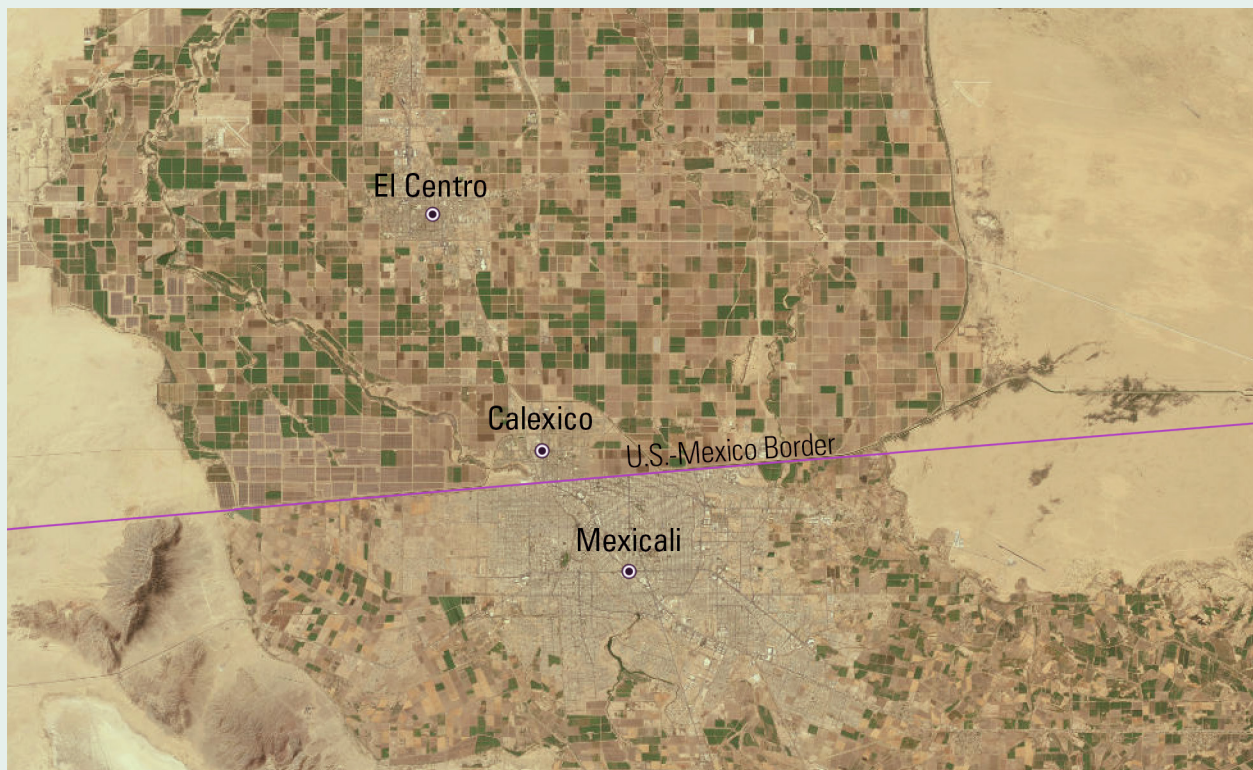


Figure 5. Map of Calexico, El Centro (Imperial Valley, CA), and Mexicali.

Finally, with EPA Border 2025 funding, the “Air and Health Surveillance System, Mexicali-Imperial Valley” project completed a GIS-based analysis of existing sensors monitoring PM2.5 data, as well as population information and health data from medical facilities in Mexicali/Imperial Valley to determine vulnerability of the population to guide public health outreach.

Water Quality

EPA worked on mitigating transboundary wastewater in the Tijuana River and coastal flows to address concerns about environmental and public health conditions. In July, U.S. and Mexican federal agency representatives signed the [Statement of Intent](#) which serves as a binational framework identifying a number of projects to stem the flow of transboundary pollution in the San Diego/Tijuana region. The second binational agreement, [Minute 328](#), was also signed by the US and Mexican sections of the International and Boundary Water Commissions (IBWC and CILA, respectively) on July 19, 2022 as the first step in binational implementation of the Statement of Intent framework and includes operations and maintenance cost-sharing for the proposed expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (ITP). Efforts include the development of sanitation projects to be constructed in San Diego and Tijuana using \$330 million dollars from the U.S. government, funded through United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and the Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP), and \$144 million dollars from the Mexican government.

Sustainable Materials Management, Waste Management, and Clean Sites

In collaboration with Border 2025, DTSC and EPA R9 held a series of hazardous waste workshops for cross-border hazardous waste transporters, recyclers, and enforcement authorities. Border 2025 also funded Proyecto Fronterizo de Educación Ambiental and the Environmental Health Coalition to conduct educational outreach, cleanup and monitoring activities in Goats Canyon and the Alamar River in Tijuana. Funding also included support to San Antonio Nécuá, Kumiai indigenous community in Baja California to strengthen waste management, including composting, while training leaders and families in sustainable materials management. Efforts also included DTSC’s implementation of the Consultative Mechanism by sharing information with EPA on current, new and closed border area hazardous waste facilities, spent lead acid battery and electronics recycling facilities in the counties of San Diego and Imperial.



Figure 6. A group of people surrounding a map pinned to the wall. They are engaged and pointing at various locations.



Figure 7. Matthew Maldonado from Comite Civico del Valle shares during the CJYF's panel discussion session about the work his organization is doing in Imperial Valley and ways youth can get involved in making an impact in their local community. Sep 23, 2022.

Tribal, Cross-Media, and Climate

EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) convened a Tribal Listening Session on April 7, 2022. Participation by Jane Nishida, OITA Assistant Administrator and R9 Regional Administrator (RA) Martha Guzman, provided the opportunity to meet with several U.S. Federally Recognized Tribes to discuss Tribal inclusion in the program, program goals, organization, environmental issues and tribal priorities. In addition, EPA partnered with the Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) at Northern Arizona University to hold a US-Mexico Border Region Climate Action workshop (March 22-23, 2022), engaging with 14 tribes.

