



WINTER 2004

## We Won!

### State Board denies Goleta Sanitary District Appeal

On January 22, 2004, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) passed a ruling (3-2) that paves the way toward the Goleta Sanitary District (GSD) upgrading treatment levels of the sewage effluent it puts into the ocean.

This is an enormous victory for Heal the Ocean – for all of us!

It was a surprise victory, because even though HTO had successfully argued in two hearings before the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) last year that GSD not be allowed another extension of its 301(h) waiver permit, the state agency was leaning heavily toward overturning this ruling.

It looked glum for us, because in SWRCB workshop meetings last fall, attended by HTO attorney Vicki Clark, the state agency had drafted an order remanding the case back to the Regional Board, requiring that more documentation be added to Goleta's 301(h) waiver permit.

Even though sewage treatment plants have been required by law to give their effluent full secondary treatment, some sanitary districts have been operating under an waiver program that allows ocean dumping of sewage that does not receive full secondary treatment.

The difference in treatment levels affects the amount of solids in the sewage effluent. Under the waiver permit, Goleta planned to put into the ocean, by the end of the permit period, *a ton and a half* of solids per day – one mile off Goleta Beach, in a sewage plume that sometimes reaches the beach, as well as the popular surfing spot at Campus Point.

As in past, GSD appealed to the state board to overturn the RWQCB's ruling. As in past, the state board appeared to be agreeing with the overturn.

On January 22, HTO executive director Hillary Hauser and attorney Vicki Clark were in Sacramento to argue to the state board that it uphold the RWQCB ruling, not overturn it! And the picture

looked bleak for us.

However, in the weeks before the January hearing, we activated HTO's "Action Alert" network, an e-mail lobbying system run by advisory board member Ruston Slager that makes it easy for our members to get letters and e-mails to the governing agencies making decisions.

In this way, a flood of communication went out to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's newly appointed Secretary of Environment, Terry Tamminen, and also to the chairman of the SWRCB. In addition, Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson helped us by doing some serious lobbying in Sacramento on our behalf.

As a result of all this lobbying, HTO came home with a huge victory. In early March, 2004, GSD must file a new NPDES permit with the Regional Board, an action that paves the way for a sewage upgrade. HTO and the public, working together, will achieve more such victories for a clean ocean! ☀

## Rincon vote nears...

The long-awaited draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the South Coast Beach Communities Septic-to-Sewer Project (Rincon, Sandyland, Sand Point, Padaro Lane/Beach Club Road) is finished! A public meeting to provide comment by interested parties will be held by the Carpinteria Sanitary District (CSD) on Tuesday, February 17, 2004.

Interested parties may also provide written comments to the CSD until the February 18, 2004 deadline. If you attend and speak at the meeting, we encourage you also to submit a written comment for the record.

Now is the time to support this project, which will remove septic systems and their leachfields from seven miles of coastline!

This EIR, a \$425,000 study funded by a Proposi-

tion 13 grant obtained by the late Carpinteria Sanitary District manager John Miko, Jr., is a long awaited important step for homeowners to vote on bringing public sewer service to their homes.

**ACTION ALERT!**  
Hearing on the draft EIR  
for Rincon septic-to-sewer project  
When: 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 17, 2004  
Where: Carpinteria Sanitary District  
5300 Sixth St., Carpinteria  
Please appear to speak in favor  
of this project moving forward!  
Send written comments by 2/18/04 to Carpinteria Sanitary District  
5300 Sixth St., Carpinteria, CA 93013, attn: Kellie Burrey

The Rincon project, implemented by Heal the Ocean over five years ago, has significantly changed water quality policy in the state of California. Septic

systems are now being scrutinized everywhere for their impact on creeks, rivers and the ocean. Santa Barbara County itself is now launching a countywide septic-to-sewer program, made possible by \$2 million in state funds brought to us by Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson.

