THE OCEAN GUARDIAN



April 2024 | Earth Day Issue

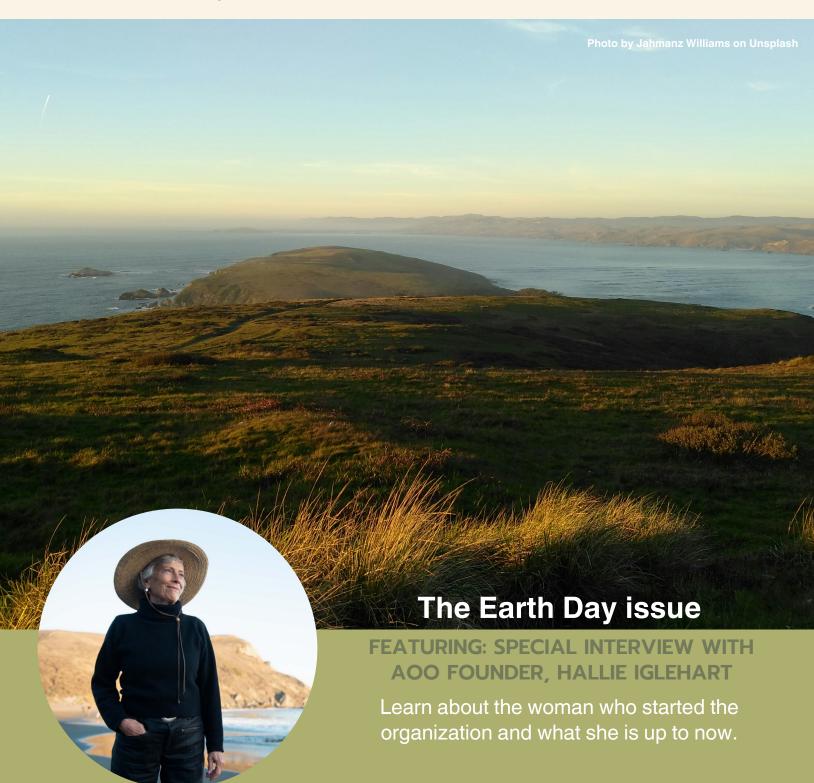


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A LETTER FROM AOO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: NICOLE CIBELLIS

Dear Ocean Guardians,

In 2016, I joined All One Ocean because of my deep connection to our ocean. Having grown up on the beaches of Southern California and now residing in Northern California for nearly three decades, my affinity for the Ocean runs deep. As a lifelong competitive swimmer, I find solace and clarity when I swim in our oceans, drawn to its healing powers. My life's mission revolves around water protection, and my passion flows seamlessly across all bodies of water.

As Earth Month approaches, I am continually reminded of the profound impact humanity has on our planet. Each day, as I walk along the shores, I witness the stark reality of our influence—the debris washed up with each tide, the litter left behind by beachgoers, and the tragic sight of animals filled with plastic they mistook for food.

Our collective journey is rooted in a shared passion for the ocean and a deep-seated responsibility to safeguard it. The ocean is not merely a distant entity but a vital force intricately woven into the fabric of our lives. Its well-being directly affects our health, the animals who call it home, the stability of our climate, and the legacy we leave for future generations.

At this critical juncture, the relevance of our work becomes ever more pronounced. Earth Month represents a global moment of reflection—a time when the world comes together to assess our impact on the planet and take concrete steps toward its preservation. The

ocean, facing unprecedented challenges such as pollution, overfishing, and climate change, demands urgent attention and collective action.

With this inaugural issue of The Ocean Guardian, we endeavor to illuminate the ocean's beauty and significance, inspiring wonder and fostering a sense of responsibility among our readers. We aspire to be a beacon of hope and knowledge, empowering individuals to make informed choices that positively impact our marine ecosystems.

Earth Month serves as a poignant reminder of our shared duty to protect and preserve this precious resource. Let us seize this moment to amplify awareness, ignite meaningful conversations, and drive tangible change. Together, let us chart a course toward a sustainable future—one where the ocean thrives and our connection to it deepens.

