



Santa Barbara CHANNELKEEPER®

Keeping watch for clean water



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Our mission is to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through science-based advocacy, education, field work and enforcement

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FROM THE HELM

In January, Governor Brown officially declared that California is in a drought emergency. His declaration, along with the alarming condition of local water supplies, provided a call to action for citizens to reduce their individual water usage, as well as to lawmakers to enact long-term policy changes that protect our water supplies and improve our resiliency to the expected impacts of climate change.

Channelkeeper understands that water quality and water supply are all part of the same big picture, and we're working on several fronts to promote a holistic approach to water management.

At the local level, we're promoting installation of rainwater harvesting features on residential and commercial properties in our area, and we even put in a small rain garden at our own office. In the Ventura River watershed, we recently enhanced our monitoring program to better understand the impacts that the drought and rising water demands are having on surface flows and water quality.

On a regional level, we continue to advocate for policies that require Central Coast municipalities and developers to capture stormwater for infiltration and reuse as a resource rather than funneling it to the nearest storm drain as waste and contributing to runoff pollution. Our ongoing work to protect aquifers from agricultural contamination is also increasingly important as public agencies come to rely more heavily on groundwater supplies to offset shortages in our reservoirs.

Through our participation as a member of the California Coastkeeper Alliance, we're also supporting policies to promote sustainable water management at the state level. When it comes to water supply, we are all part of the problem as well as the solution. Please join us in conserving our most precious resource – every drop counts!



KIRA REDMOND | Executive Director

SANTA CRUZ ISLAND BEACH CLEAN-UP

Channelkeeper teamed up with Santa Barbara Adventure Company and Island Packers to co-host a trash clean-up on Santa Cruz Island on January 15th. Together with volunteers from Channel Islands Outfitters, Save the Mermaids, the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, EDC and Aquasports, we removed 910 pounds of trash from Chinese Harbor and transported it by kayak from the beach to the Island Packers boat. The trash was then disposed of by the Channel Islands National Park Service.



Visit www.sbck.org to check out our video of this great team effort. Thanks to all who participated!

Santa Barbara Bans the Bag!



Channelkeeper applauds the Santa Barbara City Council for taking decisive action to reduce our city's contribution to plastic bag pollution! At its meeting on October 15, 2013, the Council formally adopted the single-use shopping bag ordinance that Channelkeeper has been championing for the past six years. The ordinance will ban plastic carryout bags at grocery stores, convenience stores, liquor stores, and pharmacies in the City of Santa Barbara, but still allow for produce bags as well as plastic bags at restaurants and non-grocery retail stores. It will also require regulated stores to charge a 10-cent fee for paper bags in order to incentivize the use of reusable bags. The ordinance will enter into effect at

large grocery stores on May 14, 2014 and at smaller grocery retailers in November 2014. Channelkeeper will continue to partner with the City and the Community Environmental Council to prepare local citizens and stores for the new rules through outreach, education and widespread distribution of free reusable bags.

We also saw progress toward bag bans by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Ventura City Council, who both voted near the end of 2013 to draft similar bag ordinances and to initiate the associated environmental review process, with next steps anticipated later this year. Channelkeeper has been working to build awareness and support for action to reduce disposable bag use

in Goleta as well. We look forward to and will continue working towards a future of clean beaches and creeks unsullied by plastic bags along the South Coast!

Following last year's narrow defeat of a state-wide plastic bag ban bill, State Senator Padilla recently introduced Senate Bill (SB) 270, which is currently making its way through the legislative process. SB 270 would ban plastic bags state-wide at large grocery stores in July 2015 and at pharmacies and liquor stores in 2016. The bill includes provision of grant funding for California bag manufacturers to help alleviate any potential job losses. Stay tuned for updates, and meanwhile, remember to use reusable bags every time you shop!

Channelkeeper Challenges Adequacy of Ag Pollution Rules

Channelkeeper continues the fight to protect Central Coast waterways from agricultural pollution. In November, we joined a coalition of environmental, social justice, and fishing organizations in filing a lawsuit against the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for adopting a new ag pollution regulatory program that fails to protect public health and environment.

In a 2010 report, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) determined that agricultural pollution is contributing to well-documented, severe, and widespread water quality impairments throughout the Central Coast. They set out to strengthen the regulations governing discharges from irrigated agricultural lands in the region (known as the “Ag Order”), focusing on new requirements to monitor and verify that farms aren’t polluting.

