

2025 Annual Report



Our Program Impacts



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A word from the Executive Director

As I reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude for the community that makes Save Our Shores possible. This year was a powerful reminder that when people come together in defense of our coast, real and lasting change happens.



From the beaches of the Monterey Bay to city council chambers, we saw what's possible when people come together to protect the coast. Together, we secured landmark ordinances banning the sale of single-use filtered tobacco products—tackling one of the most common forms of plastic pollution at its source—and mobilized strong public opposition to new offshore oil drilling proposals that threaten California's waters. At the same time, we brought more than 1,300 students into hands-on learning experiences, engaged thousands of volunteers in beach and river cleanups, and transformed community action into data that strengthens our advocacy.

More than half of our funding comes directly from community members, a powerful reminder that this work is rooted in local commitment and shared responsibility. Every student reached, every pound of debris removed, and every policy advanced reflects your belief in a thriving coast for generations to come. Thank you for standing with Save Our Shores and for helping turn awareness into action and action into lasting impact.

Katie Thompson
Save Our Shores

Making Waves



Hosted
155
BEACH, RIVER, &
WATERSHED
CLEANUPS



10,269
HOURS WERE
VOLUNTEERED
To help foster a thriving
Bay



Engaged
9,587
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS
at 275 education,
outreach, volunteer, and
activism events.



Teamed up with
24

SCHOOLS

in

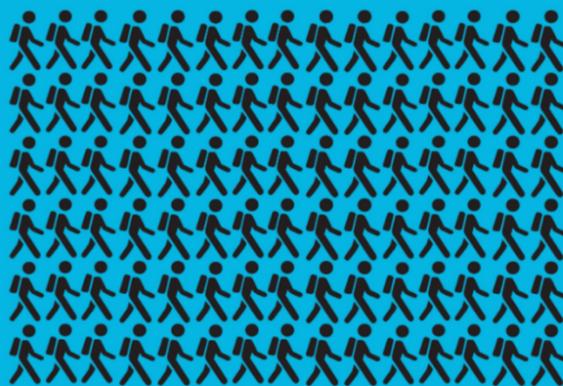
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SCHOOL DISTRICTS
to engage

1,328

STUDENTS

in ocean conservation
curriculum about the
Monterey Bay Sanctuary,
plastic pollution, and how
they can do their part every
day



Kept over

13,378

POUNDS

of trash out of our beloved
Monterey Bay



4620

VOLUNTEERS
Joined our events and
made it all happen



Top 5 Items Collected:

- 35,781 plastic pieces
- 23,346 cigarette butts
- 17,361 paper pieces
- 16,250 plastic food wrappers
- 11,816 misc. items

Save Our Shores uses data from community scientists of all ages and diverse backgrounds

Pushing the Tide



2025 was a pivotal year for Save Our Shores, marked by decisive action on plastic pollution and a renewed fight against offshore oil drilling along the California coast, including the Monterey Bay.

Save Our Shores secured major policy wins together with other organizations and government partners by successfully advocating for ordinances in the Cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola that ban the sale of single-use filtered tobacco products. These landmark actions confront one of the most pervasive forms of plastic pollution at its source, reflecting the power of community-driven advocacy to protect local waterways, neighborhoods, and beaches.

When the current federal administration proposed opening federal waters off the California coast to new offshore oil drilling, Save Our Shores moved quickly to coordinate People’s Hearings and mobilize public opposition. By creating accessible spaces for community members to learn about the proposal and providing clear tools to submit public comments, we amplified local voices and sent a strong message that California’s coast is not open for extraction.

Together, these campaigns underscore Save Our Shores’ commitment to stopping pollution at its source and standing firm against threats to California’s coast. These victories were made possible through close collaboration with coalition partners, public officials, and engaged community members who showed up to support bold, preventive action.

"Every time I volunteer with Save Our Shores, I see the impact our advocacy and outreach have firsthand. Even the smallest action creates a wave of change." - Mary Scheller, Sanctuary Steward

The Next Gen of Ocean Stewards



1,328

youth engaged



105

classes from 24 schools



57%

schools engaged were Title I

Empowering students to connect with the Monterey Bay, build healthy eco-identities, and become lifelong stewards of our coasts and oceans.

