



PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IN THE SANTA BARBARA CHANNEL

The Santa Barbara Channel is considered one of the most biologically rich ecosystems on Earth. A galaxy of interconnected marine species pulses with life, from tiny crustaceans and nudibranchs to sheephead and halibut, and seabirds, sharks, dolphins, and whales.

Each of these diverse species plays a critical role within the marine ecosystem and the depletion of one species can create a cascading crisis that affects others, which depend on the entire ecosystem's ability to function.

Scientists have already documented changes in the Santa Barbara Channel to fish and bird populations, shifts in ocean pH levels, and an increase in the frequency and intensity of harmful algae blooms that have indicated imbalances.

Channelkeeper works to protect biodiversity in the Santa Barbara Channel by conducting important fieldwork, advocating for more protective policies, increasing public awareness, and enforcing environmental laws. We're out on the water monitoring for harmful algal blooms and surveying human activity in marine protected areas. Through ongoing advocacy, we work to protect water resources and public health by improving environmental policies that help address pollution, habitat destruction, and the impacts of climate change.

We hope you'll join us in taking action locally to protect the biodiversity in our backyard and ensure that the Santa Barbara Channel's ecosystems are healthy and vibrant for future generations. Read our blog to learn more.

[Read](#)



SANTA BARBARA HARBOR COMMISSION'S CRUISE SHIP SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

On August 22nd, the Harbor Commission's Cruise Ship Subcommittee held its fifth public meeting to discuss the future of the City's program and explore the recommendations provided by the City of Santa Barbara's Waterfront Department, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council using a matrix to compare each issue.



Channelkeeper's Executive Director Ted Morton (right in the photo above) was a panelist alongside representatives from the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, Visit Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce, and Cruise Lines International Association. In addition to advocating for a firm limit on the number of visiting cruise ships, he answered the Harbor Commissioners' questions and provided deeper insight into the environmental impacts ships have on the Santa Barbara Channel and closer to shore.

Channelkeeper's recommendations for the cruise ship program involve reducing

and capping the number of visiting ships, expanding the vessel speed reduction zone, ensuring that ships that visit Santa Barbara have state-of-the-art technology and a record of environmental compliance, and maintaining community engagement in the program.

Eventually, the subcommittee will report back to the Harbor Commission with advice on updating the City of Santa Barbara's Cruise Ship Program. The City Council will also weigh in. The timeline for these steps is not clear, but we should expect more activities this fall.

If you are interested in weighing in and receiving additional information on this issue, please email cruiseship@sbck.org with your name and contact info, and we will keep you informed about future opportunities to get involved.



LOS ANGELES/VENTURA REGIONAL EFFORTS TO REDUCE AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION

Contaminated runoff from farms and the over-application of fertilizers is one of the primary sources of water pollution in Ventura County. Excessive nutrients and fertilizers can impair rivers and creeks, contribute to toxic algae blooms that harm fish and wildlife, and pollute drinking water sources. Channelkeeper is working to change that by improving the safeguards in place to protect our rivers, coastal areas, and water supplies from agricultural pollution.

In 2016, Channelkeeper worked with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to update its irrigated agricultural lands program to include firm timelines and enforcement mechanisms for growers in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. We believe that this accountability is crucial for protecting water quality.

The program is being updated. Unfortunately, changes are being proposed to weaken the accountability elements of the current program—before they have had a chance to be fully implemented.

In collaboration with our colleagues from Heal the Bay, Los Angeles Waterkeeper, Wishtoyo Foundation, Surfrider Ventura Chapter, Channelkeeper recently submitted a comment letter to members of the Los Angeles Regional Water Board urging the agency to maintain accountability in its Irrigated Agricultural Lands program.

Some of the primary recommendations are to include clear requirements and enforceable deadlines for Water Quality Management Plans, sufficient monitoring to identify nonpoint source discharges, and increased accountability and enforceable implementation deadlines for Waste Discharge Requirements.

There will be upcoming opportunities to express your support for protecting clean water this month during the public comment period. Stay tuned for more information and ways to make your voice heard.

Channelkeeper is also working with several groups on an update to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Agricultural Program. We are concerned about several aspects of the State’s review of Central Coast’s program (which covers Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Monterey Counties) that also significantly weakens accountability on measures to reduce pollution.



CHANNELKEEPER TO RECEIVE SANTA BARBARA BEAUTIFUL AWARD

We are honored to announce that Channelkeeper will be awarded the Playa de Santa Barbara Award for environmental stewardship at this year’s 59th Annual Santa Barbara Beautiful awards ceremony.