Unfortunately, agricultural industry representatives attacked the proposed Ag Order and succeeded in significantly weakening it by the time it was finally adopted in March 2012. After numerous appeals by both agricultural and environmental



interests, the SWRCB issued a final decision to further eviscerate the Ag Order last October.

Channelkeeper and our partners believe the final Ag Order violates state law because it allows further degradation of surface and ground water quality. We also believe that crucial scientific evidence of water quality degradation - and solutions -

were deliberately excluded from the policy making process, which failed to comply with California’s Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). We are calling for a reinstatement of the RWQCB’s March 2012 version of the Ag Order while the SWRCB develops stricter regulations. We expect the State Superior Court in Sacramento to hear the case this summer and issue a ruling by year’s end.

Channelkeeper Weighs in on Ellwood Oil Project

Local oil company Venoco has proposed to return one of its Ellwood oil leases (PRC 421) to production. The project would re-open the well at Pier 421-2 (closed in since 1994) and shut down and remove neighboring Pier 421-1. Oil extracted from Pier 421-2 would be piped to the Ellwood Onshore Facility to be processed.

Channelkeeper submitted written comments and oral testimony to the State Lands Commission (SLC) on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed project. Our comments focused on hazardous material contamination and releases, Venoco’s history of non-compliance and accidents, and threats to designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas and endangered, threatened, and rare species from project activities.

The SLC released a Final EIR in January, and it incorporates several of Channelkeeper’s recommendations, including adding turbidity monitoring requirements, removing language that would delay removal of hazardous material, and clarifying language regarding identification and avoidance of sensitive habitats. The City of Goleta is considering the proposed project and potential mitigation measures it might require, and the SLC will hold additional hearings thereafter to decide whether to approve or deny the project. Channelkeeper and our environmental allies will be meeting with the SLC beforehand to discuss our concerns with the project, and we will continue to weigh in as the process moves forward.



Photo by City of Santa Barbara

Sewage Spills Down by More Than 50%

Channelkeeper is pleased to report on recent progress made by the City of Santa Barbara to accelerate the repair and replacement of leaky sewer pipes and reduce sewage spills.

This significant decrease in sewage spills and heightened effort to address exfiltration means less bacterial pollution in our creeks and beaches and a decreased risk of illness among ocean users.

Channelkeeper filed a lawsuit against the City in early 2011 for violations of the Clean Water Act caused by excessive sewage spills and underground leakage (“exfiltration”) of sewage out of broken pipes. Channelkeeper and the City reached agreement on a settlement in March 2012 which binds the City to spend an additional \$4.5 million over the ensuing five years to improve its sewer system operation and maintenance practices, significantly reduce sewage spills, and nearly double the number of miles of sewer

pipes it repairs and replaces, with a focus on those that have the highest risk of exfiltrating and contaminating downstream creeks and beaches. As part of the settlement, the City

also funded a project to mitigate the environmental harms caused by their spills by supporting the installation of pollution-reducing rainwater harvesting projects throughout Santa Barbara (see page 9).

Since our settlement, the City has developed and begun to implement several programs and activities to reduce spills and accelerate the repair and replacement of leaking sewer pipes, including, among others, a Sewer System Overflow Response

Improvement Plan; a Cleaning and Inspection Improvement Plan; a High Risk Pipe Evaluation; a Fats, Oils and Grease Program Plan; a Closed Circuit TV and Condition Assessment Work Plan; a Capacity Assurance Program; an Annual Exfiltration Abatement Program; an updated Sewer System Management Plan; and a Sanitary Sewer Overflow Reduction Action Plan. In 2012, the City had 20 sewage spills; rehabilitated or replaced 1.02 miles of pipe with a high risk of exfiltration; and rehabilitated or replaced 5.12 miles of pipe overall. In 2013, the number of sewage spills fell to 9 – a 55% reduction from 2012, and down 74% from 35 spills in 2010, when we decided to file the lawsuit.

This significant decrease in sewage spills and heightened effort to address exfiltration means less bacterial pollution in our creeks and beaches and a decreased risk of illness among ocean users. Channelkeeper is thrilled with this progress and looks forward to even fewer spills and leaks in the future.



Fostering MPA Awareness and Stewardship

As part of our effort to raise awareness and promote stewardship of our Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Channelkeeper is working to highlight the recreational opportunities and monetary benefits that MPAs provide to the local economy.

