

2024 | CONSISTENCY PAYS OFF

Beach Cleanup Year in Review



 Michaela Rabinov



SURFRIDER
FOUNDATION.
VENTURA COUNTY

Overview

In 2024, our consistency paid off as we increased our impact yet again.

Our Beach Cleanups Program serves as a boots-on-the-ground solution to the trash and plastic pollution issue impacting our Ventura County beaches. Often, the first way volunteers get involved with Surfrider is through our beach cleanups. Our community relies on us being out on the sand each month. In 2024, our consistency paid off as we increased our impact yet again.

Even as we found great success across our different cleanup locations, this year didn't come without challenge. Ormond Beach's seemingly never-ending flow of trash continues to be a heavy lift for our volunteers—and one we're trying to find solutions to. The Rincon Parkway faced access challenges due to January's flooding, closures at Emma Wood State Beach, and construction by CALTRANS on Highway 1 — a foreshadowing to the upcoming 2025 closures that will most likely put a halt to our RRP cleanups for a while.

Despite these challenges, our program leads and core volunteers work diligently to ensure that we are up-and-running each month. Thanks to them, we had another strong year and ensured that our beaches were left cleaner throughout 2024.

The Surfrider Ventura County Chapter has three public cleanup programs that run monthly: Ormond Beach and Wetlands, C-Street, and Respect the Rincon Parkway. We also hosted 12 private cleanups in 2024, a mix of corporate groups, youth/student groups, and other organizations. As always, Surfrider supports and encourages solo cleanups as a way to get involved for the days we aren't on the sand.

SURFRIDER VC'S CLEANUP PROGRAMS



Ormond Beach & Wetlands



C St./Ventura Promenade



Respect the Rincon Parkway

By collecting data, we are able to visualize the impact beach cleanups have. Check out our results from the past 6 years.

296

Total Cleanups

348,280

Total Items Collected

10,781

Volunteers Engaged

91,603

Pounds of Trash Collected

Program Results

In 2024, we had 2,595 volunteers remove over 31,748 pounds of trash from a variety of beaches across Ventura County. We hosted 14 more beach cleanups compared to last year, reaching 194 cleanup hours across 90 cleanup events. We targeted 13 different locations, each bringing unique perspectives and challenges (we take a deeper look at our different locations on page 5). Our data was collected from a variety of solo, public, and private cleanups.

We raised volunteer engagement by 16% compared to 2023, engaging 410 more volunteers throughout 2025. Whether that's new or returning volunteers at our events, we were able to make big impacts on our beaches!

OUR 2024 IMPACT

90

Total Cleanups

89,042

Total Items Collected

2,595

Volunteers Engaged

31,748

Pounds of Trash Collected

↑
In 2024, we raised volunteer engagement by 16% compared to 2023.

This year, we continued to have more cleanups, engage more volunteers, and pick up more trash than last year.



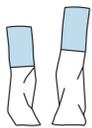
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Data Deep Dive

Our volunteers serve as a strong team of citizen scientists, collecting data on the ground at each of our beach cleanups. In 2024, we continued to find that plastic serves as the biggest contributor to waste at our local beaches. Unfortunately, 65% of all our items collected were plastic, coming in at a total of over 57,000 plastic items removed from our local beaches.

A whopping 19% of our total items collected were plastic fragments. Plastic fragments are small but mighty, causing some of the greatest [harm to our marine ecosystems, disrupting the food chain, and even speeding up climate change](#). With this data to support, we'll continue to [fight plastic pollution at it's source](#) to ensure our beaches are healthy and clean.

TOP 5 ITEMS COLLECTED:



23,791

Cigarette Butts



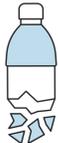
22,008

Glass Fragments



5,727

Small Plastic Fragments



4,438

Large Plastic Fragments

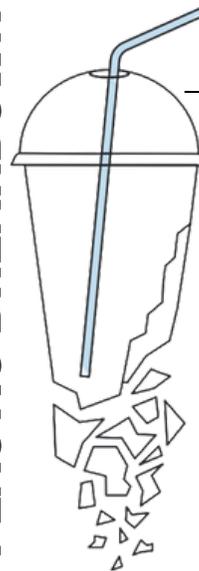


3,468

Large Foam Fragments

Cigarette butts have been our #1 found item for the past five years.

