



Ballona Creek Channel Trash Reduction Efforts Frequently Asked Questions

Are there other Interceptor projects being developed in the US?

The Ocean Cleanup is on a mission to tackle the world's 1,000 most polluting rivers, which can be seen on the interactive map at <https://theoceancleanup.com/sources>. The peer-reviewed paper behind the model was published in the scientific Journal *Science Advances* in April 2021. Currently, The Ocean Cleanup's focus is on regions where the problem appears most imminent; therefore, The Ocean Cleanup is not prioritizing other Interceptor projects in the US. Based on the paper's findings, The Ocean Cleanup's initial efforts have been focused on Southeast Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean.

If the Pilot Project is successful will it be implemented in other creeks?

This is a question that will be considered during the Pilot Project or subsequent to its completion. The Pilot Project is considered a proof-of-concept, and the results of the pilot will help inform the type of trash capture solutions that could be implemented throughout the region.

What is the estimated cost of the Pilot Project?

The cost of designing and permitting is estimated at approximately \$1.3M. Construction of the moorings to secure the Interceptor and booms in place is estimated to cost \$1.5M. The Interceptor is being provided to LA County for free from The Ocean Cleanup.

What is the cost of maintenance for the Interceptor?

Maintenance is currently estimated to cost \$650,000 annually, although this is a very conservative estimate. Actual maintenance costs will be closely monitored.

What are the current considerations for wildlife going up the Interceptor's conveyor belt?

The Pilot Project is not expected to adversely affect wildlife. The conveyor belt on the Interceptor moves at a slow speed, giving animals ample time to return to the water. Holes in the conveyor belt will allow small animals to pass through the belt and re-enter the water should they interact with it. The Flood Control District and The Ocean Cleanup also intend for the Pilot Project to be iterative; as the Pilot Project moves forward, the District and The Ocean Cleanup will be able to alter and improve the Pilot Project to increase efficiency and avoid any negative interactions or impacts on wildlife and the environment.

What is being done with the trash after it's collected?

Public Works is working on developing a trash characterization program to identify the various types of trash and debris that reach the Pilot Project site. All trash collected will be taken to an appropriate solid waste facility. When possible, trash will be taken to a Materials Recovery Facility for separation and recycling.

What will happen to the existing trash booms upstream of the Pilot Project site when the Interceptor is in place?

During the recent community meeting on March 23, attendees raised concerns that the existing Lincoln trash boom would be temporarily removed to test the effectiveness of the Interceptor. We have heard their concerns loud and clear, and our current plans are to continue to keep the Lincoln boom in place for the duration of the pilot period.

Does the Interceptor run autonomously? If there is a problem, how are operators notified?

Yes, the Interceptor is powered by solar panels on the roof of the boat and is fully automated. As the Interceptor's conveyor belt extracts debris from the water onto the shuttle, the shuttle equally distributes waste into the six dumpsters located on a separate barge within the Interceptor. At any time, operators can remotely access the Interceptor's dashboards. Once the trash bins are full, the Interceptor will automatically send a message to local operators. While the Interceptor itself functions autonomously, maintenance crews will empty the dumpsters and perform routine maintenance activities as appropriate.

What are the dimensions of The Interceptor?

The interceptor is approximately 79' long, 26' wide, and 16.5' tall.

How often will trash have to be removed from The Interceptor?

The Interceptor will be emptied after each storm event with a daily rainfall intensity of 1" or greater. Per our hydrologic records and rainfall data for the last ten (10) storm seasons (from October to April), the average number of storms with a daily rainfall intensity of 1" or greater for the Ballona Creek watershed was 2.3. Therefore, we anticipate that Interceptor will be emptied 2-4 times per storm season. However, this number will vary from year to year. During non-storm season months, trash will be removed as needed, and is anticipated to occur much less frequently. The barge will be removed from the interceptor, hauled over to Marina del Rey where the trash is offloaded, and finally returned to The Interceptor. Removal and replacement of the barge from The Interceptor will be done as quickly as possible and is not expected to occur over more than one day.

Will boats and rowers be able to enter Ballona Creek from Santa Monica Bay once the Pilot Project is in place?

Most of the year, only one of the Interceptor's trash booms will be installed. Thus, boats and rowers will be able to travel up and down Ballona Creek past the Pilot Project site unrestricted. During the storm season, Public Works will monitor weather reports and deploy the Interceptor's second trash boom in anticipation of high-trash flow events. When both trash booms are deployed, boats and rowers will not be able to travel past the Pilot Project site. Once the storm has subsided and the Interceptor has collected the trash behind the trash booms, the second boom will be removed.

Will the Interceptor restrict pedestrian access to the jetties?

Access to the jetties will not be restricted during the operation and maintenance of the Interceptor.

Will there be lights on the Interceptor? How will it affect the surrounding area?

The Interceptor is equipped with standard white navigation lights for safety purposes. Additionally, there are LED strips around the opening of the canopy. These lights are designed so they do not shine light on the water surface, minimizing potential glare from the water reflection. Reflective ribbon may be installed on the Interceptor as a bird deterrent. In short, the lighting generated from the interceptor should not stand out greatly in comparison to the surrounding lighting conditions.

Will odors be generated by the trash collected by the interceptor?

The trash being collected is expected to be 75% inorganics, which have less potential to generate odors compared to organics. Any odors associated are anticipated to be localized on the interceptor itself. Additionally, the collection bins are perforated to help drain the trash collected, removing excess moisture and helping to minimize odor impacts.

What is the noise level going to be like once the Interceptor is deployed?

The Interceptor has minimal mechanical components, with the loudest part being the conveyor belt operation. While the conveyor belt is running, the noise level at the Interceptor will be 60 to 70 decibels if you were to stand on the Interceptor. From the nearest residential area, the maximum projected increase in noise is 0.4 decibels. For reference, a normal speaking voice is equivalent to around 60 decibels, and a whisper is about 30 decibels. Studies show that a 1 dB change in sound level is hard to notice, a 3 dB change is clearly noticeable, and a 10 dB increase will be nearly twice as loud. In summary, the analysis shows that noise will not be an impact as the surrounding noise will be more audible than the noise level from the Interceptor itself.

Is the Interceptor the only trash capture solution being considered by LA County Public Works? Are there alternatives?

Currently, there is a trash boom deployed within Ballona Creek at Lincoln Blvd as well as the Trash Free contract (trash clean-up along the creek beds). To increase awareness of the trash issue, Public Works has engaged the public in the form of a “Trash Travels” and a “Don’t Waste Beautiful” anti-littering campaign. There is also concurrent planning and development of a long-term Trash Capture Project involving an automatic trash rack and a trash boom to divert trash into the trash rack.

Did you consider environmental impacts of deploying a Trash Interceptor in Ballona Creek?

The Ocean Cleanup conducted Environmental Assessments for the other locations, and Public Works did additional environmental analysis, specifically in regard to lighting, noise, odor, and vectors. As this project is considered a temporary pilot project, it is currently exempt under CEQA. However, at the end of the pilot period, additional analysis and a public CEQA process will need to be conducted to determine an appropriate permanent location for the Interceptor moving forward.