

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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October 20, 2016

To: Commissioners and Alternates

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RE: 2016 Public Education Program Update

At the Coastal Commission meeting of Thursday, November 3, 2016, the staff of the Public Education Program will update the Commission on program activities and accomplishments for the past year. This memo provides a summary of these activities and accomplishments.

## Background

The Coastal Act lays out the foundations of the Commission's Public Education (PE) Program. The Coastal Commission's Strategic Plan articulates current goals and objectives.

**Coastal Act, Section 30012**, states that "an educated and informed citizenry is essential to the well-being of a participatory democracy and is necessary to protect California's finite natural resources, including the quality of its environment. Through education, individuals can be made aware of and encouraged to accept their share of the responsibility for protecting and improving the natural environment." This section of the Coastal Act further states that "the Commission shall carry out a public education program that includes outreach efforts to schools, youth organizations, and the general public for the purpose of promoting understanding of, fostering a sense of individual responsibility for, and encouraging public initiatives and participation in programs for, the conservation and wise use of coastal and ocean resources. Emphasis shall be given to volunteer efforts such as the Adopt-A-Beach program."

The Coastal Act also addresses funding for the PE Program. Section 30012 (c) states that "the Commission is encouraged to seek funding from any appropriate public or private source and may apply for and expend any grant or endowment funds for the purposes of this section without the need to specifically include funds in its budget."

**The Commission's Strategic Plan** addresses PE Program objectives and actions in several sections. Where relevant, this update report will point out programmatic links to the Strategic Plan.

## **2016 Activities**

The Public Education (PE) Program continued to carry out the Coastal Commission's core education and outreach programs, while adding enhancements and developing new initiatives. Working collaboratively with a wide array of organizations and individuals, including non-profits, government entities, schools and other educational institutions, citizen groups, recreational associations, visitor-serving facilities, and businesses, these programs seek to educate and involve Californians of all ages, ethnicities, income levels, and physical abilities, whether they live along the coast or inland, with a particular emphasis on reaching Californians who are underserved in terms of access to the coast and to marine education programs.

Topics addressed include ocean pollution (including marine debris), habitat restoration, climate change, sustainability choices, wildlife, ocean literacy, coastal science, and policy. Some PE Programs reach the public directly; while others provide coordination support, educational resources, grants, training, and technical assistance.

The following description organizes PE Programs according to audiences, beginning with programs that target specific audiences, followed by programs for schools and educators, and programs for general public audiences. The final sections address PE work that involves policy and coordination, and funding sources.

## Program Activities and Accomplishments 2016

### *Programs for Specific Audiences*

#### **Beach Wheelchairs**

The Coastal Commission is committed to helping *all* visitors to the coast 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 awarded \$122,000 to a variety of jurisdictions up and down the coast for the purchase of beach wheelchairs. In 2016, this included three new chairs for Crystal Cove State Park; a chair for the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center; and a new chair for Asilomar State Beach, which also received funding to test out a wheeled beach walker, which people push by themselves while they're standing up. In some years this funding has been made in conjunction with matching contributions from the Coastal Conservancy.

The Commission maintains a webpage - <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/access/beach-wheelchairs.html> - that includes a map showing the location of beaches with wheelchairs available for use by the public.

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

This program is a partnership with the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways. The program educates boaters about clean and safe boating practices and provides technical assistance to marinas and local governments to increase the availability of environmental services for boaters.

**Clean Boating Kits and the Dockwalker Program.** In 2016, the Boating Clean and Green Program developed and distributed 6,500 boater kits. Boater kits are designed to provide boaters with knowledge and tools to reduce their environmental impact. They include information on clean boating practices as well as an oil only absorbent bilge pillow. A new pollution prevention tool was included in the 2016 boater kits: a fuel bib. The kits are distributed by volunteer Dockwalkers. This year staff conducted 11 Dockwalker trainings at various locations throughout the state, and trained more than 160 volunteer Dockwalkers.

**Boat Shows, Boating Events, and Clean Boating Seminars.** Staff participated in two boat shows and boating events and conducted six clean boating seminars. These boating events and seminars reached over 1,200 boaters.

**Fishing Line Recycling Stations.** With support from the BoatUS Foundation, the program installed 23 new monofilament fishing line recycling stations in 2016. Since 2009, the program has installed a total of 226 stations, located throughout the state. The stations and their locations can be seen at: <http://goo.gl/maps/5zF5F>. To date, 1,230 pounds of fishing line have been collected and recycled. Stretched out, this line would stretch from San Francisco to Athens, Ohio!

