



## **HEAL THE BAY READIES A REAL PICK-ME-UP FOR L.A.** *More than 10,000 volunteers sought for Coastal Cleanup Day on Sept. 16*

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (August 22, 2017) – Local environmental organization Heal the Bay issues a call today for Southland residents to join the largest, single-day volunteer event on the planet – the 33rd annual Coastal Cleanup Day, to be held from 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Sept. 16.

As part of a global effort, tens of thousands of concerned citizens in Los Angeles County will link on this one morning to remove harmful and unsightly trash and debris from more than 50 coastal and inland sites.

Four of the inland locations are sites where habitat restoration work is underway, with volunteers removing invasive plant species and harmful manmade debris. Active restoration sites participating in Coastal Cleanup Day include the LAX Dunes site and the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, both in Playa del Rey; Alta Vicente Reserve in Rancho Palos Verdes; and the Agoura Hills/Medea Creek restoration site in Agoura Hills.

Coastal Cleanup Day mobilizes thousands of volunteers across L.A. County who come out in force to pick up trash throughout the region -- an area that spans close to 100 square miles. Last year's Coastal Cleanup day saw more than a half million people in 112 countries -- and in 43 U.S. states -- remove 18.3 million pounds of debris from beaches, streams, and other waterways and parks.

Anyone who participates in the local cleanup will be rewarded with a free visit to Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, 1600 Ocean Front Walk, between 12:30 and 5 p.m. on Coastal Cleanup Day.

Since 1990, Heal the Bay has coordinated the county's Coastal Cleanup Day, organizing an army of volunteers on the third Saturday of September. Recognized by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the "largest garbage collection" ever organized, the annual volunteer effort provides Southern California residents with the chance to beautify their neighborhood, local waters, or beach. It's also an ideal way to make new friends and enjoy the outdoors.

Cigarette butts, plastic beverage bottles, and food wrappers remain the three most common items found by Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers, followed closely by plastic straws. Heal the Bay is calling for all to rethink their drink and go "strawless," as several local beach municipalities are mulling ordinances that would make straws available only on request.

Heal the Bay seeks volunteers of all ages and physical abilities to participate Sept. 16; no experience necessary. Site captains will organize a diverse mix of individuals, families, neighborhoods, community groups, schools, faith-based groups, sports teams, and businesses.

To register, please visit [healthebay.org/ccd](http://healthebay.org/ccd)

No special training or equipment is necessary. But in a bid to reduce waste even further, Heal the Bay encourages volunteers to “BYO”-- bring their own buckets, reusable bags, and gloves to pick up trash.

In addition to picking up debris, volunteers learn first-hand the importance of keeping trash out of waterways and improve their own community environments, thus protecting what they love – be it their local beach, park, avenue, or creek.

Runoff from more than 200,000 storm drains flowing out to Santa Monica and San Pedro bays causes the vast majority of local ocean pollution. By removing tons of debris from beaches and inland neighborhoods, cleanup participants reduce blight, protect marine animals, and boost the regional economy.

More than 50 sites have been confirmed this year, including more than 15 inland locations. SCUBA dive sites will include Malibu Pier, Redondo Beach, Dockweiler State Beach and the Santa Monica Pier.

### **About Coastal Cleanup Day**

Heal the Bay organizes Coastal Cleanup Day in Los Angeles County in partnership with the California Coastal Commission. The L.A. campaign is part of a global international event led by the Ocean Conservancy.

**This year’s sponsors:** California Coastal Commission (statewide leader), California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways (statewide co-leader in the boating facilities and boating community effort) City of Santa Monica, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, and Union Bank.

### **About HEAL THE BAY**

Heal the Bay is Southern California’s leading nonprofit dedicated to protecting local beaches, oceans and watersheds. The organization has a 32-year track record of using sound science and community engagement to keep our coastline and inland neighborhoods clean and vibrant. The group issues water quality grades for more than 500 beaches each week, conducts monthly beach cleanups, educates thousands of underserved schoolchildren each year, and operates the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, among many other programs.

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