



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

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper mourns and offers our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those impacted by the *Conception* dive boat fire on September 2nd.

Those lost in this tragedy perished while visiting and exploring a place that we love and cherish, the Santa Barbara Channel, aboard a vessel that regularly supported Channelkeeper's education and outreach initiatives. Many of the excursions that we've spearheaded to enable SCUBA divers to explore our awe-inspiring marine protected areas were hosted from the deck of the *Conception*. The vessel and its crew have served an important role in enabling locals and visitors alike to access the Santa Barbara Channel and its underwater treasures. We consider our local dive and ocean recreation outfitters and their customers as friends and family, and we are deeply saddened by the loss of so many of their lives. Our hearts, thoughts, and prayers go out to all who have been affected by this terrible tragedy, which once again hit us all too close to home.



KIRA REDMOND | Executive Director

Channelkeeper is Turning 20!

It's hard to believe it's been nearly 20 years since a small group of visionaries joined forces to spearhead the creation of a grassroots watchdog and advocate for clean beaches, creeks and watersheds along the South Coast that would eventually become Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, but time flies when you're having fun!

Channelkeeper will celebrate our 20th anniversary throughout 2020, and we invite you to join the party, because we'll also be celebrating you! Through a series of fun events and outreach initiatives, we will reflect back on our clean water victories over the past two decades, provide opportunities for our constituents to explore and connect with the waterways and watersheds we love and protect, and honor and appreciate those who have helped Channelkeeper become such a strong and effective force for clean water – including you! We look forward to celebrating this important milestone with you and sharing our vision and plans to make even bigger waves to advance the health and sustainability of our beloved waterways in the future, so stay tuned!

Restoring Flows in the Ventura River

The Ventura River and the wildlife that rely on it are in serious jeopardy, and Santa Barbara Channelkeeper just won a big round in our long-fought battle to save it.

For many years, the City of Ventura has pumped so much water out of the Ventura River that its value as critical habitat for the endangered steelhead trout and other aquatic life has all but dried up, so Channelkeeper is leveraging the law to bring it back from the brink. And we're succeeding.

Our legal and public pressure ultimately brought the City of Ventura, State Water Resources Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other pumpers to the table for the first time ever to negotiate a plan that ensures there is water in the river for fish. We've secured binding commitments from the City to remove fish passage barriers in the river and to reduce or curtail its pumping and

diversion of water from the river when flows diminish during dry times to help protect steelhead for an interim period until a longer term solution is developed.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife and State Water Board are also currently completing scientific studies that will determine precisely how much flow is needed in the river to protect steelhead. These studies will serve as the basis for a long-term science-based solution that ensures sufficient flows in the river to sustain healthy steelhead and other wildlife while also meeting the community's water needs in the future.

Our fight for water for the Ventura River is not over, but our goal to establish a binding, science-based process that balances the needs of the river with other uses has come to fruition, and Channelkeeper will have a seat at the table to ensure that the river has a voice as the process moves forward.

Case Against Offshore Fracking Gains Steam

Channelkeeper and the Environmental Defense Center (EDC) are unwavering in our commitment to protect wildlife and the environment from fracking in the Santa Barbara Channel, and our perseverance is paying off. In late 2016, we filed a lawsuit against two federal agencies for approving permits for fracking, acidizing, and other "well stimulation techniques" (WSTs) from oil platforms offshore of California without first completing a full environmental impact assessment and consulting with federal wildlife agencies on potential impacts to endangered and threatened species, as required by the National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Endangered Species Act.

First we overcame the feds' attempt to have our lawsuit dismissed, and then, in November 2018, we prevailed on our Endangered Species Act claims, which prompted a court-ordered moratorium on the approval of any new permits for the use of WSTs until the requisite process of consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service is complete. The court also ruled that the agencies violated the Coastal Zone Management Act by failing to allow

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Recycled Water Coming to Carpinteria

The Carpinteria Valley Water District has proposed to build a \$21 million water reclamation project to create a new, drought-proof source of potable water for Carpinteria. The proposed Carpinteria Advanced Purification Project would produce approximately 1,000 acre feet per year of drinking water – about one quarter of the service area’s demand – from highly treated recycled wastewater. (One acre foot equals 325,851 gallons of water. The average California household uses between ½-1 acre foot per year.) The treated wastewater would be injected into the groundwater aquifer and then later pumped out and retreated before being distributed through the potable water delivery system to homes and businesses.

