

# WILDCOAST

WILDCOAST NEWSLETTER VOL. 5 ISSUE 2

SPRING 2007

WILDCOAST  
COSTASALVAJE



## HIGHLIGHTS:

**MANA and WILDCOAST  
ROCK Southern California**

**Legendary Mexican  
Wrestler El Hijo Del Santo  
Teams up with  
WILDCOAST**

**First Ever Bi-National  
Telethon Raises Money to  
Protect Laguna San  
Ignacio**

**Jill and Steve Tyler:  
Encourage Others to Get  
Involved**

**Darrin and Paulina  
Polischuk: Donate their  
Time and Talent to Fight  
for Clean Water**

# Beach Cleanup Featured on National TV

Buster, an animated rabbit, comes to Imperial Beach, where the Latin rock group he travels with, Los Viajeros, is giving a benefit concert for WILDCOAST. There he meets new friends and helps them as they work with other local children to clean up the coastline near the San Diego-Tijuana border.

For those of you unfamiliar with *POSTCARDS FROM BUSTER*, this daily 30 minute national program is a spin-off of the popular children's series "Arthur." It combines animation and live action, where the main character is eight year-old Buster, and his dad, the pilot for the animated Latin rock group Los Viajeros. They travel from one locale to another, where Buster, armed with his video camera, meets actual, non-animated people, who introduce him to the local scene.

While Buster and friends pick up all kinds of trash from the sand, Buster asks, "how did litter get to the beach in the first place?"

Serge Dedina, WILDCOAST's executive director, explains that the Tijuana River brings it all down to the ocean and the surf throws some back onto the beach. Buster's friends further explain how the garbage affects marine life by getting caught around animal bodies or choking birds, fish and other marine animals when they swallow it thinking it is food.

Designed to delight and intrigue young audiences, *Postcards from Buster* is a great educational tool. Millions of children continue to view the



episode and are becoming aware of, and building respect for, the coastal environment.

The series, produced by WGBH, a Boston Public Television station, appeals to all children by providing them with content and characters with which they can identify. Diversity is incorporated into the fabric of the series to help children understand and respect differences. It teaches children how to live in a multicultural society. The series shows modern multi-ethnic/lingual/cultural families and children.

"Interactive and fun, WILDCOAST will use this episode to communicate our clean water message to elementary school children and offers them the chance to express themselves and participate in the adventures. We will show the video and encourage kids to write to the Buster blog and comment about ways to clean up the trash on our beaches and rivers" said Ben Mc Cue, Coastal Conservation Program Manager.



“... a team effort is needed to protect our coast and ocean ...”



## From the Executive Director

Los Laureles Canyon is located next to the Tijuana Estuary. Thousands of families live in this Tijuana *colonia* using old truck tires to shore up the shacks that line the hillsides of this narrow canyon. Children play in the raw sewage that flows out of the houses and across the border into the Tijuana Estuary and into the Pacific Ocean. Yet the scene is not as bleak as it may seem at first. There is change happening that WILD COAST is helping to take place there.

This past month, I was gratified to visit Los Laureles with El Hijo del Santo, the world's most popular *lucha libre* star, to meet the children and community members who are working to clean up the neighborhood and find a solution to the menace of the *aguas negras* (dirty water) that flow through it. El Santo was met with the enthusiastic cheers of residents, young and old, as he assured them that their conservation endeavors were worthwhile and that he, El Hijo de El Santo himself, is committed to combat “los enemigos del mar” (enemies of the sea).

The visit by El Santo capped an activity-filled winter that kept the WILD COAST team working full-speed to spread our message of coastal protection. On March 15th we helped organize the first-ever binational telethon, together with TV-Azteca, Azteca-America and our partners at Pronatura, NRDC and International Community Foundation, to raise over **\$350,000** to protect San Ignacio Lagoon. The telethon highlighted the fact that San Ignacio Lagoon is one of the world's most treasured wildlife habitats. Our gratitude goes out to Maná, the world's most popular Spanish language rock band, for participating in the telethon.

