

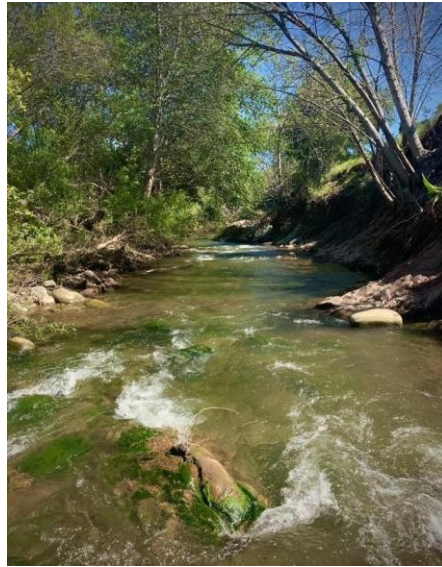
September 2020 E-Newsletter



You're Invited to the Blue Water Ball - *Second Sail!*

Please join us online for our 20th Annual Blue Water Ball – *Second Sail* **today, Wednesday, September 9th at 5:00 pm** and celebrate Channelkeeper's 20th anniversary with us from the comfort and safety of your own home. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper is taking our 2020 Blue Water Ball virtual! This free, very brief online celebration will feature special guests, fun

surprises (!), and the kickoff of our infamous Silent Auction and Raffle, which will be open for online bidding from September 9-23rd. The Blue Water Ball is Channelkeeper's most important fundraiser of the year, raising critical funds that enable us to monitor the health of our waterways, advocate for clean water and environmental justice, hold polluters accountable, and educate and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. Learn more and get your free ticket [here!](#)



Channelkeeper and the City of Ventura Amend Settlement Agreement

Channelkeeper is proud to announce a MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT in our years-long endeavor to protect the Ventura River from over-pumping. Through dialogue, Channelkeeper and the City of Ventura have reached a new agreement to ensure that the City leaves a meaningful amount of water behind to keep the river flowing for endangered species, other wildlife, and recreational uses. Prior to Channelkeeper's intervention, nothing prevented the City and others from taking every last drop from the river. Now, we have secured a commitment to keep this cherished ecosystem flowing until a long-term watershed-wide solution is finalized. Visit [here](#) to read more and check out this [article](#) about the agreement.



Strengthening Agricultural Pollution Regulations

Farming is an essential aspect of California's economy and way of life, but it's also the number one source of pollution to groundwater supplies and many of our rivers, streams, and wetlands. At an upcoming hearing on September 10-

11th the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board will consider a new proposal (named Ag Order 4.0) to establish rules for Central Coast farmers to follow to address decades of agricultural pollution.

Records show that the vast majority of farms egregiously over-apply fertilizer. According to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, over half the nitrogen applied as fertilizer ends up as harmful pollution to the environment. Currently, farms discharge nitrogen at levels ten times higher than levels that are safe for drinking water and protective of the environment. The Regional Board has issued findings that “groundwater nitrate (fertilizer) contamination is widespread and severe, and degradation is increasing in many areas.” Nitrates leaching from fields into aquifers have left over 100,000 square miles of groundwater contaminated with nitrates throughout California resulting in toxic drinking water supplies.

Channelkeeper, along with a coalition of environmental partners, has worked on this issue for over a decade and will be testifying as part of the panel to move the new Ag Order forward and to ensure that it protects water quality.

Channelkeeper Supports Strong Stormwater Quality Protections

Traditional urban landscapes funnel stormwater straight to the ocean carrying trash and pollution along the way. On August 19th, Channelkeeper testified before the Santa Barbara Creeks Advisory

Committee to recommend preserving existing policies that require new development projects to treat or infiltrate stormwater into the landscape.

Overtime, these water-smart actions will improve water quality, conserve our water supply, and preserve flowing creeks. This issue will now go before the Santa Barbara City Council (likely at the September 22nd meeting). Please join us in voicing your support for these important environmental protections. Stay tuned for an action alert with talking points coming soon.





ExxonMobil's Interim Oil Trucking Proposal – Postponed

The County of Santa Barbara's Planning Commission was set to make a recommendation on ExxonMobil's proposal to truck oil from three offshore shut-in platforms to the Phillips 66 Santa Maria

Refinery this month. However, just weeks before the hearings (which were originally set for September 2nd and 9th), Phillips 66 announced plans to close their Santa Maria refining facility in 2023, which greatly impacts ExxonMobil's plan. With this new development, Exxon must now decide how to proceed. The new hearing dates will be announced sometime in the future, so stay tuned.



California Plastic Reduction Bills Fail

The CA Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act, SB54 and AB 1080, two plastic pollution reduction bills, failed to pass the California State Assembly on September 1st. These bills would have by reduced single-use plastics across California

by 75% by 2032. The plastic industry pushed back hard spending \$3.4 million on a lobbying campaign that ultimately was able to influence a few key representatives to abstain from voting. In the end, the bills fell short of passing by only by 4 votes.

The plastic industry has also been exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic by citing misinformation and fomenting fear around reusable bags and other alternatives and advocating that single use plastic is a necessary and safer alternative despite research showing that the virus can survive longer on plastic than many other surfaces.

Channelkeeper will continue our work locally to educate our community about the impacts of single use plastic and ways to reduce its use while also continuing to advocate for local policies to reduce single use plastic helping to set an example for the state. There is also a concurrent effort for a similar initiative, the

Plastic Free California initiative, that has a good chance of qualifying for the 2022 ballot and will take this issue to CA voters. We will be keeping our community informed about this effort and will share upcoming opportunities to take action.



Join our Watershed Brigade Challenge for Coastal Cleanup Month!

We are excited to announce our first Watershed Brigade Challenge in time for Coastal Cleanup Month! Make a difference in keeping our watersheds clean and healthy as a part of our team. Sign up to the SBCK Watershed Brigade group on Facebook by searching for "SBCK Watershed Brigade" or [email us](#) to join. Conduct a cleanup, on your own time, and post photos and details (date and location, time spent, amount of trash removed) to earn points! Watershed Brigade participants will earn points for time spent volunteering! At the end of September, points will earn entry into a prize-affle to win a AWESOME 2-Hour Kayak Tour for 2 (!), donated by our good friends at [Santa Barbara Adventure Company](#). Click [here](#) for more details!

Coastal Cleanup Month cleanups take place every Saturday in September from 9am to Noon. You can participate in one or all of the cleanups or cleanup whenever you have time. Be sure to record what you find so your litter is included in the statewide count. Click [here](#) for more info about how to record your trash data and other details about Coastal Cleanup Month in Santa Barbara County!



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

