



HEAL THE OCEAN

FALL 2001 • VOLUME 4 • NUMBER 2

Tertiary Treatment: Time for Self-Determination

Each day, 16 million gallons of sewage effluent flows into the Santa Barbara Channel from five South Coast wastewater treatment plants — Santa Barbara (El Estero), Goleta, Carpinteria, Montecito and Summerland. Three of these plants discharge into 20 feet of water or less — Montecito, Carpinteria and Summerland. These three outfall pipes are close to shore.

One plant, Goleta, is discharging “blended secondary” — a mix of primary (raw) sewage with secondary treated sewage, under a 301h waiver program. This plant is applying to the Regional Water Quality Control Board in May 2002 for an extension of the waiver, to continue this practice. The El Estero (city) wastewater plant has reduced its chlorination (anti-bacteria treatment) levels.

Each discharger is operating according to applicable standards and requirements.

We don't think this is of particular comfort. These standards and requirements were established in 1972 as part of the federal Clean Water Act, with its attendant Ocean Plan for individual states. It is now 30 years later, and our ocean and waterways are, for the most part, in trouble.

Heal the Ocean believes the only answer to this quagmire is self-determination on the part of the public. Instead of waiting for the government to change its rules and/or require anything of us, we can take a look at the situation and proceed ahead with common sense. This kind of proactive response has already occurred in Santa Barbara County in the initiation of septic-to-sewer conversion at the Rincon. Here, homeowners did their own sewer engineering study, got the cost of abandoning

their failing septic tanks, and voted to proceed.

Government agencies, seeing this independent work on the part of citizens they represent, were inspired (we hesitate to say shamed) to get busy themselves on these issues.

It is a human condition to want to do only what is required of us. It starts in childhood, and increases especially in situations where more money is involved. In the matter of ocean pollution, however, Heal the Ocean believes the public is going to have to take matters into its own hands if improvements are going to happen. Our agencies, working with 30-year-old regulations, are hamstrung by these regulations.

Costs of Tertiary Wastewater
Metcalf & Eddy Report to Heal the Ocean, August 2001
(Cost computed on 20-year loan at 5.7% interest)

City (El Estero)	Present charge	Tertiary	Per-month increase
City (El Estero)	\$19.94/mo	\$32.50/mo	\$12.56
Goleta	\$13.86/mo	\$38.51/mo	\$24.65
Montecito	\$25.00/mo	\$40.53/mo	\$15.53
Carpinteria	\$33.17/mo	\$66.18/mo	\$33.01
Summerland	\$30.00/mo	\$69.16/mo	\$39.16

Heal the Ocean believes the time has come to stop using the ocean for dilution of human waste. Since November 2000, we have been conducting virus tests (using a USC lab to process the samples) in ocean swimming water and in the final settling ponds of some wastewater treatment

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Local Heroes Presented with Healer Awards

A “Thank You” party for Heal the Ocean's generous supporters took place on October 14 at the home of James and Francoise Park, where members of the Board of Directors served guests and Leslie Lembo provided music, including her beautiful song, “Heal the Ocean.” At the party, Healer Awards were given to the following individuals in recognition of their tireless, sometimes immense, work to combat ocean pollution:

- **Steve Halsted**, who, as president of the Rincon Point Property Owners Association, helped move septic-to-sewer conversion at the Rincon and along seven miles of coastline — by coordinating on-site visits for engineers, conducting homeowner meetings, and registering support at endless public hearings.

- **Hannah-Beth Jackson**, our tireless assembly-woman in Sacramento, who is never afraid to speak her mind on water pollution issues, and who has brought millions of dollars into Santa Barbara County for clean water work.

- **Richard and Peggy Lamb**, who in June announced a matching grant challenge to pay for the \$15,000 Metcalf & Eddy cost/feasibility study for tertiary sewage treatment. (Heal the Ocean had the full amount in less than a week!).

- **Jeff Maassen**, who has volunteered countless hours of work to get Heal the Ocean's message to the public: video-filming, diving, and even cleaning storm drains in front of media cameras. With executive director Hillary Hauser, Jeff filmed “Tajiguas,” which aired for a month on Channel 17, as well as “Views from the Bottom,” documenting their dive along the El Estero sewage outfall.

