



Santa Barbara CHANNELKEEPER®

Keeping watch for clean water

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Santa Barbara CHANNELKEEPER®

*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

The times they are a-changin'. Let's start with the good news – most of California is finally seeing the end of its deepest drought on record. After five desperately dry years, the rains have returned, rivers are flowing again, the landscape is green, and reservoirs and aquifers are filling up. This bodes well for flora and fauna, the economy, and our communities – for now.

South Coast communities have done an exemplary job conserving water in response to the drought. However, it's imperative that we continue that trajectory and make conservation a way of life, drought or no drought, because with the earth's climate continuing to warm, it's likely that droughts will become more frequent and more severe in the future. You can count on Channelkeeper to continue to champion a shift to more sustainable water supplies like recycled water, rainwater capture, and continued improvements in water use efficiency and conservation, which not only make us better prepared for future droughts, but also reduce pollution and save money.

Now, the not-so-good news. With the shift in our nation's leadership, efforts are already underway to undermine critical federal agencies and laws that we depend on to defend our environment, wildlife and communities from pollution. We are likely to see ongoing attempts to gut the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act, re-open federal coastal waters and lands to new oil drilling, and de-fund environmental agencies and enforcement.

Fortunately, Channelkeeper and our partners are prepared and already implementing a multi-pronged strategy to defend our critical environmental protections, and we are uniquely positioned to succeed. What makes Santa Barbara Channelkeeper such an effective organization is that we are razor-sharp focused on protecting water resources on the targeted stretch of coast from Gaviota to Ventura, but we are also affecting change at the state and federal levels through our active participation in the California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) and the national Waterkeeper Alliance. We are working closely with our Waterkeeper partners throughout California and across the US to defend the Clean Water Act and other critical environmental laws, hold our government and polluters accountable, and strengthen protections for our waterways and communities at the state and local levels to shore up against rollbacks at the federal level.

For one, CCKA and California Waterkeepers played a lead role in designing Senate Bill (SB) 49 - a state bill recently introduced to defend the environment from federal rollbacks by enshrining protections currently provided in the Clean Water Act and other national environmental laws into state law. The bill seeks to protect the rights of citizens to enjoy safe and healthy waters, and to



KIRA REDMOND | Executive Director



Channelkeeper Compels Santa Barbara to Reduce Sewage Spills

Thanks to Channelkeeper's ongoing vigilance, the City of Santa Barbara must ramp up its efforts to prevent sewage spills and repair and replace leaky sewer pipes, which threaten public health, our environment, property and the local economy by polluting creeks, beaches and coastal waters with pathogens and toxic chemicals.

In January, Channelkeeper and the City agreed to extend the legally-binding settlement we signed in 2012 to improve the operation and maintenance of Santa Barbara's sewage system and reduce spills. Our 2012 settlement resolved a Clean Water Act lawsuit Channelkeeper filed against the City in 2011 for having one of the highest rates of sewage spills on the Central Coast without an adequate program to address it. That settlement, which was set to expire in March 2017, required the City to increase its level of effort and funding to repair and replace leaking sewer pipes and progressively reduce sewage spills.

Unfortunately, however, the City exceeded the maximum number of spills allowed under our 2012 settlement in 3 of the first 4 years of the 5-year agreement. These violations prompted Channelkeeper to notify the City that we would require an extension of our agreement or be forced to seek recourse from the Court.

The City came to the table, and we successfully negotiated an agreement to extend our 2012 settlement for an additional 3 years, require specific improvements to the City's sewer pipe cleaning, assessment, and spill response protocols, and further reduce sewage spills. Channelkeeper commends the City for committing to these actions, and we look forward to working with them to better protect water quality, public health, aquatic life and our local economy from harmful sewage spills.



From the Helm

continued from page 2

empower California's most vulnerable communities to fend off various forms of toxic water pollution. Waterkeepers are also strategizing to develop and champion municipal ordinances to enact similar environmental protections at the local level. In addition, Waterkeeper Alliance is closely tracking federal legislation and mobilizing Waterkeepers across the nation to activate their local networks and urge their Congressional representatives to oppose federal environmental rollbacks.

