

For Immediate Release

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**California Science Center Breaking New Ground
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With Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Honored Guest**

Los Angeles - The California Science Center broke ground today on its Phase II project, which will house the World of Ecology, with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as the honored guest. The Phase II expansion represents the continued fulfillment of the California Science Center's 25-year master plan and the World of Ecology is distinguished as its most ambitious component. When completed, the expansion will nearly double the size of the Science Center, adding an additional 170,000 sq. ft.

The California Science Center's World of Ecology will fuse the live-habitat concept of zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens with the interactive science learning focus found in leading science centers and museums. "This innovative combination of live habitats, real science tools, and interactive exhibits promises to be a new model for museum exhibitions that provides both a richer environment for science learning and a more intimate connection with the amazing diversity of life that surrounds us," said Jeffrey N. Rudolph, President and CEO of the Science Center. A 165 million-dollar campaign to raise funds for this effort is well underway. The project is expected to be complete by 2009.

In the *World of Ecology*, living plants and animals will be used to explain key principles of ecology as guests explore each of the gallery's eight exhibit "Zones." Within in the Forest Zone, for example, an 180,000 gallon salt water tank teeming with the life of a Kelp Forest will illustrate the science and significance of biodiversity. The exhibit will feature over 300 species of animals and plants, and will also include a discovery room for preschool and early school age children.

"The World of Ecology takes the Science Center's mission of stimulating curiosity and inspiring science learning, with school-age children, parents, teachers and the general public, to a new level," added Science Center President Jeffrey Rudolph.

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World of Ecology: A New Approach to Science Learning

Traditionally science centers and museums present ecology to the public without the benefit of live habitat environments; while most zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens focus on their living “collections” without providing in-depth interpretation or integrated interactive experiences. The World of Ecology will combine both concepts with unique and new environments.

World of Ecology is also inventive in how the exhibit was designed. Normally, a single design firm would be engaged to create a large-scale exhibit such as this one. But now for the first time, the California Science Center has adopted a team approach to exhibit design and fabrication. Two award-winning architectural firms, Zimmer Gunsul Frasca, and Esherick, Homsey, Dodge and Davis, worked together on the building design and two award-winning live-habitat design teams, CLR Design, Inc. and Bios Inc., worked together to conceptualize the live animal exhibit areas. The live-habitat designers in turn worked with a team of interactive exhibit designers that included colleagues from the Science Museum of Minnesota. California Science Center senior managers, curators, researchers and writers led the overall process of design and concept development.

In November 2001, the Board of Trustees of the California Science Center Foundation adopted a plan to secure public and private funds to support the implementation of Phase II of the Master Plan. Phase II will more than double the size of the Science Center’s exhibit and education program space, increasing its attendance capacity from 1.4 million to 2 million visitors annually.

Other aspects of Phase II that have been completed are the construction of the Science Center School, featuring state-of-the art facilities serving K-5 neighborhood children in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the Amgen Center for Science Learning. The latter, a resource center for teachers, students and scientists, offers professional development opportunities, training and tools for science, math and technology instruction. Both were completed in 2004.

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