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**REUBEN H. FLEET SCIENCE CENTER AND SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY
MUSEUM PARTNER TO CONDUCT 3-YEAR CLIMATE-CHANGE STUDY**

SAN DIEGO, Calif., May 4, 2009 – The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center and San Diego Natural History Museum have announced a new project, **Communicating Climate Change (C3)**. C3 is a three-year study, led by the Association of Science-Technology Center's IGLO (International Action on Global Warming) Initiative in collaboration with 12 science centers across the U.S. and 12 National Science Foundation-funded research institutions. The simultaneous C3 projects happening across the country are intended to illustrate local indicators of global climate change. The project is made possible by the contributions of scientific leaders studying climate change, meteorologists, science journalists, government agency personnel, university outreach specialists, and members of the community at large.

The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center and San Diego Natural History Museum launch the three-year study on Saturday, May 16 at the Fleet's annual "**Green Day**" celebration. The public is invited to attend "Green Day," which takes place from 12:00–4:00 p.m. at the Fleet. "Green Day" kickoff activities include a Solar Car activity where participants can use solar cells, motors, and various recycled materials to design and build a solar car to take home. Students from San Diego High School will also present a Biofuel Station and demonstrate how to make biodiesel from cooking oil.

In addition to these activities, the SDSU Field Stations program will broadcast video updates live from Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve where students from Health Sciences High and Middle College in City Heights, will participate in a number of data collection activities related to environmental science and climate change. Each group of four to five students will be responsible for participating in a live videocast with visitors back at the Fleet. The SDSU Field Stations program will use plants and aquaria to demonstrate CO₂ flux and to explain how scientists use this data to study climate change.

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The San Diego Natural History Museum will be present at “Green Day” to provide information about the phenology (BudBurst) project, as well as examples of plant specimens. The San Diego Natural History Museum is partnering with the Fleet to launch a new “volunteer observation network” that will collect data on the timing of flowering of selected plant species across the county. Seasonal plant activity (such as the emergence of leaves, flowers, and fruit) helps us visualize the local effects of climate change, particularly when the timing becomes disrupted, and gets out of phase with the lifecycle of insects and birds. Volunteers from both institutions are being trained how to make scientific observations on plant activity and submit the data online for inclusion in the San Diego County Plant Atlas project (www.sdplantatlas.org). This will enable modern-day flowering trends to be compared with historical flowering data from the Museum’s extensive plant collections that stretch back to the 1870s. Changes in plant flowering patterns over the past 100 years could be an indicator of the effects of climate change on our region, which is an important hotspot of biodiversity.

In addition to the phenology project, SMER field trips, and the C3 launch event, the Fleet will offer a series of public lectures and panel discussions throughout the year, led by local scientists from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, SDSU, and Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Programming exploring the impacts of climate change on the California wine industry and a presentation about the depiction of climate change in Hollywood films is also planned.

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About the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

With exhibits to touch, IMAX® films to watch and motion simulator rides to experience, the **Reuben H. Fleet Science Center** (“the Fleet”) offers an educational, entertaining experience for visitors of all ages. Open 365 days a year, the Fleet is located at 1875 El Prado, two blocks south of the San Diego Zoo on Park Blvd. The Fleet is a non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the public understanding and enjoyment of science and technology. For information regarding current admission prices, please call 619.238.1233 or visit our Website at www.rhfleet.org.

About the San Diego Natural History Museum

Celebrating its 135th year, the San Diego Natural History Museum is the second oldest scientific institution in California; third west of the Mississippi. A binational museum, its 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 and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment. Located in Balboa Park at the intersection of Village Place and Park Blvd., the Museum is open daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Phone: 619.232.3821. Website: www.sdnhm.org.