

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT STREET, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400
WWW.COASTAL.CA.GOV



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November 1, 2019

To: Commissioners and Interested Persons

From: John Ainsworth, Executive Director
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Christiane Parry, Public Education Program Manager
Annie Kohut Frankel, Grants and Education Coordinator
Eben Schwartz, Statewide Outreach Manager
Vivian Matuk, Environmental Boating Program Coordinator
Matt Yurko, Restoration Education Program Manager
Luna Taylor, Management Services Technician

Re: 2019 Public Education Program Update

At the Coastal Commission meeting of Friday, November 15, 2019, the staff of the Public Education Program will update the Commission on program activities and accomplishments for the past year. This memo provides a summary of these activities and accomplishments.

Background

The Coastal Act lays out the foundations of the Commission's Public Education (PE) Program. The Coastal Commission's Strategic Plan articulates current goals and objectives.

Coastal Act, Section 30012, states that "an educated and informed citizenry is essential to the well-being of a participatory democracy and is necessary to protect California's finite natural resources, including the quality of its environment. Through education, individuals can be made aware of and encouraged to accept their share of the responsibility for protecting and improving the natural environment." This section of the Coastal Act further states that "the Commission shall carry out a public education program that includes outreach efforts to schools, youth organizations, and the general

public for the purpose of promoting understanding of, fostering a sense of individual responsibility for, and encouraging public initiatives and participation in programs for, the conservation and wise use of coastal and ocean resources. Emphasis shall be given to volunteer efforts such as the Adopt-A-Beach program.”

The Coastal Act also addresses funding for the PE Program. Section 30012 (c) states that “the Commission is encouraged to seek funding from any appropriate public or private source and may apply for and expend any grant or endowment funds for the purposes of this section without the need to specifically include funds in its budget.”

2019 Activities

The PE Program continued to carry out the Coastal Commission’s core education and outreach programs, while adding enhancements and developing new initiatives. Working collaboratively with a wide array of organizations and individuals, including non-profits, government entities, educational institutions, citizen groups, recreational associations, visitor-serving facilities, and businesses, these programs seek to educate and involve Californians of all ages, ethnicities, income levels, and physical abilities, whether they live along the coast or inland, with a particular emphasis on reaching Californians who are underserved in terms of access to the coast and to marine education programs.

Topics addressed include ocean pollution (including marine debris), habitat restoration, climate change, sustainability choices, wildlife, environmental justice, ocean literacy, coastal science, and policy. Some PE Programs reach the public directly; while others provide coordination, resources, grants, training, and technical assistance. Here are a few highlights of 2019:

- The 35th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day on September 21, 2019 attracted 68,428 volunteers who collected 827,736 pounds of debris. There were 953 cleanup sites spread across 55 counties. To recognize the milestone, PE staff worked with the commission’s mapping unit to produce a [story map](#) looking back on the history of the cleanup and its accomplishments.
- As part of its new role as lead agency for the California King Tides Project, the Coastal Commission launched a new photo collection process and created an [online mapped display](#) of the 2018/2019 King Tides photos.
- The Boating Clean and Green Online Quiz Program received the 2019 Digital Communication Award at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit (IBWSS). Sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council, National Water Safety Congress, and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, the IBWSS awards program recognizes creativity in communicating with the public about safe and responsible boating.

- The Commission launched a new [video challenge](#) for middle and high school students to respond to the question, “How do we come together for the climate?” Students throughout California are invited to create a short video and submit it to this challenge, due March 31, 2020.

This report organizes PE Programs according to audiences, beginning with programs that target specific audiences, followed by programs for schools and educators, and programs for general public audiences. The final sections address PE work that involves policy and coordination, and funding sources.

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Program Activities and Accomplishments 2019

Programs for Specific Audiences

The PE Program serves a wide range of audiences, and many programs serve multiple audiences. The following two programs serve specific audiences, the first is for visitors who want to borrow a beach wheelchair, and the second serves the boating community.

Beach Wheelchairs

The Coastal Commission is committed to helping *all* visitors to the coast experience the beach firsthand. The Commission's beach wheelchair program aims to ensure that these chairs, which have wide, balloon tires that are able to move across soft sand, are widely available. To this end, the Commission has awarded nearly \$148,000 to a variety of jurisdictions through the history of the program, up and down the coast for the purchase of beach wheelchairs and their storage lockers. The Coastal Conservancy also provides funding for beach wheelchairs.

The Commission maintains a webpage - <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/access/beach-wheelchairs.html> - that includes a map showing the location of beaches with wheelchairs available for use by the public.

Boating Clean and Green Program

This program is a partnership with the California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways. The program educates boaters about clean and safe boating practices and provides technical assistance to marinas and local governments to increase the availability of environmental services for boaters.

Clean Boating Kits and the Dockwalker Program. In 2019, the Boating Clean and Green Program developed and distributed 7,800 boater kits. Boater kits are designed to provide boaters with knowledge and tools to reduce their environmental impact, and include information on clean boating practices as well as an oil-only absorbent pillow, an oil absorbent sheet, and a fuel bib. The kits are distributed by partner Dockwalkers and staff. In 2019, Staff conducted 13 Dockwalker trainings at various locations throughout the state, and trained 200 Dockwalkers. Dockwalkers donated over 1,800 hours to the program, conducting face-to-face education.