Heal the Ocean has been working toward the February 17 hearing day in Carpinteria for nearly five years. Please come and support this important moment by showing up and speaking in favor of the project moving forward!

After the final report is issued and certified, assessment engineering reports will be performed, and formal balloting by the individual beachfront homeowners to approve sewer service to their communities can occur as soon as mid-2004! ☀

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Hillary Hauser  
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NEWSLETTER DESIGN  
Daniel Escobar

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Heal the Ocean  
1129 State Street #26  
Santa Barbara, Calif. 93101

Mail: P.O. Box 90106  
Santa Barbara, Calif. 93190  
Phone 805/965-7570  
Fax 805/962-0651  
E-Mail: [info@HealTheOcean.org](mailto:info@HealTheOcean.org)  
Website: [HealTheOcean.org](http://HealTheOcean.org)



## Hi From Hillary

At Heal the Ocean it becomes more apparent each day that working for the ocean is not an idealistic foray into the world of mermaids and gorgonian corals. It's down-and-dirty

dealing with human sewage and waste.

These pollutants are delivered indirectly to the ocean through creeks, rivers and groundwater that have been in contact with septic leachfields or sewer laterals that have dissolved, or from sewer pipes that need repair. Pollutants are also delivered directly to the ocean, in the form of sewage effluent pouring from the end of outfalls at the rate of 16 million gallons a day.

Let's face it, when it comes to handling our sewage and garbage, society still uses Neanderthal means. We use water to carry away our junk, or bury in the ground whatever the water won't take away. This is case whether we're talking about septic systems, sewer outfalls or the trash at Tajiguas. We believe this primitive practice is directly responsible for putting our water systems on overload, and that we are fouling – have already fouled – our own nest.

When HTO first started, officials said, "There's nothing wrong with septic systems," a statement we just could not accept. Fortunately we have serious support from generous donors, which has enabled us to lobby, hire experts, consultants and lawyers, and we've been able to scream and yell. Now, five years later, the County is launching a \$2 million septic cleanup program with state money brought into Santa Barbara by Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson.

Two years ago, no one thought about shallow groundwater providing underground transport of pollution and waste to the ocean. Joining with Channelkeeper, we insisted that

the City of Santa Barbara consider this phenomenon as how the city's sewer system might be contributing to Santa Barbara's ocean pollution problem. Today we are awaiting a bid from the U.S. Geological Survey for a mapping of the groundwater beneath the city.

We have been able to convince a state agency that the groundwater at the Tajiguas Landfill has to be monitored, and as this newsletter goes to press, wells are being sunk at the landfill to track and report what occurs there. Overall, we believe that waste disposal is a greatly undervalued utility that needs to be brought up to speed.

Yes, bringing disposal methods and infrastructure to a higher standard will cost money, and understandably people don't want to spend more. Putting it in perspective could be difficult, but look at your other utility bills and the situation becomes clear. Notice how much higher your bills are for electricity and gas, as compared to your fees for sewage disposal and trash. Are they double, triple, even four times more? What does cable television service cost each month? The reality of these comparisons, combined with awareness of our outdated sewage disposal methods, has to result in an ability to establish new priorities.

At the end of 2003, a whopping 88 percent of state citizens said in an opinion poll conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California that the ocean "was personally important" to them, and that they would pay higher prices in favor of giving the ocean a break. At Heal the Ocean, we agree it is time to pay. Nothing should be put into the ocean but respect.

Thanks for helping.

Executive Director, Heal the Ocean



## Join our army!

Heal the Ocean bumper stickers are cool!  
They're probably the most "seen" bumper stickers in Santa Barbara!

They are a command: You want the ocean healed!  
Please call the office (965-7570) or e-mail us at [info@healtheocean.org](mailto:info@healtheocean.org) –and we will send you a bumper sticker for free! Display it! Join our army!

## Trash the "Public Process"

Heal the Ocean formed out of a public protest over beaches being closed because of pollution. Bureaucratic agencies formed and government projects got started, leading the protestors to believe something was going to happen.

