

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2007

Zoo Recruits Fresno Students to Assist International Beach Cleanup Effort in Monterey on Ocean Day, Tuesday, May 22nd

FRESNO, Ca. – Over 6,500 kids throughout the state will commemorate Ocean Day at the 14th Annual Kids' Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup by taking part in seven cleanups all along the California coast, stretching from San Diego to Humboldt County. This year, the California students will be joining counterparts in Mexico, British Columbia, and Alaska holding similar events.

Locally, approximately 200 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students from four different Fresno schools will travel over 150 miles all the way from Fresno County to the edge of Monterey Bay. They will be removing litter while enjoying the rare opportunity to play on the beach and gaze at Monterey Bay.

Times: Organizers and kids will be available for interviews between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Location: Municipal Beach in Monterey, just south of the Municipal Wharf, off of Del Monte Avenue.

This event is being organized locally by Lesley Gates, Education Specialist at Fresno Chaffee Zoo. "It's so important that students in the Fresno area understand their connection with the ocean. I want the students to know that they can make a difference in protecting our precious planet by something as simple as picking up trash and recycling. And, I hope that students will take this experience and apply it to their daily lives by helping keep their school and neighborhood clean," she said.

Patrick Kruer, Chair of the California Coastal Commission, said, "This program teaches students about the threats to our oceans including pollution and how to prevent it. The children are learning that the ocean and the animals that live there are in trouble due to human activities and that we all need to step up and help." The Coastal Commission coordinates the program statewide.

The Malibu Foundation for Environmental Education and the California Coastal Commission started the annual event in Los Angeles in 1994. With funding from the Whale Tail License Plate, this program expanded to serving Central Valley children in 2001. The program focuses on reaching children in underserved and inland schools. Prior to the cleanup, the program includes a series of school presentations providing information about the importance of the ocean and how the students' actions affect it.

The California Coastal Commission is the statewide coordinator of the Kids' Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup, the year-round Adopt-A-Beach program, and Coastal Cleanup Day. All of these programs are funded by the generous support of the Whale Tail License Plate Fund. Over 168,000 plates have been sold since 1996, raising \$10.4 million dollars for marine education and protection. For more information about the California Coastal Commission's programs and how to buy a Whale Tail Plate, call (800) COAST-4U or visit www.coastforyou.org.

List of local participating schools:

Yokomi Elementary School

Holland Elementary School

Edison-Bethune Charter School

Vinland Elementary School