Thank you for joining us on this vital journey of ocean conservation.

For the Ocean! Nicole Cibellis, Executive Director



OUR WORK

Mission

All One Ocean's mission is to educate our communities about the destructive impact of litter on our oceans and waterways and provide simple, sustainable, and effective ways to reduce litter. By educating our youth, we will create a new generation of environmental leaders who will grow up knowing that there is nothing normal about a plastic-choked Ocean and lead us in changing behaviors, making it possible for everyone to have healthy water.

Focus

The health of our water is at stake. Our oceans and waterways are continually polluted by items that leach toxic chemicals into the water we drink and into the ocean that many creatures call home. As these items fill our oceans and waterways, animals get tangled in them and/or mistake them for food, which threatens food chains and affects the health of our water. It also impacts living organisms in our ocean which helps reduce carbon. When trash, litter, and other pollution are not disposed of correctly, they emit methane gas, a contributor to climate change. All One Ocean is at the forefront of changing this through education and providing simple, everyday solutions that allow everyone to make a difference.

Approach

Healthy water for all is our end goal. We rely on it for drinking water, food, agriculture, and recreational activities. Animals rely on it for survival. Human pollution is capable of harming all of us, while also contributing to climate change. Through education and simple daily acts of environmental consciousness, we can get closer to our goal. By educating youth, we will create a new generation of environmental leaders who will grow up knowing that there is nothing normal about a plastic-choked ocean, and lead us in changing our habits and behaviors for the better.



Photo of AOO staff and community members at Muir Beach for International Coastal Cleanup Day



OCEANIC ODYSSEY

Unraveling the Profound Impacts of Pollution

Read about the immense impacts of pollution on our oceans and how it posing a looming threat to our oceans

By Sophie Ellersen

Photography by Brian Yurasits, Naja Bertolt Jensen, and Dustan Woodhouse on Unsplash



Found during an AOO clean up at Limatour Beach

The world's oceans, often portrayed as limitless realms of blue, silently endure the weight of human activities, as billions of pounds of pollutants infiltrate their waters annually. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), each year we witness the ingress of billions of pounds of trash and pollutants into the ocean, originating from a myriad of sources, ranging from coastal runoff to industrial discharges.

A significant contributor to ocean pollution is the unbridled proliferation of plastics, as highlighted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). At least 14 million tons of plastic find their way into the ocean annually, constituting 80% of all marine debris from surface waters to deep-sea sediments. This staggering influx of plastics poses severe threats to marine life, with millions of animals becoming entangled or succumbing to plastic waste each year.

Beyond the visible scourge of marine debris lies the menace of chemical contamination. NOAA's reports on nutrient pollution underscore a troubling trend: the eutrophication of coastal waters.

Nutrient pollution, primarily stemming from agricultural runoff, gives rise to harmful algal blooms (HABs) that wreak havoc on marine ecosystems.

In the United States alone, over

one-third of shellfish-growing waters suffer adverse effects from coastal pollution.

However, pollution's ramifications extend beyond the visible and chemical domains, permeating the very essence of oceanic ecosystems. Ocean acidification, a consequence of escalating carbon emissions, jeopardizes the delicate equilibrium of marine life, as emphasized by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The oceans absorb up to a quarter of all anthropogenic carbon emissions, resulting in a 30% increase in acidity since the Industrial Revolution. This acidification imperils calcifying organisms, disrupting food webs and coastal economies reliant on vibrant marine ecosystems.

In the face of such formidable challenges, mitigating ocean pollution demands a multifaceted approach.

"The specter of pollution casts a looming shadow over our oceans, tarnishing their once-pristine expanses."



Photo by Brian Yurasits on Unsplash



Photo by Brian Yurasits on Unsplash

While regulatory frameworks and waste management initiatives are indispensable, the crux of the matter lies in societal transformation. Education, advocacy, and collective action are imperative to cultivate a culture of environmental stewardship and catalyze behavioral change. Initiatives spearheaded by organizations such as NOAA and educational institutions play a pivotal role in raising awareness and empowering individuals to become catalysts of change in their communities.

