SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER

Channels

PROTECTING & RESTORING THE SANTA BARBARA CHANNEL & ITS WATERSHEDS

NEWSLETTER OF SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER | FALL 2003

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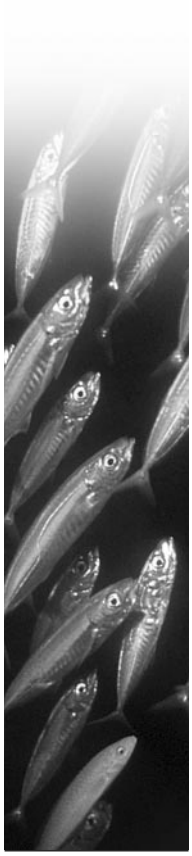
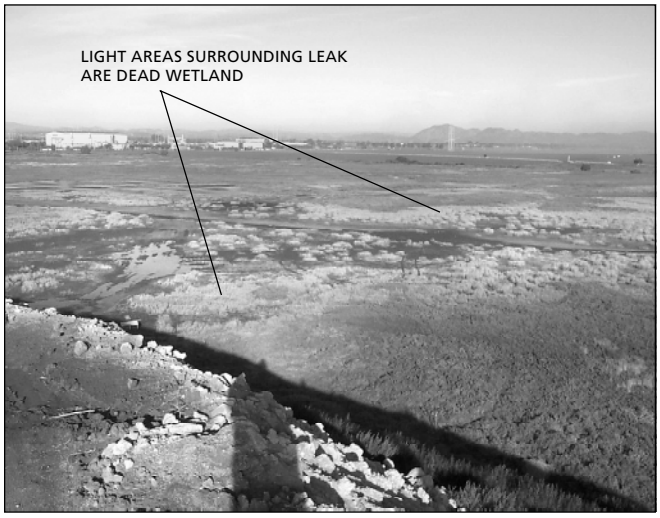


Photo: Erik Erikson

Halaco halts million-gallon-per-month toxic discharge at ormond Beach

In November 2002, Channelkeeper's efforts to bring Oxnard's Halaco Engineering Co. into compliance with the Clean Water Act finally bore fruit. After decades of discharging toxic effluent into unlined ponds on Ormond Beach, Halaco Engineering turned off the faucets last year. This is great news for the Ormond Wetland. Aerial photographs confirmed that Halaco's toxic effluent was leaking out of the unlined mountain of slag and into the wetland, killing everything in its path (see photo). Now Halaco runs its process water through a filter that removes heavy metals, ammonia and other pollutants. The filtered water is sent to the sewage treatment plant, and Halaco will now actually save money because it reuses the remaining solids. And, the slag mountain will not grow any larger since no new material will be discharged to it.



THIS PHOTO TAKEN FROM TOP OF HALACO'S SLAG PILE. CONTAMINANTS SEEP OUT OF SETTLING PONDS IN THE UNLINED PILE AND INTO ORMOND WETLAND.

While we are very pleased with this achievement, our work is far from over. Our efforts now focus on two main issues. First, we seek to force Halaco to remove the 40-foot-high, 15-acre, two-billion-pound mountain of slag that it has built on top of Ormond Beach. During storms, huge amounts of pollution are washed off of the slag pile and into the surrounding wetland and ocean. If the pile can't be removed, we'll demand it be sealed. Second, we seek to force Halaco to clean up its toxic air emissions. For years, neighbors have complained of respiratory and other ailments as a result of breathing Halaco's metallic emissions. Channelkeeper members have smelled this discharge and can attest to its noxious properties.

see HALACO continued on page 4

Storm Water Clean Up

Storm water is the single biggest source of ocean water pollution in California. During every storm, rainwater picks up a wide variety of pollutants and carries them to our creeks and ocean. These pollutants include a toxic soup of hydrocarbons, disease-causing pathogens, pesticides, sediment, fertilizers, and lead, copper and other heavy metals.

In early 2003, working in collaboration with several groups across the state, Channelkeeper convinced the State Water Board to strengthen the new state permit that will require communities like Santa Barbara to clean up storm water before it enters our creeks and ocean. At the hearings in Sacramento, we successfully opposed County staff who urged the state to adopt a weaker permit.

The State finalized the permit on April 30, and now the real work begins. Our local South Coast communities have each submitted first drafts of their required Storm Water Management Program documents to the state. Channelkeeper is working to see that those Program documents are strengthened.

This new state permit is long, technical, and tedious to read, but it presents the best long-term solution to cleaning up storm water. If you are interested in learning more, please consult Channelkeeper's web site.

SANTA BARBARA
Channelkeeper

Protecting and restoring the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds

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From the Helm

DREW BOHAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SBCK had substatial success in its first year as an independent organization.

