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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Tens of Thousands of Volunteers Take Action
to Reduce Ocean Pollution
at the 34th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day**

Presented by the California Coastal Commission

Results with 75% of cleanup sites reporting

San Francisco - Tens of thousands of Californians turned out to take part in the 34th California Coastal Cleanup Day, the state's largest annual volunteer event, organized by the California Coastal Commission.

They gathered hundreds of tons of trash at beaches, shorelines and inland waterways, cleaning up at over 1,000 sites in 55 of California's 58 counties, the largest collection of sites in the cleanup's history. Cleanups took place up and down the coast, from the Oregon to Mexico border and as far inland as Lake Tahoe. California's event is part of the International Coastal Cleanup organized by Ocean Conservancy.

With 75% of the cleanup sites reporting,

the statewide count stands at 53,073 volunteers.

**Those volunteers picked up 698,931 pounds of trash
and an additional 35,674 pounds of recyclable materials,
for a total of 734,606 pounds or 367 tons.**

"We had a fantastic day along our coast and inland waterways that flow to the ocean from every corner of the state" said Jack Ainsworth, Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission. "In only three hours, tens of thousands of Californians removed hundreds of tons of trash from our environment. It's truly amazing what we can accomplish when we work together to protect our coast and ocean."

The Coastal Commission continues to highlight to damage that trash, especially single-use disposable plastics, can cause to California's wildlife, economy, and even human health. According to past cleanup data, 75 percent of the debris that volunteers removed today was composed of plastic, a material that never completely biodegrades and has numerous harmful consequences in the environment. Plastic debris can kill wildlife, leach toxins into the environment, and even introduce them into the food chain. Since up to 80 percent of the trash on the California coast originates on land,

volunteers across the state helped prevent enormous amounts of trash from ever reaching the ocean, no matter where they participated.

Most Unusual Items:

Every-day debris and plastic items weren't the only things found on Coastal Cleanup Day. Volunteers also picked up a number of "unusual" items during this year's cleanup. The Winners of the **2018 Most Unusual Item contest are:**

- **Northern California:** A volunteer in Marin County found a painting of a marsh, in a marsh.
- **Southern California:** A volunteer in Los Angeles County found a Coca-Cola can from 1963.

In honor of Coastal Cleanup Day, the Coastal Commission has launched an effort to show how Californians can contribute to the health of our coast all year long. The Whale Tail Coastal Protection License Plate is a major source of funding for the cleanup, as well as the funding source for thousands of coastal and marine-related educational projects in California. Today, the Commission has introduced a new animated PSA for the Whale Tail License Plate that celebrates the magic of the California Coast. . The 30-second video, produced pro bono by Radley Studios, is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFpV-SzFGxk>, and on the Commission's website www.coast4u.org and social media platforms.

In addition to support from the Whale Tail License Plate, Coastal Cleanup Day could not happen without the support of public and corporate partners. Sponsors help to fund the event and often provide additional benefits. Lead sponsor Crystal Geyser Natural Alpine Spring Water donated water for volunteers. Long-time sponsors like Oracle, Union Bank, and Salesforce, and first-time sponsors Visa and the California Tobacco Control Program provided volunteer support. Along with the 60+ non-profit and local government organizations that help organize and run the cleanups around the state, the program's strong team of partners helped make the 2018 cleanup another huge success.

If you participated in the Cleanup, go to www.coast4u.org to fill out the Coastal Cleanup Survey and receive a free taco from Rubios. You will also be entered into a drawing for fabulous prizes. To stay involved with the cleanup efforts throughout the year, please visit the Adopt-A-Beach page on the same website or call (800) COAST-4U.

California Coastal Cleanup Day event is presented by the California Coastal Commission with lead sponsorship from Crystal Geyser Natural Alpine Spring Water by CG Roxane. Additional support comes from Oracle, Union Bank, Salesforce, the California Tobacco Control Program, Visa, the Whale Tail® Specialty License Plate, and the Protect our Coast and Oceans Fund. The artwork was generously donated by Matt Beard.

California Coastal Cleanup Day 2018 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 Commission is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations. It does so through careful planning and regulation of environmentally-sustainable development, strong public participation, education, and effective intergovernmental coordination. The Coastal Cleanup Day Program is part of its effort to raise public awareness of marine and coastal resources and promote coastal stewardship.

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