Highlighting the uniqueness of San Ignacio Lagoon is critical to keeping it wild. That is why I spent a week in the gray whale lagoons of Baja with Philippe Cousteau, the grandson of famed ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau, and the crew from Animal Planet. Like his grandfather, Philippe has dedicated his life to exploring and preserving the oceans. It was inspiring to see him meet Pachico Mayoral, who has spent most of his life helping protect the fragile environment of the lagoon and was the first person in the world to encounter a friendly whale.

All of these experiences brought me back to the important realization that a team effort is needed to protect our coast and ocean, whether it is working with El Hijo de El Santo and the children of the most impoverished communities of Tijuana, or helping Pachico preserve the last gray whale lagoon on earth.

Thanks to all of you, long time supporters and new members alike, for joining our team and committing your time, energy and funds to ensure that the world is a better place to live.

Serge Dedina, Ph.D.

## WILD COAST in the News

**“SAND FROM THE BORDER AREA LIKELY CONTAINS CONTAMINANTS** because it is between the mouth of the Tijuana River, where sewage-contaminated water routinely enters and pollutes the ocean, and a pipe that dumps partially treated sewage into the sea”, said Serge Dedina, executive director of WILD COAST.

— From “*Infusion of sand worries surfers. Some fear dredging will alter Tijuana Sloughs*”, *Union Tribune*, February 18, 2007

**BENJAMIN MCCUE, COASTAL CONSERVATION PROJECT MANAGER FOR WILD COAST**, surveyed the pollution in a canyon collection stream flowing into Imperial Beach from Mexico last month.

— From “*State Seeks Pollution Solution*”, *Associated Press*, February 26, 2007

**THE WRESTLER, SON OF MEXICO'S MOST FAMOUS FIGHTER, EL SANTO**, will aid the U.S.-based nongovernmental organization WILD COAST with its campaign to stop sea turtle consumption in Mexico, defend protected areas on California's coast and promote saving the gray whales in Baja California.

— From “*Mexican professional wrestler joins campaign to fight enemies of the sea*”, *The Associated Press*, Friday, March 9, 2007

**MEXICAN PROFESSIONAL WRESTLER EL HIJO DEL SANTO** is throwing the smackdown on enemies of sea turtles, gray whales and other ocean life; the 7-time WWA World Welterweight Champion has pledged to devote the majority of this year to raising awareness about how human actions are threatening the ocean, and everybody knows you don't mess with El Hijo.

— From “*Don't mess with El Hijo*”, [www.treehugger.com](http://www.treehugger.com), March, 2007

**“NOW I AM FIGHTING AGAINST SEWAGE AND OTHER ENEMIES OF THE OCEAN**, because I believe that it is important to save our natural resources. Today I am here in the colonia Los Laureles to unite with the people that live here and stop the pollution on the canyons,” said the wrestler.

— En “*Santo Vs. Contaminación*”, *Frontera*, 20 de marzo, 2007



# Campaign Launch with El Hijo Del Santo in the Heart of Mexico City

Charismatic, refined, iconic and extremely popular *El Hijo del Santo* (Son of "The Saint"), the legendary Mexican Wrestler, dazzled the media and all of us who attended WILDCOAST's campaign launch last March .

WILDCOAST organized a press conference and cocktail party to officially present a campaign featuring *El Hijo del Santo* at a famous restaurant by the Lake of Chapultepec, one of Mexico City's most beautiful and iconic settings.

One of Mexico's foremost poets and novelists, writer, diplomat and conservationist and a long time friend of WILDCOAST, Homero Aridjis brightened the evening with a wonderful speech.

In addition to performing acrobatic duels in the ring with opponents dressed as evil characters, the silver-masked "Hijo del Santo" pledged to devote the greater part of this year to raise consciousness about how human activities – over-fishing, pollution and coastal development – are threatening the ocean.

The wrestler, son of Mexico's most famous fighter, "El Santo," will aid WILDCOAST with its campaign to

stop sea turtle consumption in Mexico, help the *colonias* "clean" the Tijuana River and promote saving the gray whales in Baja California.

"I began to worry, and I was affected very much by the statistics on what is happening," El Hijo said during the conference that included the presentation of a mock movie trailer announcing "Santo Vs. the Enemies of the Sea."