In May, the EPA funded a grant to facilitate participation of six indigenous cultural specialists from the Kumeyaay (Kumiai), Paipai, and Cucapá communities in Baja California Mexico in the Southwestern Tribal Climate Change Summit: The Fire Within Us, in Pala, CA. The cultural specialists brought distinguished knowledge, and their participation strengthened the overall success of the Summit, through first-voice accounts, in their indigenous languages, of their ancestry, cultural beliefs and practices, and concerns about the adverse environmental and climate change impacts.



Figure 8. Map of Sister Cities at opposite sides of U.S. Mexico Border. A gradient of map boundaries show the varying sizes of population in border communities.

Environmental Justice

During Climate Week, EPA’s Environmental Justice (EJ) and Border Program, in collaboration with NADB, SEMARNAT and other key EPA program partners, coordinated to pilot EPA’s first hybrid, binational, and bilingual full-day Climate Justice Youth Forum where we empowered 11 youth from the Imperial Valley/Mexicali region to expand their knowledge and understanding of, and engagement in effective EJ/Climate Change (CC) remediation efforts through training and networking opportunities with local EJ/CC leaders and decision-makers.

Emergency Response and Preparedness

In 2022, the Border 2025 Program supported the implementation of the “Borderwide Study to Evaluate 6 Sister City Joint Contingency Plans (SCJCP) in the California/Baja California and Arizona/Sonora border regions. The effort developed a report on the status and quality of the SCJCPs for future use local emergency preparedness and response (EP&R) team leaders, Border 2025 Program partners, and key stakeholders as they implement the efforts outlined in the five-year plan. Activities also include the planning and implementation of two notification drills at four different sister-city locations. These test participants’ ability to make timely contact with cross border counterparts identified by the existing SCJCP.

Energy

Engagement with Border States

In 2022, CEC continued its cross-border engagement with the Mexican State of Baja California, through events organized by the Commission of the Californias and also through direct coordination between the CEC and its counterpart, the Baja California Energy Commission principally on electric system reliability and industrial efficiency. Baja California is interconnected to the California electric grid but is not interconnected with the Mexican national electric grid; CEC continues to work to foster cooperation with the Baja California Energy Commission critical to electric system reliability and decarbonization, and is in discussions with the Baja California Energy Commission on a potential MOU on clean energy cooperation. CEC has also been engaged in direct coordination with the government of the Mexican State of Sonora. Sonora is working with the Mexican Federal Government to position itself as a clean energy incubator amongst Mexican state governments; Sonora is particularly interested in renewables development to aid the decarbonization of the Western grid and in the near shoring of components critical to the clean energy transition. CEC is supportive of these ambitions and is in discussion with the State of Sonora on a potential MOU on clean energy cooperation.

Engagement with the State of Jalisco

Commissioner Andrew McAllister renewed the CEC's MOU on clean energy cooperation with the State of Jalisco in 2022. CEC continues to work with the State of Jalisco, UC-Davis, and the Autonomous University of Guadalajara on a lighting efficiency center in Jalisco modeled after the California Lighting Technology Center housed at UC-Davis (which itself was created in partnership with the CEC). As the transition away from incandescent lighting towards high-quality LED bulbs provides a cost effective means of producing massive energy savings, the center has potential to be an important driver of energy efficiency in Mexico and beyond.

Agriculture

International Trade Engagement

As part of CDFA's membership in the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) several trade promotional activities occurred to promote business engagement and trade with Mexico. Among these activities, was a trade mission to Mexico City and Monterrey (December 2022) that allowed business-to-business meetings and opportunities for CDFA and SADER officials to discuss ongoing collaboration activities. In addition to the trade mission – online retail supermarket promotions were conducted within the market as well as social media focused culinary activities, showcasing the use of California grown agricultural products. Through WUSATA, CDFA also leveraged participation in the annual ANTAD trade show in Guadalajara. Mexico is California's fifth largest agricultural export destination valued at more than \$1.2B. Leading agricultural exports include dairy, table grapes, tomatoes (processed) and beef.

Cooperating on Plant and Animal Health Issues

CDFA's Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division continues to work with border state counterparts in addressing plant pests of mutual concern. Collaboration includes the California-

Baja California Integration Group, which includes representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the agricultural commissioners' offices of Imperial and San Diego counties, and representatives from Mexico's local, state and national governments. In order to enhance pest prevention and plant health, Mexico continues to supply CDFA with biological control parasitoids (organisms to suppress pest species) for addressing an infestation of Pink Hibiscus Mealybug in Southern California. This effort allows for the continued commercial viability of several specialty crops in California.

CDFA also works closely with International Services to assist with delivery of Mexfly pupae from Guatemala through Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to the production facility in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico. In addition to assisting with pupae logistics, CDFA will occasionally host tours for International Services staff from Tijuana, provide materials and equipment, and exchange knowledge and information.

CDFA'S Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division continues to work with border state counterparts in addressing Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) and the disease that it vectors, Huanglongbing (HLB), a devastating disease that threatens citrus trees and citrus fruit production. California and Border States continue to mirror exclusion activities and share information related to ACP activities.

CDFA's Animal Health and Food Safety Division (AHFSS) continues to focus on animal health issues in collaboration with Mexico and U.S. border states. AHFSS staff continue to monitor for the incidence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and other diseases in Mexico for

situational awareness, particularly in case of detections near the U.S.-Mexico Border. In January 2022, AHFSS communicated with Baja California animal health officials regarding Mexican cattle straying across the border, working with them to repatriate approximately 50 breeding cattle which strayed from the Tecate area into San Diego County. Throughout 2022, AHFSS participated regularly with USDA and Baja California officials at four Baja California dairies as part of a binational collaborative tuberculosis vaccination project and assisted with validation of a new blood test for bovine tuberculosis.

