#### CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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To: Commissioners and Interested Persons

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RE: 2012 Public Education Program Update

At the Coastal Commission meeting of December 12, 2012, the staff of the Public Education Program will update the Commission on our program activities and accomplishments for the past year. This memo provides a summary of these activities and accomplishments.

In 2012, the Public Education Program continued to carry out its mission to "protect and restore California's coast and ocean by teaching, inspiring, and empowering the public to take environmentally positive action." Working collaboratively with many, many organizations and individuals, including non-profits, government entities, schools and other educational institutions, citizen groups, recreational associations, visitor-serving facilities, and businesses, staff cultivated an array of innovative ways to educate and involve Californians of all ages, ethnicities, and income levels, whether they live along the coast or inland. Our efforts focus on topics such as ocean pollution (including marine debris), habitat restoration, sustainability choices, wildlife, and ocean literacy, and include programs that reach the public directly, as well as providing coordination support, educational resources, grants, training, and technical assistance to others.

# **Program Activities and Accomplishments 2012**

### Whale Tail® License Plate

The "new" Whale Tail® License Plate was launched in the summer of 2011. For several years prior to the launch, we'd had level or slightly declining sales. Fortunately, this trend has



reversed, and in the year plus since the new design was launched, our revenue has been on the rise.

As of October 2012, more than 210,000 California drivers had purchased the Commission's Whale Tail® License Plate, and sales and renewal fees had raised \$68.6 million for environmental programs - \$20 million to the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (CBCEA) and \$48.6 million to the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF). Each year, the legislature appropriates funds from the CBCEA to the Coastal Commission to carry out Coastal Cleanup Day, Adopt-A-Beach, and other coastal and marine education programs, including grants to nonprofits and local agencies. The CBCEA also funds projects of the State Coastal Conservancy. The ELPF funds a variety of state environmental programs.

In response to an order from Governor Jerry Brown, during the summer of 2012 staff from the California Department of Finance conducted a review of all the specialty license plates in the state. The purpose of the review was to determine whether fees collected from license plate sales are being spent in ways that comply with their authorized uses and limitations. We are pleased to report that the Department of Finance concluded that both the Coastal Commission and the Coastal Conservancy are using revenues from the Whale Tail License Plate fully in accordance with the purposes outlined in the California Vehicle Code.

# Whale Tail Programs for the General Public

## California Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD)

Over the past several years, the Commission staff has expanded outreach and significantly grown the participation in the annual California Coastal Cleanup Day event. The results of this expanded outreach have been spectacular – in 2012, the Coastal Cleanup Day program enjoyed strong turnout and remained the state's largest single-day volunteer event. 64,663 volunteers took part at one of over 850 cleanup sites around the state in 55 of California's 58 counties – the largest geographic reach the Cleanup has ever achieved.

In addition to its strong support in coastal counties, the Cleanup Program continues to recruit participants from inland areas to clean creeks, rivers and lakes. These volunteers help to illustrate one of the event's messages – that we are all connected to the coast and ocean by our rivers, streams and storm drains. In 2012, 22,215 volunteers cleaned inland rivers and waterways, removing 410,587 pounds of debris, which far exceeded the amount of trash recovered at coastal locations. Combined with the coastal counties of the state, Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers removed over 740,000 pounds of debris from the state's coast and inland shorelines. 144,000 pounds of this debris was recycled – close to 20 percent of all debris - which points to a strengthening of our local coordinators' relationships with their trash haulers and recyclers, and indicates that the Program's year-round messaging about the need for greater recycling and reuse is taking hold.

Looking back over the history of the program helps to highlight the cumulative benefit of this program to the health of our coast and ocean. Since the Coastal Cleanup Day Program's



inception in 1985, close to 1.2 million volunteers have helped remove over 19 million pounds of debris from California's coast, ocean, and inland shorelines.

