



Desal Plant Poses Environmental Risks to Coastal Ecosystem

The Cal Am desalination plant, currently proposed to be located in the city of Marina, poses significant impacts to the marine and terrestrial biological resources of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, as well as environmental impacts to the broader Monterey Peninsula through increased greenhouse gas emissions and coastal erosion.

PROJECT DIRECTLY IMPACTS THE MARINE SANCTUARY

The Marine Sanctuary hosts one of the highest levels of marine biodiversity in the world, including:

- 27 endangered species
- 34 species of marine mammals
- Over 180 species of seabirds and shorebirds
- At least 525 fish species
- 4 sea turtle species
- 31 different invertebrate phyla
- 450 species of marine algae

The Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Federal Endangered Species Act protect numerous species in the proposed project area.



FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS VIOLATED BY PROJECT

FEDERAL LAWS

National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA)

Prohibits a person from destroying, causing the loss of, or injuring any sanctuary resource managed under law or regulations for that sanctuary.

Restricts discharge of brine effluent.

Magnuson-Stevens Conservation and Management Act ("Magnuson Act")

Requires all federal agencies to protect areas designated as "Essential Fish Habitat."

Monterey Bay is designated as such under four Fishery Management Plans.

STATE LAWS

California Endangered Species Act

Marine Life Protection Act

Marine Life Management Act

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impacts to Dunes and Coastal Habitat

Construction and operation of the Cal Am slant wells and facilities, proposed to be sited in Marina's sensitive coastal habitat, would likely accelerate coastal erosion and dune retreat along Marina's beaches.

The dunes within the project area serve as a habitat to the Western Snowy Plover, a federally protected coastal bird native to the area. The project will permanently disturb up to six acres of central dune scrub and ice plant maps, which would result in a permanent loss of habitat for the Plover and other special-status species.

Increased Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Desalination plants and their associated facilities are well known for their highly intensive use of electricity.

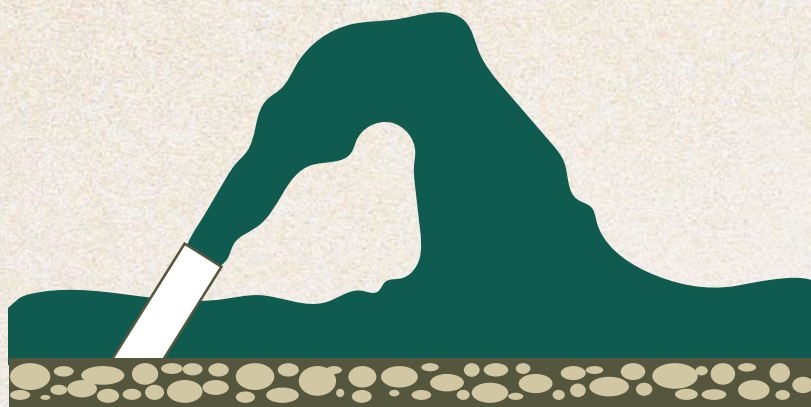
Cal Am has conceded that the desalination plant will have significant effects on the environment and that these impacts are "inconsistent" with existing climate change laws.

Despite these concerns, the project has failed to propose any mitigation measures to protect the broader Monterey environment.

BRINE DISCHARGE THREATENS MARINE SANCTUARY

California Coastal Commission Desalination Expert, Tom Luster, has raised potential impacts resulting from excessive brine discharge:

"You may create an area where a certain number of species can no longer live in. They may have to move out of that area, affecting feeding habitat."



Conceptual image of brine discharge along ocean floor

Adapted from: Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

The proposed project will produce up to 14 million gallons per day of high-salinity brine, to be discharged directly into the federally protected Marine Sanctuary.

The Draft EIR for this project admits that this discharge will result in the decimation of 2,010-5,900 square meters of squid habitat. The for-profit project has attempted to label this impact "less than significant."

Despite the protected nature of the sanctuary, the desalination plant has proposed no mitigation measures to protect the impacted area.