The specter of pollution casts a looming shadow over our oceans, tarnishing their once-pristine expanses. From the infiltration of plastics to the silent acidification of waters, the threats posed by pollution are multifaceted and farreaching. As custodians of the oceans, we bear a responsibility to prioritize conservation efforts and strive towards a sustainable future. This entails ensuring that the vast expanse of our oceans continues to flourish as a testament to our commitment to preserving and honoring the environment.

SAFEGUARDING MARINE ECOSYSTEMS: BALANCING CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Photography by David Courbit, mana5280, Tim Mossholder, and NOAA on Unsplash

By Sophie Ellersen

The marine ecosystems within the San Francisco Bay Area embody a delicate equilibrium of biodiversity, where each species contributes significantly to the health and resilience of the environment. However, this intricate web of life faces threats from various human activities. Understanding the critical status of endangered species and recognizing the pivotal role of keystone species are imperative for devising conservation strategies to uphold the Bay's marine life.

Oceana's comprehensive report illuminates the alarming state of overfishing in the region, with implications for the survival of marine species. Among the 62 managed species of rockfish off the U.S. West Coast, seven are categorized as "overfished," underscoring the unsustainable exploitation of marine resources.

The decline of iconic species such as the cowcod rockfish to a

mere 4% of their original population level emphasizes the urgent necessity for fisheries management reforms to reestablish equilibrium in the ecosystem.



Photo by David Courbit on Unsplash

Furthermore, the threat of overfishing extends beyond rockfish populations to encompass other commercially valuable species like petrale sole and Pacific whiting. Should current population decline trends persist, these species risk joining the ranks of the overfished, exacerbating the destabilization of marine ecosystems and imperiling the livelihoods of coastal communities reliant on sustainable fisheries.

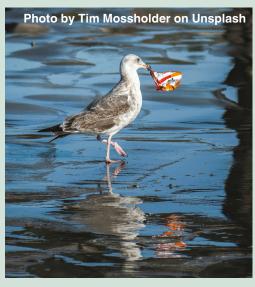
In addition to overfishing, the Bay Area confronts the plight of threatened and endangered species, emblematic of the broader ecological challenges confronting the region.

Approximately 30 species, including marine mammals, seabirds, and fish, are classified as threatened or endangered in the California ecosystem. The Pacific leatherback sea turtle, once abundant in the Pacific Ocean, now teeters on the brink



Photo by mana5280 on Unsplash





of extinction, with populations declining by more than 80% in some nesting colonies.

Anthropogenic threats such as incidental catch in fishing gear, poaching of eggs, and ingestion of plastics are driving their decline, emphasizing the urgent need for proactive conservation measures.

Similarly, the southern sea otter, a keystone species in the kelp forest ecosystem, faces multifaceted challenges to its survival. Historically hunted to near extinction for their fur, sea otters now confront threats ranging from infectious diseases to trauma from boat strikes. As predators of sea urchins, sea otters play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of kelp forest ecosystems. However, declining otter populations have cascading effects on the entire ecosystem, leading to the proliferation of sea urchins and degradation of kelp forests—a phenomenon known as a trophic cascade.

The decline of keystone species like the sea otter underscores the interconnectedness of marine ecosystems and the vulnerability of biodiversity to humaninduced disturbances.

Overcoming the challenges facing Bay Area marine life demands an approach that addresses the root causes of

By recognizing the intrinsic value of biodiversity and embracing a holistic approach to ecosystem management, we can chart a course toward a more resilient and sustainable future for our oceans.

species decline while fostering sustainable coexistence between humans and the environment. Enhanced fisheries management practices, habitat restoration efforts, and pollution mitigation measures are essential components of comprehensive

conservation strategies aimed at preserving ecosystem integrity and promoting species recovery.