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Hi From Hillary

It's a rare editorial writer who hasn't acknowledged the strange and troubling times we live in. Despite messages from our country's leaders to go about

living a "normal life," many of us have found it difficult to resume what we were doing before the unspeakable horror of September 11. "What really matters?" we ask. Previous concerns have been shoved aside by the realization that life can be taken away in a moment, as well as uncertainties about security — both physical and economic.

To put it bluntly: is ocean pollution such a big deal when we're living with the vulnerability of being attacked on our own soil, when we're dealing with airplane crashes and biological terrorism? Do we want to pay more for any cleanup work when our stock portfolios have fallen by half?

There is not one positive thing that can be said about September 11 — but out of this atrocity some interesting things are happening. People are slowing down, for one thing. "The streets are empty — nobody's out!" you hear quite often. People are staying home more, and it may not just be from fear, the price of theater tickets, or even from sadness. It may just be that people are staying home to enjoy family and friends, to play a game of Scrabble. Many have cancelled vacation trips to exotic places, not because of fear of flying, but just because it feels right to slow down.

Similarly, people are changing their minds about "getting newer and bigger" things — buying new houses, new cars, new anything. They are instead fixing and

improving what they have. (Including marriages! After September 11, one divorce lawyer said on a radio talk show that five clients called off their divorce proceedings and decided to work on saving their relationships.)

What does all this have to do with Heal the Ocean? From the calls we get, we think the public may feel the same way about appreciating and improving our own front yard — the ocean. We think that instead of spending money elsewhere, the public is ready to consider some expenditure to fix what we already have — systems of waste elimination that enter the sea.

Recent events have also heightened public awareness of the importance of being free from the threat of contamination. Heal the Ocean feels the public, now more than ever, has a heightened sense of what it means to be free of pollution, whether the pollution is intentional or unintentional. The potent mix of these moods — preserving and improving what we've got, together with combating the contamination that emanates from sources we know about — has inspired us to work even harder to achieve our goals of a clean and healthy ocean. We have added new board members to our working team, we have initiated new investigations of potential sources of ocean pollution, and we are working on projects we think will have a direct effect, to the good, on the water quality of Santa Barbara's shoreline.

We have taken time to reflect, and our resolve is unchanged.

Thanks for helping,

Executive Director, Heal the Ocean

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New Board Members at Heal the Ocean

Heal the Ocean is proud to announce the addition of three new members to its Board of Directors. Our organization is growing, not by overhead, furniture or other such encumbrances — but instead by the induction of dedicated citizens working on our campaign for a clean and healthy ocean.

• **GRAHAM FARRAR** was one of the first employees, now Senior Technical Sales Manager, of Openwave Systems (formerly Software.com). He studied molecular biology and chemistry at the University of Boulder, Colorado, grew up and lives in Santa Barbara, Graham is an avid lover of the ocean, and enjoys surfing, diving and boating.

• **STEVE HALSTED**, who as president of the Rincon Point Property Owners Association, was instrumental in

moving the Rincon septic-to-sewer project forward. Steve helped form the "model" for such conversions, and now assists Heal the Ocean's facilitation of other such projects. Steve earned his doctorate in engineering from Stanford University, is on the boards of the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara and also serves on the Investment Committee of the Music Academy of the West.

• **RICHARD LAMB**, co-founder of Balance Bar Company until its sale to Kraft Foods in 2000, was raised in Annapolis, Maryland and has been a sailor and waterman since a very young age. He received his bachelor and master's degree in Thermal Engineering from Cornell University, was a U.S. Naval officer from 1970-1973, vice president, international operations, of Windsurfing International, from 1977-1983, and president and owner of Windsurfing Hawaii, Inc., in Santa Barbara from 1983-1994. ☀

...Tertiary Treatment: Time for Self-Determination

plants. These tests have detected the presence of Hepatitis A and enteric (polio-type) viruses at some of Santa Barbara's most popular beaches.

These viruses have also been detected in the final effluent of sewage treatment plants. According to the USC researchers the viruses must be "alive" (viable) at the time of collection, in order to get a positive reading.