This type of project is known as “indirect potable reuse” and utilizes scientifically proven technology that has been used for many years throughout California and the US, including the Orange County Water District’s Groundwater Replenishment System, the world’s largest advanced water purification system for potable reuse, which came online in 2008 and produces up to 100 million gallons per day of high-quality drinking water for nearly 850,000 residents.

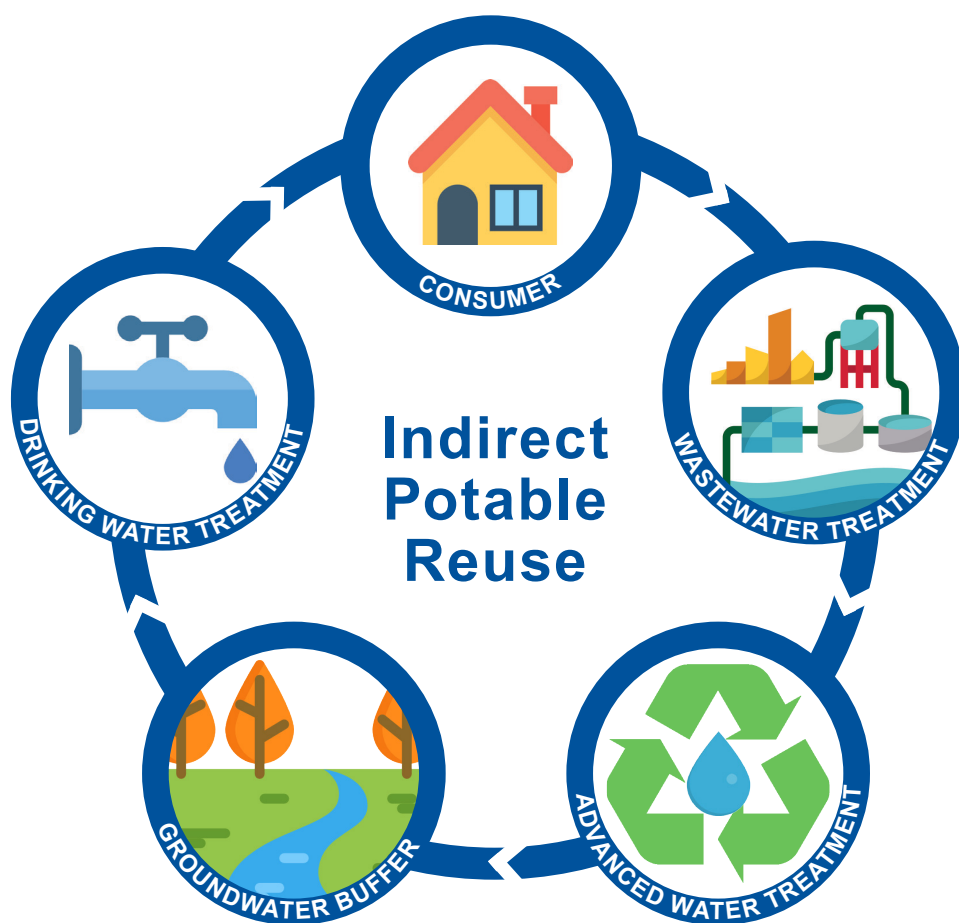
Given our changing climate and the likelihood of more frequent and severe droughts on the horizon, Channelkeeper believes recycling wastewater for reuse as potable water is critical to a more sustainable water future for our region. We’ve promoted it as a superior alternative to desalination, which requires

far more energy (and thus greenhouse gas emissions) to produce, and which kills massive numbers of marine organisms when open ocean intakes - such as those feeding Santa Barbara’s desalination plant - are used. In contrast, recycling wastewater benefits the marine environment by reducing the amount of treated sewage we dump into the ocean and turning it into a valuable new source of drinking water.

Channelkeeper submitted comments on the draft Environmental Impact Report to voice support for the Carpinteria

Advanced Purification Project while recommending heightened monitoring and public notification procedures to track and report on levels of contaminants of emerging concern, which can be present in recycled water and can be harmful to human health. The project will be subject to strict regulations to ensure that the produced drinking water is safe for human consumption.

Following environmental review, engineering design and applications for government loans and grants, construction of the project is expected to begin in 2021 and be complete in 2023.



Recycling wastewater benefits the marine environment by reducing the amount of treated sewage we dump into the ocean and turning it into a valuable new source of drinking water.

Tackling Plastic



Channelkeeper's Education and Community Outreach Director Penny Owens spoke at a press conference to voice our support for the California Plastic Pollution Reduction Act, which would set statewide targets to reduce waste from single-use plastic products and packaging by 75% by 2030.

