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Volunteers Prevent 2,417 Pounds of Pollution From Entering the MBNM Sanctuary for Earth Day

(April 16th, 2011) Santa Cruz, CA – For the benefit of the marine environment, [Save Our Shores](http://saveourshores.org) (SOS) staff, Sanctuary Stewards, and 193 community volunteers banded together to prevent a total of 2,417 pounds of pollution from entering the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) today.

Volunteers gathered at the San Lorenzo River and on Cowell and Main Beach in Santa Cruz to show their support for the environment and clean beaches in celebration of Earth Day this year.

The San Lorenzo River Cleanup gathered 82 volunteers who prevented a total of 2,300 pounds of pollution from entering the Sanctuary in under four hours. Of that, 1,800 pounds were trash and 500 pounds were recycling, which included 3 shopping carts, 5 tires, a washing machine, and lots and lots of plastic.

The Cowell and Main Beach Cleanup gathered 119 volunteers who prevented a total of 117 pounds of pollution from entering the Sanctuary in under 3 hours. The volunteers included fans and representatives from KDON radio station, a rugby team, UCSC students, and local families, who all worked together to remove 86 pounds of trash and 31 pounds of recycling from the popular tourist beach downtown. Volunteers at Cowell and Main Beach removed an impressive 2,667 cigarette butts – a mere fraction of what washes into our oceans throughout the year. Cigarette butts are the #1 littered item around the world.

"The number of volunteers who came out today and the amount of trash they collected only tell part of the story. Each volunteer who pitched in today experienced a connection to our ocean and watersheds. That is what Earth Day is about and that is what Save Our Shores is all about," says Andrew Hoekesema, Coordinator of Volunteer Programs at Save Our Shores.

"With the recent storms that have been bringing extreme high tides and large amounts of rain, we were concerned with the amount of debris accumulating on our beaches and in our rivers. That's why we were excited to build off the momentum of Earth Day to garner more volunteer support than ever before for our Santa Cruz Earth Day Festival Cleanups," says Emily Glanville, Program Manager at Save Our Shores.

Save Our Shores continues to target problematic pieces of pollution in our community and environment and develop ways to combat it locally. Visit saveourshores.org for more information.

About Save Our Shores:

Save Our Shores is the Central Coast leader in caring for the marine environment through ocean awareness, advocacy and citizen action. Our core initiatives are Plastic Pollution, Clean Boating, and Ocean Awareness. Over the last 30 years, Save Our Shores helped to establish the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, prevent offshore oil drilling and cruise ship pollution, and today focuses on educating youth about our local watersheds, tackling pollution on our beaches and rivers, implementing our renowned DockWalker program, and providing our community with educated and inspired Sanctuary Stewards. For more information visit: saveourshores.org.

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