

# The Drop

SPRING 2022





The Surfrider Foundation is committed to fostering a just, equitable, diverse and inclusive organization for all people who protect and enjoy the world's ocean, waves and beaches.

Our success and impact depend on learning from our community, standing in solidarity with our allies and working toward a more just future, both for our organization and the environmental movement as a whole.



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# Making a Quantum Leap of Action

For nearly four decades, the Surfrider Foundation has driven a fundamental and pivotal network of passionate activists who take action to protect what they love. Starting in 1984 in Malibu, California, a small group of people decided to stand up and make their voices heard to save their threatened surf spot and coastal environment. They generated a tidal wave of momentum that has grown into a nationwide movement with global affiliates that are effecting change around the world. From Hawai'i to Puerto Rico and Senegal, we are mobilizing dedicated volunteers, members and supporters at local, state and national levels to advance our mission to protect the world's ocean, waves and beaches for all people for the future.

Together, we are working to not only elevate our efforts but also to take a quantum leap to tackle some of the most major global threats of our time, including water pollution, plastic waste and the climate crisis. We are on the ground in local communities, fighting for change and testing the water so people

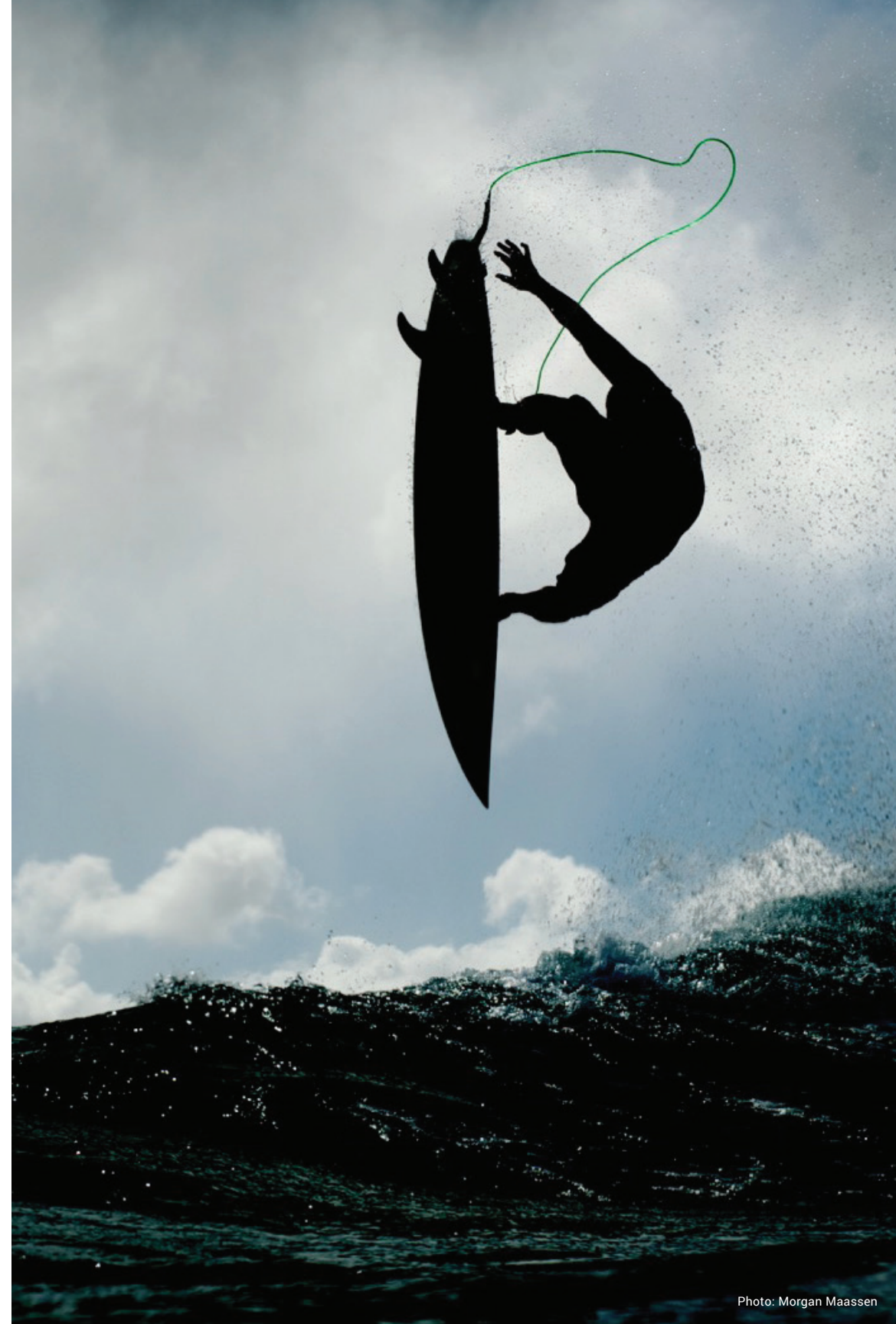
know where it's safe to surf, swim and play at the beach. In addition, we are working at state and federal levels to advance the protection of clean water and demand improved infrastructure to stop sewage pollution. With nearly 800 victories, our efforts are creating a tangible difference and are also inspiring the next generation to get involved and take action for the future.

Our achievements are only possible with the help of our incredible network of dedicated people, like you, who are making a lasting impact. Thank you for your continued support of our mission to protect clean water and healthy beaches for all people.

For our ocean, waves and beaches,



Dr. Chad Nelsen  
Chief Executive Officer





# A Pivotal Time for Coastal Protection

By: Zach Plopper, Senior Environmental Director

I was four years old when Glenn Hening, Lance Carson, Tom Pratte, Chris Blakely and a group of surfers in Malibu, California, mobilized against the threats to their local surf spot. In doing so, they founded the Surfrider Foundation. Incorporated in 1984, Surfrider has been on the frontlines of coastal and ocean protection ever since.