Transportation

Impacts of Border Delays

Tens of thousands of personal and commercial vehicles travel between California and Baja California every day. These travelers often experience unpredictable border-crossing traffic congestion and delays. Wait times routinely exceed two hours at the seven existing POEs. These delays are not only frustrating for pedestrians and drivers, but they have a significant negative impact on the environment, economy, and overall quality of life of border communities.

Binational Transportation Investment

Communities at the border are amongst the most under-served communities, experiencing fewer benefits and a greater share of negative impacts associated with California's binational transportation system. To reduce impacts of border operations and congestion, Caltrans, in partnership with several U.S. and Mexico agencies, are implementing several innovative strategies and infrastructure improvements. These initiatives will help achieve California's climate goals, reduce air pollution emissions, address community impacts, improve the flow of people and goods, and foster better collaboration between the U.S. and Mexico. Key 2022 border improvements include the items below.

Advanced Technology Corridors Border Pilot Project

An important piece of California's overall strategy to combat vehicle congestion and reduce cross-border wait times is the usage of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). Such systems improve transportation safety and mobility and enhance productivity through the integration of advanced communications technologies into the transportation infrastructure and in vehicles. ITS encompass a broad range of wireless and wireline communications-based information and electronics technologies.

The purpose of using an integrated technological network for border crossing wait time data is to provide a continuous, reliable data source to support operations, security, management, and planning decisions at the border facilities, in the local community, in the region, and at the U.S. and Mexico national levels. The Border Wait Time System (BWTS) uses Intelligent Transportation System Technologies to inform drivers of wait times at various Ports of Entry in the region to assist with informed decision-making. The BWTS will satisfy the increasing demand for California-Mexico trade at existing border crossings.

The northbound BWTS reduces economic loss because of existing border wait times for both commercial and passenger vehicles. The fiber optic communications network portion of the project began construction in 2021 and has been ongoing throughout 2022. This will ultimately connect the border region to Caltrans Traffic Management Center. In addition, temporary readers were installed to collect data on commercial outbound border wait times. Both design and construction for this northbound BWTS were ongoing throughout the

entirety of 2022, and the system is set to be completed by December 2023.

The 2016 Sustainable Freight Action Plan identifies the importance of using such systems in the border region, and outlines the Advanced Technology Corridors Border Pilot Project, in which Caltrans will work with federal, state, regional, local, and Mexican partners to implement information management systems, innovative operation techniques, and enhanced traffic management technology. The pilot project will use a range of advanced technologies to improve safety and mobility, while reducing the environmental impact of transportation across the border. The pilot project aims to disseminate accurate wait time information to assist local, state, and federal agencies in border operations and traffic management. The development of a sustainable freight strategy for San Diego and Imperial counties that articulates a single vision for sustainable regional freight and outlines key regional freight projects and policies that will reduce emissions and foster economic competitiveness and trade was ongoing throughout 2022.

Air quality has been a concern for residents and workers near the international border in San Ysidro and Otay Mesa. CalEPA and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment have partnered with local non-profit Casa Familiar along with San Diego State University and the University of Washington to monitor air quality throughout San Ysidro. Using air quality monitors that Caltrans will install, data will be collected to monitor the effects of traffic, congestion, and commercial vehicles in the community.

Otay Mesa Port of Entry

To increase vehicle and pedestrian-processing capacity and to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection ability to conduct their respective missions, the U.S. General Service Administration is in the process of modernizing and expanding the existing port. Once complete, the project will provide the port with adequate operational space, reduced traffic congestion, and a more efficient layout for port operations and the traveling public. The Otay Mesa POE is the busiest commercial port in California. It processed more than \$21.3 billion in exports and \$37.9 billion in imports in fiscal year 2022. Additionally, the Otay Mesa POE processed more than 2.7 million pedestrians and more than 5.8 million vehicles. Caltrans continues to work closely with the federal government on the development of the POE's expansion.

Otay Mesa CHP Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility

The Otay Mesa Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility (CVEF) processed over 1 million trucks in 2022, making it the busiest CVEF in the California-Baja California region. This facility is being expanded with an additional lane and Weigh-in-Motion scale system to accommodate the anticipated increased volumes from the Otay Mesa POE modernization. In 2022, the Plans, Specifications, & Estimates phase was completed, and the construction contract was approved.

Otay Mesa East Port of Entry

A new 120-acre Otay Mesa East POE, and improvements to State Route 11 (SR-11), will improve mobility and reduce wait times at the California-Mexico border. Caltrans, in coordination with SANDAG, is working with local, State and federal stakeholders in the U.S. and Mexico to construct the SR-11/Otay Mesa East POE project along the San Diego-Tijuana border. The project includes the development of a toll road approaching the border crossing that will allow travelers to pay a fee to get to the border more quickly. The project's goal is to achieve a 20-minute average wait time using a variable tolling system that serves as both a revenue collection tool and a transportation demand management tool. Once completed, it will be California's first toll road that leads to a POE. To support cross-border activities at the future Otay Mesa East POE, this system will integrate security, dynamic tolling, and improved transportation operations. It will also include wait time and lane detection devices, communications modems, and new advance traffic controllers.

In August 2022, federal, state, and local officials in the U.S. and Mexico joined Caltrans and SANDAG to break ground for the new Otay Mesa East POE for the California-Baja California region. The event was met with great enthusiasm by officials on both sides of the border and reinforces each country's shared commitment to deliver on their promise of opening an innovative new border crossing. This commemorated the start of site preparations for the POE including mass grading, drainage, and utilities, beginning after a total of \$35.8 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant funding was awarded.