Save Our Shores education programs bring students from the classroom to the beach, turning lessons about marine science and plastic pollution into hands-on experiences that connect them to the Monterey Bay. Through interactive presentations and field trips, students explore local ecosystems, participate in community science beach cleanups, and witness the impact of their actions firsthand.

This year, our programs reached 1,328 students from 105 classes within 24 schools around the Monterey Bay area and beyond. More than half of the students we reached came from Title I schools, bringing hands-on experiences with the Monterey Bay to youth who might not otherwise have these opportunities.

"The most important thing I learned from Save Our Shores is that we need to take care of the ocean for it to take care of us." - 6th grade student from Fremont Elementary School (Salinas)





Clean Shores

From rivers to beaches, Save Our Shores cleanups bring community members together to restore habitats, witness the impact of pollution, participate in community science data collection, and leave our outdoor spaces better than they found it.

"What I found was more than a cleanup. I found big-hearted people across generations who enjoy the open air and the quiet power of turning small acts into meaningful change." - Josh Stuart, Sanctuary Steward



Awareness

Every cleanup is more than picking up trash, it's a chance for participants to see how marine debris travels from streets and rivers to the ocean, understand its impact on wildlife and communities, and discover the simple actions they can take to prevent pollution at its source.



Action

Volunteers at each cleanup practice stewardship of the Monterey Bay while contributing to community science by tracking the trash they collect. Their efforts turn action into data, helping guide solutions and protect our coast.



Advocacy

Every piece of trash volunteers collect becomes a tool for change, giving Save Our Shores the data needed to push local and regional policies that tackle marine debris at its source.

▼ Save Our Shores

Annual Coastal Cleanup Day

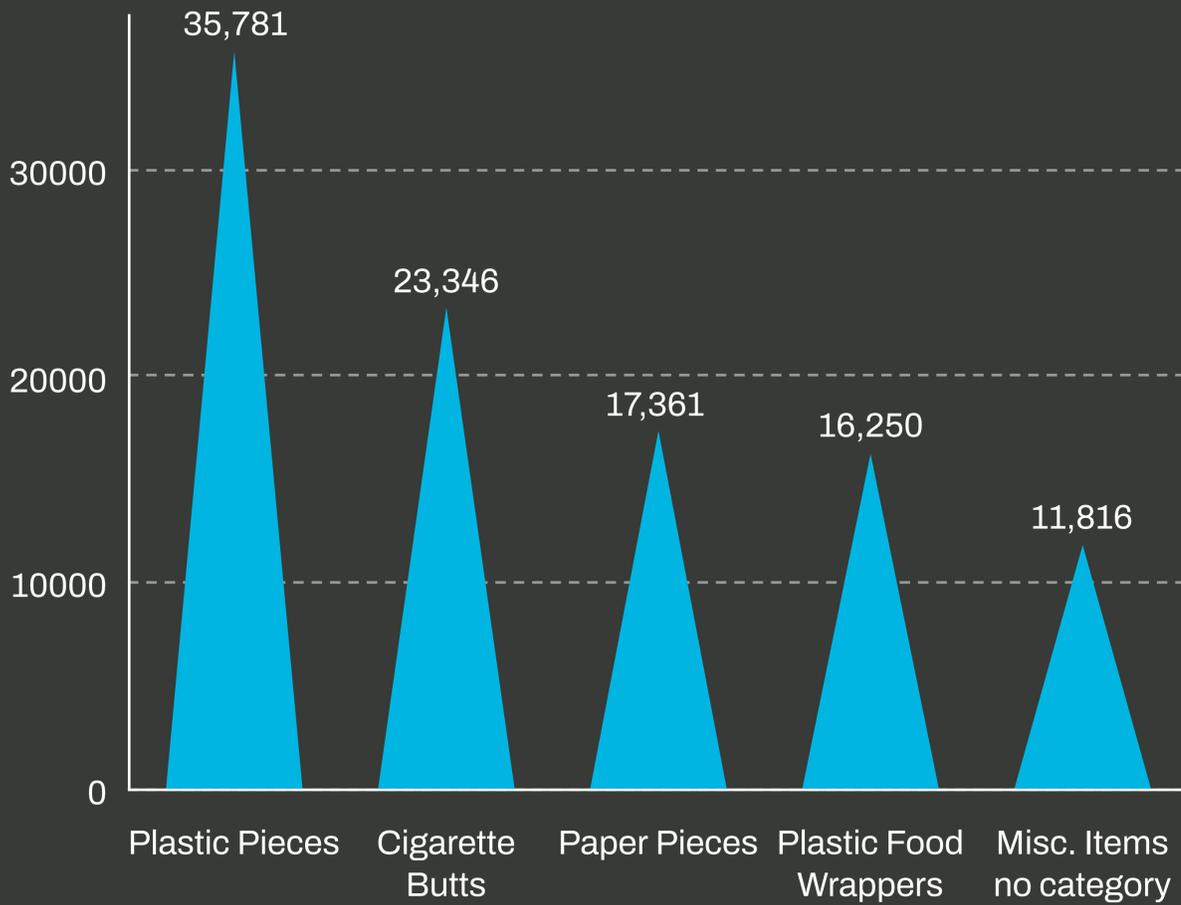
On September 20, the spirit of community was on full display as Save Our Shores marked the 41st Annual Coastal Cleanup Day. From Waddell State Beach to Andrew Molera State Park, 1,412 volunteers fanned out across 58 sites, working together to keep 6,801 pounds of pollution out of the Monterey Bay. In just three hours, community volunteers cleared thousands of pounds of trash and recyclables, finding everything from a \$2,000 check to a fake mustache, and enjoyed the debut of the new “Trashure Hunt,” a statewide scavenger hunt that brought extra excitement to the day. As volunteers gathered data to guide future pollution-reduction efforts, the event once again demonstrated the dedication our community holds for the coast.