Last year marked Channelkeeper's first year as an independent organization, and we are very proud of our accomplishments so far. Channelkeeper's primary role in the community is to enforce the Clean Water Act. The Act's "citizen lawsuit" provision levels the playing field between large corporations or governments and small environmental organizations like Channelkeeper.

The Waterkeeper approach to protecting water quality gets results, and new Waterkeeper programs are being added to the Waterkeeper Alliance every month. As of July 2003, the Alliance had 114 members throughout the United States and across the globe. The Alliance now has a Thames Riverkeeper in London, a Georges Riverkeeper in Sydney, Australia, a Fundy Baykeeper in Canada, and a Cartagena Baykeeper in Colombia (whose boat was recently shot at–and we think we take risks!).

Our lawsuit against the nastiest, most intransigent industrial polluter of the Channel began to get results toward the end of last year. As the article on page 1 describes in some detail, in November 2002, Halaco completely stopped its decades-old practice of discharging a million gallons per month of toxic effluent into the Ormond Wetland. This was a direct result of our lawsuit.

We also joined with the City of Goleta in a lawsuit to stop the needless destruction of over 13 acres of the Goleta Slough wetlands and an additional 18 acres of uplands. The City of Santa Barbara argues that this project is essential for safety, but our investigation has revealed that the airport is already safe, and that any increase in safety can be achieved without damaging the Slough.

We also convinced the State Water Resources Control Board to strengthen the statewide storm water permit that regulates communities like Santa Barbara that have fewer than 100,000 residents. We have focused a lot of our energy in the last six months on storm water because it is the single biggest source of water pollution in California. We will continue to make this a priority.

While we've had great success this past year in our role as tough guy on the block, we also have a softer side. On the water, our eelgrass restoration project has been a tremendous success. The eelgrass we transplanted at Anacapa Island last summer is thriving and new seedlings have already begun to grow. Dozens of volunteer divers have accompanied us on our restoration trips. On land, over 200 volunteers have joined us on our Stream Teams. The first Saturday of every month, community members help us gather water quality data from 15 sites throughout the Ventura River watershed. The first Sunday of every month, volunteers join us on visits to our 11 sites throughout the Goleta Slough watershed.

Our success in protecting the Channel depends a lot on participation from community members. If you are interested, please call to volunteer—you'll have a lot of fun, and you may just learn something new.

Channelkeeper Welcomes Two New Faces

Christina Michael has joined our staff as part-time Assistant Office Administrator.

Stevie DeJong also joined our team as part-time Assistant Kelp Biologist. She will be with us until September 2003.

Good news for the Carpinteria Salt Marsh

For nearly two years, Channelkeeper staff members have documented illegal discharges of toxic levels of nitrates from the greenhouse industry in Carpinteria. These discharges flow to the Carpinteria Salt Marsh, one of the last remaining coastal wetlands in Santa Barbara County. Nitrate concentrations as low as 1 milligram/liter are harmful to salt marsh organisms. Greenhouse discharge samples collected by Channelkeeper staff and tested at a local lab revealed concentrations of between 200 and 550 milligrams/liter.

In December 2002, Channelkeeper staff presented this evidence to the Regional Water Board in San Luis Obispo. The Board directed its staff to take a tour of the greenhouses with Channelkeeper staff. On January 31, 2003, Regional Board enforcement officer Mike Higgins accompanied CK Executive Director Drew Bohan on a tour of those greenhouses that consistently have the worst discharges. Through our joint efforts, numerous discharges have stopped.

PHOTOS OF WASTEWATER DISCHARGES FROM GREENHOUSE OPERATIONS INTO CREEKS THAT DRAIN INTO CARPINTERIA SALT MARSH.

Like most industries, this one has its good guys and its not-so-good-guys. One of the good guys is Ed Van Wingerden. In fact, in March 2003, the Regional Board presented him with an award for environmental stewardship. Mr. Van Wingerden used to discharge a heavy dose of pollutants offsite until he invested in a recycling system that keeps water, fertilizers and pesticides on-site. As a result, his profits have increased dramatically. Mr. Van Wingerden told CK staff that his inputs are far too valuable to discharge into the creeks. Our plan is to convince others to follow Ed's lead. Many already have, and we will continue to work on the holdouts.

Santa Barbara's East Beach: One of 10 Worst in California

Channelkeeper Working to Stop Beach Closures

Santa Monica's Heal the Bay publishes a weekly report card that assigns water quality "grades" to over 400 beaches in California. From March 2002 to March 2003, Santa Barbara's East Beach received such poor marks that it was among the 10 worst beaches in California. Beaches often receive lower marks during the rainy season because storm water carries pathogens to the ocean. But East Beach, Hendry's Beach, and other local beaches received numerous "F" grades even in the summer months when there is no rain and the creeks are not flowing.

