



## April E-Newsletter

### THE PATH OF TRASH

Each year, 5 to 14 million tons of debris flows into the ocean from coastal areas. Not only can it be toxic to aquatic wildlife and humans, this pollution degrades the water quality and destroys the beauty of our oceans and beaches. Litter is a debilitating global issue, and one that we can take steps to mitigate in our coastal communities.

Understanding the path trash takes through city streets, storm drains, and creeks to the coastal environment and ocean is an essential part of pollution prevention. In an effort to outline the debris trail from upstream sources to the ocean, Channelkeeper recently developed a “Watershed Wise” educational tool that illustrates the path of trash through the watershed. It shows how each of us can help stop the flow of trash to the sea by helping keep streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and storm drains free of garbage. Read our [blog post](#) and click [here](#) to download the Watershed Wise handout.

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EDUCATION



ADVOCACY



FIELD WORK



ENFORCEMENT



## AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION

Irrigated agriculture is the nation's number one source of pollution to rivers, streams, and groundwater supplies. Despite this fact, the agricultural industry is exempt from the Federal Clean Water Act. In California, agricultural pollution is regulated by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board through a program previously known as the "Ag Waiver". On April 14-16, the Regional Board will consider approval of "Ag Order 4.0", the latest iteration of the Region's program that is supposed to protect our waterways from fertilizer and pesticide pollution.

Many farmers are committed to protecting water quality. However, in general, agricultural pollution is widespread and severe in the Central Coast Region. Though many farmers strive and work towards sustainable farming practices, a subset of egregious polluters do not, and they undermine our progress as a Region. Based on the Region's own findings, on average, farms apply an order of magnitude (10 X) more fertilizer than is safe to protect groundwater supplies. Forty-four percent of stream and river monitoring sites in agricultural watersheds exceed the drinking water standard for fertilizer pollution by two-fold or more,