Corporate Partners in CCD. The Coastal Cleanup Day Program has enlisted strong corporate partners, which have greatly assisted our outreach efforts. We continued our key, ongoing relationship with Crystal Geyser Alpine Spring Water. In addition to their financial support, Crystal Geyser provided free water, primarily in large, gallon-size containers, in 51 Coastal Cleanup regions, covering almost all of the Cleanup volunteers. This is a crucial benefit that helps local coordinators immensely, especially during the 2012 Cleanup when the day of the event saw record temperatures throughout the southern California region. The Coastal Cleanup Day Program also enjoyed continuing support from Whole Foods Market, Oracle, the Whale Tail® Ecoplate, Nature's Path, Clif Bar, See's Candies, Bartlett Tree Experts, Anaheim Orange County Visitor's and Convention Bureau, Santa Monica Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Union Bank, Lindamar Industries, and an array of in-kind and media support from partners around the state.

CCD Influence on Business Practices. An additional benefit of establishing Coastal Cleanup Day relationships with corporate partners is our ability to positively influence their business practices. One example of this is Whole Foods Market's move in 2008 to eliminate the use of plastic grocery bags at their stores, a decision that was influenced by their participation in Coastal Cleanup Day. Another example was introduced in 2010 by Crystal Geyser -- a completely recyclable bottle cap that stays attached to the water bottle, with no plastic parts that need be completely removed. Crystal Geyser developed this bottle cap as a direct response to their involvement with Coastal Cleanup Day and at the urging of Commission staff, in recognition of the large contribution plastic bottle caps make to our overall marine debris problem and the impact they have on our environment. Crystal Geyser continues to innovate and find new ways to reduce waste in their manufacturing process, recently introducing the lightest weight water bottle on the market and eliminating all corrugated cardboard from their shipping processes.

BYO for CCD. The Commission staff launched a new program in 2010 that was expanded significantly in 2011 and 2012, known as "BYO for CCD." In recognition of the need to reduce the amount of waste created by the event itself, the Coastal Cleanup Day Program began asking volunteers to bring their own reusable cleanup supplies from home, rather than using the single-use disposable plastic items available at cleanup locations. Whenever possible, the Commission and our partners also provide reusable supplies like buckets and gardening gloves for volunteer use. The initiative has been a great success, as over one-quarter of all cleanup participants brought at least one reusable item from home to the Cleanup in 2010, 2011, and 2012. As a result, the Commission was able to order 40,000 fewer trash bags for the 2012 event, and expects to lower those numbers even further in 2013. The initiative is helping to reduce the environmental footprint of the Cleanup while educating volunteers about simple lifestyle changes that cumulatively can have enormous, positive benefits to our coastal and marine environments.

**CCD Survey.** In 2012, we again conducted a survey of Cleanup participants to gain information about our volunteers and their experience of participating in the cleanup e.g. how they heard



about the event, whether participating in the event raised their awareness, and how they expect the experience to affect future behavior regarding the environment. We also use the survey to collect feedback and suggestions.

We used an on-line survey tool to collect over 800 survey responses. Since it was not a random sample, it is important to consider potential biases of the survey – not everyone heard about the survey (depended on local site coordinator communication), and not everyone is inclined to take an on-line survey. That said, some general trends can be inferred from some of the very strong results. For example, almost all survey respondents (91% in 2012) report that participating in the event motivated them to take specific actions to protect the environment, such as educating others, picking up street and beach litter, reducing their use of single-use disposable items, etc.

In addition, the survey showed that participation in the Cleanup dramatically increased respondents' assessment of their knowledge of the causes and impacts of marine debris. 88% of respondents considered themselves either "knowledgeable" or "very knowledgeable" about the causes of marine debris after the event, as opposed to only 66% before the event, a 22% increase. Similarly, 86% of all survey takers considered themselves "knowledgeable" or "very knowledgeable" about the impacts caused by marine debris after the event, as opposed to 69% before the event, an increase of 17%. These findings indicate that the Cleanup is both educational and motivational for many participants.

### Adopt-A-Beach Program

The Commission staff has continued to improve the Adopt-A-Beach Program, connecting volunteers with the resources they need to organize their own cleanups and become environmental stewards in their local communities. The program has strong participation in the 15 coastal counties and in recent years has expanded into Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Each of our 48 beach managers assists groups in conducting beach cleanups at their "adopted" beach, with special recognition given to those who participate in three or more cleanups a year. CCC staff compiles the data that is collected at individual cleanups. Based on reports from Los Angeles, San Diego, San Mateo, Alameda, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties, over 36,000 people volunteered during one of the 867 Adopt-A-Beach Cleanups in 2012, contributing over 56,700 volunteer hours.

