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San Diegans Will Come Together to Cleanup Local Communities *County's Largest Volunteer Event Expands Across the Border*

San Diego, CA –With only one month until the 24th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD), co-coordinators San Diego Coastkeeper (SDCK) and I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD) are seeking volunteers to meet their goal of 7,000 participants at this year's event. CCD, presented by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, will be held on September 20th from 9AM to Noon in conjunction with International Coastal Cleanup (ICC), the largest international cleanup event in the world. This year's cleanup in San Diego includes 70 coastal, inland and underwater sites throughout the County and across the border, with three sites in Playas de Tijuana.

First organized in 1985 by the California Coastal Commission, CCD began with just 2,500 volunteers along the California coast. After joining with the Ocean Conservancy, in conjunction with ICC, the event is now the largest volunteer event in support of the marine environment with 358,000 volunteers participating in 45 U.S. states and 76 countries last year. CCD accounts for a large part of this international effort, as the statewide event grew by 20 percent last year to include more than 60,000 participants in 45 counties throughout California.

This year's countywide event will expand once again, with more sites than ever before, including a bi-national cleanup taking place on both sides of the border at Border Field State Park and Playas de Tijuana to reinforce the message that pollution knows no borders. Last year's event brought out 6,212 community volunteers at 63 cleanup sites. In total, 94,758 pounds of debris were removed from an estimated 166 miles of San Diego's inland and coastal waterways and coastlines. The amount of trash picked up by volunteers decreased last year by more than 100,000 pounds, showing that the pollution prevention messaging is working.

The focus of CCD is to provide a direct and tangible way for individuals to make a difference for one of the largest problems the marine environment faces, trash in the ocean. Surprisingly, up to 80 percent of marine debris in the ocean comes from land-based sources. CCD continues to coordinate beach sites and expand into the inland areas in San Diego and throughout the state to try and stop pollution at the source before it reaches the ocean.

"Marine Debris is one of the most pervasive pollution problems our ocean is presently facing. Coastal Cleanup Day not only provides a tool to remove this trash," states Bruce Reznik, Executive Director of San Diego

Coastkeeper. "It also educates the volunteers about the importance of pollution prevention and how small changes in everyday activities can make a world of difference in reducing the debris they are picking up."

In addition to collecting trash, volunteers are presented data cards to collect data during the cleanup to better understand the nature and source of the trash and debris they are picking up. These data cards are used to produce the ICC Report, which is distributed yearly to help educate the public, business, industry and government officials about marine debris issues and aid in reducing pollution in our waterways. Also, these statistics are used locally to help advocate for legislation to reduce plastics and other marine debris posing a threat to local waterways.

The 24th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, coordinated statewide by the California Coastal Commission, is presented locally by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors through the support of Supervisor Greg Cox and Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. Coordinators are also pleased to have Whole Foods Market on board, once again, as presenting sponsor of the statewide event. In San Diego County, the Sempra Energy Foundation will act as a countywide sponsor, along with media partners 10 News, Azteca America SD, SOPHIE and Radio Latina. Additional sponsors include: 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, Dog Beach Dog Wash and San Diego Natural History Museum.

CCD is a great opportunity for San Diegans to unite and restore their communities back to health. This year, SDCK and ILACSD will hold a Coloring Contest for children in kindergarten through 6th grade and also offer cleanup patches to all participating scouts. Visit the official CCD web site for more information, including a list of cleanup sites. Volunteers of all ages and walks of life can make a big difference in just three hours! Take part in the largest volunteer event in the world by visiting www.cleanupday.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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