Many past wins for the organization, which I now help to represent as Senior Environmental Director, have held special importance in my life. I was able to enjoy the results of those initial efforts in Malibu, where I frequently surfed during my grad school days at the University of California, Los Angeles. In 1985, Surfrider won in federal court against the Army Corps and stopped a breakwater from wrecking Imperial Beach's incredible shoreline and estuary. I would surf that beach a thousand times while working in the same area with WILDCOAST for 13 years before joining Surfrider.

In 1987, Surfrider created public beach access to San Diego's Seaside Reef, which became my home break soon after that win. In 1993, Surfrider's San Diego Chapter succeeded in stopping unregulated sewage outflows at Penasquitos Lagoon next to Torrey Pines State Beach. During my high school years, that was a favorite stretch of coast to surf and later, it was a favorite summer play spot for my kids.

In 2008, the year I launched my career in ocean conservation, Surfrider was pivotal in activating its network to stop a toll road

project that would have been catastrophic for Southern California's premier waves at Trestles. I attended that emotional Coastal Commission hearing in Del Mar and since then, I have carried with me the inspiration of possibility that surfers and friends of the ocean can actually save our coasts.

Over the years, Surfrider has achieved hundreds of more victories, activated tens of thousands of volunteers and spread its impact across the country and the world.

I could not be more excited to join Surfrider during a pivotal time for ocean protection and the organization. It is unfortunate that plastic pollution continues to plague our waterways and beaches, poor water quality puts too many beachgoers at risk and the worsening climate crisis threatens the resilience of our coastlines. However, I am fully confident that our teams of policy and conservation experts, along with Surfrider's vast chapter and student club network, are the most competent at addressing these issues.

Together, we are knocking on the doors of Congress, the Senate and the White House to advance policies that will save our coasts. During Surfrider's 6th annual Coastal Recreation Hill Day, more than 160 recreational leaders, professional surfers and delegates from Surfrider's chapters and student clubs held 145 meetings with congressional representatives to discuss solutions for our ocean, waves and beaches.

We are focused on three federal priorities to help make the nation a leader in ocean protection.

The first is to tip the scales across the nation in favor of plastic pollution prevention through the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act. While eliminating single-use plastic waste in our ocean at local and state levels is critical, the time has come for a unified federal push to achieve this goal. This act is the nation's most comprehensive solution to curbing the plastic pollution crisis and will not only require minimum recycled content for plastic products, but it will also end recycling waste exports and pause permits for new plastic production facilities.

With federal programs in place to ensure our beaches are safe from sewage and runoff pollution, the U.S. is well equipped to reach Surfrider's long-term goal of the protection of clean water and healthy beaches. However, programs that provide critical support to beach water quality monitoring and public notification, such as the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act (BEACH Act), are underfunded and beachgoers suffer as a consequence. Surfrider is calling for more funding for these key programs to make sure we all have access to beaches free of sewage and pollution.

In addition, Surfrider's push of ocean-based climate solutions is essential to the future of healthy coastlines. The coasts and ocean, when leveraged effectively, can provide us with the adaptation and mitigation strategies necessary to have resilient coastlines. Natural solutions, such as restoring carbon-storing salt marshes, seagrass meadows and mangroves, protecting seabeds from mining and offshore oil drilling, and planning for sea level rise with approaches like living shorelines, are critical to this effort. The Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act is a multifaceted proposal that uses the power of a healthy ocean to tackle climate change. This year, we will continue to promote this act and help to put the U.S. at the forefront of natural solutions to the climate crisis.

Surfrider has come a long way since that day in 1984 when our organization's inaugural papers were signed at the Surfrider Inn on the Malibu coast. There are many moving parts as our team has grown, our reach is greater and we have more support to do this work. However, our commitment to clean water and healthy beaches for all people has not changed. Thank you for being part of Surfrider's history and for continuing to join us in our mission.



Beachgoers enjoying the day at Imperial Beach, which was saved by Surfrider activists at the federal level in 1985.

# Driving Large-Scale Solutions in Senegal

By Babacar Thiaw, Founder of Surfrider Senegal

## Please tell us how you got involved with the Surfrider Foundation

I'm Senegalese born, raised in Dakar and have been surfing since I was six years old. Growing up, I saw the plastic increasing and becoming more of a problem in my hometown. In 2013, I inherited my father's restaurant and also opened a surf school. As the owner of Copacabana Surf Village, I started a beach cleanup program with my community. As soon as I finished my studies, I made projects around the environmental issues we have here in Dakar, Senegal, more of a priority.

While I gained exposure with becoming the first zero-waste restaurant in Dakar, which we achieved in partnership with a local association, my passion for protecting the environment and the ocean grew stronger as I could see the local impact. After our lead, we were able to influence 17 other restaurants in the city to transition to becoming zero-waste locations. Through friends at Surfrider Foundation Europe,

in addition to other passionate business owners, surfers and entrepreneurs, we decided to create a Surfrider Foundation chapter in Senegal.

## How did Surfrider Senegal get started?

We started Surfrider Senegal with beach cleanups and awareness about the environment. The buzz grew and allowed us to get in touch with the head of Surfrider Foundation Europe, who gave us a lot of guidance and advice about how to set up a chapter in Senegal. Knowing that everything is interconnected and that pollution is a worldwide problem, aligning with a global group like the Surfrider Foundation allowed us the opportunity to participate and bring solutions to Senegal on a larger scale.

## What are some local issues that are affecting your ocean, waves and beaches?

The main issues impacting our coasts are plastic bottles, single-use bags, sewage, coastal erosion and construction.

**Knowing that everything is interconnected and that pollution is a worldwide problem, aligning with a global group like the Surfrider Foundation allowed us the opportunity to participate and bring solutions to Senegal on a larger scale.**



Above: Surfrider Senegal started by getting the community involved with beach cleanups to raise awareness about plastic pollution.



**What Surfrider projects have you worked on?**

For Surfrider projects, we started small with beach cleanups and got the community involved. Here in Senegal, people are not educated on this subject and protecting the ocean and coasts is not a priority for people living the day-to-day struggle. This makes it a challenge to implement policies and rules on the same level as you would in developed countries.

