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## **Sea Center Offers Free Admission for Underwater Parks Day Festival**

*As a gift to the community post-Thomas Fire and mudslides in Montecito*

**Santa Barbara, California (January 16, 2018)** — The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Sea Center located on Stearns Wharf is offering free admission to its Underwater Parks Day Festival this Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> as a gift to the community following the Thomas Fire and mudslides in Montecito.

In partnership with the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, the Underwater Parks Day Festival celebrates Marine Protected Areas, or “underwater parks,” that preserve the biodiversity and abundance of ocean life in our coastal waters.

From 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, the Sea Center will offer educational and interactive activities for all ages covering topics such as marine debris, marine animal entanglement, and conservation efforts in the Santa Barbara Channel and beyond. For kids, there will be ocean-themed crafts, an aquatic quest, and opportunities to solve riddles and win prizes.

Underwater Parks Day is celebrated in unison with many aquariums and science centers in Southern California including the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach and the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.

“Our community has experienced incredible hardship over the past six weeks,” said President & CEO, Luke J. Swetland. “We want to offer everyone a place to gather, take a break, and celebrate some of Santa Barbara’s most valuable treasures, our exceptional natural beauty and resources.”

The Sea Center is located at 211 Stearns Wharf and is open from 10:00 AM-5:00 PM seven days a week. For more information, visit [www.sbnature.org](http://www.sbnature.org) or call 805-962-2526.

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### **About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Sea Center**

The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Sea Center is located on Stearns Wharf and fulfills the mission of the Museum to inspire a passion for the natural world.

At the Sea Center visitors of all ages can enjoy interactive exhibits, opportunities to work like scientists, a theater showcasing the wonders of the Santa Barbara Channel, hands-on close encounters with sea creatures, and a live shark touch pool. Children can crawl through a 1,500-gallon tide pool tank to see ocean life from a different perspective. The Sea Center is an engaging, interactive marine education facility that allows visitors to discover the fun in science and the wonders of the natural world.