“This year’s turnout shows how deeply people care about Monterey Bay” - Krista Rogers, Program Manager



Community Science

Top 5 Items Collected



Highlights

- 155** Beach and River Cleanups
- 4,620** Volunteers Participated
- 10,269** Volunteer Hours Dedicated
- 13,378** Pounds of Debris Removed
- 147,963** Pieces of Debris Collected

Turning Community Action into Impact

Data collected at community cleanups is a powerful tool that informs and strengthens our advocacy efforts by transforming hands-on stewardship into community science. By tracking the types and quantities of debris found, we are able to educate decision-makers and the public about how pollution moves through our watersheds and impacts the Monterey Bay. Cleanup data consistently shows that plastic materials make up the top items most commonly collected and continue to be the most pervasive form of marine debris encountered during cleanups. These findings help raise awareness, shape policy priorities, and support advocacy campaigns aimed at reducing plastic pollution at its source and protecting our coastal ecosystems.

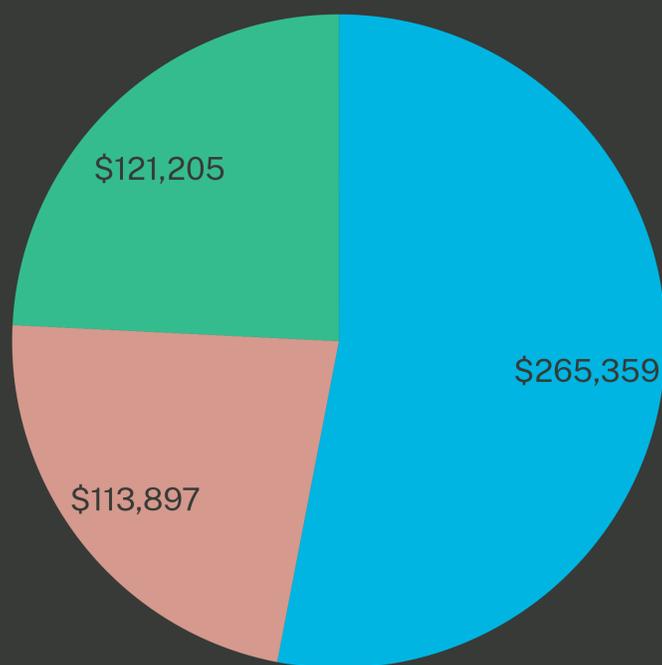


Community Investment

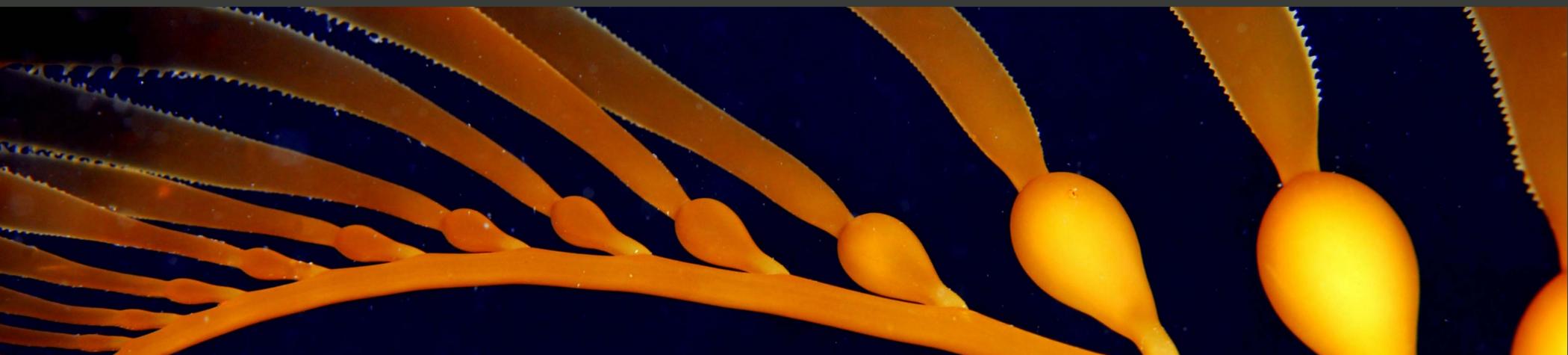
More than half of our funding begins with people, community members who care deeply about clean shores, healthy oceans, and a thriving Monterey Bay we can all be proud of. Every gift, whether large or small, is a vote of confidence in this work and a powerful reminder that coastal protection starts at home. The rest of our support comes from grants, foundations, and mission-aligned contracts that help strengthen and expand our impact. Together, this partnership between community generosity and institutional investment fuels lasting change and ensures that, with your continued support, our work for the coast grows stronger each year.

2025 Funding Sources

\$500,461