Last fall we began coordinating with local businesses and offering subsidies to those who agreed to develop new tour packages that feature trips to local MPAs. In October and November, Channelkeeper worked to bring together groups of divers from the Paradise Dive Club with a local 6-PACK (Ocean Sports Private Charters) for paid dive trips to the new MPA at Naples. We also recently partnered with Channel Islands Outfitters to produce a full-page story about Santa Barbara's MPAs in the April issue of *US Airways Magazine*.

In an effort to engage the recreational fishing community, Channelkeeper initiated a dialogue with a prominent local fishing guide to provide special fishing trips that feature education about MPAs. We're developing similar collaborations with several other local businesses who offer boat, kayak, fishing or eco-tour services.

Channelkeeper is also developing a new program to offer on-the-water marine environmental education experiences for families. We will be providing selected families with the unique opportunity to journey aboard our research vessel, the *RV Channelkeeper*, to learn about marine conservation and to explore the rich biodiversity underwater. Using an underwater drop camera and onboard monitor, Channelkeeper scientists will give passengers a live tour of the kelp forest just below the surface. These 1-2 hour trips will be provided free of charge and will target families who lack the means or opportunity to get out on the water to explore and learn about the incredible marine ecosystem in our front yard.

In addition to these efforts to promote the benefits of our local MPAs, Channelkeeper is also monitoring human activities in and around Santa Barbara's coastal MPAs through our *MPA Watch* volunteer monitoring program. *MPA Watch* is a citizen science initiative started by The Otter Project which was replicated and adapted by Channelkeeper and Heal the Bay in

2012. The information we're collecting through *MPA Watch* will help government agencies and scientists interpret how successful our MPAs are at rebuilding fish populations, while also identifying any social and economic benefits that result from MPA implementation (i.e. from increased recreation and tourism) and informing MPA management and enforcement. Channelkeeper is looking for volunteers to conduct *MPA Watch* surveys at Campus Point, Naples, and Gaviota, so please contact us to get involved.

We've also been working closely with the California Ocean Science Trust and other partners to expand *MPA Watch* state-wide. Channelkeeper is serving as the program liaison for the *MPA Watch* Advisory Committee, which is comprised of representatives from the CA Department of Fish & Wildlife, CA State Parks, and several scientists. We're developing best practices and standardized protocols to ensure that our data and methodologies are consistent and comparable across all existing and future *MPA Watch* programs.

King Tides - A Crystal Ball?

Unfortunately we don't have a crystal ball to see the future, but those that visited the beach at high tide in late December and late January had a unique opportunity to see what our shoreline might look like in the future as a result of rising sea levels.

The National Academy of Sciences predicts that the ocean along California's coast will rise as much as one foot by 2050 and five feet by the end of the century. To help document the potential impacts of rising sea levels, Channelkeeper and other groups throughout California have been coordinating efforts to support the California King Tides Initiative. The Initiative aims to identify coastal areas vulnerable to tidal inundation, and to promote awareness of the specific potential impacts of sea level rise on our region in an effort to support climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.

During the 2013-2014 winter high tides – the highest tides of the year, known as “king tides” - Channelkeeper staff and 20 volunteers took to the



beaches and to the air to snap more than 200 photographs to document how sea level rise may impact our

coastline due to climate change. Check out the photos on our interactive map at www.sbck.org.

Monitoring Ocean Acidification

Channelkeeper has formed a new partnership with researchers at UCSB in an effort to understand how climate change will impact the Santa Barbara Channel. As levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) increase in our atmosphere, more and more carbon is absorbed by our oceans. In water, CO₂ is converted to carbonic acid, which lowers the ocean's pH. This phenomenon, called “ocean acidification,” is expected to have major impacts on many forms of marine life worldwide.

As it turns out, the Santa Barbara Channel is a hub of ocean acidification research, and several ocean pH monitoring stations are currently in place to continuously measure changes in acidity. Channelkeeper is now using our research vessel to assist Dr. Gretchen Hofmann's laboratory at UCSB by collecting regular samples at coastal pH sensors so that they can be properly calibrated.

Channelkeeper also secured funding, from the Walter O. and Holly J.

Thomson Fund through the Santa Barbara Foundation, to purchase a new monitoring station to be deployed at Naples Reef, which is important to researchers because of its thriving kelp forest ecosystem, its status as a Marine Protected Area, and its proximity to concurrent biological monitoring efforts. Through this research, we hope to learn more about how species in the Santa Barbara Channel will adapt to this globally significant phenomenon.

Cruise Control

Santa Barbara will host even more cruise ships this year than last, with 18 visits scheduled from January through the beginning of May, followed by another 11 in the fall. While many locals are happy to see the influx of cruise passengers and their tourism dollars into Santa Barbara, others are concerned about the potential impacts these floating cities could have on our local environment.

