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## Potential Impacts of Climate Change on California

by Robert C. Wilkinson

There is broad scientific agreement that global warming is occurring and that anthropogenic (human-induced) releases of emissions is a major cause. The rate of warming is projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to be much greater than the observed changes during the 20th

century, and it is "very likely to be without precedent during at least the last 10,000 years." There is also agreement that climate change and variability pose serious challenges. Last year the U.S. National Academy of Science and its counterparts from UK, Russia, Japan, Italy, India, Germany, France, China, Canada, and Brazil, issued a joint statement. They



note that: "climate change is real" and that "the scientific understanding of climate change is now sufficiently clear to justify nations taking prompt action." They also warn that "Failure to implement significant reductions in net greenhouse gas emissions now, will make the job much harder in the future." They called on world leaders to "Acknowledge that the threat of climate change is clear and increasing."

The IPCC's assessment and the US National Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change indicate that increased

temperatures will cause greater extremes of both drying and precipitation, changes in precipitation patterns, sea level rise, changes in ocean circulation patterns, and a decrease in snow cover, glaciers, ice caps and sea ice. We are seeing evidence of all this and more.

Along California's central coast re-

gion we will likely face increased fire risk in both wet and dry years due to increased temperatures. Land slides are already a problem, and an increase in the intensity of precipitation events would exacerbate this problem. Sea level rise will be a challenge for accelerated coastal erosion as well as inun-



dation of low-lying areas. In some areas, rail lines, freeways, pipelines, and transmission infrastructure are close to the cliffs. Other potential impacts are more subtle than the highly visible fires, floods, and land slides, but they can be serious nonetheless. Farmers know that pattern changes in the weather can be a disaster for crops. Rain at the wrong time, for ex-

ample, can ruin crops such as wine grapes.



There are a number of sensible things we can do, now. As over 2,600 economists, including eight Nobel Laureates in economics, have formally stated: "Policy options exist that would slow climate change without harming American living standards,

and these measures may in fact improve U.S. productivity in the longer run." These strategies can also build resilience in critical systems. For example, improving the efficiency of energy and resource use, reducing waste, and designing policies and management systems to provide better signals to consumers regarding the cost and scarcity of resources can make a significant difference. In addition, there are a number of opportunities to shift to renewable sources of energy at reasonable cost. We should be taking much better advantage of these "no regrets" and multiple benefit strategies now, both because they begin to address the problem of climate change and because they are good investments.

What is EDC doing to fight global warming? What can you do? See page 3

Dr. Robert C. Wilkinson is Director of the Water Policy Program at the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at the UCSB, and he is a Lecturer in the Environmental Studies Program at UCSB. His teaching, research, and consulting focus on water policy, climate change, and environmental policy issues. Dr. Wilkinson is also a Senior Fellow with the Rocky Mountain Institute, and a former EDC board member.

ABOUT EDC The Environmental Defense Center is the only nonprofit environmental law firm on California's Central Coast. EDC works with community groups to protect air and water quality, preserve precious open spaces, save species from extinction and guard public health. EDC provides legal, educational and advocacy support to grassroots efforts.

EDC complements the efforts of local environmental groups by offering a service that no other organization between Los Angeles and San Francisco provides: the legal expertise and assistance of trained staff in understanding and navigating the system of laws that are in place to protect our health and environment.

In doing so, EDC levels the playing field for citizens and gives them a voice in determining the future of their communities. EDC balances the scales of justice by providing the tools that community groups need to succeed against well-funded special interests.

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PHOTO BY ROBERT BERNSTEIN

## From the Desk of Cameron Benson

We are nearing the tipping point beyond which we could find ourselves on an irreversible course towards climate changes that will rapidly melt enough polar ice to cause a twenty foot rise in sea levels worldwide, concluded a study published recently in the well-respected journal Science.

Scientists don't know exactly when we will cross that line, but it appears it will be much sooner than previously thought and the results will be even more catastrophic. And although it is often called "global" warm-

ing, this has clearly become a deadly serious local problem. Imagine the devastating economic, environmental, and social consequences to our coastal communities from the projected rise in sea levels (see Wilkinson article on front cover).

