

THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK



A Quarterly Newsletter of



CITY OF
SANTA CRUZ

Public Works Department
(831) 420-5160

www.cityofsantacruz.com
Spring 2014

"ONE PERSON'S TRASH"



YOUR GUIDE TO REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING

The Straw That Broke the Camel's Back

By Chris Moran, Waste Reduction Manager

The parable goes something like this. A camel was loaded down with so much weight that when one more straw was added to the load the animal was, finally, incapable of even moving. This beast of burden was pushed beyond its capacity to fulfill its function, beyond its ability to operate. The camel's downfall highlights that even the mightiest entity can be brought down when it is overused, or abused, to a point of no return. The fable is ancient, its origins tracing back to the 13th century, but that message is as important today for our earth as it was then for the camel.

Like that last straw, small changes can make a big difference. Thirty years ago, it didn't seem like a big deal to drink coffee from a foam plastic cup. The cup

didn't want a straw, but there it was. She still carries that straw as a reminder that it's up to her to make that change. Now she asks for drinks with "no straw, please." She became active.

Jackie joined **Save Our Shores** (www.saveourshores.org) as an ocean steward, initially donating 50 hours of time to beach cleanups, dock walking, outreach, and education. Then she started "The Last (plastic) Straw" movement (www.thelastplasticstraw.com) to help lessen the impact of this one piece of plastic pollution.



and thrown away (because they're not recyclable). The average life, or use, of that straw is from five to 10 minutes, yet it remains in our environment 500 or more years. It will outlive you and generations to come. Is that the burden we want the camel to carry?

If restaurants simply said, "Straws Upon Request," the use and associated cost would plummet.

According to Save Our Shores, the plastic straw always hits the top ten list of items found during international beach cleanups. For Jackie, the plastic straw is important because it's an easy item to remove from our lives and our oceans, and the straw is a metaphor for other single-use items in our lives.



Jackie Nunez

movement to eliminate the use of plastic straws. Milo Cress of Eco Cycle's (www.EcoCycle.org) "Be Straw Free" started his campaign at the age of nine by

asking restaurants to adopt the "ask first" policy. Now 12 years old, he has embarked on an international speaking tour, talking to school groups, restaurant organizations, and tourists on the beach. (Visit "Down to the Last Straw" on Facebook.) "Straw Wars," a group of Soho, London restaurants (and beyond), are voluntarily providing straws only when a customer asks or

WE ARE NOT ALONE!



 = Bag Ban  = Bottle Bill  = BPA Bill  = Polystyrene Foam Bill  = Plastic Free Campus

IDEA WHO'S TIME HAS COME



learn more: thelastplasticstraw.org



DITCH THE PLASTIC STRAW!



WHY STRAWS?



More than 500 million plastic straws are used and disposed of daily in the USA alone!



EACH DAY WE USE

500,000,000

STRAWS



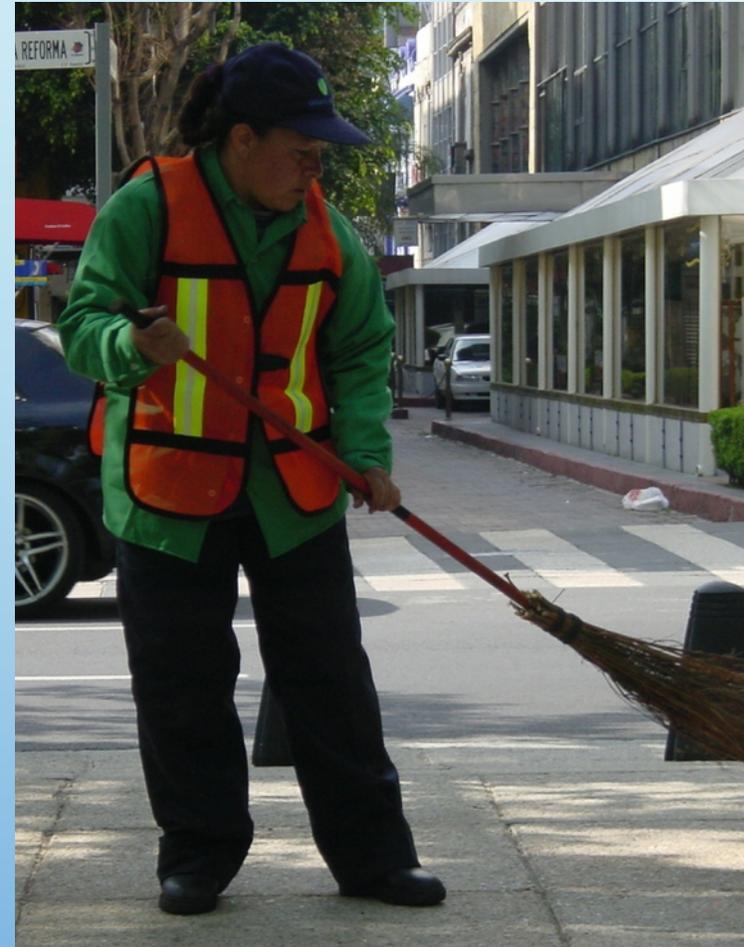
Enough straws to fill
46,400
large school buses
PER YEAR!

