



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**REUBEN H. FLEET SCIENCE CENTER ACHIEVES LEED® SILVER CERTIFICATION
FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS: OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE FROM THE U.S. GREEN
BUILDING COUNCIL**

SAN DIEGO, Calif., May 25, 2010 – The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center announced today that it has received LEED Silver Certification for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance (EB: O&M) from the U.S. Green Building Council. The Fleet Science Center is the first building in Balboa Park to receive LEED Silver Certification EB: O&M.

LEED certification, established by the U.S. Green Building Council and verified by the Green Building Certification Institute, is the nation's preeminent program for the design, construction and operation of high performance, environmentally responsible green buildings.

Since 2005, the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center has proactively implemented many measures to dramatically reduce its energy and water consumption. As the result of new technologies and energy-saving strategies, the Fleet now consumes less energy today than it did prior to its 1998 expansion, which doubles the size of the facility to an astounding 93,505 square feet.

Some of the GREEN measures the Fleet has taken to minimize environmental impact include:

- In 2007, the Fleet Science Center and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) unveiled the installation of more than 10,000 square feet of solar panels on the roof of the Science Center. The first installation of its kind for any San Diego museum, it generates more than 100 kilowatts (kWh) of clean electricity at peak production – enough to light 1,700 60-watt light bulbs, or power about 65 homes.
- The use of fluorescent, compact fluorescent or LED bulbs throughout the building. These lights provide the same amount of illumination, last longer and use at least 60 percent less energy than traditional lights.

(more)

- The conversion of the Science Center's central chiller plant, part of the air conditioning system, from natural gas to electricity – improving its efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The result has been a 60% reduction in natural gas usage.
- 33 percent of total waster generated at the Fleet Science Center is recycled and the Fleet has been awarded with the city of San Diego's "Recycler of the Year" award for 3 consecutive years (2008, 2009 and 2010).
- All toilets throughout the building are low-flow (1.6 gallons per flush) and all 10 urinals in the building are waterless, saving up to 450,000 gallons of water per year.

"LEED Silver certification represents a major benchmark in quantifying the sustainable practices that have been implemented at the Fleet," said Dr. Jeffrey Kirsch, executive director of the Fleet Science Center. "We are especially excited and honored to receive this recognition from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) which recognizes the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts."

As part of the Fleet Science Center's educational mission to further the public understanding and enjoyment of science and technology, the public has been invited to share in the Fleet's vision for environmental sustainability through public programs including "Green Day," "Climate Conversations" and the Communicating Climate Change (C3) project. Two major exhibitions help to communicate the importance of environmental conservation to the public.

The exhibition "So WATT! An Illuminating Look at Energy" explores electricity production, alternative sources of energy, and basic conservation strategies visitors can implement at home and work. The exhibition is made possible by grants from SDG&E and Shell Trading with additional support from the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation. "San Diego's Water From Source to Tap" gives visitors an opportunity to view the sources of San Diego's water and the methods of delivering and processing this vital resource. Interactive elements of the exhibition explore water conservation and preservation – vital information for residents and visitors alike. This exhibition is made possible by funding from the Hans & Margaret Doe Chartiable Trust and City of San Diego Water Department Watershed Sign Program.

(more)

“This effort, initiated by the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, is an exemplar model for other museums and cultural facilities to follow. Through their commitment to sustainability, Balboa Park institutions can focus their resources on their primary mission—which provides value to the whole community,” said Douglas Kot, executive director of the USGBC – San Diego Chapter.

In addition to the environmental advantages of being classified as a “Green Building,” there are a number of health and community benefits associated with LEED certification. Visitors to the Fleet Science Center will enjoy improved air quality and an enhanced thermal and acoustic environment. Through its ongoing efforts, the Fleet Science Center hopes to serve as a model for museums and urban parks across the nation.

“The Fleet Science Center has been an energy efficient role model and SDG&E has special programs that help forward-thinking customers like this achieve their vision for LEED certification,” said Alex Kim, director of customer innovations for SDG&E. “They have been named an SDG&E Sustainable Communities Champion and host the utility-owned rooftop solar panels that provide renewable power to the surrounding community.”

The LEED certification initiative was led by David McGrew, director of facilities and engineering for the Fleet Science Center, along with collaboration from Cathy Fillmore, LEED AP of Alpha Mechanical Services Inc.

The Fleet has played a key role in leading the collaborative effort to make Balboa Park a model of sustainability for generations to come. By the 2015 Centennial Celebration, Balboa Park hopes to create 10 million kWhs and 200,000 therms of gas in annual savings – reducing Balboa Park utility bills by \$1.5 million per year. In part with the Science Center, the Balboa Park Sustainable Partnership is making great strides toward this goal. Between 2007 – 2010 alone, park-wide savings of 4.1 million kWhs and 87,000 therms were recorded.

###

About the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

With exhibits to touch and IMAX® films to experience, the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center (“the Fleet”) offers an educational, entertaining experience for visitors of all ages. 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 Web site at www.rhfleet.org.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Erin Burns

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

(619) 685-5743 – office

(425) 443-9581 – cell

eburns@rhfleet.org