To raise consciousness, El Hijo will visit various coastal communities in northern Mexico, where he will distribute educational comics and posters featuring his character confronting threats to the ocean.

He also will travel to California to promote marine protected areas among Latino communities and will head a petition drive in Mexico City demanding that lawmakers create more protected marine zones.

"I am prepared to go straight to Los Pinos and chat with President Felipe Calderon," El Hijo said, referring to the president's official residence.

We at WILDCOAST could not be more excited to have such a committed and charismatic spokesperson. We want to thank all our friends who have joined our campaign.



## Wall Street Journal Article Uncovers the Bajagua Scam

WILDCOAST has been saying it all along, but to little avail: "The Bajagua Project will do nothing to stop cross-border sewage from closing San Diego County beaches."

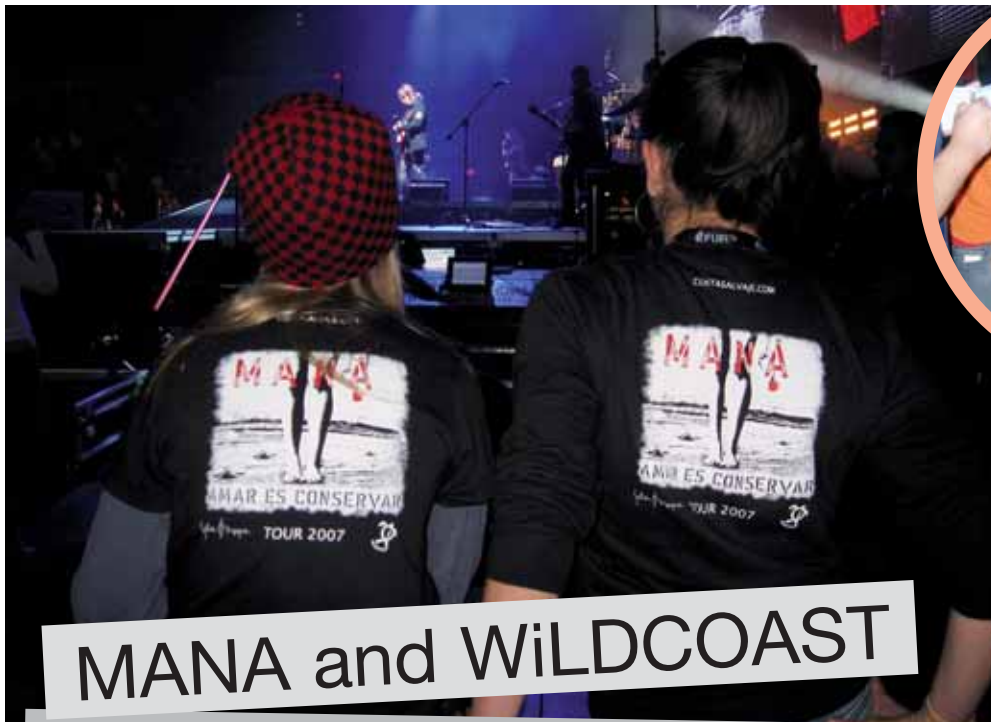
It took a reporter from across the country to "break" the story on the front page of The Wall Street Journal for anyone to pay attention. In *How Politics Influenced a Big Clean-Up Deal* (January 29, 2007),

Scott Paltrow, an investigative reporter, uncovered the sordid history of Bajagua Company LLC and its backroom dealings to receive a federal government contract to treat cross-border sewage.

Less than a week after the articles' publication, the White House reversed its prior decision to unconditionally support the project. After failing to meet a May 2 development deadline, the International

Boundary and Water Commission officially suspended all dealings with the Bajagua Project.

Now it is up to the federal government to implement a viable, efficient, and timely secondary treatment alternative as the first step to comprehensively address the environmental health threats of cross-border sewage.



