



Eco Fund Launched to Protect the Great White Shark-GuadalupeFund.Org

Unique and timely non profit eco fund launched by unlikely coalition of shark reserachers, eco tour operators and vessel owner/operators. Fund leverages scuba interests to provide hard dollars for research and ongoing white shark protections/education at famed white shark dive site Isla Guadalupe, Mexico.

San Diego, CA, June 11, 2007 --(PR.com)-- Isla Guadalupe, Mexico has become the internationally recognized destination for divers seeking unprecedented encounters with Great White sharks (*Carcharodon carcharias*.) The 90 square mile island located in the Pacific is also home to many rare endemic species of animals and plants.

In 2005 Mexico declared the island a Bio-Sphere Reserve under the watchful eye of CONANP the Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas. As is the case with many watch dog and eco enforcement organizations world wide, long term funding for actual on site protections of this resource and the Great Whites that seasonally inhabit these pristine waters do not exist at this time.

Globally, shark aggregation sites like Isla Guadalupe have been decimated in the past few years by poaching, over fishing, and an uncontrolled trade in shark fins that takes an estimated 70 million sharks a year.

Recently a concerned group of shark diving operators, vessel owners and researchers stepped in to create and launch the Guadalupe Fund 501(c)3. Its stated goal is to move much needed cash and donated equipment into the Bio-Sphere for park staff and continued funding for long term white shark science/monitoring.

“The timing for the Guadalupe Fund couldn't be better,” said John Conniff, owner operators of the MV Islander, which runs white shark diving expeditions to the island. “I've been fortunate enough to spend the past 8 years working at Isla Guadalupe. Over that time I've marveled at both the diversity and uniqueness this island has to offer. This fund, in conjunction with a robust effort from the Mexican government will insure that future usage is managed in a way that maintains the island's integrity and protects its many resources; this island is truly one of a kind. Our goal is to make sure it stays that way for generations to come.”

Nicole Nasby Lucas from the Marine Conservation Science Institute has been involved in ongoing white shark tagging and photo identification research at this site for the past six years. "Our tagging and photo-ID research have shown that the Guadalupe Island white sharks aggregate here in large numbers during the fall and winter, leave the island and travel as far as Hawaii and then come back to the same spot. This makes Guadalupe Island a critical habitat for the white shark in this region and demonstrates the importance of protecting the island and its sharks.”

The diverse and often contrary nature of this coalition of dive boat operators, researchers and eco-tour operators is a testament to the immediate need for a long term funding source for this unique Bio-Sphere



Reserve and all its inhabitants.

The Guadalupe Fund is being managed by Marinebio.org with assistance from shark diving operator SharkDiver.Com and hopes to generate a minimum of \$100,000 a year from concerned divers and shark lover's world wide. All donations to this fund are tax deductible and gifts ranging from free trips to the island and the opportunity to name a Great White shark after donors exist for interested parties.

For more information visit:

Guadalupe Fund-www.guadalupefund.org

Shark Diver-www.sharkdiver.com

Nautilus Explorer-www.nautilusexplorer.com

Islander Charters-www.islandersportfishing.com

Horizon Charters-www.horizoncharters.com

Marine Conservation Science Institute -www.marinecsi.org

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