They tell us the presence of viruses means there is "people poop" in the water at the collection sites — which in our ocean sampling spots has been in knee-deep water, inside the surf zone.

The detection of human viruses occurred during dry seasons, when creeks are not running.

Our latest virus sampling, done during Fiesta weekend (August 4, 2001), revealed the presence of Hepatitis A at three South Coast beaches: Arroyo Burro, Butterfly Beach, Leadbetter Beach and Summerland Beach. Enteric (polio-type) viruses were detected at Goleta Beach, Leadbetter Beach, and in the final settling ponds of El Estero and Goleta Sanitary District treatment plants.

We can only conclude that human waste is getting into the ocean one of three ways: from groundwater contaminated by leaking sewer pipes, groundwater contaminated by septic systems, or from sewage outfalls.

While Heal the Ocean continues to investigate the sewer pipe leakage problem in our "Groundwater/Ocean Interface" study (see elsewhere in

this newsletter), we believe the citizens of Santa Barbara are ready to consider the costs of tertiary treatment of sewage. We think the citizens are ready to consider whether or not

they want to pay more for upgraded treatment of their sewage effluent, so that what is now deposited into the ocean as sewage is deposited as "reclaimed water" instead.

This effluent is clean enough to use for irrigation of freeway planting, school lawns and golf courses, and some of this is already being done in Santa Barbara (produced by

El Estero and Goleta). We looked into the possibility of using more reclaimed effluent for irrigation purposes in Santa Barbara in our commissioned report, "Water Reclamation Research," authored by Ian Adam/UCSB Bren School, which is now at the Santa Barbara Library. Having done that, we proceeded to commission a study to investigate the costs for tertiary treatment upgrade at the five sanitary facilities that have outfalls to the ocean.

This cost/feasibility study, performed by the San Diego firm of Metcalf and Eddy, was finalized in August 2001, and calculates ratepayer cost of upgrade as closely as possible. A more detailed engineering study/plan would be needed for each treatment plant, the cost of which is built into the Metcalf & Eddy estimate.

It is the goal of Heal the Ocean to put before the ratepayers the added costs of tertiary treatment, and let them decide for themselves if they would be willing to pay the added price of upgrade. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will see a clip-and-mail questionnaire, which we hope you will fill out and mail back to us —

because we would like to express your opinion on this issue to our public agencies.

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Heal the Ocean Quarterly Virus Testing Conducted in the laboratory of Dr. Jed Fuhrman, USC

Summer (August 4) 2001	Hepatitis A	Enteric viruses
Arroyo Burro Beach	Yes	No
Arroyo Burro Creek	No	No
Butterfly Beach	Yes	No
Carpinteria State Beach	No	No
El Estero sewage treatment plant	No	Yes
Goleta Beach	No	Yes
Goleta Sanitary District	No	Yes
Goleta Slough	No	No
Hope Ranch Beach	No	No
Leadbetter Beach	Yes	Yes
Summerland Beach	Yes	No
Fall (Nov. 11) 2000	Hepatitis A	Enteric viruses
Arroyo Burro	No	No
Butterfly Beach	No	No
Carpinteria State	No	No
El Estero sewage treatment plant	Yes	Yes
Goleta Beach	No	No
Leadbetter Beach	No	No
Summerland Beach	No	No
Summer 2000	Hepatitis A	Enteric viruses
Arroyo Burro	No	No
Butterfly Beach	Yes	No
Carpinteria State	Yes	No
East Beach @ Mission Creek	Yes	No
Goleta Beach	No	No
Hope Ranch Beach	No	No
Leadbetter Beach	No	No
Summerland Beach	Yes	No
Winter 1999	Hepatitis A	Enteric viruses
Arroyo Burro	No	Yes
Butterfly Beach	No	Yes
Carpinteria State	No	Yes
East Beach @ Mission Creek	No	Yes
Goleta Beach	No	No
Hope Ranch Beach	No	No
Las Palmas Creek (Hope Ranch)	No	No
Leadbetter Beach	No	No
Summerland Beach	No	Yes
Fall 1999	Hepatitis A	Enteric viruses
Arroyo Burro	No	No
El Estero sewage treatment plant	Yes	Yes
Goleta Sanitary District	No	Yes
Goleta Beach East	Yes	No
Goleta Beach West	No	Yes
Hope Ranch Beach	No	No
Las Palmas Creek (Hope Ranch)	Yes	No
Leadbetter Beach	Yes	Yes
East Beach @ Mission Creek	No	Yes

