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North County's Invasive Plant Removal Project Honors Local Organizations and Citizens

Carlsbad, CA 7-11-06 The greatest threat to our lifestyle may be in your backyard. As part of the CA Weed Awareness Week, July 17 –23, 2006, the Carlsbad Watershed Network (CWN) Invasive Plant Removal Project is hosting Weed Warriors of the Carlsbad Watershed. Individuals, non-profits, business, local government agencies, and a water district (see attached list) are being recognized for their efforts in the eradication of invasive plants in the Carlsbad Watershed(CHU). The event is scheduled for July 21st at the LaCosta & I-5 Park and Ride from 10-11am.

So why should we care?

Invisible to most, much of our economy is dependent on water and soil. Invasive plant species threaten the productivity of our natural resources. Moreover they endanger the conservation gains of the past century and imperil the native species that have made our region unique. The devastation caused by non-native invasive plants and animals is one of the most serious and least recognized tragedies of our time.

San Diego County is very rich in biodiversity. In fact, San Diego has more biodiversity than any other county in North America and, along with the rest of California is among the top10 biodiversity regions on earth.

Join us, with Senator Bill Morrow (confirmed), Assembly Member Mark Wyland (TBC), Supervisor Bill Horn (TBC) in recognizing our Weed Warriors.

The honorees represent a wide range of participants from local resident, Tom Palenscar who eradicated a 3000 sq. foot area of arundo from his backyard to Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation who with Invitrogen, Four Season's Resort and Waste Management joined together in a "Weed Whacking" event involving 200 volunteers from Invitrogen.

Our awardees also include, City of Encinitas' Council Member Maggie Houlihan who promoted weed awareness by sponsoring the Exotic Invasive Plant Workshop and the City of Oceanside, Planning Department for instituting landscape approval policies that screens invasives in the plans. The Olivenhain Water District had invasives removed along the Escondido Creek and the Vista Conservancy for the clean up of the upper reach of the Buena Vista Creek.

In 2004, the CWN received \$3.9M of Prop.13 funds to eradicate invasive weeds that choke the local creeks of the Carlsbad Watershed, displace natural habitat, create massive accumulations of plant materials that can cause flooding and become a source of fuel for wild fires. More than 600 acres of these plants have been identified in our watershed.

Since Aug. 2004, the CWN project has accomplished the following:

- Treated and removed over 300 acres of invasive plants;
- Replanted more than 30K native plants in the treated areas;
- Restored 25 miles of the 140 miles of streams throughout the Carlsbad Watershed; and
- Launched Project NIIMBY (No Invasives In My Backyard)

While the project has removed over 300 acres of invasive plants, there is still more to do. Many of these species are dispersed by human activities, citizens can help prevent new weed infestations and combat those already in place by removing invasive plants in their back yards. Become a part of the citizen effort, participate in Project NIIMBY

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The Carlsbad Watershed Network is a coalition of non-profit groups, cities of the Carlsbad Watershed, government agencies, business and individuals dedicated to the conservation, protection and education about the natural resources in the region.

The Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit or Watershed (CHU) is a 210 mile area in Northern San Diego County that extends well beyond the boundaries of the City of Carlsbad. It covers substantial portions of the cities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, Escondido, Encinitas and Solana Beach in addition to significant unincorporated portions of the County of San Diego.

For more information:

Invasives Plant Control Project -

http://www.carlsbadwatershednetwork.org/invasives_project.php

Cal-IPC The Impact of Invasive Plants <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/definitions/impact.php>

San Diego's Biodiversity

http://interwork.sdsu.edu/fire/resources/overview_biodiversity.htm

California's Biodiversity

http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org/xp/Hotspots/california_floristic/