



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Coastkeeper Selected to Taskforce to Enhance Marine Protection in Southern California**

*Coastkeeper's Marine Conservation Director to Provide a Link to San Diego Community*

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SAN DIEGO, CA – San Diego Coastkeeper Marine Conservation Director Kate Hanley was appointed to the Marine Life Protection Act South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. The group will work to implement the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), a state law requiring the design and implementation of a network of marine protected areas down the coast of California. This group will provide local expertise and knowledge of southern coastal communities, from Santa Barbara to the California/Mexico border. The group of volunteers will work to research, design and implement marine protected areas (MPAs), with recommendations for the south coast expected to be completed by late 2009.

The South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group represents the diverse needs and interests of southern California's coastal communities. They will work with members of the public, key stakeholders and decision makers as well as the science advisory group to research and design a MPA network that works for the south coast, providing maximum ecosystem benefits with minimal economic impact. Scientific studies show that MPAs and reserves result in larger, more abundant, healthier and more fertile fish populations, and a more diverse, resilient habitat.

"I am honored to serve on this important committee," Kate Hanley said. "I look forward to collaborating with fellow Regional Stakeholder Group members to ensure the successful creation of a network of marine protected areas in southern California."

In order to further marine conservation goals in San Diego County, San Diego Coastkeeper is working to raise public awareness concerning issues and activities impacting our coastal environment. Coastkeeper's involvement in the MLPA will continue to focus on implementing a

cohesive network of MPAs in southern California. Coastkeeper will conduct educational outreach to the community to ensure successful support of important marine conservation tools.

Hanley will be joined by dozens of leaders from various stakeholder groups throughout Southern California, including divers, sport and commercial fishermen, educators, agency and elected officials and local businesses to successfully complete the regional stakeholder group process in the south coast. Hanley's alternate to the group is Ray Hiemstra from San Diego Coastkeeper's sister organization, Orange County Coastkeeper.

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Founded in 1995, 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.