San Diego Natural History Museum Announces $7 Million Grant Award to Bring Habitat Journey to the San Diego Community

April 15, 2011: San Diego—The San Diego Natural History Museum has been awarded a $6.9 million grant from the State of California to complete the next phase in permanent exhibition development for the Museum. The exhibition, which has a working title of Habitat Journey, will be an 8,000-square-foot permanent installation exploring the habitats of Southern California’s major ecosystems and utilizing new technology to engage visitors, including social media.

“We are ecstatic! This grant will help the Museum complete this core exhibit prior to Balboa Park’s 2015 Centennial Celebration,” says Dr. Michael Hager, the Museum’s president and CEO. “Habitat Journey/Viaje por los habitats builds on our first permanent exhibition, Fossil Mysteries, and is an exploration of the unique habitats of our region from the ocean to the mountains to the Colorado River.” The exhibition will showcase the biologic/geologic connection that underlies the region’s tremendous biodiversity, showing visitors why San Diego is a “global biodiversity hotspot.”

On November 7, 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84 known as the Safe Drinking Water Bond or “Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. $100 million of the bond was for nature education and research facilities, of which the Museum was awarded $6,999,542 to complete the Habitat Journey/Viaje por los habitats over the next four years. Over $1 billion in proposals were submitted for this funding, and only 43 projects across the state were awarded grants.

Habitat Journey/Viaje por los habitats will explore the floral and faunal inhabitants of Southern California’s major habitats. “The animals and plants and environmental challenges of each ecosystem will be revealed in Habitat Journey/Viaje por los habitats, inspiring students, residents, and visitors to go outside and explore our wonderful parks,” Dr. Hager said. “With their renewed sense of place, we believe people, including those who will be our future leaders, will make decisions that will help to preserve our quality of life.”

Complementing the exhibition will be a robust lineup of public programs and opportunities for educators, students, scientific researchers, and the general public. These programs include a standards-based bilingual Educator Guide, accompanying science workshops and guided tours, public lectures, free (with admission) Family Days, special activities, and more.

The San Diego Natural History Museum is the second oldest scientific institution in California and the third oldest west of the Mississippi. Founded in 1874 by a small group of citizen scientists, the Museum’s mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of Southern California and the peninsula of Baja California, Mexico; and to inspire in all people respect for the environment. Website: www.sdnhm.org

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