Channelkeeper and Heal the Ocean have been conducting an investigation to determine whether Santa Barbara's sewer system could be contributing to our poor beach water quality.

Sewage Spills Raw sewage can contain a variety of microbes that cause everything from sinus, ear and stomach infections, to cholera, hepatitis, and dysentery. Unfortunately, raw sewage spills in Southern California – including along the Santa Barbara Channel – are rather common occurrences. These sewage discharges expose swimmers and surfers, as well as marine mammals and birds, to viruses and other pathogens that can cause serious health problems. The cost to our beach-based economy can be immense.

Santa Barbara's El Estero plant processes an average of just over 8 million gallons of sewage every day. The sewage collection system consists of 250 miles of piping, 13 pumping stations and over 5,000 manholes. The majority of the system was constructed between 1900 and 1960. Over the years, the system has deteriorated, and hundreds of thousands of gallons of sewage have spilled out of the sewer pipes and into the streets that drain to the creeks and the ocean.

see EAST BEACH continued on page 6

Goleta Slough Lawsuit

Court to Decide Soon on Airport Expansion

In July 2002, Channelkeeper teamed up with the City of Goleta to file a lawsuit to stop the construction of a runway extension at Santa Barbara Airport into the Goleta Slough. This unnecessary extension will pave over a large stretch of one of Santa Barbara's most important coastal resources. An alternative exists that will improve the safety of the runway while protecting the Goleta Slough: EMAS. EMAS (Engineered Materials Arresting System) is a surface made from a special type of concrete that crumbles when weight is applied to it. This crumbling action acts like a runaway truck ramp and allows a runaway plane to slow down quickly and safely.

In April 2001, when the City of Santa Barbara secured Coastal Commission approval of this project, City staff argued that EMAS would not work at Santa Barbara airport because there is not enough space to install it. In fact, there is sufficient space. Last year, Burbank Airport installed EMAS at its main runway (in response to a highly publicized runaway plane incident). That runway is not only 250 feet shorter than Santa Barbara's, the safety areas on either end of it are also shorter. Santa Barbara could install EMAS at one end of the runway - as Burbank did - and still have a longer safety area at the other end. If EMAS works at Burbank, an airport that services many more large jets than Santa Barbara, it should work at Santa Barbara.

In a last-minute effort prior to the critical Coastal Commission hearing, City staff assembled slick brochures designed to show that EMAS was infeasible for Santa Barbara Airport. However, FAA Safety Officer Ellsworth Chan testified at the hearing that EMAS was never evaluated for Santa Barbara Airport. Indeed, EMAS was not even mentioned in the Environmental Impact Report prepared for this project.

Installing EMAS would be less costly than building a runway extension and would obviate the need to fill in two creeks and over a dozen acres of wetland habitat. Refusing to take this step, and instead filling in a big chunk of the Goleta Slough, will move this ecosystem one step closer to the edge of complete destruction. Local scientists say the Slough is currently teetering on the edge of extinction. Let's avoid that final push.

HALACO continued from page 1

Halaco has tried everything to eliminate our lawsuit. Halaco's attorneys filed endless court papers, all of which were rejected by the federal District Court. When that failed, Halaco filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, claiming that our lawsuit was threatening the company's solvency. Despite this claim, Halaco enthusiastically pays its own attorneys (one of whom is also one of Halaco's owners) over $1 million per year in fees. In addition, to date Halaco has asked the bankruptcy court to approve over $500,000 in attorneys' fees incurred just in connection with the bankruptcy filing.

It is unfortunate that Halaco has wasted so much money on attorneys' fees when it could have used these funds to clean up the mess it has created on the Ventura County coast.

Other Enforcement Actions Against Halaco

1. In October 2002, the Ventura County District Attorney and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control filed a complaint in state court against Halaco for illegally burning hazardous waste and dumping it into settling ponds that leak in to the ocean. The complaint also alleges Halaco committed unlawful business practices.

2. In April 2003, the Ventura County District Attorney filed criminal charges against Halaco for unlawful discharges of air pollutants. Halaco's permit only allows it to discharge filtered waste from its smokestack, but for years Halaco has discharged toxic smoke through windows, doors, and holes in the smelter buildings. Thankfully, the DA is finally going to help put a stop to this.

Conservancy Eyeing a Portion of Ormond Wetland

The California Coastal Conservancy is seeking to purchase the portion of the Ormond Wetland located immediately adjacent to Halaco's slag pile. The current owner of this 280-acre parcel, Metropolitan Water District (along with the City of Oxnard), recently voted unanimously to explore the possibility of selling to the Conservancy. Last fall, the Conservancy purchased a similar-sized parcel of the Ormond Wetland. The Conservancy has expressed concern about its potential neighbor, Halaco. Hopefully, by the time a purchase is ready to be finalized, the slag pile will be on the road to removal (or at least it won't be polluting).