Multiple roadway connectors and interchanges were completed in 2022, which fill in previously missing links in the transportation network for this region. The southbound SR-125 to westbound SR-905 connector was opened to traffic in August 2022, and the new Siempre Viva Road interchange reached substantial completion in July of 2022. The Siempre Viva interchange will ultimately provide a direct connection to the Otay Mesa East POE and a new CHP CVEF enabling fast, predictable, and secure border crossings. These improvements provide a physical transition to and from SR-11 to the 15-lane toll plaza, existing Otay Mesa POE, and the future Otay Mesa East POE, improving mobility and access throughout the border region. The completion of this roadway infrastructure brings us one step closer towards completing the 20-year vision for an innovative new border crossing.

The binational Border Infrastructure Policy Group meets quarterly to track milestones and resolve any policy issues to advance the Otay Mesa East and other border projects. This sets the groundwork for a shared vision to set project delivery milestones, provide for the location of tolling facilities in the United States, and establish a framework for developing toll revenue sharing policies to finance the project on both sides of the border. On October 14, 2022, the SANDAG Board of Directors **unanimously approved** a binational Toll Revenue Sharing Agreement for collecting tolls at the Otay Mesa East Port of Entry. The revenue would be split evenly between the U.S. and Mexico, with an estimated \$3.4 billion for each country over the next four decades.

Landscaping Project

The construction of a landscaping improvements project began in September 2022. The project intends to fulfill and complete the environmental mitigation stated in the environmental document for SR 905 and address the lack of highway planting and beautification of this key gateway to California.

Calexico West Land Port of Entry Modernization and Expansion Project

The \$418 million Calexico West Land Port of Entry Modernization and Expansion Project will support CBP and other federal agencies' mission requirements by expanding non-commercial vehicle inspection processing and inspection capacity at the third busiest land POE in California. This POE links the agriculturally rich Imperial Valley to Mexicali, State of Baja California's capital with a population of over 1.0 million people. A total of \$99.7 million was proposed in the President's Fiscal Year 2021 budget request to Congress for the final construction of a new pedestrian processing building with an expanded number of northbound pedestrian inspection lanes, demolition of legacy facilities and significant earthwork. The anticipated completion date for Phase 2B of this project is Winter 2028.

Calexico East Expansion Project

The Calexico East expansion project proposes to widen the off-system bridge over the All-American Canal at the U.S.- Mexico border approximately 0.7 miles south of State Route 7. The project will widen the bridge on its east side to minimize traffic impacts during construction and reduce construction costs; add four northbound lanes, two commercial vehicle lanes and two passenger vehicle lanes; the existing northbound pedestrian walkway will be shifted to the west to facilitate the addition of the two new northbound passenger vehicle lanes; and add new concrete barriers and minor modifications to existing landscaping, drainage, signage, and lighting. Construction for this project was ongoing throughout 2022, and the application for the presidential permit required to expand and operate this POE was submitted in December 2022.

San Diego – Imperial County Desert Line Feasibility Study

International commerce between Mexico and California relies heavily on commercial truck traffic resulting in a single mode freight system that is unsustainable, inefficient and with significant environmental impacts. The Desert Line would reduce truck traffic at ports of entry and reduce environmental and economic impacts due to commercial vehicles idling at the border. It would fill the gap that is impeded by the current limitations on the San Diego mainline. A proposed study would determine the feasibility of reinstating freight train services on the San Diego and Arizona Eastern “Desert Line” Railroad. The Desert Line is 150 miles of short-line railroad via Baja California, Mexico and through eastern San Diego County into Imperial County. The application for a \$440,000 State Planning and Research grant to conduct this study was submitted in 2022.

El Protector Program

The goal of the El Protector Program is to educate and encourage positive traffic safety behavior and to build better community relations between the community and law enforcement agencies. The driving force and focus of this program is the use of a CHP officer of Hispanic ancestry or officers that are bilingual and bicultural - known as the El Protector Program Coordinator. The coordinator organizes community events, provides traffic safety education presentations, and serves as a role model.

Figure 9. Calexico Bridge Widening



Health

California Department of Public Health, Office of Binational Border Health

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Office of Binational Border Health (OBBH) was legislatively mandated in 1999 by Assembly Bill 63 (Health & Safety Code 475) to facilitate cooperation between California and Mexico health officials and professionals to reduce the risk of disease in the California border region. The mission of OBBH is to facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration between California and Mexico health officials, health professionals, and communities to optimize border and binational health. OBBH has collaborated with partners on both sides of the border to address priority issues through collaborative projects, such as binational symposiums and epidemiology partnerships on public health issues of mutual interest with Mexico. More information about OBBH is available on their website: [CDPH-Office of Binational Border Health](#).

In 2022, the following OBBH projects are highlighted:

Monitor and Surveillance

Under the direction of the CDPH-Center for Infectious Diseases, OBBH follows the [Technical Guidelines for US-MX Coordination on Public Health Events of Mutual Interest](#) and focuses on enhancing the detection and response capabilities to infectious disease incidents and threats in the border region. During 2022, OBBH continued to monitor and investigate binational infectious disease cases and outbreaks in the border region. The Office worked collaboratively with state, local, and federal partners focused on the surveillance, monitoring, notification, and investigation of infectious disease cases and outbreaks, including COVID-19.

OBBH tracked approximately 2,648 binational cases reported by local health jurisdictions in CA, allowing for the implementation of binational U.S.-Mexico protocols for the exchange of epidemiological information and joint work with Mexico to take public health action. Such protocols include the United States-Mexico Coordination on Public Health Events of Mutual Interest & the Operational Protocol for Binational Communication and Coordination on Disease Notifications and Outbreaks. OBBH strengthened its long-standing collaboration with the Department of Epidemiology, Baja California Secretariat of Health. As part of these efforts, OBBH issued situational awareness reports and served as the liaison between Baja California and U.S. entities at the local, state, and federal level.

OBBH has continued to manage and coordinate the California Border Infectious Disease Program (CA-BIDS), a collaboration between CDPH, CDC, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, and the Imperial County Public Health Department. CA-BIDS activities focus on enhancing surveillance, laboratory testing, and reporting of urgent and routine infectious diseases in the border region. These include conducting surveillance for respiratory illness, such as influenza-like illness and COVID-19 like illness at sites located throughout the border region. Other BIDS surveillance activities include conducting binational surveillance for severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) at hospitals in Imperial County and Mexicali, Baja California.