Plastic has been found in the deepest parts of the world's oceans, in arctic ice, in rainwater, and even in drinking water. Scientists are still conducting research to understand the extent of its impacts on humans, but we already have seen its devastating impacts on wildlife.

In addition to hosting beach and creek clean-ups to prevent plastic and other trash from polluting the ocean, Channelkeeper has also been advocating for laws to reduce the use of single-use plastic for more than a decade. The plastic and compostable straw ban that we successfully lobbied the City of Santa Barbara to enact went into effect on July 1st. (Compostable straws have similar impacts on wildlife as plastic straws and are currently not accepted in local commercial composting programs.) This past spring Carpinteria also adopted stronger plastic reduction policies that will enter into effect in January 2020. We have also been lobbying the County of Santa Barbara and the City of Goleta to adopt similar policies to reduce our plastic footprint.

Single-use plastic bans are a great first step, but further action is needed to address the massive problem of plastic pollution and the way we use plastic in its many forms. Currently, it is estimated that 40% of all plastic produced worldwide is for single-use packaging. This past year, the California Legislature considered two bills, Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080, together called the California Plastic Pollution Reduction Act, which would have set statewide targets to reduce waste from single-use plastic products and packaging by 75% by 2030, thereby requiring manufacturers to make less of it in the first place and ensuring that the rest can actually be recycled or composted. Unfortunately, the bills failed to pass through the legislative process, but they became two-year bills and will be taken up again in the next session.

Governor Newsom signed other legislation this summer which will advance the use of reusable

to-go containers. Once this law enters into effect in 2020, customers will be able to bring their own reusable containers for take-out food and drinks at food service establishments once they've adopted the law's required procedures to ensure cleanliness and safety.

Recycling in the US has changed a great deal over the past year since China is no longer accepting contaminated recycling. Much of the plastic that we thought was being recycled in China was actually being incinerated in small, unregulated facilities, while only the most valuable items were in fact being recycled. Unlike aluminum cans or glass bottles, which can be recycled into the same items, recycled plastic is not as strong as virgin plastic and cannot be recycled into the same item it was previously, but is down-cycled and mixed with virgin plastic material to make new products.

As a result of the recent changes in the recycling market, the list of which materials can be placed in blue recycling bins in the Santa Barbara area has been updated. Only the following materials are now being accepted: clean and dry metal (no liquids or food), #1 and #2 plastics (greater than 6"), all paper (but no pizza boxes, even the lids), and all glass containers (no food or liquid). All items must be clean, empty, dry, and loose (not bagged).

The best single-use plastic item is the one you don't use! Thank you for doing your part to help keep plastic out of our waste stream and oceans. Every little bit counts!

Visit sbck.org/film-plastic to learn about our film plastic recycling program with Ablitt's Fine Cleaners and the Community Environmental Council



Cruise Control

Up until about 15 years ago, Santa Barbara used to host only a few cruise ships a year. Then the City began actively courting the cruise industry to make Santa Barbara a more frequent stop on their itineraries, and as a result, we now see these massive ships anchored outside the harbor upwards of 30 days per year. Ever since this spike in cruise ship visits, Channelkeeper has been patrolling the Santa Barbara Channel when they're here and reminding the cruise captains of the no-dumping rules they're required to comply with. We've also lobbied City leaders

to keep a watchful eye on the liners' environmental practices, because the cruise industry has a checkered past when it comes to environmental stewardship and compliance.

Despite the fact that clean oceans are absolutely critical to their success, several cruise companies have been found guilty of violating environmental laws over the years, including some highly egregious cases involving deliberate and ongoing dumping of pollutants into the ocean. In a recent example, Princess Cruise Lines paid a record \$40 million penalty and

was put on probation in 2016 for illegally dumping oil-contaminated waste from a ship in UK and US ports and falsifying documents to hide the acts from authorities. Its probation required the company to implement a court-supervised environmental compliance program to oversee cruise ships from Princess and seven other Carnival Cruise Lines subsidiaries, subject to independent audits. An April 2019 governmental audit showed they failed to comply with the environmental program, including by dumping plastic from a ship in December 2018, so the court recently ordered Princess to pay an additional \$20 million in criminal penalties and to be subject to enhanced supervision.

Upon learning this news, Channelkeeper testified before the Harbor Commission, notified City Council, and met with the Waterfront Department to express concern and to urge them to take action to ensure that Princess and other cruise lines do not pollute the Santa Barbara Channel. The Waterfront Department subsequently organized a meeting between Channelkeeper and several representatives of Princess Cruise Lines to discuss our concerns and options for how they might address them.

