



# 2022 Federal Priorities

**Hundreds of millions of Americans participate in ocean and Great Lakes recreation each year, supporting millions of jobs and generating over \$143 billion annually. Yet, our nation's communities and coastal environments, which these industries depend upon, are increasingly under siege from the impacts of pollution, development, and climate change. Federal leadership is needed to ensure clean water, resilient coasts, and a healthy ocean to support this public use and economic activity.**

## PREVENT PLASTIC POLLUTION

Each year 11 million metric tons of wasteful plastic pollution enters the ocean, posing a major threat to our ocean environment, coastal economy and even the food chain. Yet plastics cause pollution throughout their entire lifecycle, from extraction, production, use and disposal. Surfrider supports laws aimed at reducing sources of plastic pollution, as well as prevention and response to ocean trash.

**Support:** *Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act* (S. 984/H.R. 2238) by Sen. Merkley and Rep. Lowenthal

## PROTECT CLEAN WATER & PUBLIC HEALTH

Sewage spills and stormwater runoff threaten the health of beachgoers and coastal ecosystems. Sufficient water quality monitoring is needed to protect public health and inform solutions, while significant investments are needed to repair, upgrade and ensure climate resilience for America's failing water infrastructure.

**Support:** FY23 EPA funding appropriations of \$15 million for BEACH Act Grants Program and \$4 billion for Clean Water State Revolving Fund



## SUPPORT OCEAN CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Coastal communities, our nation's infrastructure and marine ecosystems are increasingly threatened by sea level rise, extreme weather events, ocean warming and acidification. Bold federal leadership is needed to implement ocean climate solutions that ban offshore drilling, protect coastal and marine habitats, advance coastal adaptation and fund NOAA programs.

**Support:** Ocean Climate Solutions legislation such as the *Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act* (H.R. 3764) by Rep. Grijalva

### About The Surfrider Foundation:

The Surfrider Foundation is a grassroots non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our ocean, waves and beaches for all people. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers, Surfrider's network includes over 185 volunteer chapters and student clubs, and over a million members and supporters.

**For more information, visit [go.surfrider.org/coastalhillday](https://go.surfrider.org/coastalhillday) and [surfrider.org](https://surfrider.org)**



# Pass the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act

Surfrider Foundation advocates for laws aimed at reducing sources of plastic pollution, including prohibition of easily littered and pervasive single-use plastics, such as plastic bags, straws and polystyrene foam, as well as more comprehensive legislation to address source reduction of plastic pollution.

## PROBLEM

Plastic pollution is a grave climate and environmental justice problem that threatens marine ecosystem health, critical components of the food chain, communities and coastal economies. The U.S. produces more plastic waste than any other country in the world, at an estimated 42 million metric tons each year. With only 9 percent of plastic ever recycled, most of this waste ends up mismanaged and polluting our environment, including our air, water, seafood and more. An estimated 11 million tons enter the ocean each year, causing harm to marine life including the threat of plastic ingestion and entanglement to endangered species. Additionally, plastic production exacerbates our nation's reliance on and emission of harmful fossil fuels.



## SOLUTION

Surfrider calls upon Congress to pass the *Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act* to address the plastic pollution issue affecting our environment and communities.

**Support:** The *Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act* (S. 984/H.R. 2238) to strongly address the plastic waste crisis by reducing the source of plastic pollution. Key components of this legislation include:

- Require producers of packaging, containers, and food-service products to design, manage, and finance waste and recycling programs.
- Ban certain single-use plastic products that are not recyclable.
- Ban single-use plastic carryout bags and place a fee on alternative carryout bags.
- Prohibit plastic waste from being shipped or re-shipped to developing countries.
- Place a pause on new plastic facilities until EPA updates and creates important regulations on those facilities.
- Prohibit toxic chemicals from being included in compostable products.
- Provide funding for pilot programs for removal and prevention of microplastic pollution.
- Establish pilot programs to implement reuse and refill technologies.
- Ensure translation services are provided for non-English speaking communities and accessibility services for the disability community.



# Fund Critical EPA Programs to Protect U.S. Beaches from Sewage Pollution

**Hundreds of millions of Americans and visitors enjoy U.S. beaches every year, trusting that the water is safe for recreation. The following investments in EPA programs will help protect ocean water quality, provide families with the information they need to stay safe at the beach, and safeguard our valuable coastal tourism-based economies.**

## PROBLEM

Sewage spills and stormwater runoff threaten the health of beachgoers and coastal ecosystems. Sewage spills and failing wastewater infrastructure impact water quality by discharging raw and under-treated sewage into local waterways and the ocean. Sewage contains bacteria, viruses and parasites that make people sick with gastrointestinal symptoms, rashes, and worse. Sewage discharges also pollute waterways with excess nitrogen that wreaks havoc on coastal ecosystems by fueling harmful algal blooms that harm human health, cause fish kills, damage wetlands, and smother coral reefs. This pollution threatens our ocean and Great Lakes tourism and recreation economies that are valued at over \$143 billion annually and support 2.46 million jobs nationwide.