The public was invited to attend meetings and hearings. Hearings are particularly important because governmental agencies are required by law to include public comment in their decision-making process.

Heal the Ocean has been able to enter this political arena in a unique way because of the financial generosity of a concerned public. We have been able to pay for experts and consultants. Our aim has been to enter the process with meaningful information.

HTO has found the "public process" (in the case of Tajiguas) to be nothing short of shocking.

Specifically, when one of our hired consultants prepared a report that exposed the fact that trash is in contact with groundwater at the Tajiguas Landfill, not only did county Public Works officials deny it, they turned in our consultant to the state Geology Board. They said he had produced a flawed report. The state Geology Board scrutinized the report, fined our consultant, and thus the consultant was scared off the case.

His transgression? The report was "too general." Nevertheless, the report highlighted for the first time the fact that as much as 100 feet of groundwater is in contact with the trash at Tajiguas, which the consultant gleaned from the County's own documents.

Even though the groundwater connection with trash at Tajiguas has since been admitted as truth by not only the Regional Water Quality Control Board but also the County itself, this consultant has been besmirched.

Not only does it discourage consultants from helping small environmental groups like ours, it makes the "public process" a very uneven playing field. The executive officer of the state Geology Board told Heal the Ocean that what we really needed to do was "hire a competent firm," and admitted this would be very costly.

In our search for expert help we found most firms will not give pro bono rates and will often not even take a job for a non-profit for fear of losing more lucrative contracts from counties and municipalities.

Does this mean that the outcome of a "public process" depends on who has the most money?

Does the "public process" mean you get to attend a hearing, and if you bring in a consultant who disagrees, they answer not by addressing the issue, but by turning him or her in?

Heal the Ocean remains committed to blasting through this kind of stonewalling. We will also continue to hammer away on any political will that resists the wishes of the people who want to see something really done about ocean pollution in Santa Barbara. ☀

## WATCHING TAJIGUAS

Heal the Ocean, together with the Gaviota Coast Conservancy, has been successful in getting state water quality officials to order Santa Barbara county to begin testing for underground water seepage and contamination at six new locations in and around the Tajiguas Landfill.

This order, which came from the Regional Water Quality Control Board on December 23, 2003, requires the county to install six new monitoring wells by May, 2004, and the wells must be tested every three months. If pollution is detected in the wells, the Regional Board will expand its investigation of the problem.

Heal the Ocean finds the Regional Board order significant, because there has been a perception that once the county got its permits to expand Tajiguas, operations at the landfill would proceed without limitation.

The opposite is true. Heal the Ocean and Gaviota Coast Conservancy continue to watch the pollution statistics that comes out of the landfill – both in groundwater monitoring wells and Pila Creek.

During its December 23 meeting, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) paid particular attention to the high bacteria numbers still emerging out of Pila Creek, which is diverted through and around the landfill. The county has maintained that high bacteria counts at Tajiguas (and nearby Arroyo Quemada beach) had come from the seagulls that are attracted to the landfill, but that its falcon program is scaring away the seagulls to good effect on the bacteria.

During the expansion permitting process, Surfrider and the Environmental Defense Center were able to gain an agreement from the county Board of Supervisors for monthly monitoring of Pila Creek. Despite falcons patrolling the landfill, the bacteria readings for Pila Creek are still very high – and these high numbers were of particular interest to the RWQCB during its December 23 meeting. Heal the Ocean and Gaviota Coast are in the process of getting updated bacteria sampling results, to report to the Regional Board.

