# Santa Barbara CHANNELKEEPER®

Keeping watch for clean water

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FROM THE HELM

It’s still hard to believe the magnitude of the devastation that struck our small coastal community this past winter with the one-two punch of the Thomas Fire and Montecito mudslides. Our hearts go out to all those who were impacted by these tragic events, and we sincerely thank and applaud the first responders who were out on the front lines working tirelessly to save lives and protect property from the ravages of fire and flood.

We are also incredibly grateful to you and all the other caring and active people in our community who joined in to help, and who enable Channelkeeper to be nimble and well-equipped to help respond to disasters like this. Thanks to your invaluable support, we were able to get out there immediately to sample the mud that was deposited on our beaches and test water quality at neighboring beaches, to obtain information from government agencies involved in the response and share it quickly with the public and the media, and to serve as a reasoned, science-based advocate for our beaches, streams, and fellow water-loving citizens.

Our watersheds and habitats have been severely impacted by these devastating events, and it will be many years before they recover, but Channelkeeper is committed to helping monitor and restore them back to health. Needless to say, our community has suffered deeply and will take a long time to heal as well. But times like this also bring us together and make us stronger. Channelkeeper is extremely grateful and proud to be a member of such a strong and resilient community, and we are honored that you trust and enable us to serve as a resource and a voice for our beloved beaches and waterways as we recover and rebuild this extraordinary stretch of coast we call home together.

CALIFORNIA WATERKEEPERS HOLD WATER BOARDS ACCOUNTABLE

Our partners at California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) recently spearheaded the Clean Water Accountability Project, a new campaign aimed at strengthening the state agencies tasked with managing California’s water resources. The State and Regional Water Boards make important decisions about the water on which our economy, health, and way of life depend. While few Californians are aware of this vital line of defense, polluting industries are actively working to weaken and undermine the enforcement of rules that protect water quality and public health. As a result, despite having strong laws on the books, California has a serious and growing pollution problem. CCKA has established a Blue Ribbon Panel of respected leaders from across the state to work with local Waterkeepers to recommend reforms that will increase Water Board transparency, function, and enforcement to achieve swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters for all.
The past few months have been an incredibly trying time for our community and our landscape. First, in early December 2017, the Thomas Fire - the largest in California history - swept across the South Coast, burning hundreds of thousands of acres of watersheds, including many that Channelkeeper monitors in the Ventura, Carpinteria, and Montecito areas. Then, with fire evacuees barely back in their homes, the raging rains of January 9th triggered deadly mudslides that ravaged the community of Montecito, causing 21 deaths, destroying over 100 homes, and leaving roads, streams, and properties choked with debris and mud.

As we did in the aftermath of the 2015 Refugio Oil Spill, Channelkeeper immediately sprang into action to do what we could to help. We leveraged our water quality expertise to serve as a resource for the community as mud cleared from roads, creek channels and debris basins was deposited on Carpinteria and Goleta beaches.

We were inundated with questions and concerns from local citizens and reporters about water quality, the contents of the mud being deposited on beaches and elsewhere, and the safety of recreating in the Channel. In response, Channelkeeper quickly initiated daily sampling of fecal bacteria levels at Rincon and Campus Point beaches – popular surf spots adjacent to the dump sites that were not being monitored by the County.

We posted our results immediately on our website and social media feeds to help ocean users protect themselves against the risk of getting sick from recreating in polluted water. We also collected samples of the mud being deposited on Goleta and Carpinteria beaches to test for the presence of harmful chemicals and toxic effects to wildlife. We tracked down the results of sampling done by public agencies and analyzed the laboratory results. We also used our boat, the R/V Channelkeeper, to collect water samples offshore to document the dispersal of contamination from the beaches receiving the mud.

Channelkeeper spent days tracking down information from numerous government agencies and provided regular updates on the situation to local, regional and national news.

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The Trump administration has begun to implement the “Drill, Baby, Drill” intent of the “America-First Offshore Energy Strategy” with the release of a proposed plan that will dictate where new oil leases can be purchased off our nation’s coast. The Draft 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Leasing Plan proposes to open more than 90% of the total OCS to potential new and expanded oil drilling, including the Santa Barbara Channel. This new plan threatens the progress California has made to protect our coastal resources and to transition from dirty fossil fuels toward cleaner, renewable energy sources.