In an effort to deter any such impacts, Channelkeeper will continue to strategically monitor cruise ships when they come through the Santa Barbara Channel. We will meet some of the ships on our boat as they enter the 12-mile no-discharge zone, communicating with their crew over marine radio to remind them of the no-dumping rules and to let them know we are watching. We will monitor others by air, employing thermal imaging technology in attempts to identify any discharge plumes that might emanate from the ships.



Last fall, we monitored four cruise ships from our boat. We had positive communications with their crews, and all confirmed that they were well aware of and complying with the no-dumping regulations.

With several new ships visiting Santa Barbara this year, Channelkeeper will continue to keep watch to make sure that the increase in cruise ship traffic through the Channel doesn't result in an increase in pollution.

Channelkeeper Joins Radiation Monitoring Efforts

Although initial investigations suggest that the Fukushima nuclear disaster will not impact the western US, several research institutions agree it's an important issue to monitor. Thanks to generous support from Blaine and Valerie Lando, Channelkeeper has joined two collaborative research efforts to assess radiation levels along our coast.

In mid-February, Channelkeeper collected a water sample from Butterfly Beach for "Our Radioactive Ocean," a Woods Hole Institute of Oceanography research project that is monitoring the extent of Fukushima radiation transport. No Cesium-134 isotopes were detected in the sample, and the results indicate that background levels of radiation are normal and that Fukushima radiation has not arrived in Santa Barbara as of yet. Additional samples will be taken in Santa Barbara and along the West Coast over the next year to continue to monitor for any transport of radiation from Fukushima.

Channelkeeper is also collecting kelp near Rincon to as part of "Kelp Watch 2014," an initiative coordinated by researchers at Cal State Long Beach and UC Berkeley to assess the extent of possible radionuclide contamination (primarily Cesium-137 & Cesium-134) in kelp forests along the West Coast from seawater arriving from Fukushima.

"My family loves the ocean and spending time at the beach, so getting reliable information about the safety of local beaches is important to me," says Blaine Lando. "I'm supporting Channelkeeper's participation in this research because of their scientific credibility and monitoring expertise."

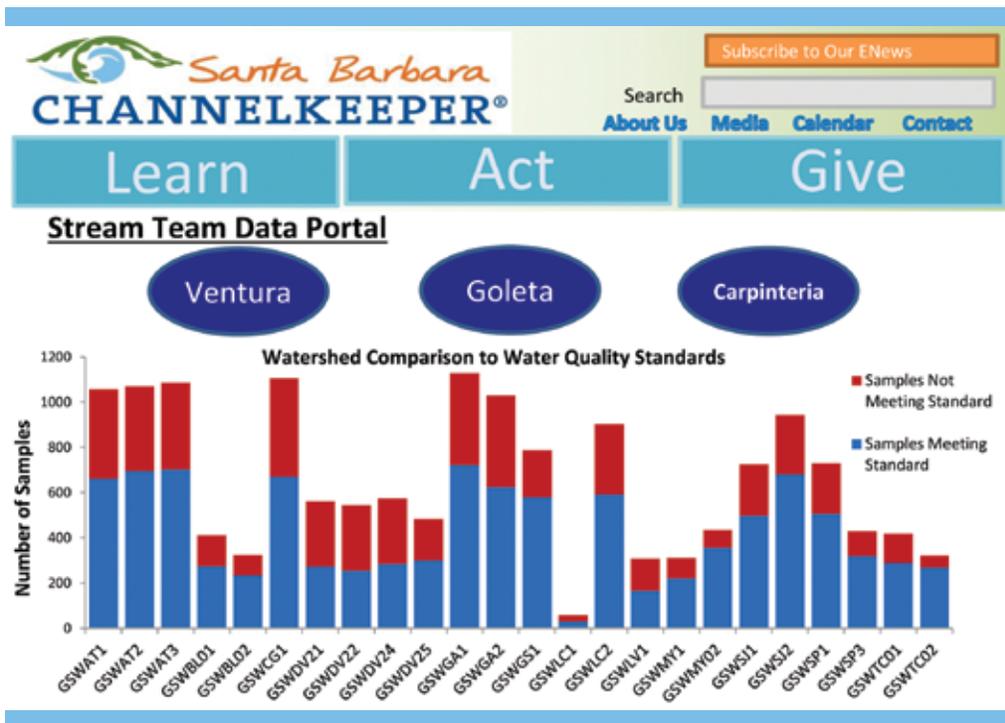
New Web Portal Provides Access to Water Quality Database

Channelkeeper is excited to announce the launch of a new interactive portal on our website that allows users to download and explore water quality data collected during our Stream Team sampling events. Our Stream Team database is one of the longest and most comprehensive water quality datasets available for our local watersheds.