The conservation of Bay Area marine life is a shared responsibility that necessitates concerted action at local, regional, and global levels. By recognizing the intrinsic value of biodiversity and embracing a holistic approach to ecosystem management, we can chart a course toward a more resilient and sustainable future for our oceans. Together, we can safeguard the fragile balance of marine ecosystems and ensure the continued well-being of present and future generations.



What does All One Ocean do?

By Taryn Pham Photography by All One Ocean

At All One Ocean, we are committed to protecting our oceans and coastlines through hands-on efforts and educational outreach. We strive to raise awareness about the importance of ocean conservation and empower individuals to become stewards of our marine ecosystems.



Our flagship program is our Beach Cleanup Stations (BCUS). These stations contain repurposed bags so that beachgoers can clean up their beach on their own account. The idea behind this porgram is cleaning up a beach on an individual scale.

Along with BCUS, one of our primary initiatives is organizing regular beach clean-ups along the Bay Area coastlines. These clean-ups bring together volunteers from all walks of life to remove litter and debris from our beaches, preventing them from entering our oceans and harming marine life.



By engaging in these clean-up activities, participants not only contribute to the cleanliness of our shores but also gain a deeper appreciation for the importance of preserving our coastal environments.

In addition to our beach cleanup efforts, we provide climate justice for local schools through our Ocean Warriors program. This program brings interactive and engaging educational seminars to elementary schools across the Bay Area, empowering students to take an active role in ocean conservation. Environmental education should not be a privilege.



With a focus on bringing ocean conservation education to low income priority schools, AOO strives to empower the next generation of environmental leaders. Through hands-on activities, informative presentations, and discussions, students learn about the importance of our oceans, the threats they face, and the actions they can take to protect them.

By instilling a sense of responsibility and environmental stewardship at a young age, we aim to cultivate a generation of ocean advocates who are committed to preserving our marine ecosystems for future generations.



WHY DO WE CARE

The vitality of our oceans is woven into human well-being, influencing many facets of our existence, from climate moderation to economic stability and public health. Recognizing the interdependence between ocean health and human welfare is imperative for confronting the complexities presented by environmental decline and charting a path toward a sustainable future for generations to come.

The United Nations (UN) underscores the pivotal role of oceans in climate regulation, highlighting that the ocean absorbs 25% of carbon emissions, thereby ameliorating the impacts of climate change.

Moreover, the ocean generates 50% of the oxygen essential for human survival, functioning

as the planet's primary respiratory system. Without a robustly healthy ocean, climate stability and breathable air would be compromised, posing grave threats to human health and well-being.

Furthermore, the UN underscores the ocean's significance in ensuring food security and sustaining livelihoods for billions worldwide. The ocean supplies 15% of the global animal protein, with seafood serving as a principal protein source for over 50% of the population in the least developed countries.

However, unsustainable fishing practices and pollution pose challenges to biodiversity and food security. Each year, more than 10 million tons of fish are wasted due to destructive fishing practices, imperiling the

sustainability of marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of coastal communities.

In addition to food security, the ocean is instrumental in fostering the economic development of coastal communities. Coastal tourism, fishing industries, and maritime transportation rely on healthy marine ecosystems for their viability and profitability. Pollution and overexploitation of marine resources jeopardize these economic prospects and coastal communities.

The health of our oceans is indispensable for human well-being and environmental sustainability. By comprehending the intricate nexus between ocean health and human welfare, we can address the challenges posed by environmental degradation and strive toward a more sustainable future.



Meet Our Founder: HALLIE AUSTEN IGLEHART

By Sophie Ellersen

All One Ocean is the proud fruit of Hallie's drive for ocean conservation and enviornmental activism. Learn about how we started and where she is now.

Environmental activism has never been an island. It is an intersectional, multi-faceted, broad issue that touches us all. It goes beyond conservation and is deeply tied to Racial and Indigenous justice globally as well as healing our perspective on the planet. This is something Hallie Austen Iglehart, founder of All One Ocean understands deeply.