Boat Shows and Clean Boating Seminars. Staff participated in two boat shows and conducted six clean boating seminars in 2019, which altogether reached over 1,000 boaters.

Fishing Line Recycling Stations and On-Board Program. Since 2009, the program has installed 290 on-shore fishing line recycling stations, located at piers, marinas, boat launch ramps, etc. throughout the state. This year 19 new stations were installed. The locations can be seen at: <http://goo.gl/maps/5zF5F>. As of October 2019, 1,846 pounds of fishing line have been collected and recycled. Stretched out, this line would stretch from San Francisco to La Pintada, Panama!

In addition, this year staff worked with the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries to install containers on five sport fishing charter boats in the San Francisco Bay Area. Since 2016, a total of 17 stations have been installed on fishing charters. As of October 2019, 190 pounds of fishing line have been collected and recycled by the On-Board Fishing Line Recycling Program.

CA Stow It, Don't Throw Project. Staff continued working with the Stow It, Don't Throw It Project on a project to build and distribute portable fishing line containers using used tennis ball cans. The fishing line containers are created by students and then distributed for free to fishermen to hold old fishing line until they can get to a recycling collection site or secure trash can. Since 2015, students from 60 schools and groups have constructed 6,582 containers, which were distributed to fishermen by the students, Boating Clean and Green staff, and partners.

Changing Tide Newsletter. This newsletter focuses on new trends in clean boating practices and environmental services for boaters statewide and is published jointly by the three chapters of the California Clean Boating Network (a forum of members of from the boating industry, government agencies, and environmental groups). In 2019 the program distributed three issues of the newsletter.

Marinas and Yacht Clubs Oil Spill Preparedness Workshops. The Marinas and Yacht Clubs Spill Response Communication Packet is designed to help boating facilities access needed information in the event of an oil spill. The Packet was developed by a working group led by Boating Clean and Green staff and comprised of representatives from Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), the Coast Guard, California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), the Port Captains and Harbormasters Association, Marina Recreation Association, the Clean Marinas Program, Pacific Inter-Yacht Club Association, and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

In 2019, Boating Clean and Green staff, OSPR and CalOES conducted four oil spill response communication workshops for boating facilities in Oakland, Lake Tahoe, San Diego and Los Angeles. The workshops were attended by 101 marina and yacht club operators (Strategic Plan Action 2.3.2).

Coastal Cleanup Day for Boating Facilities. Again this year, the boating community demonstrated its commitment to keeping our shorelines and waterways clean. Sixty-six boating facilities and boating groups participated in the event with 2,042 volunteers who cleaned 137 miles and collected 23,304 pounds of trash and recyclables on land and from 264 vessels (kayaks, canoes, and dinghies). Twenty-eight percent of the volunteers brought their own reusable cleanup supplies. (Strategic Plan Actions 7.2.4 and 7.3.1)

Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Workshops. To increase awareness about the impact of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and prevent their spread, staff and partner organizations hosted two workshops in Alameda and Yolo County, attended by 40 people. Participants learned how to prevent spreading AIS by inspecting and cleaning equipment and watercraft. The workshops were co-hosted by California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, and UC-Davis Romberg Tiburon Center.

Online Clean Boating Quiz. From July 8 to September 1, 2019, staff conducted a statewide online campaign to increase awareness of clean boating practices. Advertisements challenged recreational boat owners to take a short quiz to test their clean and green knowledge about preventive practices related to oil, fuel, hazardous waste, sewage and marine debris. The Program used the quiz to reach boaters not reached at boat shows, boating events or through the help of the partner Dockwalkers.

Geo-targeted outreach messages about the six-question educational quiz reached California boaters via native ads, posts and tweets on social media (Facebook and Instagram). A total of 2,405 people took the quiz. Weekly quiz incentives included life jackets or the California clean boater kits for randomly selected participants.



San Francisco and Alameda County Marine Flare Pilot Collection Events. Program staff worked with the San Francisco Department of Environment and Alameda County Department of Environmental Health on the Bay Area's first ever marine flare collection events (April 14th and May 26th, respectively). Local boaters were encouraged to bring

their old, expired, or damaged marine flares for proper disposal. The events attracted 78 boaters and collected over 3,500 marine flares!

Marine flares are signaling devices to be used in the event of an emergency. Because of a mandated 42-month expiration date, these marine flares need to be replaced about every three seasons of boating. Yet, currently, there are only two collection sites in California that will accept and dispose of outdated flares. This presents a safety hazard and disposal challenge for Bay Area boat owners. The events were made possible from a grant from the California State Department of Resource Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

Programs for Schools and Educators

The Coastal Commission supports teachers in educating students about California's coast and ocean through free resources in print and online, grants, teacher training workshops, and other programs. From January 1 through October 16, 2019, the Coastal Commission's webpages specifically for educators received more than 178,209 pageviews.