Goleta's Forgotten Treasure

A Brief History of the Goleta Slough

In the heart of Goleta lies a treasure, often overlooked by passersby. Sadly, it is now endangered after years of degradation by both human and natural catastrophes. It is called the Goleta Slough.

For thousands of years, the Goleta Slough area was inhabited by one of the most prosperous populations of Native Americans in California. At this time the Slough held much more water, and formed a large lagoon. Near the mouth of this lagoon stood two islands with at least 30 large permanent homes. This village—called Helo' and later renamed Mescalitan—was inhabited for at least 1,000 years, and perhaps as long as 4,000. During this period the Slough was home to an abundance of fish, birds, deer, coyotes, bears, and small game.

GOLETA SLOUGH FROM THE BICYCLE BRIDGE AT THE END OF MOFFETT PLACE.

The first European explorer in the Goleta area, Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, arrived on October 15, 1542. At this time the slough was deep and wide enough for large ships to sail into. A Spanish schooner, or Goleta, reportedly sank in the lagoon area sometime thereafter. From that point on, the area became known as Goleta.

In the mid-1800's, the Goleta Slough began to decline. In 1861-62, catastrophic flooding due to severe winter storms caused much of the Slough to be filled in with sediment. Soon thereafter, humans began major alterations on the Slough for agricultural development. Decades of ditching, diking and filling continued to reduce the Slough's size and productivity. In 1941, construction began on the Marine Corps Air Station, later to become the Santa Barbara Municipal airport. Over 400 acres of salt marsh were filled in. Since then, runways have been extended, more roads have been built, creeks have been channelized or relocated, and beach facilities have been developed. Most of Mescalitan Island was bulldozed to create fill for the construction of Ward Memorial Boulevard.

Today, only about 430 acres remain of the Slough's original 1150 acres. Mescalitan Island, once a large, thriving Chumash settlement, is now merely a small hill located near the intersection of Sandspit Road and Moffett Place with junk scattered around its base. In the last 20 years alone, at least 18 species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals have disappeared from the Slough. Many areas are slowly dying because of severely decreased tidal circulation.

The Goleta Slough is a local treasure. The largest estuary between Point Mugu and Morro Bay, the Goleta Slough has been described as "the major environmentally sensitive habitat area in the Goleta Valley's Coastal Zone." Channelkeeper harbors no illusions that the Slough can be restored to its former glory, and that ships will once again be able to dock at the corner of Hollister and Fairview, as they may have 400 years ago. However, we aim to facilitate a process whereby we can preserve and improve what remains, to expand tidal function into undeveloped areas, and to increase public access. Twenty years ago, kids fished off the bike path bridge. There's no reason why that can't be restored. An improved Slough would offer a wide range of recreational activities for Goleta Valley residents and visitors.

"No more than one or a few decades remain before the chance to avert the threats we now confront will be lost and the prospects for humanity immeasurably diminished. A new ethic is required, a new attitude toward discharging our responsibility for caring for ourselves and for the earth."

Submitted to the 1992 Earth Summit
by 102 Nobel Laureates

EAST BEACH continued from page 3

These spills are especially common during the rainy season. Earlier this year, on March 15, the sewer system backed up at the harbor, as it often does during heavy rains. Witnesses reported seeing a geyser several feet high spewing toilet paper-strewn wastewater onto the pavement near marinas 2 and 3 and into the harbor.

On the same day, the sewer backed up at the 700 block of Spring Street. Sewage flowed down the street and into the storm drains that drain to the ocean at East Beach. The City estimated the harbor spill at 2,000 gallons and the Spring Street spill at 6,000 gallons.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind A larger problem may be lurking beneath the surface. The vast majority (85%) of the sewer system consists of 2 – 5 foot sections of vitrified clay pipe (VCP). Over the years, many of the pipe joints have separated and thousands of cracks have developed throughout the system. As the City acknowledges, many of the sewer pipes leak. Privately owned pipes – called "laterals" – that connect homes and businesses to the sewer system are also prone to leakage.

While the City has an ongoing program of sewer maintenance, to date, the City has made no effort to determine the extent of this underground leakage. Nor has the City made an effort to determine whether any of these leaks are getting to our creeks or the ocean.