None of this will be easy. We urgently need your support and activism now more than ever before. But with Channelkeeper's unique ability to affect change at all levels of government, and with your support, we will weather this storm and defend what we hold dear. Onward and upward!

Resurrecting the Ventura River



Winter rains have brought the Ventura River back to life - for the time being - but its long-term survival still hangs in the balance as efforts to manage groundwater pumping in the watershed move forward.

Many people don't realize that most of our local rivers are fed by springs that send groundwater to the surface, meaning that stream flow

dismissed, but is now trying to bog it down by appealing for the right to bring an additional 400 water right holders into Channelkeeper's lawsuit.

Meanwhile, Channelkeeper is also serving as the lead environmental advocate in the process now underway to implement California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014

on the Ventura River and what Channelkeeper is doing to prevent it. Please follow and share our [#ResurrectTheRiver](#) social media campaign, and visit www.sbck.org/rtr to check out videos and other information and sign our petition to voice your support for sustainable water management strategies that satisfy the needs of people AND leave enough water in the river to sustain nature.

Sign our petition to voice your support for sustainable water management strategies.

only exists when there is enough groundwater beneath them. During droughts, groundwater levels may naturally decline, but pumping from wells can cause many rivers to dry up much faster than they normally would.

In 2015, Channelkeeper filed a ground-breaking lawsuit targeting over-pumping by the City of Ventura, which can cause key stretches of the Ventura River to run dry. The City tried but failed to have our lawsuit

in the Upper Ventura River and Ojai Valley Groundwater Basins. We're attending public meetings, reviewing technical plans and proposals, and providing comments and testimony to ensure that local and state agencies are protecting the Ventura River watershed from over-pumping as required under SGMA.

Finally, Channelkeeper is working hard to raise awareness about the impacts of over-pumping



Take Action to Cap Leaking Oil Wells!



California's Central Coast was home to one of the largest oil booms in US history beginning in the late 1800s. Back then, once oil wells had reached their useful life, they were often abandoned with slapdash techniques. Today, several of these poorly-abandoned "legacy wells" leak significant volumes of oil, particularly in Summerland and Ellwood.

Fortunately, thanks to advocacy by Channelkeeper, other environmental groups, concerned citizens, and elected officials, the California State Lands Commission is now investigating the Becker Well, one of the most polluting legacy wells, and designing a plan to properly re-cap it. In addition, State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson has authored legislation, Senate Bill 44, which would help monitor and properly cap the 200+ legacy wells along our coast.

The Governor vetoed a similar bill last year, so your activism is urgently needed to show state legislators and Governor Brown that there is broad support for immediate action to stop the pollution of our beaches from these poorly abandoned wells. Please visit sbck.org/legacywells to learn more and take action today.

Voice Your Support at
sbck.org/legacywells

California Bans the Bag!

This past November, Californians voted to uphold the nation's first state law to ban plastic grocery bags, despite a vigorous campaign by the plastic bag industry to overturn it. The statewide bag ban is now in effect in all parts of the state that did



