



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 6, 2014

CONTACT: Ben Pitterle, Watershed and Marine Program Director, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

Tel: (805) 636-6189; Email: ben@sbck.org

OR

Penny Owens, Education and Outreach Director, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

Tel: (805) 563-3377 ext. 4 or (805) 450-9552 (cell); Email: penny@sbck.org

Channelkeeper Takes Local Youth Out On the Water for Ocean Education Tours as part of World Oceans Day Activities

Santa Barbara, CA – This Saturday, June 7, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper will be providing on-the-water educational experiences for local youth and community groups as part of a host of ocean stewardship activities planned for World Oceans Day. Departing from the Santa Barbara Harbor, Channelkeeper will be taking groups of local students for free two-hour tours along the Santa Barbara coast on their boat, the *RV Channelkeeper*. Participants will learn about marine conservation and the biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel and be treated to a live tour of the wonders below the surface via an underwater drop camera operated by a Channelkeeper diver connected to a monitor onboard.

A primary goal of these educational tours is to offer a unique opportunity to local youth and families who, despite living in the Santa Barbara area, don't otherwise have the opportunity to experience the wonders of the ocean. "Many of the students we engage have never even been out on a boat before," said Penny Owens, Education and Community Outreach Director for Channelkeeper. "It's awesome to see their faces light up when they watch the monitor and get to explore a kelp forest with our diver. It's an experience we hope they'll never forget."

Channelkeeper is working with community groups, churches, schools and after-school programs to spread the word about this unique opportunity. This Saturday's trips will have youth from Santa Barbara High School's Don's Net Café and La Casa de la Raza's academic programs. In addition to providing these marine conservation boat tours, Channelkeeper is also partnering with local businesses to promote visitation and stewardship of Santa Barbara's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by offering discounted dive, kayak and recreational fishing trips that showcase our local MPAs. On Saturday, June 7, community members can also come out to the Santa Barbara Ocean Festival on West Beach from 11 am - 6 pm to learn about local MPAs and actions they can take to safeguard our oceans for future generations.

Please call Santa Barbara Channelkeeper at 563-3377 ext.3 for more information, or visit www.sbck.org.

#####

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's mission is to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through science-based advocacy, education, field work and enforcement. To learn more, visit www.sbck.org.