Channelkeeper will be presented with the award on Sunday, October 1st, during a ceremony and reception at the Music Academy of the West. We hope you'll celebrate with us! If you are interested in attending, click below to purchase tickets!

[Tickets](#)



Channelkeeper Board Walk

September 14 at 5:30 pm
Rattlesnake Canyon

CHANNELKEEPER BOARD WALK SEPTEMBER 14

Please join our inaugural Channelkeeper Board Walk on Thursday, September 14th, at 5:30 at the Rattlesnake Canyon trailhead for a nature walk led by board member Karen Telleen-Lawton, author of *Canyon Voices: the Nature of Rattlesnake Canyon*.

Muddy trail conditions in August following a surprise summer rainstorm prevented us from gathering on the original date.

Channelkeeper Board Walks are occasional walks and talks around town to explore water from different perspectives. They are designed for the whole community to understand our place in nature, especially with respect to life-giving water. Each will be led by a Channelkeeper Board member, drawing upon the expertises of naturalists, hydrologists, nature film producers, native plant gardeners, and more.

We look forward to seeing you on September 14th!

Trivia Night

September 20

SB Biergarten
11 Anacapa Street
6:00 - 7:00 pm

Hosted by Boone Graphics
Highlighting Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's
Clean Water Work



TRIVIA NIGHT September 20

Come test your knowledge at Trivia Night on September 20th at SB Biergarten. The event, which will take place from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., is hosted by Boone Graphics and will highlight Channelkeeper's clean water work. We hope you'll join in the fun!



MICROTRASH CHALLENGE ON COASTAL CLEANUP DAY 2023
September 23

We hope you'll join us for the Microtrash Challenge at West Beach on Saturday, September 23rd from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm! Channelkeeper is proud to be the site captain at the West Beach cleanup location.

For this Coastal Cleanup Day event, we'll meet in person to collect litter, paying special attention to pieces of microtrash. Any litter smaller than a golf ball can be considered microtrash, from tiny wrappers to water bottle caps, styrofoam bits, and discarded pieces of packaging and plastic. These small pieces of litter can cause harm to wildlife and enter the food chain.

Using kitchen strainers, we will sift through the sand and remove microtrash from along West Beach. Volunteers of all ages can join in the fun! Participants are welcome to bring their own kitchen strainers for collecting microtrash, but we will also have cleanup supplies available at the event.

Parking will be free from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at any City of Santa Barbara lot when displaying a Coastal Cleanup Day voucher, which can be obtained from the site captain the morning of the event. Sign up below!

[Sign Up](#)



CELEBRATE CREEK WEEK 2023
September 23-30

Creek Week is an annual community event celebrating our local creeks and ocean, with many groups sponsoring events throughout the week to help build

awareness and stewardship of the natural riparian treasures of the South Coast. Creek Week is hosted by the Santa Barbara City Creeks Division, Project Clean Water, and the cities of Carpinteria and Goleta.

The fun begins on Saturday, September 23rd with Coastal Cleanup Day and there are opportunities throughout the week to join in restoration project tours, beach and creek cleanups, and much more! With a week of outdoor events and virtual talks, there is something for everyone!

Creek Week Schedule



GIRLS IN OCEAN SCIENCE SEPTEMBER 24 and SEPTEMBER 30

There's a saying that if you see it, you can be it. That's the power of representation to expand young people's perceptions of what they can achieve. Channelkeeper is honored to participate this month in the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum's Girls in Ocean Science Conference.

The conference connects female ocean experts and scientists with young women interested in ocean science-based fields of study and careers. Open to

both middle school and high school students on two different days, the conference brings together learning and mentorship as participants spend the day conducting research in labs and at sea aboard a local vessel.