Millions of Gallons of Leaking Sewage While the amount of leakage has not been quantified precisely, we do have some idea of the extent of it. We know that during heavy rains, millions of gallons of rain water enter the sewer system. Because Santa Barbara's storm water system is separate from the sewer system, no storm water should be entering the sewer system. But it does. On an average "dry weather" day, the treatment plant processes just over 8 million gallons of wastewater. On rainy days, that figure can soar to a daily average of over 30 million gallons. A substantial amount of this "extra" water enters through cracks and leaks in the pipes.

see EAST BEACH continued on page 11

News & Notes

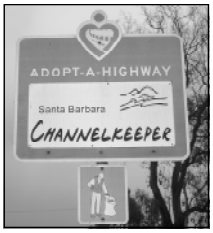
Bush Administration Attacks Environmental Laws

The Bush Administration's orchestrated environmental rollback is unparalleled. No prior administration has ever before launched such a comprehensive attack on our environmental laws. Environmental groups are not the only ones taking notice. In January, the Los Angeles Times quoted California Attorney General Bill Lockyer as saying in reference to the Bush Administration, "On every conceivable front, they are pushing back environmental protection in California." Of particular concern to the Waterkeeper Alliance is the current assault on the Clean Water Act. For a definitive list of the Bush Administration's environmentally destructive efforts, as well as a few positive ones, visit www.nrdc.org/bushrecord/default.asp. You can help by writing Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Congresswoman Capps and urging them to oppose measures that would weaken the Clean Water Act and other environmental laws.

International Waterkeeper Alliance Conference

In June, SBCK Executive Director Drew Bohan attended the International Waterkeeper Alliance annual conference in Toronto. In the photo, Drew and Bobby Kennedy stand with Robert Hunter, founder of Greenpeace, who had just given a rousing speech.

Adopt-A-Highway



Channelkeeper adopted a stretch of Southbound Highway 101 starting at the Carpinteria Salt Marsh. Check out our sign right next to the Carpinteria Avenue exit. In the last year, we have collected hundreds of pounds of trash that would otherwise have ended up in the Marsh. Call us to volunteer.

No More Free Ride for Agriculture

While every other industry's water discharges have been regulated for many years, the agriculture industry has essentially enjoyed a free ride. California's Regional Water Quality Control Boards have issued "waivers" that allow the agriculture industry to discharge huge volumes of pesticides, fertilizers, sediment, and other pollutants to California's waterways. Well over half of the impaired water bodies in our region are impaired by pollutants from farms. On the South Coast, sediment is a particular problem because it can fill in our coastal wetlands like the Goleta Slough and Carpinteria Salt Marsh.

A bill signed into law last year by Governor Davis mandated that all waivers expire on December 31, 2002. Currently, our Regional Board (Region 3 in San Luis Obispo) is preparing to issue a new waiver to the agriculture industry, but with certain conditions. Channelkeeper is working with Board staff, growers, and other conservation groups to develop appropriate conditions. A critical condition is monitoring. We are urging the Board to require that all growers monitor their discharges to determine whether their operations are contributing to the impairments. Often times, pollution discharges from agricultural operations can be eliminated with a minimum of cost and effort. Many farmers have already done so. The new conditions should be designed the remaining growers follow suit.

EPA Dragging its Feet on Oil Rig Regs

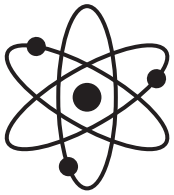
In January 2001, Channelkeeper and Environmental Defense Center convinced the California Coastal Commission to impose stricter water quality standards on the oil rigs in and around the Channel. First, the Commission required that EPA apply more stringent pollution discharge standards.

Second, the Commission required independent monitoring of the oil industry's discharges. Instead of having the oil industry itself conduct all of the water-quality monitoring, third parties would be able to ensure industry compliance. The federal government recently announced it would be cutting back on its oil rig inspections. This makes the need for independent monitoring even greater.

Third, the Commission required that the industry study the feasibility of alternative methods of disposal of drilling fluids and cuttings. Whereas platforms located in State waters (like Holly) are prohibited from discharging these wastes, platforms located in federal waters (the vast majority of all rigs) are currently free to do so. If the study determines that disposal at a proper land facility is feasible, this method will be required.

Channelkeeper learned recently that EPA has not implemented any of these conditions on the oil rig operators. We are working to remedy this situation as soon as possible.

Nuclear Waste in the Channel?



On Sunday, March 23, Channelkeeper testified before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The federal government has proposed that nuclear waste be transported by ship from Diablo Nuclear Power Plant in San Luis Obispo, through the Santa Barbara Channel, to Port Hueneme where it will be sent by truck or train to Yucca Mountain, Nevada. On March 23, we put the NRC on notice that Channelkeeper opposes this harebrained scheme. Congresswoman Lois Capps has also expressed her opposition to this plan. The costs of insuring against a major nuclear reactor accident are borne by the federal government, and by extension, the taxpayer, because the cost of a major accident could be unthinkable (government estimates place it at over $500 billion). No other power-generating industry enjoys this type of subsidy. This should tell us something about the safety of this industry in general, and transport in particular.

