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Oakland Museum of California



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OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA RECEIVES MAJOR GRANT TO SUPPORT TRANSFORMATION OF NATURAL SCIENCES GALLERY

**Nature Education Facilities Grant Totaling \$2,999,522 Awarded
To Oakland Museum of California To Support Groundbreaking
Reinstallation of Natural Sciences Collection**

OMCA's Natural Sciences Gallery to Reopen June 2012

(Oakland, CA) June 28, 2011—The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) is undergoing a groundbreaking renovation and reinstallation of its 28,975 square foot **Gallery of California Natural Sciences**, scheduled to reopen in 2012. The project is the continuation of a museum-wide transformation featuring major renovations to the landmark building, designed by architect Kevin Roche, and the Galleries of Art and History, completed in May 2010. The new Gallery of California Natural Sciences, featuring over 2,000 different native species and seven major habitat areas, will be the largest and most comprehensive gallery in existence dedicated to California's extraordinary biodiversity and conservation issues.

The California State Parks Nature Education Facilities Program (NEF), founded through the 2006 ballot measure Proposition 84, funds the development of nature education facilities, buildings, structures, and exhibit galleries that present collections to inspire and educate the public. With support from the \$2,999,522 grant, OMCA is transforming the Natural Sciences Gallery with innovative and participatory elements that continue the Museum's commitment to creating a dynamic experience focused on visitor engagement through multilayered approaches to interpretation. The award of the NEF grant, which follows a \$2.5 million grant awarded in 2010 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) as well as major grants from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, enables the complete transformation of the groundbreaking Natural Sciences Gallery. OMCA was one of 44 grants received statewide from a field of over 300 applications.

The new Gallery of California Natural Sciences showcases the state as one of the top 10 biodiversity hotspots in the world and aims to increase visitors' understanding of this extraordinary ecological biodiversity as well the environmental threats to California's natural resources—particularly climate change, loss of habitat, and pollution. Through the in-depth exploration of seven real places within the state—Mount Shasta, Sutter Buttes,

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Oakland, Yosemite, Palm Desert, Tehachapis, and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary—the new Gallery will encourage a sense of urgency for environmental sustainability and direct community and citizen conservation action.

“Once complete, the Oakland Museum of California’s new Gallery of California Natural Sciences will be the best in the world at telling the incredible story of California’s amazingly rich biodiversity,” says Chief Curator Douglas Long. “Using our collection of dioramas fused with the latest advances in technology and exhibits created with our community partners, the new Gallery will present a visually dramatic way to explore seven of the most ecologically diverse areas of our state, along with their compelling conservation issues and the stories of the people working toward their preservation.”

The new Gallery will explore the educational potential of wildlife dioramas to engage the public in urgent environmental issues by layering dioramas with the latest technologies and utilizing cross-discipline connections to OMCA’s Art and History collections. Using technology the Gallery will reconceptualize the traditional presentation of wildlife dioramas to make them more interactive and engaging. In addition, the transformed Gallery will incorporate visitor participation and community collaboration, with project partners co-designing and providing content for the major reinstallation.

As part of a major research initiative under way in conjunction with the gallery, OMCA is partnering with the Denver Museum of Nature & Science and the Field Museum in Chicago. Local partners for the project include East Bay Regional Parks, Friends of Sausal Creek, YMCA of the East Bay, The Nature Conservancy, Golden Gate Audubon Society, *Bay Nature* magazine, and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. In addition to the grants awarded by the National Science Foundation and the California State Parks Nature Education Facilities Program funded by Proposition 84, the project is supported by donors to the Museum’s successful \$62.2 million capital campaign.

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.

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.

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