



2015 BEACH CLEANUP REPORT

Written for: Surfrider Ventura County Chapter

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Background

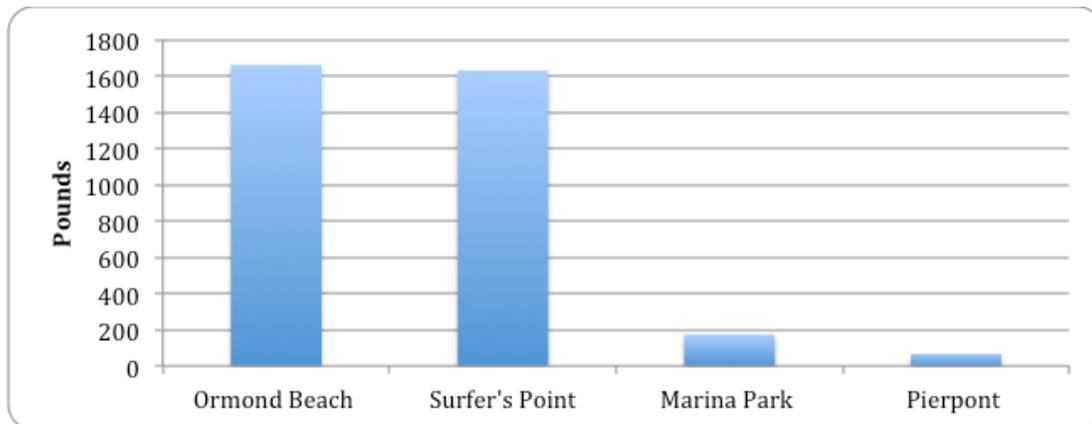
The following report is based on data provided by Surfrider Ventura County Chapter (Appendices 1 and 2) for beach cleanups occurring during the 2015 calendar year. The purpose of reporting the data in a report format is to: 1) Gain a better understanding of the types of debris and the amount of debris that is being collected on our beaches, 2) help inform the location of future beach cleanups, and 3) create a format that can easily be used for publication (e.g., website, press releases, social media, etc.) and to impact change (e.g., efforts to reduce cigarette butts on beaches).

2015 Beach Cleanup Data

Surfrider Ventura County Chapter hosts monthly public beach cleanups. The beach cleanups are organized in order to reduce the amount of trash on our beaches and in our ocean.

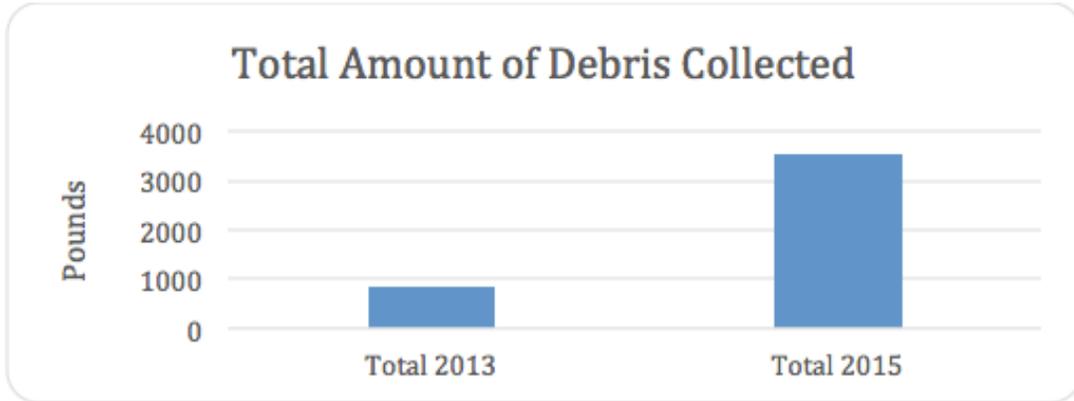
In 2015, a total of 13 beach cleanups (~ 1 per month) were held at local Ventura County beaches. Specifically, a total of 9 beach cleanups were held at Surfer's Point, 1 beach cleanup and 1 beach/water cleanup were held at Marina Park, and 1 beach cleanup was held at Pierpont and 1 at Ormond Beach. Collectively, a total of 3,529 lbs. of trash were collected from our local beaches by volunteers in 2015 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Total Weight of Debris Collected at Each Beach in 2015