Channelkeeper honored by California League of Conservation Voters

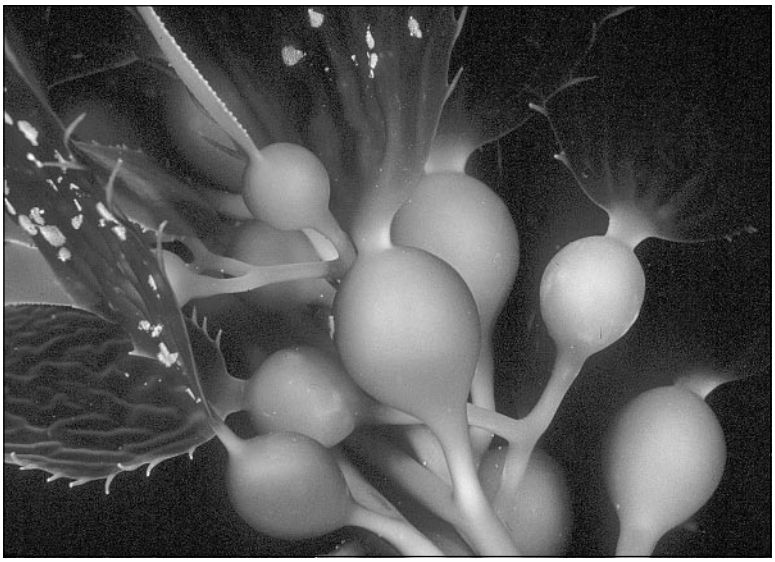
In September 2002, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper and the other southern California Waterkeepers (Ventura, Santa Monica, Orange County, San Diego, and Baja) received the 2002 Environmental Leadership Award from the California League of Conservation Voters. The awards ceremony took place at the Beverly Hills home of Richard and Daphna Ziman. Senator John Kerry, pictured above, delivered the keynote speech. Activist Ariana Huffington also shared her thoughts on the future of California's coast.

Marine Restoration

Channelkeeper currently manages two marine restoration and education programs. Both programs are partially funded through NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program grants. Both recruit and train volunteer divers from the community to do much of the work. And, both programs are brought to schools so kids can learn about the sea via our eco-carts in their classrooms.

Eelgrass Restoration at Anacapa

Eelgrass (Zostera marina) is one of only two species of native marine flowering plants found along our coast. Eelgrass beds produce a unique microenvironment that provides food and protection for hundreds of other species. Eelgrass grows along sandy bottoms in protected areas, which in southern California usually means within harbor and bays. Human activity, such as dredging and building harbors and other coastal structures, can harm the plants either by physical disturbance or by reducing water clarity.



CLOSE-UP PHOTO OF HEALTHY KELP IN THE CHANNEL.

Our project aims to restore an important eelgrass bed at Frenchy's Cove, West Anacapa. The historic bed disappeared in the late 1980's as marauding white urchins swept through and ate everything in their path.

We began replanting eelgrass in the spring of 2002. Within a few months, a species of brittlestar moved into the area in densities greater than 1000 per square meter. Although the brittlestars did not eat eelgrass, they overwhelmed the young plants by climbing up the blades and knocking them over.

Over the summer and fall, we watched our healthy eelgrass beds shrink until there were only a handful of plants remaining. But as we had hoped, heavy winter storms dislodged the brittlestars and the invasion ended. Subsequent surveys found that a few healthy plants survived, and to our great astonishment, dozens of new eelgrass seedlings had sprouted. The chance of survival has greatly improved now that conditions are back to "normal" at Frenchy's Cove. Stay tuned for continuing updates about our growing eelgrass bed. We hope that one day soon a full and healthy eelgrass habitat will be reestablished at Anacapa.

Kelp Restoration Education and Monitoring Program

Our Kelp project is part of a much larger regional partnership with our California Coastkeeper Alliance partners to the south. The project has two goals: to monitor and restore kelp to a local barren reef, and to teach kids about kelp and help them to grow it in their classrooms.

It has been a great year for kelp along our coast. However, Carpinteria Reef conspicuously lacks a kelp bed, although a large one grew there historically. This expansive rocky reef is about a half-mile offshore of the mouth of the Carpinteria Salt Marsh. Local residents tell us that in the 1960's and '70's, a healthy kelp bed supported teeming marine life in this area. Today, the bottom is covered by fine silt that seems to have come from the mouth of the Marsh. It seems plausible that this fine silt could be breaking the kelp life cycle at the microscopic stage. We are hoping that by planting juvenile plants that have been nurtured past this sensitive stage we can establish a healthy bed of adult plants. As kelp beds change water dynamics much like a stand of trees breaks the wind, it is possible that sedimentation could diminish once a kelp bed is established. The presence of kelp creates habitat for many species, and improves the recreational diving potential.

We are expecting to begin our first transplanting this summer. In four classrooms around town, kids are learning about the kelp life cycle and are watching tiny kelp plants grow upon tiles in classroom tanks. When those kelp plants become big enough, students will accompany us on our boat as we transplant them.

