



CHANNELKEEPER SEEKS ANSWERS AND ACTION IN THE WAKE OF THE GOLETA SLOUGH AND BEACH SEWAGE SPILL

In recent weeks, three sewage spills have contaminated waters and closed beaches in Ventura, Montecito, and Goleta. On February 20, Miramar Beach was closed in response to a 2,500-gallon sewage spill into Oak Creek. On February 22, Ventura County closed two miles of beaches from the Ventura Pier to Emma Wood State Beach in response to a 35,000-gallon spill in Oak View—15,000 gallons entered a storm drain that discharges into the Ventura River.

The third spill was the largest. On February 16 and 17, a massive spill of one million gallons of sewage polluted Tecolotito Creek, Goleta Slough, and Pacific Ocean waters at Goleta Beach. The huge size of the spill, and the confusing, delayed responses are alarming and of significant concern to Santa Barbara Channelkeeper.

We are concerned about the public health impacts, as well as the effects of waters polluted by sewage on the fish, wildlife, and habitats of the Goleta Slough, a state ecological reserve, and nearshore marine waters.

We are also troubled by the breakdown in communications between government agencies and with the public. According to the Central Coast

Regional Water Quality Control Board's Notice of Violation, the spill went unnoticed for thirteen hours, over a Friday night and Saturday morning. The reported estimates of the spill size have grown from an initial report of 1,000 gallons on February 17, to 30,000 gallons (unclear if this estimate was reported on February 17 or February 21), and then 500,000 gallons on February 22, and finally to 1 million gallons on February 23. The public was notified and 1.5 miles of beaches were closed with public warning signs on Thursday, February 22—six days after the spill. The beaches remain closed as of March 13.

Our team is working to uncover more details about the cause, containment, and longer-term impacts of this spill, as well as advocating for preventative measures that our community and public agencies can take to ensure that something like this doesn't happen again.

We have attended public meetings, provided comments, and posed tough questions at recent meetings of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, Goleta West Sanitary District, Goleta Sanitary District, and Goleta City Council. We are also tracking the Central Coast Region Water Quality Control Board's investigation to ensure recovery and accountability under clean water laws.

We will continue to engage, follow the investigation, and present our recommendations to prevent future spills, ensure prompt and accessible public information about sewage spills and beach closures, and rehabilitate the impacted environment and aquatic life.

[Read More](#)



THE HARBOR COMMISSION TAKES POSITIVE STEPS TO IMPROVE THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA'S CRUISE SHIP PROGRAM

On February 15, Channelkeeper staff members Ted Morton, Nate Irwin, and Annie Lovell spoke before the Santa Barbara Harbor Commission in support of programmatic changes to the City of Santa Barbara's Cruise Ship Program and many other community members delivered insightful comments. After a dynamic discussion, the Harbor Commission approved a set of recommendations intended to better align the Cruise Ship Program with the community's priorities, as expressed by the public over the past two years in meetings convened by the Commission's Cruise Ship Working Group and as established under the City's environmental goals. The Santa Barbara City Council will take the next steps in the ongoing review.

Some of the policy changes that the Harbor Commission agreed to are:

- An annual capacity limit for either ships or passengers - it deferred many details to the City Council but did recommend that no more than 20 ships should visit annually. Channelkeeper is calling for an annual cap of 18 ships.
- Continuing the current practice of prohibiting cruise ship visitation between Memorial Day and Labor Day.
- Prioritizing ships with advanced environmental technologies and strong compliance records.
- A voluntary agreement that ships reduce ship speeds to 10 knots or less when in the Santa Barbara Channel to prevent ship strikes with whales.
- A request that cruise ships calling on Santa Barbara to be equipped with Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems by 2025. We are looking for this to be a requirement, rather than a request.
- Periodic reviews of the Cruise Ship Program.
- Many other recommendations on fees, business engagement, and administration.

When cruise ships returned to Santa Barbara after the COVID restrictions were lifted, Channelkeeper urged the City to involve the public in shaping the future of the City of Santa Barbara's Cruise Ship Program. Channelkeeper developed a set of recommendations to reduce the risks of cruise ships and better protect air and water quality, habitat, and ecosystems.

Community support has been integral to this effort. The public submitted over 100 pages of public comments for the February Harbor Commission meeting. Twenty-five out of 30 individuals who provided an in-person statement at last month's meeting favored making significant changes to the cruise ship program. We are grateful for your contributions.

Our team is pleased with the results of the Harbor Commission meeting and looks forward to working with the Santa Barbara City Council and reinforcing our recommendations for the City of Santa Barbara's Cruise Ship Program.



Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

Blue Water Ball

March 16, 2024



Artwork by Chris Potter

THE 22nd ANNUAL BLUE WATER BALL IS COMING UP!

Channelkeeper's Blue Water Ball is right around the corner and we couldn't be more excited! Our team has put together a fun and meaningful evening for all our guests to enjoy. This year's program, emceed by Andrew Firestone, will showcase special guest and Chumash leader Mia Lopez and will feature Patagonia CEO Ryan Gellert in an inspired and thought-provoking "Channelside Chat" with Executive Director, Ted Morton.

The evening will be a special community celebration of Channelkeeper's accomplishments; it will forge meaningful connections, inspire positive action for the environment, and generate excitement for the year ahead.

We look forward to seeing many of you dressed up in your blue-hued cocktail attire at the seaside Cabrillo Pavilion. For those of you unable to attend this year, we promise to share photos after the event and we also hope to host additional events in the upcoming year that allow us to gather and celebrate with the entire Channelkeeper community. So, please stay tuned!



THE BLUE WATER BALL AUCTION: ART, ADVENTURES, AND MORE!

Channelkeeper is grateful to the many businesses, underwriters, artists, and volunteers who are helping to support this year's event. We have curated a fantastic offering of ocean-centric art, outdoor adventures, gear, and more for the auction. Click below to check out all the items available. Please note, however, that bidding is only in person this year.

We encourage those of you attending the Blue Water Ball to peruse these items ahead of time, especially the art, trips, and experiences so you have more information about any auction items of interest ahead of the event.

[Auction](#)

Thank you to artists Andy Vogel, Ben O'Hara, Benjamin Anderson, David J. Diamant, Eric Foote, John Baran, Kara Crisp, Kelly Clause, Mary Heebner, Michael Irwin, Morgan Maassen, Nate Irwin, and Sarita Reynolds, whose beautiful ocean- and water-themed art will be featured in the silent auction.

We also have a variety of experience-based auction items, including a 2-night, all-inclusive stay at andBeyond's Vira Vira Lodge in the Chilean Lake District, a gift certificate for a fishing trip at Alaska Waterfall Resort, a two-day private sailing trip to the Channel Islands, a guided day trip to Santa Cruz Island with Island Packers, acoustic guitar sail with Sandala Experiences, and a stay at Santa Barbara Inn.

Local adventures from the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, Paddle Sports Center, SB International Film Festival, Santa Barbara Adventure Co., Santa Barbara Outrigger Canoe Club, and Sustainable Wine Tours will be available.

Additional auction items also include a private cocktail party at Bluewater Grill,

a private dinner with Chef Coco LaForge of the Santa Barbara Chef Collective, an 18' yearlong slip rental at Seabridge Marina, and more. Gear and gift certificates from Patagonia, FluidStance Balance Boards, Toad & Co., Genuine Restaurants will also be open for bids.

We're grateful for the generous support.