With that said, our beach cleanups led to a study of the waste that we found and highlighted the most common things we discovered. That continues to help us focus on the source of the issues: educating our people about these pollution habits. For us, social awareness is first.

The project that I am most excited about right now is building a model beach, in partnership with the Portuguese Embassy, to demonstrate to people what it would require to have a clean zero-waste beach. This is participative science with beachgoers and ocean lovers included. The project will last over six months.

**What has been the highlight of your Surfrider experience?**

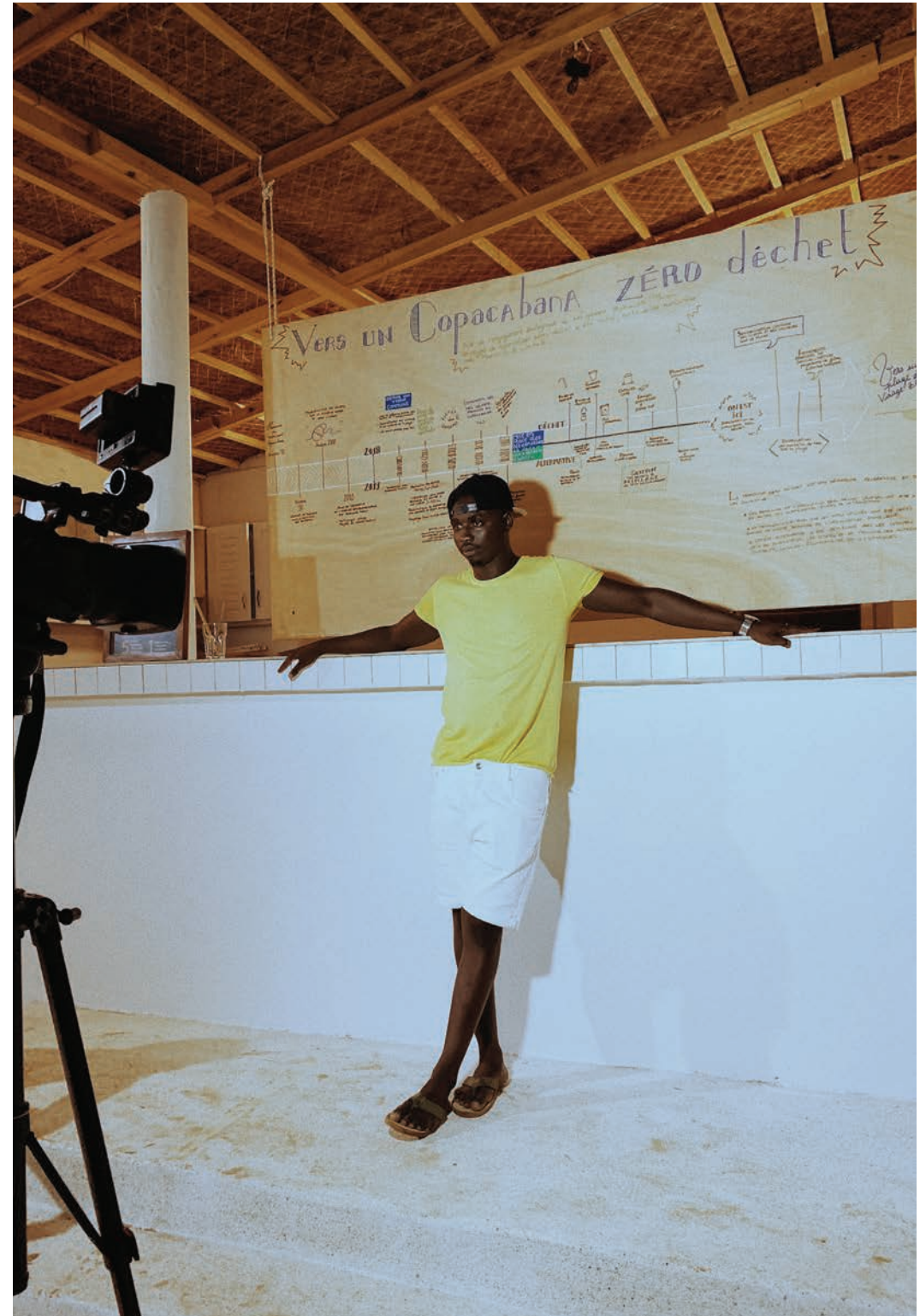
Involving our youth community by working with schools and clubs definitely warms my heart and leaves me hopeful about our future, even if our political leaders are not doing things to change what's going on in the country. With our community, we can work together to protect the ocean.

**What is the most important thing you tell others about Surfrider?**

I tell others that as part of Surfrider, we fight for what we love together.

**Why is being a Surfrider coastal defender important to you?**

I see how much my environment has changed over the last decades and I don't want to be part of the silent people. I am standing up loud and clear, fighting to make a change and pass on a great legacy to my kids and community.



# Fighting to Protect Clean Water and Stop Sewage Pollution

By: Mara Dias, Water Quality Initiative Senior Manager

More than 100 million visitors flock to U.S. beaches every year to enjoy the sand, sunshine and water. In fact, the coastal tourism and recreation industry generates over \$150 billion annually and supports millions of jobs nationwide. Despite how much we cherish our beaches and the massive economic activity they support, coastal water quality continues to be threatened by discharges of stormwater and sewage. Decades of neglect have left America's outdated wastewater infrastructure in disrepair. As a result, sewage spills and infrastructure failures release approximately 900 billion gallons of undertreated sewage into surface waters every year.

Sewage can contain bacteria, viruses and parasites that make people sick with gastrointestinal symptoms, rashes, skin and eye infections, flu-like symptoms, and worse. In addition, sewage discharges can pollute waterways with excess nitrogen that wreaks havoc on coastal ecosystems by fueling harmful algal blooms that threaten human health, cause fish kills, damage seagrass meadows and smother coral reefs. Climate change will only increase these threats to coastal ecosystems as sea level rise, warming temperatures and more frequent and severe coastal storms cause increased flooding, stormwater runoff and wastewater infrastructure failures.