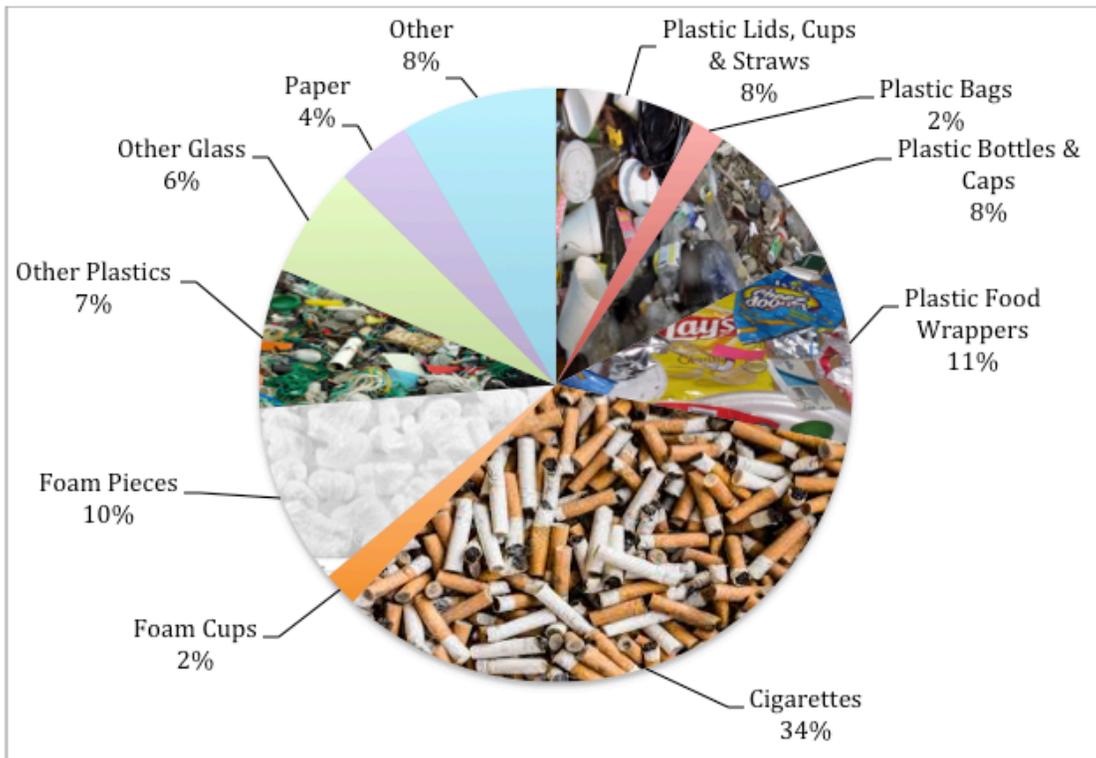
The total amount of trash collected in 2015 was more than four times the amount of trash collected in 2013 (see Figure 2). In the calendar year 2013, there were a total of 11 beach cleanups hosted by Surfrider, resulting in the collection of 837 lbs. of debris (see Appendix 2). Note 2014 data was unavailable.

Figure 2. Comparison of Amount of Debris Collected in 2013 and 2015



As illustrated in Figure 3, items making up the majority of the debris collected were: 1) cigarette butts, followed by 2) plastics (i.e., food wrappers, bottles and caps, cups, straws, and plastic pieces). Other categories of trash included foam, glass, and paper. Notable items collected during beach cleanups were: syringes, dead animals, crack pipes, a massive tire tractor and candle holders. The data collection spreadsheet is located in Appendix 1.

Figure 3. Types of Items Collected in 2015



Recommendations

1. Data collection suggestions for 2016 to inform a more detailed report:
 - Obtain trash inventory from each volunteer. This would allow Surfrider to create a graph of the number of pieces of trash that were collected for each item (rather than only showing percentages as we did this year).
 - Capture the number of volunteers that participated in each beach cleanup. This would allow us to graph the # of lbs collected/volunteer. This could be motivating for those who participated and may encourage future participation.
 - Keep historical data to get an understanding of how litter on the beach is changing over time.
2. Create a page on the Surfrider Ventura County website for beach clean up data. Some of the graphics and text from this report can be used for the webpage to educate and encourage participation from the community. Note that San Diego Coastkeeper has created a page for their beach cleanup data on their website and the graphics created in this report were largely based on what San Diego Coastkeeper has done.
3. Use the data to demonstrate that our local beaches, namely Surfers' Point/C Street area, have a problem with cigarette butt litter despite the fact that smoking is not allowed on the beaches. Examples would be: educating community stakeholders about the impact of tobacco waste on the environment, increase the amount and size of no smoking signage on the promenade, increase fines and penalties for butt litter, etc.