



United States Lifesaving Association

PO Box 366 ♦ Huntington Beach, California 92648 ♦ Tel: 866-FOR-USLA

www.usla.org

July 11, 2007

B. Chris Brewster
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Vice-President

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Medical Advisor

John "Chip" More
Legal Advisor

State Coastal Conservancy
Douglas Bosco, Chairperson
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: SUPPORT FOR RIP CURRENT AND BEACH SAFETY SIGN FUNDING

On behalf of the United States Lifesaving Association I would like to encourage approval of funding for rip current and beach safety signs as described in the attached proposal.

As part of a national partnership, we teamed with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Sea Grant to develop standardized rip current signs for posting on the nation's beaches. Rip currents are the cause of over 80% of reported rescues by lifeguards at surf beaches and are therefore presumed to be the cause of over 80% of drowning deaths at these beaches, in the absence of timely rescue. California is disproportionately impacted due to consistently strong surf, which produces rip currents. Over 50% of the rescues reported by surf lifeguards in the United States take place in California.

While we lack funding for signs to blanket the nation's beaches, we strongly encourage local efforts to print and post these signs.

Sincerely,

B. Chris Brewster
President

RECEIVED

JUL 19 2007

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.



Russian River District
25381 Steelhead Boulevard
P.O. Box 123
Duncans Mills, CA 95430

August 6, 2007

Deborah Hirst, Project Manager
California State Coastal Conservancy
1339 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Deborah,

The Russian River District endorses the request from the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards) for a grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy to support the production of the multi-language surf safety signs for Sonoma Coast State Park.

This project began as a result of a tragic drowning event which involved a group of young non-English speaking park visitors in November of 2005. Local citizens came to State Parks and volunteered to assist in an effort to provide ocean safety information for non-English speaking park visitors. State Park staff, Stewards staff, as well as dedicated volunteers began working on this project with the end product being a Spanish language panel that describes ways to stay safe while visiting the beach. This panel, along with the associated support material can and will be used by other agencies in different locations along the California coast. It is the intent of State Parks to use this effort as a building block for more comprehensive signage to reach as many culturally diverse visitors, as we possibly can.

The Russian River District fully supports Stewards efforts in this matter and strongly urges the California Coastal Conservancy to fund this request. If you need any further information please feel free to contact Rick Royer at (707) 865-3126.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Burko, Superintendent
Russian River District

Cc: Michele Luna, Executive Director
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

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AUG 07 2007

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

SONOMA COAST CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Post Office Box 123 • Duncans Mills, CA 95430

Brenda Adelman

August 8, 2007

Philip Barlow

Scott Barrow

Sabrina Braham

Kate Fenton

David Kenly

Doug Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Kathie Lowrey, Chair

Julie Marlowe

Don Martin

Darrell Sukovitzen

Elinor Twohy

Carol Vellutini

It is with pleasure that the Sonoma Coast Citizens Advisory Committee (SCCAC) to State Parks recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy approve funding for the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods' (Stewards) to provide ocean safety signs for use at State Parks' beaches. Along the Sonoma Coast, we have experienced many deaths of unsuspecting visitors who are unaware of the danger of "sleeper" waves. After a tragedy involving a Spanish-speaking family, Michele Luna of Stewards worked with Kate Fenton of our committee to design a bilingual layout that can be used for both signs and handouts.

It is our understanding that Stewards is requesting funding to produce both rip current and steep beach signage in English and Spanish that will benefit the entire California coast. We feel this effort will go a long way towards addressing this crucial issue and help save lives.

Thank you for your interest in Stewards' work and in the safety of visitors in State Parks' beaches. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions. I can be reached during business hours at 707-874-0102, ext. 34.