New leases have not been offered for sale in state waters (0-3 miles from shore) since the 1969 oil spill in the Santa Barbara Channel or in federal waters (beyond 3 miles) off the California coast since 1984. Under the new proposed plan, lease sales would occur in the Southern California planning region (from the Mexico border to north of San Luis Obispo) in 2020 and 2022. After a public review process, lease sales would allow companies to bid on “lease blocks” (three square-mile areas of ocean), with the lease going to the highest bidder as long as the bid is determined to be “fair market value.” This means that, as currently proposed, hundreds of new lease blocks in the Santa Barbara Channel may be opened to new and expanded oil and gas extraction. Increased drilling in the Channel would increase the risk of accidents and spills and associated impacts to the environment, wildlife, our communities and economy, so Channelkeeper strongly opposes this proposal. We have submitted written comments on it, outlining the ecological, recreational, and economic importance of the Santa Barbara Channel and highlighting consistent opposition by state and local governments, organizations and citizens to expanded oil development here. There will be two more public comment periods before the final plan is adopted.

California legislators are fighting back against Trump’s proposed OCS leasing plan. Governor Brown issued a strong statement in response, stating that “California’s door is closed to President Trump’s Pacific oil and gas drilling.” The State Lands Commission (SLC), a coalition of elected officials, and dozens of local governments have also voiced their opposition. In addition, two pending state bills - Senate Bill 834 (Jackson) and Assembly Bill 1775 (Muratsuchi and Limon) - would prohibit the SLC from approving any new leases (or lease renewals, extensions, or modifications) in state waters that would increase oil or natural gas production from federal waters. Channelkeeper is actively advocating in support of these bills. Please visit sbck.org/legislation to learn more and to voice your support for these critical protections for our coast.

Visit sbck.org/offshoreoil to learn more and lend your voice to protect our coast from this ill-conceived plan.
California Coastkeeper Alliance recently launched the Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast (BAPPC), a network that aims to mobilize and amplify the business voice against new or expanded oil drilling offshore of the West Coast.

The alliance, which already has 1,100 member businesses, was formed in response to the Trump Administration’s recent proposal to open 90% of US coastal waters to oil and gas drilling. It is a business-led effort that seeks to highlight the economic risks new drilling poses to our fisheries, tourism and recreation industries, and clean energy future. From technology to tourism, seafood to real estate, BAPPC members believe that a healthy coast is vital to their bottom lines, as well as the lifestyles of their customers and staff.

Inaugural members from the Santa Barbara area include Santa Barbara Adventure Co., The SANDBOX, Smart Chiropractic and Logic Monitor, Inc. If you own a business that is interested in becoming a BAPPC member, please let us know!
Single-use plastics continue to be a major source of pollution to our creeks, beaches and ocean, and Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Foam is one of the biggest offenders. EPS Foam is harmful to wildlife that can accidentally ingest it and to the manufacturing workers that produce it, and is not viably recyclable. Styrene is a known animal and probable human carcinogen and is ranked the fifth worst global industry for toxic waste production by the US EPA. Polystyrene and EPS, commonly known as Styrofoam, can be identified by the number “6” on cups, lids, cutlery, take-out containers and more. Fortunately, municipalities are taking action to reduce this pernicious pollution source. To date, more than 114 local governments across California have adopted foam ban ordinances, including Carpinteria, which has had a ban on foam in take-out food containers in place since 2008. Channelkeeper, in partnership with the Community Environmental Council (CEC), worked with Carpinteria to strengthen their ordinance by including a ban on the retail sale of foam cups, plates, coolers and other disposable foam products, which they adopted in November 2017.

We are also working with the City of Santa Barbara and other South Coast municipalities to follow suit. The Santa Barbara City Council agreed to draft a foam ordinance last fall, and its Ordinance Committee is working to finalize one for consideration and adoption by the Council later this spring.

EPS Foam is harmful to wildlife that can accidentally ingest it and to the manufacturing workers that produce it, and is not viably recyclable

Plastic straws are another pervasive type of litter often found at beach clean-ups. Americans use and dispose of 500 MILLION plastic straws a day! Channelkeeper and our partners have developed education and outreach materials to raise awareness and encourage people to go straw-free for the sea or use reusable straws instead. We’re also teaming up with elementary school kids to ask local restaurants to offer straws only upon request and to consider more environmentally friendly options like paper or compostable straws.