This scientific conclusion, which reflects nearly unanimous consensus, reminds me of the old saying: "the first rule when you find yourself in a hole is to stop digging" (or, in this case, drilling). The number one human contribution to climate change, by far, is carbon dioxide emissions caused by fossil fuel mining and consumption. We need to stop digging, put the shovel down, and start climbing out of the hole.

We cannot afford to invest our limited infrastructure resources in outdated technologies that are destroying the planet and threatening our lives. We cannot afford another generation of fossil fuel status quo — oil drilling and liquefied natural gas importation. Instead, we must significantly reduce our energy consumption individually and as a community through conservation measures, improving efficiency, and developing non-polluting renewable sources of energy such as wind, solar, and geothermal.

As the leading scientists from around the world are telling us, we must do these things now – our lives, our children's lives, our coast and wildlife, and the future of the planet depend on it. At the Environmental Defense Center, we're acting locally to address this global crisis today.

## Special Announcements

We are saddened to report the loss of two wonderful members of our community: EDC Advisory Board Members and dear friends **Pauline Abbe** and **Herman Warsh** passed away recently.

Herman was a long-time EDC supporter and one of our first Advisory Board members. He was an avid traveler and hiker, including treks in Nepal and Peru. Beginning in 1977, when he moved to Santa Barbara, he was involved in many local organizations and supported us with his generous philanthropy, wise counsel, and infinite kindness.

Pauline joined EDC's Advisory Board a few years ago, but had been a supporter and friend for a long time. We first became acquainted with Pauline when she worked for then-Assemblyman Jack O'Connell. Like Herman, Pauline was an exceptionally active figure in the community who supported many important nonprofit organizations with her boundless energy and infectious enthusiasm.

The presence of these amazing individuals made the world a better place. We feel privileged to have known them, and will miss them both very much.

**Brian Trautwein**, EDC's Environmental Analyst, was awarded STREAMKEEPER 2006 by Cal-Trout's Executive Director Brian Stranko at their Board of Governors meeting on Saturday April 22, 2006. Brian was nominated by Dr. Craig Fusaro, who is on CalTrout's Board of Governors and a former college professor. Brian was honored "for his dedication to local Santa Barbara streams and for his vision for Mission Creek, Santa Barbara's cherished urban stream ...."

On Sunday, April 30th, EDC's Chief Counsel, **Linda Krop**, was honored by the League of Women Voters for her contributions to the League and the community. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. **Congratulations Linda! Thank you for all of your hard work here at EDC as well as in the community!** 

EDC's own **Eric Cárdenas** was selected by *Latino Today* as one of the 50 most influential Latinos on the Central Coast. He was honored at a luncheon awards event on Saturday, March 18th at the Historic Santa Maria Inn. Eric has been the director of EDC's Central Coast Environmental Health Project for the past three years.

## County Releases Report On Naples Development Proposal

The County of Santa Barbara has released the long-awaited Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Santa Barbara Ranch development at Naples. This large housing project would be located at the entrance to the scenic Gaviota Coast, and would negatively impact views,

native grasslands, habitats and the rural character of the coast. EDC is reviewing the DEIR on behalf of Surfrider Foundation] to ensure that all impacts are adequately disclosed, and environmentally preferred alternatives are considered. EDC and Surfrider are working with the Naples Coalition in an effort to transfer as many homes as possible to existing urban areas (as required by the County's Local Coastal Plan), or to an inland portion of the Ranch, out of the public viewshed. The public hearing on the DEIR took place on July 27, and the com-



Naples off Gaviota Coast. Photo: William B. Dewey

ment deadline is September 27. The DEIR is available on the EDC website (http://www.edcnet.org); or you can call the county planning department at 568-2000 to request a hard copy or CD.