Additionally, OBBH, in partnership with CA-BIDS, has collaborated with the CDC United States-Mexico Unit (USMU) and other border states to implement COVID-19 focused surveys in selected regions of the US-Mexico Border. The objectives of this project are as follows: 1) to understand cross-border mobility patterns, 2) better understand knowledge, attitudes, and practices among border crossers as it pertains to COVID-19, 3) gain better understanding of health care utilization patterns and evaluate the impact of health equity indicators on the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). Data collection took place at US-Mexico land ports of entry and for this project concluded in January 2022. Continued collaboration with USMU on the development of an updated survey instrument for a second phase of data collection, as well as a manuscript on the first phase's data took place throughout 2022.

Border Health Status Report to the Legislature

CDPH-OBBH continues to produce a "Border Health Status Report to the Legislature" that provides a summary of the general health status of the population living in the California southern border region. There are demographical, geographical, and health-related differences between the southern California border region when compared to non-border regions of California. The Border Health Status report summarizes the demographic information and health indicators including obesity, diabetes, suicide, tuberculosis (TB), sexually transmitted infections (STI's), HIV/AIDS, select vaccine-preventable diseases, and COVID-19. The report delineates the implications these diseases present for the California border region counties (i.e., San Diego and Imperial).

Advisory Group

OBBH convenes a voluntary statewide community advisory group twice a year to develop a strategic plan with goals for implementation, and to advise CDPH and the California members of the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission. The group of 12 members includes representatives from Los Angeles, San Diego, and Imperial counties' health departments, association of local health officers, local government, hospitals, health plans, community-based organizations, and universities. In 2022, two public meetings were held by the OBBH Advisory Group with discussion of OBBH's strategic plan and the office's role in the prevention, control, and mitigation of COVID-19 in the border region.

CDPH will continue to focus on border and binational communities through the efforts of border health programs.

Safety

Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) Program

OPSG funds in Imperial County are administered by the Imperial County Sheriff's Office, with El Centro Sector (ELC) having operational oversight. The program, which had a total of 14 participating agencies, includes the following law enforcement community:

- Imperial County Sheriff's Office
- California Highway Patrol–El Centro
- California Highway Patrol–Calexico
- California Highway Patrol–Winterhaven
- El Centro Police Department
- Brawley Police Department
- Calexico Police Department
- Imperial Police Department
- Calipatria Police Department
- Imperial County Probation Department
- Imperial County District Attorney's Office–Investigations
- Imperial County Narcotics Task Force
- Riverside County Sheriff's Department
- San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

The Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) operating in the ELC area of responsibility (AOR) are involved in a network of criminal activities, including smuggling migrants, currency, weapons, and narcotics. In the past, Imperial County has served as a heavily trafficked and preferred entry corridor for both human and narcotics traffickers. This was primarily due to the increase in border security in the San Diego Sector (SDC), the proximity of interstate and State Routes/highway systems to the international border, and the proximity of major metropolitan cities such as Los Angeles, California.

The goal of current and past collaboration between ELC and Imperial Valley OPSG partners has been making the operational environment hostile to TCOs by targeting their reliance on motor vehicles and travel corridors to smuggle their illicit cargo.

OPSG Accomplishments

During 2022, the Imperial County Sheriff’s Department (ICSO) and Friendly Forces conducted multiple highway enforcement operations along major travel corridors in the El Centro Sector AOR. These operations resulted in the seizure of approximately \$298,410 in bulk cash, 835 lbs. of methamphetamines, 48 lbs. of heroin, and removed 34 firearms from the hands of criminals. These enforcement operations supported border security efforts by advancing the common goal of disrupting and degrading the TCO activity in the El Center Sector. The 2022 OPSG Stats are show in the table below.

Category	Results
Mileage	138,103
Vehicle Stops	6,617
Citations	3,465
Prosecution Cases	73
Significant Seizures	32
Narcotic Cases	50
Marijuana (kg)	54.01
Cocaine (kg)	0.06
Methamphetamines (kg)	375.33
Heroin (kg)	22.06
Fentanyl (kg)	1.34
Other Narcotics (kg)	1.43
Currency Seized	\$298,410
Firearms Seized	34
Vehicles Seized	0

California Maritime Security Program

The California Maritime Security Program is responsible for maritime safety and security awareness for the State of California. It has assigned units throughout the state, including Sacramento, Northern and Southern California, focused on maritime recovery, security, and intelligence. These units collaborate with the United States Coast Guard (USCG), with all state security programs, as well as the United States Navy. They are permanent members of the USCG Sector Staff and coordinate with the State Threat Assessment Center (STAC) and the local fusion centers throughout the state. They are staff members of the USCG Command Staff at District 11, USCG Headquarters in Alameda, California.

The Cal OES Maritime Security Program continues to collaborate with USCG, the U.S. Navy, and local marine law enforcement, including San Diego County, Orange County, Los Angeles County, and San Francisco Bay Area/ Delta Region in joint operational efforts. They also continue participating as subject matter experts and observers, in full coordination with the USCG in marine training, meetings, and in some rare cases, in real-world operations with Mexico. Cal OES also continues to share best practices, lessons learned, and catastrophic plans with the Mexican Marine operators as they are part of the West Coast Seaboard.

Emergency Management

Cal OES/México Response

Cal OES collaborates with the 10 Mexican consulates in the state. These consulates serve as essential points of contact and information dissemination for the Mexican community residing in California, as well as for those who may be visiting or traveling through the state. In 2022, CalOES shared materials on disaster preparedness and situational reports regarding the wildfires in Siskiyou and Riverside counties, the September heatwave, and the earthquake in Humboldt county.

In efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 along the border region, Cal OES collaborated with the Mexican consulates and distributed over two million in personal protective equipment (PPE) to Mexican Consulates. In addition, the San Diego Consulate coordinated the delivery of PPE donations, which included N95 and surgical masks, to hospitals in Baja California.

Cal OES continued its bimonthly participation with California and Baja California border stakeholders on the Binational COVID-19 Conference Call to share information on COVID-19 needs, efforts, and responses.

In September 2022, Hurricane Kay impacted a sparsely populated peninsula on Mexico's Pacific coast before weakening into a tropical storm as it traveled to Southern California. Cal OES

maintained daily communication with their Civil Protection counterparts in Baja California and Baja California Sur to collect situational information.

Cal OES monitors and collaborates with the International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC) on reporting raw sewage spills discharging into the Tijuana River, which has the potential to arrive at the International Boundary or any other location along the international border. In 2022, the California State Warning Center received 18 spill incident notifications from the IBWC and followed notification protocols by notifying all U.S. stakeholders.

Commission of the Californias (COMCAL)

On September 14, 2022, Cal OES joined other state agencies from California, Baja California, and Baja California Sur for the first time since the Commission of the California's (COMCAL) reestablishment in 2019 and met with counterparts to discuss areas of collaboration and efforts on Zero Emission Vehicles.

Binational Tabletop Exercise (TTX) of Barrett Dam and the Tijuana River Watershed

On November 6, 2022, Cal OES participated in a virtual Binational Tabletop Exercise (TTX), with U.S. and Mexican stakeholders on the rupture of the Barrett Dam and Tijuana River Watershed. The purpose of the exercise was to test cross-border communication and validate the Barrett Dam Emergency Action Plan and Emergency Response Plan. This is an effort led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers aimed at strengthening binational collaboration and communication along the border.

Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG)

Cal OES, along with officials from federal, state, local, and tribal public safety agencies, continues to participate in the Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG) to discuss emergency communication efforts concerning terrorist threats, hazmat incidents, natural disasters, border violence, escapes and evasions, medical emergencies, and cross-border interference. The SWBCWG meets quarterly to provide opportunities to discuss ongoing emergency communication efforts and identify communications gaps along the border.

9-1-1 Emergency Communications Branch, Public Safety Answering Point with Mexico

Cal OES collaborates with public safety agencies in the state to provide California citizens and visitors with the best emergency services available. Cal OES Public Safety Communications 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Branch assists local public safety answering points (PSAP) with administration and funding. This allows PSAPs to provide effective telephone access to emergency services for all 9-1-1 calls and the operation of the 9-1-1 system.

Cal OES works closely with four PSAPs in San Diego and Imperial Counties, which interact daily with Mexico to assist with the 9-1-1 calls originating within Mexico or from Mexican citizens who reside and/or work in bordering cities and towns within California. The administrative and funding support of this Cal OES-PSAP partnership

allows Cal OES to continue supporting and promoting these collaboration efforts with Mexico.

The city of San Diego has a resident population of 1,400,000 people, not counting tourists or people who commute from the surrounding areas. The city of Tijuana, directly across the border, has a population of 1,900,000 people. It is estimated that hundreds of 9-1-1 calls are routed or transferred across the border every week. Many of these calls are misrouted to the wrong country due to the current limitations of cellular 9-1-1 routing. Next Generation 9-1-1 will geospatially route those calls, drastically reducing the number of calls that are mistakenly sent over the borders. Cal OES continues to work with the 9-1-1 professionals in Mexico in order to ensure that our systems are compatible, and investigate how to reduce the number of misrouted calls, and build the capabilities needed to transfer a 911 caller to the correct PSAP when help is needed.

Listos California

Through ongoing support from California Governor Gavin Newsom and the State Legislature, Listos California bolsters California's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events.

Listos California leverages a grassroots field strategy partnering with over 100 local trusted messengers, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), federally recognized Tribal Nations in California, and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to help prioritize equity in protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and populations.

Since its launch in 2019, Listos California Partners reached over 5 million individuals through community-focused outreach events. Additionally, Listos California has

created over 130+ free online materials available in 20+ languages to promote disaster preparedness. The materials housed in the resource hub on the Listos California website provide culturally competent, accessible, in-language information to advance a new culture of disaster preparedness.

Unified Border Coordination Group

The State of California established the Unified Border Coordination Group (UBCG) in March 2021. The UBCG formed an Incident Management Team (IMT) that consisted of CalOES, California Department of Social Services, Cal Health and Human Services, Emergency Medical Service Authority, and California Department of Public Health who provided humanitarian assistance to asylum-seeking migrants entering California via the Mexico border. In 2022, the UBCG IMT continued to support the counties of San Diego, Imperial, and Riverside alongside local, state, and federal partners, as well as four NGOs. The mission provided COVID testing, vaccinations, medical screening, case management, and on-ward travel assistance so that migrants could reach their intended destination. Additionally, Cal OES attended the Border Alliance calls sponsored by Save the Children that focus on the Southwest Border.

On September 31, 2023, the UBCG will dissolve and return to a program supporting humanitarian assistance led by NGOs and supported by CDSS. The mission proudly assisted almost 500,000 asylum-seeking migrants entering the U.S.

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Appendix A: Trade Statistics with Mexico

Figure 1. Trade Statistics with Mexico³

(Billions of U.S. dollars)	2021	2022	% Change
U.S. Exports to Mexico	276.45	324.31	+17.3%
CA Exports to Mexico	27.23	30.78	+13.0%
U.S. Imports from Mexico	384.70	454.77	+18.2%
CA Imports from Mexico	57.66	60.48	+4.9%
U.S. Total Trade with Mexico	661.16	779.08	+17.8%
CA Total Trade with Mexico	84.89	91.25	+7.5%

Appendix B: Additional Air Quality Efforts

Enforcement

In 2022, enforcement efforts resulted in CARB reaching a [settlement with BG Trucking, Inc.](#), located in Calexico, in the amount of \$86,000, for failing to meet the applicable smoke testing requirements for most of the heavy-duty diesel vehicles in its fleet. CARB also reached a [settlement with Sea World San Diego](#) in the amount of \$13,740 for the company's violations under CARB's Refrigerant Management Program (RMP), demonstrating CARB's commitment to reduce emissions and improve air quality in the border region. The RMP is designed to reduce emissions from high-global warming potential ([high-GWP](#)) refrigerants from leaky stationary, non-residential refrigeration equipment.

