

The Story of California. The Story of You.

Oakland Museum of California



CONTACT: Kelly A. Koski
510-238-7964 or
communications@museumca.org

**OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA PRESENTS
AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION EXPLORING
JOHN MUIR'S LEGACY**

***A WALK IN THE WILD* INVITES VIEWERS TO EXPLORE THE VAST
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF CALIFORNIA**

**Exhibition offers a fresh look at Muir's life and work, including the
Modern Day Muirs who keep his legacy alive today**

This release is available online at: www.museumca.org/press-landing

(OAKLAND, CA) June 28, 2011—The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) presents *A Walk in the Wild: Continuing John Muir's Journey*, on view **August 6, 2011, through January 22, 2012**, in the Museum's Great Hall. John Muir's experience in the Golden State led to his becoming a founding figure of the environmentalist movement. In this provocative new exhibition, OMCA celebrates the legendary naturalist's life, work, and legacy in California and beyond. Told through OMCA's collections of art, history, and natural science, as well as interactive digital technology and extensive loans—Muir's journals, manuscripts, original drawings and plant collections—the exhibition pays tribute to the "Father of the National Parks," whose legacy continues to inspire environmental stewardship in California today.

Through interactive, multisensory displays, *A Walk in the Wild* invites visitors to explore the vast natural environment of California and experience the sights, sounds, and smells that Muir encountered during his explorations. Through four main themes of wonder, adventure, discovery, and action, the exhibition brings the radical preservationist's legacy to life, and connects it to contemporary activists of environmental study, conservation, and exploration working today in California. Through video and interactive technology, visitors will be able to meet these Modern Day Muirs and learn about their work and motivations.

The featured Modern Day Muirs include: **Shelton Johnson**, Yosemite National Park ranger; **John Wehausen**, wildlife biologist; **Dune Lankard**, Alaskan environmental activist/fisherman; **Rick Deutsch**, Half Dome hiker/author; **Jean Krejca**, cave explorer;

1000 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4892
www.museumca.org

tel 510-238-2200
fax 510-238-2258
tty 510-451-3322

Greg Stock, Yosemite National Park geologist; **Steve Sillett**, redwood canopy researcher; **Tori Seher**, Yosemite National Park bear biologist and Alcatraz bird biologist; and **Kemba Shakur**, tree planter for Oakland Relief.

"This incredible exhibition explores the abundance of California's natural treasures through the lens of John Muir—the radical environmentalist who adopted this state as his own," says OMCA Executive Director Lori Fogarty. "This is a fitting story for OMCA to tell as it utilizes our multidisciplinary collection focus and reinforces our dedication to telling the many stories of California. With its interactive approach, *A Walk in the Wild* provides an exciting primer to what visitors can expect with the reopening of our transformed Gallery of California Natural Sciences in June 2012."

Simulation activities featured throughout the exhibition allow visitors to travel alongside Muir during his many explorations. From the ability to enter a giant hollow Sequoia tree in Yosemite, and see and smell the burnt embers of the forest burning around you to testing your skills at glacier and crevasse leaping in Alaska to following Muir's trek from Yosemite to Mount Whitney on Google Earth to the ability to take a simulated photograph of yourself mountaineering, *A Walk in the Wild* offers many opportunities to learn about Muir's legacy and bring out the John Muir in you.

"This exhibition is filled with wonder and discovery," says guest curator Dorris Welch. "We all have many things to learn from John Muir's legacy. To be able to honor and bring John Muir's legacy into a modern-day light is an extremely important thing," Welch says of the OMCA-exclusive show.

The exhibition features striking large-scale photographic murals by Steven Joseph showcasing the natural wonders of Muir's explorations and dramatic landscape paintings by William Keith and Thomas Hill, allowing visitors to explore the beautiful scenery that inspired John Muir. Through original artifacts on loan from the John Muir Papers, University of the Pacific, and the John Muir National Historic Site, visitors will be able to see Muir's journals and manuscripts where he cites the awe and wonder he experienced alone in nature—from the musical qualities of waterfalls, streams and rivers in Yosemite Valley to the majestic glacially sculpted granite landscapes he explored in the highest of the High Sierra. Visitors can also explore how the minimal gear Muir carried in the mountains compares to the elaborate mountaineering gear of today. The exhibition also features "Nature's Beloved Son," a print gallery highlighting Stephen Joseph's prints of Muir's original pressed plant collections, displayed with Muir's original plant collection herbarium sheets.

A Walk in the Wild: Continuing John Muir's Journey opens at the Oakland Museum of California on Saturday, August 6, 2011, and continues through January 22, 2012. The

1000 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4892
www.museumca.org

tel 510-238-2200
fax 510-238-2258
tty 510-451-3322

exhibition is organized by guest curator Dorris Welch, and is made possible by generous support from the Oakland Museum Women's Board, The Bernard Osher Foundation, the J.M. Long Foundation and the University of the Pacific Library, John Muir Papers, Holt Atherton Collections/Muir-Hanna Trust.

Additional exhibition partners and collaborators include: Bonnie Gisel, Muir scholar and author; Jerry Pentin, videographer with Spring Street Studios; Dr. Bill Swagerty and Shan Sutton, University of the Pacific, Holt Atherton Special Collections, John Muir Papers; Carola DeRooy and Isabel Jenkins Ziegler, John Muir Historic Site National Park Service; and Malcolm Margolin, Heyday Books.

GALLERY OF CALIFORNIA NATURAL SCIENCES

Reopening June 2012

The transformed Gallery of California Natural Sciences themed *Hotspot California: Bringing Dioramas to Life Through Community Voices* will feature innovative displays about California places that exemplify the state's great biological and geological diversity as well as its complex environmental challenges, such as climate change, urbanization, pollution, and invasive species, among others. The Gallery will infuse dramatic dioramas with emerging technologies and compelling stories of real places to engage museum visitors in the natural world and to encourage positive attitudes toward conservation. Interactive displays, learning stations, and testimony from scientists and local residents will inspire visitors to learn more about California hotspots, five real places in California that exemplify the high biological diversity and complex environmental issues that, in combination, warrant California's designation as a global "hotspot."

ABOUT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) brings together collections of art, history and natural science under one roof to tell the extraordinary stories of California and its people. OMCA's groundbreaking exhibits tell the many stories that comprise California with many voices, often drawing on first-person accounts by people who have shaped California's cultural heritage. With more than 1.8 million objects, OMCA is a leading cultural institution of the Bay Area and a resource for the research and understanding of California's dynamic cultural and environmental heritage.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Museum admission is \$12 general; \$9 seniors and students with valid ID, \$6 youth ages 9 to 17, and free for Members and children 8 and under. OMCA offers onsite underground parking and is conveniently located one block from the Lake Merritt BART station, on the corner of 10th Street and Oak Street. The accessibility ramp is located at the new 1000 Oak Street main entrance.

1000 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4892
www.museumca.org

tel 510-238-2200
fax 510-238-2258
tty 510-451-3322