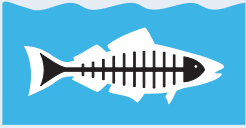


Heal the Bay

2021

**THE YEAR IN REVIEW
ANNUAL REPORT**





Heal the Bay

With the support of 20,000 active members and volunteers, Heal the Bay is the most recognized environmental nonprofit group in LA for a reason: We have been keeping California's coastal waters and watersheds safe, healthy, and clean since 1985.

Through science, advocacy, community action, and education, we mobilize Angelenos to bring about real progress by helping them engage in practical solutions.

Our passionate team conducts hundreds of beach and community cleanups each year, informing people about the root causes of pollution along the shorelines and in their neighborhoods. We advocate for strict water quality regulations that protect the health of both humans and the aquatic life who call local creeks, rivers, and the Santa Monica Bay home.

We operate the award-winning Heal the Bay Aquarium underneath the Santa Monica Pier, inspiring visitors to become stewards for the region's most important natural resource: clean water. We also educate and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards, with thousands of students joining us each year for hybrid learning experiences including school field trips, science-based classroom presentations, and community events.

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LEADERSHIP

In my five years as CEO of Heal the Bay, I have seen the biggest societal upheavals of my lifetime: the climate change emergency, the social justice movement, and the global pandemic.

The pandemic seems to be receding, but has left indelible marks and changed the ways we live and work. Justice has been an issue for generations, and the long-overdue renewed awareness and energy for change impacts everyone, including Heal the Bay. Climate change, which we work on tirelessly through our mission for clean and safe water, has truly become a crisis.

Heal the Bay evolved our ways of working to acknowledge these shifts in our world. We continue to increase accessibility by producing more digital content for education and advocacy. We prioritize clean water projects in neighborhoods that need them the most, working as Watershed Coordinators for the County's Safe, Clean Water Program, and upping our investment in community-led water infrastructure planning. We fight relentlessly to reduce disposable plastics, to protect people and environments from toxic trash and the fossil fuel industry that profits from it.

2021 was a year to reconnect with the people we serve. We re-opened Heal the Bay Aquarium to an eager public. Kids and adults alike missed our animals and educators as much as we missed them. Heal the Bay staff and volunteers also got back on the beaches, cleaning up trash to keep our ocean clean. Our decades of on-the-beach work continues to give credibility to our relentless pursuit of laws that reduce plastic trash: we pushed City, County and state lawmakers to go beyond bans of individual products and adopt comprehensive plastic-reduction policies in support of a circular economy.

Our science and policy staff were back in the field, testing the waters of the LA River, and

partnering with State Assemblymember Bloom to pass exciting legislation, AB1066. This is the grandchild of our landmark 1997 legislation, AB411, which required water quality testing at beaches in California and led to the amazing Beach Report Card that we have today. The new bill, AB1066, is a first step toward similar legislation for freshwater. It's necessary to protect people who swim, wade, fish, and kayak at the rivers and streams in California. The next step will be a follow-up bill to require the water quality testing we need to publish a River Report Card that is just as robust and easy-to-use as our Beach Report Card, further protecting California's water and the people and wildlife that rely on it.

Our outreach and communications team responded to the major sewage spill at Hyperion that put the health of thousands of beach users at risk. Fourteen million gallons of raw sewage overflowed into Santa Monica Bay, in mid-summer when our beaches were packed with people enjoying the ocean and cooling off from the city's heat. Heal the Bay worked with Hyperion staff to track the spill; we demanded increased water quality testing; and we vetted and shared the info with the public who were clamoring to understand what had happened and whether it was safe to get in the water. In the subsequent weeks and months we reviewed Hyperion's reports and data, and made recommendations to improve their processes and ensure this does not happen again.

Heal the Bay has weathered many challenges in 36 years, yet none on the scale of what we face today. These challenges mean we need to rethink our strategies and priorities, but they never stop us or derail us from our mission of safe, clean, and healthy waters. We are inspired to broaden our coalitions, expand our goals, and commit our hearts and minds to protecting people today and making a better future.