Heal the Ocean platform

Heal the Ocean is a non-profit citizen's action group with a simple philosophy: the ocean can no longer be used as a dump. Our focus is on the following:

- Zero pathogens in sewage discharges to the ocean
- Septic systems
- Groundwater pollution
- Non-point source pollution
- Dredging and dumping
- Tajiguas Landfill

With Deep Appreciation

Heal the Ocean sends its sincere thanks to these contributors who have helped assure the success of our campaign for a clean and healthy ocean. This roster records donations made from January 1 – November 1, 2001. If your name has been omitted, please call (805) 965-7570 so we can correct our records.

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Tajiguas Expansion: A Soggy Mess?

Heal the Ocean has been opposing the expansion of Tajiguas for some time now, for the reasons that the landfill is unlined, and lies in a coastal canyon that has a creek running through it, to the sea. The beach in front of the landfill has been labeled by Heal the Bay as THE dirtiest beach in Southern California.

County Public Works argues that this problem is caused by the septic tanks of the 20 homes at Arroyo Quemada, and the seabirds that congregate on the beach there. (Even if seabirds could turn a basically deserted beach into THE dirtiest beach in Southern California, would this not make a strong case that no landfill should be sited — or continued — on an ocean coastline where seabirds live?)

The EIR for the expansion of Tajiguas finally came out in October — only about two years late. With time running out on the current landfill, and with no space to put trash unless there is an expansion into the back canyon, the EIR says there are no water quality problems associated with the landfill.

The “Technical Report” accompanying the EIR, however, focuses on water saturation throughout the landfill. The EIR also ignores a sworn affidavit of the former manager of the landfill, Robert Cady, who testified that the landfill was built on top of natural springs so that the trash is mixing with the garbage at the rate of 5,000-15,000 gallons per day. Working with Surfrider and Gaviota Coast Conservancy, Heal the Ocean has been in countless meetings with Public Works and with county supervisors and with staff. We have asked repeatedly to sample groundwater at Tajiguas. Getting nowhere, Heal the Ocean went to the landfill on its own, taking with us a professional sampler who had a professional kit and equipment to get readings for total and fecal coliform, and for enterococcus bacteria.

We went straight to the tank where groundwater is stored, and took a sample. Our professional also took samples from Pila Creek at the railroad tracks and from the culvert inside the landfill. The following chart reveals how those samples turned out.

These results were shown in a Heal the Ocean film, “Tajiguas,” shot by Jeff Maassen in a “Bagofchips” production that aired on Channel 17 during the month of June. The film shows executive director Hillary Hauser slipping and sliding around Pila Creek on the landfill property, taking samples from Pila Creek and from the silting pond — using a mayonnaise jar. Admitted amateurism, left in the film for comic relief.

When the film aired, county public works dismissed our sampling results because of this mayonnaise-jar amateurism. They chose not to connect our sample results with the work that was done by the professional on January 16, 2001.

This is why Heal the Ocean has joined with Surfrider and the Gaviota Coast Conservancy to get permission from the county to test when they test — sending split samples to a lab

Bacteria in the Tajiguas Landfill drain system entering into Pila Creek <i>(Averages for the year 2000, Santa Barbara County figures)</i>				
		State standards/ limits		
Total Coliform	73,603	10,000		
Fecal Coliform	3,299	400		
Enterococcus	4,436	100		
<i>Units: Most probable number of bacteria per milliliter of sample water.</i>				
Testing of Tajiguas Landfill groundwater <i>(Tested on 1/16/01. Results show extreme levels of pollution.)</i>				
	Culvert	Trench water (ground water)	Pila Creek @ RR tracks	State standards/ limits
Total Coliform	76	73,603	345	10,000
Fecal Coliform	3,768	3,299	24,192	400
Enterococcus	36	4,436	72	100
<i>Units: All measurements are in Mpn/100ml</i>				

of our own choice. It is why the three groups have hired professional consultants to go over the EIR. Geosolv, the same hydrogeologic team that helped Ed Masry and Erin Brockovich break the PG&E case, will be issuing their report on Tajiguas, and the EIR — probably by the time you are reading this. We are concerned that the EIR for the expansion of Tajiguas contains no thorough analysis of an alternative to Tajiguas — in case the landfill gets shut down. ☹️