Many years ago while she was walking along the Point Reyes shoreline, Hallie came upon an entangled gulf that was hopping along the beach with a fishing line wrapped around its ankles. The sight horrified her. After rescuing the bird from the plastic, she felt a great sadness about the state of our ocean and had a large desire to do something about it. She dreamed up Beach Cleanup Stations which she designed with the goal of encouraging casual beach goers to grab recycled coffee bags and clean up their local beaches.

Hallie deliberately crafted these stations with several key considerations in mind.

Firstly, she recognized that many, like herself, acknowledged the issue of beach waste but often forgot to bring their own garbage bags. Thus, she aimed to address this need by providing easily accessible solutions. Secondly, understanding that people often prioritize their own interests over environmental concerns, she astutely appealed to their self-interest, realizing that while many may not care deeply about marine life, they would care about how ocean plastics directly impact them.

"People are just addicted to convenience," Hallie remarked, echoing her rationale. "Appealing to people's self-interest is often the way to creating a cleaner, greener world." Drawing inspiration from a
Buddhist mindset, Hallie
employed skillful means,
tailoring her message to resonate
with her target audience. By
highlighting the harmful effects
of ocean plastics on human
health, she emphasized the direct
repercussions for individuals,
not just marine creatures.
Encouraging beach cleaning as
an act of self-preservation, she
cleverly aligned environmental
stewardship with personal
benefit.

Lastly, Hallie sought to captivate attention through visually appealing designs.
Collaborating with her young neighbor, Hannah MacIntosh, she adorned the stations with vibrant and engaging illustrations, hoping to pique the curiosity of beachgoers and draw them towards taking action.

After hiring a director and establishing a good relationship with the National Parks Service, All One Ocean took off.
Within a few years, All One Ocean had set up 24 Beach Cleanup Stations in California, Hawaii, and Iowa; now there are 57, having expanded to Alaska, Alabama and Baja California. In the first three years, we picked up over 17,000 pieces of trash, received inquiries from all over the world, and inspired

more than 500 students, and engaged more than 4,100 volunteer hours. An estimated 200-400 users access our stations per month now. At Drakes Beach in Point Reyes National Seashore alone, about 300,000 people annually are exposed to the message All One Ocean hopes to convey.

Following her work with All One Ocean, Hallie has continued her commitment to conservation and environmental justice. Currently affiliated with Solidaire, an organization born from the imperative to combat corporate greed, economic inequality, climate change, and injustice, she actively engages with a community of donor organizers. The Solidaire Network swiftly mobilizes vital resources and unprecedented solidarity to support frontline social justice movements.

Through networking and facilitating connections between philanthropists and impactful causes, she strives to amplify support for worthy endeavors.

In our dialogue, Hallie emphasized the frequent oversight of indigenous peoples' concerns within the climate movement, despite their pivotal role as custodians of solutions. By maintaining their indigenous identities and stewarding their ancestral lands, these communities safeguard approximately 80% of the planet's biodiversity. Hallie underscored the distinctive value system prevalent among indigenous cultures, characterized by a profound reverence for all life forms—an ethos divergent from mainstream paradigms centered on domination.



"As relatives, not as something to be dominated as we do in this culture," Hallie articulated, advocating for the reintegration of indigenous perspectives into societal norms. She envisioned a convergence between scientific knowledge and indigenous wisdom, positing that by advancing black liberation and safeguarding indigenous communities, a more sustainable and equitable future could be realized.

While Hallie's insights into indigenous values are invaluable, it's imperative to not only acknowledge but also center indigenous perspectives in environmental activism.

Rather than merely drawing superficially from indigenous cultures, genuine engagement entails actively involving indigenous communities in decision-making processes, respecting their sovereignty over their lands and resources, and fostering meaningful partnerships based on trust, respect, and mutual benefit. This requires listening to and learning from indigenous knowledge holders, supporting indigenousled initiatives, and advocating for the protection of indigenous rights and territories.

Environmental justice encompasses both social and climate justice, intertwined in a deeply intersectional manner. Addressing one necessitates addressing the other, a principle that resonates within both our team at All One Ocean and Hallie.