The following chart shows the results of Pila Creek sampling. (Note: SW-4 and SW-1 stand for "Surface Well" 1 (at the top of the landfill) and "Surface Well 4" (at the bottom) – which gives an indication of how Pila Creek is affected by flowing through the landfill before going out to sea. ☀

**BACTERIA CHART – PILA CREEK TESTING**  
(Performed by Santa Barbara County)

	E. coli	Enterococcus	Total Coliform	Fecal Coliform
<b>February 13, 2003</b>				
SW-1	3,840	36,540	35,000	13,000
SW-4	48,840	241,920	160,000	160,000
<b>March 2, 2003</b>				
SW-4	1,414	579		
<b>April 2, 2003</b>				
SW-4	74	482	160,000	300
<b>May 3, 2003</b>				
SW-1	214,300	41,600	500,000	210,000
SW-4	241,900	50,000	900,000	240,000

### Heal the Ocean platform

Heal the Ocean is a non-profit citizen's action group with a simple philosophy: the ocean can no longer be used as a dump. Our focus is on the following:

- Zero pathogens in sewage discharges to the ocean
- Septic systems
- Groundwater pollution
- Non-point source pollution
- Ocean dumping
- Tajiguas Landfill

# With Deep Appreciation

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in honor of Ellen Fox  
Ronald J. & Carol A. Fox  
Evelyn Freed  
Jennifer Freed  
Bernard & Joan Fried  
Georgia Funsten  
Konnice & Andrew Gault, Jr.  
in memory of Jacques Cousteau  
John & Elizabeth Gerig  
Cliff & Nicola Ghersen  
Laurie & George Glerum  
Richard & Mimi Gunner  
Richard & Lois Gunther  
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Joan Hardie  
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in memory of Don Harmer  
Julie Harris & Russell Ghitteman  
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Georgia Kux  
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 Robert & Durga Andre  
 Chandler & Sandy Armstrong  
 Jens Zerbe Arnette  
 Sally Jo Arteseros  
 Dennis Axelrod  
 in memory of Joni Axelrod  
 Randall & Shelley Badat  
 Simi & Andy Barrad  
 Marvin A. Bauer  
 R.F. & Jan Baxter  
 Catherine Belkonen  
 Gloria & Donald Bell  
 Lila Berris  
 Norrine Besser  
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 Jude Bijou  
 Von Biskupsky  
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 Robert Bondurant  
 Annabelle Bosset  
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 Travis Bower  
 Dora B. Bradley  
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 Sally Bromfield  
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 Laura Malakoff  
 Shannon Brown  
 Wesley & Kathiann Brown  
 Sharon Brownnett  
 Nancy Broyles  
 Wendel Bruss  
 Robert Bryant  
 David & Jane Buchanan  
 Susan & Brett Caine  
 Matthew C. Campbell  
 Joanna Candler  
 in memory of Henry Heinz  
 Congresswoman Lois G. Capps  
 Richard Carson  
 Ani J. Casillas  
 in memory of Maja Casillas  
 George & Jill Cassill  
 Barbara Chaney  
 Jacques & Denyse Charest