# MANA and WILDCOAST ROCK SAN DIEGO AND L.A.

If Latin music rock lovers took a poll of their favorite 'rock en español' group, I'm betting the clear winner would be Mexico's MANÁ. After a four-year hiatus, they released their sixth album "Amar Es Combatir", which reached #4 on the Billboard Top 200, selling over 60,000 copies in the first week. The single "Labios Compartidos" is still reigning in the Latin music charts.

WILDCOAST is proud to have partnered with MANÁ since 2003 when we were invited to a sea turtle hatchling liberation and concert. In 2005 MANÁ received the "Hero of the Environment" award granted by the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

In February WILDCOAST had the opportunity not only to see this seminal Latin rock band live in San Diego, our own hometown, gather support from thousands of MANÁ fans for more marine protected areas in Southern California. WILDCOAST's campaign in partnership with MANÁ's Selva Negra, a foundation that supports environmental protection initiatives worldwide, adopted MANÁ's album name but added a little twist: "Amar es Conservar" "Love is Conservation" (although it makes more sense in Spanish). Fher, MANÁ's lead singer loved the slogan and the image printed on WILDCOAST t-shirts and posters.

WILDCOAST's enthusiastic crew also traveled to Los Angeles, where MANÁ

offered four more sold-out concerts. Hollywood celebrities and even Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa witnessed the impact that MANÁ has on millions of Latinos in the United States.

As far as our conservation objectives is concerned, we could not have asked for better partners and a more committed fan base. The more than eight hundred Mexican-American and Latin American fans that approached our booth were completely supportive and signed our petition to Governor Schwarzenegger for more marine protected areas and healthier oceans.

MANÁ which means "supernatural force" in Polynesia, honors its name with supernatural crowds that sing to every song during the duration of the show.

The four charismatic band members are only the tip of iceberg. Behind the scenes there is an amazing crew of managers, audio and video technicians, handy-men, P.R. specialists, family and friends who make the MANÁ phenomenon possible.

We want to thank MANÁ, the crew, and all

the fans that joined our plea for healthier oceans! With their support, the Fish & Game Commission approved on April 13 the creation of 29 new marine reserves off the Central Coast of California, an unprecedented decision for ocean conservation.

Special thanks to Fher, Sergio, Alex, Juan, Ulises, Jorge, Fernando, Arturo, Nanette, Augusto and the rest of the big MANÁ family for their support and hospitality. You inspire us to defend our oceans!

Watch our video at [www.wildcoast.net](http://www.wildcoast.net)

## Write a Letter to your Rep!

It's not too late to join the movement to create MPAs!

Write your own personal letter to Governor Schwarzenegger or use our pre-written template. Tell him why you enjoy the ocean and why it is important that he promotes the creation of an efficient network of MPAs. You can send it directly to the Governor, or send it to us and we will make sure he gets it. Our marine life and ocean will thank you!

WILDCOAST  
925 Seacoast Drive  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932  
[info@wildcoast.net](mailto:info@wildcoast.net)

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[http:// www.govmail.ca.gov](http://www.govmail.ca.gov)

# Movimiento Azteca's First Bi-national Telethon a Great Success

On March 15, WiLDCOAST, members of the Laguna San Ignacio Conservation Alliance, *Fundación Azteca*, and Azteca America, organized the *Movimiento Azteca*, the first binational telethon for conservation. The public responded enthusiastically and in just one day, people on both sides of the border donated \$350,000 to protect Laguna San Ignacio, the last undeveloped gray whale birthing and nursing ground. The same day, Ernesto Enkerlin, the National Park Service Director, announced that President Calderon will protect 110,000-acres of Laguna San Ignacio that had once been under concession to the Mexican Salt Exporting Company that is 49 percent owned by the Mitsubishi Corporation.

The response of the public is a clear indication that people are willing to step in and support conservation. The decision of President Calderon to protect coastal ecosystems surrounding Laguna San Ignacio is a positive sign that this new administration will be more proactive about conservation than former president Vicente Fox, who left a pro-development and environmental destruction ignominious legacy.

The 110,000 acres in the western shoreline protected by the Mexican government will be added to the 140,000 acres of conservation easements in the eastern shoreline protected by WiLDCOAST and the Alliance. The Alliance will be using the money raised during the telethon to protect an additional 35,000 acres in the northern shoreline of the lagoon.