POLYSTYRENE BAN

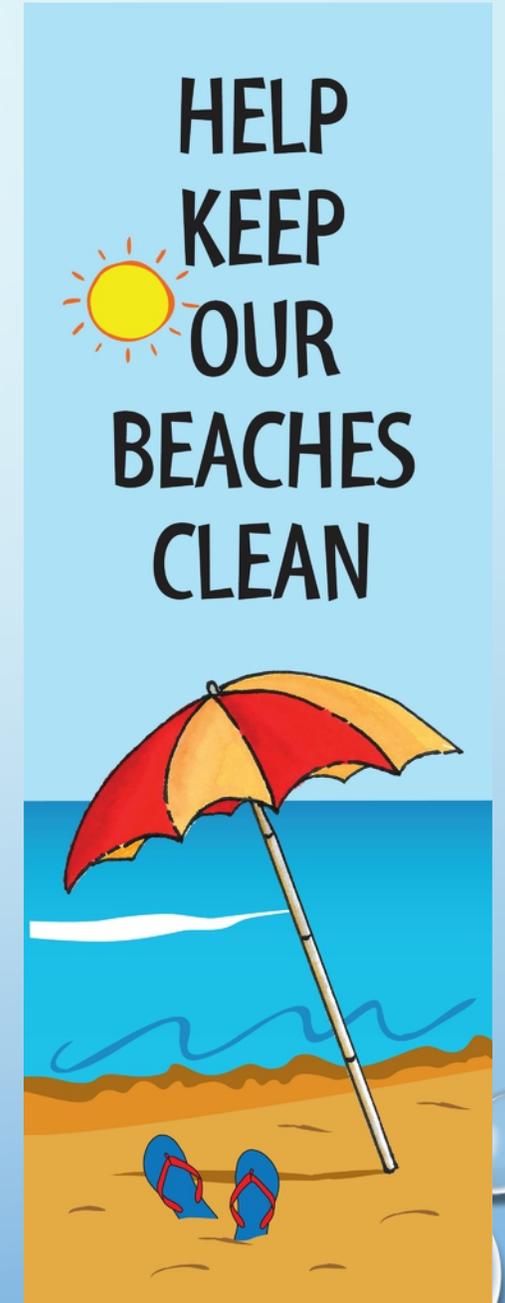
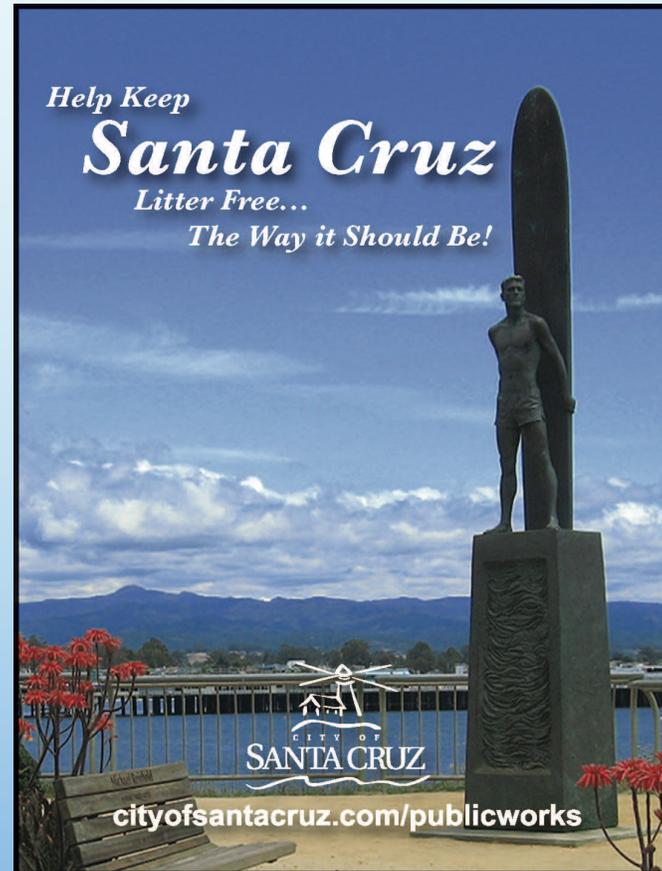
- 1992: VOLUNTARY POLYSTYRENE BAN
- 2008: ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE FOOD PACKAGING ORDINANCE
- 2012: EXPANDED ORDINANCE TO BAN THE SALE OF POLYSTYRENE ITEMS INCLUDING PLATES, CUPS AND COOLERS
- 2017: ALL DISPOSABLE SERVICE WARE MUST NOW BE BIODEGRADABLE, COMPOSTABLE AND/OR RECYCLABLE IN THE CITY'S RECYCLING PROGRAM INCLUDING LIDS, STRAWS, CUTLERY.