Janice & Roland Chase  
 Caldecot Chubb  
 Robert Cibull  
 Maxine & Steven Clark  
 Carnzu A. Clark  
 Dr. John & Joy Clark  
 Lorene Cleary  
 Rebecca Cleary-Shaw  
 Michael & Linda Coady  
 Alex & Anne Cole  
 Steve & Melissa Cook  
 in honor of Steve Cook  
 Angus Cooke  
 Kathy & Bill Crevier  
 J. Hewes & Marjorie Crispin  
 Christine Culver  
 Christmas gift for John Coons  
 Robert Cummings  
 Anne Dahlgren  
 Lloyd Dallett  
 Dr. Richard & Randi Danson  
 Kimi Davies  
 Loretta DeRocher  
 Marjorie Carlson Detch  
 Rick Dison  
 Nan Djordjevic  
 David & Theresa Dolotta  
 Ann Dusenberry  
 Chuck Ebner  
 Iana Eden  
 Sylvelin Edgerton  
 Alice Edwards  
 Jettie Edwards  
 Peter & Shirley Edwards  
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 Neil & Barbara Elliott  
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 Margaret & Warren Evans, Jr.  
 Tom Farr  
 Rosemary Fatano  
 Hyla Fetler  
 David & Zelda Fields  
 Courtney Fischer  
 Douglas Fischer  
 Dr. Michael & Leslie Fisher  
 in memory of Edward  
 & Roselle Schiller  
 Kevin & Shelley Fitzpatrick  
 in memory of the Ocean  
 Charles & Bob Foss  
 in memory of Gates Foss  
 John Fox  
 Peter & Shelia Frick  
 J.E. Friedrichsen  
 William Truax Frost  
 Michelle Fulton  
 in memory of Danny Moyer  
 Chris & Diane Gabriel  
 Victor Gallegos  
 Inge Gatz  
 Samara Gill  
 Helen Gill  
 Steven Glikbarg  
 Alan Godley  
 Mark Golden  
 Marilyn Goldman  
 Simon Goode  
 Scott Goodrich  
 Lisa & Jeffrey Gorrell  
 Elizabeth Graham  
 Jinx Grant  
 Mrs. Richard A. Grant  
 Margo Hall  
 Ted & Frances Halpern  
 Lois Hamilton  
 Veronica Hanlon  
 in memory of Robert Hanlon  
 Andree Harmer  
 in memory of Don Harmer,  
 husband, father, beach lover  
 Roy & Barbara Harthorn  
 Robert Hay  
 Jeffrey Hayden & Eva-  
 Marie Saint

