



**August 15, 2007**  
**For Immediate Release**

**CONTACTS:**

Coastal Coordinator – Danielle Miller, San Diego Coastkeeper: (619) 758-7743, ext 101

Inland Coordinator – Morgan Justice-Black, I Love A Clean San Diego: (619) 291-0103, ext 3003

## **23rd Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day is Almost Here** *San Diego County's Largest Volunteer Event One Month Away*

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San Diego, CA – With only one month until the 23rd Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD), co-coordinators San Diego Coastkeeper (SDCK) and I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD) are anticipating more than 6,000 volunteers to turn out for this event. CCD, presented by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, will be held September 15th, 2007 from 9AM to noon in conjunction with International Coastal Cleanup, making this event one of the largest international volunteer events of the year. This year's cleanup includes nearly 60 coastal and inland sites throughout San Diego County alone.

First organized in 1985 by the California Coastal Commission, CCD began with just 2,500 volunteers statewide. Over the years, in conjunction with International Coastal Cleanup, organized by the Ocean Conservancy, the event has grown to become one of the world's largest volunteer events with all 50 states, nearly 70 countries, and more than 358,000 volunteers participating. Last year's event in California became the single largest event in the cleanups 22 year history, with volunteers removing just under one million pounds of debris.

This year's countywide event will build upon the success of last year's cleanup, at which 5,850 volunteers removed 196,966 pounds of debris from over 165 miles of San Diego's inland areas, waterways, coastlines and border, making the event the largest volunteer event in San Diego County. On September 15th, local cleanups will occur at roughly 60 different coastal and inland sites from the beaches of Baja California to the creek beds of Fallbrook.

"Clean beaches and waterways are not only a benefit to the economy in San Diego," states San Diego Coastkeeper's executive director Bruce Reznik. "They are also the right of every community member in the County. Debris on our beaches and in our waters poses a threat to the health of humans and animals that depend on these resources. California Coastal Cleanup Day is essential to keeping these pollutants out of our waters."

Surprisingly, not all trash and debris in our ocean comes from recreational beach activity. The California Coastal Commission reports that 60 to 80 percent of the debris found on California's beaches, such as cigarette butts and plastic containers, originates from inland or urban areas and washes out to

the ocean. New efforts by California's government to stem this tide of trash have placed even greater importance on the growth of the Cleanup.

"California Coastal Cleanup Day has long been the state's largest volunteer event," said Eben Schwartz, statewide director of the cleanup. "Recent actions by our state government have challenged us to build even further on this success. The California Ocean Protection Council recently passed a Resolution on Marine Debris that calls on the Coastal Commission to expand our coastal and watershed cleanups. We are taking this challenge to heart, and expect this year's cleanup to be our biggest ever."

In addition to collecting trash, volunteers also collect data during the cleanup to better understand the nature and source of the trash and debris. Volunteers are presented data cards to keep track of the types of debris they are picking up. These data cards are used to produce the International Coastal Cleanup 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.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Coastal Cleanup Day is presented locally by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors through the support of Supervisor Greg Cox and Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. This event marks the fifth year that the Supervisors have sponsored CCD. Coordinators are also pleased to have Whole Foods Market on board as the presenting sponsor of the entire statewide event, coordinated by the California Coastal Commission. In addition, coordinators are excited to have Sempra Energy on board again this year as a countywide sponsor, along with 10 News, through the Sustain San Diego initiative as media sponsors, and KPRI as the radio sponsor. Additional sponsors include: Time Warner Cable, Cymer Inc., the City of San Diego's Think Blue Program, Digiteers, SeaWorld, Hornblower, Vulcan Materials Company, Western Division, Palomar Transit Mix, Birch Aquarium, General Dynamics NASSCO, City of La Mesa, Vitamin Water, Clif Bar and J & S Travel.

CCD is a great opportunity for families, students, service groups, businesses, and communities to join together to preserve our marine environment, learn about the impacts of marine debris and have fun! As the summer winds down and the tourists begin to leave, we must help restore our beaches and waterways back to health. This year again, SDCK and ILACSD will hold the 2nd Annual Coloring Contest for children in kindergarten through 6th grade. Coordinators will also offer cleanup patches to all scouts participating in the cleanup. Contest details along with all other CCD information, including a list of cleanup sites, can be found on the official San Diego CCD Web site. Volunteers of all ages can make a difference and are encouraged to be part of the largest volunteer event in the county, the state, the nation and the world by visiting [www.cleanupday.org](http://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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