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For Immediate Release

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## **San Diegans Play Large Role in International Cleanup Efforts** *California Coastal Cleanup Day is a Huge Draw for San Diegans!*

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San Diego, CA – Handcuffs, garage door openers, a handgun and fireworks. Can you guess what these four objects have in common? Well, all of these, as well as many other items were collected at this morning's countywide cleanup, Coastal Cleanup Day. Today the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD), presented by the County Board of Supervisors, brought together thousands of San Diegans working towards a common goal- to combat the extensive pollution problems our local communities, beaches and oceans face. Co-coordinated by San Diego Coastkeeper (SDCK) and I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD), 2008 marked another record turnout as more than 7,000 volunteers removed over 80,000 pounds of trash and recyclables from at least 100 miles of beach and shoreline. This year coordinators expanded their reach across the border, where more than 8,250 pounds of trash was removed from four cleanup sites in Playas de Tijuana. Coordinators expect both volunteer numbers and debris totals to increase after all cleanup sites report their totals. With an astonishing 73 cleanup sites throughout the county and in Tijuana, 2008 has proved to be another record setting year.

The efforts from thousands of San Diego volunteers contributed largely to the statewide event, which took place at more than 750 locations around the state, in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup happening in nearly all U.S. states and over 70 countries. This event is unique in that each volunteer not only removes trash but tracks the debris collected on data cards which will be used to stop pollution at the source. These data cards educate residents, businesses and government on the issue of marine debris and its effects on coastal and ocean ecosystems, and are an instrumental tool for policy change to protect the marine environment.

In South Mission Beach, 488 volunteers attended the media kick-off event where Mayor Jerry Sanders and Senator Christine Kehoe spoke about the importance of environmental stewardship. In addition, Cleanup Champion awards were presented to Supervisor Greg Cox, Supervisor Pam Slater-Price, the Sempra Energy Foundation and Think Blue San Diego. Participants also enjoyed a live performance by Seagull and lunch provided by the Sempra Energy Foundation.

“I think it’s great to see so many San Diegans giving up part of their weekend to help keep our beaches and waterways clean,” said Chairman Greg Cox of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. “With programs like Project Clean Water, the County of San Diego is working hard to protect our natural resources and I am proud to join San Diego Coastkeeper and I Love a Clean San Diego in today’s effort.”

At the bi-national cleanup event and first ever Spanish language media site at Border Field State Park & Playas de Tijuana, 1,300 volunteers participated in a multitude of festivities from the cleanup itself to an Eco-kite Contest, where volunteers on both sides of the border used recycled materials to assemble kites that were flown together above the border fence.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, coordinated statewide by the California Coastal Commission, was presented locally by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors through the support of Supervisor Greg Cox and Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. Coordinators were also pleased to have Whole Foods Market on board, once again, as presenting sponsor of the statewide event. San Diego County sponsors included the Sempra Energy Foundation, along with media partners 10 News, Azteca America SD, SOPHIE and Radio Latina. Additional sponsors included: the City of San Diego’s Think Blue Program, Kashi, Qualcomm, AMB Solutions, Cykichosting.com, Cox Communications, Crystal Geysers, SeaWorld Adventure Park, Hornblower Cruises and Events, Birch Aquarium, Lincoln Military Housing, Fitness and Wellness Insurance, General Dynamics NASSCO, Stretch Island Fruit Company, Valley View Casino, Allied Waste Services, Waste Management, Debris Box, Tayman Industries, EDCO, Dog Beach Dog Wash and San Diego Natural History Museum.

County coordinators San Diego Coastkeeper and I Love A Clean San Diego are encouraged by the successful turnout of this year’s event and look forward to seeing San Diegans embody the valuable lessons about waste reduction and conservation everyday of the year. To learn more about year round environmental programs in San Diego, visit [www.sdcoastkeeper.org](http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org) or [www.cleansd.org](http://www.cleansd.org).

***San Diego Coastkeeper:*** *San Diego Coastkeeper protects the region’s bays, beaches, watersheds and ocean for the people and wildlife that depend on them. We balance community outreach, education, and advocacy to promote stewardship of clean water and a healthy coastal ecosystem. Dedicated to the belief that we all have a right to clean water, Coastkeeper is the largest professional organization dedicated solely to the monitoring and protection of San Diego’s coastal areas and waterways.*

***I Love A Clean San Diego:*** *Through outreach, community involvement and example, I Love A Clean San Diego leads and educates our community to actively conserve and enhance the environment. As one of San Diego County’s oldest and largest environmental education non-profit organizations, ILACSD promotes awareness of environmental issues including resource conservation, waste reduction, recycling, community enhancement, and pollution prevention.*

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