



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Data Gives Glimpse into Behaviors that Create Pollution**

**(October 3, 2011) Santa Cruz, CA** – [Save Our Shores](#) (SOS), the leader in ocean awareness and advocacy on the Central Coast, has just released data totals from Coastal Cleanup Day 2011. During Coastal Cleanup Day 2011 on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 4,584 volunteers in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties removed a total of 17,503 pounds of debris from 81 cleanups sites around the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in just 3 hours. A deeper look into what particular items were removed during the cleanup paints a data-backed picture of the habits and products that cause the most harm in the marine environment.

**Cigarette butts, total removed: 36,082.** Total smoking related items removed: 38,824.

SOS data reports that cigarette butts are the #1 item found polluting beaches and rivers on the Central Coast. Cigarette butts are made of plastic and toxic materials, and are seen as a major threat to marine species locally and worldwide. SOS has been spreading awareness about this #1 polluter through their publications, beach and river cleanups, advertisements, and radio PSAs. They have worked with the Cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola to install 18 BaitTanks (stainless-steel cigarette butt receptacles) in high-traffic areas, and data collections near these BaitTanks show a steep decline in cigarette butt litter by an average of 70%. Two BaitTanks are installed on the Monterey Wharf, and expansion of this program is underway.

**Plastic bags, total removed: 4,750.**

Save Our Shores recently celebrated a victory two years in the making when the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance to ban single-use plastic bags. SOS sat on the Task Force to write the ordinance, supplied cleanup data to back the need for the ordinance, and continually garnered support for the ban from businesses and citizens alike. SOS formed the [Central Coast Sanctuary Alliance](#), a coalition of 70 environmental organizations and local business, with the mission of banning single-use plastic bags all around the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. SOS continuously works with local leaders, businesses, and citizens to see that similar plastic bag ban ordinances are implemented in each jurisdiction surrounding the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, an often multi-year process.

**Food wrappers/containers: 12,127. Caps/lids: 6,412. Plastic beverage bottles: 2,158. Straws/stirrers: 2,129. Pieces of fishing line: 223. Fishing nets: 296.** Spreadsheet containing data totals also attached.

Save Our Shores will continue to identify problematic pollution and identify ways to combat it locally. Learn more at [saveourshores.org](http://saveourshores.org). “Our goal is to inspire our community to make the connection between their actions on land and the impact their actions have on our Marine Sanctuary,” says Laura Kasa, Executive Director of Save Our Shores.

#### **About Save Our Shores:**

Save Our Shores is the Central Coast leader in caring for the marine environment through ocean awareness, advocacy and citizen action. Over the last 30 years, Save Our Shores helped to establish the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, prevent offshore oil drilling and cruise ship pollution, and today focuses on educating youth about our local watersheds, tackling pollution on our beaches and rivers, implementing our renowned DockWalker program, and providing our community with educated and inspired Sanctuary Stewards. For more information visit: [www.saveourshores.org](http://www.saveourshores.org).

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*Caring for the marine environment through ocean awareness, advocacy and citizen action.*