**Recognition for Beach Adopters**. Each group that participates in the Adopt-A-Beach program is recognized on our website as an official adopter. In addition to receiving web recognition, each adopting group is mailed a certificate recognizing their participation in the program and thanking them for their contribution.

**Adopt-A-Beach Advisory Council**. Commission staff met quarterly with its Adopt-A-Beach Advisory Council, a group of Adopt-A-Beach Managers, to discuss publicity, outreach, and new ways to engage volunteers.



#### Coastweeks

Commission staff serves as the California coordinator for Coastweeks. California celebrates Coastweeks starting on Coastal Cleanup Day and over the following three weeks. The staff creates an online calendar of events throughout the state that are connected to the ocean, coast, and waterways. In 2012, our on-line calendar included 324 events, a 40% increase over the previous year.

## **Community-Based Restoration and Education Program (CBREP)**

The Commission staff continued its work on the Community-Based Restoration and Education at Upper Newport Bay, begun in 2001. To date, the program has engaged over 18,200 volunteers, who together have restored more than 14 acres of coastal salt marsh, riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats. Volunteers have planted 21,178 native plants (over 3/4 of which were propagated in an on-site native plant nursery) and removed nearly 40 tons of invasive plant material (not including material left on site).

In 2012, we worked on maintaining and expanding current restoration sites. Volunteers attending our restoration events represented schools, community groups, and corporations through such varied groups as DeutscheBank, Newport Bay Conservancy Naturalist Trainees, University of Redlands Alumni, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. We reached out directly to the community through a presentation at the Orange County Natural History Lecture Series.

Commission staff organized and facilitated the Community-Based Habitat Technical Session at the annual conference of the California Society for Ecological Restoration. In addition, staff organized and facilitated, in conjunction with the Newport Bay Conservancy, a four-day intensive program entitled "Engage in STEM: Practical Experience in Ecological Restoration" for community college students.

**CBREP High School Curriculum**. Staff continued to distribute the CBREP high school curriculum, called "Our Wetlands, Our World". The curriculum is aligned to the State Science Content Standards, and focuses on the history and ecology of Upper Newport Bay; the effects of urbanization, invasive species and loss of biodiversity; and the importance of restoration and stewardship. We continued to make available "Our Wetlands, Our World" activity kits to allow teachers to borrow materials needed for each activity, and to support use of the curriculum in the classroom and at the Upper Newport Bay.

**Digging In Guide and Workshops**. The CBREP also continued to distribute "Digging In: A Guide to Community-based Habitat Restoration." The Guide explains the basic steps of information gathering, site selection, project implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and working with volunteers. In 2012, staff held one workshop based on the Guide to cultivate the field of community-based restoration at Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve near Monterey.



### **Coastal Stewardship Pledge**

The Coastal Stewardship Pledge is an online program that encourages Californians to make a commitment to taking specific personal actions to protect our coast and ocean. They can take a "quick pledge" (with five pre-selected steps anyone can take) or create a personalized pledge action list. Once they have followed through on their commitment, they receive a certificate of participation and a free canvas tote bag. The goal is to encourage people to consider the health of the coastal environment in all their choices throughout the day. The Pledge can be reached through the Commission's Public Education website at <a href="www.coastforyou.org">www.coastforyou.org</a>. Nearly 1,800 Californians have taken the pledge online. A special pledge is available for classes and youth groups that include teacher background for each action. Participating student groups are featured on the Commission's web site.

### **Seafood Watch Campaign**

For the past nine years, the Commission has been a regional partner with the Monterey Bay Aquarium in its Seafood Watch Campaign. The Commission staff distributed 32,000 Seafood Watch pocket guides in 2012 through its public programs and events. The pocket guide is a convenient reference for making sustainable seafood choices.

