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California Coastal Cleanup Day Kicks Off with New Ad Campaign and Preparation for Tsunami Debris

August 15, 2012 – The California Coastal Commission is proud to announce that the 28th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, the state’s largest volunteer event, will take place on Saturday, September 15th, 2012. The event will take place at more than 850 locations around the state, comprising the largest single effort to remove the debris that has accumulated on California’s beaches and inland shorelines over the past year. This year’s event will also provide one of the first opportunities for Cleanup organizers to measure a baseline of debris on our shores that may have washed up as a result of last year’s devastating tsunami in Japan.

After the massive earthquake and tsunami struck Japan in March, 2011, the Japanese Government estimated that as much as 1.5 million tons of debris may have washed out to sea. The West Coast has already begun to feel the impacts of that debris, as items as small as a soccer ball and as large as a 100-ton pier have washed ashore north of the California border. None of the items recovered in California so far have been confirmed to have been tsunami debris, but in order to achieve a better understanding of when or if the debris from the tsunami is reaching our shores, California Coastal Cleanup Day organizers along the coast will be distributing a new, simplified data card for use at select beaches. These data cards will collect information about items that could potentially indicate tsunami debris, and will provide a baseline of data against which future cleanups will be measured.

“We hope to be able to identify trends in these potential tsunami debris indicators that could help us firmly establish when, or if, the debris from the tsunami is starting to arrive in bulk along our shores,” said Eben Schwartz, Marine Debris Program Manager for the California Coastal Commission. “At the same time, we don’t want to lose sight of the fact that the California coast is polluted by thousands of tons of debris every single year, no matter what natural disasters may or may not have occurred. The most important thing for us to do at the moment is to capture the increased volunteer momentum around marine debris that we are seeing right now. We want to be able to direct those volunteers to cleanup events where

they can be safely overseen and put to work by our trained volunteer organizers while helping rid our coast of debris, no matter where it might have originated.”

Coastal Cleanup Day is a massive undertaking, bringing together partners from around the state to implement cleanups on the ground. A vital aspect of these partnerships is the [sponsors](#) of the event, providing the necessary funding and help with publicity that make the Cleanup such a success. Among these partners is San Francisco-based advertising agency ATTIK, who has teamed up with the Coastal Commission to develop a new publicity campaign aimed at increasing volunteerism and educating Californians about the vital need for Coastal Cleanup Day. The campaign, available for viewing on the Coastal Cleanup Day webpage found at www.coastalcleanupday.org, focuses on a theme of “Every piece of trash you remove reveals something beautiful.” Essentially, the message focuses on what all Californians inherently understand: that all it takes is one piece of trash to ruin an otherwise perfect moment at the beach, or wherever you happen to be enjoying the outdoors. And one of the solutions to this problem is easy – just pick up trash wherever you see it. This is why Coastal Cleanup Day takes place not only along the coast, but also at bays, creeks, rivers, and highways throughout California – it’s an attempt to stop trash from becoming marine debris in the first place.

The campaign was designed by Senior Art Director Jeff Fang and Copywriter Will Zschau, with help from a great team of people at ATTIK. For Jeff and Will, working to help publicize and strengthen Coastal Cleanup Day became a passion project. “Jeff and I are both native Californians and avid lovers of the outdoors,” said Will Zschau, “so the project took on special meaning. It was unbelievably rewarding to be able to help make a difference with something that matters personally to each of us.”

This year’s Coastal Cleanup Day will take place on Saturday, September 15th from 9 AM to Noon in most locations. For those who cannot attend Coastal Cleanup Day, the Coastal Commission maintains a calendar of events taking place during the 3 weeks following the Cleanup, known as COASTWEEKS. For more information on last year’s Cleanup or any of the new initiatives planned for 2012, please visit www.coastalcleanupday.org.

The statewide event is presented by the California Coastal Commission with major statewide support from CG Roxane - Crystal Geysers. Additional support comes from Whole Foods Market, Oracle, Nature’s Path, Clif Bar, ATTIK, See’s Candies, Lindamar Industries, Bartlett Tree Experts, Union Bank, Marin County Board of Supervisors, Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau, and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

California Coastal Cleanup Day 2012 is supported by the California Coastal Commission, California State Parks Foundation, and Ocean Conservancy. This event is made possible by the hard work of hundreds of local non-profits and government agencies throughout the state and tens of thousands of volunteers annually.

The Coastal Commission, in partnership with coastal cities and counties, plans and regulates the use of land and water along the California coast to maximize public beach access and recreation, provide for priority coastal development, and assure that new development will protect coastal resources including wetlands, wildlife on land and in the sea, water quality, coastal tourism, and scenic vistas.

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