



## *October eNewsletter*

### **CALIFORNIA'S NEW AND IMPROVED PLASTIC BAG BAN**

Governor Gavin Newsom recently signed legislation to eliminate plastic film bags at grocery stores across California. The [law](#), SB 1053, which takes effect on Jan. 1, 2026, honors the intent of a ban on single-use bags enacted 10 years ago.

California became the first state to pass a plastic bag ban in 2014. However, the ban on single-use bags contained a loophole that allowed grocers to sell thicker plastic bags for a 10-cent fee. In theory, the heavier bags were reusable. But in practice, they became a more substantial form of waste.

As a result, California sent 47% more plastic bags to landfills. According to CalRecycle, the amount of bags discarded by Californians grew from 157,385 tons of plastic bags the year California passed the bag ban to 231,072 tons by 2022.

A plastic bag has an average lifespan of 12 minutes and then it is discarded, afflicting our environment with toxic microplastics that pollute our oceans and persist in landfills for up to 1,000 years. Plastic bags are also one of the most common single-use plastics harming marine wildlife, so this is a positive step for our oceans.

The new law does not restrict the sale of any specific type of bag but requires that only paper bags are available at the point of sale. Under the new legislation, grocery stores can offer recycled paper bags or consumers can use their own bags to carry out their purchases.



## **CHANNELKEEPER VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON COASTAL CLEANUP DAY**

More than 28,000 Californians turned out on September 23rd to participate in California Coastal Cleanup Day, the state's largest annual volunteer cleanup event, organized by the California Coastal Commission. Statewide, volunteers picked up 254,772 pounds of trash and recyclable materials.

In Santa Barbara County, 1,059 volunteers turned out for Coastal Cleanup Day and collected 5,286 pounds of trash and recyclable materials. Local efforts were organized by our friends at Explore Ecology.

Channelkeeper was the site captain at West Beach. We were joined by 31 volunteers who combed the sand from the Santa Barbara Harbor to Stearn's Wharf and collected 47 pounds of trash, including hundreds of tiny pieces of styrofoam, cigarette butts, plastic water bottle caps, drinking straws, fiber bits, and wrappers that we were able to keep out of the ocean and the food chain! Some of the more notable items were a large candle, a Lego toy, broccoli, and a candy cane still in the wrapper!

We are grateful for all of the community members and volunteers throughout the state who helped clean up California's coastline.





## GIRLS IN OCEAN SCIENCE CONFERENCE 2024

Channelkeeper was honored to participate in the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum's Girls in Ocean Science Conference 2024! The conference took place on September 28th for middle school students with boat time on the *Double Dolphin* and in the labs, and on September 29th for high school students aboard the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary's research vessel, *Shearwater*.

Education and Outreach Director Penny Owens and Program Assistant Veronica Moran shared their experiences with marine and environmental science and technology and offered guidance to young women exploring career paths in ocean science.

Throughout the program, 53 young scientists learned about ocean science in labs led by female researchers and graduate students. Some of the topics covered included plankton and all the larval stages of many sea creatures, underwater remote-operated vehicles, marine snow, technical dive operations, marine invertebrates, and efforts to prevent ship strikes to whales in the Channel with practice identifying whale songs.

We believe that connecting students with powerful women in this field will inspire the next generation of female scientists and empower them to solve some of the environment's most pressing issues.



## **ORTEGA NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP**

**Saturday, October 12**

**9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

In October, Channelkeeper will partner with the City of Santa Barbara Sustainability & Resilience Department to clean up the neighborhood surrounding Ortega Park! With the rainy season approaching, it's crucial to remove trash from streets and urban areas before it can wash into storm drains and out into the ocean.

Volunteers will meet at the corner of Ortega and Salsipuedes Street and then spread out through the surrounding neighborhood to pick up trash. Cleanup supplies will be provided. Sign up below to join us!

[Sign Up](#)



## **Santa Barbara Harbor and Seafood Festival**

Saturday, October 21

10:00 am to 5:00 pm



## **SANTA BARBARA HARBOR AND SEAFOOD FESTIVAL**

**Saturday, October 21**

**10:00 am to 5:00 pm**

The Harbor and Seafood Festival is a fun, interactive day that celebrates Santa Barbara's maritime community and the abundance of the Santa Barbara Channel.

The Harbor and Seafood Festival began decades ago as a boat parade and annual "Blessing of the Fleet." Today, the free, family-friendly event provides an opportunity for our community to meet fishermen, learn about ocean-related topics, and enjoy an array of freshly caught seafood. For more information, visit [harborfestival.org](http://harborfestival.org).

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## SUPPORT CLEAN WATER

Want to make a difference for the environment and your community? Making a tax-deductible contribution to Santa Barbara Channelkeeper today is an investment in clean beaches, healthy watersheds, and a more sustainable future. Thank you for your support!

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