

# Port of San Diego's Shellfish & Seaweed Aquaculture Program

## Second Discussion Draft Summary



**BACKGROUND:** Shellfish and seaweed aquaculture can provide sustainable commercial opportunities in multiple areas, including food production, biofuel, bioplastics, and other materials. When properly planned, managed, and operated, shellfish and seaweed aquaculture can coexist with other maritime functions and provide benefits such as improving water quality, habitat enhancement, carbon sequestration, and ecosystem restoration.

San Diego Bay and its surrounding environment have the potential to support viable shellfish and seaweed aquaculture businesses that align with the Port's mission, advance science, and cultivate a new industry sector with strong potential for job creation and economic and environmental benefits for the region.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVE:** To support and facilitate shellfish and seaweed aquaculture in and around San Diego Bay. The proposed Shellfish and Seaweed Aquaculture Program (SSAP), if adopted, would provide a regulatory and permitting framework for the District to consider shellfish and seaweed aquaculture activities.

**DISCUSSION DRAFT UPDATES:** The first discussion draft of the proposed SSAP was released to gather early stakeholder and public input. The updates highlighted in this handout reflect feedback received to date and refinements made by the District, and will be incorporated into the second discussion draft anticipated for public comment in Spring of 2026.

## TIMELINE:

### First SSAP Discussion Draft (2024)

- Released on August 20, 2024
- 60-Day public comment period
- 20 comment letters received from stakeholders, including agencies, organizations, and individuals

### Second SSAP Discussion Draft (2026)

- Release date anticipated for Spring 2026
- 45-day public comment period
- Continued focused stakeholder engagement

## KEY UPDATES:

### Stakeholder feedback received on First SSAP Discussion Draft:

- Support for the program
- Suggestions for improvement
  - Environmental interactions
  - Economic impact
  - Shared ocean uses
    - Recreation
    - Commercial fishing
    - Lifeguarding
    - U.S. Navy military readiness
- Storm swell considerations

### New data analyzed for the Second SSAP Discussion Draft:

- Natural Resources
  - Submerged aquatic vegetation (2020/2023)
  - Shoreline orthoimagery (2022/2023)
  - Bathymetric data
  - Oceanographic data
  - Wave height
- Vessel traffic (AIS):
  - Cargo
  - Tug and tow
  - Tanker
  - Fishing
  - Pleasure and sailing craft

### Revisions made for Second SSAP Discussion Draft based on stakeholder feedback:

- Updates to maps of potential in-water locations
- Expanded discussion of:
  - Environmental benefits
  - Potential economic opportunities

# Updated Map of Potential In-Water Locations

## Shellfish and Seaweed Aquaculture Program

Currently, three in-water locations and three landside locations are proposed within the SSAP. Each of the locations provides unique environmental and co-benefit opportunities. These locations have been adjusted based on stakeholder feedback received on the First SSAP Discussion Draft and will be included in the Second SSAP Discussion Draft.

### Zuñiga Shoals:

Reduced from **936 acres** (1st SSAP Discussion Draft) to **598 acres** (2nd SSAP Discussion Draft)

Reducing acreage addresses concerns regarding:

- recreation
- commercial fishing
- military use
- bathymetry
- proximity to eelgrass

### Former A-8 Anchorage:

Remained unchanged at **80 acres**

### Imperial Beach:

Reduced from **270 acres** (1st SSAP Discussion Draft) to **152 acres** (2nd SSAP Discussion Draft)