To protect water quality and public health along our coasts, Surfrider is working to ensure that all sewage in the U.S. is adequately collected and treated. To achieve this goal, we are asking Congress to increase funding levels for the BEACH Act Grants Program administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The BEACH Act Grants Program helps coastal states fund their beach water quality monitoring and public notification programs so beachgoers know where it is safe to surf, swim and recreate in the ocean. For over 20 years, funding for this critical public health program has remained level at just under \$10 million, divided between 35 coastal states and territories. As cost of living has gone up over the past two decades, states have struggled to maintain adequate programs while available resources become more constrained. This has resulted in gaps in many beach programs, leaving some beaches not covered for part, if not all, of the year. Surfrider's national network of 50 Blue Water Task Force labs are working hard to fill in these gaps to provide more water quality information for their communities. Our volunteers can't meet this demand alone, however. We are also asking Congress to raise the level of funding for the BEACH Act Grants Program to \$15 million this year, so beachgoers have the information they need to stay safe at the beach. More testing is also necessary to identify problems so sources of pollution can be identified and fixed.



Sewage spills and infrastructure failures release approximately 900 billion gallons of undertreated sewage into surface waters every year. To protect water quality and public health along our coasts, Surfrider is working to ensure that all sewage in the U.S. is adequately collected and treated.

**Surfrider's national network of 50 Blue Water Task Force labs are working hard to fill in these gaps to provide more water quality information for their communities.**

Surfrider is also calling on Congress to make significant investments to repair, upgrade and ensure climate resilience for America's failing water infrastructure. The bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Investment Act that was signed into law late last year was a positive start. This bill provides a total of \$27.35 billion to the EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) over the next five years. The CWSRF is a federal program that provides low-cost loans and grants to states for wastewater and stormwater treatment upgrades. While \$12.7 billion of this funding is

already dedicated, the remaining \$14.65 billion is only authorized. Surfrider's federal advocacy goal for this year is to ensure that this additional funding is actually appropriated. We are asking Congress to include \$4 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund in the FY2023 federal spending bill.

Together with our activists, partners and supporters across the country, we are fighting at local, state and national levels to protect clean water for all people.



# Water Quality Monitoring in Hawai'i

By: Lauren Blickley, Hawai'i Regional Manager

There is an 'olelo no'eau, or Hawaiian proverb, that states, "Inā mālama 'oe i ke kai, mālama no ke kai iā 'oe." Simply put, that means, "If you care for the ocean, the ocean will care for you." In Hawai'i, life revolves around the water. Our communities are dependent upon the ocean for not only recreation, but also for celebrations, gatherings, sustenance and cultural practices. Clean ocean water is therefore extremely important and a necessity.

Despite the clear connection between our communities and ocean resources, drastic land use changes, such as rampant coastal development and large-scale agribusiness, have negatively impacted water quality during the past 150 years. More pollution along the coasts not only affects ecosystem health, but it also poses a risk to public health from exposure to pathogens and other contaminants found in sewage, stormwater and agricultural runoff.

Compounding the issue is the fact that the state agency tasked with monitoring water quality and protecting public health at the beach, the Hawai'i Department of Health, is facing the same staffing and resource shortages that most coastal states are experiencing. Because of this,

many beaches used by local communities are not tested frequently enough, if at all. Even more concerning is the lack of monitoring during heavy rain and runoff events, which are situations that typically elevate the presence of harmful bacteria, nutrients, pesticides and other contaminants in the water. Better public notification of these polluted conditions, including signs posted on the beach, are also needed so people can make informed decisions on where it is safe to get into the water.

## Seeping Cesspool Sewage

Outdated and failing wastewater infrastructure is a major contributor to coastal water pollution in Hawai'i. With an estimated 88,000 cesspools, Hawai'i has one of the highest numbers of cesspools per capita in the U.S. Instead of providing treatment, cesspools allow wastewater from homes and businesses to slowly seep into the underlying groundwater. More than 53 million gallons of partially treated sewage leach out of these cesspools across Hawai'i every day, which contributes to high nitrogen levels in ground and surface waters. During flooded conditions, cesspools can also release pathogens that make people sick.

**More than 53 million gallons of partially treated sewage leach out of these cesspools across Hawai'i every day.**



Photo: Erik Kabik

Surfrider Foundation volunteers on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui maintain year-round Blue Water Task Force (BWTF) water quality monitoring programs to fill in monitoring gaps and quickly communicate with the public about where it is safe to swim.

## Blue Water Task Force Fills in the Gaps

To better protect public health and help bridge critical water quality testing locations, Surfrider Foundation volunteers on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui maintain year-round Blue Water Task Force (BWTF) water quality monitoring programs.

The goal of the BWTF is to fill in monitoring gaps and quickly communicate with the public about where it is safe to swim and where bacteria levels are elevated. Surfrider Foundation BWTF volunteers collect water quality samples and test for the presence of *Enterococcus*, a fecal bacteria that indicates the presence of human or animal waste in the water.

Elevated levels of *Enterococcus* increase the likelihood that other pathogens that can make people sick may be present. The data

collected by the BWTF is also important in identifying chronically polluted sites that should continue to be prioritized for ongoing monitoring, as well as for potential investigation on behalf of the Hawai'i Department of Health.

The water quality information generated by Surfrider's BWTF augments the data that the Department of Health provides through its beach water quality monitoring program. While their monitoring tests only a specific number of beaches on each island, primarily those with lifeguards in popular tourist areas, the BWTF covers a variety of areas popular with recreational users, including surf spots and local bathing beaches. The Surfrider Foundation's Hawai'i BWTF teams collectively sample more than 60 sites across the islands during both dry and wet weather.





Brown waves crashing on the shore at Māliko Bay on the North Shore of Maui, which regularly reports some of the highest bacteria readings in the area.