## SOLUTION

Sufficient water quality monitoring is needed to protect public health and inform solutions, while investments are needed to repair, upgrade and ensure climate resilience for America's failing water infrastructure.

**Support:** Appropriations of \$15 million for the EPA BEACH Act Grants program to provide support for beach water quality monitoring and public notification programs in coastal states and territories.

**Support:** Appropriations of \$4 billion for the EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund to upgrade failing wastewater infrastructure and stop sewage spills at the source.

**Support:** Appropriations of \$100 million for the EPA Border Water Infrastructure Grant Program to address the sewage pollution crisis and advance environmental justice at the US-Mexico border.

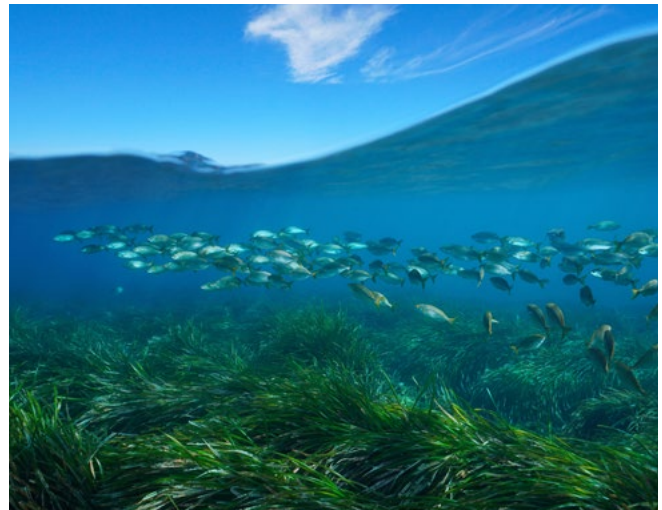


# Support Ocean Climate Solutions

**The ocean covers over 70 percent of our planet, supports the primary source of protein for three billion people, sinks enormous amounts of atmospheric carbon, and provides us with more than half of the air we breathe.**

## PROBLEM

The climate crisis is greatly impacting our ocean, coasts, and communities. Extreme weather events, sea level rise, and ocean acidification are disrupting everything from community infrastructure to ocean recreation, fisheries, and ecosystem health. The ocean is at the mercy of climate change, having absorbed nearly 30 percent of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted from burning fossil fuels and 90 percent of excess heat trapped in the atmosphere. Without meaningful climate action, impacts will only become more destructive and costly.



## SOLUTION

Surfrider calls upon Congress to act now on climate crisis solutions and protect the cornerstone of our planet, the ocean.

**Support:** The *Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act of 2022* (H.R. 3764) to leverage the ocean's potential in the fight against climate change. Critical components of this bill include:

- **Enhance Coastal Resilience:** Help coastal communities prepare and respond to climate change impacts by investing in climate adaptation, resiliency planning, coastal restoration, and natural infrastructure programs at the local and federal level.
- **Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, end fossil fuel subsidies, permanently ban new offshore oil and gas development in the OCS, and transition to renewable energy sources, including well-planned and sited offshore renewables.
- **Advance Climate Justice:** Ensure climate change planning is inclusive, just, equitable and respects diversity, working with communities to transition away from fossil fuels and create good-paying jobs.
- **Protect Critical Habitat and Blue Carbon:** Help mitigate climate change impacts by protecting and restoring the nation's coastal and marine ecosystems, especially blue carbon ecosystems like mangroves, salt marsh and seagrass, which store up to 50X more carbon than forests on land.

# Protect Clean Water at the U.S./Mexico Border

## BACKGROUND

The U.S./Mexico border is plagued by severe pollution that threatens public health, the environment, local economies and our national security. Stormwater and wastewater discharges from Mexico bring raw sewage, harmful chemicals and immense amounts of trash to beaches across south San Diego County. In 2021, this pollution caused border-area beaches to close for 246 days. This issue disproportionately affects disadvantaged Latino communities on both sides of the border, highlighting the need for environmental justice. Additionally, U.S. Border Patrol and Navy conduct patrols and training in contaminated environments that put agents and sailors at risk.

The USMCA International Trade Agreement has provided \$300 million to fund comprehensive solutions to this border pollution; however, the full cost of the proposed projects is more than double that amount.

## SOLUTION

Surfrider calls upon Congress to support federal legislation and funding to address stormwater and wastewater upgrades at the U.S./Mexico Border.

**Support:** Appropriations at the full authorized level of \$100 million for the Border Water Infrastructure Program to implement solutions for chronic water pollution along the U.S./Mexico border.

**Support:** The *Border Water Quality Restoration and Protection Act* (H.R. 1663/S. 572), introduced by Rep. Vargas and Sen. Feinstein, to designate the EPA to address transboundary pollution and improve water quality along the border.



“Environmental justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policy.”

– US EPA

The time for environmental justice is now. Ensure the EPA has the funding to complete the USMCA comprehensive solution Alternative I-2 project.