**CA Stow It, Don't Throw Project.** Staff is working with the Stow It, Don't Throw It Project to implement a project to build and distribute portable fishing line containers in California. Students create the containers using used tennis ball cans. The cans are then distributed for free to fishermen to hold old fishing line until they can get to a recycling collection site or a secure trash can. Since 2015, 2,200 containers have been constructed by students from 40 schools and groups, and distributed to fishermen by the students, Boating Clean and Green staff, and partners.

**On-Board Fishing Line Recycling Program:** Staff in partnership with the Greater Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries, expanded its onboard fishing line recycling program. This program began as a pilot in 2014, in partnership with the Santa Barbara Harbor, and its charter vessel, Stardust. The pilot was successful. Installation and service provided by this container was convenient and a big hit with fishermen. To date, more than 30 pounds of fishing line has been collected and properly recycled on the Stardust vessel.

Currently, two Santa Barbara charter boats have onboard recycling containers. Based on this pilot project and feedback from the harbor and Stardust staff, staff partnered with the Greater Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries to expand this program in the Bay Area. To date, the program has worked with 16 charter companies and installed 20 on board fishing line collection containers.

**Changing Tide Newsletter.** The Changing Tide Newsletter focuses on new trends in clean boating practices and environmental services for boaters statewide. It is published jointly by the three chapters of the California Clean Boating Network (a forum of members of from the boating industry, government agencies, and environmental groups). In 2016 the program distributed three issues of the Newsletter (8,000 copies each).

**Marinas and Yacht Clubs Oil Spill Preparedness Workshops.** The Marinas and Yacht Clubs Spill Response Communication Packet is designed to help boating facilities access needed information in the event of an oil spill. The Packet was developed by a working group led by Boating Clean and Green staff and was comprised of representatives from Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), the Coast Guard, California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), 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. .

In 2016, Boating Clean and Green staff, OSPR and CalOES conducted two workshops for boating facilities in Stockton and Newport Beach to introduce the Packet. The workshops were attended by 60 marina and yacht club operators (Strategic Plan Action 2.3.2).

**Coastal Cleanup Day for Boating Facilities.** This year, 34 boating facilities participated in California Coastal Cleanup Day, involving 700 volunteers, who cleaned 43 miles and collected 17,084 pounds of trash and recyclables on land and from 55 vessels (kayaks, canoes and dinghies). Thirty-one percent of the volunteers brought their own reusable cleanup supplies. (Strategic Plan Actions 7.2.4 and 7.3.1)

**Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Workshops.** In order to increase awareness about the impact of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and prevent their spread, staff and partner organizations offered three workshops in Oakley, Santa Cruz, and Modesto, attended by 77 people. Workshops participants gained an understanding of the impacts AIS have on the economy and environment; learned to recognize AIS in their region; and learned how to take action and prevent spreading AIS by inspecting and cleaning equipment and watercraft. The workshops were co-hosted by California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, and UC-Davis Romberg Tiburon Center.

**2016 Pilot Online Clean Boating Quiz.** This year staff worked with Sacramento State and the marketing company, Glass Agency, to develop an online quiz. The main goal of this pilot project was to increase clean boating practices among boat owners in the Sacramento, Central Valley and Southern Inland areas of California, where data from the Program's 2011 California Boater Survey indicate that knowledge of clean and green boating practices and regulations is low. Three out of four of boaters from these areas did not know the penalty in California for illegally discharging untreated sewage, and could not identify the oil recycling logo. Nearly all of these boaters reported that their boats leaked oil most or every time they went out.

The pilot project was conducted from June 2016–September 2016. Total quiz completions was 452, more than double the original goal of a minimum of 200 completions. A report about the project, with results and recommendations, will be prepared by the Glass Agency. Once the quiz is revised to incorporate this feedback, it will be launched in other areas of the state.

## ***Programs for Schools and Educators***

### **Curriculum Resources**

The Coastal Commission supports teachers in educating students about California's coast and ocean through free curriculum resources in print form and online, and teacher training workshops. During the first nine months of 2016, the Coastal Commission's webpages specifically for teachers received more than 54,592 pageviews.