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Heal the Ocean News

Please send us your e-mail addresses

We are updating our e-mail lists — which will be used more frequently to send you up-to-date notices and information. Please send us your e-mail addresses to HealTheOcean@rain.org

Fund helps Volunteer/Public Outreach

Thanks to a generous \$5,000 grant from The Fund for Santa Barbara, Heal the Ocean finally has a Volunteer Coordinator in place — Ruston Slager. Ruston has, for the past three years, manned our public events, setting up tables, passing out information, organizing sign-up sheets, selling T-shirts, talking to the public. With the Fund's grant, Ruston can devote his time to the organization of volunteers to do this work, which means Heal the Ocean can be involved in a much broader public outreach.

Volunteers, please send your e-mail addresses to: RustonHTO@aol.com.

We thank all the volunteers who have stepped forward to help us at numerous events, most recently: Judith "Sam" Case and Sylvia Frain (Leadbetter Clean Water Classic); Ben Conway, Steve Halsted (Sea Festival); and Karin Young (Heal the Ocean "Thank You" party). With Ruston at the helm, we will be able to acknowledge the help we get a little better. We also thank advisory board member Patricia Duffy for thinking to apply to The Fund for Santa Barbara for the help we have needed! Thank you, all.



Leslie Lembo (far left) performs "Heal the Ocean" with Santa Barbara Community Academy children during this year's Earth Day at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse.

"True Nature" CD to feature HTO

Leslie Lembo, a noted and talented singer/composer in Santa Barbara, will soon be releasing a CD, "True Nature," which will include her beautiful song, "Heal the Ocean." The CD will debut at SoHo on February 6, 2002 — and we'll be there!

"Heal the Ocean" was written by Leslie in 1999 during an HTO fund-raising event at the Coral Casino, where she was performing as part of the program. During the speeches, Leslie pencilled out the words on a paper napkin. When the speeches were over, she gave impromptu instructions to her keyboardist and performed the song — "I am the ocean, I am the sea... what harm I bring to her, I bring to me..." There was not a dry eye in the place.

Later, she organized the recording of "Heal the Ocean" in Beagle Studio, Santa Barbara. Donating their time and talent to the project were: Emmet Sargeant, engineer/owner of Beagle Studio; guitarists Randy Tico and Randy Cobb; pianist Bruce Bigenho; drummer Jesse Siebenberg; and Elias Buchanan on flute.

HTO Groundwater study moves ahead

With a generous grant from the Ann Jackson Family Foundation, Heal the Ocean has been able to proceed with its "Environmental Quality Assessment of Shallow Groundwater/Ocean Interface" — a four-part study that is taking a close look at the possibility of leaking sewer pipes getting into the flow of groundwater to the sea.

The lead researcher on this project has been replaced by Ed McGowan, a PhD in water resources and toxic materials, and who has thirty years experience in development and direction of programs for water resources, health and environmental issues.

Ed is completing Phase I of this study, which has involved a close look at a Martin, Northart, Spencer audit of city sewer mains in 1983. This, together with other public records of monitoring and testing of sewer lines beneath Santa Barbara, will lead McGowan to the next phase of the Heal the Ocean Groundwater study — determining where to test groundwater that cannot be contaminated by any source (septic system, homeless encampment, etc.) other than sewer lines.

Drew Bohan, executive director of ChannelKeeper, is working with Heal the Ocean on this project. We thank the Ann Jackson Family Foundation for its support of this important work.