The new portal will help keep the public informed about water quality in their watersheds, facilitate access to our data for scientific analyses, and inform important water resource management decisions.

Our new interface features maps, photos, and graphs that depict more than a decade's worth of scientifically sound water quality data. Graphs show data by sampling site for dissolved oxygen, conductivity, pH, temperature, turbidity, nutrients, and bacteria, and users can see the percentage of samples that did not meet water quality standards. Data depicted on watershed summary pages compare sites and

<http://www.sbck.org/current-issues/water-quality-monitoring/download-our-data/>



identify those that have persistent pollution problems. Channelkeeper would like to thank Joseph Hoover, who dedicated hundreds of hours to developing this portal for us.

Visit our website at www.sbck.org and explore this exciting new portal for yourself!

New Rain Gardens Help to Protect and Conserve Water

As part of the settlement of Channelkeeper's sewage lawsuit, the City of Santa Barbara funded a two-year project to create water harvesting and green infrastructure demonstration sites, build residential rain gardens, and provide professional training and educational workshops to build local capacity and awareness about Low Impact Development in Santa Barbara.

The Watershed Management Group (WMG), who is managing the project, has been providing subsidies to support the installation of 20 rain gardens and graywater systems on

residential properties throughout the City, as well as three green infrastructure demonstration sites at the Santa Barbara Association of Realtors, at Santa Barbara City College's (SBCC) Lifescape Garden,



and at SBCC's Schott Campus. WMG has also hosted 12 free workshops to educate the public about water harvesting, and led an 8-day water harvesting apprenticeship for local professionals.

Channelkeeper is pleased to have helped facilitate these on-the-ground projects, which will filter harmful pollution out of stormwater before it reaches local creeks and the ocean, while also recharging groundwater and reducing irrigation demand on precious water supplies by capturing and reusing rain - a free and sustainable water source.

Educating the Next Generation of Environmental Stewards

In addition to our efforts to monitor water quality, advocate for clean water, and enforce environmental laws, a core component of Channelkeeper's work is to educate the community, including youth, about human impacts on the marine environment and how we all can and must be part of the solution to pollution.

Channelkeeper's long-standing youth education program, Clean Water Environmental Stewardship Training (CWEST), provides interactive educational programs that teach kids about the aquatic sciences while fostering environmental stewardship. Channelkeeper has educated more than 20,000 young people over the past 11 years through this program!

Through our Marine Science Education Curriculum, we provide a series of hands-on lessons and experiments throughout the year at several local schools, teaching kids about ecology, oceanography, watersheds and marine habitats in the Santa Barbara Channel.

Channelkeeper has been partnering with the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History since 2006 to deliver an interactive watershed awareness curriculum to local youth, which this year included visits to the Mission Creek watershed at upstream and downstream locations as well as a kayaking field trip around the Santa Barbara Harbor.

Channelkeeper has also partnered with the University of California Sea Grant since 2008 to provide water quality training for teachers and students through the Research and Education for Students and Teachers supporting the Ormond Beach Restoration (RESTOR) Program. Ormond Beach is adjacent to the subject site of Channelkeeper's first lawsuit, where Halaco Engineering Co. operated a metal smelting factory that polluted the neighboring wetland and surface and groundwater for more than 40 years. Our students are always outraged when they learn about Halaco's egregious pollution and see firsthand the 26-acre, 40-foot high mountain of toxic slag they left behind.

Channelkeeper is honored to work with these partners to provide meaningful, hands-on scientific education and enrichment experiences for local youth, inspiring them to care about the environment by getting them outside to explore their watershed and experiment with nature. By fostering scientific inquiry and environmental stewardship in today's youth, we are helping to develop and empower tomorrow's environmental leaders, and that is a beautiful thing!



Before your next surf or swim, use the Waterkeeper Swim Guide app (download it at www.sbck.org) to check the water quality at your favorite beach. This free smartphone app provides up-to-date information about water quality conditions at 5,000 beaches, coves, lakes and creeks across North America.

