

Solutions for NJ Trash Free Waters

Conference Call Notes June 8, 2016

Education to Action Plans – discussed status of action plans based on information learned from May 4th meeting.

- Brick Township – Litter abatement is their focus since they are a commercial hub with significant waterfront. Revamping their Adopt – A – Spot program; currently businesses are receiving publicity for keeping an area clean but with limited engagement and enforcement. Bring in elected officials, local landscapers and other groups onto this issue and enlist the Police Department for enforcement of anti-littering ordinances. Coming up with plan grass roots education to remind people.
- Upper Freehold Regional School District wants to reduce plastic pollution in schools. 2016 graduating class offered to purchase water refilling stations as class gift. Some pushback from food service vendor since water bottle sales is a money maker. Discussed opportunity to sell reusable water bottles to offset profit margin.
- Ocean Township working on a program called Trash Free Asbury and looking to reduce single use items from restaurants and other food service vendors. Working to expand Clean Water Action’s Rethink Disposal program. This is a fantastic structured program that works with local business and governments via audits, education and data collection to reduce waste. Program originated in California and now available in NJ.
<http://www.cleanwater.org/campaign/rethink-disposable>

Legislative Update

- Bill A3671 establishes fee on single-use carryout bags used in certain stores and dedicates partial fee revenue to “Healthy Schools and Community Lead Abatement Fund.” Getting some traction in legislature. Surfrider Foundation and other environmental groups concerned about the language referencing “biodegradable bags.” Biodegradable plastic bags are still made from traditional petrochemicals, so we have same issues of using fossil fuel and pollution concerns.
- Longport passed single use fee bag ordinance in November 2015. Other towns to follow soon are Brigantine and Ventnor.
- NYC passed 5c single use bag bill. Unfortunately, NY State Senate passed a state preemption bill. This bill is now in the Assembly and we need people to rally and stall this bill. Since we share so much with NY State, it’s critical that preemption bill does not pass.

Data Collection: Showing community, local and state legislatures the importance of reducing plastic pollution at the source with data is critical.

- When collecting litter, track sources and location and effect change. Can use Clean Action Ocean's sample data card:
http://www.cleanoceanaction.org/fileadmin/migrated/content/uploads/Datacard_Final.pdf
- Wyckoff Environmental Commission and Green Team did a plastic film waste recycling study in 2011. 5 families participating representing 19 individuals, **22.4 lbs of plastic film waste was collected in just one week.**

General Comments:

- Cherry Hill Township Environmental Board does frequent cleanups of parks, with emphasis on the streets that border the parks. They also developed a township sustainability plan.
- Consider not allowing vendors to sell bottled water at Township fairs, and events such as school sports. Instead, bring in a MOBILE water refilling stations.
- For people entering/leaving bars & restaurants, there should *always* be a place to deposit cigarette butts. Easy to implement and enforce.
- Litter flying off garbage trucks is a major source of trash in some areas. Also important to have residents put a lid on all garbage.

The Ask – Looking for information or resources on the following items:

- Interesting, engaging and fun signage that asks customers “Do you really need that bag?”
- Photos of animals trapped in debris (e.g., fishing line wrapped around marine animals) for the Marine Mammal Stranding Center.
- Any data on how many volunteer hours and the cost associated with picking up litter?
- Any Adopt-A-Spot programs working well?

Latest reports, videos and resources about plastic pollution. Please use #TrashFreeWaters when sharing on social media.

- Film makers Jay Potter, Paul Garafola and Sara Krieger have teamed up to create a comedic short about a serious problem- The urban blight of plastic bags.

Imagine if you will, the BBC's David Attenborough meets the satire of "The Onion" in the mockumentary, "*Baggus plasticus, The Invasive Species*".

<http://www.baggusplasticus.com/>

- TFW Partner, Cafeteria Culture, has just released a new educational video (many more to come, as part of a series) produced by NYC middle school students, titled "Journey of Plastic Litter – Do You Know Where Your Cap Goes?" This is a GREAT video, including some really beautiful stop-motion animation.
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iuu2zSeKhJQ>
- Environmental Education Fund promotes eco-literacy and stewardship of the environment by encouraging and helping individuals, communities, schools, religious and other organizations plan and hold engaging programs using film and multimedia events. <http://www.environmentaleducationfund.org/index.html>
- By 2050, there will be more plastic pieces than fish in the world's oceans!
<http://ecowatch.com/2016/01/20/more-plastic-than-fish-in-ocean/>
- TFW Partner has useful resources about plastic bags: <http://plasticbaglaws.org/useful-links/>
- Litter Ordinance Template and Handbook: this is a turnkey guide with time-tested solutions for developing and implementing a litter control program in municipalities that are designed to minimize aquatic trash pollution. It's Louisiana-focused, but a great resource with many components that can be used here in our region.

Link: https://owpubauthor.epa.gov/type/oceb/marinedebris/upload/louisiana_litter_handbook_073015_508_final.pdf
- Clean Ocean Action's 2014 Beach Sweep data shows that 69% of beach debris is plastic with top 5 offenders being: Cigarettes, Plastic Caps/Lids, Food, Candy Wrappers/Bags, Straws/Stirrers and Plastic Pieces
http://www.cleanoceanaction.org/fileadmin/editor_group2/Beach_Sweeps/2013_Report/AnnualReport2014.pdf

Next conference call is fall 2016. Thanks to all that participated.

Please contact nchecko@anjec.org for more information and resources.