



## **Earth Weekend Celebration at Santa Monica Pier Aquarium**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Santa Monica, CA (March 26, 2010) – Heal the Bay’s Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is celebrating Earth Day the weekend of April 17 and 18th, with presentations and activities for all ages, and an offer of free admission to everyone who first cleans the beach.

The marine education center at 1600 Ocean Front Walk, beach level at the Santa Monica Pier, will be open from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. both days for its Earth Weekend festivities. Beach cleanups will be ongoing throughout the weekend. Heal the Bay’s monthly “Nothin’ But Sand” cleanup runs from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. north of the Pier on April 17; for the remainder of the weekend, meet in front of the Aquarium to participate in a cleanup. Anyone who cleans the beach is rewarded with free admission on April 17th or 18th.

Face painting, story times, scavenger hunts and crafts projects for children as well as displays, presentations and activities focusing on environmental hot topics issues give all visitors opportunities for further education and involvement.

Special exhibits on display in the Aquarium will highlight the environmental problems of marine debris, including the work of artists “Deb Ris,” who uses trash found in the marine environment to educate about ocean pollution, and as her artistic medium.

Visitors can check out marine life off the west end of the Pier at the wildlife observation station, equipped with binoculars and field guides, and Aquarium naturalists will be available to answer questions.

Visit <http://www.healthebay.org/smpa> or call 310-393-6149 for more information. Admission is free for children under 13 when accompanied by an adult; for all others admission is \$2, with a suggested \$5 donation. Groups of 10 or more are \$2 per person. But remember, all who clean the beach come in for free to celebrate Earth Weekend.

#### About the SMPA

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is Heal the Bay's marine education facility located beach-level, just below the Carousel, at the Santa Monica Pier. The Aquarium is open to the general public <<http://www.healthebay.org/smpa/visitor/hoursfees.asp>> and attracts more than 85,000 visitors per year. Since Heal the Bay acquired the Aquarium in 2003 from UCLA, more than 300,000 visitors have been welcomed during public hours and approximately 80,000 students have been educated during in-house education programs <<http://www.healthebay.org/smpa/edupgms/default.asp>> .

#### About Heal the Bay

Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use research, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our mission.