## **Snowy Plover Faces New Threats**

The Pacific Coast population of the Western snowy plover was listed as threatened on March 5, 1993. The plover nests and winters on coastal beaches, and the primary threat to this species is the loss and degradation of habitat from human activities and development along the coast. These small shorebirds are also easy prey for domestic and wild animals. In 2002 – 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received petitions to "de-list" the plover. Acting on behalf of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, EDC objected to these petitions, on the grounds that the plover is still very much threatened and requires the protections of the Endangered Species Act to survive and recover. In April 2006, the Service rejected the petitions to de-list the plover, but did propose a new rule that would allow "take" of plovers (including killing, harming or harassing, habitat destruction, and habitat alteration). We again worked with Audubon to submit concerns about the proposal, which would allow the very activities that threaten this species' survival and recovery.

# What Can We Do About Global Warming?

### What EDC is Doing

The primary contributors to global warming in our area are oil & gas development, vehicles, ships, and the threat of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) projects. We are doing our part by

- Blocking the development of 37 federal oil and gas leases
- Opposing oil and gas development in state waters, within 3 miles of shore
- Fighting the Cabrillo Port LNG project
- Supporting fuel efficiency, clean fuels, and alternative transportation
- Advocating for ships that run cleaner and quieter
- Participating in Santa Barbara County's Bike Team competition!

### What You Can Do

Think globally, act locally: "C - E - R" Conservation – Efficiency – Renewables

### Conservation

- Turn off equipment & lights when not in use
- · Adjust thermostat
- Use appliances during non-peak times
- Drive less: carpool, ride a bike or walk, take the bus

### Efficiency

- Drive a hybrid vehicle
- Replace appliances with more efficient ones
- Use compact fluorescent lights

### Renewables

- Buy vehicles that run on alternative fuel
- Install solartubes, sky lights or solar panels on your home and business
- Encourage your utility, City and County to purchase renewable sources of energy

### **UCSB/Devereux**

EDC represents Save Ellwood Shores and Santa Barbara Audubon Society in response to UCSB's proposal to construct over 200 faculty homes near the Devereux Slough and Coal Oil Point Reserve. EDC and our clients are pleased that the University has agreed to preserve an additional 70 acres next to the coast, south of the Ocean Meadows Golf Course; however, we are still negotiating the terms of the agreement to make sure it is permanent and enforceable. We also continue to work with the University to ensure that the development complies with the wetland and habitat protections of the California Coastal Act. Protection of our remaining wetlands is especially critical, as California has lost over 90% of its historic wetlands. This loss results in more flooding, polluted run-off and less habitat for birds and other wildlife. UCSB's plan may be heard by the Coastal Commission this fall.

### Hope Shimmers for Mission Creek Steelhead

Prior to the channelization of Lower Mission Creek through Santa Barbara in the '30s and '60s, steelhead trout swam freely from the ocean to spawning pools in Mission Canyon. Today that path is blocked by a mile-long concrete channel. Dams and channels have reduced the Southern California Steelhead population by 99%.

Efforts to return federally Endangered steelhead to Mission Creek took a giant leap forward in 2006. EDC's Mission Creek Steelhead Recovery Project received a grant from the Wendy P. McCaw Foundation to retain a fish passage engineering firm. The engineers developed a plan to remove the flat concrete bottom of the mile-long channel and restore a more natural creek bed. This will reduce stream flow velocities enabling steelhead to migrate through the channel to upstream spawning grounds.

EDC and the City have both applied for further funding to complete the next steps so that this amazing species can rebuild its population in Mission Creek.





Mission Creek upstream and downstream.

## **LNG Threatens Our Shores**

As scientists world-wide tout the dangers of global warming, the oil and gas industry has a new plan to extend our dependence on fossil fuels. Having reaped enormous profits shipping oil around the world, the industry now seeks to do the same thing with gas. As shown in the movie Syriana, the new product of the industry is liquefied natural gas (LNG) – gas that is extracted overseas (often in poor, unstable countries) and liquefied to decrease its volume so that it can be economically transported in large quantities around the world on supertankers.