Shelley Luce
President and CEO
[@drshelleyluce](#)



OUR IMPACT



Heal the Bay sponsored-Assembly Bill 1066 passed with flying colors through the legislature. We firmly believe that inland water recreation areas, where people swim, boat, and wade in the water, should have the same health protections as coastal areas.



A suite of bills dubbed the California Circular Economy Package was introduced by a variety of California decision-makers. While not all of the bills made it through the harrowing process to become law, five did, and they mark some major wins for tackling plastic pollution and toxins in California's waters.



LA County's Safe, Clean Water Program contracted Heal the Bay as Watershed Coordinators for Central and South Santa Monica Bay. We hosted educational events for over 500 people about how stormwater can become an asset in our communities through equitable, nature-based, and multi-benefit solutions.



Heal the Bay's Nothin' But Sand public group cleanups restarted gradually. We celebrated Coastal Cleanup Day together again too with month-long activities focused on learning and advocacy. In total, 5,800 cleanup volunteers removed 111,000 pieces of trash and debris from Los Angeles County beaches, rivers, and neighborhoods this year.



Our Angler Outreach Program team was back in a big way. We spoke with 4,200 anglers on piers in the Greater Los Angeles area about seafood contamination and health tips to keep their families and friends safe from harm caused by the toxic legacy of PCBs and DDT chemical waste in the Santa Monica Bay.



Heal the Bay Aquarium created new initiatives that released 6 marine animals into the wild, including 1 critically endangered species. Our team of animal experts also rescued 101 animals from environmental emergencies in the ocean. Celebrating a baby boom, we had 52 marine animals born at our Aquarium.

2022: OUR VISION



GOAL 1

Protect public health with increased access to science-based water quality information for ocean, river, and stream water users.

How we're doing it: The River Report Card, Heal the Bay's public map-based tool for water quality at LA County's popular freshwater areas, is about to get a fresh upgrade. We've created the River Report Card Technical Advisory Committee, with experts representing Tribes, agencies, NGOs, and academia. We are going through a rigorous process to enhance our River Report Card by aligning the freshwater grading methodology with scientific standards as well as our well-known Beach Report Card's "A through F" grading system. We're also focusing on outreach, advocacy, and education at Heal the Bay Aquarium about the health and safety risks of poor water quality at local swimming holes.



GOAL 2

Champion equitable, multi-benefit, and nature-based solutions to address water quality and supply issues for the communities most impacted by climate change.

How we're doing it: For the first time ever, Heal the Bay is building a stormwater park in collaboration with LA City Councilman Curren Price Jr. and community members! The new community-designed, multi-benefit green space Inell Woods Park is coming to South LA this year. To keep raising awareness about nature-based solutions like this park, we're hosting workshops for South LA communities where we'll share climate-ready clean water projects that can be implemented. The success story of Inell Woods Park will be shared with Heal the Bay Aquarium visitors and volunteers across our programs, to foster a broader understanding about essential environmental and public health services that protect the most impacted communities from dangerous heat and flood effects caused by extreme weather. We can't talk about the dangers of the climate crisis without talking about the dangers of fossil fuels — the number one contributor to climate change. Our organization continues to advocate for an end to oil drilling in our ocean and neighborhoods locally and statewide through allyship and support of legislation and ordinances.



GOAL 3

Enhance ocean, river, and stream habitats by cultivating environmental stewardship and action for our local waters.

How we're doing it: Will 2022 be a pivotal year in the fight against plastic pollution? Yes—and our work includes an advocacy campaign, targeted at Southern California voters, in support of the statewide 2022 ballot measure (California Plastic Pollution Reduction and Recycling Act), to reduce plastic pollution in communities and aquatic environments. While we are set on passing comprehensive policies at the state level, we're not losing sight of the critical importance of local change. We're pushing the City of LA and LA County to greenlight comprehensive ordinances that address single-use plastic waste. Plastic isn't the only cause of harm to our environment, and Heal the Bay Aquarium is creating more community resources for habitat and wildlife restoration information while ramping up efforts in the rescue, rehab, and release of critically endangered species.



