

## ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAMS



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Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project • 213.576.6614 • [www.smbay.org](http://www.smbay.org) • March 2001

### SANTA MONICA BAY

*Santa Monica Bay is one of the country's most important natural resources, providing the two million-plus humans who live in its watershed with a mild climate, aesthetic beauty, recreation, food, fresh oxygen, and commercial opportunities. It teems with life, serving as home to over 5000 species of birds, fish, mammals, plants and other wildlife—some of the largest and smallest organisms on Earth. Its 50 miles of coastline provide recreational opportunities for an estimated 45 million visitors each year—more than 500,000 a day at the height of summer. Santa Monica Bay's natural boundaries extend from Point Dume to Palos Verdes Point.*

#### FACTS ABOUT THE ESTUARY

- The bay generates \$1.08 billion annually for the economy of Southern California.
- Nearly 10 million people live within an hour's drive of Santa Monica Bay.
- Santa Monica Bay beaches average 40–50 million visits per year.
- As many as 5.5 million sport fishing trips are made annually in bay waters.
- The bay boasts the world's largest man-made small craft harbor, the 6,000 slip Marina del Rey.

## HEALTH OF THE ESTUARY

- Over 5,000 different species of plants and animals call the bay home including the southernmost run of endangered steelhead trout.
- Tumors and other diseases once commonly found on animals are now rarely observed.
- Recreational fishing industries remain stable, although the catch has declined since 1980.
- Average concentration of DDT and PCBs in most seafood species have fallen to near or below the level of concern for human consumption.
- The number of days per year during which at least one beach is closed due to sewage spills has greatly decreased.
- Development has destroyed more than 95 percent of the bay's historic coastal wetlands and degraded the remaining 5 percent, putting some species in danger of local extinction.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE ESTUARY PROGRAM

- Completed an epidemiological study to assess the human health risks of swimming in runoff-contaminated waters.
- Helped develop municipal storm water permits for Los Angeles County and its 85 cities.
- Provided more than \$450,000 to community groups, local governments, and schools to educate and inspire people of all ages to appreciate and take care of Santa Monica Bay.
- Developed an integrated, comprehensive bay-wide monitoring program and funded an in-depth study to assess the loading of toxic air pollutants to the watershed.
- Spearheaded efforts to restore the Zuma Lagoon and Wetland, the first coastal freshwater wetland restoration project in the area.
- Secured \$25 million in bond financing from the state to implement the Bay Restoration Plan.

### *Fish Tacos, Bay Style*

3 limes, cut into wedges  
3/4 lbs white fish, cut into 1-1/2 inch squares  
1 package small corn tortillas  
1 cup vegetable oil  
Toppings  
1 avocado, sliced  
1 red onion, thinly sliced and diced  
1 head cabbage, shredded  
White sauce (1 cup sour cream mixed with 1/4 cup milk)  
Pico de Gallo  
2 large tomatoes, diced  
1 green onion bunch, thinly sliced  
2 jalapeno chillies, seeded, diced  
2 tbl olive oil  
1 tbl red wine vinegar  
Combine tomatoes, green onions, jalapenos, olive oil and red wine vinegar in a bowl. Season to taste with salt. (Can be prepared up to 6 hours ahead of time.)

Batter  
Mix together 1-1/4 cups flour and 1 tsp baking powder; stir in 3/4 cup beer, 1 egg, and 1/4 tsp salt in a large bowl.  
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat vegetable oil in skillet. When sufficiently hot, dip fish squares into batter (coating both sides), and deep fry for approximately 56 minutes, or until thoroughly cooked through. Drain on paper towels before serving. Place tortillas on the oven rack for 23 minutes or until warm and soft before serving.  
In separate bowls, set out shredded cabbage, onions, sliced avocados, limes, white sauce and Pico de Gallo. Use 2 tortillas for each taco created (you really do need two, one on top of the other). Place 34 fish nuggets on double stacked tortillas and assemble using some or all of the toppings. Lastly, squeeze lime juice from wedges over the top. Enjoy!