## SAVE THE GRAY WHALES

In 2007, WiLDCOAST and the Alliance plan to protect more than 170,000 acres in the north shoreline of the lagoon. Securing a stretch of coastline this big could easily cost tens of billions of dollars in the United States. But we estimate the total cost of protecting the north shoreline of Laguna San Ignacio to be about \$1.7 million. That's an average cost of only \$10 per acre!

Help WiLDCOAST buy the development rights around the gray whale's last untouched nursery and keep it wild and free forever!

Your donation of:

- \$20 protects 2 acres
- \$30 protects 3 acres
- \$50 protects 5 acres
- \$70 protects 7 acres
- \$100 protects 10 acres

Make a tax-deductible contribution at [www.savethegraywhale.com](http://www.savethegraywhale.com) or send a check to:

Save the Gray Whale Fund  
925 Seacoast Drive  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932



# Estamos Contigo Santo!

## El Hijo del Santo Joins the Fight for Clean Water

**Last year, Hollywood's *Nacho Libre* brought Mexican wrestling with its tights, masks and *machismo* to movie theatres across the U.S. Today, Mexico's most popular *lucha* star, El Hijo del Santo, will help WILDcoast tackle South San Diego County ocean users' greatest health threat: The cross-border sewage flows that were the cause of 80% of the County's beach closures in 2006. The "Silver-Masked Man," as he is known in Mexico, will serve as The Clean Water Campaign's 2007 ambassador.**

The tag team of El Santo and WILDcoast face a formidable enemy. It is estimated that only 50% of Tijuana's 2 million residents have plumbing. This creates a tremendous environmental health problem on both sides of the border as raw sewage runs through Mexico's poorest neighborhoods on its way downstream to South San Diego County beaches. In a 2006 survey of regular ocean users in Imperial Beach and Coronado, WILDcoast found that over two-thirds had gotten sick from direct ocean contact. Sewage-contaminated water has been shown to cause sicknesses ranging from bacterial infections to hepatitis.

The charismatic Santo will help WILDcoast bring attention to a binational

problem largely ignored by elected officials on both sides of the border: Tijuana's critical lack of sewage infrastructure, the environmental health threat this poses to border area residents, and the need for decision-makers to step into the ring to support a comprehensive clean water action plan. Santo has selflessly committed his celebrity status to the Clean Water Campaign, attending press conferences in Mexico City and Tijuana and filming promotional videos and public service announcements.

Unlike the protagonist in *Nacho Libre*, El Hijo del Santo is not alone. In late March, the wrestler accompanied WILDcoast to Colonia San Bernardo, a suburb of Tijuana, to thank residents for their dedication to clean water. With binational support, these residents have been working hard to address the lack of infrastructure in their colonia. They have been applying innovative solutions to pave their roads to slow erosion, reuse wastewater for plant irrigation, and organize their neighbors to install a low-tech sewage treatment system. The residents of San Bernardo are helping to create a model to be applied throughout Tijuana's poorer developments. Throughout the San Diego/Tijuana area, the shouts of support for clean water solutions are loud and clear:

"We got your back, Santo!" "Cuenta con nosotros, Santo!"



"Chancho. When you are a man, sometimes you wear stretchy pants ..."

— Nacho Libre, 2006

# Member Profile

## A Message From Our Donors – Jill and Steve Tyler

I have deeply felt concerns for the welfare of wildlife, the environment and indigenous people. As WILDCOAST works with these issues, primarily in Baja, Mexico, I feel a close bond that was further enhanced last March when my wife Jill and I visited San Ignacio Lagoon, the breeding grounds of the California gray whale. Having recently been to Rwanda to see the mountain gorillas and Borneo, orangutans, I didn't anticipate what turned out to be a thrilling experience, being so close to these magnificent marine mammals. In fact, so impressed with your excellent program, we have purchased land surrounding the lagoon that will be preserved in eternity. As well, not only will we continue with our yearly donations, we have since revised our living trust to include WILDCOAST.