### Water Testing Results

In order to inform safe recreation, each Surfrider chapter communicates their water quality results widely in the community every time they test. All data is posted on the BWTF website and shared through social media and email. Local media outlets cover these water quality reports, especially when results indicate poor water quality conditions. The BWTF programs in Hawai'i also synthesize and evaluate their water quality results in annual reports to describe trends that identify areas of chronic pollution and to alert the public to areas of potential health hazards.

In 2021, for example, the O'ahu BWTF collected nearly 500 water quality samples across 23 beaches. Results indicated chronic pollution in Kāne'ohe Bay, the largest sheltered body of water in the main Hawaiian Islands and an area that is significant for its cultural, recreational and scenic values.

Three BWTF sites in Kāne'ohe Bay had at least 77% of their samples exceed state health standards. Areas of Kāne'ohe Bay are also considered 'Priority 1' cesspool areas, meaning that there is known wastewater contamination.

On Maui, the BWTF team focuses its monitoring efforts on 17 sites along the island's North Shore. Year over year, Māliko Bay reports some of the highest bacteria readings in the area. Māliko is regularly used by paddlers for downwind runs and it's also where jet skis launch for big wave tow-in sessions. In addition, it sits at the mouth of the Māliko stream that drains Upcountry Maui, which is another 'Priority 1' cesspool area. The data documented by the BWTF at these and many other sites throughout Hawai'i indicates the potential impacts of chronic pollution and the importance of moving the affected communities toward more advanced technologies for treating sewage.

### State Legislation to Improve Testing and Reduce Pollution

While the BWTF program provides critical data to help cover in the gaps of agency testing in Hawai'i, improvements to the state-run water quality monitoring program are necessary to better protect public health at the beach. The Surfrider Foundation is advocating for statewide legislation that would require the Department of Health to sample during both wet and dry weather, and to post signs at popular beaches to warn the public of potential health hazards when Brown Water Advisories are issued.

The legislation would also require the Hawai'i Department of Health to establish a more equitable beach sampling plan by incorporating environmental justice concerns into their monitoring program. On the island

of Maui, for example, tourist beaches in Ka'anapali and Kihei are prioritized for routine monitoring over community beaches, such as Waiehu, Papalau'a ("Grandma's") and Paukukalo ("Big Lefts") surf breaks. This trend of elevating popular tourist beaches over sites favored by local communities, even when pollution concerns exist, is seen on every island.

### Fighting for Clean Water

From moms with kids to canoe paddlers, surfers and divers, communities across Hawai'i stand in strong support for improved public notification and a more equitable and representative state-run water quality monitoring program. Clean water and healthy beaches are vital to our environment and way of life, and Surfrider is working hard to protect our coastal resources in Hawai'i.

**Clean water and healthy beaches are vital to our environment and way of life, and Surfrider is working hard to protect our coastal resources in Hawai'i.**



Photo: Rafael Bergstrom



# The Coast is Always Being Saved

By: Chris Casey, Membership Manager

In the heat of 91 degrees in October, Surfrider's Huntington / Seal Beach (HSB) Chapter was working with eyes on the hot sand, seeking out and picking up bottle caps, cigarette butts, plastic straws and all the other usual plastic detritus that's taking over our ocean and coasts.

There was an additional incentive to be out on the beach on that hot October Saturday. The Pacific Airshow had returned to Huntington Beach after being canceled the previous year during the pandemic.

As each plane made its way toward the pier where the crowd was, they passed right above Surfrider's beach cleanup volunteers on Bolsa Chica State Beach.

At this point in time, few knew of the massive threat already spewing into the waters off of Huntington Beach. By Sunday, the beaches would be closed and the air show canceled. A broken pipeline from an offshore oil platform was spilling what ultimately amounted to 24,696 gallons of oil into the waters right off of Huntington Beach.



Cleanup efforts begin following the rupture of an offshore drilling pipeline in Huntington Beach, California, which released an estimated 24,696 gallons of crude oil into the ocean.

The HSB Surfrider Chapter and Surfrider staff were quickly on the scene. Together, they began sharing updates and recruited volunteers for assistance, served as the NGO liaison to the Unified Oil Spill Command, and ultimately released a smartphone photo app that allowed individuals to report tarball sightings on Southern California beaches as the spill drifted south.

In the face of an environmental disaster, eyes are opened, people are listening, and an opportunity to learn from catastrophes must be taken. For example, less than three weeks following the spill, the City of Huntington Beach became the 100th West Coast community to pass a resolution to officially oppose the expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling.

Just two days after the beaches had been declared as repaired following the October oil spill, they came under a new assault. A sewage line failed on December 30 and

released 8.5 million gallons of untreated sewage before the flow was stopped. Orange County beaches were closed for days. More sewage spills and beach closures soon followed in February. Whether it's from aged and failing infrastructure, clogged pipes, or human error, spills continue to happen and our coasts keep paying the price.

As Peter Douglas, former executive director of the California Coastal Commission, said, "The Coast is never saved. It is always being saved." Surfrider volunteers and members of the HSB Chapter have lived this truth every day. Surfrider's network takes action on a daily basis to cleanup our coasts, hold polluters accountable and defend clean water and healthy beaches for all people. While there are numerous threats to our coasts, we can tackle them when we work together to protect our ocean, waves and beaches for future generations.



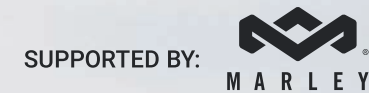
Following the oil spill, Surfrider achieved a significant victory in a city council meeting, as the City of Huntington Beach became the 100th West Coast community to pass a resolution to officially oppose the expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling.



# Get Involved With The Blue Water Task Force

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the Surfrider Foundation.  
Join our network and help us tackle the issues that face our  
ocean, waves and beaches.

