



CI and Wishtoyo Foundation's Ventura Coastkeeper (VCK) Form Collaborative Partnership

Camarillo, CA. June 28, 2010 - A partnership to enhance student educational and professional opportunities, scientific research, and the ecological integrity and water quality of Ventura County's water bodies has been formed between the Environmental Science & Resource Management program at California State University Channel Islands (CI) and Wishtoyo Foundation's Ventura Coastkeeper (VCK).

Dr. Donald Rodriguez, Chair and Associate Professor of ESRM at CI, expressed that, "The relationship we are forging is good for students, good for CSU Channel Islands, Wishtoyo, the community, and our environment. I believe this will be a partnership for the 21st century and that it will set the bar for the next level of community involvement at CI. Sharing resources like this more than doubles the capacity of both our organizations' ability to serve Ventura County. This will serve to spawn unique opportunities for educational and monitoring funding, while increasing our respective networks exponentially."

The partnership will provide CI students with:

- * Enhanced Watershed Science, Management, and Policy Educational Opportunities
- * Transferable and Professional Environmental Skill Sets
- * Additional Water Quality Related Project and Research Opportunities
- * Laboratory and Field Experience
- * Watershed Monitoring, Community Mobilizing, and Advocacy Internship Positions

"Wishtoyo's VCK Program is thrilled to help provide CI's future graduates - our future leaders and community members - with enhanced educational experiences and professional skill sets, and an increased environmental and cultural awareness," says Mati Waiya, Executive Director of Wishtoyo's VCK Program and Chumash Ceremonial Elder.

"Not only are we ecstatic about the educational and professional opportunities that the partnership will provide for CI students, but the enhancement in VCK's efforts to monitor, protect, and restore the water quality and the ecological integrity of Ventura County's inland and coastal waterbodies will be tremendous. Our efforts will be furthered greatly from increased student involvement, greater access to the CI community for outreach and mobilization, better coordination with CI's researchers and scientists, and the housing of our Watershed Monitoring Program in CI's new first class ESRM laboratory." says Jason Weiner, VCK's Associate Director and Staff Attorney (M.E.M.). "The partnership is an enormous social and scientific asset to the Ventura County community."

CI's ESRM program has been investigating water quality issues in Ventura County for several years, but their limited capacity to date has kept these efforts moderate. With newly opened campus wet lab space and this partnership with VCK, the stage is set for a greatly expanded sentinel monitoring effort. "We have great collaborations with local and regional academic partners and laboratories," said Dr. Sean Anderson, Assistant Professor of ESRM at CI. "Recently we have been sending some of our students to colleagues' labs at other universities as we simply didn't have the in-house capacity to get their samples processed here at CI. Now we can send students to our collaborators when they have a need to learn a particular technique or piece of novel equipment and make the reciprocal offer to them."

To volunteer with Ventura Coastkeeper's Watershed Monitoring Program email: jweiner.venturacoastkeeper@wishtoyo.org and visit <http://www.wishtoyo.org/ventura-coastkeeper.html> for monthly monitoring opportunities.

For additional information about the partnership, contact Dr. Donald Rodriguez at CSU Channel Islands at 805-437-8494 or Jason Weiner at Wishtoyo's VCK at 805-823-3301.