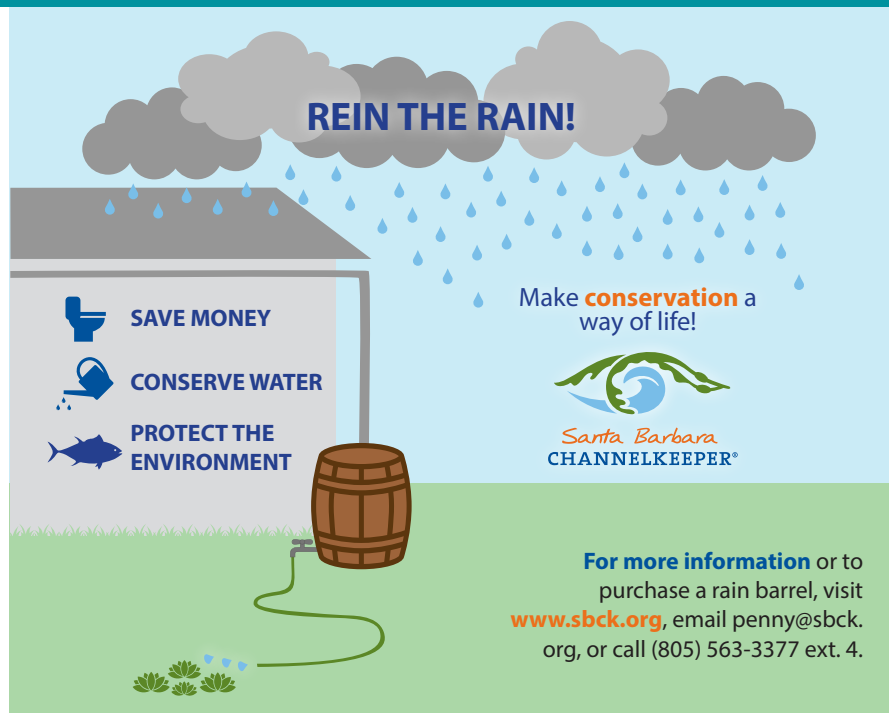
not already have a local bag ban ordinance in place. This brings to a triumphant end more than eight years of advocacy by Channelkeeper, the Community Environmental Council, and many other partners across California. Many thanks to all voters who supported this landmark law, which will protect our rivers, wildlife and ocean from plastic bag pollution and sets an example for the rest of the nation.

In an effort to further reduce plastic pollution in our waterways, beaches, and ocean, Channelkeeper is now lobbying South Coast cities to join the 99 California municipalities that have adopted Expanded Polystyrene Foam (EPS) ordinances. EPS is an extremely pervasive form of plastic pollution routinely found in our creeks and beaches. Stay tuned for updates on how you can get involved!

Make Conservation a Way of Life

Despite the deluge of rain this past winter, as of March 2017, Lake Cachuma - the South Coast's primary water supply source - is still only at 48.7% capacity, and southern Santa Barbara County is one of the last regions in California that remains in drought. With climate change, droughts are likely to be more common in the future, and areas like southern California with drier climates must make water conservation a way of life. With this in mind, Channelkeeper has been championing a shift to a more sustainable water supply portfolio that includes rainwater capture, recycled water and heightened water use efficiency rather than more expensive and environmentally harmful alternatives like ocean desalination.

Complementing our advocacy to this end, we're also putting practical tools into people's hands to realize that vision. Through our "Rein the Rain" Project, Channelkeeper is partnering with local brewers and vintners, including Figueroa Mountain Brewery, Melville Winery, Beckmen Vineyards, Buttonwood Winery, and Imagine Wines, to convert wooden barrels that were previously used to age wine and



beer into rain barrels and getting them out in the community. We purchased simple kits that convert the barrels into rain barrels and are offering the barrels and kits for sale for \$100.

Every drop counts, whether we're in a drought or not.

These attractive barrels hold 60 gallons and fill quickly by capturing rain running off your roof through a downspout and storing it for later reuse for plant and landscape irrigation. The barrels are available for pickup at the Channelkeeper office (or we can deliver for \$20), and the do-it-yourself conversion kits come complete with step-by-step directions and all the pieces needed to connect the barrel to a rectangular downspout. Email us at penny@sbck.org to reserve yours today.

Outdoor residential irrigation represents at least 50% of water use in Santa Barbara, so we're also promoting additional steps to reduce

outdoor water use. Installing larger rainwater harvesting systems like cisterns or slimline tanks in your yard can capture even greater amounts of rainwater (500+ gallons) for later reuse. Other options include upgrading landscape irrigation equipment, installing smart water meters, replacing water-thirsty plants with drought-tolerant ones, and installing rain gardens and bioswales that soak up rain. Another great way to conserve water is to install a greywater harvesting system that diverts water from your washing machine (which would otherwise go to the sewage treatment plant and then the ocean) and reuses it to irrigate outdoor plants and trees. Several South Coast municipalities offer rebates for such measures.

Every drop counts, whether we're in a drought or not. Please help us make water conservation a way of life on the South Coast! Visit sbck.org/water-conservation to learn more.

Marine Protected Areas for the People!



Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were established by California lawmakers to preserve our marine natural heritage for future generations to enjoy. MPAs limit or prohibit fishing, but public access and non-consumptive recreation are fully allowed. Channelkeeper has been working hard to raise community awareness, support and stewardship for MPAs, including by:

- sponsoring SCUBA, kayak, and educational excursions to MPAs for 200 people
- forming partnerships with six local businesses to promote MPAs
- engaging 250 volunteers through our MPA Watch citizen science monitoring program
- gathering 10,000 signatures on a petition to support ongoing protections for MPAs
- reaching tens of thousands of people through interactive MPA SCUBA dive maps, testimonials, videos, social media campaigns, brochures, events, presentations and more.

Learn how you can explore MPAs in the Santa Barbara Channel and get involved by visiting sbck.org/mpa.

Channelkeeper Launches New CSTAR Monitoring Program

Channelkeeper recently launched a new monitoring program in partnership with the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) MARINe Network. Our Citizen Scientists for Tidepool Assemblage Research (CSTAR) Project supplements more than 20 years of data collected by marine scientists at sites across the West Coast by training and utilizing volunteers to monitor the health of the rocky intertidal habitat.

Thanks to funding from UCSB's Coastal Fund, Channelkeeper recently launched CSTAR as a pilot project at Coal Oil Point Reserve. The project will subsequently be replicated at other sites across the coast, enabling the collection of more frequent data at established monitoring sites where funding has been cut or at new sites to fill monitoring gaps. The data will be used by BOEM and their 45+ research partners to evaluate the health of rocky intertidal ecosystems, inform important coastal resource management decisions and climate change adaptation strategies, and help assess impacts from future oil spills. To learn more or to get involved, visit sbck.org/cstar.



Meet the *R/V Channelkeeper*



A critical and unique tool that helps Channelkeeper fulfill our mission to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel is our boat, the *Research Vessel (R/V) Channelkeeper*, a 31-foot JC former lobster fishing vessel. We set sail several times a month to patrol the Channel for pollution, monitor water quality and the health of marine habitats, conduct scientific research, and educate local youth and other citizens about the extraordinary biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel.

Here are just a few examples of ways we use the *R/V Channelkeeper* to serve our community as THE on-the-water environmental watchdog for the Santa Barbara Channel:

- Cruise ship monitoring
- “Seafari” experiential education cruises
- Ocean acidification research
- Harmful algal bloom monitoring
- MPA monitoring patrols
- Fish and invertebrate surveys
- Oil spill monitoring and response
- Invasive algae removal
- Fukushima radiation monitoring
- Eelgrass habitat surveys and restoration
- Community support (Audubon Christmas Bird Count, Friendship Paddle, etc.)
- Marine debris removal
- Beach clean-ups at the Channel Islands
- MPA education and outreach



Visit sbck.org/our-boat to learn more, or contact us at info@sbck.org or (805) 563-3377 to support or get involved in our boat-based programs.

Celebrate Earth Day at the 17th Annual Blue Water Ball



Channelkeeper's 17th annual Blue Water Ball fundraising gala will take place on Saturday, April 22nd from 5:00 pm - 9:30 pm at Deckers's LEED-certified headquarters in Goleta. Please join us for a celebratory evening of fine food, local wines, an awesome silent auction, dancing, and an inspiring keynote address by clean water champion Sara Aminzadeh.

Sara studied environmental studies and political science at UCSB and fell in love with the Santa Barbara coast and environmental work, logging hours at the Sea Center touch tanks, tracking endangered foxes on Santa Cruz Island, and removing non-native species from the wetlands near Isla Vista.

Today, Sara serves as Executive Director of the California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA), which unites the 13 local Waterkeeper organizations from San Diego to the Oregon border to fight for swimmable, fishable and drinkable waters for California communities and ecosystems. Sara and her team are extremely effective

in influencing the enactment and enforcement of state-level policies to protect our coast and waterways across California. To help advance our clean water agenda, Sara spearheaded the creation of the Blue Business Council, a network of California businesses who recognize that clean water and a healthy coast are critical to their success and our economy. CCKA informs, engages and activates Council members to speak out and show decision makers there is business support for strong laws and policies to protect California's most valuable and threatened natural capital – our coast, ocean, bays, rivers and wetlands, which is critically important given the mounting opposition to environmental protection by polluters and their friends in Washington.

