

# Coast cleanup is mission of King Harbor task force

Volunteers spent a year looking at ways to improve water quality and put their ideas in 114-page report.

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DAILY BREEZE

They met for a year to pinpoint any potential threat to the waters in and around Redondo Beach's King Harbor: red tides, urban runoff, unhealthy levels of bacteria.

For some problems, the solutions seem simple. In other instances, achieving a cleaner coastline could prove more complex.

Now, it's up to Redondo Beach staff members and city leaders to pick and choose from the recommendations outlined in a 114-page report by the Water Quality Task Force -- a volunteer group formed shortly after Mayor Mike Gin was elected last year.

The committee of boaters, residents, business leaders and biologists finished work in June and presented its findings last week to the City Council.

The report covered existing conditions, goals, grant options and ways to educate the community. As committee member Ann Dalkey said, something as simple as telling homeowners about the dangers of fertilizing and overwatering would be a small but important step.

"We knew that our recommendations would range from very simple to implement to very difficult," said Dalkey, a city resident who works as director of science programs for the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy.

"We wanted to hit everything we could think of," she said. "The group was a very dedicated group and we looked at everything we could look at in a limited time."

For the yearlong study, the committee split into subgroups to focus on different areas.

Dalkey's team, for example, laid out long-term water quality goals, including the creation of a clean waterfront plan and educational literature for visitors and boaters. Her group also suggests the city study ways for improving harbor circulation, including the use of power plant intake lines as conduits for moving water.

Some suggestions will move through the city bureaucracy faster than others.

In the coming months, City Manager Bill Workman said his staff will prepare a matrix with all of the recommendations and start evaluating the city's options.

Ideas that involve policy discussions -- such as expanding street sweeping -- will need to be weighed by the council or various commissions, he said.

Others might require grants or approval from different agencies -- such as changes to King Harbor, which would require cooperation from the Army Corps of Engineers, the report states.

Some strategies have already been tested. When last year's smelly red tides killed aquatic life across the waterfront, a volunteer force mobilized scoop buckets of decaying fish from the water.

One subgroup suggests the city start an official emergency response program that would bring a volunteer crew together if the red tide returns.

Gin, who with Councilman Chris Cagle served as the group's city representatives, said he believes this is the first time a committee tackled such a far-ranging topic and "reached out and engaged people in the community."

But he also said to consider what's at stake.

"Our ocean and our harbor is an invaluable community asset," Gin said. "We need to do everything that we can to protect our resource."