Jane Maassen running HTO Office

Jane Maassen, a longtime supporter of Heal the Ocean, in August took over the management of Heal the Ocean's office at 1129 State Street. This is no small task — Heal the Ocean's connection to the public is larger than ever, and involves much phone and mailing work, as well as organizing schedules and events. Jane's creative talents were reflected in the great Heal the Ocean aprons she assembled (with HTO's logo) for Board Members to wear during HTO's "Thank You" party in October. Jane and her husband, advisory board member Jeff Maassen, live in Montecito with their two sons, Morgan (a surfer) and Graham (also an ocean person).

Heal the Ocean in Maui Swim

A three-man, three-woman Heal the Ocean "Blue Buzz" team entered the 30th Maui Channel Swim on September 1, 2001 — a ten mile swimming race from the island of Lana'i to Kaanapali, Maui.

Swimming relay-style against 4-6 ft. swells and 20-25 knot winds, the Heal the Ocean "Blue Buzz" team placed 10th overall, and 4th in the coed division, "missing third place by only 30 seconds!" said Kathy Mann, one of the swimmers. Mann said her team will represent Heal the Ocean again in 2002 in the swim, which is "the only Masters Swimming Inter-Island race in the world."

Tertiary Sewage Treatment Survey

*Do you want to be **ABLE TO VOTE** on a rate increase to upgrade sewage treatment in Santa Barbara?*

IMPORTANT: *This poll is important for us to determine your level of interest, so that we can represent your feelings to our public agencies and get this issue to a vote. Homeowners only, please.*

1. WHICH SANITARY DISTRICT SERVICES YOUR HOME?

	<i>Per month increase for tertiary treatment</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> City of Santa Barbara (El Estero)	\$12.56
<input type="checkbox"/> Goleta	\$24.65
<input type="checkbox"/> Montecito	\$15.53
<input type="checkbox"/> Summerland	\$39.16
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpinteria	\$33.01

2. WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE A PUBLIC VOTE ON TERTIARY UPGRADE?

- Yes
- No

3. CAN WE USE YOUR NAME? (IF YES, PLEASE FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING.)

Name _____ Address _____

4. PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TO HEAL THE OCEAN. EITHER:

- *Use the donation envelope to mail it in OR*
- *Fax it to us at 962-0651 OR*
- *Email your reply to info@HealTheOcean.org*

...Healer Awards, continued from page 1

• **John Miko**, manager of the Carpinteria Sanitary District, for spearheading the Rincon septic-to-sewer conversion project, and thereby creating a “template” for other such projects in Santa Barbara county as well as the state. John put himself very far out on a limb to help this project through, and when it became obvious that EIR money was needed before a homeowner’s vote could be taken, John applied for a \$425,000 grant from the State Water Resources Control Board — and got it. (The EIR is scheduled to begin this month).

• **Ruston Slager**, always there at public events with Heal the Ocean’s table, selling shirts, passing out information and bumper stickers, Ruston was the single impetus for the formation of Heal the Ocean. He organized the public demonstration on the Santa Barbara County administration building the day he read Hillary Hauser’s article, “Another Day at the Beach” in the Santa Barbara News-Press.

• **Chris Wilkinson**, owner of E-Wave in Santa Barbara, is one of the very first people who stepped forward to volunteer for Heal the Ocean. He created the logo, designed and manages Heal the Ocean’s web site, and changes our letterhead every time a new member joins our working team. ☀

...Tertiary Treatment, continued from page 2

We would like to stress that Heal the Ocean’s campaign is to get the vote of rate increase before the public. If the public is satisfied with current sewage treatment, it can say so in its vote, and Heal the Ocean will feel that it has done its job. We think it is time for self-determination — to decide this issue for ourselves. We think it is time to quit waiting for someone, some agency, to tell us what to do. Please fill out the questionnaire.

Thank you! ☀

Please consider giving

The end of the year is here, and Heal the Ocean encourages you to please consider us for your tax-deductible donation! The money we receive goes toward engineering studies needed to determine the exact costs of improvements so citizens can act! It goes toward hiring experts so that we can make our case! It goes toward media and mailings when public support becomes vital! It goes to our direct campaign for a clean and healthy ocean! Thank you!

Heal the Ocean
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With Glen Phillips

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