SUPPORT STRONGER PROTECTIONS FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA STEELHEAD

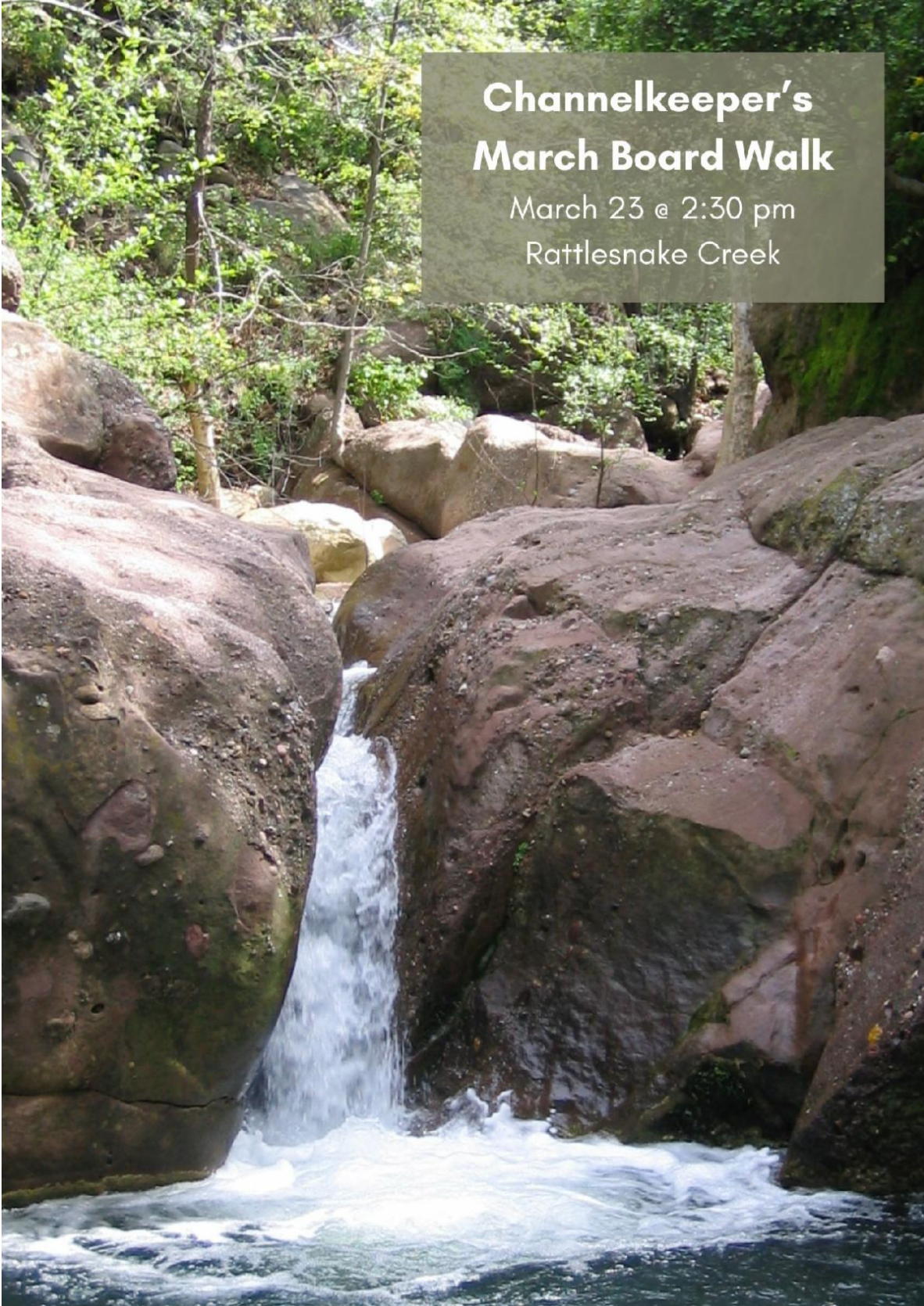
The Southern California Steelhead is an indicator of the health of our rivers and streams in Southern California. Their dwindling numbers indicate that more needs to be done to protect them.

The Southern California Steelhead was listed as a federally protected endangered species in 1997. However, in the years since this protection, the species has had little success in rebounding. Without significant work to rehabilitate their habitat, they could go extinct within the next 25-50 years. We must act urgently to prevent the irreversible loss of this species.

Our friends at California Trout have created a petition urging the California Department of Fish and Game Commission to list Southern California Steelhead as a California Endangered Species. This state distinction would give Southern

California Steelhead additional protection and allow crucial habitat conservation. We invite you to support California Trout's petition.

Petition



Channelkeeper's March Board Walk

March 23 @ 2:30 pm

Rattlesnake Creek

CHANNELKEEPER'S MARCH BOARD WALK
Saturday, March 23

Rattlesnake Canyon 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm

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 is led by a Channelkeeper board member, drawing upon their expertise as naturalists, hydrologists, nature film producers, native plant gardeners, and more.

Our next Board Walk will be a saunter up Rattlesnake Canyon. Meet us at the trailhead on Las Canoas Road at 2:30 PM on Saturday, March 23. Join us to learn about creek habitats and how Rattlesnake Creek factors into the archeology, history, geology, and biology (and more!) of Santa Barbara. This short hike will be led by board member Karen Telleen-Lawton, author of "Canyon Voices - the Nature of Rattlesnake Canyon."

The walk includes a moderate climb on a dirt trail. Participants should wear sturdy shoes and bring a hat, jacket, water, and sunscreen. We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, March 23, at 2:30 pm.



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. Thank you for your support!

[Donate](#)

KEEPING WATCH FOR CLEAN WATER
SINCE 1999



Santa Barbara
CHANNELKEEPER®



Santa Barbara
CHANNELKEEPER®

CONNECT WITH US



Santa Barbara Channelkeeper | 714 Bond Avenue, Santa Barbara, CA 93103

[Unsubscribe info@sbck.org](mailto:info@sbck.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by santabarbarachannelkeeper@santabarbarachannelkeeper.ccsend.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!