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Seafari Cruises - Getting Kids Out on the Water



Channelkeeper loves to share the unique and extraordinary wonders of the Santa Barbara Channel with local youth through “Seafari” experiential education cruises on our boat, the *R/V Channelkeeper*. On a Seafari, we take groups of kids on a free, two-hour cruise along the Santa Barbara coast, where they learn about the rich biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel, its primary threats, and ways to conserve and protect it. Channelkeeper’s scientifically trained SCUBA divers provide passengers with a unique live tour of a kelp forest by using an underwater communications system and video camera connected to a monitor on the boat, while our on-

deck scientist interprets what they’re witnessing beneath the surface.

This past summer, Channelkeeper shared this exhilarating on-the-water experience with 118 students and their chaperones, bringing our total to nearly 100

cruises for over 700 youth since we launched the program in 2014. Our aim is to provide this impactful experience to underserved and at-risk youth who may lack the means or opportunity to get out on the water. We’ve partnered with several youth mentorship and enrichment programs, including the Turner Foundation, Peoples’ Self-Help Housing, Girls Inc., Santa Barbara School of Squash, Boys & Girls Club, Youth Interactive, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, and Casa de la Raza, to host cruises for their kids. If you have a group in mind for a Seafari, please contact Penny Owens, Channelkeeper’s Education and Community Outreach Director, at penny@sbck.org or 805.563.3377 ext. 4.



Case Against Offshore Fracking Gains Steam *continued from page 3*

the California Coastal Commission to review potential harms to the State’s coastal zone. The Commission’s review will include a full public comment and hearing process, and Channelkeeper and EDC will participate in that process.

Channelkeeper and EDC won another round this past April when the court denied a request filed by oil company DCOR for a special exemption from the moratorium so it could secure permits to utilize WSTs at Platform Gilda (9

miles offshore of Rincon). Then in May, the American Petroleum Institute, an intervenor in the case, filed an appeal to challenge the court’s partial ruling in our favor. Channelkeeper and EDC responded by opposing their appeal and filing our own appeal in attempt to reverse the court’s unfavorable ruling on our NEPA claims. Our goal is to compel the federal agencies to conduct a full environmental

review of the impacts of WSTs on the environment, including air and water pollution, as well as harm to marine and coastal wildlife, such as the threatened Southern sea otter and Western snowy plover.

The court set a schedule for the parties to file briefs on both appeals which extends through December of this year, so we anticipate rulings on the appeals sometime in early 2020.



Connecting the Community to Marine Protected Areas

This summer, Channelkeeper organized an excursion for 40 recreational SCUBA divers to explore the Naples and Campus Point Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) off our coast. MPAs are proven, effective tools to protect and restore marine species and ecosystems, but they're also good for eco-tourism because they give people a chance to experience pristine ocean ecosystems firsthand, while also creating a niche market for ocean recreation businesses.

Channelkeeper works hard to connect our community and local businesses to the extensive network of MPAs in the Santa

Barbara Channel to raise awareness and build support for the critical protections these special areas offer. We've created interactive dive maps for the Naples and Campus Point MPAs to help divers and others access and experience these breathtaking underwater parks, and we've partnered with several local ocean recreation businesses to bring divers, paddlers and recreational fishermen to learn about and explore these special places along our coast. Please visit www.sbck.org/mpa to download our MPA dive maps, view underwater video footage of local MPAs, and learn about future opportunities to explore and support your MPAs!



Stacey Janik

Cruise Control

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The Princess representatives explained the environmental compliance efforts they're now undertaking as a result of their probation and promised to follow up with more detailed information in writing. Channelkeeper expressed

our view that the company should go above and beyond to provide our community with additional assurances that their ships will respect the unique and extraordinary marine environment of the Santa Barbara Channel. We followed

up and expect to hear back from them soon, and we will continue to press the company and City leaders to ensure that cruise ships do not dump their waste into our Channel. We encourage any readers who share these concerns to do the same.

How's the Water Quality at Rincon?

Thanks to generous support from our community, Channelkeeper continues to collect regular water quality samples at Rincon Point to help protect the health of surfers and other ocean users. Throughout the summer we've collected weekly samples and tested them for levels of Enterococci, a type of fecal indicator bacteria that indicates the likely presence of other bacteria that can make people sick.

Supplementing Ventura County's Monday samples, Channelkeeper conducts our weekly sampling on

Thursday mornings and posts our results online on Friday mornings so weekend beach-goers can make informed decisions about recreating at the beach. Once the rainy season starts, we will increase our sampling frequency to three times a week, since the water tends to be more polluted when storms generate runoff that sends land-based sources of pollution to the ocean. Check our website at www.sbck.org for the latest results to get the skinny before you dip!



