

COPPER ALTERNATIVES

San Diego Project Update

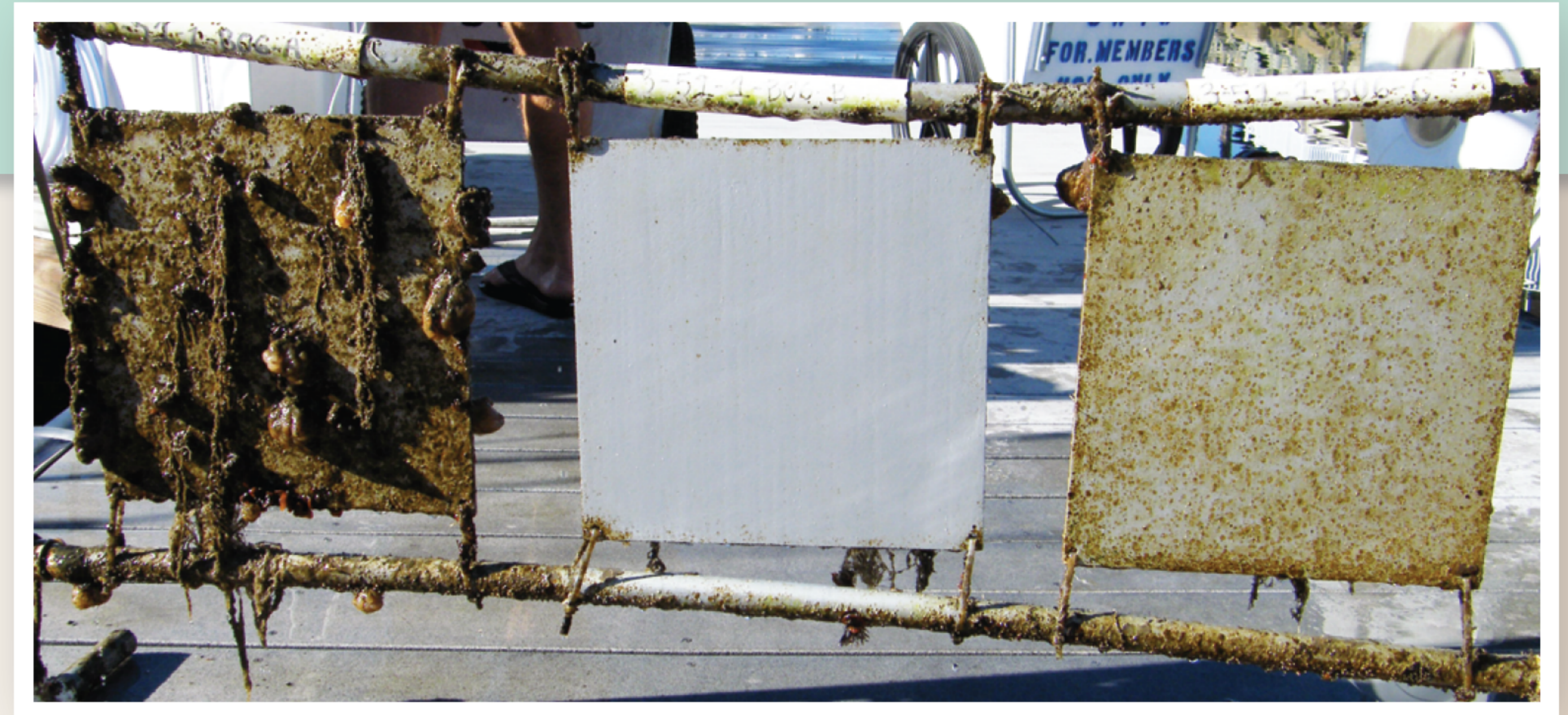
With growing concern over water quality and the accumulation of heavy metals like copper and zinc in our waterways, many paint manufacturers, boat owners, and other interested parties are looking for alternatives to metal-based antifoulings.

One such effort—being carried out by the Port of San Diego (Calif.) and the non-profit Institute for Research and Technical Assistance (IRTA)—is being funded in part by a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant. San Diego Bay is one of several around the U.S. that has documented potentially toxic copper levels, and this has been linked to copper-based antifoulant paints.

The two-year project aims to find viable, environmentally friendly alternatives to copper antifoulings and encourage boaters to use to them. The effort, which we reported on in October 2008, is now moving into its second phase.

The first phase was panel testing 46 coatings from June to October 2008. Of those, 24 were non-biocides, 18 were zinc-based, and four were organic biocides.

Twenty-one of the top-performing coatings will go on to Phase 2, applying the paints to volunteers' boats in the Shelter



The Port of San Diego recently wrapped up its bottom paint panel tests, tapping 21 coatings as top performers.

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Island, Calif. Of the advancing paints, five are non-biocide coatings, 14 are zinc-based, and two are organic biocides. The tests will wrap up in June 2010. For more information, visit www.portofsandiego.org or call 619/686-6200.

SONIC BOOM

The list of alternatives to traditional antifoulings doesn't end with paints. From stick-on products to vibrating products, more and more choices are becoming available. One product we've received many inquiries about is Ultrasonic Antifouling. According to the maker, the digital electronic units send pulsed ultrasonic signals to a transducer that in turn emits low-power, low-frequency sound waves, which create a wall of moving water molecules over the submerged hull to destroy growth.

We've not yet tested the Ultrasonic products, but we plan to, and we welcome comments from anyone who has tried the system. For more information, visit www.ultrasonic-antifouling.com.



Ultrasonic Antifouling