The Portable Emission Acquisition System (PEAQS) is an emission screening system that obtains a real-time snapshot of each truck's exhaust emissions—including black carbon, carbon dioxide, and oxides of nitrogen (NOx)—as it passes through the device's detection area. CARB's Enforcement Division deployed PEAQS six times in the border communities during 2022. In Otay Mesa, PEAQS screened 3,115 heavy-duty diesel vehicles (HDDV) resulting in 70 inspections and 40 citations. In Calexico, PEAQS screened 704 HDDVs resulting in 28 inspections and 16 citations.

To help communities better understand CARB's enforcement efforts, provide

community members a user-friendly way to access CARB enforcement information, and to facilitate the development of community emission reduction programs, CARB's Enforcement Division developed the [Enforcement Data Visualization System \(EDVS\)](#) for users to assess CARB's enforcement activities across the state, including field inspections, case settlements, and Supplemental Environmental Projects on a map interface. EDVS launched the website and began making the enforcement data available on a quarterly basis in late 2022. CARB has begun to introduce and share this data tool with communities in the border region to provide for transparency on our enforcement efforts there.

CARB's [Supplemental Environmental Project \(SEP\)](#) policy allows community-based projects to be funded from a portion of the penalties received during case settlements, and can improve public health, reduce pollution, increase environmental compliance, and bring awareness to communities most burdened by environmental harm. Currently, SEP funds have been used to sustain an existing 12 air monitor network along the California-Mexico border. The air monitors measure NOx, particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5), carbon monoxide (CO), and ozone (O3) and relay real-time data to community members via an online platform. Additionally, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) received SEP funding to install and maintain air filtration systems as well as an electronic flag program in Calexico and El Centro schools.

Community Air Protection Program

In October 2022, the ICAPCD submitted a recommendation to CARB to select the [North Imperial Phase 1 \(Imperial North-End\)](#) community, consisting of the Westmorland, Brawley, and Calipatria communities, to develop a CERP and CAMP. The Imperial North-End community shares similar air quality concerns with the communities of Eastern Coachella Valley and the Imperial Corridor, such as agriculture equipment and practices, unpaved roads, heavy-duty vehicles, and issues with the Salton Sea. Air quality improvements in this community are anticipated to benefit other surrounding communities.

CARB continues to support the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and [the Eastern Coachella Valley](#) community steering committee in their implementation of the [Community Emissions Reduction Program \(CERP\)](#) and [Community Air Monitoring Plan \(CAMP\)](#) approved by the CARB Board in 2019. Since implementation began, \$1 million in Community Air Protection incentive funds have been allocated for community-identified projects which include installing home air filtration and purifier systems, and \$4.57 million towards road paving projects. Collaboration with other agencies, such as the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), have resulted in the identification and prioritization of commonly used pesticides in the Eastern Coachella Valley. CARB conducted air monitoring throughout the community close to sensitive receptors and pesticide application areas during the high-use period from November 2022 through February 2023. CARB, DPR, and OEHHA

are currently reviewing the pesticide air monitoring results to address community concerns about pesticide emissions and exposures.

Air Monitoring

2022 marked the 8th year that a community-based PM sensor was collocated at CARB's Calexico air monitoring station, the longest continuous run in CARB's air monitoring network. In 2015, almost a year before Purple Air PM sensors were commercially available, Comité Civico del Valle approached CARB with a request to collocate a Dylos sensor at the Calexico air monitoring site to complement the growing IVAN network. This collocation provides a basis for comparison of the sensor technology against regulatory PM monitors, to improve sensor performance and track their long-term effectiveness.

During 2022, CARB completed gaseous analyzer calibration training to new ICAPCD monitoring staff. District staff received hands on instruction and support in a capacity building effort to assume independent quality control calibrations of O3, NOx, and dilution systems. Training events at the Niland and Westmorland monitoring stations enabled district staff to ultimately complete biannual calibrations on analyzers at the El Centro monitoring station.

In March 2022, CARB staff completed a project that assisted the City of Mexicali in the development of a Purple Air sensor correction factor for their network, based on the seasons. CARB, in coordination with the City of Mexicali, established a 50 PM low-cost sensor network in 2018 and worked with the City of Mexicali and project partners to develop a correction factor, leveraging two regulatory PM monitors within the network. Six Purple Air sensors were deployed, three at

each regulatory site for comparison to regulatory data.

Air Quality Planning and Border 2025 Funded Projects

In September 2022, CARB completed work on an emissions inventory study to gather information on vehicle fleet characteristics and emissions in Northern Baja California, using roadside remote sensing measurements and data collection. This study found that vehicles operating legally in Mexico have emissions that are 1-2 times higher than California-registered vehicles. For vehicles operating illegally in Mexico (and not registered in California), emissions ranged between 2.8-3.5 times higher than California-registered vehicles.

In 2022, CARB also wrapped up a two-year PM2.5 measurement campaign in Mexicali aimed at understanding sources of PM2.5 in the Imperial-Mexicali border area. Data analyses are ongoing, and a final project report is expected to be completed at the end of 2023.

Investments and Grants in the Border Region

In 2022, CARB awarded approximately \$600,000 in **Community Air Grants** to two community-based partners (Casa Familiar and Comité Civico del Valle) to sustain and advance their community air monitoring efforts in the border region.

Appendix C: Additional Water Advancements in 2022

San Diego Water Board Engagement

The San Diego Water Board hosted tours of the Tijuana River Valley and Estuary and border pollution sites for over 100 people for the national Center for Watershed Protection conference, state, federal and local legislative staff, non-governmental organizations, and concerned citizens.

