

# Robert E. Badham

## AREA OF SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

HIGH LEVEL OF HIGH THREAT DISCHARGE

### Area of Special Biological Significance = Zero Pollution Discharge

In the 1970s, to preserve biologically unique and sensitive marine ecosystems for future generations, California designated 34 regions along the coast as Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). These areas support an unusual variety of aquatic life, and are important building blocks for a sustainable, resilient coastal environment and economy. Although the State Water Board's Ocean Plan prohibits all waste discharges into these areas, pollution continues to damage these important habitats.

With YOUR help, California Coastkeeper Alliance is working to ensure important marine ecosystems are protected from pollution.



Black abalone used to be the most abundant large marine mollusk on the West Coast of North America. Now, because of overfishing and Withering Syndrome, it has much declined in population.

**Robert E. Badham** skirts just less than a mile of coast and encompasses 220 ocean acres near Newport Beach in Orange County. Magnificent coastal bluffs dominate the southern shore above glistening rocky tide pools. At low tide beautiful pink clonal anemones, two-spotted octopi, bat stars and knobby and ochre sea stars flaunt their brilliant colors. In deeper water, kelp and shiner surfperch, striped kelpfish and translucent bay gobies swim above yellow crabs, horn sharks and endangered black abalone. During the day, California spiny lobsters stake out rock crevices, sometimes not far from moray eels, and then leave at night to devour prey on the ocean floor.

### Pollution

The State Water Board has determined that despite protection under California law, the Robert E. Badham ASBS is contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), copper, cadmium and nickel from urban runoff, residential runoff and the Newport Beach Marina. These contaminants threaten water quality and can harm fish and wildlife.

### One Threat and Solution: Urban Runoff

One pollution source that particularly threatens the Robert E. Badham ASBS is polluted stormwater that runs off city surfaces. In urban areas, rainwater washes over paved areas, such as streets, parking lots and roofs, picking up a potentially toxic mixture of oil, dirt, trash, metals and fertilizers. City storm drains funnel polluted stormwater directly to natural waterways, where it can cause beach closures and poison aquatic plants and animals, particularly in sensitive marine ecosystems like ASBSs.

By incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) techniques, many city surfaces such as rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and medians can work with nature to filter polluted stormwater. For example, streetscapes can be constructed to funnel stormwater into landscaped elements called bio-swales that capture and filter rainwater. Native plants in the bio-swales create habitat and naturally remove silt and pollution from stormwater before reaching the ocean. Stormwater filtration devices can also be inserted into storm drains for added protection.

### Learn More

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/ocean/asbs\\_map.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ocean/asbs_map.shtml)

<http://www.cacoastkeeper.org/programs/clean-abundant/stormwater-runoff>



Robert E. Badham is known locally as "Little Corona" (to distinguish it from nearby Corona del Mar State Park or "Big Corona") and offers excellent dive opportunities and postcard vistas. Photo SWRCB.

### Pollution Threats At A Glance

- Number of High Threat Discharges: 18
- State Board Identified Contaminants: PAHs, Copper, Cadmium and Nickel
- Pollution Sources: Urban runoff, residential runoff and the Newport Beach marina