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**COASTAL COMMISSION'S WHALE TAIL LICENSE PLATE CLEARS FINANCIAL REVIEW BY STATE AUDITORS WITH FLYING COLORS****San Francisco, CA, April 19, 2013 –**

A Department of Finance review of the Coastal Commission's use of Whale Tail License Plate funds found that the Coastal Commission and the State Coastal Conservancy were using the revenues in full compliance with the law. In 2012, the Department found that the funds were being spent appropriately on coastal and marine-related programs and projects. This week's report issued by the State Auditor's Office found no discrepancies with the Commission's Whale Tail License Plate Fund.

"We passed our review with flying colors," said Coastal Commission Executive Director Charles Lester. "If you have a Whale Tail license plate, be assured that the Coastal Commission is spending the money to protect the coast and ocean."

The Coastal Commission launched the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> License Plate Grants Program in 1998 to support local marine and coastal education efforts in California. The first fourteen years of the program have provided a combined total of \$7.7 million in grants, supporting a total of 461 projects throughout the state of California, which are estimated to have reached a total of 11.6 million people.

WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grants from the Coastal Commission support programs that teach California's children and the general public to value and take action to improve the health of the state's marine and coastal environments. Examples of projects that have received funding include: school programs emphasizing stewardship of the coast and ocean, watershed education, marine science summer camps, wetland and sand dune habitat restoration, beach wheelchairs for the elderly and disabled, equipment for marine science laboratories, trips to the beach for children from inland and underserved communities, educational boat trips, beach and river cleanups, ocean-related museum exhibits, water quality monitoring and education, pollution prevention programs, tide pool education, and beach wheelchair purchases.

Revenues are also used for Coastal Cleanup Day, the Adopt-a-Beach program, public access projects, and other marine education programs for underserved communities and the general public.

The full report can be found here:

[http://www.dof.ca.gov/osae/audit\\_reports/documents/ReviewoftheCaliforniaBeachCoastalEnhancementAccountFund0371WEB.pdf](http://www.dof.ca.gov/osae/audit_reports/documents/ReviewoftheCaliforniaBeachCoastalEnhancementAccountFund0371WEB.pdf).

For more information, visit the Coastal Commission's website, [www.coastal.ca.gov](http://www.coastal.ca.gov), or [www.ecoplates.com](http://www.ecoplates.com).