[surfrider.org/volunteer](https://surfrider.org/volunteer)



# Tackling Coastal Protection in Puerto Rico

By: Héctor Varela-Valez, Organizador Comunitario de Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico faces monumental challenges in the conservation of the ocean, coasts and beaches. The demand for paradisiacal land with crystal clear waters, easy access to the beach and perfect weather all year round has resurfaced interest in construction in areas susceptible to tides and sea level rise. This has adversely impacted healthy coastal conditions and generated public access problems, resulting in the loss of coastline due to erosion.

Puerto Rico is a tropical Caribbean archipelago in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean with approximately 1225 beaches, only 33% of which are still sandy. For more than five decades, the urban sprawl has affected the metropolitan area and today, the results are visible. Sandy beaches have been lost and turned into rock deposits to protect private coastal properties because of rising sea levels and the onslaught of

hurricane waves, which are outcomes of climate change and poor planning.

The systematic processes of granting construction permits in sensitive areas, in addition to the inaction of regulatory agencies that are to conserve and protect our natural resources, are becoming more pronounced every day. The country is now suffering significant consequences with the loss of coastal natural resources, which are of incalculable ecological and economic value.

One of the most striking cases of morphological change was produced by the impacts of Hurricane Maria. The 2017 hurricane resulted in a loss of beach width and eroded the sand bar that protected buildings. In fact, it is estimated that 90% of Puerto Rico beaches suffered major changes after Hurricane Maria.

After the hurricane came the COVID-19 pandemic and with it, people started to understand the importance of having outdoor spaces. This highlighted the diverse destinations that the Puerto Rican archipelago can provide for enjoyment. Our communities began to feel a sense of belonging and passion for protecting and conserving existing natural resources. They also understood that community self-management is the primary tool to confront damage to the ocean, beaches and coasts.

Since our communities have started to take an interest in coastal resources and appreciate their value, this has given us the opportunity to enter as an organization to help coordinate aspects of resource protection. As Surfrider's Community Organizer in Puerto Rico, I have been able to work with nonprofit organizations, academia, local businesses, communities and government entities. This has allowed

us to focus on unifying work with multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary aspects.

For example, our Surfrider Rincón Chapter recently worked together with a coalition of organizations, local businesses and the surrounding community to celebrate the 18th anniversary of the Tres Palmas Marine Reserve. Our educational event mobilized the largest number of people to the reserve since its founding and encouraged environmental activism. As the first marine reserve self-managed by the community and nonprofit organizations in Puerto Rico, the Tres Palmas Marine Reserve continues to serve as a model for the rest of the Puerto Rican archipelago.

The environmental problems that affect Puerto Rico can be resolved when we work together and unite to solve the threats. This will help us to tackle the core of the problems from the bottom up and advance in a structured way toward innovative solutions.

**The environmental problems that affect Puerto Rico can be resolved when we work together and unite to solve the threats.**



Following the devastation of Hurricane Maria, communities began to feel a sense of passion for protecting and conserving existing natural resources, which allowed Surfrider to help coordinate aspects of resource protection.



The Tres Palmas Marine Reserve, is the first marine reserve self-managed by the community and nonprofit organizations in Puerto Rico.



## PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

# Creating Change One Festival at a Time

By: Rachael Cushing, Partnerships Coordinator

The Surfrider Foundation is proud to collaborate with a wide range of companies, from heritage surf industry brands to iconic music festivals. Over the past several years, Surfrider has worked with a number of music events, including the Sea.Hear. Now Festival on the East Coast and Ohana Festival on the West Coast, to integrate our mission into the festival ethos and collective experience.



The Jersey Shore Chapter has worked with Sea.Hear.Now on their 'Rock & Recycle' program, in which guests collect recyclable items and submit them for proper disposal.  
Photos: Michael McKenna

The Sea.Hear.Now Festival, held annually in Asbury Park, New Jersey, has supported Surfrider's Jersey Shore Chapter since 2018. Through this collaboration, the chapter has engaged with thousands of festival attendees, rallied new support within the local community and helped to reduce the festival's environmental footprint.

From raising awareness to mitigating environmental concerns and reducing waste during the event, the local Surfrider team has taken a holistic approach to collaborating with Sea.Hear.Now. During the festival, the chapter hosts an educational booth and oversees bike parking to help encourage guests to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions. As single-use bottled water is not sold at the festival, guests are encouraged to refill reusable vessels at water stations staffed by Surfrider volunteers. In addition, the Jersey Shore Chapter has worked with Sea.Hear.Now on their 'Rock & Recycle' program, which incentivizes guests to collect recyclable items and submit them to the Surfrider chapter for proper disposal to receive a free concert t-shirt.

"The Sea.Hear.Now Festival has been our biggest community engagement event each year," said Mike Castellano with Surfrider's Jersey Shore Chapter. "We get an incredible amount of involvement and positive feedback from community members. They are grateful that they get this amazing festival without all the typical problems of plastic pollution, litter and traffic as a result of our collective efforts."



Surfrider and other nonprofit partners to discuss how we can all help find solutions to issues that are impacting the coastal environment at the annual Ohana Festival in Dana Point, California.

On the West Coast, the annual Ohana Festival held in Dana Point, California, has supported Surfrider at local and national levels for more than five years. Unique to this festival is the 'Storytellers Stage,' a place where event organizers have enlisted Surfrider and other nonprofit partners to discuss how we can all help find solutions to issues that are impacting the coastal environment.

"It is so valuable to have the opportunity to engage with interested concertgoers on our top environmental issues, like plastic pollution," said Surfrider's Senior Legal Director, Angela Howe, who hosted a panel on reducing plastic waste during last year's event. "The festival venue offers Surfrider a

chance to reach community members that we may not be able to otherwise and the relaxed, optimistic atmosphere leads to lively and productive discussions about ocean conservation."

In addition to support from Sea.Hear.Now and Ohana Festival, Surfrider has also recently collaborated with other West Coast festivals, including Outside Lands in San Francisco, Beach Life Festival in Redondo Beach and Cali Vibes Festival in Long Beach.

The Surfrider network is excited to continue to drive change through festivals and music events as we work together to help protect our ocean and coasts for the future.



