



April 2016 E-Newsletter

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Santa Barbara Passes on Environmental Improvements to Desalination Plant



Last Tuesday, Channelkeeper testified before the Santa Barbara City Council to urge them to delve deeper into the feasibility of making its desalination plant less harmful to the marine environment. At

the hearing, City staff presented the findings of a recent study that was meant to assess the feasibility of utilizing subsurface intakes to draw seawater into the desalination plant. The study was done because Channelkeeper successfully lobbied the Regional Water Board to require it of the City out of concern for the harmful impacts to marine life that will be caused by the desalination plant's existing "open ocean" intake. Unfortunately, however, the study found that subsurface intakes would not be feasible because they could not produce 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water. Channelkeeper contended that the study should have determined whether subsurface intakes could feasibly produce 3,125 AFY - the amount of water the plant is actually being recommissioned to produce. Based on information presented in the study, five of the six subsurface intake technologies examined would have likely proven feasible at this level of production.

Channelkeeper asked the Council to have the study revised to provide the City and its ratepayers with a useful and realistic analysis of whether a subsurface intake could feasibly be built so we have the relevant information needed to decide whether or not to install one to minimize the environmental impact of desal. Unfortunately though, the Council elected not to do so. (Click [here](#) for our press release about this.) Channelkeeper is now lobbying the Regional Water Board to require the City to revise the study. The Board agreed to place it on the agenda at one of their next hearings. Meanwhile, please join us in telling Santa Barbara City Council that you'd like to see a fair and honest assessment of subsurface intakes, and if they're found to be feasible, that the City should commit to installing them in order to avoid killing trillions of marine organisms every day.

Important Hearing on Ag Pollution Regulations Monday, April 14th

In the wake of our legal



Did You Know? Check the Coast at Tax Time

When you choose the "Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund" on your California tax return (Voluntary Contribution fund #424), your money will directly support Whale Tail Grants which help organizations like ours. These grants fund programs that clean up shorelines, restore habitat, promote beach access, and help kids learn about and experience the coast. Learn more at ChecktheCoast.org, and thank you for protecting our coast and ocean!



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



victory last summer to curb agricultural pollution on the Central Coast, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has developed a similar new program (commonly referred to as the Ag Waiver) to regulate discharges from irrigated agriculture in Ventura and LA counties.

Channelkeeper is playing a lead role in this process to ensure that the program adequately protects rivers, streams, wetlands, and groundwater supplies. In coordination with Ventura Coastkeeper, we are leading a coalition of environmental and environmental justice groups to lobby the RWQCB for stronger regulations to keep farms from contaminating waterways and aquifers.

Agriculture is one of the biggest sources of water pollution both nationwide and in Ventura County, yet it is one of the least regulated industries when it comes to water quality. Unfortunately, the RWQCB's draft Ag Waiver falls short of what is needed to adequately protect water quality, for one because it fails to require many farmers to ever actually comply with water quality limits when they discharge waste into our waterways.

The LA RWQCB will consider whether to adopt or modify the draft Ag Waiver at a public hearing on April 14th in Simi Valley, and **we need your help! Please join us at the hearing to speak up for stronger protections against agricultural pollution.** Click [here](#) to read Channelkeeper's comment letter, and for more information, [email](#) or call us at 805.563.3377 ext.3.

Channelkeeper Comments on Environmental Assessment of Offshore Fracking



Two federal agencies responsible for overseeing oil and gas development have produced an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the impacts of offshore well stimulation treatments (fracking and acidizing). Unfortunately, the analysis fell short of

providing the complete evaluation necessary to protect public health and natural resources. Channelkeeper submitted [written comments](#) that addressed how the EA incorrectly concludes that the existing National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit provides sufficient coverage to address well stimulation fluids. After considering public comments, the agencies will issue a final EA in the next few months.

ACTION ALERT! Support Funding to Repair Leaking Summerland Oil Well

As many locals know, our coast



was home to one of the largest oil booms in our nation's history beginning in the late 1800s. Back then, once oil wells were no longer productive, they were often abandoned with slapdash techniques. We have several of these poorly-abandoned "legacy wells" along our coast which still leak significant



volumes of oil, particularly in the Summerland area. The Becker Well, located in the surf zone on Summerland Beach, is the worst offender, often causing noxious odors, sheens on the water, and oil on the beach.

Fortunately, thanks to advocacy by Channelkeeper and other environmental groups, concerned citizens, and elected officials, the State Lands Commission is now investigating the Becker Well and designing a plan to properly re-cap it, and has put forward a proposal to fund this important work as part of the draft state budget. We need your help to make sure these funds remain in the final budget so that the Becker Well can be properly sealed. Please click [here](#) to send a message to the State Budget Committee voicing your support for this funding to remain in the budget so we can rid Summerland Beach of this toxic threat to public health and the environment.