On February 23rd, Channelkeeper and CEC commemorated National Skip the Straw Day with several local restaurants, including Farmer Boy Restaurant, Enterprise Fish Co., Live Oak Café, and Taffy’s Pizza, who offered straws only on request for the day. Many other local businesses have been doing so for some time now, including The Lark, Press Room and Lure Fish House, and we applaud them for their leadership.

Please join us in the movement for plastic-free seas by supporting local foam bans and pledging to hold the foam and skip the straw!
Due to below average rainfall again this past winter, the City of Santa Barbara is poised to consider expanding the capacity of its desalination plant in May. Channelkeeper thinks that’s a bad idea for several reasons.

One is the extremely high cost. Desalination is the City’s most expensive water supply source, costing approximately $1,400 per acre-foot (AF), or $2,660/AF when including the annual cost to pay off the loan to recommission the plant. Santa Barbara’s desal plant was originally built in the drought of the late 1980s/early 1990s at a cost of $34 million, and was then promptly decommissioned when heavy rains ended the drought. It was recently reactivated at a cost of more than $71 million – about $50 million more than originally estimated. This equates to $4.2 million per year in debt service plus another $4.1 million per year to operate at its current capacity of 3,125 AF/year (equal to 3 million gallons per day, or approximately 30% of the City’s current demand). These exorbitant costs will be borne by City water customers for decades to come in the form of significantly higher water bills.

In addition to the high cost, desalination also has significant environmental impacts. For one, it is extremely energy intensive and thus generates significant greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, operating the desal plant has single-handedly increased the City’s energy usage BY MORE THAN 50%.

Moreover, Santa Barbara’s desal plant kills or injures massive numbers of marine organisms through its outdated “open ocean” intake pipes – which the State Water Board effectively banned in 2015 - and the discharge of concentrated brine and other chemical byproducts back into the ocean. Unless we get a whole lot more rain, Operating the desal plant has single-handedly increased the City’s energy usage BY MORE THAN 50% by the end of April, the City will likely decide in May to increase the capacity of its desal plant. This would cost several more million dollars and result in further energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and harm to marine life in the Santa Barbara Channel – and is most likely unnecessary.

There are several cheaper and more environmentally sound water supply sources that the City could invest in to meet demand, including recycled water, stormwater capture, and incentives for increased conservation and efficiency. Santa Barbara should fully exhaust these more environmentally sound alternatives first, and then, if the desal plant absolutely still must be expanded to meet any remaining shortfall, it should be upgraded with the best available technologies to minimize its massive environmental footprint, and its impacts should be monitored and publicly reported.

In the words of our friends at LA Waterkeeper, who are fighting a desal plant in El Segundo, “Desal sucks - money, energy and fish.” Join Channelkeeper in urging the Santa Barbara City Council to reject more desal and lead us toward a more economically and environmentally sound water supply future. To learn more, visit www.sbck.org/desalination.
Making Water Conservation a Way of Life

Despite the welcome recent rains, the winter of 2017-2018 brought only 30 percent of what is considered normal rainfall and, as of March 2018, Lake Cachuma - the South Coast’s primary water supply source - is at 39.1% capacity, so Santa Barbara County is once again in a severe drought. Extreme weather, including drought, is likely to be more common in the future, and areas like southern California with drier climates must make water conservation a way of life.

With this in mind, Channelkeeper has been championing a shift to a more sustainable water supply portfolio on the South Coast that includes rainwater capture, recycled water and heightened conservation and water use efficiency rather than more expensive and environmentally harmful alternatives like ocean desalination.

Through our “Rein the Rain” Project, Channelkeeper is partnering with local brewers and vintners, including Figueroa Mountain Brewery, Melville Winery, Beckmen Vineyards, Buttonwood Winery, and Imagine Wines, to repurpose wooden barrels that were previously used to age wine and beer into rain barrels and getting them out in the community. We purchase simple kits that convert the barrels into rain barrels and offer the barrels and kits for sale for $100.

These beautiful oak barrels hold 60 gallons and fill quickly by capturing rain running off your roof through a downspout and storing it for later reuse for plant and landscape irrigation. The barrels are available for pickup at the Channelkeeper office (or we can deliver for $20), and the conversion kits come complete with simple step-by-step directions and all the pieces needed to connect the barrel to a rectangular downspout.