Sonia Hayward  
 Sarah Hearon  
 Mary Heebner  
 Lee Heller  
 Heather Herbst  
 Philip & Emilie Hight  
 David & Nancy Hill  
 Michael Hill  
 Frank Lee Hood  
 Billy Hooten  
 Millicent Horton  
 in memory of Gay Parker  
 Susan Hopmans  
 Walter Iberti  
 David & Cindy Iroff  
 John & Dorothy Ise  
 Roberta Issaris  
 in memory of Steve Issaris  
 Mojave & Philip Jackson  
 Fran Jacobson  
 Ken & Stephanie Jamgochian  
 Chris & Cecilia Jensen  
 Anthony Jessen  
 Jayne Johann  
 Christina Johnson  
 Craig Johnson  
 Evan Barlow Jones  
 Donna Jordan  
 Glenn Jordan  
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 George Kaklamanos  
 Sue Lael Katnic  
 Tom Kearns  
 Raymond & Maile Kennedy  
 R.B. & Connie Kennelly  
 T.C. & M.M. Kenney  
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 Lindy Kern  
 Paul J. Kierpiec  
 Paul Kimmel  
 Vernon Kjonegaard &  
 Ines Talamantez  
 Robert Klein  
 Walter & Ingeborg Knapp  
 Gary & Mary Lou Kravetz  
 Roy Kuklinsky  
 Marc & Julie Kummel  
 Tom & Diana Lackner  
 Rob Lane  
 Katharine Larsen  
 Robert & Ellen Lawson  
 Wendy Lee  
 in memory of Lanny Wright  
 Lori M. Lenz  
 Glenn Leopold  
 Bunni Lesh  
 Heather Levlin  
 Joseph & Vivian Lindsten  
 Adam & Diane Lingle  
 Ann C. Little  
 Patricia Lobenberg  
 Jaya & Erin Lozano  
 Daphne Lubick  
 Steve & Sherry Lutz  
 Morgan & Rebecca Macdonald  
 Greg Mahaffey  
 Frank & Mary Ann Malinowski  
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 Ann Pennock Marshall  
 Bruce & Sheila Marshall  
 Michael & Nancy Martz  
 Jamie Mathews  
 in honor of Ali Bush  
 Conni Mattingly  
 Robert & Patricia Mayer  
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 Monika McCoy, DC  
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 Kathryn Mead  
 Art Melton  
 Wieke Meulenkamp  
 Dianne E. Miles  
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 Matt Moore/Rincon Design  
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 Rhonda Munson &  
 Harry Van Besoyen  
 Douglas & Gretchen Murray  
 Robert Nagy  
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 Ann Ostrowsky  
 Mary O'Toole  
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 William Paxson  
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 Janet Pedersen  
 in honor of Matt Reid  
 Marla Phillips  
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 in memory of Kilene  
 Celeste Poehler  
 Jan & Petronella Post  
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 Catherine Preston  
 Ruth Profant  
 in memory of Bob Profant  
 William Prothero, Jr.  
 Keith & Fran Puccinelli  
 Craig & Merrie Rice  
 Melissa Riparetti  
 Lois Robinson  
 Christopher Roderick  
 Steven P. Rogers  
 Joshua Rosenkrantz  
 in memory of Syd Rosenkrantz  
 Herbert & Rhoda Rosenthal  
 Scott Rowland  
 Arlene Russin  
 Christine & Jim Ryerson  
 in memory of Isabelle Gessford  
 Sanford & Phyllis Sacks  
 Sheldon & Alice Sanov  
 DeAnn Sarver  
 Bob Saunders, DVD  
 in memory of 'Busted' the cat  
 Christiane Schlumberger  
 David & Connie Schott  
 Arent H. & Jean K. Schuyler  
 Gordon & Karen Seabury  
 Jeff & Laura Seawards  
 Stephen Segal  
 Dorothy Perkins Sewell  
 in memory of Robin Schieueink  
 Robert & Susan Shand  
 Eldon Shiffman  
 Linette & Robert Silsbee  
 George & Joanne Singer  
 Julian Smariga  
 Carol Houck Smith  
 Bob & Tomi Sollen  
 Miles & Marsha Standish  
 Barbara & Carl Stanley  
 Mary Staton  
 Geoffrey Stearns  
 in memory of Charles Stearns  
 Michael & Patricia Stevens  
 Bret & Becky Griffith Stewart  
 Terri Stewart  
 Sally H. Stout  
 Darin & LaRea Sullivan  
 Bruce Sweet  
 Ted & Becky Swift  
 Ron Takeda  
 Robin & Stefani Taliaferro  
 Kirk & Marguerite Taylor  
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 Martina Victoria  
 in memory of Barbara  
 Heppler  
 Louis & Rochelle Villanueva  
 in memory of Erik  
 Villanueva  
 Nancy J. Vogel  
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 Anne Warburton  
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 Rubin & Irene Ynzunza  
 Donald & Caroline Young  
 Kevin Young  
 Stella Zadeh & David Gersh  
 Joyce Yarling  
 in memory of Andy 'Z'  
 in honor of the dolphins



# Heal the Ocean News

## Origins of Heal the Ocean

Heal the Ocean started in August 1998 following the publication of a Santa Barbara News-Press editorial by Hillary Hauser. Read this "Genesis" article on our website: [HealTheOcean.org](http://HealTheOcean.org)

## Surfers help again!

Thanks again to the surfers of the Rincon Cleanwater Classic, who are donating surf-team entry fees to Heal the Ocean's Rincon Fund this year! The exciting, fun event will be held February 28-29, 2004, at the Rincon (or on March 13-14, 2004 if the weather doesn't cooperate on the earlier dates).

The Cleanwater Classic guys are near and dear to our hearts! They rallied for HTO in the very early days of our organization, raising money to help fund the sewer engineering study for the Rincon and to pay for a lawyer to help us out during the Rincon homeowner lawsuit. In the very beginning they raised money to contribute to the big funds we needed for the DNA study of the Rincon lagoon, too.

Come on down to the Rincon, where HTO will have a table, and watch these guys surf. They are wonderful! ☀

## "Swimming in Sewage"

HTO was among seven invitees to make input to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) "Swimming in Sewage" report, which the powerful organization is using to lobby Congress with recommendations to tighten up U.S. wastewater problems. The Bush administration wants to shelve a proposed regulation that would keep raw sewage discharges out of America's streets and waterways..