LITTER IMPACTS TO CITY SERVICES



PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS & PROGRAMS



LEARN FROM THE BEST

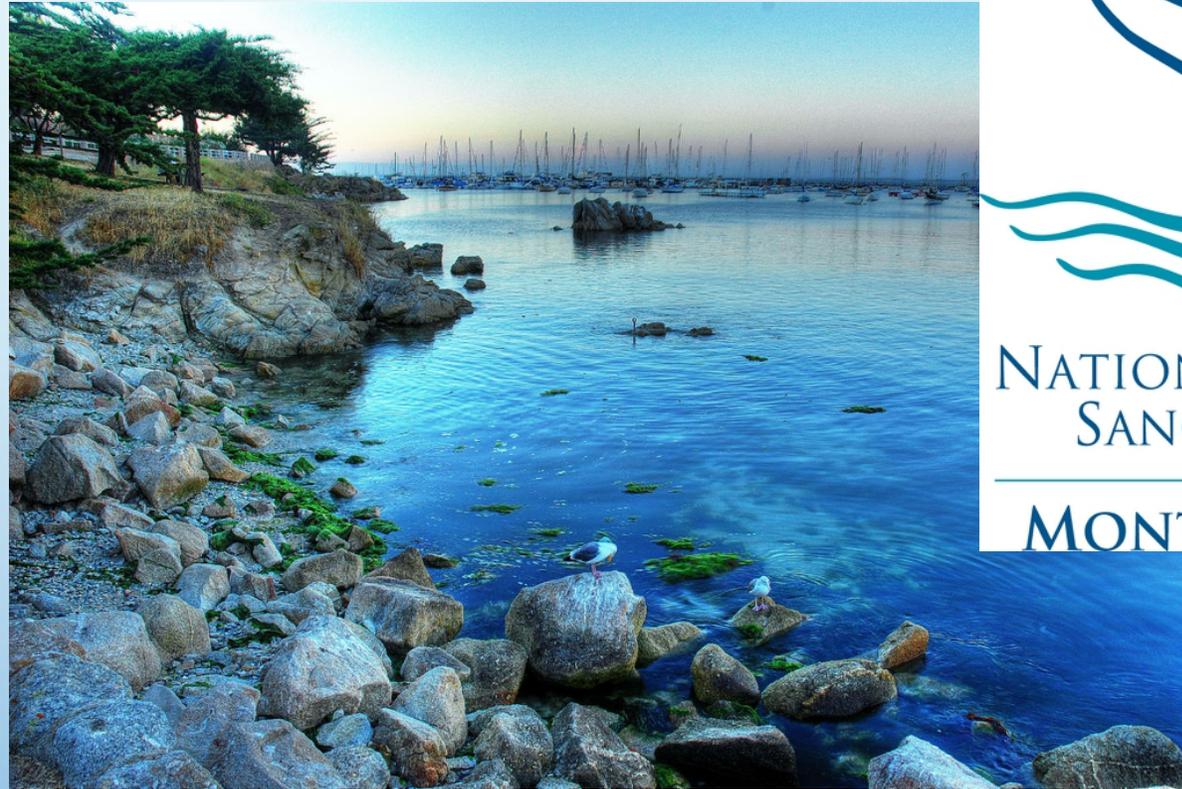
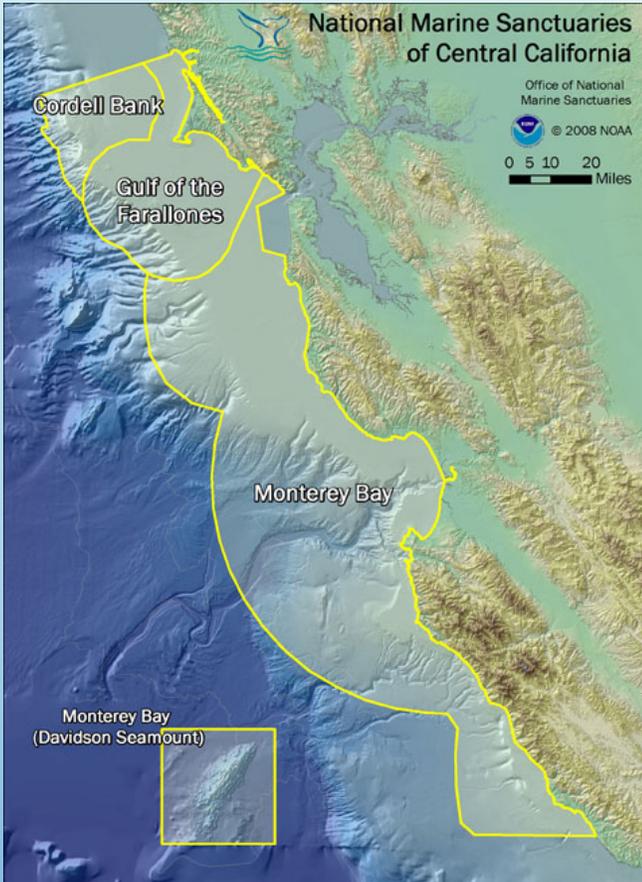


Glacier Bay National Park

Grand Canyon National Park



MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



CURRENT LOCAL ORDINANCE & SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES TO ADDRESS DISPOSABLES

- 2014: THE LAST PLASTIC STRAW MOVEMENT BEGAN IN SANTA CRUZ
- 2017: CITY AND COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ AND CITY OF CAPITOLA STRENGTHENED PACKAGING ORDINANCES TO INCLUDE CUTLERY, LIDS AND STRAWS
- 2017: CARMEL BANS PLASTIC CUTLERY AND STRAWS. BAN WILL BE PHASED IN DURING 2018 STARTING WITH 'STRAWS UPON REQUEST'
- 2017: CITY ON MONTEREY: NO STRAW NOVEMBER CAMPAIGN
- 2017: MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM CO-FOUNDED AN INITIATIVE, ALONG WITH 19 OTHER AQUARIUMS – TO ELIMINATE THE USE OF DISPOSABLE PLASTICS INCLUDING WATER BOTTLES, PLASTICS BAGS, CUTLERY AND STRAWS IN THEIR FACILITIES.



MORE WORK TO BE DONE





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Waste Reduction Program Manager

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