***Waves, Wetlands, and Watersheds*** is a science activity guide for teachers, that addresses topics such as endangered species, marine debris, coastal geology, water use, and water quality. This popular guide is aligned to California State Standards for third through eighth grades. It also 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 the website, as can Spanish translations of the student handouts. To date, 17,046 hard copies of the book have been distributed (including 5,000 printed and distributed by the City of Los Angeles). Coastal Commission staff has held a total of 92 teacher training workshops, directly interacting with 2,023 educators. (Strategic Plan Action 7.3.3)

The **Schoolyard Cleanup Program** provides support to teachers and school groups to do cleanups on their school grounds. Schools unable to take a field trip to the beach or river for Coastal Cleanup Day or an Adopt-A-Beach event are encouraged to do the important work of preventing litter at the source. Teachers may sign up for the program on the Commission's website, which includes extensive related lessons and teacher resources, detailed cleanup instructions, and post-cleanup analysis guidance. The activities of planning and carrying out the cleanup, collecting and analyzing the data, and communicating and acting on the results are directly aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and support Common Core State Standards as well. A teacher workshop on the impacts of marine debris in the context of the Schoolyard Cleanup Program was held in 2016 at the San Diego Science Education Conference. Since the program's launch in fall 2014, teachers have reported 8,520 students taking part. (Strategic Plan Actions 7.3.1 and 7.3.3)

Staff will soon be releasing a new high school curriculum called **California Coastal Voices**, about coastal science, policy, and management in the context of the issues facing the California coast. The project-based learning units are aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards and encourage students to get involved in issues of importance to their community. Experts in project-based learning have reviewed and are enthusiastic about the curriculum. Feedback continues to be sought from classroom teachers. A workshop on California Coastal Voices was presented in October 2016 at the California Science Teachers Association annual conference in Palm Springs. (Strategic Plan Actions 3.3.3 and 7.3.3)

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

Open annually to California students in kindergarten through 12th grade, this contest's goal is to encourage youth to reflect on the beauty and spirit of California's beaches and ocean, and inspire a greater sense of stewardship for these natural places. Every year, judges select five winners each in art and poetry, and around 40 honorable mentions. Since 2003, students from all over California have submitted 28,511 entries to the contest.

Each year's winners and honorable mentions are shown in a traveling exhibit at venues up and down the coast. The 2016 contest exhibit locations were Channel Islands National Park Visitor Center in Ventura; Point Reyes National Seashore's Bear Valley Visitor Center in Marin County; the Ford House Museum in Mendocino; and, through mid-January, the Seymour Center in Santa Cruz. Some of the 2015 artwork was displayed in front of the Governor's office at the State Capitol in Sacramento in February 2016. Contest prizes were provided by Rubio's Restaurants, Acorn Naturalists, and Aquarium of the Pacific. The Tabula Poetica program at Chapman University provided judging assistance. Artwork from the Coastal Art & Poetry Contest is used in many Commission publications and its 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, and often it provides the opportunity for a child's first visit to the beach. The Program includes a school presentation about the ocean, marine debris, and pollution prevention as well as a beach cleanup event. Approximately 7,500 students participated in the 2016 cleanup event, and even more saw the assembly. Students also sat in formation on the beaches to create images and text photographed from the air; in 2016 this "aerial art" featured marine animals accompanied by a "sea change" message. Photos of the aerial images, and an inspiring new short video called "Art for a Sea Change" showcasing the program's aerial images over the years, can be viewed at [www.oceanday.net](http://www.oceanday.net).

## Whale Tail Grants Program

The Whale Tail Grants Program awards funds to schools, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies conducting coastal and marine education and stewardship programs throughout the state. The funding for these grants comes from the sales and renewals of the Whale Tail License Plate and beginning in FY2015/16, also from voluntary contributions to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund on the state tax return form. Since the program began in 1998 through June 2016, the Whale Tail Grants Program has awarded \$10.9 million in grants to 609 different projects. The program targets both children and the general public with an emphasis on reaching underserved communities.

Grantees are selected from a broad range of California cities located up and down the state's coast, on the Channel Islands, and from some inland locations as well. This geographic diversity can be seen on an interactive [online map](#) on the CCC website showing all grants that have been awarded throughout the history of the Whale Tail Grants Program (Figure 1).

