

Defend Ballona Wetlands Calls for Cancellation of New Year's Eve Fireworks in Marina del Rey, California

Defend Ballona Wetlands Calls for Cancellation of Marina del Rey New Year's Eve Fireworks to Protect Wildlife and Coastal Ecosystems.

MARINA DEL REY, CA, UNITED STATES, December 30, 2025 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- [Defend Ballona Wetlands](#) is calling on local authorities and event organizers at the Los Angeles County Beaches & Harbors Department to cancel the scheduled New Year's Eve fireworks displays planned for December 31 at 9:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight in Marina del Rey, California.

With rain forecast and fireworks slated to launch adjacent to the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, this event poses an unnecessary threat to wildlife, public safety and the surrounding coastal environment.

The Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve is one of the most biologically significant coastal ecosystems in Southern California, providing habitat for approximately 1,700 species of plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species. This reserve is the only State of California Ecological Reserve in all of Los Angeles County and it serves as a critical refuge and migratory stopover for birds such as pelicans, egrets, cormorants, herons, and shorebirds, as well as for marine wildlife, including Sea Lions and Dolphins that regularly swim through the Marina Channel connecting the marina to the open ocean.

Additionally, two fragile lagoon areas owned and managed by the City of Los Angeles, Del Rey Lagoon and Ballona Lagoon Marine Preserve, are nearby, where migratory and resident birds have been observed to exhibit threat behavior once the fireworks blasts begin. A rookery (trees



This Great Blue Heron was rescued after it fell from a nest due to blasts from fireworks at Marina del Rey. It later died as a result of its injuries. Photo by Jonathan Coffin

with nests) of Great Blue Herons exists in Mariners Village, directly across the channel from where the fireworks are scheduled to be launched. Numerous birds from this rookery have fallen from the trees during past fireworks events and have been taken to rehabilitation facilities by concerned citizens – some have died.

There are seven endangered species and dozens of species on the lists the State of California is charged with protecting that use this area for some part of their life cycles.

The intense noise, bright flashes, and concussive blasts terrify animals, causing mass panic and flight responses. Birds are often flushed from roosting and nesting sites at night, when visibility is low and stress is high, leading to exhaustion, collisions with structures, abandonment of nests, and death of chicks and juveniles. Marine mammals such as sea lions and dolphins are also highly vulnerable, as underwater sound travels farther and faster, disrupting communication, navigation, and normal behavior.

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Marcia Hanscom, Defend Ballona Wetlands

and wires, unexploded fragments, and microplastics—persists long after the celebration ends. Fireworks displays are also associated with increased public safety risks, including fires, injuries, and degraded air quality. Coastal and wetland-adjacent locations are particularly ill-suited for explosive events.



Fireworks shows do not occur in a vacuum. They knock birds right out of their nests.

Watch UnchainedTV's Emergency Town Hall to End Fireworks

Beyond the immediate terror inflicted on wildlife, fireworks deposit toxic debris into the air, water, and soil. Fireworks are composed of heavy metals and chemical compounds used to create colors and effects, including substances that become airborne as fine particulate matter, later settling into surrounding ecosystems. When rain is present, these pollutants are washed directly into the marina, coastal waters, and wetlands, contaminating the ocean and land alike. Residue from fireworks—including plastic casings

Marcia Hanscom of Defend Ballona Wetlands notes, "Fireworks are not the only way to celebrate. Proven, visually stunning, and environmentally responsible alternatives already exist. Drone light shows, laser displays, and other modern technologies offer festive experiences without explosions or toxic fallout. Marina del Rey itself recently demonstrated this with a successful drone show during the holiday boat parade."

Defend Ballona Wetlands urges officials to cancel the New Year's Eve fireworks and protect this irreplaceable ecosystem.

For more information, visit www.DefendBallonaWetlands.org

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This chick was found dead after falling from its nest after a fireworks show at another coastal Southern California city.

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