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August 2015 E-Newsletter

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**Channelkeeper Investigates Goleta Oil Slick**



On July 29th, an oil slick offshore of Goleta Beach was reported to local officials by two kayakers. As the Santa Barbara County Fire Department and US Coast Guard responded, Channelkeeper was also on scene on our boat, the R/V Channelkeeper. We observed patches of thick oil slick near Santa Barbara Harbor and again offshore of More Mesa as the slick traveled east. We collected samples to contribute to the official investigation if needed. Samples were also collected by the US Coast Guard and will undergo fingerprinting to determine whether the oil is from natural seeps, a new spill or the Plains All American spill.

**Plains All American Oil Spill Update**

As reports of tar and oil observations continue to come in from the community, it is important for officials and the public to be able to differentiate oil from the Plains All American spill at Refugio from other sources. On July 9th and 10th, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper participated in a tar ball sampling effort on beaches in Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles and Orange counties. The event was coordinated by the Refugio Response Unified Command (UC) in an effort to provide publicly accessible data that would serve as a reference point for the monitoring and maintenance of beaches potentially affected by the Plains All American oil spill. Prior to this sampling event, only a single sample result (a positive detection at Manhattan Beach) had been released by the UC. Of the 44 samples collected through this effort, one matched that from the Plains spill, from Las Varas Beach (Gaviota). 44 tarball samples were collected from beaches extending from the Gaviota Coast to



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## Did You Know?

### Could you save more water?

There are many hidden uses of water in our daily lives - in food, energy and the things we buy. [Check out your water footprint](#) to learn more about your [actual](#) water use and ways to [reduce](#) your water footprint.



Download the Waterkeeper Swim Guide app for real-time water quality data at local beaches



Orange County. Results can be viewed [here](#).

In other spill-related news, our partners at [California Coastkeeper Alliance](#) testified about the spill on our behalf before the California Ocean Protection Council on Wednesday, July 29 in Sacramento, highlighting our recommendation that Area Contingency Plans better incorporate specific measures to prioritize protection of Marine Protected Areas in proximity to oil spills. Channelkeeper's Executive Director also testified before the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board today, supporting their staff's recommendation that the Board refer enforcement against Plains to the California Attorney General to pursue the maximum penalties possible through judicial resolution. The Board voted unanimously to do so.

## Santa Barbara Pulls the \$55 Million Desalination Trigger

At a hearing on July 21st, the Santa Barbara City Council voted unanimously to move forward with reactivating its mothballed desalination plant, the cost of which has now climbed to a whopping \$55 million. Channelkeeper testified at the hearing to once again express our disappointment with this decision when



other, less expensive and less environmentally harmful alternatives like stormwater capture, more recycled water, and increased conservation and efficiency have not been fully exhausted. In light of mounting evidence of an impending El Niño, we also urged Santa Barbara to follow the lead of cities like Los Angeles who are investing heavily in large-scale stormwater capture projects to prepare to catch some of that rain when it finally comes and store it for later use.

Meanwhile, the City is moving forward with the study to assess the feasibility of using a subsurface intake to draw water into the desal plant as opposed to the screened open ocean intake they currently intend to use. Subsurface intakes are known to virtually eliminate the death of massive numbers of marine organisms caused by open ocean intakes. The City has formed a Technical Advisory Panel to oversee the study and are currently developing a work plan. There will be a public meeting to present the work plan and solicit comments from the public on Wednesday, August 5th from 9:30 am-12 noon in Council Chambers at City Hall (735 Anacapa Street). Channelkeeper will participate in this and all future meetings of the Panel to bird-dog the process.

## Santa Barbara County Bans the Bag & Goleta Drops the Ball

Last Tuesday, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors joined more than 100 other jurisdictions in California when it voted to enact a plastic bag ban ordinance. The Board will formally adopt the ordinance after its second reading on August 25th. Similar to the City of Santa Barbara's ordinance, the county's will



ban plastic carryout bags at grocery stores, convenience stores, liquor stores, and pharmacies in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County, but will still allow for produce bags as well as plastic bags at restaurants and non-grocery retail stores. It also requires regulated stores to charge a 10-cent fee for paper bags in order to incentivize the use of reusable bags.

Later that same day, the City of Goleta voted to wait for the outcome of the referendum on the state-wide bag ban before taking any action on a local bag ordinance. The state-wide bag ban, which was signed by the Governor last year, was scheduled to enter into effect on July 1, 2015, but the plastic bag industry succeeded in collecting enough signatures to put a vote to overturn it on the November 2016 ballot. We're very disappointed that Goleta will continue to distribute 15 million plastic bags annually while neighboring municipalities (the cities of Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Ojai and the counties of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo) have all done their part to stem the tide of plastic pollution. If you live in Goleta and support a plastic bag ban, please contact your City Councilmembers and let them know!

Check out this [infographic](#) created this past spring by UCSB Bren School students highlighting the economic benefits of a plastic bag ordinance in Goleta.