Please join us to learn more about this vital work and to celebrate Channelkeeper's many recent victories for clean water. Tickets to the event are \$200. For more information or to reserve your tickets or table today (we WILL sell out!), visit www.bluewaterball.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 2. We look forward to seeing you there!

First Annual SB AQUATHON Makes a Splash



Last September, Channelkeeper launched a new event to bring ocean lovers of all ages together to jump in and enjoy the water we work so hard to protect. As part of the Waterkeeper Alliance/Toyota SPLASH Event Series, Channelkeeper's first annual Santa Barbara AQUATHON brought scores of swimmers, SUPers and surfers out to Leadbetter Beach for some friendly competition and a salty good time.

Guided by experts from Channel Islands Outfitters, Surf Happens, and our friends at Reef & Run, AQUATHON participants had the chance to swim 500m or 1K courses, stand-up paddle a 1K course, or catch waves in a surf contest just for groms. The post-race celebration featured live music, Hawaiian shave ice, chances to win awesome raffle and auction items (including GoPro cameras, Sanuk shoes and concert tickets), and prizes of gorgeous Turkish towels donated by Riviera Towel Company for the winners. Everyone left stoked for the 2nd annual AQUATHON, so we hope to see you there on Saturday, September 30th!



Donor Spotlight

Channelkeeper donors Jack and Judy Stapelmann have played a tremendous role in our success ever since they made their first donation in 2001, and we sat down with Jack recently to ask what inspired him to get involved.

Why support Channelkeeper?

My experience working offshore for oil companies and boating around the Channel Islands for many years opened my eyes to the environmental problems in the Santa Barbara Channel, and when a friend introduced me to Channelkeeper, I saw how I could make a difference. Channelkeeper is impressive because, although it's a small organization, it works swiftly and effectively and uses its resources efficiently. Thanks to our hard work and successes over the years, Channelkeeper is now known and respected, and I am proud of what we have accomplished.

You've contributed to our success in so many ways. Anything you're particularly proud of?

I was thrilled to spearhead the Student Art Show 14 years ago. It's so important to get young people involved.

What do you see as our most significant challenge?

We're entering a critical period as the new Administration in Washington DC threatens to dismantle the EPA and cut funding for environmental endeavors. It will be a challenge to raise awareness, raise funds and still do the work. That's why Judy and I feel it's more important than ever to support Channelkeeper, and we're committed to that over the long term.



Sustained, annual giving builds our capacity to tackle the challenges ahead. Our deepest thanks go to Jack and Judy and all the generous donors who make a difference by helping ensure that Channelkeeper is prepared to do what needs to be done to protect this incredible stretch of coast we call home.

14th Annual Student Art Show Celebrating the Santa Barbara Channel



2017 Channelkeeper Student Art Show Winners

This past winter, Channelkeeper hosted our 14th annual ocean-themed juried student art show, "What the Channel Means to Me." The goal of the show, which is open to high school students from Carpinteria to Goleta, is to inspire local youth to create art that celebrates the natural beauty and biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel, and for their art to inspire others in our community.

Art students from Anacapa, Bishop Diego, Dos Pueblos, San Marcos and Santa Barbara High Schools submitted more than 200 works of art to vie for the chance to be featured in this year's show. Our juror, Santa Barbara County Office of Arts and Culture Chief Curator Maiza Hixson, selected 52 awe-inspiring pieces to be in the show, as well as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners, a jurors' choice award,

four Honorable Mentions and an Environmental Ethic Award. At the opening exhibit on March 2nd, Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson presented the winners with awards and cash prizes made possible by our show sponsors, Trillium Enterprises and the Montecito Rotary Club Foundation. The show remained on display at the Jodi House Gallery throughout the month of March. We're thrilled to be able to provide this unique opportunity for local youth to create beautiful art inspired by the ocean and to be recognized and rewarded for their creativity.

Changes to Our Team

Channelkeeper is thrilled to welcome five new members to our Board of Directors – Nancy Hussey, Hank Mitchel, Brad Newton, Jeff Phillips, and Randy Solakian.