Hallie's journey embodies a holistic approach to environmental activism, recognizing the interconnectedness of social justice, climate issues, and environmental stewardship.

Through her work with All One Ocean and involvement with organizations like Solidaire, she emphasizes the imperative of collective action and intersectional advocacy. By fostering unity, advocating for justice, and prioritizing collaboration, we can aspire towards a more equitable and sustainable future for all.



Photo of Hallie, AOO founder, and Frankie, AOO steward after repairing a BCUS



Photo of Executive Director, Nicole Cibellis, with elementary school students after a beach cleanup

Our Favorite BEACHES

Drakes Beach Rd, Point Reyes Station, CA

Limantour Beach Point Reyes Station, CA

Stinson Beach 3514 Shoreline Hwy Stinson Beach, CA

Muir Beach 199 Pacific Way. Muir Beach, CA Rodeo Beach 1049 Bunker Rd. Sausalito, CA

Tennessee Valley Beach Coastal Trail, Mill Valley, CA

Encinal Beach 313 Tideway Dr, Alameda, CA

Pacifica 5000 CA-1, Pacifica, CA A Cleanup can happen right in your neighborhood.

Here is a small list of our favorite beach cleanup locations!



Reduce Single-Use Plastics: By reducing single-use plastics such as plastic bags, bottles, and straws, we can help prevent plastic waste from entering our oceans and harming marine life. Instead, opt for reusable alternatives like reusable shopping bags, water bottles, and metal or bamboo straws

Participate in Beach Clean-Ups: Get involved in local beach clean-up events in your area. Joining organized clean-ups or simply picking up litter during your beach visits can help prevent trash from reaching the ocean and improve the health of coastal ecosystems.

Support Sustainable Seafood: Choose seafood options that are sustainably sourced. Look for certifications such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or Seafood Watch recommendations to ensure that your seafood choices are responsible and support healthy ocean ecosystems.

Conserve Water: Be mindful of your water usage at home. Conserving water reduces the strain on freshwater sources, which impacts the health of our oceans. Simple actions like fixing leaks, taking shorter showers, and watering plants efficiently can help conserve water and protect our oceans

Reduce Carbon Footprint: Carbon emissions contribute to climate change, which has far-reaching effects on our oceans, including ocean acidification and sea level rise. Reduce your carbon footprint by driving less, using public transportation, and choosing energy-efficient appliances/lighting options.





On Earth Day and every day, let's commit to protecting our oceans and preserving the planet for future generations. By adopting sustainable practices and actively contributing to ocean conservation efforts, we can all play a role in creating a healthier and more sustainable world.

LEARN ABOUT LONG-TIME STEWARD:



By Taryn Pham



Every individual, from the young child picking up litter on the beach to the seasoned activist championing policy change, plays a vital role in safeguarding our marine ecosystems. Taking the initiative to pursue environmental passion at a local level is the cornerstone of fostering impactful change within communities. Sita's journey exemplifies this truth, as she channels her passion for ocean conservation into tangible actions within her hometown of San Anselmo.

As a Beach Clean Up Station (BCUS) steward at All One Ocean, her dedication to cleaning up beaches and raising awareness about the detrimental impact of plastics on our environment shines brightly.

Sita's upbringing was unconventional, to say the least. Growing up around influential figures in the plastics industry, she was surrounded by the very materials that would later become her adversary.

However, it was during her college and post-graduate years that she began to "realize that plastic was harmful to the environment", unraveling the true extent of the damage caused by plastic pollution. Through her studies, she learned about the harmful chemicals found in plastics, such as plexiglass and their devastating effects on marine life and ecosystems.

In her hometown of San Anselmo, she channeled her passion for ocean conservation by actively participating in the Sustainable San Anselmo, formerly known as the Quality of Life Commission. Here, she played a pivotal role in the successful implementation of a Plastic Bag Ban, passed on June 11th, 2014.

