

July 25, 2025

## Regional Beach Sand Project III: Phase 1

### Overview

San Diego is internationally recognized for its striking coastline and picturesque beaches, which serve as major drivers of tourism, while also providing essential protection for the region's coastal infrastructure.

SANDAG has led two regional beach nourishment projects in 2001 and 2012 placing a total of 3.6 million cubic yards of sand on the region's beaches (Attachment 1). At the request of the coastal jurisdictions, SANDAG has developed the necessary steps and funding requirements for a third Regional Beach Sand Project (RBSP III).

SANDAG staff will present a summary of the Feasibility Study and Economic Analysis (i.e., planning studies) and highlight the interregional collaboration between Orange and San Diego counties to advance RBSP III. Additionally, representatives from Orange County will present on their local and regional nourishment efforts.

### Action: Information

The Borders Committee will be briefed on the draft results of the Feasibility Study and Economic Analysis for the Regional Beach Sand Project III, Phase 1.

### Fiscal Impact:

None. The planning studies for Regional Beach Sand Project III have been funded by the ten participating local jurisdictions. Grants are being sought for future phases.

### Schedule/Scope Impact:

The final Feasibility Study and Economic Analysis will be completed and made available August 2025.

### Key Considerations

- The planning studies covers all eight coastal cities in the San Diego region and two Orange County cities (San Clemente and Dana Point) that are within the Oceanside littoral cell<sup>1</sup> (Attachment 2). Recognizing SANDAG's success in prior beach nourishment efforts, the Orange County cities requested to participate in RBSP III and are providing their fair share of costs to fund the planning studies.
- A total of 5,853,000 cubic yards (CY) is proposed for RBSP III with 4,303,000 CY to be placed on 15 beaches in San Diego and 1,550,000 CY to be placed on 3 beaches in Orange County. Receiver sites and volumes were based upon previous nourishment efforts and jurisdictional input (Attachment 3). In total, the draft estimate for Construction and Post-Monitoring for RBSP III, including hard and soft costs, and contingency, is \$260 million.
- The Economic Analysis Report prepared for RBSP III follows federal standards. The combined Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) for RBSP III was 5.7, which is well above the greater than 1 cost effectiveness requirement.
- SANDAG received over 200 comments on the draft Feasibility Study and Economic Report from the participating coastal cities after a 45-day review period. Over the next few weeks, the project team will work on incorporating the comments received and will finalize the report in August.
- SANDAG has applied to the State of California's Division of Boating and Waterways for a Public Beach Restoration grant requesting \$5,525,000 to fund the next phase of the RBSP III,

<sup>1</sup> A littoral cell is self-contained compartment within which sand circulates. The San Diego region has three littoral cells that stretch from Dana Point to the U.S.- Mexico border and referred to as the Oceanside, Mission Bay and Silver Strand littoral cells

Environmental Permitting and Design. SANDAG is also working to get federal appropriations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to investigate expanding their current nourishment efforts to cover more beaches in San Diego and Orange County and to include them in a cycle of nourishment efforts over the next 50 years.

- In late 2024, the five counties of southern California formed the Southern California Beach Sand Collaborative to collaborate on beach nourishment and shoreline management issues from Point Conception to the U.S.-Mexican border. This group has been meeting quarterly to discuss regional challenges, funding opportunities, best practices and coordinated solutions for beach nourishment and shoreline management across Southern California.
- Southern Orange County is engaged in several collaborative beach nourishment and coastal protection projects, including: the USACE Coastal Storm Damage Reduction project and collaboration with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to place sand on beaches adjacent to the coastal rail line to add protection from erosion. Furthermore, the 2025 OCTA Grand Jury Report identified that the lack of a hopper dredge on the West Coast is a significant regional challenge that poses a major barrier to timely and cost-effective beach nourishment initiatives.

### **Next Steps**

The final Feasibility Study and Economic Analysis Report will be provided to participating coastal cities in San Diego and Orange County in August 2025. SANDAG will continue to collaborate with its interregional partners to pursue grant funding opportunities and collaborate on shoreline management efforts.

### ***Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning***

- Attachments:
1. Got Sand?
  2. Southern California Littoral Cells
  3. Receiver Sites Locations