Curricular Resources

The Public Education Program offers multiple curricular resources for teachers. Among these is ***California Coastal Voices***, made up of six project-based units for middle and high school teachers focusing on coastal science, policy, and management in the context of issues facing the California coast. This book encourages students to get involved in issues of importance to their community, and is available as a PDF along with extensive associated online resources such as slide shows, data sets, and videos.

Waves, Wetlands, and Watersheds is a science activity guide for 3rd through 8th grade teachers that addresses topics such as endangered species, marine debris, coastal geology, water use, and water quality. This book is available free to California educators, both online and in hard copy, with student handouts also in Spanish. The Coastal Commission website also offers stand-alone lessons relating to topics including the properties of plastic, waste reduction, climate change, and whales.

The **Schoolyard Cleanup Program** provides support to teachers and school groups to do cleanups on their school grounds. Schools unable to take a field trip to the beach or river for Coastal Cleanup Day or an Adopt-A-Beach event (or those who want to expand their efforts) are encouraged to do the important work of preventing litter at the source. Teachers may sign up for the program on the Commission's website, which includes related lessons and teacher resources, detailed cleanup instructions, and post-cleanup

analysis guidance. The activities of planning and carrying out the cleanup, collecting and analyzing the data, and communicating and acting on the results are directly aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and support Common Core State Standards as well. From January through September 2019, teachers have registered 3,228 students to take part in the program.

In 2019, Public Education staff presented teacher workshops in Occidental in partnership with the Association of Environmental and Outdoor Educators, three workshops in San Jose in partnership with the California Science Teachers Association, and (in December) three workshops in Anaheim at the California STEAM Symposium.(Strategic Plan Actions 3.3.3, 7.3.1, and 7.3.3)

Climate Video Challenge

New for 2020, staff launched a [video challenge](#) for middle and high school students to respond to the question, “How do we come together for the climate?” Students throughout California are invited to create a short video and submit it to this challenge, due March 31. The challenge webpage includes extensive resources on climate change causes, impacts, and solution actions, for use by students and educators.

Coastal Art & Poetry Contest

Open annually to California students in kindergarten through 12th grade, the contest’s goal is to encourage youth to reflect on the beauty and spirit of California’s beaches and ocean, and inspire a greater sense of stewardship for these natural places. Every year, judges select five winners each in art and poetry, and around 40 honorable mentions. Since 2003, students from all over California have submitted more than 36,700 entries to the contest, including 2,852 in 2019. The winning entries and honorable mentions can be viewed on the [Commission’s website](#).

Each year’s winners and honorable mentions are shown in a traveling exhibit at venues up and down the coast. The 2019 contest exhibit locations are the Estuary & Ocean Science Center in Tiburon; Point Reyes National Seashore Visitor Center, the Ford House Museum in Mendocino; Channel Islands National Park Visitor Center in Ventura (through mid-November); and, from December through late-January, the Seymour Center in Santa Cruz. Contest prizes for 2019 were provided in part by donations from Acorn Naturalists, Blick Art Materials, Seymour Marine Discovery Center, and Aquarium of the Pacific. The Tabula Poetica program at Chapman University provided judging assistance. Artwork from the Coastal Art & Poetry Contest is used in many Commission publications and its website.

Kids' Ocean Day Adopt-A-Beach School Assembly Program and Beach Cleanup

This annual program includes a school presentation about the ocean, marine debris, and pollution prevention, as well as a beach cleanup event. In 2019, it took place in six locations: San Diego, Huntington Beach, Los Angeles, San Simeon (where students traveled from Kern County), San Francisco, and Humboldt. In all of the locations, the emphasis of this program is on involving students from underserved schools, and often it provides the opportunity for a child's first visit to the beach. Nearly 7,000 students participated in the 2019 cleanup event, and even more saw the assembly. Students also sat in formation on the beaches to create images and text photographed from the air; in 2019 this "aerial art" featured the theme "Protect What You Love". Photos of the aerial images can be viewed at www.oceanday.net.