Nancy Hussey is a Realtor with Coldwell Banker and currently sits on the Ethics Committee of the Santa Barbara Board of Realtors. A Santa Barbara native, she has served on various school Boards, chaired auctions at Mt. Carmel and the Profant Foundation, and was past president of the Villas Home Owners Association. When not tending to her clients, Nancy enjoys playing golf, tennis, sailing and hiking.

After working as an importer and manufacturer of industrial equipment for many years, Hank Mitchel became ordained and served as a priest for the Episcopal Church for 15 years. He has served on the Board of the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum and currently serves as a certified naturalist and docent with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Channel Islands National Park. Hank has been a boater and ocean enthusiast all his life.

Brad Newton is a geologist and hydrologist and founder of Newton Geo-Hydrology Consulting Services. Brad is an experienced technical advisor on water resource management and planning, hydrogeological assessments and investigations, resolution of water quality problems, and compliance with water quality standards. He is an avid outdoorsman and enjoys board and body surfing, diving, fishing, hiking, micro-farming, and exploring nature.

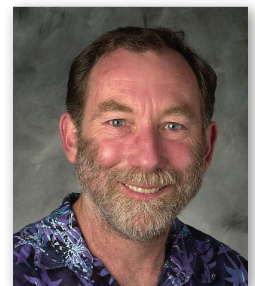
Jeff Phillips has worked as an environmental contaminants biologist specializing in natural resource damage assessment and oil spill response and is now a senior fish and wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Ventura Field Office serving as the Conservation Banking Coordinator. Jeff is an also adjunct professor at Antioch University where he teaches Conservation Biology and Eco-psychology.

Randy Solakian is a real estate agent at Coldwell Banker Previews in Montecito. He has served on the Board of the Community Environmental Council and is a long-time supporter of various environmental, cultural and educational non-profit charities in the Santa Barbara area. His interests include swimming, surfing, boating, diving, hiking, travel, skiing, gardening, and making a difference.



Nancy Hussey, Hank Mitchel, Brad Newton, Jeff Phillips, Randy Solakian

Channelkeeper also owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Bob Warner, who recently stepped down from our Board after 13 years of service, including as President of the Board in 2016. Bob continues to work on marine conservation issues at UCSB and as the Research Chair for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Most recently, he was named to the Board of the Benioff Ocean Initiative, which is seeking real solutions to pressing ocean problems by combining crowdsourced ideas with dedicated scientists. We couldn't let Bob get away though and convinced him to serve on our Advisory Council.



Bob Warner

THANK YOU Bob, and welcome aboard to our new Directors!



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Upcoming Events

Stream Team

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. Upcoming Goleta Stream Team events will take place at 10 am on May 7th, June 4th, July 9th, and August 6th. Upcoming Ventura Stream Team events will take place at 9 am on May 6th, August 5th, and November 4th. Email jennad@sbck.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 5 for more information.



Santa Barbara AQUATHON!

Join us at the 2nd annual Santa Barbara AQUATHON on September 30th at Leadbetter Beach and dive in with other ocean-lovers to swim and SUP for clean water. Kids 13 and under can also participate in a groms-only surf contest. We're looking for energetic volunteers, cash and product sponsors, and water-loving community groups and businesses to help make the 2nd annual AQUATHON even better than the first, so please contact us at 805.563.3377 ext. 2 or morgan@sbck.org if you want to be a part of the coolest new on-the-water event in town! Visit www.aquathon.info for more information.

Volunteer for MPA Watch

Are you into marine conservation AND long walks on the beach? Learn how to collect valuable data on our local Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) while walking along the beautiful beaches of Campus Point, Naples and Gaviota through Channelkeeper's MPA Watch program. MPA Watch is a citizen science initiative to monitor human uses of coastal MPAs and collect data to help inform the management, enforcement and science of California's MPAs. Our next MPA Watch volunteer training workshop will take place on April 11th at 6:30 in Bren Hall Room 4016 at UCSB. Email penny@sbck.org for more information and future training opportunities.



PLEASE JOIN US at the 17th Annual Blue Water Ball on Saturday, April 22, 2017