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We Beat Valero!

Our 300th Legal Victory Stops Bay Pollution

In a major victory for you and for the Bay, Valero oil refinery and Amports shipping facility just settled Baykeeper's lawsuit over their repeated pollution violations.



Our field investigator caught the companies red-handed dumping toxic petroleum coke into the Bay.

A few years ago, our field investigator caught the companies red-handed dumping toxic petroleum coke

into the Bay while loading ships for export in Benicia. Our attorneys took one look at the long black plumes of pollution in the Bay and, with you by our side, sued the corporate giants.

Now, after years of complex negotiations, the companies have agreed to stop their pollution. They will upgrade infrastructure, fix equipment, and improve loading practices to make sure their activities no longer pollute. And our experts will watchdog them for three years to confirm they stop harming the Bay and local neighborhoods.

The companies will also jointly pay \$2.38 million to the Rose Foundation to help mitigate their polluting ways. It's one of the largest pollution settlements

in Baykeeper's 35-year history! The funds will be granted to community groups for projects to restore the Bay (none of that money will come to Baykeeper).

What's especially powerful is that Baykeeper was initially made aware of these polluters by a Bay Area resident, just like you. The tipster was disgusted by what he witnessed and called our pollution hotline.

It just doesn't pay to pollute when you and Baykeeper are on the watch!

Pictured, above: With your support, Baykeeper's field investigator captured drone footage of toxic petcoke in the Bay at the Port of Benicia. Together, we compelled Valero to stop polluting—and the oil giant will have to pay to clean up its mess.

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Puzzling Your Way to a Healthy Bay



We came up with the idea during an impromptu lunch meeting with a co-founder of the Oakland Puzzle Company: Let's create a puzzle to teach people about the Bay's endangered fish!

It was a different— more fun— way to deliver the dire message that our fish are in trouble because state and federal agencies are allowing too much water to be taken from San Francisco Bay's tributary rivers.

The Bay's water goes to industrial agriculture and to large cities, many of which

Pictured, top: We recently partnered with the Oakland Puzzle Company and illustrator Fiorella Ikeue to create a puzzle featuring the Bay's beautiful—and imperiled—wildlife. Visit baykeeper.org/UnderTheBay to learn more and get yours today.

are outside the watershed. Our field investigators have even documented some rivers running dry in recent years. This lack of fresh water harms the people who rely on local rivers, and it spells doom for the Bay's fish.



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For example, Longfin Smelt used to be one of the Bay's most commonly found fish, but the population has crashed by

99% since the 1980s. That's why Baykeeper and our allies worked for two decades to protect them. This summer, we finally won a lawsuit to recognize the species as federally endangered. That means state water policies will now have to account for impacts to this fish and reconsider projects, if the harm is too great.

Also this year, because of Baykeeper's advocacy, the Bay's White Sturgeon became a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act, and we petitioned for them to be listed under the federal Endangered Species Act as well. If the fish are either state or federally listed, that would mean stronger protections for this ancient population.

Now, one puzzle at a time, everyone can learn more about these fish and how to help protect them.

Happy puzzling!

Sejal Choksi-Chugh,
Executive Director





You Are Preventing Harmful Algae Blooms

Pictured: Thanks to you, Baykeeper proactively monitored for harmful algae this summer, when blooms were most likely to occur. While our investigator confirmed the presence of a small harmful algae bloom in Alameda recently (above), luckily, it didn't spread.

In another big victory this summer, your support helped us win stronger policies to prevent harmful algae from growing out of control in San Francisco Bay.

The Bay has some of the highest levels of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of any estuary in the world. This pollution mostly comes from the sewage treatment plants that surround the Bay.

In 2022 and 2023, we all saw what happened when too much wastewater pollution enters

the water. Algae grew out of control and massive blooms caused unprecedented and heartbreaking levels of fish kills.

But this year, there's new hope. Together, with your help, we advocated for the Regional Water Board to adopt new requirements for a 40% reduction in wastewater pollution over the next decade. While stronger reductions over a shorter time period would have been better, the agency has taken a first step in the right direction.

Preventing algae blooms and protecting fish won't be the only beneficial outcomes. The new rules will require technological upgrades that will reap other benefits—from drought resilience to sea level rise preparedness.

These infrastructure upgrades are way overdue, and thanks to your help, we're hopefully making these changes in time to prevent more devastating harm to the Bay.



Photo: Rabb Most

Pictured, left: Baykeeper scientist Ian Wren oversees volunteers taking water samples for algae.

With support from you and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, we created a community volunteer monitoring program this year to track algae blooms.

You Can Stop Big Polluters

With your support, Baykeeper's field investigators regularly go out on the Bay to track down pollution that poses a threat to water, wildlife, and Bay Area communities. They collect evidence—including water quality samples, photos, and drone footage—that build our cases against polluters like Valero.

Your support makes our pollution investigations possible.

You enabled our small team to hold an oil giant accountable—with a drone and a pollution hotline tip. Your support powers our work, keeping our staff on the water and on top of bad actors across the Bay Area.

Keep us on patrol! Make a gift today to stop Bay polluters.

Use the enclosed envelope or visit:

[baykeeper.org/donate](https://www.baykeeper.org/donate)



Photo: Robb Most

Your support keeps us on patrol. Baykeeper field investigators use drones to find and stop pollution. The footage from patrols gives us the evidence needed to go after fossil fuel giants like Valero.