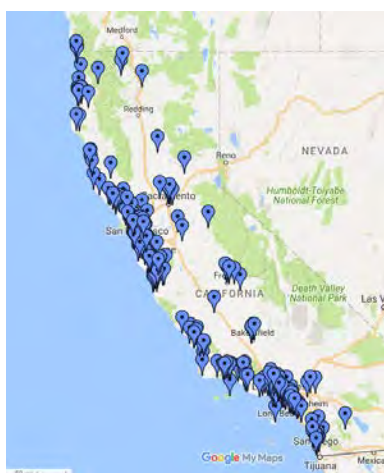


Figure 1-Map of Whale Tail Grants Awarded to Date



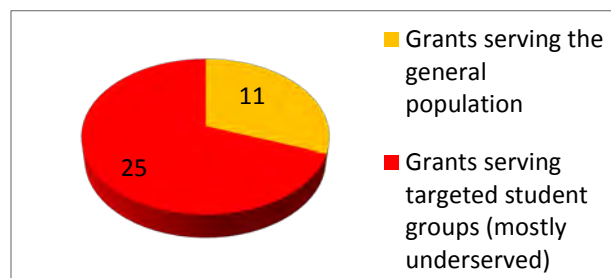
There are two categories of Whale Tail Grants: competitive and targeted. Competitive grants are awarded once a year in the early spring and are selected from a large number of proposals that are submitted from all over California. Each proposal is evaluated by staff using 12 criteria previously approved by the Commission. These projects tend to be one to two years in duration. Typically there is enough funding for approximately 15% of the total dollars requested. Staff recently solicited proposals for the 2016/17 round of competitive grants.

Targeted grants are awarded once a year in the fall. These grants are for projects that are important to the Coastal Commission because they are outgrowths of Commission programs and/or fulfill key organizational priorities, yet exceed the capacity of the Commission Public Education staff. In order to extend our capacity to implement priority projects, the Commission partners with grantees with aligned missions to carry out these key programs.

In Fiscal Year 2015/16, the Commission awarded \$753,000 to 37 different projects, including several in a subcategory for projects addressing climate change and/or ocean acidification (Strategic Plan Action 3.3.3). Examples of funded activities included: children from very urban, underserved Bay Area schools participated in overnight coastal environmental education programs on the San Mateo coast; students from the Central Valley went to hands-on science and ocean literacy classes on Monterey Bay; Del Norte County students learned how to hatch and release salmon and steelhead trout; the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum provided public programming about climate change science and solutions, adult volunteers and multicultural, underserved students analyzed water quality as part of a citizen science program at Bolsa Chica Wetlands in Orange County; and production of a series of short videos about the California Coastal Trail.

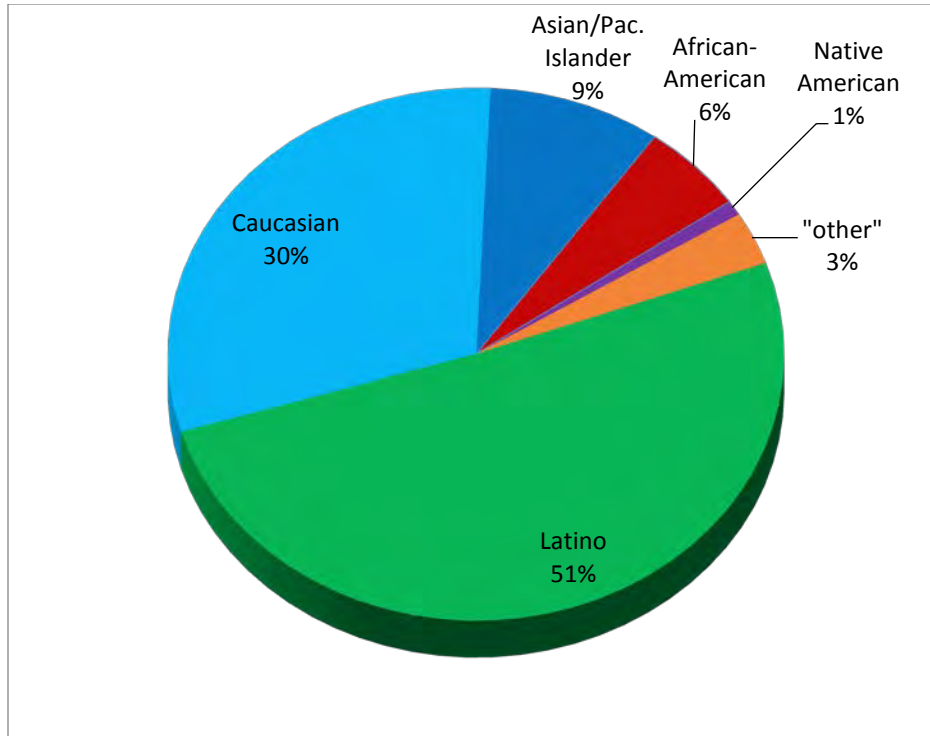
Staff developed and continues to share a guidebook to assist grantees and applicants in conducting program evaluation. The guide is titled “Making Your Program Evaluation Work for You – A Manager’s Guide to Evaluating Coastal and Marine Education Programs.” The guide is posted on the website at <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/plate/wtevaluation.pdf>.