PLASTIC BREAKDOWN



65%

of all items collected were plastic

19%

of all items collected were plastic fragments

10%

of all items collected were large plastic fragments

9%

of all items collected were small plastic fragments

Small Fragments
Smaller than a dime

Large Fragments
Larger than a dime

BROAD USAGE CATEGORIES



47%

Fragments



28%

Smoking Waste



12%

Packaging



6%

Foodware



4%

Other



2%

Consumer Goods



1%

Fishing Items



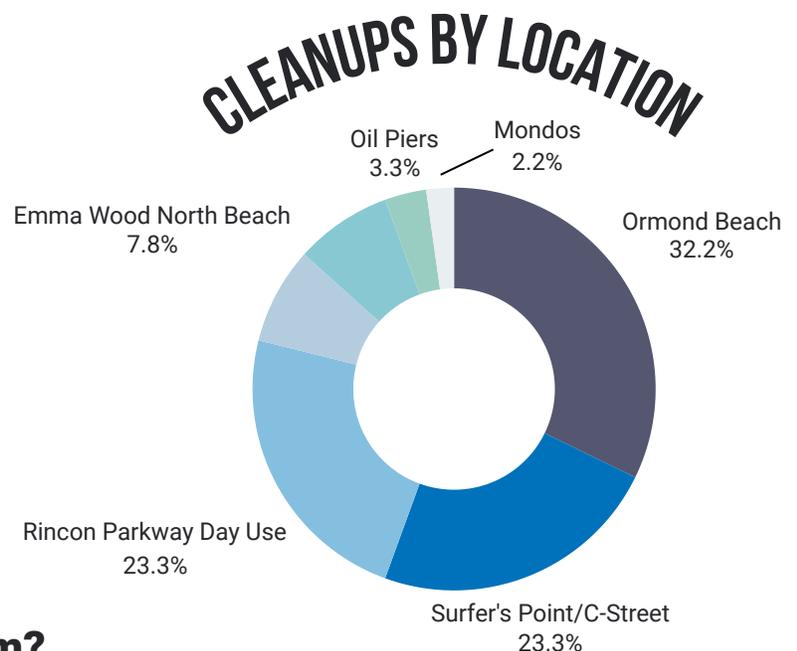
1%

Sanitary & Medical

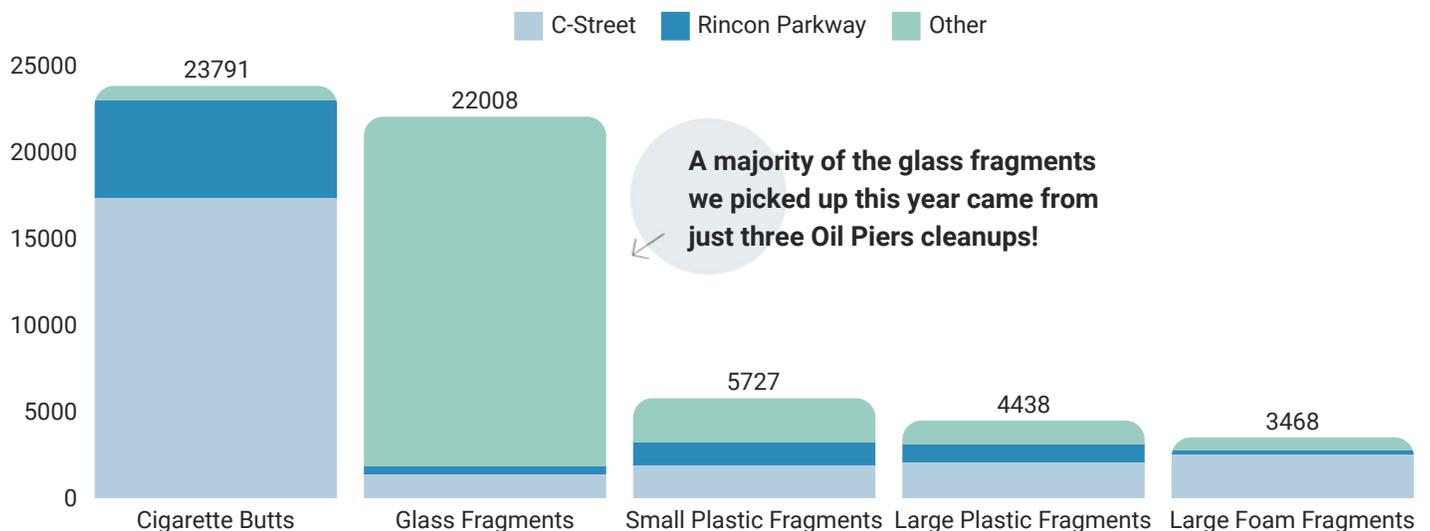
Data Across Ventura

Our chapter covers the entirety of Ventura County, from County Line Beach up to Rincon Point. Though we occasionally do cleanups at a variety of beaches depending on need, we are consistent in the location of our monthly public cleanups at the Rincon Parkway, Ormond Beach, and C-Street.

Thanks to this consistency, we're able to take a look at the differences between each location. Check out the story our data tells us about each of our diverse regular cleanup locations. *Note: we do not collect data at our Ormond location due to the volume of trash being picked up.*



Where did our Top 5's come from?