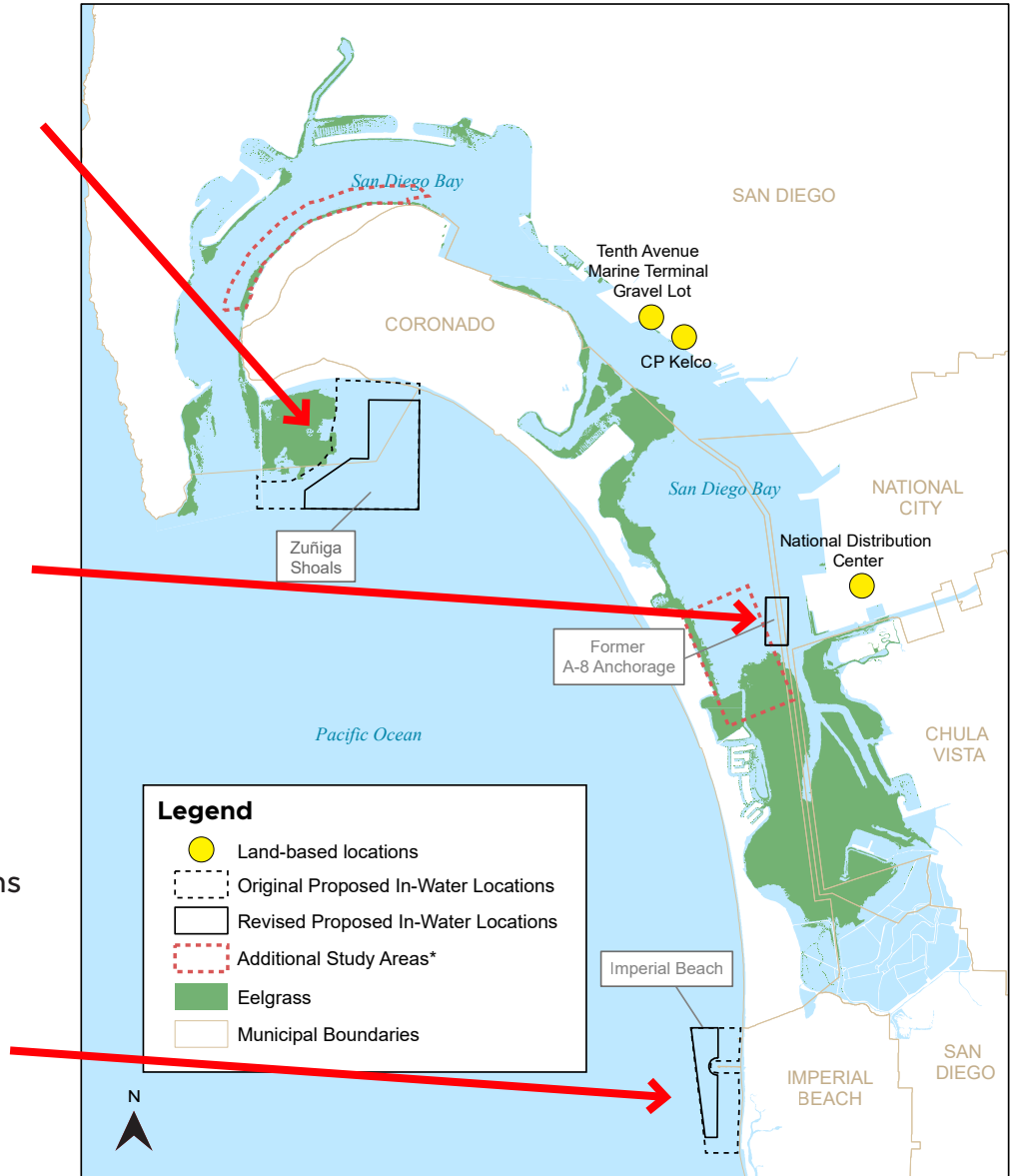
Reducing acreage addresses concerns regarding:

- bathymetry
- proximity to shore
- recreation
- lifeguarding activity
- storm surge

### \*Additional Study Areas

Additional study areas were analyzed, as suggested by stakeholders. They were found to have operational compatibility limitations and are not included as a part of the proposed in-water locations.

Potential Sites for Shellfish and Seaweed Aquaculture Program (SSAP)



To learn more about the program, visit [portofsandiego.org/aquaculture](http://portofsandiego.org/aquaculture)