Recently the staff undertook an analysis of the ethnic diversity represented by people served through the Coastal Commission’s Public Education grantmaking. For Whale Tail grants awarded in FY2014/15 (the most recent year for which most projects have already shared results), 11 of the 36 grants served the general population and the other 25 grants served targeted student groups, mostly underserved student groups (Figure 2).



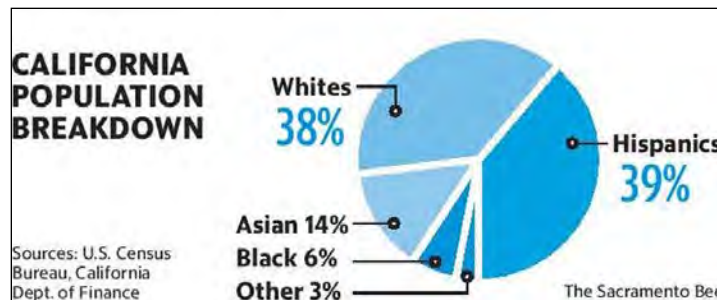
**Figure 2-Grants Awarded in Fiscal Year 2014/15**

Of these 25 grants reaching primarily underserved student groups, seventy percent of the participants were non-white. Specifically, an estimated 51% of the students were Latino, 30% were Caucasian, 9% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 6% were African-American, approximately 1% were Native American, and an estimated 3% were in another category (often more than one race) (Figure 3).



Comparing this data to the overall ethnic makeup of the state in 2015 (Figure 4), in 2014/15 we reached proportionally more students from Latino populations (50% of target audiences versus 39% in population), fewer students of Asian or Pacific Islander decent (9% versus 14% in population) fewer Caucasian students (32% versus 38% in general population), and equivalent proportions of students of African-American, and Native American descent.

**Figure 3-State Population in June 2015**



## *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 annual California Coastal Cleanup Day event. The results have been spectacular – in 2016, the Coastal Cleanup Day program hosted the most cleanup sites across the broadest geographic range in its history: 922 individual cleanup locations across 54 counties. A total of 53,575 volunteers took part in the event, maintaining Coastal Cleanup Day's status as the state's largest annual volunteer event. (Strategic Plan Actions 7.2.5 and 7.3.1)

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 2016, 16,332 volunteers cleaned rivers and waterways within inland counties, removing 338,097 pounds of debris, while many more cleaned inland shorelines within the coastal counties. Combined with those coastal counties, Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers removed 649,759 pounds of debris from the state's coast and inland shorelines. This equaled 8.4 pounds of debris per coastal volunteer versus almost 21 pounds per volunteer within the inland counties, a huge discrepancy that speaks to increased efforts in inland counties, where illegal dumping adds a significant amount of weight to the debris totals collected during the cleanup. It also indicates another continuing impact of the state's drought, as volunteers along inland shorelines were able to reach legacy debris that had been under water in previous years.

Looking back over the history of the program helps to highlight the cumulative benefit of this program to the health of the coast and ocean. Since the Coastal Cleanup Day Program's inception in 1985, over 1.4 million volunteers have helped remove almost 23 million pounds of debris from California's coast, ocean, and inland shorelines. (Strategic Plan Action 7.2.5)

**Coastal Cleanup Day Publicity.** Publicizing the Cleanup is a major aspect of the work that Commission staff undertakes each year. Making sure that the public knows that the Cleanup is coming up and how important it is that they take part is a critical step that allows the Commission to support local partners and increase the connection between the Cleanup and the Commission.

In 2016, the Commission undertook a new publicity campaign that focused on the single biggest contributor to the trash volunteers pick up every year: cigarette butts. The Commission worked with a pro bono ad agency, Gyro LLC, to develop a campaign that not only highlighted the impact of cigarette butts on coastal and marine environments, but also provided instant education about how trash can travel from inland areas to end up along the coast and inland shorelines. The campaign featured pictures of cigarette butts on the coast or on a riverbank with word bubbles over them with the captions "Flicked in Union Square," "Flicked along L Street," or similar words to help indicate that the cigarette filter the audience was seeing originated far from where it had been found. Gyro also created editable versions of the artwork, which coordinators personalized for their region.