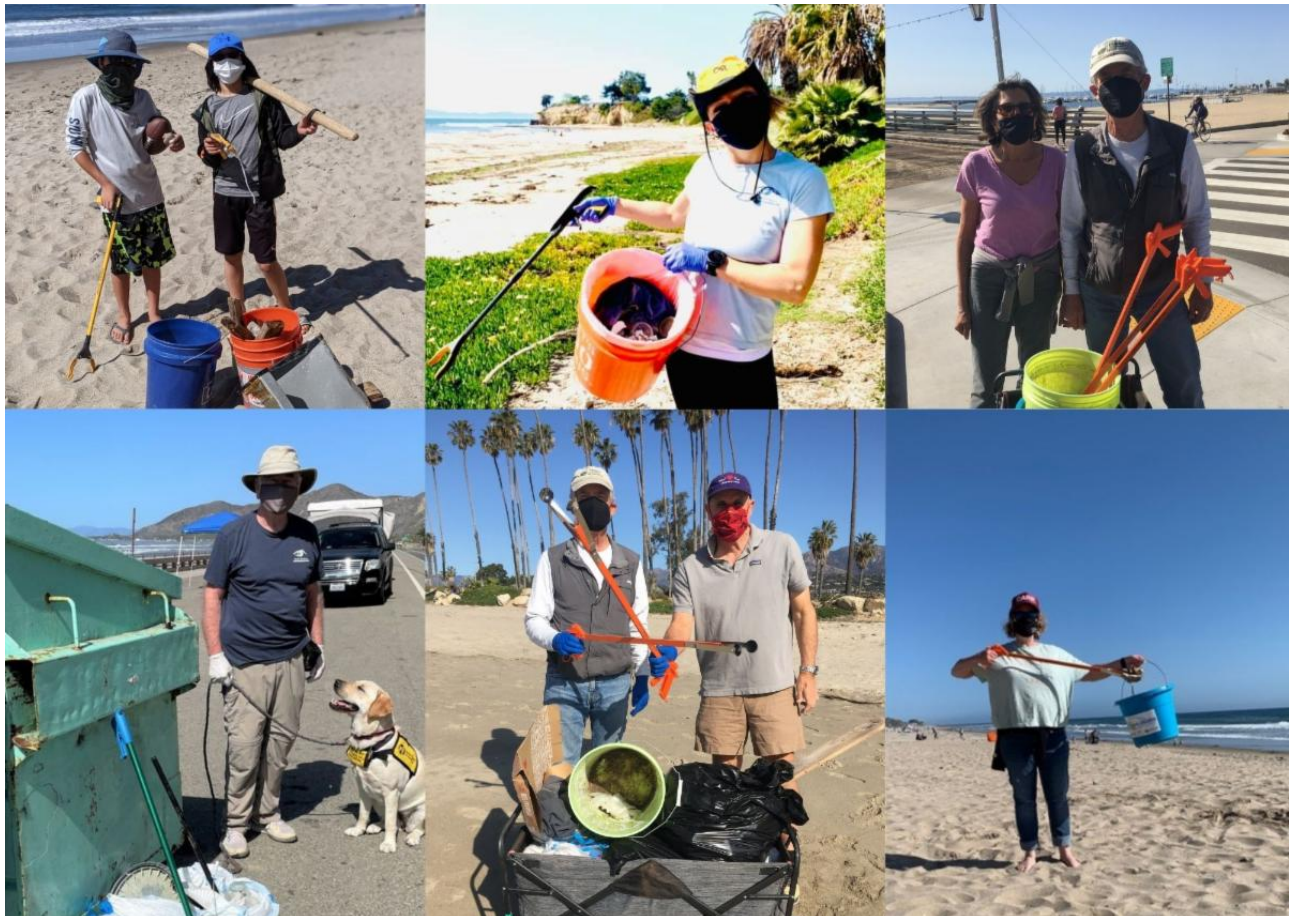


and this standard does not even begin to protect aquatic ecosystems from harm. In many areas, trends are worsening. Several waterways the Carpinteria and Goleta Valleys continue to suffer from agricultural pollution without any assurance that conditions will improve.

In 2015, Channelkeeper and our allies prevailed in a lawsuit challenging the adequacy of existing regulations that address agricultural pollution on the Central Coast. The Court agreed that the regulations failed to protect public health and the environment and directed the Regional Board to develop stronger regulations that require verification that farmers actually are achieving water quality standards within an established timeline. Unfortunately, after years of development, the proposed Ag Order 4.0 fails to ensure that water quality will be protected and restored. Though the Order contains progressive new actions designed to protect waterways, its effectiveness is fatally undermined by loopholes and alternative compliance pathways designed by the agricultural industry to protect farmers who do pollute from accountability.

- Read [here](#) for a detailed assessment submitted to the Regional Board by Channelkeeper and our conservation partners.
- Read our supplemental comment letter [here](#).

On April 14th, Channelkeeper will testify at the adoption hearing to voice our disapproval, and we will continue our 16+ year campaign to protect Central Coast waterways from agricultural pollution as the issue progresses.



## THE WATERSHED BRIGADE SET NEW PARTICIPATION RECORDS!

March was an exciting month for Watershed Brigade clean-ups! A total of **75** volunteers spent **168** hours picking up **879** pounds of trash from **35** different

locations! We're grateful for those of you who participated in our World Water Day Dispersed Clean-up and Monthly Challenge. You helped us reach new heights!

We awarded two lucky Brigadiers a \$100 gift card to the Bluewater Grill and a \$50 gift card to Salty Brothers Soap Co. For April's Monthly Challenge we will be giving away two gift cards (for \$100 and \$50) to Santa Barbara Running Co. We hope you'll join the Monthly Challenge to get in on the clean-up adventures and the friendly competition!

Local trails and turnouts are the focus of April's dispersed clean-up event in celebration of Earth Day. Read on for more details or check out the [Watershed Brigade Event page](#) to sign up!

We are also pleased to share that we now have Channelkeeper Watershed Brigade swag! T-shirts, stickers, and clean-up kits are all available for [purchase](#) or can be earned through participation in the [Monthly Challenge](#)!

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## JOIN THE "SKIP THE STUFF" CAMPAIGN!

The next time you support our local restaurants and order take out for dining at home remember to "Skip the Stuff" you don't need! Every year, billions of unused straws, utensils, napkins, condiment packets, and other accessories are included in take-out and delivery orders and just thrown away.

Single-use foodware is a huge and growing portion of the waste stream entering landfills and incinerators, and polluting city streets and waterways. In the US, 561 billion disposable food service items are used every year, resulting in 4.9 million tons of waste. Many restaurants provide these accessories for take-out meals even if the customer doesn't need them.

Skip the Stuff is part of Upstream's National Reuse Network program to encourage local and state governments to enact policies that require restaurants to "ask first" before adding all the accessory items to the order. This will not only reduce waste but also save restaurants money.

In California, **Assembly Bill 1276**, has been introduced to Skip the Stuff and make accessory items available upon request. It's still early in the legislative process and the bill is making its way through committees. Let our local state legislators know you support this bill! And remember to Skip the Stuff next time you order take out!

[Sign the Petition](#)



## 18th ANNUAL STUDENT ART SHOW April 22nd

Channelkeeper is thrilled to host our 18th annual ocean-inspired Student Art Show, **"What the Channel Means to Me."**

While this year the student reception and awards ceremony will take place virtually as part of the [Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival's Youth Leadership Day](#), hosted by the Community Environmental Council, the theme of the show remains the same and we couldn't be more excited to host a show celebrating local students, their incredible art skills, and the natural beauty and biodiversity of the Santa Barbara Channel.

