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People's Climate March San Diego



7,000 March for Planet Earth in San Diego 'State of Resistance'

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By Ken Stone

A hundred days into the Trump administration, a crowd estimated by Harbor Police at 6,000 to 7,000 gathered Saturday to celebrate what one speaker called 100 days of resistance.



Lead marchers People's Climate March San Diego near finish at Waterfront Park. Photo by Ken Stone

The **People's Climate March San Diego** — about half the size of the week-earlier **March for Science** — was a distillation of earlier rallies with hard-hitting speeches and signs.

"We live in a state of resistance," Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher said of California. "A true

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state of resistance. ... At the end of the day, Donald Trump will be gone, and we'll remind him that climate change is real."

The Rev. Dr. Beth Johnson of Palomar Unitarian Universalist Fellowship helped emcee a pre-march rally from the steps of the County Administration Center.

"This is a dark time for our country," she said, ticking off social and environmental concerns familiar to the crowd. "We are here to make our voices known. The thing that gives us hope is you."

Fletcher used her brief remarks to lobby for [AB 805](#), her effort to overhaul the San Diego Association of Governments and make it more mass-transit friendly.

"Fifty percent of our greenhouse gases comes from transportation," she said. "It's time we reform SANDAG" and "reduce the number of cars on the freeway."

Jim Miller, a San Diego City College professor and leader of the local American Federation of Teachers, slammed the White House "wrecking crew" for enabling a "rebirth of climate [change] denial."



Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzales Fletcher speaks at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone

"We place our bets on the future," he said, noting the hope of education. "A catastrophic climate change is a threat to all of our futures."

Jeff Severinghaus, a geoscientist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, cited the "overwhelming amount of evidence" supporting the existence of manmade climate change.

"When people ask me if I believe in climate change, I say no," he said. "I say no because it's not a matter of belief. ... If you don't believe that carbon dioxide is causing global warming, just look at our neighbor planet Venus," where superhigh concentrations of CO2 lead to temperatures of 850 degrees.

"So literally, we are cooking ourselves," Severinghaus said. "It's not ethical to take something away from future generations. They're not at the negotiating table."

After an hour, the crowd marched south on Harbor Drive, east on Ash Street, south on Pacific Highway, west on Broadway and north on Harbor Drive back to the starting point.

Marchers carried signs with slogans including "mother frackers!" "I march for birds and bees and oceans and trees," "water is life," "people over profit," "protect earth," "100%

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SanDiego350 founder Masada Disenhouse points to something in crowd while standing with speakers Mukta Kelkar of UC San Diego and Willow Lark of San Diego State University. Photo by Ken Stone

clean energy,” “respect mother earth,” “make earth great again,” “our planet can’t sustain this government,” “you can’t drink oil” and “save the frogs,” among others.

Assemblyman Todd Gloria, D-San Diego, was present for the rally and march but wasn’t among the speakers.

But he told City News Service: “There is no larger threat than climate change and the rebuke of this truth by the

president and his administration is terrifying.”



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“While Washington denies the truth, California and San Diego will remain on the front lines of this fight by advancing policies that protect our planet like powering our communities with 100 percent renewable energy.”

Led by **SanDiego350**, groups involved in the march included Sierra Club, Environmental Health Coalition, Alliance San Diego, Surfrider Foundation, Greenlove SDSU, the Catholic Diocese of San Diego, and the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council.

A Peace & Freedom Chorus led by Peggy Watson and Marshall Voit warmed up the crowd on a cloudless day that reached the low 80s.

Voit, a 29-year-old musician and graduate student at San Diego State, said “the world needs changing” and used an acoustic guitar labeled “The Machine Calls for Revolution” to make the point.

The North Park resident said he was part of a tradition of music leading protest movements.

Before the march — and simultaneous with climate demonstrations around the country — emcees called for 100 seconds of silence with the crowd sitting down, people thumping their hearts in unison.

Event organizers said they wanted to let U.S. leaders know that “we will fight for our basic freedoms, rights and liberties.”



A young boy delights in being tossed into air after People’s Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone

The event had a lighter side as well, including someone role-playing a green space alien warning earthlings: "Protect your planet" and Palomar College theater professor Michael Mufson dressed as "Senator Cash" festooned with oil company logos.

A woman carried a sign that said: "I've got my own hot flashes. I don't need more with global warming."

Complete video of the People's Climate March rally can be [found on Facebook](#).



SanDiego350 founder Masada Disenhouse gives instructions before rally at People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



Bobby Wallace of the Barona Band of Mission Indians of the Kumeyaay Nation speaks at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



Willow Lark of San Diego State University speaks at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzales Fletcher speaks at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



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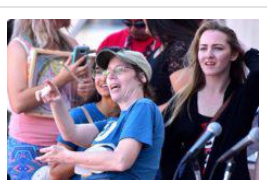
Bobby Wallace of the Barona Band of Mission Indians of the Kumeyaay Nation gestures at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



Professor Jeff Severinghaus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography speaks at rally before People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



Jim Miller of the American Federation of Teachers exhorts crowd at People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



SanDiego350 founder Masada Disenhouse points to something in crowd while standing with speakers Mukta Kelkar of UC San Diego and Willow Lark of San Diego State University. Photo by Ken Stone



Creative signs at People's Climate March San Diego. Photo by Ken Stone



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