

Martin Luther King remembered by beach cleanup volunteers

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The Pacifica Beach Coalition and Pacifica's Environmental Family will hold their annual beach cleanup and planting day on Pacifica State Beach in honor of Martin Luther King Day of Service on Saturday, Jan. 17.

This year's event, from 9 a.m. to noon, is expected to attract a hundred or more volunteers who wish to give back and help the beach, snowy plovers, and ocean inhabitants.

Volunteers are invited to start by cleaning Linda Mar Beach and the surrounding area on Saturday, January 17, from 9 to 10 a.m. The cleanup meeting location is in the main parking lot against the seawall just north of Taco Bell.

The beach planting will be held from 10 a.m. to noon near the bike path north of the Crespi stoplight. With the recent rain, volunteers are needed for planting on the beach dunes and also along the bike path where weeds have been removed over past years. If enough people show up the group will target weed removal along the bike path. The restoration and planting are key to increasing biodiversity and protecting the wintering habitat of the threatened Western snowy plover and other wildlife. It is believed that native plants host up to 400 percent more insects by mass than non-native plants.

In the past 17 years, volunteers have planted over 18,000 native dune plants, creating a more biologically sustainable and beautiful beach. Pacifica stewards Mary Petrilli, Kathy Kellerman, Lynn Adams, Michael Ayala and other volunteers will lead the planting and restoration projects in a number of sites on Linda Mar State Beach.

"Come and make this your tradition too. Every year we have a wonderful mix of people who have been coming for years and those who are first timers for getting their hands into the sand. Because of the early rains we would like to plant as many natives as possible this year. Everyone is welcome to enjoy this great community experience and to learn and truly make a difference," said Petrilli.

Are you are a leader or habitat restoration champion who would like to participate? If so, contact the Pacifica Beach Coalition in advance at 650-355-1668. Help moving plants to the planting site at 9 a.m. and leading small teams is needed.

This year we will have a number of work sites including the "Giveback Patch," a stretch of fore dunes formerly occupied by ice plant until volunteers from Earth Day, monthly beach restoration workdays, schools, Genentech, Life Technologies, Target Stores, SalesForce, and VMware employees who "Gave Back" and heroically removed it, making it ready for a diversity of native plants that will bring life back into the land," said Pacifica Beach Coalition President Lynn Adams.

While walking is recommended, parking is available at the Linda Mar State Beach parking lot and at the Pacifica Community Center parking lot at Crespi Drive and Highway 1. A parking fee of \$4.00 (4 hours) or \$8.00 (all day) applies at both parking locations and will help with beach maintenance and care. A free parking pass may be obtained from a designated site captain if you prefer.

Tools, gloves, water (bring a cup) and snacks will be provided, although volunteers are welcome to bring their own gloves and favorite shovel/digging tools too! Sturdy shoes, sunscreen, water bottle and warm layers are advised.

This event is a long standing commitment on the part of both the Pacifica Beach Coalition and Pacifica's

Environmental Family to preserve Pacifica's natural environment through volunteer events throughout the year.

The Pacifica Beach Coalition's ongoing Linda Mar clean-ups are held on the third Saturday of each month from 9 to 11 a.m. and the beach restorations are every fourth Sunday of each month at 10 a.m. Since 1996 thousands of volunteers have joined the site captains at Linda Mar to remove tens of thousands of pounds of debris and weeds and save countless numbers of fish, birds and wildlife. A cleaner beach is safer for the Snowy Plovers and all wildlife.

For more information email Mary Petrilli at mary355@comcast.net or go to www.pacificabeachcoalition.org

--submitted by Mary Petrilli, Pacifica Beach Coalition