One of our most important considerations before deciding to make financial contributions to an organization, is how much will be used toward direct services. WILDCOAST, with support from so many wonderful volunteers, assisting one of my all time heroes, Executive Director Serge Dedina, is exemplary. Jill and I are honored to support WILDCOAST and we wish to thank everyone contributing his or her effort.

We would like to encourage others to become actively involved, whether writing to key persons involved in land and wildlife management issues (letters have tremendous impact), volunteering or with greatly appreciated and well deserved financial support.



# Volunteer Profile

## Darrin and Paulina Polischuk

Directly in front of his house, six miles south of the US Mexican border, the waves were perfect; and yet, Darrin Polischuk was disgusted. The water smelled so bad he felt compelled to take action. His wife, Paulina, was six-months pregnant and the thought of his son growing up surfing in sewage-contaminated water was too much. Darrin spent the rest of the day on the Internet researching ways to fight the pollution threatening his family, and that's when he found WILDCOAST. Since hooking up with WILDCOAST, Darrin and Paulina have been two of our most dedicated volunteers.

Darrin, a native of the west coast of Canada, was driven to activism out of a need to protect his family. In 2004, Darrin met Paulina, a native of Playas de Tijuana in San Diego. They were married and settled on the beach in San Antonio del Mar, just north of Baja Malibu. Little did the young couple know that their beach was the daily recipient of 30 million gallons of partially treated sewage from Tijuana's treatment plant.

With over ten years of professional experience as a free-lance television and film director producing art and action sports shows, Darrin had a whole bag full of skills to offer WILDCOAST's Clean Water Campaign. Paulina, a lifelong native of Tijuana, had the local knowledge and connections to navigate the city. Darrin and Paulina have combined their strengths in volunteering their time, skills, and professional equipment to document pollution sources on both sides of the border. The couple's volunteer efforts have helped WILDCOAST educate thousands of ocean users, policy-makers and elected officials on the environmental threat of untreated sewage along border beaches. Their videos have highlighted the importance of gaining a bi-national constituency of clean water advocates. When their efforts pan out, their eight-month old son Nico will know what its like to surf in a healthy ocean.



## What Volunteers are Saying about WILDCOAST ...

"I'm a volunteer here at WILDCOAST and have earned a lot of community service hours. Working with WILDCOAST is a lot of fun. The staff is real cool, and friendly ... they make you feel comfortable. We work right by the beach, which is one of my favorite things about volunteering here. WILDCOAST is a great program and they let us do a lot of cool activities. I enjoy doing volunteer work here because I get to help out, earn community service hours, and have fun all at the same time." *Richie - East Lake High School*

"I have really enjoyed working here at WILDCOAST. I learned a lot about what it takes to accomplish things and the amount of work it takes to successfully run a non-profit organization. I was given the opportunity to work directly with other professionals within the various fields. I also appreciated the openness of the position and that opinions I developed were considered. I have learned so much and thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the WILDCOAST team." *Julie - University of San Diego*

## Special Recognition

WILDCOAST appreciates the support of the following donors who made contributions this quarter. On behalf of the wild coasts of the Californias and Latin America, thank you!

### **\$10 and Over**

Greenberg, Martin  
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San Clemente  
Sportfishing Inc

### **\$40,000 and Over**

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Jorge Tapias – Google  
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### **The WILDCOAST Team**

Serge Dedina, Ph.D. – Executive Director  
Saul Alarcon Farfan – Wildlands  
Conservation Program Manager  
Fay Crevoshay – Communications Director  
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or [celia@wildcoast.net](mailto:celia@wildcoast.net).

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### **WILDCOAST**

925 Seacoast Drive  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932 USA  
Telephone 619.423.8665  
Fax 619.423.8488  
Email [info@wildcoast.net](mailto:info@wildcoast.net)  
[www.wildcoast.net](http://www.wildcoast.net)

### **COSTASALVAJE**

Avenida Television 911  
Col. Juarez 22040  
Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico  
Telephone Tijuana 664-231-3001  
Telephone Mexico City 555-350-1886  
Email [info@costasalvaje.com](mailto:info@costasalvaje.com)  
[www.costasalvaje.com](http://www.costasalvaje.com)

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