



Santa Barbara Developers Move to Weaken City Water Quality Protections

Stormwater pollution is one of the primary sources of contamination to Santa Barbara's creeks and beaches. When it rains, pollution and litter is washed directly from urban landscapes to our waterways through the storm drain system. In 2008, to help combat stormwater pollution, the City of Santa Barbara adopted requirements for new development and re-development projects to retain and/or treat stormwater onsite. This strategy is at the heart of sustainable water management, which municipalities across the nation are striving to achieve. Some developers, however, have pushed back against the requirements to reduce stormwater runoff from their projects.

The Santa Barbara Creeks Division recently worked to modify its stormwater program by proposing more flexibility for developers working on projects with special site constraints like steep slopes or clay soils, where infiltrating rain into the soil is difficult. To maintain the same level of water quality protection, the Creeks Division proposed to establish new requirements for large projects. Their proposal strikes a prudent balance between development interests and environmental protection.

Channelkeeper and other environmental groups submitted comments in support of the Creek Division's proposal in writing and at a Santa Barbara City Planning Commission hearing on July 23rd. The Commission, unfortunately, bowed to developers and recommended adopting measures that would likely weaken water quality protections for small and medium sized projects and delaying and weakening measures that would increase protections for larger projects. Channelkeeper will advocate against weakened environmental protections as this issue moves to City Council in September and we encourage you to do so as well. Stay tuned for an action alert with talking points coming soon.



SB City Council Saddles Ratepayers and Environment with Desal for Next 40 years

This past Tuesday, the Santa Barbara City Council voted unanimously to accept a \$10 million grant from the Department of Water Resources to offset a fraction of the \$72+ million price tag of reactivating its desalination plant, including with a binding obligation to operate the plant at full capacity for 36 out of the next 40 years. This directly contradicts promises made repeatedly by City Council that reactivation of the desal plant was a temporary emergency measure to meet a shortfall in supply caused by the recent drought, and that the long-term role of desal in the City's water supply portfolio would be revisited once the drought was over. Channelkeeper opposed the acceptance of the grant under these questionable terms and will continue to press the City to take an honest and thorough look at the major energy, environmental and social justice impacts of desal through a transparent public process that includes a modern and accurate Environmental Impact Report. Click [here](#) for more information.



Santa Barbara County to Vote on ExxonMobil's Interim Trucking and Restart of Offshore Oil Proposal

ExxonMobil is seeking approval to use 70 tanker trucks per day to transport oil from its three offshore platforms that have been shut in since the Plains All

American Pipeline ruptured in 2015. The County of Santa Barbara released the [Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report](#) (FSEIR) at the end of July and will present its findings to the Planning Commission at two public hearings on September 2nd and September 9th, after which the Commission will vote on the project. Channelkeeper submitted comments on the draft SEIR highlighting concerns with its failure to adequately address several major issues, including the restarting of operations at the platforms, and the FSEIR does not resolve these issues. We will be voicing our opposition to the project when it goes before the Planning Commission next month, and we urge you to do so as well. Stay tuned for talking points and ways to voice your opinion about this dangerous project.



Watershed Brigade - Volunteers Needed!

More than ever, our beaches, creeks, rivers, and trails are serving as an escape from both the heat and pandemic-related stress, providing much-needed places to enjoy fresh air and the great outdoors while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Unfortunately, the surge in visitation to our outdoor spaces is also causing a [surge in trash and litter](#), including disposable masks, gloves, and take-out containers. In response, Channelkeeper has called to action willing individuals and household units (following strict safety guidelines) to not only pick up trash in our outdoor spaces, but also to help spread awareness about the need to prevent littering. In these times of uncertainty where large group gatherings are not allowed, we are creating an online forum and community where volunteers can connect with each other and share our individual actions to create a large positive impact. Channelkeeper's [Watershed](#)

[Brigade](#) was out on Memorial Day Weekend, July 4th Weekend, and several days in between, and collectively, our 50+ volunteers removed 90 bags of trash from local recreation hotspots. [Email us](#) to get more information and join this tenacious group to make a difference for our cherished open spaces!



Coastal Cleanup Day is now Coastal Cleanup Month!

Channelkeeper has been a long-time beach captain for the statewide annual Coastal Cleanup Day event hosted by the California Coastal Commission and coordinated by regional partners throughout the state. Instead of gathering in groups at beaches this year, we'll be protecting the coast close to home by cleaning up our own neighborhoods. Local parks, shores, creeks, streets, sidewalks, natural areas, and trails are great choices. Please practice physical distancing and follow local ordinances and the guidelines provided on the

California Coastal Commission's [website](#) to make this safe for all!

Cleanups will occur every Saturday from 9 am-12 noon on September 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th. You can participate in one or all of the cleanups. Coastal Cleanup Month volunteers are asked to record what you find so your litter is included in the statewide count. Learn more [here](#).



Collaboration Leads to Massive Marine Debris Cleanup at Santa Cruz Island

Last Thursday, to kick off “Get Into your Sanctuary” weekend, Channelkeeper joined forces with two local Santa Barbara commercial lobster fishermen and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) to remove

marine debris off the Santa Cruz Island shoreline. Over the weekend, participants removed 6,440 pounds of trash from a one-mile stretch of beach known as Yellowbanks, including 131 derelict lobster traps, foam fishing buoys, rope, and LOTS of plastic. Plastic garbage is one of the most pervasive problems facing our world’s oceans and the Santa Barbara Channel is unfortunately no exception, with some island beaches serving as catch basins for floating debris. This cleanup effort was funded by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation as part of the CINMS’ new Clean Seas Channel Islands initiative. Channelkeeper looks forward to further partnering with CINMS and our local commercial fishing fleet to tackle our marine debris problem.



Plastic Webinars Recap

Channelkeeper and the Community Environmental Council hosted two webinars in observance of Plastic Free July – a global movement encouraging folks to choose to refuse single-use plastic for cleaner communities and oceans. In our first webinar, we looked at how plastic and microplastics are invading every corner of the

planet, including the air we breathe, how the use of single-use plastics has increased recently, and Big Plastic's tactics to spread misinformation about the safety of reusables during the pandemic and to increase production in the coming years. In our second webinar, Getting Real About Plastic and Recycling, we learned about updates to Ablitt's Fine Cleaners' film plastic recycling program and reviewed dos and don'ts for our blue recycling bins with waste management experts from the City of Santa Barbara and MarBorg Industries.

If you missed the webinars, you can check them out [here](#), along with other great resources to explore for further reading and action. Together we can all be part of the solution to plastic pollution!



Become a 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 emailing us or clicking here.

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

