

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteer Cleanup Reveals the Beauty of California's Beaches and Shorelines on 28th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day

California Coastal Cleanup Day
Presented by the California Coastal Commission

Results with 70% of cleanup sites reporting

(San Francisco) Californians have turned out by the tens of thousands to lend their hands in support of clean beaches and inland waterways at California Coastal Cleanup Day. They scoured shorelines and inland locations, picking up trash and debris at over 850 sites in 55 of California's 58 counties, gathering hundreds of tons of trash during this morning's three-hour event. These volunteers took part in the California Coastal Commission's 28th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, the state's largest volunteer event. Beach, inland waterway, and community cleanups took place up and down the California coast, from Mexico to the Oregon border, around San Francisco Bay, and at sites as far inland as Lake Tahoe. California's event is part of the International Coastal Cleanup organized by Ocean Conservancy.

With 70% of the cleanup sites reporting,

the statewide count stands at 57,442 volunteers.

**Those volunteers picked up 534,115 pounds of trash
and an additional 105,816 pounds of recyclable materials,
for a total of 639,930 pounds or 320 tons.**

Data from past cleanups tell us that most (between 60-80 percent) of the debris on our beaches and shorelines comes from land-based sources, traveling through storm drains or creeks out to the beaches and ocean. This year, however, coastal volunteers were on the lookout for debris from a new source: items that may have been washed into the Pacific due to the March 2011 tsunami in Japan. Volunteers at many sites carried a new data card, designed by the Coastal Commission with help from the NOAA Marine Debris Program, for the purpose of recording potential tsunami debris.

"The results will provide us with a baseline against which we can measure future cleanup data from those same locations," said Eben Schwartz, Marine Debris Program Manager for the California Coastal Commission. "Volunteers collect data during every Coastal Cleanup Day, and this year is no different. However, with the potential for a significant

increase in the amount of ocean-borne debris reaching California, it is important that we monitor the data closely so that we know where to direct our volunteers and resources in the coming months.”

As of this release, there have been 3 reports of potential tsunami debris found at 2 locations in California. We categorize it as “potential” tsunami debris because it meets certain criteria, but has not been confirmed to have come from the tsunami.

In addition to tracking down tsunami debris, volunteers picked up a number of “unusual” items during this year’s cleanup (as always!). The Winners of the **2012 Most Unusual Item contest are:**

- **Coastal California:** A volunteer at Kehoe Beach in Marin County found an old, degraded love letter that was later read aloud at the celebratory BBQ at the Bay Model Visitor Center.
- **Inland California:** A volunteer in Redding in Shasta County found a concrete statue of a rabbit.

Whole Foods Market will donate \$50 gift certificates to the volunteers who found the unusual items.

The Coastal Commission continued an effort, initiated during the 2010 Coastal Cleanup, to reduce the environmental footprint of the Cleanup. The Commission asked volunteers to bring their own reusable bag or bucket and reusable gloves to the event, rather than using the single-use disposable items that were available at every site. Thanks to this effort, the Commission was able to order 30% fewer trash bags for this year’s event, and early reports indicate that the popularity of the effort is growing. The latest reports show that XXXX volunteers brought at least one reusable item from home for use during this year’s Cleanup.

Those who were unable to make it to the beach for Coastal Cleanup Day can still participate in COASTWEEKS, a three-week celebration of our coastal resources that takes place across the United States. The Coastal Commission has a calendar of COASTWEEKS events on its website. To get involved with COASTWEEKS, or to find out how you can become a Coastal Steward throughout the year, please contact the Commission at (800) COAST-4U or visit our Web site at www.coast4u.org.

The statewide event is presented by the California Coastal Commission with major statewide support from CG Roxane - Crystal Geyser Alpine Spring Water. Additional support comes from Whole Foods Market, Oracle, Nature’s Path, Clif Bar, ATTIK, See’s Candies, Lindamar Industries, Bartlett Tree Experts, Union Bank, Marin County Board of Supervisors, Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau, The Huntington Beach Marketing & Visitors Bureau, and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

California Coastal Cleanup Day 2012 is supported by the California Coastal Commission, California State Parks Foundation, and Ocean Conservancy. This event is made possible by the hard work of hundreds of local non-profits and government agencies throughout the state and tens of thousands of volunteers annually. The event is also supported by the thousands of Californian’s who’ve purchased the Coastal Commission’s Whale Tail License Plate (www.ecoplates.com).

The Coastal Commission, in partnership with coastal cities and counties, plans and regulates the use of land and water along the California coast to maximize public beach access and recreation, provide for priority coastal development, and assure that new development will protect coastal resources including wetlands, wildlife on land and in the sea, water quality, coastal tourism, and scenic vistas.

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