



Santa Barbara
Museum of Natural History

Inspiring a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world since 1916

February 18, 2014

Dear Honorable Members of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, I am submitting this letter in strong support of our proposal to the Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund (CREF) requesting funding to help us construct a solutions-based "California Coastal Immersion Zone" (CCIZ) interactive exhibit designed to excite and educate visitors on the marine life of the Santa Barbara Channel and convey important marine conservation messages.

Each year, the Museum's Sea Center connects 90,000 visitors from Santa Barbara and across the state with the ocean and the diversity of sea life in the Santa Barbara Channel. We are often referred to as the window to the Santa Barbara Channel, and for many of our visitors, tourists and locals alike, it is the only resource for learning about the marine life found right here on our coast.

The California Coastal Immersion Zone, or CCIZ exhibit, will provide new experiences for children, families and visiting school groups throughout the first floor of our Center. The new CCIZ exhibit will educate our visitors about the richness and diversity of local marine species and their habitats, and will highlight the connections between humans and the ocean. Throughout the exhibit, our visitors will get up-close, personal, and authentic experiences with local marine life. We have woven a hands-on, minds-on educational approach into the visitor and the power of our design is in providing rich interactive experiences that are drawn from our live collection, local scientific research, and most importantly, our amazing coastal setting.

The Sea Center is the region's only public marine education facility and plays an important role in connecting local communities with the coast. I strongly urge you to support the construction of this engaging and exciting exhibit.

Sincerely yours,

Elisabeth Fowler
Chair, Board of Trustees