Email us at penny@sbck.org to reserve yours and start reining the rain today!

Fire, Flood and Mud Scar the South Coast

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outlets, generated helpful fact sheets, and used social media to keep the public informed. We also coordinated with the County and other agencies to ensure that stockpiles of mud and debris are adequately contained to prevent runoff from contaminating local waterways. Channelkeeper is continuing to monitor and weigh in on the recovery and restoration process to ensure that all actions are in alignment with environmental safeguards, best practices and regulations. Finally, we’ve developed a monitoring plan to document long-term impacts of the Thomas Fire on local watersheds. Please visit www.sbck.org/fireflood to learn more.
What is your wish for the future?

This past winter, Channelkeeper hosted our 15th annual ocean-themed juried student art show, “What the Channel Means to Me.” The goal of the show, which is open to high school students from Carpinteria to Goleta, is to inspire local youth to create art that celebrates the natural beauty and biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel, and for their art to inspire others in our community.

Art students from Dos Pueblos, San Marcos and Santa Barbara High Schools submitted more than 325 works of art to vie for the chance to be featured in this year’s show. Our juror, plein air artist Chris Potter, selected 65 awe-inspiring pieces to be in the show as well as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners, jurors’ choice and environmental ethic award winners, and four Honorable Mentions.

At the opening exhibit and awards ceremony on March 1st, Assemblymember Monique Limón presented the winners with awards and cash prizes made possible by our long-time show sponsor, Trillium Enterprises, Inc. The show remained on display at the Jodi House Gallery throughout the month of March.

Many thanks to all the students (and their art teachers) who created such beautiful and inspiring works of art in celebration of our beloved Santa Barbara Channel!

ART SHOW WINNERS

1st Place: Berena Espinoza, San Marcos High School
2nd Place: Cooper Jasiorowski, Dos Pueblos High School
3rd Place: Sunny Graybill, Dos Pueblos High School
Jurors’ Choice: Gabriella Minier, Dos Pueblos High School
Environmental Ethic: Jennifer Zaida, Dos Pueblos High School
Honorable Mentions:
Violet Beraldo, Dos Pueblos High School
Harrison Del Bonis, San Marcos High School
Annika Linquist, Dos Pueblos High School
Kai Smiddy, Santa Barbara High School

Many thanks to Trillium Enterprises for its long-time sponsorship of our Student Art Show!

Do you believe clean beaches, a healthy ocean, and a safe and sustainable water supply will always be essential? Working with your financial advisor, you can make a gift to Channelkeeper now or in the future to protect these precious resources for generations to come. Please consider planning your legacy in the following ways:

- Bequests – Remember Channelkeeper in your will through cash or property bequests.
- Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) – With a CRT, appreciated assets are placed in an irrevocable trust, which the trust may invest or sell to provide income to the donor for life. Ultimately, the assets become the property of Channelkeeper, while providing current tax savings to the donor.
- Appreciated Assets – Appreciated assets such as real estate, stocks, bonds or securities can be donated and tax benefits realized from the donation without paying tax on capital gains.

There are many types of charitable gifts with substantial tax advantages. We encourage you to contact your professional tax advisor as to how best to structure a gift for your needs. For more information, please call (805) 563.3377 ext. 2 or email morgan@sbck.org.
What better way to celebrate the Earth than at Channelkeeper’s 18th Annual Blue Water Ball?

Please join us on Saturday, April 21st from 5:00-9:30 pm at Deckers Brands’ headquarters in Goleta for a gourmet dinner, fine local wines, an enticing auction, dancing to DJ Darla Bea, and an inspiring keynote address by Mimi Armstrong deGruy.

Ms. deGruy is a documentary filmmaker who, with her late husband, the irrepressibly curious and enthusiastic underwater filmmaker Mike deGruy, produced numerous hours of award-winning television for National Geographic, BBC and other networks. Mimi also worked for CNN, Turner Broadcasting’s “Portrait of America” series, and PBS’ “The Infinite Voyage” series.

Blue Water Ball guests will be treated to sneak peaks of Mimi’s latest project, “Diving Deep,” an inspired documentary slated for release this summer that celebrates her late husband and his mission to save our oceans.