## Stream Team Data Reports Available



Channelkeeper has just released Ventura and Goleta [Stream Team Data Reports](#) for the 2014 water year. The reports summarize our Stream Team water quality data from October 2013-September 2014 and compare the data to applicable water quality standards. In both the Ventura River and Goleta Valley watersheds, a higher percentage of samples failed to meet water quality standards in 2014 than ever before in the history of our Stream Team Program (which we launched in 2000). Each report also focuses on a particular prominent issue in the watershed during that year - impacts of channelization in Goleta, and low flows on the Ventura River. Download PDFs of these reports

[here](#).

## Celebrate Swimmable Waters - July 31 to August 2

Channelkeeper works to protect the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds so they're clean and safe for everyone to enjoy. In 2013,



the California Legislature passed a resolution (coauthored by our local reps Senator Hannah Beth Jackson and Assemblymember Das Williams) to officially commemorate July 25th as "Swimmable California Day," recognizing Californians' right to waters that are clean and safe for swimming. For the second year in a row, Waterkeeper organizations across the globe will be celebrating swimmable water from July 31 to August 2. Click [here](#) to learn more about Waterkeeper's

#swimmablewater photo contest and how you can enter to win a GoPro. Locally, join Channelkeeper as we celebrate swimmable water on Thursday, July 30th at 6:30 pm for an ocean swim with our friends at [Reef & Run](#) at the Cabrillo Bathhouse at East Beach. There will be three swim race lengths of 500m, 1k and 1 mile. Post-race there will be hot showers, live music and festivities for athletes and families alike. Here's to clean, swimmable water!

## Stream Team August 1 & 2



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 protect our local waterways. Stream Team in Ventura will meet at 9am on Saturday, August 1st, and Goleta

Stream Team will meet at 10am on Sunday, August 2nd. For more information, visit our [website](#), [email](#) us or call 805.563.3377 ext. 5.

## Special Discounted SCUBA Trip to Naples Reef! August 9th

Join Santa Barbara Channelkeeper and Captain Ron with Ocean Sports Private Charters on August 9th for a special 6-pak SCUBA trip to the Naples Marine Protected Area (MPA). For the discounted price of \$450, you and five friends can experience the breathtaking beauty of Naples Reef on a ¾ day trip aboard the 42' *Miss Devin*. Divers on this trip - which is partly sponsored

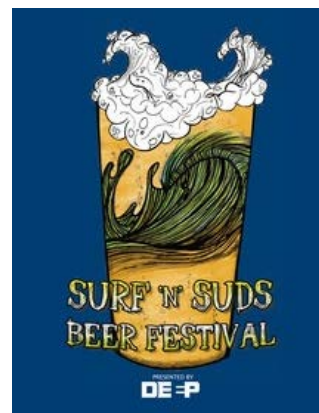


by Channelkeeper - will also be featured in materials we're putting together to promote eco-tourism in our local MPAs.

Naples Reef, off Santa Barbara's Gaviota Coast, is one of southern California's richest ocean areas. This small offshore pinnacle reef provides impressively complex habitat and has some of the most diverse and productive sea life in all of California. Dive in and experience the diversity of marine life that makes the Naples MPA so unique. To get a sneak peak of what you might see, check out the [recent video from our dive at Naples on May 19th](#). To book the trip, contact Caption Ron at 805.736.3186. Rental dive gear is also available.

## Surf & Suds Beer Festival Saturday, August 15th

DEEP Surf Magazine brings you the third annual "Surf 'n' Suds" on Saturday, August 15th in sunny Carpinteria. This awesome beer festival with a surf twist will feature over 60 craft breweries, live bands and plenty of food trucks, more than a dozen local surfboard shapers, and several ocean-related nonprofits, including Channelkeeper. [Get your tickets](#) today, as the event has sold out the past two years!



## Water Conservation Summit August 22nd

Learn more about what you can do to save water in and around your home at this free event on Saturday, August 22nd from 11 am-2 pm at the Faulkner Gallery in the Santa Barbara Public Library. This event will feature workshops,

innovative solutions, and information on water-saving rebates. The event is co-sponsored by Assemblymember Das Williams, the City of SB, the Carpinteria Valley and Goleta Water Districts, SB County Water Agency and Sweetwater Collaborative. Click [here](#) to learn more.



## Become a Channelkeeper Member!

Your support for Channelkeeper's efforts is needed now more than ever. Become a member of the Channelkeeper crew today with your tax-deductible donation. You'll be investing in clean water and healthy communities along the Santa Barbara Channel today and for future generations. With your membership, you will receive our regular newsletters, news updates and action alerts, invitations to special Channelkeeper events and fun volunteer opportunities, and a free Channelkeeper sticker. All new donors contributing \$50 or more can also receive a Channelkeeper t-shirt, and for donations of \$250 or more, bi-annual issues of *Waterkeeper* magazine. Sign up today by calling 805.563.3377 ext. 2, [emailing](#) us, or clicking [here](#).



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