



August 11, 2023

World Cetacean Alliance
Unit D, 132-134 Albion Street, Southwick,
Brighton, BN42 4DP, UK.

Attn: Harry Eckman, CEO, World Cetacean Alliance

RE: In support of the Designation of the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area

Dear Mr. Eckman,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. At Ventura Visitors Center & Bureau, we cannot emphasize enough how vital the Santa Barbara Channel (SBC) is to the Ventura community and to what we do here at Visit Ventura. That is why on behalf of Ventura Visitor's Center & Bureau, I would like to express our strong support for the designation and world recognition of the SBC as a Whale Heritage Area.

As a coastal destination, Visit Ventura promotes all the incredible wildlife and experiences our ocean offers off our shoreline. Experiencing the beauty of the SBC as visitors hop onto an Island Packers boat—the official Boat Concessionaire for the Channel Islands National Park—on their way to Santa Cruz Island, is a key experience for all visitors who travel to Ventura, California.

Eco-tourism, sustainable travel, and responsible tourism have all become increasingly popular in the tourism industry. Travelers all across the world prioritize ways they can limit their footprint and spend time and money in tourism destinations that are making a positive impact on the environment. As a destination marketing organization dedicated to sharing Ventura's history, culture, activities, and unique attractions with visitors, Visit Ventura has made it a priority to share the story of Ventura's conservation efforts and responsibility as a beach town to attract visitors.

By designating the SBC as a Whale Heritage Area, the SBC Whale Heritage Area will continue its efforts to protect, maintain, and research the diverse wildlife that calls the channel its home. It will also signal to visitors who consider eco-conscious traveling a top priority in their vacation-making plans that a trip to Ventura means they will be visiting a beach community that cares for its environment and the wildlife that also calls the Ventura waters home.

The designation of the channel as a Whale Heritage Area will also inspire our local community and bring a sense of local pride. Our community members care about our streets and our ocean, with many of our locals spending their mornings and afternoons paddling through the waves. The designation will mean the world to Ventura and its locals who donate their time to

cleaning our beaches, volunteering to rescue wildlife, and sharing awareness about saving our ocean.

We understand the value of Whale Heritage Areas and therefore enthusiastically support the designation of the SBC as a Whale Heritage Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marlyss Auster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marlyss Auster, President & CEO, Visit Ventura