# Tabbi Knudson

## Why and when did you get involved with the Surfrider Foundation?

I was first introduced to Surfrider in high school when our environmental club transitioned into a student club. A teacher then encouraged me to join the Surfrider Club at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, where I also served as chair. Currently, I'm part of the national Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Engagement Committee, function as the JEDI Coordinator for Surfrider's O'ahu Chapter and I'm a member of the Surfrider Student Club Leadership Council.

## What inspires you to be active in ocean conservation?

Sea level rise and coastal erosion is becoming a drastic issue for our coastal areas. Many of the beaches I grew up surfing at about eight years ago are now half the size they used to be, which threatens homes and infrastructure. Plastic pollution is a constant issue here as well. The first campaign I worked on

was advocating for a student policy to ban plastic straws on our university's campus, which was approved in 2019! In addition, our co-chair and I helped to lead a campaign to get reusable take-out containers implemented at our on-campus dining locations. On a nationwide level, I've also helped to create parts of the 'Student Guide to Plastic Pollution' resource for the student network with other members of the Student Club Leadership Council.

## What has been the highlight of your Surfrider experience?

Surfrider conferences and events have always been my favorite part of the organization. I've met so many amazing people throughout my local community and across the entire network with shared values and an understanding of what's important. Whenever I have the opportunity to talk to the special people who are part of Surfrider, it makes me feel so stoked to do the work that I do and thankful to have joined this community.



## What is the most important thing you tell others about protecting the ocean, waves and beaches?

I think that Surfrider is amazing at helping people to get introduced to advocacy and activism. Becoming involved with the community work can sometimes be intimidating, but Surfrider does a great job at empowering people and making the issues feel approachable.

Growing up in Hawai'i was such a unique experience but taught me first-hand the importance of intersectionality. We can really enact wide-scale systemic change if we show up in solidarity with each other and implement this into our work. Even if the connections aren't obvious, we are all interconnected.

**We can really enact wide-scale systemic change if we show up in solidarity with each other and implement this into our work.**



# Shaun Tomson

## What inspires you to be active in ocean conservation?

I got involved with the Surfrider Foundation a long time ago when the organization was first formed in 1984. I got a call from a guy called Glenn Hening. At that time, I was ranked as the number one surfer on the International Professional Surfers World Tour. Glenn mentioned that Malibu was facing a significant environmental problem and he wanted to create an organization that would not only help to resolve the problem, but it would also have a wider mission to protect the world's ocean, waves and beaches. I thought it was a great idea.

Glenn said they needed a poster and a picture to promote the issue and the new foundation. I said, "I'll find a photo for you and write the copy for your first ad." So I picked a cool picture that showed me doing a bottom turn at the Banzai Pipeline and I

wrote the copy, 'Do a good turn today.' It had a double meaning because the fundamental maneuver in surfing is doing a bottom turn and I think one of our fundamental missions in life is to do a good turn.

That was the start of my long-term involvement with the Surfrider Foundation. Eventually, I went on to become the first ambassador for Surfrider, the first professional surfer to be a member and I was also one of the original members from 1984. Since then, I have served two terms on Surfrider's national Board of Directors and over the years, I've worked with Surfrider on many different initiatives.

I think every surfer has a responsibility to give something back to this beautiful sport, art form and lifestyle that provide so much pleasure, sensation and solitude. It's our obligation to get involved in ocean conservation and protect the world's ocean and coasts.



## What has been the highlight of your experiences related to protection of clean water and healthy beaches?

Three important victories have included the resolution of the environmental problem at Malibu during the inception of Surfrider, achieving the protection of Trestles from an encroaching toll road and a major win in Rincon, California, when we helped motivate a change to get everyone connected to the sewer line to protect clean water.

I was also honored that Surfrider Foundation Australia used the words from my 'Surfer's Code,' which is a 12-line card of 105 words that outline the significant lessons that surfing can teach about life. In Australia, they used the 'Surfer's Code' as a public service announcement that was narrated by World Champ Mick Fanning. It was wonderful to

read that juxtaposition of my life's mission and that of Surfrider's.

## What is the most important thing you tell others about protecting the ocean, waves and beaches?

It's really easy to do a good turn. It's also really easy to do something selflessly that can help the environment, the ocean and your local beach. Whether that's picking up trash, getting involved and making a trip to a city council meeting or just sending a donation in to Surfrider, becoming a member or being active with your local Surfrider chapter, I think it's important to do something and give back. Waves are not free, there is a moral debt due to the ocean and we can repay that debt by supporting Surfrider and its mission to protect our ocean, waves and beaches for all people.





# *Do a good turn today!*



 **Join the  
Surfrider  
Foundation**

*Dedicated to the protection,  
enhancement and enjoyment of our  
coastal environment.*





## Gifts That Give Back

100% of the proceeds from our store directly fund our mission to protect our ocean, waves and beaches.

[shop.surfrider.org](https://shop.surfrider.org)





## DONOR PROFILE

# Dillon Henry Foundation: A Lasting Impact

Many of us chose to make a positive difference through our daily actions by picking up trash that may end up in the ocean, using reusable water bottles, or simply providing the time to volunteer and apply specific skills to a cause we love. In addition, some people effect change by motivating and influencing young people in their pursuits of a better planet as well. The Dillon Henry Foundation has done this by making a lasting and inspirational impact on the ability of the next generation to get involved and help protect our ocean and coasts for all people.

Dillon Henry was passionate about the planet and showed deep care for the people around him. He co-chaired the Ocean Awareness Club at his high school to help protect our ocean and increase awareness of water pollution issues and clean water. After his passing in 2007, his parents and sibling, Steve Henry, Harriet Zaretsky and Talyor Henry established an endowment at the Surfrider Foundation to provide support to summer interns pursuing a career in law or environmental policy.

Since the creation of the internship program, the outcomes have been remarkable. More than 30 interns have participated and many have gone on to become leaders in government, law firms, and NGO's with missions that include ocean and coastal protection. In addition, the Dillon Henry Foundation has supported Surfrider's student network that connects youth to our community of driven and dedicated activists.