“I began my conversation with the ocean after meeting my husband Mike deGruy, a marine biologist turned filmmaker. I’d always loved the sea, but seeing it through Mike’s eyes gave me a greater appreciation for not only its beauty but the necessity for a healthy ocean. In addition to inspiring us all with its endless expanse, the ocean is literally responsible for every other breath we take. I am thrilled to support Channelkeeper, an organization that tirelessly and effectively advocates on behalf of our beloved Santa Barbara Channel and the surrounding Pacific Ocean.” - Mimi deGruy

You won’t want to miss this very special presentation and fun opportunity to celebrate Channelkeeper’s recent victories for clean water. To buy tickets or tables, become a sponsor, donate auction items, or learn more, please visit www.bluewaterball.org, email morgan@sbck.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 2. We look forward to seeing you there!
Channelkeeper is thrilled to welcome three new members to our Board of Directors! Katharine Gerhardt is an artist, surfer, and actress/model who serves as a brand ambassador for several surf companies – a position she leverages to promote environmental mindfulness and sustainability as a lifestyle. She also strives to foster environmental awareness and ocean conservation through her work as a surf instructor and guide. Kat was born and raised in Mill Valley and lives in Santa Barbara with her husband.

Scott Carrington leads digital and social media marketing at Patagonia, and co-led the team that built Patagonia Action Works, a powerful online platform launched in early 2018 that connects citizens who want to take action on environmental issues with non-profits doing environmental work in their area. Scott has over 15 years of experience developing digital and brand marketing programs and leading ecommerce businesses. Born and raised on the Jersey Shore, Scott is an avid surfer and lives with his wife and kids in Carpinteria.

Kathy Rogers grew up in the Bay Area and recently moved to Santa Barbara after living in New York City for 27 years. She studied Engineering at Stanford and Journalism at Columbia University and spent several years trading securities in NYC. She has written numerous articles about the environment and clean water, including a series about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Kathy also serves on the Board of Women’s Voices for Change, a non-profit organization that informs, empowers and celebrates women in the second halves of their lives.

Welcome aboard Katharine, Scott and Kathy!

Honor Roll

Channelkeeper is proud to announce that Jenna Driscoll, our Watershed and Marine Program Associate, was recently appointed by California Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León to serve on California’s Oil Spill Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The 14-member TAC provides public input and recommendations to the Oil Spill Administrator, State Lands Commission, California Coastal Commission, and other state agencies on a broad range of issues related to oil spill prevention and response in California. Way to go, Jenna!
Upcoming Events

Stream Team
Stream Team is Channelkeeper’s volunteer-based water quality monitoring program. Every month, volunteers join Channelkeeper staff to test for common water quality parameters at numerous sites in the Ventura River and Goleta Valley watersheds. Come join us to help monitor and protect our local waterways. Upcoming Goleta Stream Team events will take place at 10 am on April 8th, May 6th, June 3rd, July 8th, and August 5th. Upcoming Ventura Stream Team events will take place at 9 am on May 5th, August 4th, and November 3rd. Email jennad@sbck.org or call 805.563.3377 ext. 5 for more information.

Dirty Martinis for Clean Water
Channelkeeper is privileged to hold the first fundraiser in Santa Barbara’s newest and hippest waterfront restaurant, Bluewater Grill. Please join us for cocktails and appetizers, live music and stunning views of the Channel from a private balcony on Thursday, March 29th from 5:30-8:30 pm. Tickets are $40 per person and are limited to 50 people, so make your reservations now at www.sbck.org/bluewatergrill.

International Ocean Film Tour to Benefit SBCK
The International Ocean Film Tour is coming to Santa Barbara on Friday, April 20th at The Sandbox, and Channelkeeper is the lucky beneficiary! The tour features two hours of the best ocean adventures, water sports and environmental documentaries of the year, and the Santa Barbara stop is sponsored by Toad & Co., The Sandbox, All Good, and Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co. This awesome event is sure to sell out, so visit www.sbck.org/filmtour to get your tickets today - the $10 ticket price includes a beer! Proceeds from ticket, beer and food sales will be donated to Channelkeeper. Doors open at 6:30pm, films start at 7:00pm. We hope to see you there!

PLEASE JOIN US at the 18th Annual Blue Water Ball on Saturday, April 21, 2018