Campaign posters and postcards were printed in both English and Spanish, and distributed to local coordinators across the state. Staff and local coordinators also shared the images widely across social media, and can be viewed on the Coastal Cleanup Day webpages, found here: [www.coastalcleanupday.org](http://www.coastalcleanupday.org).

Staff continued to refine a new tool for publicizing and growing the Cleanup – the Commission's on-line map showing every cleanup location in California. Working with the Commission's IT staff, Commission staff researched the locations of each cleanup site, gathered the information necessary for volunteers to know how to register for that site, and then mapped the cleanups using the template previously developed by the Commission for its "Your Coast" beach access map. The map was a powerful and valuable tool for volunteers and organizers across the state, providing a simple, one-stop approach to connecting volunteers with their cleanup location.

**Corporate Partners in CCD.** The Coastal Cleanup Day Program once again enlisted strong corporate partners, which greatly assisted CCD outreach efforts. Crystal Geyser Alpine Spring Water continued as lead sponsor for the event. In addition to their financial support, Crystal Geyser provided free water, primarily in gallon-size containers, in 42 Coastal Cleanup regions, covering almost all of the Cleanup volunteers. This is a crucial benefit that helps local coordinators immensely. Crystal Geyser was joined by continuing sponsors Rubio's Fresh Seafood Restaurant (who again provided coupons for free tacos or kid's meals to every single volunteer), NOAA, CalOES, Oracle, the Whale Tail® Ecoplate, Union Bank, California State Parks Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, and an array of in-kind and media support from partners around the state.

**BYO for CCD.** The Commission staff launched a program in 2010 that has grown significantly since then 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 asks volunteers to bring their own reusable cleanup supplies from home, rather than relying on the single-use disposable plastic items available at cleanup locations. Whenever possible, the Commission and partner organizations also provide reusable supplies like buckets and gardening gloves for volunteer use. The initiative has been a great success and has grown each year it has been in place, as more volunteers hear the message and more local coordinators gather enough reusable supplies to make the plastic bags and gloves unnecessary. Staff estimates that about one half of all participants in the 2016 Cleanup either brought a reusable item from home or were able to use reusable Cleanup items provided at their site. 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 coastal and marine environments. (Strategic Plan Action 7.3.2)

**CCD Survey.** Commission staff has again surveyed Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers about their experience in order to continue to improve the event and learn about the overall impact of the cleanup. Results from the survey are still coming in as of this report, so staff will provide a verbal update during the November meeting presentation.

## **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 50 beach managers assists groups in conducting cleanups at their “adopted” beach, helping to bring more than 25,000 people to an Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup in 2016, contributing nearly 50,300 volunteer hours. (Strategic Plan Action 7.2.5)

Each group that participates in three or more cleanups (or just one cleanup for school groups) through the Adopt-A-Beach program is recognized on the Commission website and receives a certificate acknowledging their participation in the program and thanking them for their contribution.

## **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 that are connected to the ocean, coast, and inland waterways, occurring throughout the state. In 2016, the on-line calendar included 363 events.

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

The Commission staff continued its work on the Community-Based Restoration and Education Program at Upper Newport Bay, begun in 2001. To date, the program has engaged over 23,700 volunteers, who together have restored more than 15 acres of coastal salt marsh, riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats. Volunteers have planted over 26,000 native plants (the vast majority of which were propagated in an on-site native plant nursery) and removed over 49 tons of invasive plant material (not including material left on site).

2016 programming worked on maintaining and expanding current restoration sites. Volunteers who attended restoration events represented schools, community groups, and corporations through such varied groups as Chapman University, Saddleback College, UC Irvine, Orange County School of the Arts, Estancia High School, Starbucks, Hyatt, Master Gardeners, Newport Bay Conservancy, and Scouting troops.

Staff continued building its program to recruit and train college interns, who act as leaders for community habitat restoration events. Students from diverse backgrounds receive training in volunteer event management, environmental education, and ecological restoration techniques. In 2016, CBREP engaged 23 interns from UC Irvine Center for Environmental Biology, Chapman University, and Saddleback College. The recruitment and training of these student leaders increases the program’s capacity to act as a resource for engaging the community with their local environment and ways they can protect and restore it. The students receive invaluable real world experience as environmental leaders in their community.

