

Off The Lip

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SURFRIDER FOUNDATION | SOUTH BAY CHAPTER

Spring 2007

OCEAN FRIENDLY GARDENS *A SOLUTION TO POLLUTION*

The South Bay Chapter of Surfrider Foundation, in partnership with the West Basin Water District, will launch our “Ocean Friendly Gardens” program this spring.

“We know our members are looking for ways to contribute to eliminating pollution in our local watershed and beaches,” said Chapter Chairman Alan Walti. The Ocean Friendly Gardens program will educate our members and our communities in landscaping and irrigation techniques that dramatically reduce urban runoff from our residential gardens. These innovative gardens use native, drought-tolerant species, that are beautiful year round and create scenery that is unique to the Southern California coastal environment.

Studies have shown that installing water conserving irrigation systems, such as SMART timers that sense moisture levels and adapt to weather conditions, can dramatically reduce polluted runoff. Our goal is to further reduce water use and runoff via landscaping that captures irrigation and rainfall on-site through creative and attractive garden designs that include permeability and proper plant selection. The program encourages residents to “plant, not pave.”

The program will consist of broad educational opportunities – from online and printed instructional materials to public workshops. We also plan to advocate for these Ocean Friendly Garden techniques in public parks, street medians and walkways. Finally, we hope to install demonstration gardens in frequently used public spaces to illustrate the beauty and natural benefits of these gardening practices. “We want to make natural solutions to cleaning up our water the norm in South Bay cities,” says Walti. “It’s time to ‘walk the walk’ not just ‘talk the talk’ and the best place to start that is at home, in our own gardens and in our neighborhoods.”

EARTH DAY SURF CONTEST

SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2007

Men’s and Women’s
(Age 13 & up)

Bodyboard • Shortboard • Longboard

Rosecrans Ave, Manhattan Beach
April 21th, 7 a.m.

Entry form and details inside or find it on our website:

www.surfrirder-southbay.org/pdf/earthday07_surf_contest_app.pdf

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PROTECTING AND PRESERVING OUR SOUTH BAY COAST

SMOKE FREE BEACHES

We know from quantitative data taken at our beach cleanups that cigarette butts are the most littered item on our beaches, and they pose a serious health threat to our children, beach users and marine life. Cigarette smoke and butts are dirty, full of toxic chemicals, impact our enjoyment of the beaches and when washed into the oceans become "toxic teabags" that impair water quality and endanger the lives of marine life which may mistake them for food. For these reasons, the South Bay Chapter of Surfrider has joined a coalition of groups to push for a smoking ban on our local beaches – the South Bay Smoke-Free Beaches Coalition.

The coalition has been very fruitful in its efforts so far. Following the lead of the Malibu chapter of Surfrider which was instrumental in getting smoking bans enacted from the LA-Ventura county line down to El Segundo, the South Bay Chap-

ter has continued the momentum working first with Manhattan Beach and then El Segundo to pass laws prohibiting smoking on the beach. Then in May 2006, through the Coalition's dedicated efforts, we won major victories in Torrance and Hermosa Beach when both banned smoking on their beaches during their City Council meetings on the same night! More recently, Palos Verdes Estates passed an ordinance banning smoking on their beaches. This leaves Redondo Beach as the only city in the entire Santa Monica Bay, from the LA-Ventura county line to the LA Harbor that still allows smoking on its beaches, thus earning it the dubious title of "the Ashtray of the Bay."

The South Bay Chapter and the Coalition will continue to work with community, health and political leaders in Redondo Beach to complete the link and make the beaches of the entire Santa Monica Bay

smoke-free. Log onto our website and check in for updates on our progress!

The South Bay Chapter of Surfrider supports Smoke-Free beaches along our coasts for the following reasons:

1. Cigarette butts are the most littered items on our beaches.
2. Cigarette butts can be dangerous and deadly to marine life and birds that mistake them for food.
3. Butts leach their carcinogens and toxins into the sand and in the water, effectively becoming "toxic teabags" that affect local water quality.
4. Butts can be harmful to children playing in the sand, or burn hazards when not extinguished properly.
5. Smoking is not consistent with the healthy and natural recreation environment of our beaches.

A NETWORK OF NATURAL TREATMENT WETLANDS

Amazingly, Southern California has lost over 95% of our natural wetland areas in just this last century – and the Ballona Creek watershed is arguably the "poster child" for this unfortunate history. Low-lying wetlands once provided habitat for numerous species now considered at risk of extinction and served an important function in naturally filtering pollution and contaminated run-off before it entered the Santa Monica Bay. Unfortunately, sprawling development and urbanization have eliminated these natural cleaning areas in favor of more housing, wider streets and concrete surfaces that all increase the pollution load that now runs directly into our ocean.

"We had no idea the destruction we were causing when we filled coastal wetlands in the past – but now we're suffering the consequences," says Joe Geever, Environmental Coordinator for the South Bay

Chapter. "Now we have the chance, if not the duty, to re-create some of these areas to improve our environment and water quality in our oceans today – and to leave a better community for future generations."

The South Bay Chapter is putting forward a vision and plan to re-create a chain of these natural area in communities up and down the Ballona Creek. By diverting polluted water from the Creek into "treatment wetlands" we can help resolve the intractable problem of urban runoff, clean the water of pollutants and toxins before it pours out on to our beaches in to the bay, and offer numerous communities a little slice of nature in their neighborhoods.