- Community Support (53.02%)
- Contracts & Other Revenue (22.76%)
- Grants & Foundations (24.22%)



We Swim Forward

As we look ahead, we are building on the power of community action to deepen our impact and create lasting solutions for a thriving Monterey Bay for all.

The stewardship and community science generated through cleanups, education, and volunteer leadership continue to guide our advocacy and shape our priorities. We will remain a strong and consistent voice opposing offshore oil drilling proposals that threaten our ocean, climate, and coastal communities, using data and lived experience to advocate for lasting protections. At the same time, we are launching new education initiatives and strengthening existing programs to reach more students and community members, fostering environmental literacy and a shared sense of responsibility for our watersheds. By connecting local action with bold advocacy and accessible education, we are moving forward with purpose, momentum, and an unwavering commitment to a thriving Monterey Bay for generations to come.

Community



Community Science Data

Beach & River Cleanups



Earth Month Community Action

Youth Education



Coastal Classroom

Junior Sanctuary Stewards



Advocacy



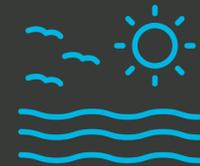
Oppose Offshore Oil Drilling

Expand Ban the Butt



Watershed Pollution Prevention

Impact



50 Years Coastal Act

5 Year Strategic Plan



The work ahead depends on all of us, and together we can protect our coastline through stewardship, education, and collective action.



Our 2025 Program Impacts

From policy change to educational programs, we're ensuring ocean conservation throughout the community. Our programs and projects are designed to support the foundations of clean, healthy shores, and a **thriving Monterey Bay for all.**

Contact

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