

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400
TDD (415) 597-5885



Media Contacts

Orange County at Dana Point Harbor:

Toni Purry, toni.purry@purry.com, 310.410.0300

Santa Monica at Santa Monica Pier:

Maria Losch, maria@marialosch.com, 310.592.6724 cell

San Francisco at Crissy Field:

Dawn Stranne, dawn@pr-dsa.com, 415.893.1780 or 415.533.0532 cell

Coastal Cleanup Day and general:

Judi Shils, judishils@earthlink.net, 415.939.1232 cell

Department of Motor Vehicles:

Michael Marando, Michael.marando@dmv.ca.gov, 916.657.6437 or 916.997.8962 cell

California Coastal Commission Introduces New Whale Tail® Ecoplate With a Whale of a Deal For the First Thousand Who Sign Up

Design contest winners Elizabeth Robinette Tyndall of Contra Costa County and Bill Atkins of Orange County recognized at statewide press conferences

(SAN FRANCISCO/SANTA MONICA/DANA POINT, Calif., August 2, 2011) – Today, the California Coastal Commission and the Department of Motor Vehicles officially launched the state's new Whale Tail® Ecoplate by announcing the details of a "whale of a deal" for the first thousand Californians who sign up on www.ecoplates.com for the new specialty license plate. The winners of the Coastal Commission's contest to redesign the license plate were also announced at three press conferences held simultaneously at Crissy Field in San Francisco, Dana Point Harbor in Orange County, and the Santa Monica Pier. Funds from the sale of the plates support coastal conservation in California.

WHALE OF A DEAL REVEALED

The first 1,000 people to order on www.ecoplates.com will score a standard Whale Tail® Ecoplate for 50 percent off (\$25 instead of \$50) or \$25 off a personalized plate (\$73 instead of \$98) plus two tickets to a California aquarium. This special offer is made possible by the Coastal Commission's *Stewards of the Coast* campaign sponsors, including convention and visitor bureaus from across the state; the City of Dana Point; SeaWorld San Diego; and Waste Management WM EarthCare.

DESIGN CONTEST WINNERS NAMED

After receiving more than 300 entries in a public contest to design a new license plate that retained the popular Whale Tail theme, the Coastal Commission selected two winners to collaborate on the design: Painter Elizabeth Robinette Tyndall of Bethel Island on the California Delta in Contra Costa County, and Graphic Designer Bill Atkins of Laguna Beach in Orange County. Each was awarded \$1,000. *Note to editors: For downloadable photos and more information about the artists, visit the newsroom at <http://www.ecoplates.com>.*

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TALE OF THE TAIL

First produced in 1997, the iconic Whale Tail® plate is among the most popular specialty license plates ever sold. Nearly 200,000 plates have been purchased, raising \$60.2 million for coastal conservation and environmental efforts. To date, 433 Whale Tail® grants have been awarded for programs implemented in every California coastal county and many inland watersheds.

Marine life artist Wyland of Laguna Beach designed the artwork for the first Whale Tail® license plate. The decision was made to seek out a new design after he asked for a 20 percent royalty from all sales of the license plates. On July 12, the Coastal Commission issued a Declaration of Appreciation to Wyland, thanking him for his generous contribution.

“While we are grateful to Wyland for his donation over many years, we opted to retire the plate,” said California Coastal Commission Executive Director Peter Douglas. “This presented an exciting opportunity to freshen the look of the license plate, inspire new interest, and get the public involved.”

STEWARDS OF THE COAST MAKE A SPLASH WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT

As part of the rollout, the Coastal Commission kicked off *Stewards of the Coast*, a summer campaign culminating in the 27th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day on Saturday, September 17. In addition to underwriting the cost of the first thousand plates sold, *Stewards of the Coast* sponsors will provide Coastal Cleanup Day participants with the chance to win getaways to beautiful California destinations or a \$1,000 gift certificate to Whole Foods Market.

The *Stewards of the Coast* sponsor team was spearheaded by Anaheim/Orange County Visitor and Convention Bureau, and includes the following additional major sponsors: the City of Dana Point and its partners the County of Orange, Dana Point Harbor Association, and Dana Point Chamber of Commerce; Santa Monica Convention and Visitors Bureau and its partners Pier Restoration Corporation, Pacific Park, and Office of Sustainability and the Environment, City of Santa Monica; SeaWorld San Diego; and Waste Management WM EarthCare.

Supporting sponsors include Huntington Beach Marketing and Visitors Bureau (Surf City USA®), Laguna Beach Visitors and Conference Bureau, Long Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau, San Francisco Travel, Santa Barbara Conference and Visitors Bureau, Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitors Council, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, Visit Newport Beach Inc., Aquarium of the Bay in San Francisco, Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, SEA LIFE™ Carlsbad Aquarium at the LEGOLAND® California Resort, and Whole Foods Market.

WHALE TAIL CITIES CHALLENGE

Today, Mayor Scott Schoeffel of the City of Dana Point issued an invitation to California mayors to join him in a friendly competition – “The Whale Tail Cities Challenge” – to see which participating city claims the most Whale Tail® Ecoplate sales, as a percentage of population, before Coastal Cleanup Day on September 17. The winning city will receive a gift basket of locally produced foods and beverages from each of the participating cities to be shared at a city event or council meeting.

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WHOLE FOODS MARKET SPECIAL OFFER IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA STORES

Whole Foods Market is supporting the launch of the new Whale Tail® Ecoplate with a special offer in all 33 Northern California stores. Beginning today and running through August 17, customers who fill out a license plate application in the store will receive \$25 off a Whale Tail® Ecoplate plus four tickets to San Francisco's Aquarium of the Bay, while supplies last.

ABOUT COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

California Coastal Cleanup Day is the premier volunteer event focused on the marine environment in the country. The event is funded in part by the Whale Tail® Ecoplate. Last year, more than 82,500 volunteers worked together to collect more than 1.2 million pounds of trash and recyclables from our beaches, lakes and waterways.

For more information, visit the newsroom at <http://www.ecoplates.com>, follow #whaletailplate on Twitter or visit The California Coast on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaCoast>.

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