Snapshot Day 2003: California's first coast-wide monitoring event

On Saturday May 17th, hundreds of volunteers from the Oregon border to Ensenada, Mexico participated in California's first Snapshot Day. This event aimed to test the water quality of every coastal stream along California's coast, taking a "picture" of the water that is flowing into our ocean on a single day. Channelkeeper was the Regional Coordinator for this event, covering Ventura, Santa Barbara, and southern San Luis Obispo counties. California Coastal Commissioner Pedro Nava and Second District Supervisor Susan Rose attended the event, and acknowledged Channelkeeper's efforts to protect California's coastal resources.

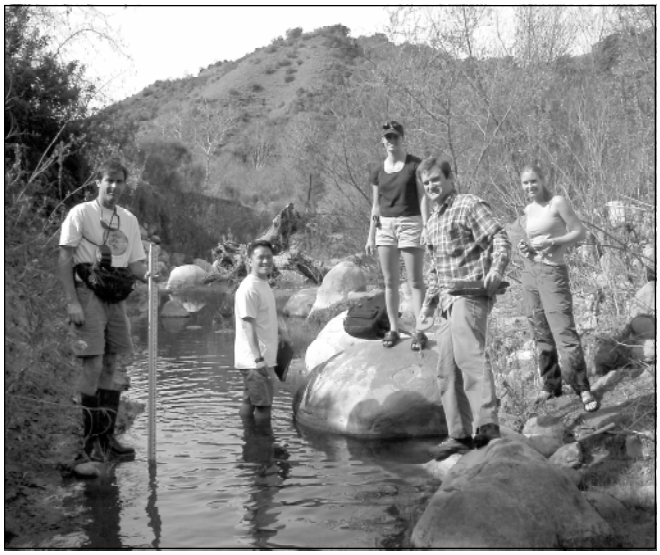
Altogether, 43 volunteers tested a total of 56 water bodies in our region, from San Luis Obispo Creek to Revelon Slough (near Point Mugu). Each creek was tested for bacteria and nutrient content, as well as for common water quality parameters including temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, electrical conductivity, and turbidity. All results are being entered into a database that will soon be available to the public at www.ccamp.org.

OUR SNAPSHOT DAY VOLUNTEERS AT THE WATERSHED RESOURCE CENTER.

Ventura & Goleta Stream Team in full swing!

In 2001, Channelkeeper began the Ventura Stream Team program, a volunteer monitoring project on the Ventura River Watershed. The first year of this program was so successful that we decided to launch the Goleta Stream Team in the summer of 2002. Every month, with the help of community volunteers, we now test water quality at 15 sites in the Ventura River watershed and 11 sites in the Goleta Slough watershed.

All members of the community are encouraged to participate in these fun and educational programs. For more information on volunteering, please contact Leigh Ann at 563-3377 x3 or lag@sbck.org.



STREAM TEAM VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED *have fun, help Channelkeeper*

Divers/Boat Helpers We need assistance with our kelp and eelgrass restoration projects (regularly, weather permitting).

Stream Team Help us gather data from throughout the Ventura River or Goleta Slough watersheds.

Other We have numerous other volunteer opportunities, from research projects to beach clean-ups.

Please contact Leigh Ann at (805) 563-3377 or lag@sbck.org for more information on our volunteer opportunities.

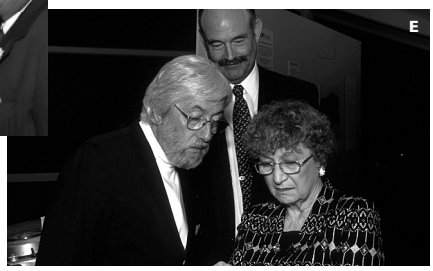
Blue Water Ball

On February 22, 2003, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper hosted its third annual benefit, the Blue Water Ball, at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum. The event was a great success, made possible by all of Channelkeeper's local supporting community members and loyal and dedicated volunteers.

The program began with a powerful welcome from Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson, followed by a delicious meal catered by The Waterfront Grill. Board Member Terry Tamminen, who just might be the funniest and most entertaining emcee, kept the night rolling with his charm and passion for Channelkeeper's work. "Dollar for dollar, Keepers are the most effective environmental groups anywhere," according to Terry. Ventura resident Roma Armbrust gave a touching testimonial during dinner about the devastation that Halaco Engineering Co. has caused to the precious local Ormond Wetland. She expressed her appreciation to Channelkeeper for taking on Halaco when nobody else would.

Channelkeeper honored Jean Michel Cousteau of Ocean Futures Society and Peter Howorth of the Marine Mammal Center. We're all lucky to have these two great figures spotlighting the importance of the health of the magnificent Santa Barbara Channel.

We also presented Volunteer of the Year awards to Terri Nichols and Will McGowan for their outstanding contributions.