EDC recently submitted a 140-page comment letter on behalf of California Coastal Protection Network outlining the alarming impacts of the Cabrillo Port LNG Project. The Cabrillo Port

What you can do: contact the Governor at governor@governor.ca.gov and ask him to veto this project. To stay informed on the issue and learn about upcoming hearings and other opportunities for public participation, please refer to our website www.edcnet.org/lng.

project is proposed by BHP Billiton (the largest mining company in the world, with a horrendous safety, environmental and labor record), and would be located offshore Oxnard and Malibu. In our comments, we pointed out the safety risks of the project, as well as the fact that the project would be-

come the #1 source of smog-related air pollution in Ventura County. In addition, the seawater intake and hot water discharges would kill marine life, and the greenhouse gas emissions from the project would exceed those for domestic gas production by 25%. At a time when our State has adopted policies prioritizing clean energy alternatives and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, LNG is clearly a step in the wrong direction.

## **EDC Weighs In On Sanctuary Management**

EDC Chief Counsel Linda Krop represents the conservation community on the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council and leads the Sanctuary's Conservation Working Group (CWG), a coalition of thirteen environmental organizations, including The Ocean Conservancy, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, and Ocean Futures. On July 7, EDC and the CWG submitted extensive comments on the Sanctuary's proposed new Management Plan. This plan, which will replace the original plan that was adopted in 1983, provides an opportunity to enhance protection of ocean water quality and marine wildlife – including endangered and threatened species such as blue and humpback whales, sea otters, and brown pelicans. In our comments, we urged the Sanctuary program to strengthen regulations protecting water quality, increase funding for enforcement, and include protections from new threats such as underwater noise, ocean fish farming, liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, and rigs-to-reefs. A final Management Plan should be released by the end of the year.

## Venoco Unveils Plans To Drill For Oil

Venoco is pursuing two plans to drill for oil along the coast of Santa Barbara County. The Paredon project would involve "slant drilling" from an onshore drilling rig into a state lease offshore Carpinteria. The drilling facility would be 175 feet tall, and located next to City Hall, Carpinteria Bluffs, seal haul-out, the Arbol Verde and Concha Loma Neighborhoods, as well as the San Roque and Granada Mobile Home Parks. Impacts from the project include air and water pollution, visual blight, safety risks, global warming, interference with recreation and coastal access, and noise. In addition, the project would require a rezone to allow this type of industrial facility. The public was allowed the opportunity to comment on the scope of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will be released later this year. Contact the Carpinteria Valley Association for more information about this project.

Just up the coast, Venoco plans to significantly extend the life of Platform Holly (offshore UCSB and Ellwood) by slant drilling into an area that is currently part of the California Coastal Sanctuary. Venoco would need the State's permission to expand its current oil lease, and would need the City of Goleta's permission to process the oil at the Ellwood Onshore Facility, despite the fact that the land the facility sits on has been rezoned for recreational use. EDC represents the Sierra Club, Get Oil Out, Citizens Planning Association and Citizens for Goleta Valley in opposition to this proposal.



Photo: www.anniecrawley.com.

EDC's Central Coast Environmental Health Project (CCEHP) "
continues to provide important information and outreach about the
effects of pesticides on human health and the natural environment."



## **Demographic Survey**

CCEHP recently completed its long awaited demographic survey of indigenous farmworkers in northern Santa Barbara County. Funded by The California Endowment, CCEHP interviewed nearly 500 farmworkers on a range of issues including health, employment, income and family. A majority of the workers interviewed hailed from the state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico and identified with an indigenous culture. CCEHP's survey is intended to provide a glimpse into the lives of these workers with the hopes of raising awareness and support.

Entitled Portrait of a Laborer: Indigenous Farmworkers in Santa Barbara County, CCEHP's final report can be found at www.ccehp.org.

Taken together, we hope that CCEHP's findings and recommendations lead to better living and working conditions for the region's thousands of workers, who toil day after day for little recognition and even littler pay. Go to www.ccehp.org to see the survey questions, complete findings and statistics, and the final report.

## **Agricultural Discharges**

Until recently, agricultural operations in California had been largely exempt from state and federal Clean Water laws via waivers granted at the regional level. As a result, high levels of pesticides, fertilizers and nutrients, and sediment have been detected in local streams and creeks, degrading water quality.

CCEHP participated in a process with staff members of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and members of the farming and environmental communities to address this

problem. In 2004, the Regional Board unanimously endorsed a unique proposal crafted by all participants. This action came after multiple stakeholder meetings, hearings, and public debate on the issue and included provisions for water monitoring, implementation of best management practices, and continuing education courses.