### **Coastal Photography Contest**

In 2012 the Commission continued its successful partnership with the Thank You Ocean Campaign to co-host the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual California Ocean & Coastal Amateur Photography Contest. Similar to last year, the contest was held entirely online with digital images. Fairmont Hotels & Resorts of California donated overnight stays at luxury hotels for the winners, and Hornblower Cruises & Events donated a prize for a yacht cruise. A panel of judges selected three winning photographs from 715 entries, and online voters selected their top two favorites as "viewers' choice" winners. The winning photographs, along with 13 honorable mentions, are featured on the contest website, <a href="http://mycoastalphoto.com">http://mycoastalphoto.com</a>. In 2012, we also continued to exhibit a selection of winning photographs, which were displayed at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium and the Coloma Community Center in Sacramento.

#### **General Outreach**

COAST4U.ORG. The Commission's public education web site provides detailed information on all of the programs, contests, and resources that we offer to the public. It includes a resource directory of more than 400 organizations that address the California coast and its watersheds; a page in Spanish detailing and linking to our many Spanish language resources; and interactive Google maps on topics such as Whale Tail Grant locations, beach wheelchair availability, fishing line recycling stations, and available Adopt-A-Beach sites. In the first 10 months of 2012, the Public Education website received more than 101,400 visits and almost 245,000 page views.



**COAST4U Quarterly.** Commission staff produced four issues of our quarterly on-line newsletter, which includes information on upcoming events, news, quizzes, and coastal destinations. The newsletter is distributed to 11,000 subscribers.

**Environmental Fairs and Events.** Each year, we attend a number of environmental fairs and events, where we staff an educational booth, hand out materials, and talk to attendees. This year we exhibited our education resources at 11 events and reached over 2115 people.

In addition, with the assistance of the Public Education Team, the Coastal Commission's Santa Cruz Office organized a special "First Friday" event for the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, in celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Coastal Act . The event included a display of the past 27 years of Coastal Cleanup Day posters, coast and ocean-themed art and videos, hands-on activities, and live music. We also displayed a special poster to celebrate 40 years of vibrant coastal heritage.

## Whale Tail Programs for Schools and Educators

### **Waves, Wetlands and Watersheds**

Waves, Wetlands, and Watersheds is a science activity guide for teachers, developed by Commission staff in 2003, that addresses topics such as endangered species, marine debris, coastal geology, water use, and water quality. The guide is aligned to the California State Science Content Standards for third through eighth grades, and includes Community Action lessons adaptable for all ages up to and beyond grade 12. Copies of Waves are available free to California educators. The book can also be downloaded from our website, as can Spanish translations of the student handouts. To date, more than 16,000 hard copies of the book have been distributed (including 5,000 printed and distributed by the City of Los Angeles). The Coastal Commission staff has held a total of 85 workshops, directly reaching 1,699 educators. In 2012, staff held 12 workshops, in San Rafael, San Diego, Carlsbad, Walnut Creek, Sausalito, San Jose, Santa Rosa, Ventura, Los Angeles, and Newport Beach, in partnership with the Bay Area Environmental Education Resources Fair, the National Park Service, the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation, Lindsay Wildlife Museum, Army Corps of Engineers, California Science Teachers Association, Sonoma County Office of Education, and Friends of the Los Angeles River. Activities from the book have been adapted for numerous other publications and audiences, and Waves has been incorporated into many educator workshops held by other organizations.



### **Coastal Art & Poetry Contest**

This contest is open annually to California students in kindergarten through 12th grade. By encouraging youth to reflect on the beauty and spirit of California's beaches and ocean, we hope to inspire a greater sense of stewardship for these natural places. Every year, five winners each in art and poetry are selected, and around 30 honorable mentions are recognized. Since the contest began in 2003, over 19,000 entries have been received from students from throughout California. Following each contest, the winning and honorably mentioned pieces are exhibited at venues up and down the coast. The 2012 contest exhibit locations are Crystal Cove State Beach in Orange County, Channel Islands National Park Visitor Center in Ventura, Point Reyes National Seashore's Bear Valley Visitor Center in Marin County, and the Ford House Museum in Mendocino. Artwork from the Coastal Art & Poetry Contest is used in many Commission publications and throughout the Commission's website.