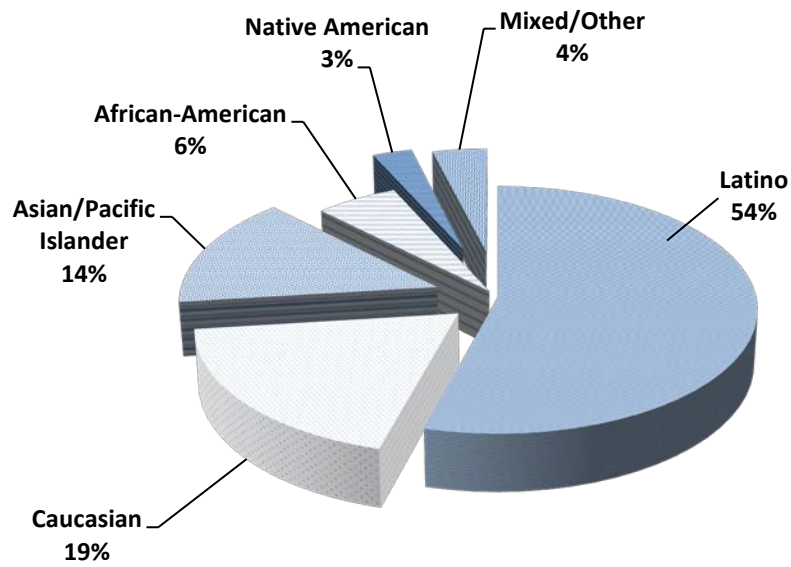
Whale Tail® Grants Program

The Whale Tail® Grants Program supports coastal and marine education and stewardship projects in California by awarding funding to schools, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies throughout the state. The funding for these grants comes from the sales and renewals of the Whale Tail® License Plate and since FY2015/16, also from voluntary contributions to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund on the state tax return form. In the 21 years since the program began in 1998, the Whale Tail® Grants Program has awarded \$14 million to 714 different projects. The program targets both children and the general public with an emphasis on reaching underserved communities. In 2019, the Commission continued its efforts to make the grants program more accessible and inclusive. For the first time, there was a funding category for grants for organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or less, that are working with underserved communities. Other activities included hosting a well-attended live (and recorded) webinar for prospective grant applicants to assist them with the grant application (first offered in 2017); funding Youth Outside to provide workshops in March 2019 for Whale Tail® grantees on cultural relevancy, equity, and inclusion in environmental education; increasing outreach regarding available funding to the Coastal Commission's Environmental Justice mailing lists; and considering cultural competence and cultural relevancy when scoring grant applications.

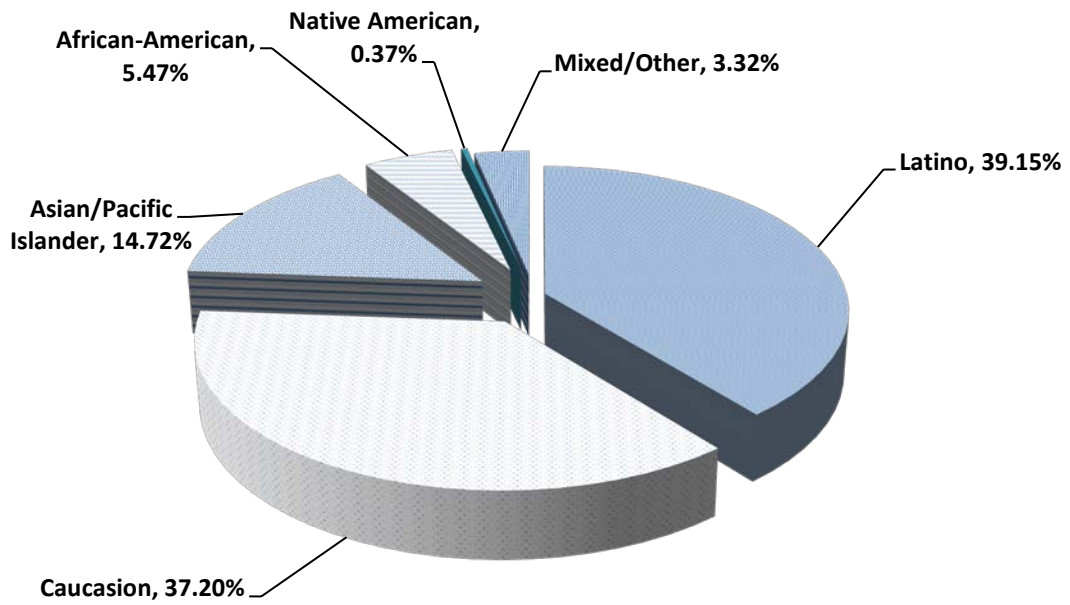
In Fiscal Year 2018/19, the Commission awarded \$863,000 to 29 different projects, including several in a subcategory for projects addressing climate change and/or ocean acidification (Strategic Plan Action 3.3.3). Projects awarded Whale Tail® Grants were located in a broad range of California cities up and down the coast and in some inland locations as well. Examples of funded activities included: a Climate Action Project Symposium in Monterey, open to teachers statewide; Klamath River watershed experiences for Siskiyou County students; a sustainable aquaculture program for San Pedro high students; a "plastic free oceans" job training program; and a "Surfing 101" program for urban San Francisco students.

For the Whale Tail® grants awarded in 2017/18 (the most recent year for which most projects have shared results) that served student populations (60%), staff analyzed available demographic data on ethnic composition. For these grants, 81% of the participants were non-white: 54% were Latino, 14% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 6% were African-American, 3% were Native American, 4% were in another category (often more than one race), and 19% were Caucasian. Comparing this data to the ethnic makeup of the state as a whole, the program reached proportionally more students from Native American and Latino populations, and fewer Caucasian students.

Whale Tail Grants 2017/2018



California Population



Programs for the General Public

California Coastal Cleanup Day

Over the past several years, the Commission staff has expanded outreach and significantly grown the annual [California Coastal Cleanup Day](#) (CCD) event. In 2019, California Coastal Cleanup Day program celebrated its 35th anniversary and hosted one of its largest cleanups ever, with over 1,000 individual cleanup locations across 55 counties. A total of 68,428 volunteers took part in the event, removing 827,736 pounds of debris from the state's coast and inland shorelines, maintaining the cleanup's status as the state's largest annual volunteer event. (Strategic Plan Actions 7.2.5 and 7.3.1).