Two years later, there have been some significant accomplishments. First, over 80% of all growers in Region 3 (representing over



Strawberry fields like this one are commonly treated with methyl bromide. Photo Eric Cárdenas.

380,000 irrigated acres) have enrolled in the program. In Santa Barbara County alone, 70% of all irrigated acres are covered thus far. In either case, these growers are actively implementing steps to improve water quality. Those who have not yet enrolled are being encouraged to apply, or risk facing penalties.

Secondly, the first phase of water monitoring has been completed. Water monitoring is a critical component of the approved program, and can be conducted by an individual grower or by a group of growers. Phase I monitoring took place in Salinas and Santa Maria, and initial results indicate high levels of nitrate, organophosphate pesticides, and sediment in water samples (exact numbers were not available at time of this writing). These findings are important because they give growers, community advocates and local agencies a place to start when assessing improvements to water quality.

CCEHP was a key participant in the original collaborative process that developed this unique plan, and will continue to track the progress of the program.

### State Appeals Methyl Bromide Decision

EDC and the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) successfully sued the California Department of Regulations for failing to incorporate State health standards into DPR's new methyl bromide regulations. Methyl bromide is a highly toxic fumigant that is applied to soil before planting crops such as strawberries. Methyl bromide was scheduled to be banned in 1988 under the Montreal Protocol because of its potential to deplete the Earth's protective ozone layer; however, the EPA has allowed for "exemptions" from the phase out requirement each year. Overexposure to methyl bromide can cause long term neurological problems, cancer, and reproductive harm.

The Superior Court ruled in our favor in February 2006, directing DPR to promulgate new regulations in consultation with the State Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), but DPR decided instead to appeal the decision to the Court of Appeals. Rather than protect children and farmworkers from this toxic pesticide, DPR chose to side with industry and subvert the court's ruling.

## **EPA Weighs In On Halaco** Clean-up Efforts

For several years, EDC has worked with the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper and Lawyers for Clean Water to ensure the clean-up of hazardous wastes at the Halaco facility in Oxnard next to Ormond Beach, EDC and LCW filed a lawsuit in 2001 on behalf of EDC and Channelkeeper, alleging violations of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and Proposition 65 (the State's Safe Drinking Water Act). Although we reached a settlement with Halaco in 2003, that agreement was nullified through subsequent bankruptcy proceedings by Halaco. The agreement would have required Halaco to assess the soils and waste piles on the property in order to determine what toxins and other contaminants are present, and to develop and implement a plan to clean up the site.

On June 19, US EPA began to test the site for radiation, dangerous heavy metals and other toxins. Based on earlier investigations, EPA has determined that the wastes on the site pose a threat to the environment or human health. EDC will continue to work with LCW and Channelkeeper to ensure timely implementation of pollution controls and clean-up.

## Thanks to Everyone Who Helped ' Make the 13th Annual Benefit Auction ల 2006 Environmental Hero Awards Our Most Successful Fundraising **Event Ever**

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Environmental Heros Peter Douglas and Susan Jordan with Assemblymember Pedro Nava.

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Naomi Schwartz presenting EDC's Environmental Hero award to Peter Douglas.

### THANKS TO OUR MUSICAL GUEST Pat Milliken

### **SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR BENEFIT AUCTION VOLUNTEERS, WITHOUT** WHOM THIS EVENT WOULD NOT **HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE**

Geoff Ball **Desmond Banning** Gloria Campa Rene Carbajal **Eric Cardenas** Corina Conboy Mary Jean Date **Dorothy Dent** Matt Dobberteen Sylvelin Edgerton Carla Frisk Lee Heller Vickie Hormuth Michelle Howard Karen Kraus Linda Krop Allison Low Christina Mayaro Michael Mayer Dianne McCutchan Christina McGinnis Darcie McKnight Lisa Moreno Amy Musante Erin Nicolulis Judy Pirkowitsch Liz Podolinsky Shiva Polefka Sarah Richmond Katie Silberman Angie Swanson **Brian Trautwein** Amber Tysor Randy Weiss

I Madonnari Thanks to Whitney and Meredith Brooks Abbott, the Environmental Defense Center was well represented at this year's I Madonnari Festival that was held over Memorial Day weekend at the Santa Barbara Mission. Every year these talented artists produce an incredible work of art, and this year was no exception with their depiction of San Marcos Foothills.

