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Volunteers To Clean Beaches, Trail

by Tiye Baldwin - *Staff Writer*

Friday, September 19, 2003

Santa Barbara residents will have several opportunities to participate in a global effort to preserve and care for natural resources as the International Coastal Cleanup, California Coastal Cleanup Day and National Public Lands Day all take place this weekend.

The International Coastal Cleanup evolved from a grassroots effort in Texas to mobilize volunteers for local nature conservancy efforts. The event grew to include Canada, Mexico and Japan. It has now expanded to include participants in over 118 countries from Antigua to Vietnam.

The 19th annual California Coastal Cleanup Day is a statewide event coordinated by the California Coastal Commission's Adopt-A-Beach program, the Santa Barbara Public Works Dept., and other governmental agencies and local nonprofit organizations. The event is expected to bring thousands of volunteers to local beaches and over 1,800 miles of California coastline this weekend.

Last year over 45,000 participants collected 712,000 pounds of trash and 148,000 pounds of recycleables in three hours. The cleanup will be held Sept. 20 between 9 a.m. and noon at Goleta Beach and Campus Point near the UCSB Marine Biotechnology Lab. Guinness World Records recognized the event as "the greatest number of volunteers collecting litter in one location in a single day," as a result of the 50,405 volunteers who converged on the California coastline to participate in 1993.

The event coincides with National Public Lands Day, which began as a project of the Dept. of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management. Eighty thousand volunteers are expected to participate in the event this year.

In coordination with National Public Lands Day, the Santa Barbara Mountain Bike Trail Volunteers have organized the cleanup of Jesusita Trail. Volunteers are set to meet at the lower Jesusita Trail head near the William B. Cater Water Treatment Plant on San Roque Road at 8 a.m. on Sept. 20. A catered afterparty is planned for participants of the event. Participants are advised to bring water and wear sturdy shoes, gloves and a helmet.

"We will be brushing as much single track as we can - with enough volunteers the entire trail," Tosh Bulger of SBMTV said. "Rotating teams of 3-4 volunteers will be cutting brush, pulling [throwing brush off side of trail], and then lopping the spikes or punjis down."

SBMTV engages in various activities throughout the year to promote trail education and advocacy. The organization, which boasts UCSB alumni among its leadership, works with and receives training from the National Forest Agency to maintain local trails used by hikers and bikers.

According to Jonathan Maus, an SBMTV member and UCSB alumnus, the local trails require regular maintenance. Within three months of clearing brush, the 1.5 foot-wide Jesusita Trail is overgrown with brush, making it difficult for trail users to see turns.