Moving Beyond Fossil Fuels - "After the Spill" Speaker Series Next Wednesday, March 30th



Join Channelkeeper and the [Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History](#) for the final installment of our six-part "After the Spill" speaker series next Wednesday, March 30th from 6pm-8pm in Farrand Hall at the Natural History Museum. The panelists will discuss sustainable energy and transportation in Santa Barbara County, and how we as a

community can move beyond fossil fuels. Speakers include:

- Jefferson Litten from the Community Environmental Council, who will discuss Community Choice Aggregation.
- Ed France from the Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, who will discuss Santa Barbara's Bicycle Master Plan.
- Andy Heller, SBCK Board Member, who will address how individuals can move away from fossil fuels in our daily lives.

Admission is free. For more information about the series, click [here](#).

Stream Team April 2nd & 3rd



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, April 2nd, and Goleta Stream Team will meet at 10am on Sunday, April 3rd. For more information, visit our [website](#), [email](#) us or call 805.563.3377 ext. 5.

Help Monitor our Marine Protected Areas! Next Training Workshop - April 7th

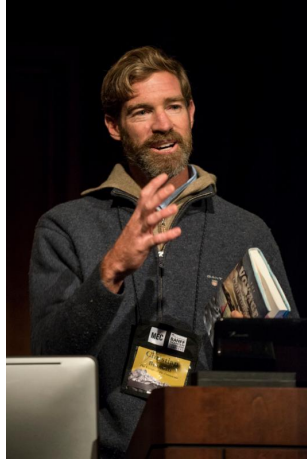


Do you enjoy long walks on the beach and helping to promote ocean conservation? Channelkeeper is looking for dedicated volunteers to help us record and track human activities in and adjacent to Santa Barbara's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) through our *MPA Watch* program. *MPA Watch* volunteers observe and collect unbiased data on coastal and marine resource use, which provides important information to understand how people are

using MPAs and to help inform MPA management. Becoming an *MPA Watch* volunteer is easy and fun. Save the date for our next volunteer training workshop on Thursday, April 7th at 6:30pm at UCSB in Bren Hall Room 4016. Snacks and drinks will be provided! If you want to attend or learn more about *MPA Watch*, please [email](#) or call us at 805.563.3377 ext. 4. Every *MPA Watch* volunteer will receive a free Channelkeeper t-shirt, and volunteers that complete 10 surveys will receive an additional exciting treat!

16th Annual Blue Water Ball Saturday, April 16th

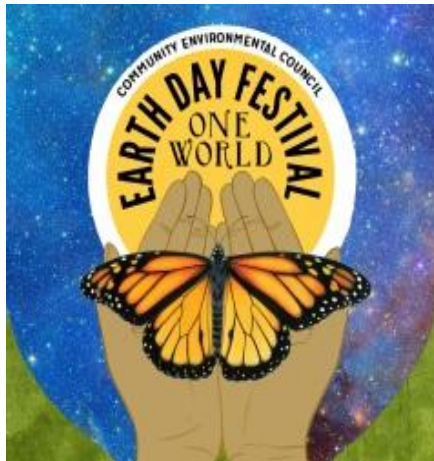
Please join us for Channelkeeper's 16th



annual Blue Water Ball fundraising gala on Saturday, April 16th at 5:00pm in the beautiful rotunda at Deckers' LEED-certified headquarters. This fun event, to be presided over by Master of Ceremonies Billy Baldwin, will begin with fine local wines, appetizers and a tempting silent auction, followed by a gourmet dinner and an inspiring keynote speech by acclaimed waterman and author Christian Beamish. We'll end the night with dancing as we celebrate Channelkeeper's recent victories for clean water. To reserve your tickets or table today or become a sponsor, auction donor or volunteer, [email](#) or call us at 805.563.3377 ext. 2. We look forward to seeing you there!

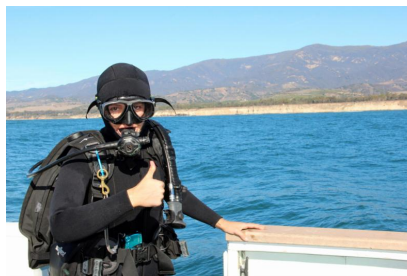
Celebrate the Earth at the SB Earth Day Festival

April 16th & 17th



Celebrate the Earth at the Community Environmental Council's annual Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival, a two-day extravaganza on Saturday, April 16th from 11 am-7 pm and Sunday, April 17th from 11 am-6 pm at Alameda Park. Stop by Channelkeeper's booth on Saturday to learn about and take action to support our current initiatives to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds. We hope to see you there!

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](#).