The goal of the show, which features artwork by high school students from across the South Coast, is to inspire local youth to create art that celebrates the Santa Barbara Channel, and for their art to inspire others in our community. This year's show will be juried by [Claudia Borfiga](#) and cash prizes will be awarded winning students thanks to the show's long-time sponsor, [Trillium Enterprise, Inc.](#)

California State Senator Monique Limón will announce the student award-winners during the virtual reception at 3:55 pm on Thursday, April 22nd. Please join us for the virtual reception—you won't want to miss this opportunity to view incredible ocean-inspired art created by local teens!

Click [here](#) for more information or send us an [email](#).





## **TRAILS & TURNOUTS DISPERSED CLEAN-UP EVENT April 24-25**

Celebrate Earth Day and help keep the environment litter-free! Join us for a dispersed clean-up event targeting front country trails and trailhead areas the weekend of April 24-25.

The goal over the weekend of April 24-25 is to clean trails and turnouts throughout Santa Barbara, Ojai, and Ventura. Volunteers will head out independently to different trailheads, front country parking areas, and trails along the South Coast to remove trash. We've created a sign-up form to ensure that we cover as many trail areas as possible.

Earth Day is April 22, and while this year's celebration is virtual, you can complement the online event by heading outdoors to clean up trash. Making sure that our environment is litter-free is a great way to honor the Earth while supporting Channelkeeper's goal to make water swimmable, fishable, and drinkable for all.

Help us achieve this by signing up to clean a trail area in our watershed this weekend. Visit the [event webpage](#) for details and to sign up!

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## CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AT CEC's VIRTUAL 2021 SANTA BARBARA EARTH DAY FESTIVAL!

Join in on conversations with climate leaders, get into the groove with musical performances and art contests, build community, connect with eco-minded exhibitors, and learn how you can lean into climate action at this urgent moment.

We hope you'll stop by **Channelkeeper's virtual booth** and say hello and swing by our student art show reception and award ceremony which are part of this year's virtual [Earth Day Festival](#) on April 22 at 3:55 pm.

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## ASK YOUR LEGISLATOR TO SUPPORT THE BREAK FREE FROM PLASTIC POLLUTION ACT OF 2021

Approximately 11 million metric tons of plastic waste escapes into the ocean from coastal nations every year. Here in the United States we generate the most plastic

waste per capita of any country in the world and much of that waste makes its way into the environment.

The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act (BFFPPA) recognizes that we cannot recycle our way out of this problem and provides a comprehensive approach to reduce plastic pollution, including source reductions for single-use plastic items, producer responsibility requirements, and targets for collection, reuse and recycling, and more. [Take action now](#) and ask your federal legislators to support the BFFPPA!

Break Free From Plastic



### CHANNELKEEPER \$50 MONTHLY DONATION BUNDLES

Good news! Our Channelkeeper monthly membership t-shirt offer is back with a twist! Join our monthly donor program to donate \$50 per month or more, for twelve months, and you will receive not only a Channelkeeper t-shirt but a set of your very own Channelkeeper branded bamboo utensils, a Riviera Towel tote embroidered with the Channelkeeper logo, and a Channelkeeper hat.

Your monthly donations support Channelkeeper's mission to protect our local Channel and its watersheds through science-based advocacy. Get your bundle today!

Monthly Donor





### PINNIPED STRANDING SEASON

Every year around this time, we see an increase in the number of seals and sea lions (pinnipeds) on the beach in need of medical attention. This is called stranding season. Common reasons for strandings include injury, illness, disease, malnutrition. Sometimes this is due to recent weaning, viral infections, or algae blooms such as domoic acid toxicosis.

Our partners at [Channel Islands Marine Wildlife Institute](#) (CIMWI) rescue, rehabilitate, and return stranded marine mammals. They have rescue teams available 24-hours a day through their hotline. Here are their recommendations for wildlife encounters.

- Please don't touch, feed, cover, pour water on, or coax stranded wildlife.
  - Observe the animal, its physical characteristics, and condition from a minimum distance of 50 feet. Keep people and pets away.
  - Determine the location of the animal and note any landmarks to help wildlife specialists easily find it.
  - Call the Channel Islands Marine Wildlife Institute Hotline at (805) 567-1505. Provide your name, phone number, and information about the animal and its location.
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**Your support for Channelkeeper's efforts  
is needed now more than ever.**

Become a member of the Channelkeeper crew today with your tax-deductible donation. You'll be investing in clean water and healthy communities along the Santa Barbara Channel today and for future generations.

With your membership, you will receive our regular newsletters, news updates and action alerts, invitations to special Channelkeeper events and fun volunteer opportunities, and a free Channelkeeper sticker. All new donors contributing \$50 or more can also receive a Channelkeeper t-shirt, and for donations of \$250 or more, bi-annual issues of [Waterkeeper magazine](#). Become a member today!

**BECOME A MEMBER**



*Including Santa Barbara Channelkeeper in your estate planning will provide the funds needed to protect water quality, fight pollution, and educate our community about the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds for years to come. Contact Development Director [Debra McCarty](#) to learn more.*

KEEPING WATCH FOR CLEAN WATER  
SINCE 1999



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