The Dillon Henry Foundation endowment has made a significant impact by allowing the Surfrider Foundation to hire and train

interns who continue to contribute to our collective efforts to protect clean water and healthy beaches. Surfrider extends our deepest gratitude to the Dillon Henry Foundation for the investment in our ocean, coasts and future generations.

If you would like to make an impact or learn more about the Dillon Henry Internship program, visit [surfrider.org/dillonhenry](https://surfrider.org/dillonhenry) or get involved with your local Surfrider chapter.

**Surfrider extends our deepest gratitude to the Dillon Henry Foundation for the investment in our ocean, coasts and future generations.**





# Hannah Tizedes

## Why and when did you get involved with the Surfrider Foundation?

I was on a road trip when I stopped to do a little beach cleanup and spotted the local Surfrider chapter picking up trash at that same exact beach. I took it as a sign and have been involved ever since! I've been continually inspired by Surfrider's ability to not only bring awareness to environmental issues but also to cultivate community among like-minded individuals and most importantly, to share tools that help drive local action in an accessible way. Having the opportunity to create art in support of these efforts has been an absolute dream!

## What inspires you to be active in coastal conservation?

Growing up surrounded by the Great Lakes, I was able to admire their deep beauty on a regular basis. But with that admiration came devastation as I continually collected plastic bits from the shoreline. As both an activist and artist, I felt an unwavering pull of inspiration to combine my efforts to share a deeper message of conservation.

Ever since, I've been collecting trash and creating art with it. Within that creative process, I've been constantly motivated by the items I pick up on beach cleanups to find new ways to take care of our planet. It's also been such an incredibly soul-nourishing experience to share my art with individuals and communities that are also able to source inspiration from the discarded plastic items used in my artwork.

Photos: @tiannasamonecreatives

## What has been the highlight of your experiences related to protection of our waterways?

Meeting so many passionate individuals and feeling incredibly inspired by their hope, ideas and optimism in what can sometimes feel like a doom and gloom space of conversation has been a top highlight. I've learned so much from the activists that I've had the opportunity to connect with around the world and that has been fulfilling in itself.

## What is the most important thing you tell others about the protection of our planet?

Don't overcomplicate it! The most important thing is to do what you can with what you have, wherever you are. That's going to look different for everyone but what matters is the progress, not perfection. Small actions add up!





# Coastal Victories Update

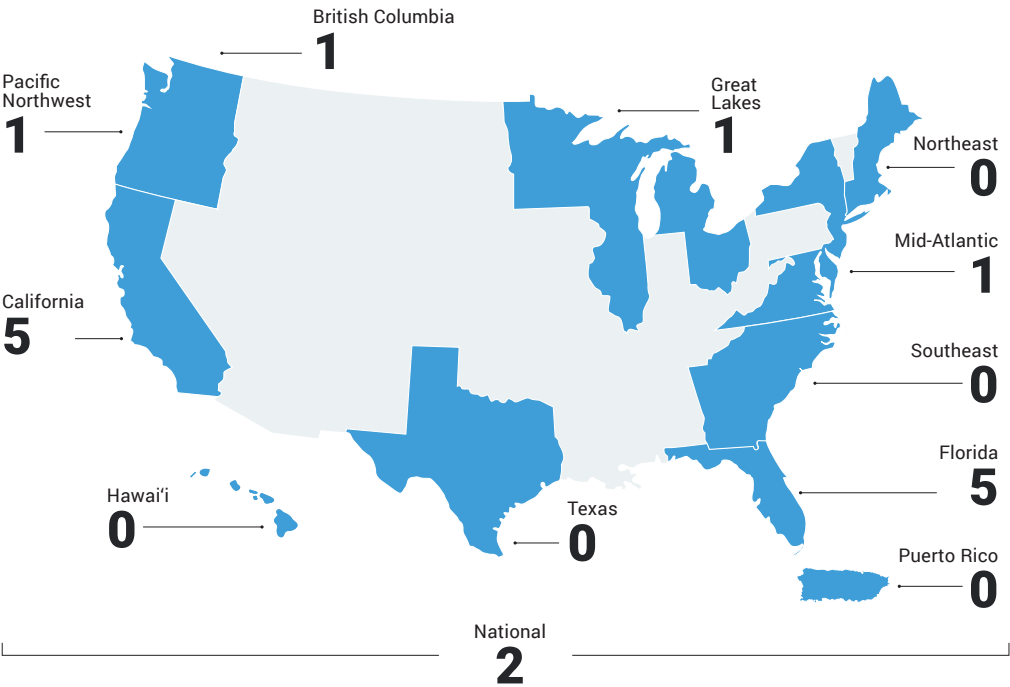
A coastal victory is a decision made in favor of the coastal and ocean environment that results in a positive conservation outcome, improves coastal access, or both.

For more information visit [surfrider.org/campaigns](https://surfrider.org/campaigns).

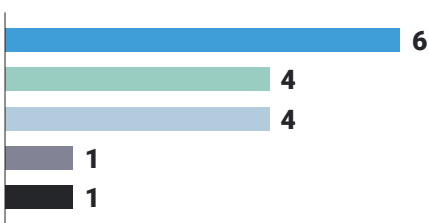
16

Total Victories as of April 2022

## VICTORY LOCATIONS

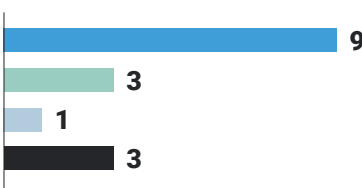


## VICTORY TYPE



- Plastic Pollution
- Ocean Protection
- Coastal Preservation
- Clean Water
- Beach Access

## VICTORY SCOPE



- Local
- State
- Regional
- National



## Leave a Lasting Legacy

Help advance the protection of our ocean, waves and beaches for future generations. Contact us about Planned Giving.

[surfriderlegacy.org](https://surfriderlegacy.org) | 949.492.8170







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