A: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, ZACH BROWN WITH CHANNELKEEPER BOARD MEMBERS MICHAEL BROWN AND JACK STAPELMANN

B: BOARD MEMBER RAE EMMETT BIDDING ON AN AUCTION ITEM

C: BILL AND ROMA ARMBRUST, AND DAS WILLIAMS

D: REGIONAL WATER BOARD MEMBER JEFF BROWN, AND BOARD MEMBERS SUSAN JORDAN AND KEN FALSTROM

E: CHANNELKEEPER AWARDEES JEAN-MICHEL COUSTEAU AND PETER HOWORTH WITH NEWS-PRESS REPORTER LORRAINE WILSON

Thank You to Our 2003 Donors (June 2002 – June 2003)

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Event Volunteers:

Simon Allen, Smiti Anand, Erik Anglin, Scott Bull, Vicki Clark, Lindsey East, Liz Frieden, Cory Gallipeau, Jenna Garmon, Heather George, Natalie Giusti, Sarah Ivester, Douglas Kaltenbrun, Glen Kaltenbrun, Tracy Kaltenbrun, Al Leydecker, Mark Lim, Kim Lyons, Laylanya Maestas, Rick Margolin, Sam Masson, Graham Maugm, James McConnell, Will McGowan, Conrad Metzenberg, Terri Nichols, Richard O'Steen, David Piasecki, Tim Robinson, Debbie Schwartz, Scott Valor, Alana Walczak, Liz Walling, Chelsea Wright.

EAST BEACH continued from page 6

Video Cameras inside the Pipes

If millions of gallons of rainwater can leak *into the pipes* through cracks and holes during rainy days, it seems logical to assume that some sewage could leak *out of the pipes* during dry days. We decided to see if this was true, and hired a leak detection company to help us review video tapes taken inside the sewer system. These videos clearly showed that there are many holes, cracks and offset joints through which sewage can leak into the surrounding ground.

Polluting our Creeks and Beaches What the videotapes *do not show* is where the sewage goes once it leaks out of the pipes. If the leakage is minor, we have no doubt that under the right conditions the soil will be able to decompose the dangerous pathogens. However, if the leaky sewer pipe is one of those located close to the beach or a creek (like the 34-inch wide pipe that runs along Cabrillo Boulevard and under Mission Creek), we may have a serious problem.

Studies conducted in San Diego and Catalina Island revealed that leaking sewer pipes can and do contribute to ocean pollution. San Diego fixed the sewer pipes at a popular spot called Windansea, and the pathogens in the adjacent beach disappeared. Similarly, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Avalon officials spent $930,000 to repair the town's sewer lines. Thereafter, beach closures declined by 50%.

The Solution We propose that the City spend a portion of the $10 million it collects every year to determine whether or not underground sewer leaks are polluting our beaches. The sewer system is by far the *single largest potential source* of pathogens. We think it only makes sense to invest a modest amount of our sewer revenues to investigate whether underground leaks are getting to the ocean. Of course, we'll continue to work on storm water and other sources as well.

Peter & Kimberly Howorth
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Peter Grim Design
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

Shop Our Shores: an easy way to support Channelkeeper!

Do you have any stuff around the house you'd like to quickly and easily get rid of and at the same support Channelkeeper's work?

Channelkeeper is pleased to announce the start of a new fundraising program called "Shop Our Shores," an auction fundraiser. When our supporters donate new or used items, we put them up for auction on E-Bay. Internet shoppers purchase donated items, and the money earned from the item goes directly to Channelkeeper.

There are two ways that you can help:

(1) Donate your new or used items to be auctioned off. These can be household items, artwork, collectibles, nice clothing, tickets for events (sports, concerts, theater, etc.), sporting equipment, electronics, etc. There are no restrictions on what you can donate, so long as items are in reasonably good condition and worth at least about $25. When your item is purchased from our E-Bay store, Channelkeeper will receive the proceeds! Donations are tax deductible.

(2) Shop online at our online E-Bay store! Visit http://www.stores.ebay.com/californiacoastkeeper to check out the items for sale. Check back regularly, as the store is always being updated. This program is managed by California Coastkeeper to benefit each of the six southern California Waterkeeper programs.

Thanks for your support!

Channelkeeper has Moved

In April, we moved our office to 714 Bond Street, Santa Barbara, 93103, one block north of Haley. Please come by and visit. The new phone: (805) 563-3377.

"The battle to save the planet begins with each of us, and progresses when we each resolve to take responsibility for preserving little bits of it – our backyards, our communities, our river valleys. After all, our planet is being destroyed piece by piece. It will only be saved in the same fashion."

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., founder and president of the Waterkeeper Alliance, and honorary Channelkeeper board member.

Become an SBCK Member

If you would like to continue to receive this newsletter and support us, please fill out the return envelope.

Thank You!

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