Sincerely yours,

Kathie Lowrey
Chair

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AUG 10 2007

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Rich Lawton
5338 Cassandra Way
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

August 11, 2007

State Coastal Conservancy
Chairperson Doug Bosco
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94912

Dear Mr. Bosco:

I would like to support the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods proposal for new updated interpretive "Surf Safety Signs". You most likely have received many letters of support showing how many people have lost their lives or have been rescued from the dangerous surf along the Sonoma Coast. I was the Supervising Ranger for Sonoma Coast State Beach from June 1989 to December 2005. During my tenure at Sonoma Coast State Beach I was involved in numerous rescues and fatalities caused by the Pacific Ocean. My first day on the job was dealing with the loss of a 5 year old boy and his 78 year old grandmother. He had been pulled into the ocean at Goat Rock, his grandmother and her boyfriend went in after him. She lost her life and her boyfriend was barely rescued by several visitors. Several times we lost 5 year old children at Wright's Beach while their families were on a relaxing camping trip.

Over the years there were several dramatic surf rescues. Three of which earned State Park Rangers and Lifeguards Metals of Honor from the Governor and Metals of Valor from the Director of Parks and Recreation. One rescue resulted in the United States Coast Guard awarding the two State Park rescuers the "Silver Lifesaving Award". A number of park visitors were awarded a "Carnegie Medal" for their involvement in surf rescues.

Many attempts have been made by the Department of Parks and Recreation to reduce the amount of ocean fatalities. Two types of signs have been used over the years. First are the legal signs. These are required in order to protect the visitors. They have changed little over the years and simply state "Warning, Surf Unsafe, no Lifeguard on duty". Then there are the interpretive signs. These have changed over the years. In early years the Rangers would attach wooden signs on top of each of the beach entry signs stating "Surf Unsafe". These were replaced with simple interpretive signs with information regarding sleeper waves and staying off the rocks. In 2002, new and improved interpretive signs were developed specifically for the Sonoma Coast steep beaches. These were installed along the Sonoma Coast and went into detail about how to better understand the dynamics of the steep beach and sleeper waves. Additionally, the standard interpretive rip current beach signs were installed along Salmon Creek Beach.

The recent improvements made to these signs, especially the interpretive steep beach signs, for which the Stewards proposal is requesting funds, would be a great benefit to the safety of the over 3 million annual park visitors at Sonoma Coast State Park. I encourage your support for this funding request.

Sincerely,



Rich Lawton
Supervising State Park Ranger (Retired)

July 29, 2007

State Conservancy Board
Chairperson Doug Bosco
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairperson Bosco and Members of the Board:

I believe that by approving the grant for Bilingual Ocean Hazard Signs, you will be taking an important step toward educating the public about some of California's most dangerous beaches.

As a member of the Sonoma Coast Advisory Committee on Multilingual Signage, I learned that the "steep" beaches and beaches with strong rip currents pose particular challenges to the safety of visitors and to the lifeguards and rangers who patrol the coast.

The new signs with updated graphics and text and the new flyers for outreach that are proposed in this grant are the result of a coordinated effort to expand awareness in both the English speaking and Spanish speaking communities. There have been many revisions and reviews to achieve accuracy and accessibility.

In recent years, I have been teaching English as a second language to Spanish speaking children and adults. The youngest children are most facile, but I find all keenly motivated to learn. I think there is a moral imperative to do what we can to help these Spanish speaking families be safer at the coast while they are getting "up to speed" with their English language skills.

Please fund this worthwhile effort. It will be a great service to all the community.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Finn
P.O. Box 2313
Sebastopol, CA 95473

cc: Michele Luna, Executive Director, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

July 21, 2007

State Coastal Conservancy
Chairperson Douglas Bosco
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

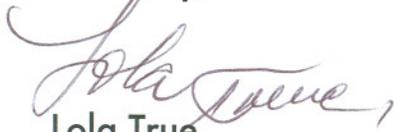
Dear Chairperson Bosco and Board members:

On behalf of the many Spanish-speaking children and parents I work with through the Sonoma County School system, I ask that you approve the proposal that will place signs in Spanish at the most hazardous beaches.

I feel strongly that education about ocean safety can help save lives. With that in mind, I reviewed and gave my input for the translation of the Steep Beach sign.