In efforts to garner support for the initiative, Sita tirelessly interviewed store owners about their ability to implement the act, and the majority of them confirmed that they would be able to. Their confirmation bolstered the campaign, paving the way for a plastic-free future in her community. Her awakening also led her to join Green Sangha, a grassroots nonprofit environmental organization, where she crossed paths with Hallie, the visionary founder of All One Ocean, at a benefit event in Mill Valley. It was through her interaction with Hallie that Sita first learned about All One Ocean's mission to promote ocean protection in the Bay Area.

Sita realized that she could play a direct role in mitigating plastic pollution in her own community.

Despite having little time to frequently participate in beach cleanups, Sita found a way to contribute to ocean conservation by becoming a BCUS steward. She dedicated herself to "going to Rodeo Beach twice a month", where she refills coffee bags used as makeshift trash bags during cleanups and meticulously clears the trash lagoon, where debris accumulates with each tide.

Since 1995, Sita has been a steadfast presence on the shores as a BCUS steward, but one event hosted by All One Ocean stands out vividly in her memory. It was a beach cleanup at Muir Beach, where she was inspired by the diverse range of ages that came to participate, united by a shared goal of protecting our oceans. The camaraderie and collective action left an indelible mark on her heart, reinforcing her commitment to the cause.

As Sita reflects on her journey, from childhood surrounded by plastic to adulthood devoted to its eradication, she embodies the transformative power of awareness and action. Through her unwavering commitment to ocean stewardship, she inspires others to join the fight against plastic pollution, one cleanup at a time.

HOW TO BECOME A STEWARD:

Each one of our Beach Cleanup Stations has a committed steward who cares for it. By caring for a Beach Cleanup Station, you are actively helping clean our Oceans.

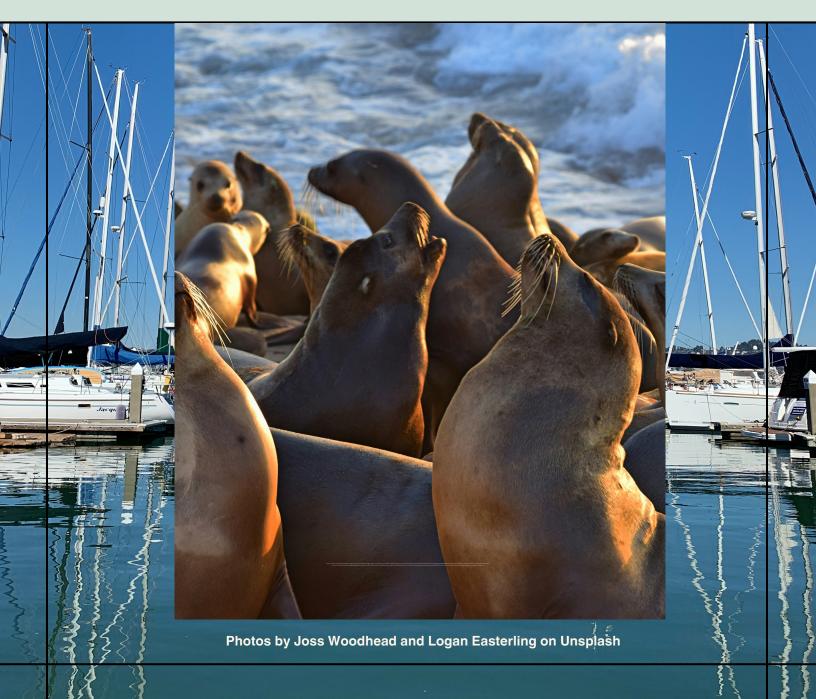
It is a steward's responsibility to visit a BCUS every other week and report its status to our

program manager. This means; visiting your BCUS station, restocking the BCUS with bags, and emailing us with the number of bags that were in the BCUS. Also, take note of any repairs so we can get someone out there fast, and if you want, send us a selfie with the BCUS!

Stewarding a BCUS is a 6-month commitment required.

WANT TO BECOME A STEWARD?

Email us at info@alloneocean.org



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