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Friends of Ballona Wetlands receives \$30,000 grant from Southern California Edison

Southern California Edison has awarded a \$30,000 grant to the Friends of Ballona Wetlands, which members say will help the organization continue its stewardship and protection of the environmentally sensitive Ballona Wetlands area.

"Southern California Edison is committed to improving the environment for communities we serve by supporting organizations like Friends, which engage the public in preserving our natural resources, and educating our youth," said David Kay, manager of environmental projects for Edison and a Friends board member. "We've been impressed for some time with the depth and breadth of the Friends' educational efforts, which encompass all ages, from kindergarten to senior citizens."

In turn, the Friends have designated Southern California Edison as the official 2010 sponsor of the Friends' monthly restoration days.

"This is the second year in a row that Southern California Edison has awarded the non-profit a grant. Last year Edison's generous gift was used to extend our community outreach and education programs," said Lisa Fimiani, executive director of the Friends. "This year we thought it would be great to give something back with their second grant, by honoring Edison as our official sponsors during habitat restoration days in the wetlands."

On the fourth Saturday of each month, the environmental organization leads groups of volunteers in restoring native dune habitat at the western border of the 600-acre Ballona Wetlands state ecological reserve. The Friends perform this work under special permits granted by the California Department of Fish and Game and the California Coastal Commission.

Created in 1978, the Friends of Ballona Wetlands has a dual mission of educating the public and representing the community during the upcoming state-sponsored restoration of the entire reserve.

"We are once again very excited to have the support of Edison. This year it was especially fun to have volunteer Edison employees come out and give a day of service in the wetlands," Fimiani said.

Each year, the environmental organization hosts approximately 6,500 visitors for interpretive wetlands tours and hands-on dunes restoration.

Information,

www.ballonafriends.org/.