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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT: Jamie Ortiz 619-758-7743 x 101; 858-337-7466 (cell)

San Diego Coastkeeper, City of San Diego Launch Project SWELL in 1st Grade
Environmental science lessons teach students about water quality, pollution prevention

SAN DIEGO, CA –San Diego Coastkeeper and the City of San Diego launched the Project SWELL 1st grade curriculum in San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) this morning at Audubon K-8School. San Diego City Council President Tony Young, SDUSD Board of Education President Richard Barrera and San Diego Coastkeeper Interim Executive Director Gabe Solmer joined 1st grade teacher Jane Sanchez as she led students in a Project SWELL demonstration called “Habitat Match”, where students match wildlife to the appropriate local aquatic environment(s), including wetlands, kelp forest, and tide pools.

Project SWELL (Stewardship: Water Education for Lifelong Leadership) promotes awareness of clean water and pollution prevention and fosters a sense of environmental stewardship in children. The City of San Diego and San Diego Coastkeeper have united with SDUSD to enhance the existing science curriculum with hands-on science lessons to teach students about pollution prevention in their local environment. This unique education program aligns with the State Science Content Standards and is adapted to teach students about San Diego issues, engaging youth in improving the health of our local waterways.

“The environment and economy go hand in hand,” said San Diego City Council President Tony Young. “We need to invest in our future through education and expansion of the green job sector. Project SWELL is a great start in the education and training of the next generation of environmentally aware citizens and skilled green workers needed to achieve our city’s environmental and economic goals.”

This innovative approach to learning began with the inaugural rollout of the 5th grade lessons in 2004. Since then, project partners have developed and implemented lessons for Kindergarten, 2nd, 4th and 6th grades in SDUSD and 5th grade classrooms in Oceanside Unified School District. Since its inception, Project SWELL has reached 180,000 students. The lessons provide a tremendous benefit for a wide range of stakeholders throughout San Diego, including teachers and students, the City of San Diego and San Diego’s coastal environment.

With the development of the 1st grade lessons, Project SWELL will reach more than 60,000 children annually. Ultimately, project partners plan to develop Project SWELL in all K-12 classrooms in SDUSD and continue to expand the program into other school districts countywide. Coastkeeper also plans to expand teacher training and availability of lessons online for busy teachers in SDUSD.

Project SWELL is made possible thanks to generous support from Coastkeeper’s partners and sponsors: City of San Diego Stormwater Department - Think Blue, San Diego Unified School District, Sempra Energy Foundation, Qualcomm Incorporated, Hunter Industries, Catherine Steifel and John K Behner, PIMCO Foundation, McCarthy Family Foundation, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, Hervey Family Non-endowment Fund at the San Diego Foundation, Price Charities, The Hattie Ettinger Conservation Fund at The San Diego Foundation, The Heller Foundation of San Diego, Wells Fargo Foundation and The San Diego Foundation’s Anonymous Fund.

For more information on Project SWELL and its partners, visit its newly launched website at www.ProjectSWELL.org.

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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.