Program staff also is working on a restoration site monitoring report that details the first four years of data collected on the current active work site, called Newport Valley. The report will share details about the successes and challenges of this restoration work, and will detail native and invasive plant coverage as well as the evidence of wildlife, human impacts, and soil quality. Staff will use the findings to adjust restoration plans as needed to improve future success. The monitoring report will be updated each year as new data is collected. The report is scheduled to be made public by the end of December 2016.

**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. Staff 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.** 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.

### **Ocean and Coastal Photography Contest**

In 2016 the Commission continued its successful partnership with the Thank You Ocean Campaign to co-host the Annual California Ocean & Coastal Amateur Photography Contest. Fairmont Hotels & Resorts of California donated overnight stays at luxury hotels for the winners. A panel of judges selected four winning photographs and 16 honorable mentions, and online voters selected their favorite as the “viewers’ choice” winner. This year there was a total of 700 entries submitted. All of the winning photographs are featured on the contest website, <http://mycoastalphoto.com>.

Staff continued to offer a traveling exhibit of a selection of winning photographs. In 2016, the collection was displayed at the State Capitol Building and the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach.

### **Other Forms of Public Outreach**

[Coast4u.org](http://Coast4u.org). The Commission’s public education web pages provide detailed information on all of the programs, contests, and resources the program offers to the public. They include Coastal Cleanup Day information, downloadable curricular materials and hard-copy request forms; a video lending library; a page in Spanish linking to available Spanish language resources; and interactive maps on topics such as Whale Tail Grant locations, beach wheelchair availability, and available Adopt-A-Beach sites. In the first 10 months of 2016, the Public Education web pages had approximately 466,722 page views.

**Social Media.** Social Media increases awareness, shares content, helps build relationships, draws readers to our other social platforms, advertises PE art, education, campaigns and mission while keeping our existing base up to date on events, milestones, and contests. Staff

also solicits feedback to improve our work. Similarly, we share partners' content, thank Coastal Cleanup Day sponsors, and celebrate pro bono advertising campaign teams as well as those who contribute to the Protect the Coast and Ocean Fund or those who purchase a Whale Tail plate by re-sharing their images and text on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr.

Social Media has become an essential part of providing California with direct and immediate access to the Commission's Public Education Program. We have continued to improve our social media outreach over the course of 2016 and will continue to do so.

We are growing on every platform: (as of Monday October 3, 2016)

- Tumblr: 40 posts since January 2016
- Facebook: 14,750 people like our page
- Twitter: 19,500+ Tweets/ 9,281 followers/ 19,300+ likes
- Instagram: 575 posts/1,255 followers
- Constant Contact:

**Environmental Fairs and Events.** Each year, staff hosts an educational booth at a number of environmental fairs and events, handing out materials, and talking to attendees. This year, staff exhibited education resources and spoke to 4,739 people at 17 events.

Our 2016 list of events included Monterey WhaleFest, Berkeley Bay Festival, Santa Barbara Earth Day, San Diego County Fair Whole Life Festival & STE(A)M Fair, San Jose State Earth Day, Los Angeles Sanitation Districts Earth Day, State Scientist Day at the State Capitol, California State Fair *Whale Tales* in Sacramento, Sunset Elementary School Environmental Fair, Bureau of Land Management's Discover the Coast event in Point Arena, California Science Education Conference in Palm springs, California's 49th Annual Native American Day.

**Email News Blasts.** Using the Constant Contact email service, we maintain a mailing list of over 21,000 subscribers, who have signed up via fairs, Coastal Cleanup Day, and our website to keep in touch. Our targeted messages include; quarterly updates, grant opportunities, cleanup events, contest announcements and awards, as well as any new program initiatives and education materials.

## ***Policy and Coordination***

Public Education staff participates in a number of groups that focus on policy and broad topics of mutual concern related to environmental education, marine debris, and other issues. Participation in these efforts are helpful in a variety of ways – strengthening and expanding networks, sharing ideas and practices, learning about key trends and initiatives. These groups include the California Environmental Education Interagency Network, Community Resources for Science, and the West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health.