We found that there was only slight variability in where our Top 5's came from, with a majority of each type being picked up at C-Street. The data reflects the differences in each location's capacity. For instance, C-Street is our largest cleanup program, bringing in over 80 volunteers each month, while Rincon Parkway is limited to 15-20 volunteers per cleanup.

What's Next?

The work doesn't stop here. As we step into 2024, here are some program-specific cleanup reflections and hopes for the future.



Ormond Beach, Oxnard

In 2024, we continued to fight for a cleaner and healthier Ormond Beach and Lagoon. We hosted 17 cleanups at Ormond, both public and private, engaging over 700 new and returning volunteers. Our volunteers picked up over 23,000 pounds of trash from the area. We targeted Ormond from a variety of locations, including Lot C in Port Hueneme, Perkins Road and Arnold Road in Oxnard, and multiple areas on The Nature Conservancy's property.

Moving into the new year, we are excited to continue with our monthly cleanups at Ormond. We also are looking into ways to streamline and more accurately collect data on where the trash is accumulating and coming from. We hope to use this data to urge decision-makers to create solutions towards a cleaner and healthier Ormond.

— Ally Alejo, VC Beach Cleanup Coordinator

Rincon Parkway, Ventura



Respect the Rincon Parkway (RRP) is our beach cleanup program that features coastal maintenance and coastal resiliency advocacy. The area experienced erosion in the RP Day Use (RPDU) section parking lots from the 12 atmospheric storms throughout 2023, which impacted the program throughout 2024. CALTRANS repairs in the area ran throughout the year, impacting visits by our recreational community and tourists. We also lost 4 of our HOTYB ashcan containers to the construction. We collected about 400-800 cigarette butts per cleanup, making them our major cleanup priority item. Instability of the north entry road caused Emma Wood State Beach Park overnight camping to close, putting pressure on the RPDU section parking lots. The uptick in recreational usage brought more trash and illegal fire-pits to the Parkway. Finally, we also saw an increase in full nitrous oxide containers being left on the beach, adding about 40 pounds of trash to our total cleanup weights. While our beach cleanups were staffed every second Saturday, we were especially heartened to see the advent of young families attending our cleanups.

In 2025, the Ventura Overpass Bridge that is the main access point to RP will be closed for two years by CALTRANS starting late spring to early summer to address the bridge deterioration. RRP will be creatively seeking solutions to maintain our cleanups and advocacy for safe and cleaner beaches while preserving this pristine coastline.

— Joy Downing Riley, VC RRP and Blue Water Task Force Lead

C-Street, Ventura



The Ventura Promenade Beach Cleanup program rallied over 1,600 volunteers to pick up more than 3,000 pounds of trash and recycling. This well-attended program, averaging over 100 community volunteers each month, has also promoted solo cleanups throughout our local watersheds and has had many individual community members submit trash data to add to our national database.

In 2025, we're looking forward to welcoming returning volunteers and introducing new volunteers to our chapter activities and events. Because of our high visibility, we have the opportunity to inspire many members of the community to get involved and make a difference for our ocean and beaches.

— Marie Martin, C Street Beach Cleanup Lead

Chapter Updates

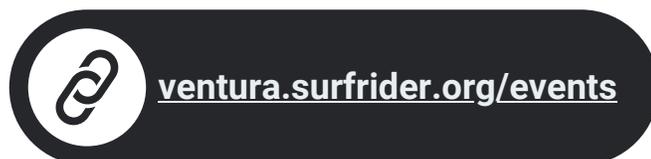
2024 gave us a lot to be proud of. Check out what else our chapter was up to this year!

We hosted our monthly chapter meetings at a variety of venues across Ventura, always keeping things fresh and new. Our Blue Water Task Force continued water quality testing at 19 Ventura County beaches, with Foothill Tech's AP Environmental students running our second lab. Hold On To Your Butt officially reached 855,000 recycled cigarette butts (and counting). We launched our Doo the Right Thing subprogram, aimed to educate the community on the impacts of dog waste on our beaches. In November, we broke ground on Phase II of the Surfer's Point Managed Retreat project. Finally, our chapter was awarded a Coastal Champion Award for our Climate Action projects at Surfrider's 40th Anniversary Super Summit in Long Beach. At the same conference, chapter founding-member Paul Jenkin was honored the well-deserved and esteemed Keeper of the Coast Award. These are just some of the things we get to celebrate—and we have all of our amazing volunteers to thank!



Want to get involved?

Join a chapter meeting or swing by a beach cleanup.
See what Surfrider Ventura County has going on.



All About Volunteers!

From participating in beach cleanups to leading our programs, take a look at some of the awe-inspiring moments from our volunteers doing amazing work in the community.



Credits

This report was a collaborative production of the Surfrider Foundation Ventura County Chapter. Please email aalejo@ventura.surfrider.org for more information on this report.