As a person for whom English is a second language, I appreciate that California Parks and Recreation is trying to make the beautiful California coast a safe experience for everyone.

Sincerely,

 *Lola True, Harmony School District.*

Lola True
Occidental

August 1, 2007

State Coastal Conservancy
 Chairperson Douglas Bosco
 1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
 Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairperson Bosco and Members of the State Coastal Conservancy Board:

As long time residents of Sonoma County, we urge your support of the Bilingual Ocean Hazard Sign Grant that is coming before you on September 20, 2007.

The drownings a year and a half ago of René Sanchez Santiago and Luciana Ortiz Abendano at Wrights Beach left many of us shaken and questioning whether more could be done to prevent future drownings.

With guidance from the Sonoma County Coast Advisory Committee of State Parks, the California Department of State Parks and Recreation, Stewards of The Coast and Redwoods, and community members, a consensus developed to produce and place signs in English and Spanish at the Steep Beaches and to extend the use of English and Spanish Rip Current signs. Signs would be placed at state, federal and local beaches. An English/Spanish flyer for education and outreach was designed.

After almost a year of meetings and extensive coordination with a number of state and local agencies, and, community and professional input on graphics and translations, the lengthy process has reached its final phase; that is the funding phase.

Please support and fund this united effort to save lives and promote ocean safety for our growing Latino community and for all visitors. This will be a lasting tribute to René and Luciana, whose youth and promise are remembered by their loving families and many friends in the community.

Sincerely,

Clare Najarian (CLARE NAJARIAN)

Elizabeth Finn (Elizabeth Finn)

Natalie Rogers (Natalie Rogers)

Andrea Krieger (Andrea Krieger)

Ruth Robinson (RUTH ROBINSON)

Dinah Bachrach (Dinah Bachrach)

Marsha Connell (Marsha Connell)

Maria Gonzalez-Blue (Maria Gonzalez-Blue)

cc: Michele Luna, Executive Director, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

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Sonoma County residents in support of the Bilingual Ocean Hazard Sign Grant:

<i>Cynthia Morrow</i>	(Cynthia Morrow)
<i>Judith Christensen</i>	Judith Christensen
<i>Kirsten Anderson</i>	Kirsten Anderson
<i>Michael C. Carelessus</i>	Michael C. Carelessus
<i>Richard G. Cole</i>	Richard G. Cole
<i>Deborah Hammond</i>	Deborah Hammond
<i>Jean Cool</i>	Jean Cool
<i>Phyllis Early</i>	Phyllis Early
<i>John Barry Vesser</i>	John Barry Vesser
<i>Jane Golden</i>	JANE Golden
<i>Laura Goldman</i>	LAURA GOLDMAN
<i>Susan Reichardt</i>	SUSAN REICHARDT
<i>Randi Farkas</i>	(Randi Farkas)
<i>Dorothea V. Joos</i>	(Dorothea V. Joos)
<i>Hetty Herman-Minsk</i>	Hetty Herman-Minsk
<i>Jisho Warner</i>	Jisho Warner

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Sonoma County residents in support of the Bilingual Ocean Hazard Sign Grant:

Dave Haselwood	DAVE HASELWOOD
Y. Spring	Tyler Springfield
Heather Dawn	Heather Dawn
Roy Crockett	ROY CROCKETT
Angel L. Fusco	ANGEL L. FUSCO
Jude Kreissman	Jude Kreissman
Louise Harris	LOUISE HARRIS
Ellen Rosenquist	ELLEN ROSENQUIST
Marilyn Chuck	Marilyn Chuck
Jacque Lefler	JACQUE LEFLER
Annette Lillie	ANNETTE LILLIE
Anja Woltman	Anja Woltman
Thelma Jean Edwards	Thelma Jean Edwards
William L. Williams	William L. Williams
Kathleen Lochman	Kathleen Lochman
Mary L. Wright	MARY L. WRIGHT