HTO contributed its own commissioned report to the NRDC project, "Concerns and risk factors associated with discharges of secondary treated sewage into very shallow coastal waters," by Howard Kator, environmental microbiologist from Virginia (see "Kator Report" on HTO's website).

Reviewers of the NRDC report, along with HTO, are Joan B. Rose (Michigan State U.), Laurel O'Sullivan (Lake Michigan Federation), Charles P. Gerba (U. of Arizona), Sarah Meyland (Citizens Campaign for the Environment), David Senn (Harvard School of Public Health) and Stephen Weisberg (So. Calif. Coastal Water Research Project). ☀

## Thanks to our fundraisers!

HTO is blessed with talented supporters, who voluntarily think of great fund-raisers that are not only innovative and fun, but leaves us free to do the work we need to do!

Thanks to Jane Maassen and her great friends and artists, who staged an art-sale party at the beautiful home of Seal and Scott Graber, raising significant funds from the sale of paintings by Karen Bezuidenhout (featured artist in current January 2004 Sundance catalogue) and Ojai jewelry artist Jes MaHarry, who designed beautiful Heal the Ocean pendants and key chains for the occasion. Great catering came from Annette Irvine and Nicola Ghersen.

Thanks to Girl Scout Troop 110, who are sixth graders at Monte Vista School, and to their leaders Patty Six and Joyce Fernandez, for donating to HTO a portion of their earnings from cookie sales in June.

Thanks to Amanda and the great cast and crew of Anthropologie, which held a great pre-Christmas sale (November) at its wonderful State Street store, and gave us 15% of the proceeds.

Thanks to Santa Barbara Seals Surf School and founder J.P., for the surf event at Campus Point in December, wherein contestants rounded up sponsors who paid for each wave caught, all proceeds benefiting HTO.

Kisses again to Jack Johnson, who designed a tee-shirt for the Artist Network Program of RVCA ("roo-KAH), an action sports/contemporary clothing line in Orange County, with a percentage of sales proceeds to benefit us. For more information on how to order, please call HTO office.) ☀

## Our hero: John Miko, Jr.

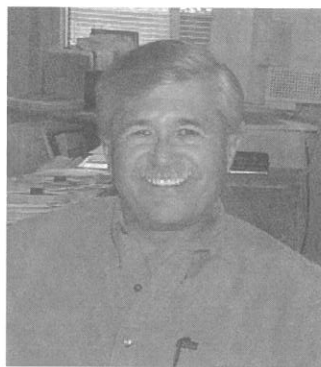
At Heal the Ocean we were devastated by the news in November 2003 of the untimely death of John Miko Jr., manager of the Carpinteria Sanitary District (CSD), who blazed the trail on the septic-to-sewer issue in Santa Barbara County.

HTO first approached Miko in 1998 for help in getting faulty septic systems off the beaches at the Rincon, and Miko readily took up the challenge.

After homeowners in the Rincon voted to move forward with sewerage the Rincon, five dissenting homeowners filed a lawsuit against CSD, charging that a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) needs to be done before a vote can be taken to form a sewer assessment district. Instead of giving in to what looked like an impossible situation, Miko began

searching for grant funds for the EIR.

He found the Costa-Machado Water Act of 2000, which earmarks millions of dollars of Prop 13 money to fund clean-water programs in the state, and he applied for \$425,000 to fund the "South Coast Beach Communities Septic-to-Sewer



John Miko, Jr.

Project" EIR. With HTO providing fierce lobbying to support the grant application, these funds were awarded.

The EIR, now being considered by the public and in a hearing by CSD on February 17, 2004, is entirely due to John Miko's effort. We don't know of another sanitary district manager who would go so far out of his way to get this grant or blaze this trail. We gave Miko a Heal the Ocean Hero's Award in 2001 for his work, and he is still our hero. ☀