The Marine Debris Alliance (formerly known as the Marine Debris Action Coordination Team of the West Coast Governor’s Alliance on Ocean Health), which Commission staff has chaired since 2008, continued its efforts to coordinate and collaborate work on marine debris along the West Coast. In 2016, the Alliance completed work on a number of initiatives, including a report on various policies put in place along the West Coast to address marine debris and evaluating their effectiveness. The Alliance has also launched a new project to assess the usability of NOAA’s Marine Debris Tracker app in an effort to both help NOAA improve the user experience of the app and increase data collection across the West Coast and beyond. The Marine Debris Alliance continues to seek new funding and expanded membership as it continues to meet monthly in 2017. (Strategic Plan Action 2.2.10)

## ***Funding Sources***

The main sources of revenue for the Public Education Program is the Whale Tail License Plate and the Protect Our Coast and Oceans tax check off. In addition, pursuant to 30012 (c) and via a partnership with the California State Parks Foundation, the Program raises funds through grants, corporate contributions, and other funding efforts. All of the funding sources described in this section implement Strategic Plan Action 7.4.6.

### **Whale Tail<sup>®</sup> License Plate**

From its launch in 1997 through September 2016 (the most recent data available), a total of 238,784 California drivers had purchased the Commission’s Whale Tail<sup>®</sup> License Plate, and sales and renewal fees had raised over \$91 million for environmental programs - \$26,401,299 to the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (CBCEA) and \$65,241,879 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.

The Coastal Commission ran a new marketing campaign over the summer of 2016 to publicize the Whale Tail Plate. The campaign was called “Do the Whale Tail” and included a public service announcement in the form of a “tongue in cheek” instructional dance video featuring actor Jeremy Sisto. “Do the Whale Tail” went viral, garnering over 101,000 views on YouTube. Campaign posters were in BART trains, on Golden Gate Transit buses, and on the Santa



Monica Big Blue bus. On-line ads were on OC Weekly, Surflife, The Inertia, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. In addition, we used our own social platforms to spread the word and invited partner organizations to help with outreach by posting about the campaign to their social media followers.

### **Tax Check-off Box for “Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund”**

Beginning in 2014, California taxpayers had the opportunity to check a box and make a donation to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund in the voluntary contributions section of the state tax return. Funds from donations to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund support marine education and coastal stewardship, through the Whale Tail Grants Program.

For 2016, the fund is required to raise \$253,000 in order to stay on the tax form for 2017. Donations have already exceeded that target. As of the end of August, the fund had raised \$276,027 in contributions, and will be on the state tax form for 2017.

This years’ “Check the Coast” marketing campaign featured well-known Californians who support the coast, such as TV journalist Lisa Ling, baseball player Adrian Gonzalez, Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, marine biologist Sylvia Earle, businessman and philanthropist Tom Steyer, actor Eric Balfour, ocean scientist Wallace J. Nichols, and Assemblymember Mark Stone.

The campaign ran between February and May of 2016 and included “out of home” and online components. Check the Coast ads were seen on billboards in South San Francisco, in downtown BART stations, on huge digital screens at the Grove Mall in Los Angeles, and on buses in Marin, San Francisco, and Santa Monica. a website ([www.checkthecoast.org](http://www.checkthecoast.org)). On-line ads were geo-targeted and selected based on performance in past campaigns. Ads ran on Surflife.com, The Inertia, Santa Barbara News Press, OC Weekly, LA Weekly, and the Santa Cruz Sentinel, Google AdWords, Facebook, and Twitter.

Social media was a key element of the campaign. In addition to staff posting extensively about the campaign on PE social media platforms, many of the well-known Californian’s who were featured in campaign images have an enthusiastic social media following, and used their own platforms to champion the coast and ocean and encourage donations to the fund. In addition, numerous partner organizations posted on social media on behalf of the campaign, which greatly extended its reach.

### **Cleanup Day Sponsorships**

The Public Education Program raises funds for California Coastal Cleanup Day through corporate and government partners. A list of sponsorship partners for Coastal Cleanup Day 2015 is included in the section of this report on Coastal Cleanup Day, on page 8.

### **Other Fundraising Efforts**

The Public Education Program encourages donations to support coastal and marine education programs. To this end, staff maintains a “[Donate/Shop for the Coast](#)” page on the [www.Coast4u.org](http://www.Coast4u.org) website. In addition to making a donation, the public can purchase t-shirts,

hats, and posters. The site links to an [on-line art gallery](#) where the public can purchase framed prints of selected winners of the photo contest and art contest. Greeting cards, throw pillows, tote bags, and shower curtains printed with the images are also available for purchase.