In addition to its strong support in coastal counties, the cleanup program continues to recruit participants from inland areas to clean creeks, rivers, and lakes. The goals of this inland expansion are to benefit the health of these waterways, remove trash before it washes down rivers and ends up in the ocean, and raise awareness of how California watersheds connect inland communities to the health of our coast and ocean.

In 2019, 19,186 volunteers cleaned rivers and waterways within inland counties, removing 493,361 pounds of debris. This equaled 25.7 pounds per volunteer within the inland counties versus about 6.8 pounds of debris per coastal volunteer. That reason for this difference in poundage has to do with the types of items cleaned up in different locations. Inland cleanups are more often dealing with illegal dumping of large items, whereas coastal areas yield mostly single-use disposables and small pieces of plastic. It also highlights the importance of continuing to expand cleanup participation along inland shorelines throughout the state.

Looking back over the history of the program helps to highlight the cumulative benefit of this program to the health of waterways, the coast, and the ocean. Since the inception of Coastal Cleanup Day in 1985, over 1.6 million volunteers have helped remove over 25 million pounds of debris from California's coast, ocean, and inland shorelines. (Strategic Plan Action 7.2.5)

Coastal Cleanup Day Publicity. One of the most important roles Commission staff plays in coordinating Coastal Cleanup Day is to ensure that the public is aware of the cleanup, why we are doing it, and how they can be a part of the event. Similarly, working with the media to promote the event and tell the story of the cleanup is essential, not only to publicize the cleanup but also to enlarge the audience for the educational messages behind the cleanup. Through these efforts, Commission staff is able to promote broad participation, support local partners, and gain publicity both for the event and for the Coastal Commission itself.

Staff conducts outreach through press releases, media interviews, and by producing and distributing cleanup campaign posters, postcards, and on-line messaging. Media outlets provide the cleanup with extensive coverage, with hundreds of stories in newspapers, on-line publications, on radio and television, both before and after the event.

The cleanup has a long history of memorable, educational, and eye-catching event posters, dating back to its inception in 1985. This year the Commission staff decided to once again feature a California artist on the cleanup posters. Marin-area artist Tom Killion generously donated three pieces of his landscape artwork to the program, pieces that highlight the diverse landscapes found along the coast and inland as well. The beauty of Mr. Killion's artwork helped capture the public's attention to bring additional publicity to the event it promoted. The posters were designed by Public Education staff, and distributed broadly around the state. They were extremely well received by local coordinators and volunteers alike. Here are the 3 posters, depicting from left to right: southern California, Northern California, and an inland landscape of a Sierra river:



Campaign posters and postcards were printed in both English and Spanish, and distributed to across the state through local coordinators. Staff and local coordinators also shared the images widely across social media, and can be viewed on the Coastal Cleanup Day webpages, found here: www.coastalcleanupday.org

Staff continued to refine a new tool for publicizing and growing the Cleanup – the Commission's [on-line map](#) showing every cleanup location in California. The 1,000+ sites mapped this year were among the most ever publicized during the cleanup. The map was a powerful and valuable tool for volunteers and organizers across the state,

providing a simple, one-stop approach to connecting volunteers with their cleanup location.

Corporate Partners in CCD. The Coastal Cleanup Day Program once again enlisted strong corporate partners, which greatly assisted outreach efforts. Crystal Geysers Alpine Spring Water continued as lead sponsor for the event. In addition to their financial support, Crystal Geysers provided free water, primarily in gallon-size containers, in 26 Coastal Cleanup regions, covering most Cleanup volunteers. This is a crucial benefit that helps local coordinators immensely. Crystal Geysers was joined by continuing sponsors Oracle, the Whale Tail® Ecoplate, Union Bank, California State Parks Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, along with an array of in-kind and media support from partners around the state.

Story Map. To commemorate the 35th anniversary of California Coastal Cleanup Day, PE worked with the Commission's mapping staff to produce a [story map](#) that looks back at cleanup history. The online site tells the stories behind the cleanup, with photographs through the years, profiles of key cleanup leaders, milestone events, and accomplishments.

BYO for CCD. In an effort to reduce the amount of waste created by the event itself, volunteers are urged to bring their own reusable cleanup supplies from home, rather than relying on the single-use disposable plastic items available at cleanup locations. Staff has also been encouraging local organizations to seek donations of buckets and reusable gloves whenever possible. The BYO for CCD initiative has grown each year it has been in place, as more volunteers hear the message and more local coordinators gather enough reusable supplies to make the plastic bags and gloves unnecessary. In 2019, about one-half of all participants brought a reusable item to the cleanup or were able to use buckets and other reusable cleanup items provided at their site.

The initiative is helping to reduce the environmental footprint of the cleanup – staff has ordered about 250,000 fewer single-use plastic trash bags over the past four years than it would have otherwise, while educating volunteers about simple lifestyle changes that cumulatively can have enormous benefits to coastal and marine environments.