### Congratulations On Your Marriage Whitney Abbott and Murray McTigue. Thank you for thinking of EDC at this special time and designating us as a recipient of your wedding donations. We wish you all the best.

## SCAPE Art Exhibit to Benefit EDC a Big Success! EDC

would like to thank S.C.A.P.E. (Southern California Artists Painting for the Environment), for their presentation of the La Arcada Art Exhibit and Sale to benefit EDC on May 20th, 2006. The

show was a huge success despite the cancellation of day two due to rain! S.C.A.P.E. sold 17 paintings and donated 40% of the proceeds to EDC. S.C.A.P.E. is a nonprofit group whose mission it is to raise money to protect open spaces, increase



public awareness of environmental raise money to protect open spaces, to increase public awareness of environmental and conservation issues, and to promote camaraderie and provide opportunities for exhibition and education for outdoor painters. To learn more about S.C.A.P.E. visit their website at www.s-c-a-p-e.org.

## Circle of Friends: A Night of Music Thank you to Andrew Jackson

for putting on Circle of Friends: A Night of Music to raise funds for EDC. On July 2, EDC proved to have many friends. Soho was packed with supporters and music lovers alike as over 20 local

musicians took to the stage to support EDC. We would like to extend our gratitude to Soho for donating the space, and all of the musicians who made the night successful: Andrew Jackson, Bruce Goldish, Cinder Jean, Claude Hopper, Earl, James Hurley, John Batdorf, Justin



Michael, Karen Thurber, Kate Bennett, Lily Wilson, Linda Dam, Matthew Kaner, Michael Frey, Nicola Gordon, Noah Churchill, Robert Postel, Roy Donkin and Alexis D, Susan Reeves.

Ten Percent Tuesdays at Aldo's! During the month of August, locally owned Aldo's Italian Ristorante donated 10% of each Tuesdays' gross sales to EDC. The month was a huge success! EDC would like to thank to Aldo's for their continuing support. We would also like to thank Andrew Jackson for providing incredible live music, and making the evening of the 15th a festive event!

# Thanks to Everyone Who Made EDC's '2006 TGIF Season a Huge Success!

EDC's TGIF celebrations were a tremendous success again this year! We trust that you had as much fun as we did. We would like to thank all of the sponsors, food and beverage donors, musicians, and countless volunteers (too numerous to name here!) for contributing to the success of the 2006 TGIF season.

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### MUSIC:

Andrew Jackson & Barbara Coventry Antara & Delilah Claude Hopper Earl Lily Wilson

A special thank you goes out to **Mark Behnke** of **Vintage Logistics** for providing excellent wine and stemware for all of the TGIF events this year!

EDC would also like to thank **Patagonia** and **Horny Toad** for making our raffles incredibly successful by providing outdoor apparel for all of our events!

We encourage you to show your appreciation to our food and wine donors by supporting these local businesses!

## Don't miss our upcoming TGIF events!

**September 8th** – Sponsored by Second District Supervisor Susan Rose and First District Supervisor Salud Carbajal with acoustic music from Lily Wilson.

**October 6th** – Fall Feast! Sponsored by GOO!, Surfrider Foundation, and Shoreline Preservation with acoustic music from Antara and Delilah. Catered by the Big Easy Catering Company.

## Film Festival to Benefit EDC

The Ocean Channel proudly presents the third annual Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival. October of 2006 marks the return of an event that has become Santa Barbara's premier ocean related film festival. This year's event promises a fantastic line up of ocean films. Adrenaline junkies, SCUBA divers, sailors, fishermen—all will find inspiration and education on



the screen at the Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival. This year the proceeds from the festival will go to benefit EDC! Join us:

Friday, October 20, 8-10pm at Campbell Hall, on the UCSB Campus.



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