### Kids' Ocean Day Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup

This program takes place in six locations— San Diego, Huntington Beach, Los Angeles, Monterey (where students are bused from Fresno), San Francisco, and Humboldt. In all of the locations, the emphasis of this program is on involving students from underserved schools. The Program includes a school assembly about the ocean, marine debris, and pollution prevention as well as a beach cleanup event. Approximately 7,500 students participated in the 2012 cleanup event, and even more saw the assembly. Formations created by the students on the beaches and photographed from the air featured pictures of different sea animals with shields and the slogan, "Defend the Sea." Photos of the aerial images can be viewed at www.oceandav.net.

# Whale Tail® Grants Program

As of June 2012 the Whale Tail® Grants Program has awarded \$7.8 million in grants to 461 different projects. Whale Tail® Grants fund schools, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies to conduct a wide variety of coastal and marine education projects. The program targets children and the general public with an emphasis on reaching underserved communities. In Fiscal Year 2011/2012, the Commission awarded \$541,000 to 28 different projects. Examples of funded activities included: transporting underserved students on bilingual educational field trips to the Channel Islands; teaching young people about preventing plastic pollution in the ocean; supporting docent education at coastal state parks; having inland and coastal students at different ends of the same watershed meet each other to learn about the migrating salmon that connect their communities; providing citizen science boat cruises at a Marine Protected Area; and training Conservations Corps youth to lead marine education workshops for teachers and beach exploration field trips for students.



# **Programs for Specific Audiences and Multi-agency Efforts**

### **Boating Clean and Green Program**

This program is a partnership with the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW). The program educates boaters and provides technical assistance to marinas and local governments to increase availability of environmental services for boaters.

**Boater Kits and the Dockwalker Program.** In 2012, we developed and distributed 6,000 boater kits and conducted 10 statewide Dockwalker volunteer trainings where more than 150 new volunteers were trained to conduct face-to-face boater education about clean and safe boating practices.

**Fishing Line Recycling Stations**. With support from the BoatUS Foundation, the program has installed a total of 79 monofilament fishing line recycling stations throughout the state since 2009. To date, approximately 755 pounds of fishing line have been collected and properly recycled. Stretched out, this line would stretch from San Francisco, California to Wichita, Kansas. Program staff is in the process of getting an additional 20 stations installed.

Clean Boating Map for SF Bay and America's Cup. The San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map was developed by staff in collaboration with the San Francisco Department of the Environment developing, and is distributed through a variety of mechanisms including boat shows and events. This year, the program distributed 10,000 free maps, which feature locations of marina-based pollution prevention services.

In addition, this popular map was selected by the America's Cup Event Authority (ACEA) to be the official map for recreational boaters during the 2012 and 2013 races. Staff also worked with the ACEA, the Port of San Francisco and the US Coast Guard providing information for the AC34 Boater Information Guide (BIG.) The purpose of BIG is to encourage boaters and marine facilities to utilize environmentally sound practices during the AC34 events. 1,000 copies of the map and the AC34 BIG were distributed to marinas and boating facilities throughout the state. The map is also available at the AC34, US Coast Guard and the Port of San Francisco websites.

**Changing Tide Newsletter.** The Changing Tide is the quarterly publication of the three chapters of the CCBN (California Clean Boating Network – a forum of members of from the boating industry, government agencies, and environmental groups). In 2012, we distributed three issues (12,000 copies each). The newsletter focuses on new trends in clean boating practices and environmental services for boaters.

**Boatyard Best Management Practices**. The staff continued working with the Department of Toxic Substances Control, Office of Pollution Prevention and Green Technology, representatives from the boatyard industry, to develop a guide to Best Management Practices for boatyards.



Marine Expired Flares Working Group. Staff is working with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, CalRecycle, California EPA, CalEMA, San Francisco Department of Public Health and the Coastal Commission's Water Quality Unit, and Orion (the biggest marine flare producer in California) to explore options for the boating community on where to properly dispose of expired flares. With an estimated 174,026 out-of-date flares generated annually by boaters in California, it is essential to find proper and convenient disposal options for boaters in California. The working group is currently exploring the idea of conducting a pilot marine flare collection event in Southern California. This collection event will be conducted in partnership with a local County bomb squad.