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We are so grateful for your generous contributions to Heal the Bay.

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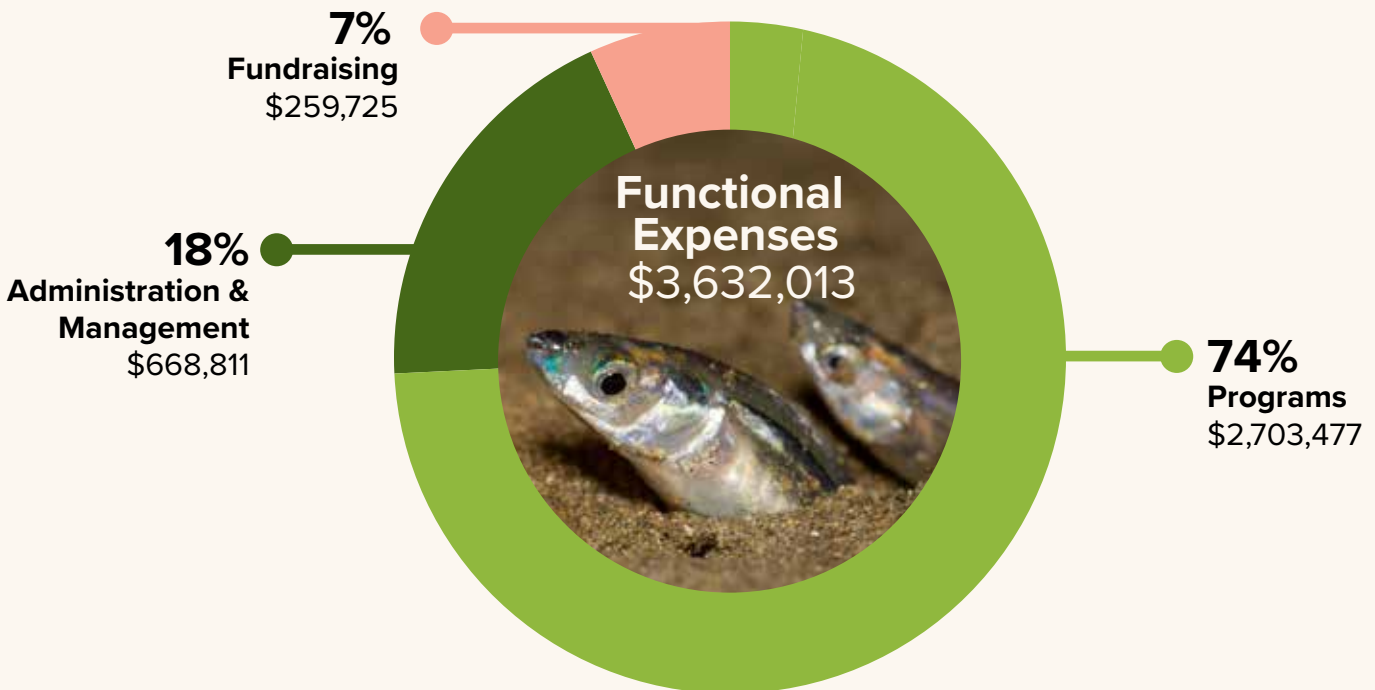
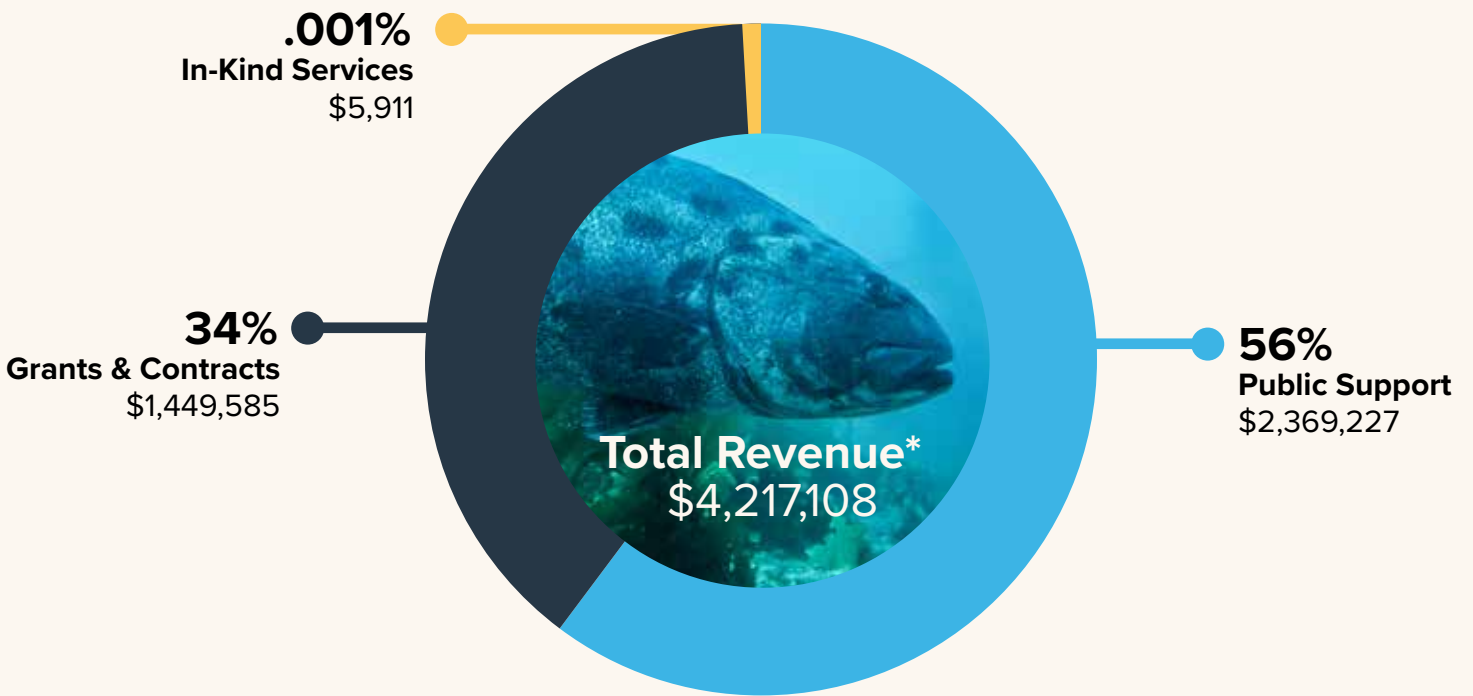
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*These gifts are part of an ongoing memorial for avid ocean swimmer, Scott Goldberg. As of April 2022, a total of \$24,293 was donated to Heal the Bay in his memory.

OUR FINANCIALS

2021 Fiscal Year



*A \$392,385 loan was secured through the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program in the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year, which was forgiven and recognized as revenue in the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year.



IN ACTION



1. Heal the Bay Aquarium exterior refresh
2. Storm Response Team after first flush
3. First-ever ONE Water Day event
4. Learning to surf at Nick Gabaldón Day
5. Release of the critically-endangered Giant Sea Bass
6. Sharks and rays feeding demonstration at Heal the Bay Aquarium
7. Baby shark (pup) is born at Heal the Bay Aquarium
8. Hyperion had a major sewage spill in the summer
9. Suits on the Sand group completes a cleanup (Photo by Danny Nguyen)
10. Historic press day for Beach Report Card