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The 30th annual Coastal Cleanup Day is September 20

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Every year there is one day when the world's population learns to clean up the world in unison, whether they live by a coast or not. This year, the 30th annual International (and California) Coastal Cleanup Day (CCCD) is Saturday, September 20. The Pacifica Beach Coalition (PBC), your local organization, coordinates cleanups throughout Pacifica, at Pillar Point Harbor and Mussel Rock, from 9-11 a.m. where you can join in, pick up trash, and make a difference for the ocean and our world. Sign up your team today by calling the PBC at 355-1668. Individuals can help at any local sites listed at www.pacificabeachcoalition.org (<http://www.pacificabeachcoalition.org>). Otherwise, you are encouraged to pick up litter independently, wherever you are on that day or any day really, to keep it from moving to places that wildlife will consume it or get entangled in it.

During CCCD we quantitate the trash to see if levels are getting better or worse. Research data is gathered to help target campaigns to reduce prevalent top offenders. The plastic grocery bag ban, the foamed polystyrene food container ban, and the re-design of soda can ring pulls are all evidence of how data has changed policy.

Plastic waste statistics from recent worldwide data indicate that volunteers picked up -- cigarette butts (2,043,470), plastic food wrappers (1,685,422), plastic beverage bottles (940,170), plastic bottle caps (847,972), plastic straws and stirrers (555, 007), plastic grocery bags (441,493), other plastic bags (389, 088), and beverage cans (339, 170).

The fate of all plastics, including cellulose acetate cigarette filters, is to stay on Earth and in our ocean, photo-degrading into smaller plastic bits and never biodegrading; enduring literally, or "litter-ly", excuse the pun, for centuries. Thus, we cannot deny that the amount of plastic is increasing exponentially in our environment, as we continue to use it and toss it. Despite recycling programs, only a small percentage of global plastic produced is actually recycled. Twenty years of research by Captain Charles Moore, who first discovered the Pacifica Gyre, and who revisited this area, indicates an alarming environmental catastrophe -- that plastic pieces now occupy 25 percent of the world's oceans.

Still, no technology effectively removes it. Species such as *Velella velella* (by the wind sailors) are a local food source but sea turtles easily mistake plastic for it. And, furthermore, studies indicate that many marine birds, reptiles and mammals have plastics in their guts and plastic chemicals in their tissues.

This year, as we clean up, let's go deeper and consider not only the physical global impact of plastic trash, but also the chemical impact from toxins leaching from cigarettes, plastics and pesticides; carcinogens, endocrine-disrupters and neonicotinoids, respectively, that are absorbed after ingestion into our bodies, or into bees that are losing the homing instinct, resulting in colony collapse in our coastal bee hives.

The beaches, coastal and marine wildlife can't take any more of what originates in our streets and



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waterways. Please join us in cleaning the San Mateo County coast for Coastal Cleanup Day. If not you, who? If not now, when?

If you go:

What -- Coastal Cleanup Day

Who -- All welcome! Group sign-ups welcome to cover needy areas!

How to register a group -- Call PBC at 355-1668

Where -- Every Pacifica beach, Mussel Rock, and Pillar Point, multiple creeks, bluffs, streets, parking lots, parks, anywhere we can get volunteers to clean

When -- 9--11 a.m. cleanup followed by an afternoon social at Surf Spot (patio) (11:30 a.m. on)

More info -- Go to www.pacificabeachcoalition.org (<http://www.pacificabeachcoalition.org>)

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