Channelkeeper is seeking volunteers in the Carpinteria area to help us collect and process Rincon Beach water quality samples. Please contact us at (805) 563.3377 to learn more.

Monitoring Goleta Bay for Impacts of Beach Mud Dumping

Channelkeeper recently initiated a new offshore monitoring project to assess water quality impacts caused by Santa Barbara County's dumping of mud into the surf zone at Goleta Beach. The County Flood Control District utilized Goleta and Carpinteria Beaches to dispose of mud and other sediments in the emergency aftermath of the January 2018 mudslides that devastated the community of Montecito. The County continued to dump sediment dredged from local debris basins onto these beaches during 2019 as well, and has stated its intent to make this a routine practice moving forward.

Channelkeeper is monitoring Goleta Bay before, during, and after beach dumping operations so we can more thoroughly assess the impacts of this intensive and unnatural activity on water quality and marine life.



Taking samples of mud dumped at Goleta Beach following the 2018 mudslides.

Samples collected over the past two years indicate that prolonged dumping activities can cause exceedances of water quality standards for concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria and ammonia offshore. We've also documented that beach mud dumping decreases water clarity, which may impact

recreation and marine life for prolonged periods.

Channelkeeper will continue to compile and share the data we're collecting with the County and state water agencies to ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect water quality and marine life from these operations in the future.

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Do you believe clean beaches, a healthy ocean, and safe and sustainable water supplies will always be essential? Working with your financial advisor, you can make a gift to Channelkeeper now or in the future to protect these precious resources for generations to come. Please consider the following when planning your legacy:

- **Bequests:** Remember Channelkeeper in your will through cash or property bequests.
- **QCDs:** Donate with Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from your IRA and you'll receive the functional equivalent of an income tax charitable deduction, even if you don't itemize. The qualifying age is 70 ½ at the time of distribution, and you can give up to \$100,000 per year per individual plan. Your IRA custodian must distribute the gift directly to Santa Barbara Channelkeeper.
- **CRTs:** With a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT), appreciated assets are placed in an irrevocable trust, which the trust may invest or sell to provide income to the donor for life. Ultimately, the assets become the property of Channelkeeper, while providing current tax savings to the donor.

- **Appreciated Assets:** Appreciated assets such as real estate, stocks, bonds or securities can be donated and tax benefits realized from the donation without paying tax on capital gains.

There are many types of charitable gifts with substantial tax advantages. We encourage you to contact your professional tax advisor about how best to structure a gift for your needs. For more information, please call (805) 563.3377 ext. 2 or email debra@sbck.org.

Intern Spotlight



Alia taking notes and tracking data during a Stream Team event.

Channelkeeper provides valuable environmental work experience and mentorship to college students through our internship program, and we're extremely grateful for the assistance and support they provide for our programs. This summer we welcomed a new intern, Alia Ajina, a fourth year environmental studies major at UCSB who assists with our monthly Stream Team volunteer water quality program in Goleta and Ventura. Alia is an avid water woman who surfs on the UCSB surf team, teaches surf and kayak lessons, and guided rafting trips on the Kern River this past summer. Welcome aboard and many thanks to Alia and all our other superstar interns, past and present!

New Website Coming Soon!

Channelkeeper's website is getting a much-needed overhaul to make it more interactive and user-friendly. Our new site will feature improved compatibility with mobile devices, a sleek modern design, easy to use action alerts, and an intuitive navigation structure to help you find all kinds of useful information about water in the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds faster and easier. Check us out at www.sbck.org in early December when we launch the new site!

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 October 13, November 3, December 1, January 5, February 2, and March 1. Upcoming Ventura Stream Team events will take place at 9 am on November 2 and February 1. Email molly@sbck.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 5 for more information.



Paige Swims for the Channel!

In the early hours of October 9th, 16 year-old Paige Kieding will dive into the Santa Barbara Channel at Anacapa Island to attempt a solo swim across the Channel to Silver Strand beach in Oxnard - a distance of about 12.4 miles. Paige came to Channelkeeper with the idea of promoting her swim as a fundraiser to support our work to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds. A lover of the ocean and passionate about ocean conservation, Paige felt Channelkeeper was the perfect fit for her fundraising campaign. You can donate and learn more at www.sbck.org/paiges-channel-swim.

Volunteer with 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 October 17th at UCSB. Email penny@sbck.org for more information and future training opportunities.



SAVE THE DATE! The 20th Annual Blue Water Ball is Saturday, March 14, 2020!