(Strategic Plan Action 7.3.2)

CCD Survey. Staff again surveyed Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers about their experience in order to continue to improve the event and learn about the overall impact of the cleanup. Volunteers were incentivized to take the survey with coupons for free chips and guacamole from Rubio's. Results from the survey are still coming in as of this report, so staff will provide a verbal update during the November meeting presentation.

Adopt-A-Beach® Program

Commission staff has continued to improve the [Adopt-A-Beach® Program](#), connecting volunteers with the resources they need to organize their own cleanups and become environmental stewards in their local communities. The program has strong participation in the 15 coastal counties and in recent years has expanded into Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Each of our 51 beach managers assists groups in conducting cleanups at their “adopted” beach, helping to bring approximately 50,000 people to an Adopt-A-Beach® Cleanup annually. (Strategic Plan Action 7.2.5)

Each group that participates in three or more cleanups (or just one cleanup for school groups) through the Adopt-A-Beach® program is recognized on the Commission’s website and receives a certificate acknowledging their participation in the program and thanking them for their contribution.

California King Tides Project

The California King Tides Project helps people visualize how sea level rise will impact their lives by inviting them to take and share photos of the highest high tides of the year. The Project was launched in 2010 by a partnership of state, federal, and non-profit organizations. The Coastal Commission took on the lead responsibility for this project in 2018. In 2019, Public Education staff created new webpages for the [California King Tides Project](#) on the [Coastal Commission’s website](#), including a page of lesson suggestions and resources for educators to incorporate the King Tides Project and sea level rise into their curriculum. Public Education staff worked with Mapping Unit staff to launch a new map-based platform to display king tides photos, enabling members of the public to submit their photos directly to the California King Tides website and see them plotted on a map of California. The new geographic display has increased the accessibility for those seeking to use this citizen science data. During the 2018/2019 season, 38 local community events were held for California King Tides and approximately 800 photos were submitted, in addition to active sharing on social media.

Project Grow (formerly Community-Based Restoration and Education Program)

Project Grow (formerly Community-Based Restoration and Education Program) continued its work at the Upper Newport Bay, begun in 2001. The program name was changed in 2018 to reflect the program’s balance of education and habitat restoration. The tag line “People and Nature Growing Together” is now used to communicate these objectives.

To date, the program has engaged over 26,400 volunteers, who together have restored more than 15 acres of coastal salt marsh, riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats.

Volunteers have planted over 27,700 native plants (the vast majority of which were propagated in an on-site native plant nursery) and removed over 54 tons of invasive plant material (not including material left on site).

2019 programming worked on maintaining and expanding current restoration sites. Volunteers who attended restoration events represented schools, community groups, and corporations through such varied groups as Chapman University, Saddleback College, UC Irvine Center for Environmental Biology, Newport Bay Conservancy, Master Gardeners, PIMCO, Advanced Sterilization Products (ASP), and CNA Financial.

Project Grow also hosted three high schools for a recurring restoration program. With recurring visits, students from Costa Mesa High School, El Modena High School, and Western High School were able to learn more about riparian habitats and see the restoration of their plots throughout the school year. Active participation in a restoration project reinforced ecological concepts and training in environmental issues they studied in the classroom.

Training Environmental Leaders. Staff continued building its program to recruit and train college interns, who act as leaders for community habitat restoration events. Students from diverse backgrounds receive training in volunteer event management, environmental education, and ecological restoration techniques. In 2019, CBREP engaged 20 interns from UC Irvine Center for Environmental Biology, Chapman University, and Saddleback College. The recruitment and training of these student leaders increases the program's capacity to act as a resource for engaging the community with their local environment and ways they can protect and restore it. The students receive real world experience as environmental leaders in their community.

Ecosystem Focus. 2019 marked a shift toward new habitats in the program's ecosystem focus. Coastal sage scrub has dominated Project Grow's restoration work and continues to receive attention in our Newport Valley site. With new funding from local mitigation projects, Project Grow's restoration work is turning toward riparian habitats in Newport Valley. Additionally, the increased presence of a non-native, invasive salt marsh plant, Algerian Sea Lavender (*Limonium ramosissimum*) is also quickly moving up the program's priority list of restoration projects. As volunteers began work in riparian and salt marsh ecosystems in 2019, future reports will show the continued progress of public education and habitat restoration in these ecosystems.

Our Wetlands, Our World High School Curriculum. Staff continued to distribute the high school curriculum "Our Wetlands, Our World." The curriculum focuses on the history and ecology of Upper Newport Bay; the effects of urbanization, invasive species and loss of biodiversity; and the importance of restoration and stewardship. "Our Wetlands, Our World" activity kits allow teachers to borrow materials needed for each activity.

Digging In Guide. The CBREP also continued to distribute “Digging In: A Guide to Community-based Habitat Restoration.” The Guide explains the basic steps of information gathering, site selection, project implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and working with volunteers.

Ocean and Coastal Photography Contest

In 2019 the Commission continued its partnership with the Thank You Ocean Campaign to co-host the 21st Annual California Ocean & Coastal Amateur Photography Contest. Hilton Hotels donated overnight stays for the winners. This year there was a total of 585 entries submitted. A panel of judges selected three winning photographs and nine honorable mentions, and online voters selected their favorite as the “viewers’ choice” winner. All of the winning photographs are featured on the [Commission’s website](#).