In 2022, the San Diego led a stakeholder coalition in meetings and communications with U.S. EPA and U.S. IBWC regarding the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision approved on June 9, 2023.

Border Field State Park

Goat Canyon Sediment Basin

CA State Parks continued annual management of the Goat Canyon Sediment Basins (GCSB). During this reporting period efforts focused on material testing, excavation, and haul-off removal activities for approximately 20,000 cubic yards of material captured by this facility. The deposition material for this season's work is being beneficially reused for concrete and asphalt production, and also nursery/landscape products. CSP has an approved annual maintenance budget of \$1,889,000 for the GCSB; costs to maintain this facility have increased dramatically in the last 5 years and this allocation now covers costs for approximately 30% of the GCSB capture capacity of 60,000 cubic yards. Additionally, a backlog of approximately 50,000 cubic yards of sediment remains stockpiled on the GCSP processing pad; removal of this material is estimated to cost approximately \$5,000,000.

Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration and Beneficial Re-use of Sediment Project

CA State Parks served as CEQA lead agency for an Environmental Impact Report for the Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration and Beneficial Re-use of Sediment Project. The Project consists of the beneficial reuse of excess sediment excavated from flood control facilities and disturbed habitats in the Tijuana River Valley towards the reclamation of previously quarried slopes and restoration of the Nelson Sloan Quarry site to close to historic (i.e., pre-quarry operations) topography and habitat. Over an approximately 10- to 15-year period, up to 1,000,000 cubic yards of excess sediment extracted from flood control facilities and habitat restoration projects managed by federal, state, and local agencies in the river valley that are currently hauled off site to area landfills or construction projects would instead be characterized and hauled to the Project site for sorting and placement.

The project will provide a cost-effective and more sustainable alternative for sediment management in the Tijuana River Valley, when compared to transporting sediment off-site. CA State Parks and San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation are currently working together to obtain regulatory permits, and on the development of a multi-jurisdictional operations agreement.

This phase of environmental review is funded through three grant allocations from the State of California- one from CA Department of Water Resources (via San Diego County Water Authority) and the other two through the State Coastal Conservancy. Implementation, and operations and maintenance funding is needed. [Additional information](#) for this project is available.

Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program II Phase I

The Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Associations (SWIA) served as the project manager for design and the CEQA/NEPA review for the [Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program II Phase I \(TETRP II Phase\) Project](#). With CA State Parks (CEQA Lead Agency), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (NEPA Lead Agency) and in partnership with the CA Coastal Conservancy, a joint document Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement was advanced for a project to restore roughly 80 acres of salt marsh within the TRNERR. This phase of environmental review is funded through grants from the CA Wildlife Conservation Board and the CA Coastal Conservancy.

NOAA Marine Debris Program- Interception Technology (IIJA/BIL)

CA State Parks submitted a grant application to [NOAA Marine Debris Program \(NOAA-NOS-ORR-2022-2007199\)](#) which involves a request for approximately \$270,000 to improve the Goat Canyon Sediment Basin trash booms. We expect to access these funds in 2023.

NOAA Operations PAC Supplement

CA State Parks worked with NOAA Office for Coastal Management to apply for special funding requesting approximately \$70,000 to be used to purchase improved trash capture infrastructure for the Goat Canyon Sediment Basin. We expect to access these funds in 2023. The grant supplement complements the NOAA Marine Debris grant application for interception technology. Together, these requests will facilitate improvements to both upper and lower trash booms in the Goat Canyon Sediment Basins.

NOAA Marine Debris Program-Community Clean-up (USMCA): The Southwest Wetland Interpretive Association (SWIA) served as program lead for implementation of programs and projects in the TRNERR funded with the support of the NOAA Marine Debris Program. This grant involves approximately \$570,000 across three years focuses on the following goals:

- **Goal 1.**
Pilot a community-led circular economy approach through reuse and income generation.
- **Goal 2.**
Establish and implement a cross-border Marine Debris Leadership Academy
- **Goal 3.**
Improve binational flood emergency response and resilience.
- **Goal 4.**
Provide an exemplary model of land-based marine debris capture and characterization.
- **Goal 5.**
Protect and enhance beach, dune, high-marsh, and riverine environments.

Border Field SP Interpretation, Resilience and Access Improvements Project:

CA State Parks continued design efforts focused on rerouting Monument Road out of the flood plain and away from coastal flood zone. The project includes restoring sections of existing road to natural habitat, reconnecting hydrology, and providing year-round vehicular access to Monument Mesa at the southwestern corner of the park. Consultant contracts and work orders are secured to complete 50% design drawings for the project, and to initiate CEQA/NEPA review for the project. The effort also includes a specific focus on improvements to the day use area at Monument Mesa.

Wildfire and Forest Resilience Program:

CA State Parks provided funding to Border Field State Park through a special Wildfire and Forest Resilience Program. This effort will focus on the control of *Arundo donax* within Border Field State Park. *Arundo donax* is an aggressive non-native invasive plant found throughout the Tijuana River Valley; it is known to impair habitat quality.

NERRS Science Collaborative:

The TRNERR Program Managers collaborated on the development and submittal of a \$10,000 capacity building grant from the NERRS Science Collaborative, focusing on capacity building for programs and projects in the context of a 'tri-national' watershed (U.S. Mexico, Kumeyaay). The award was granted to the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association.

Tijuana River Valley Sediment Management Plan:

TRNERR staff contributed to the technical advisory committee and/or review for elements of [Tijuana River Valley Sediment Management Plan](#). This effort is led by the City of Imperial Beach, with consultant Dudek, and funded by the State Coastal Conservancy. The plan was finalized during this reporting period.

The logo consists of a vertical teal bar on the left and a dark green horizontal bar on the right, forming an L-shape.

California Environmental Protection Agency

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