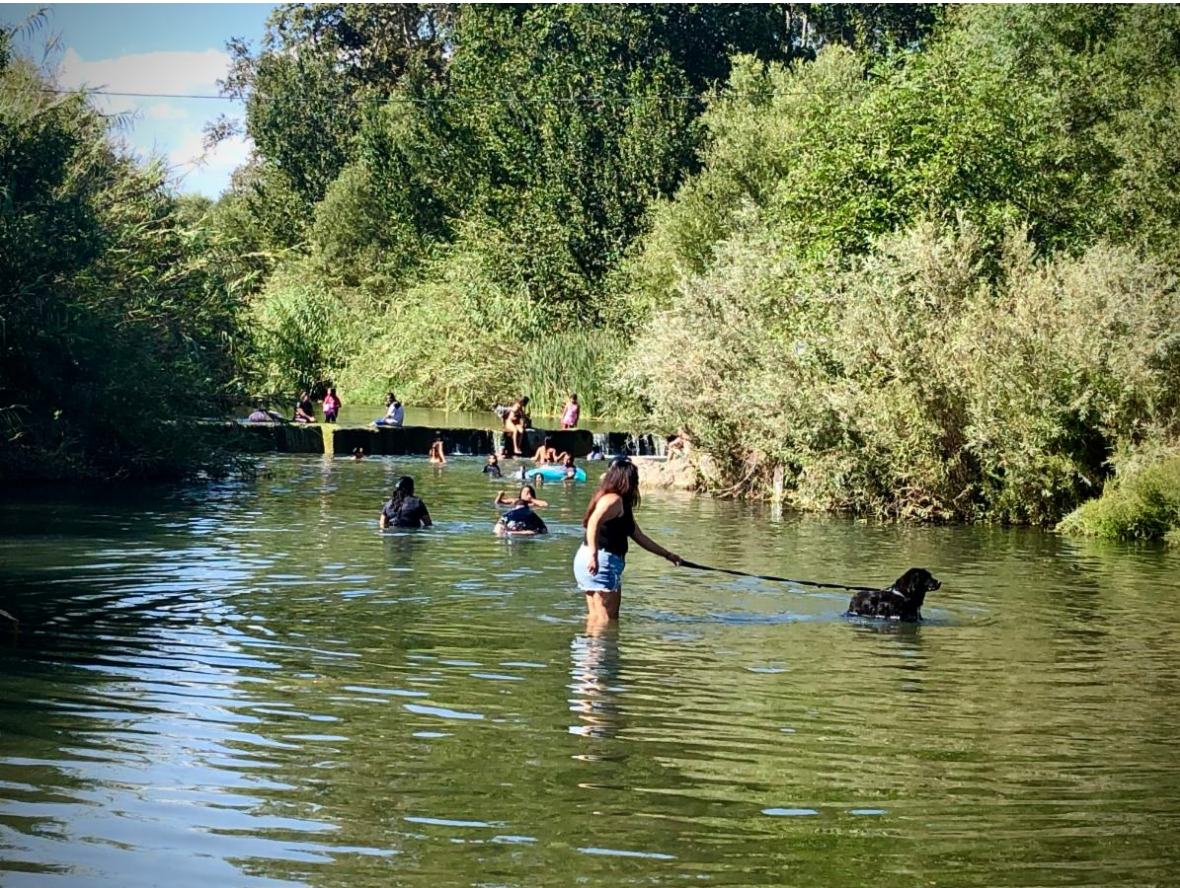
Channelkeeper staff will share their experiences with marine science and technology while helping young women explore their own career paths in ocean science. We believe that connecting students with powerful women in this field will inspire the next generation of female scientists and empower them to solve some of the environment's most pressing issues.

Conference Dates:

- Sunday, September 24, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for High School students (9th-12th grades).
- Saturday, September 30, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for Middle School (6th-8th grades).
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The conference fee is \$30. Conference scholarships are also available. Advance registration is recommended as space is limited.

[Register](#)



CELEBRATE WORLD RIVERS DAY September 26

World Rivers Day provides an opportunity to celebrate our beloved waterways, recognize their value, and advance our stewardship. Rivers everywhere face an array of threats today, including the Ventura River.

For twenty years, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper has led several programs to protect the Ventura River. In recent years, we have worked to stop the City of Ventura from pumping it dry and establish thresholds to restore flows and ensure the river's health and ecological richness, particularly during the summer. We're pleased to report that the City has taken some steps to commit to shutting pumps down when flows reach very low levels. This is helping maintain important fish and wildlife habitats and allowing local community members to enjoy the restorative power of the river.

Through membership in the California Coastkeeper Alliance, we are also advocating for the State of California to improve equitable access to inland waterways.

California has a coastal access program that prevents private development from blocking public access to the ocean and beaches. However, no such program exists for inland waterways. This discrepancy creates an equity issue in that affluent, white coastal communities have access to beaches, while inland communities that are mostly comprised of lower-income individuals or communities of color have limited access points to their local freshwater systems. We are recommending that the state develop a public access program for freshwater beaches and recreation areas.

In honor of **World Rivers Day, September 26**, we invite you to learn more about this important advocacy and take a moment to reflect on the value of our beloved waterways.

[Read More](#)



SUPPORT CLEAN WATER

Want to make a difference for the environment and your community? Making a tax-deductible contribution to Santa Barbara Channelkeeper today is an investment in clean beaches, healthy watersheds, and a more sustainable future.

Donate

KEEPING WATCH FOR CLEAN WATER
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