Staff continued to offer a traveling exhibit of a selection of winning photographs. Upcoming locations include the Arcata Library in January to March 2020 and The Napa County Library in April to June 2020.

Other Forms of Public Outreach

[Coast4u.org](#). The Commission’s Public Education web pages provide detailed information on all of the programs, contests, and resources offered to the public. They include Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach information, downloadable curricular materials and hard-copy request forms; a video links page; a page in Spanish highlighting available Spanish language resources; Whale Tail[®] Grant guidelines and application; how to purchase a Whale Tail[®] License Plate or donate to the Protect Our Coast and Ocean Fund; clean boating information; and interactive maps on topics such as Whale Tail[®] grant-funded project locations and beach wheelchair availability. From January 1 through October 6, 2019, the Public Education web pages had nearly 503,000 page views.

Social Media. PE social media platforms provide the public with a way to keep apprised of opportunities and events and to interact on topics of mutual interest. The PE Program uses social media to raise awareness, share content, invite participation, communicate about programs, and help build a constituency centered on coastal stewardship and conservation. Through social media, staff builds and strengthens connections with other like-minded organizations and keeps our supporters engaged. Staff shares partners’ posts, thanks sponsors and supporters, and celebrates pro bono advertising campaign teams.

Our numbers are growing on every platform: (as of October 30, 2019)

- [Facebook](#): 38,061 people like our page
- [Twitter](#): 13,856 followers
- [Instagram](#): 3,112 followers
- Constant Contact: 52,310 contacts

Environmental Fairs and Events. Coastal Commission staff hosts educational booths throughout the state encouraging coastal stewardship, environmental awareness, and marine education. This year we attended several new events bringing together creativity, science, and new ways to think about coastal issues such as access, climate change, and plastic pollution. Our 2019 list of events includes Monterey Whalefest, California Science Teachers Association Conference, Los Angeles Sanitation Districts Earth Day, North County San Diego Earth Day in Oceanside, South Bay Earth Day in Chula Vista, Earth Day at Folsom Lake, Santa Clara Arbor Day, East Bay STEM Career Day, Sunset Elementary Fair, Community Resources for Science Teachers Fair in Oakland, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Climate Summit.

Email News Blasts. Using the Constant Contact email service, we maintain a mailing list of subscribers who have signed up via fairs, Coastal Cleanup Day, and our website to keep in touch. Our targeted messages include: newsletter updates, grant opportunities, cleanup events, contest announcements and awards, as well as any new program initiatives and education materials.

Policy and Coordination

Public Education staff participates in a number of groups that focus on policy and broad topics of mutual concern related to environmental education, marine debris, and other issues. Participation in these efforts are helpful in a variety of ways – strengthening and expanding networks, sharing ideas and practices, learning about key trends and initiatives. These groups include the California Environmental Education Interagency Network, Community Resources for Science, and the Marine Debris Alliance.

The Marine Debris Alliance (formerly known as the Marine Debris Action Coordination Team of the West Coast Governor’s Alliance on Ocean Health), which commission staff has chaired since 2008, continued its efforts to coordinate and collaborate work on marine debris along the West Coast. In 2019, the Alliance hosted webinars for its members and others on marine debris solutions with a focus on progress made towards goals set out in the state Marine Debris Action Plans that have been adopted by Washington, Oregon, and California. (Strategic Plan Action 2.2.10)

Commission staff has also been collaborating with the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) on its California Ocean Litter Strategy. Originally adopted in 2008, and significantly revised and updated in 2018, the plan has spurred numerous actions by stakeholders to achieve its goals. Staff has coordinated with staff at OPC and NOAA to host semi-annual webinars to update and review progress on the plan. An in-person meeting to review the first two years of actions is planned for the summer of 2020.

Funding Sources

The main sources of revenue for the Public Education Program are the Whale Tail[®] License Plate and the Protect Our Coast and Oceans tax check off. In addition, via a partnership with the California State Parks Foundation, the Program raises funds through grants, corporate contributions, and other funding efforts. All of the funding sources described in this section implement Strategic Plan Action 7.4.6.



