



Santa Barbara
CHANNELKEEPER®



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VOLUNTEERS AND GROUPS COLLABORATE TO CLEAR MARINE DEBRIS FROM CHANNEL ISLANDS

Santa Barbara, CA - On Monday, May 4, 2026, eighteen volunteers joined representatives from Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, Island Packers, Santa Barbara Adventure Company, Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara, Tidy Seas, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to clear approximately 775 pounds of trash and fishing gear from Chinese Harbor on Santa Cruz Island.

This event is part of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's larger effort to remove marine debris from five different marine sanctuaries across California, Washington, and the Gulf of Mexico, a project supported by a 2023 award from the [NOAA Marine Debris Program](#).

During the day-long cleanup effort, the group removed trash from the remote shoreline. They collected items such as mylar balloons, plastic bottles, shoes, irrigation tubing, and large metal boat pieces. They ferried the trash from shore using kayaks and a skiff and loaded it onto boats that brought it back to the mainland for proper disposal.

Debris from land-based sources is a significant source of marine debris in the Channel Islands. In the Santa Barbara Channel, trash from the mainland is carried out from shore into coastal waters and beyond. Lost fishing gear and trash from marine sources are also transported by currents. Some of this debris washes up on the remote shores of the Channel Islands, while other persists in the Pacific Ocean.

"These annual cleanups provide a valuable opportunity to bring our partners and volunteers together for a productive and meaningful day of service in a very special place," says Channelkeeper's science and program manager Molly Troup. "We hope that these events inspire community members to continue to elevate the plastic crisis and push for meaningful change."

Michaela Miller, Sr. Conservation Manager for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, said, "Removing marine debris from the shorelines of Channel Islands National Park and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary is important to the local community, and this debris removal effort is the result of expert coordination and teamwork among multiple partner organizations. We are proud to steward these waters alongside our partners to remove marine debris from these beaches and fragile ecosystems."