11th Annual Student Art Show Celebrates the Santa Barbara Channel



ART SHOW WINNERS

1st Place: Teah Burdick, *Dos Pueblos High School*

2nd Place: Emma Tracy, *San Marcos High School*

3rd Place: Berenise Charco, *San Marcos High School*

Jurors' Choice: Jodi Jacobs, *Santa Barbara High School*

Environmental Ethic: Signa Bruun, *Santa Barbara High School*

Honorable Mentions:

Isabella Franco, *Dos Pueblos High School*

Anneka Purcell, *Dos Pueblos High School*

Blake Kelley, *Santa Barbara High School*

Alina Wasjutin & Anajanetzy Vera, *Dos Pueblos High School*

For the eleventh year in a row, Channelkeeper hosted our ocean-themed juried student art show, "What the Channel Means to Me." The goal of the show is to inspire local youth to create art that celebrates the natural beauty and diversity of the Santa Barbara Channel, and for their art to inspire others in our community.

This year, art students from Bishop Diego, San Marcos, Dos Pueblos and Santa Barbara High Schools submitted more than 250 works of art to the show. Our juror was Susan Bush, curator for the Sullivan Goss Gallery, who selected 50 pieces to be in the show as well as the prize-winning pieces.

State Senator Hannah Beth Jackson presented the winners with their awards and cash prizes – made possible by the Montecito Rotary Club and The Frameworks – at the opening exhibit on March 6th at the Jodi House Gallery. The show will remain on display there through March 21st.

J. Nichols to be Honored at Blue Water Ball

Channelkeeper is thrilled to honor Dr. Wallace "J." Nichols at this year's Blue Water Ball for his pioneering work to protect our world's oceans, and to inspire others to make a deeper connection with nature.

Dr. Nichols is a scientist, ocean advocate, community organizer, author, and dad. His is a uniquely experiential brand of activism, encouraging individuals to encounter the oceans directly, in order to build personal and emotional connections--to get their feet wet.

Nichols is a Research Associate at California Academy of Sciences and co-founder of Ocean Revolution, SEetheWILD, Grupo Tortuguero, and LiVBLUE. His research and expeditions have taken him to coasts and waterways across the globe, where he continually

finds that the emotional connection to water - rather than financial gain - is what keeps his colleagues working hard to understand and restore our blue planet.

J. has authored and co-authored more than 50 scientific papers and reports, and his work has been featured on TED, NPR, BBC, PBS, National Geographic, Time, Newsweek, Outside Magazine, Scientific American and New Scientist, among others. Lately he's been working on the Blue Mind Collective, merging the fields of neuropsychology and aquatic exploration to foster a deeper appreciation of the emotional and cognitive benefits of healthy waterways and oceans.

In his keynote address, J. will give our guests a sneak preview of his new book "Blue Mind" (coming out this summer),



and will no doubt give us a renewed sense of inspiration and hope for the future of our blue planet. Please join us in honoring J. Nichols at our Blue Water Ball on April 5th.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Stream Team Monitoring

Stream Team is Channelkeeper's volunteer-based water quality monitoring program. Every month, volunteers join Channelkeeper staff to test for common water quality parameters at numerous sites in the Ventura River and Goleta Valley watersheds. Come join us to help monitor and protect our local waterways; we will be sampling in Ventura on Saturdays at 9 am and in Goleta on Sundays at 10 am. Upcoming dates are April 12 & 13, May 3 & 4, June 7 & 8, and July 12 & 13. Email us at jennad@sbck.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 0 for more information.



14th Annual Blue Water Ball

You won't want to miss this year's Blue Water Ball, so please join us on Saturday, April 5th from 5-9:30 pm at the beautiful Montecito Country Club! This fun and inspiring event will feature a gourmet dinner, fine local wines, live music by the Doublewide Kings, an awesome auction, and a celebration of Channelkeeper's recent victories for clean water.

We are thrilled to feature Dr. Wallace "J." Nichols as our keynote speaker, who we will honor for his incredible work to protect our oceans. Learn more about J. on page 11. To become an event sponsor, donate auction items, volunteer or reserve your tickets or table today, please email morgan@sbck.org or call us at 805.563.3377 ext. 4.

World Oceans Day

Join Channelkeeper in recognizing the importance of our oceans and marine life by celebrating World Oceans Day on June 8th. Come by the Santa Barbara Ocean Festival at West Beach on Saturday, June 7th, visit the Ty Warner Sea Center to see local ocean creatures up close, or head to your favorite beach to give thanks to our oceans. Visit sbck.org to learn more about the many festivities happening in celebration of World Oceans Day.



PLEASE JOIN US at the 14th Annual Blue Water Ball - Saturday, April 5, 2014!