This is not an untested idea or whimsical science. Natural treatment systems are already providing cleaner water, refuge

for aquatic wildlife, and a place to escape the hectic urban lifestyle just to our south in Orange County. Right in the midst of the Irvine commercial district is the San Joaquin Wildlife Refuge where you will often find office workers and local community members "taking in nature." Even for those of us living in South Bay, it's worth the drive to visit this beautiful spot and visualize similar areas in our own neighborhoods.

We will soon be coordinating our community-led, grassroots campaign to create this vision along the Ballona Creek.

If you want to be a part of this historical movement, contact Joe Geever through our website.



Does this vision of a restored and protected coastal environment seem like a Herculean task that's unlikely to succeed? Absolutely not! We never forget the famous words of Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

If you want to actively support a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens working to change our corner of the world, contact the South Bay Chapter through our website (www.surfrider.org/southbay). Everyone can contribute!

TEACH & TEST: 3 YEARS AND COUNTING



Since 2004, the South Bay Chapter has sponsored and implemented a Teach & Test program involving students at 5 local high schools. The goals of the Teach & Test program are to educate students on water quality issues, increase public awareness, monitor bacteria levels at local beaches over time, and instill a sense of community empowerment and ownership for our local students.

Every other week, local high school students collect water samples at beaches, runoff sites, and wetlands. The water samples are brought to Loyola Marymount University and the SEA Lab in Redondo Beach, which offer their laboratories and instruction to the students. Students conduct EPA approved testing methods to measure the bacteria level of the collected water samples. Each sample is tested for three types of bacteria. These pollutants are known to harm the marine environment and to cause human health risks. The program involves 60 student volunteers who rotate testing dates resulting in a “real life” science study and community service. Each test cost \$8 to conduct, therefore donations would be greatly appreciated to help fund and expand the program. If you are interested, find more information at www.surfrider.org/southbay.

\$2.5 MIL IN FINES FROM SEWAGE SPILL

Thanks in part to the rapid response by Surfrider members Andy Dellenbach, Alan Walti, Joe Geever and Peter Gentry among others, we were able to provide evidence that led to a settlement and \$2.5 Million in fines that will fund environmental research and education programs benefiting Los Angeles County.

On the afternoon of Sunday January 15, 2006, we watched on in horror as hundreds of thousands of gallons of raw sewage spilled directly onto our beaches and into the ocean and bubbled up through the sewer covers along the beach. The spill lasted throughout the day and into the night and resulted in hazardous bacteria levels along 9 miles of our local coastline. Hermosa and Manhattan beaches suffered affected closure for 23 days. Several homes along the Strand were also damaged as sewage backup into and flooded lower levels and basements.

As lifeguards rushed up and down the beach ushering surfers and beachgoers out of the water and off the beach, we were able to capture the sewage debacle in photos and on video. Through the extraordinary efforts of our friends at Santa Monica Baykeeper, these became crucial bits of evidence that were introduced to the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board and led to the sanitation districts agreeing to pay the fines without going to court.

The sewage spill was caused by a chain of failures in the pumping station and back-up system at 26th Street in Manhattan. Despite being an accident, the fines send a strong message to the sanitation districts and those agencies responsible for proper treatment of our sewage that we will not tolerate sewage spills of any kind or size.



If you ever witness or suspect a sewage spill or other source of pollution, please report it immediately. For phone numbers to report pollution, please log onto www.surfrider.org/southbay and click on the “Report Pollution” link or check the listings under the Quick Links section.

2007 Calendar of Events & Beach Clean-Up Schedule

Beach Clean-Up
Saturday, March 17
10am - 12 pm
Point Fermin

General Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, April 11
7 p.m., Sangria,
68 Pier Ave, Hermosa Bch

Annual Earth Day
SURF CONTEST
Saturday, April 21
Details in insert

Beach Clean-Up
Saturday, May 19
10am — 12 pm
Cabrillo

General Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, June 13
7 p.m., Location TBD

Beach Clean-Up
Saturday, July 21
10 am—12 pm
El Gringo/DVS Shoes
Hermosa Beach

General Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, August 8
7 p.m., Location TBD

Int'l Coastal Clean-Up Day
Saturday, September 15
All Beaches, 9 am

General Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, October 10
7 p.m., Location TBD

Beach Clean-Up
Saturday, November 17
10am — 12 pm
Ocean Trails

South Bay Chapter — Executive Committee

Alan Walti

*Chairman
Co-Environmental Coordinator
S.E.A. Lab Liaison*

Joe Geever

*Co-Environmental Coordinator
So. California Regional Mgr.*

Andy Dellenbach

Secretary

Craig Cadwallader

Webmaster

Ronnie Del Valle

Beach Cleanup Coordinator

Tonya Stumphauzer

Volunteer Coordinator

Tiffany Murphy

Marketing & Comm. Coordinator

Jim Wride

Treasurer

Barry Phillips

Special Events Coordinator

To contact any of the Surfrider, South Bay Chapter's executive committee members, find their contact information on our website, www.surfrider.org/southbay.

“The Surfrider Foundation is an international environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world’s oceans, waves and beaches, for all people, through Conservation, Activism, Research and Education (CARE).”



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California
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The Surfrider Foundation is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves and beaches for all people, through Conservation, Activism, Research and Education (CARE). The South Bay Chapter territory includes the California coastline between Cabrillo Beach and Marina del Rey.



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