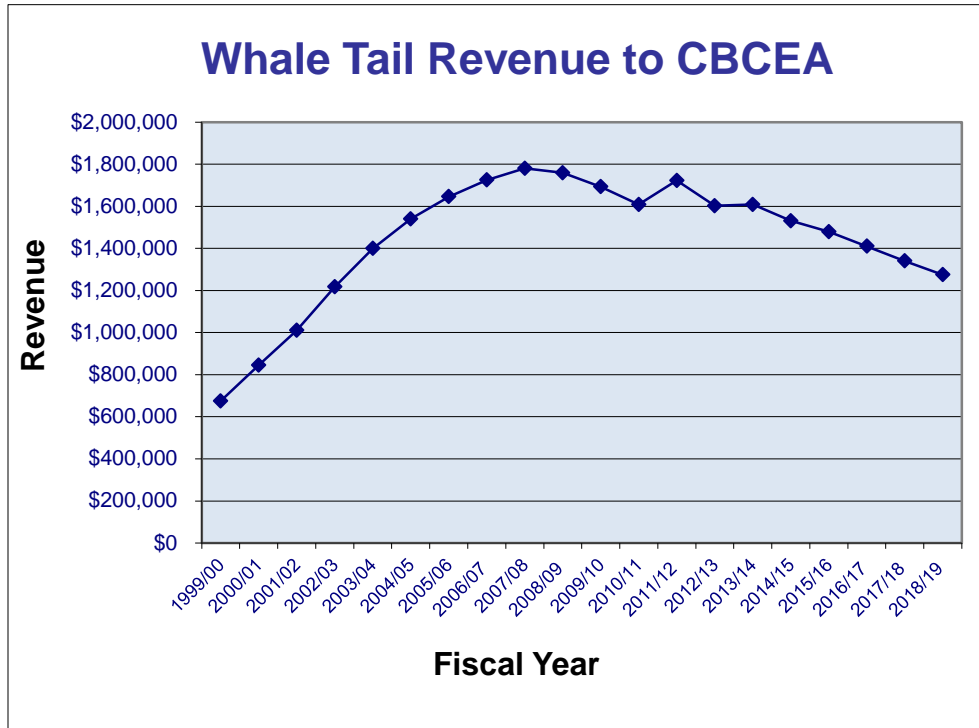
Whale Tail[®] License Plate

Over the course of fiscal year 2018/19, California drivers purchased 5,291 Whale Tail[®] License Plates, which combined with renewal fees from existing plates, resulted in close to \$5 million in revenue for environmental programs. Of this amount – \$1.28 million went to the CBCEA, and \$3.68 million went to the ELPF. Each year, the legislature appropriates funds from the CBCEA to the Coastal Commission to carry out Coastal Cleanup Day, Adopt-A-Beach, and other coastal and marine education programs, including the Whale Tail Grants Program. The CBCEA has also provided funds to the State Coastal Conservancy. The ELPF funds a variety of state environmental programs.

Looking back over time from its launch in 1997, a total of 255,939 California drivers have purchased the Whale Tail[®] License Plate, and sales and renewal fees have contributed \$107 million to environmental programs - \$30 million to the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account (CBCEA) and \$77 million to the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF).

Over the 22 years of the Whale Tail[®] Plate's history, sales and renewals have provided a steady source of revenue for Coastal Commission education programs and Whale Tail grants. More recently, annual sales have begun to decline, reducing the overall revenue available. A number of factors are likely responsible, including the length of

time the plate has been on the market and stiff competition from other specialty license plates. The staff is working to improve Whale Tail Plate sales and seeking alternative revenue sources.



To raise awareness of the plate, the Commission has contracted with Radley Studios, which has embarked on an 18 month marketing campaign. The campaign is built around a core Whale Tail[®] License Plate public service announcement, which showcases the California coast and the Whale Tail[®] License Plate program through the imaginative lens of California's next generation. The campaign strategy uses core content, paid search, social optimization, and targeted advertising coinciding with license plate renewal timing. Creative tactics focus on connecting with audiences emotionally and building sustained interest and support. The campaign is in its early stages; results will be available later in the process.

In addition to traditional marketing, an important tool for public awareness is seeing the license plate on others' cars. We greatly appreciate all those who have supported this cause by purchasing a Whale Tail[®] Plate and encourage everyone to participate. Whale Tail[®] Plates can be purchased at www.ecoplates.com. Consider a Whale Tail[®] Plate as a holiday gift this year.

Tax Check-off Box for “Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund”

Beginning in 2014, California taxpayers had the opportunity to check a box and make a donation to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund in the voluntary contributions section of the state tax return. Funds from donations to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund support marine education and coastal stewardship, through the Whale Tail® Grants Program.

As of the end of September, contributions to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund during 2019 totaled \$315,754. This year's “Check the Coast” marketing campaign had both print and radio elements. Radio advertisements ran on public radio stations KPCC in Los Angeles, and KQED in the San Francisco Bay area. Print ads featured environmentalist and author Paul Hawken, surfer Mary Mills, and surfer and designer Kassia Meador. Photography was donated by Mark Leibowitz.

The campaign ran between February and May of 2019 and included “out of home” advertisements on BART trains, online advertisements on The Inertia, Google AdWords, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. www.checkthecoast.org. In addition, numerous partner organizations helped to spread the word to their constituencies and extended the campaign's reach.

Cleanup Day Sponsorships

The Public Education Program raises funds for California Coastal Cleanup Day through corporate and government partners. A list of sponsorship partners for Coastal Cleanup Day 2019 is included in the section of this report on Coastal Cleanup Day.

Other Fundraising Efforts

The Public Education Program encourages donations to support coastal and marine education programs. To this end, staff maintains a “[Donate/Shop for the Coast](#)” page on the www.Coast4u.org website. In addition to making a donation, the public can purchase t-shirts, hats, and posters. The site links to an [on-line art gallery](#) where the public can purchase framed prints of selected winners of the photo contest and art contest. Greeting cards, throw pillows, tote bags, and more, printed with the images are also available for purchase.