Marinas and Yacht Clubs Oil Spill Preparedness Working Group. The staff continued leading this group, which is comprised of representatives from OSPR, the Coast Guard, Cal EMA, the Office of Emergency Services, the Port Captains and Harbormasters Association, Marina Recreation Association, the Clean Marinas Program, Pacific Inter-Yacht Club Association and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. This year the working group finalized the Marinas and Yacht Clubs Oil Spill Response Toolkit. The Toolkit will help boating facilities access needed information in the event of an oil spill. Staff is currently working with working group members, US Coast Guard Auxiliary and several boating publications on the dissemination strategy for the Toolkit.

In partnership with the US Coast Guard, the group held a free 8-hour HAZWOPER training at the Vallejo Public Library which was attended by 40 marina and yacht club operators. Staff is currently planning a workshop to go over the Toolkit with the San Francisco County Office of Emergency Services (OES), their oil spill response personnel, and marine industry representatives from the Bay Area and Delta.

Coastal Cleanup Day for Boating Facilities. Staff developed another toolkit for marinas and yacht clubs that will assist these facilities in planning and organizing their participation in Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD) and the Adopt-the Beach Program. We based this toolkit on a pilot project conducted with two Yacht Clubs (Port Royal in Redondo Beach and Sequoia Yacht Club in Redwood City) during CCD 2011. This year staff expanded the program. Nineteen boating facilities participated in CCD, involving 644 volunteers, who cleaned 43 miles of shoreline and collected approximately 7,563 pounds of trash and recyclables on land and from 85 non-motorized vessels.

**NOAA Marine Charts.** Staff worked with the NOAA Marine Chart Division on including clean boating information in the California NOAA full-size print on demand charts and Pocket charts. A second component of this partnership involved developing a clean boating section for NOAA's Coastal Pilot Book, which covers the entire Pacific region. 4,552 Coastal Pilot Books are printed and distributed throughout the year. Distribution includes sales to the public, the military and government agencies.



#### **Beach Wheelchairs**

The Coastal Commission is committed to helping *all* California residents experience the beach firsthand. The Commission's beach wheelchair program aims to ensure that these chairs, which have wide, balloon tires that are able to move across soft sand, are widely available. To this end, the Commission has now awarded over \$100,000 to a variety of jurisdictions up and down the coast for the purchase of beach wheelchairs. The Commission also maintains a webpage that includes a map showing the location of beaches with wheelchairs available for the public.

### **Marine Debris Action Coordination Team (MDACT)**

Commission staff continued to chair the Marine Debris Action Coordination Team for the West Coast Governors' Alliance on Ocean Health (WCGA), which is working as a region on marine debris issues of common concern. In 2012, the MDACT focused on the completion of the West Coast Marine Debris Strategy, which will serve as a blueprint for actions to be undertaken by a proposed West Coast Marine Debris Alliance that the MDACT is also working to create. Unified by a comprehensive strategy for addressing marine debris along the entire West Coast, the Marine Debris Alliance will be able to support actions at local, state, and regional levels that will have positive results in dealing with the challenge of marine debris. The MDACT also focused on the development of a Marine Debris database. The database will help standardize marine debris data collection across the west coast, establish a baseline of marine debris levels, and allow for evaluation of future efforts to address marine debris in the region. The MDACT hired a contractor, Ecotrust, to develop the database, which is currently in its final stages of revision and should be ready for public launch by the end of 2012.

### Ocean Awareness and Literacy Action Coordination Team (OALACT)

Commission staff co-chairs the Ocean Awareness and Literacy Team of the WCGA, which is working as a region to better integrate marine science and ocean literacy principles into state science curricula, and to foster increased ocean awareness and conservation. In 2012, the group revised its work plan to reflect the findings from a 2011 educator needs assessment study, and changed circumstances at the state and federal level. The revised plan focuses on encouraging national efforts to support ocean literacy and promotes collaborations with a wide range of partners to develop effective solutions. In addition, the OALACT submitted comments on the draft Next Generation Science Standards urging that the standards reflect the need for students to understand the unique qualities and processes of the ocean. The OALACT also launched a website.

