

The Drop

FALL 2020



Photo by Brady Lawrence



The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves and beaches, for all people, through a powerful activist network.

The Surfrider Foundation is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization for all people who protect and enjoy the world's ocean, waves and beaches. Our success and impact depends on learning from our community, standing in solidarity with our allies and working towards a more just future, both for our organization and the environmental movement as a whole.

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LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Paddling Towards The Outside Set

For over 35 years, the Surfrider Foundation has focused on grassroots organizing in communities across the U.S. to ensure that everyone has a voice when it comes to protecting and enjoying our coast. A core tenet of our work has been to ensure the ocean, waves and beaches are safe and accessible to all people. We know that our success and impact depends on learning from our community and expanding who is part of it, taking a more intersectional approach to our work, standing in solidarity with our allies and working towards a more just future both for our organization and the environmental movement as a whole.

This spring, Surfrider's network reacted in horror to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, amongst many other acts of racial violence perpetrated against Black people. These incidents prompted a moral reckoning of our nation's values and treatment of Black lives, and the structural racism that has pervaded our society for centuries. Surfrider has been working proactively on Justice, Equity,

Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) for the last 18 months, but we realize we still have a lot to learn and even more to do in building not only a more equitable and diverse organization, but also a more just and equitable future for our coasts, ocean and communities.

Whether it's fighting for beach access for everyone or expanding our local community partners to align with environmental justice issues, supporting local Ocean Friendly Restaurants, or advocating for the federal Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act, we remain optimistic that rising to the challenges we face will make the Surfrider Foundation movement more powerful and our resilient network of chapters and activists even more committed to protecting our ocean, waves and beaches.



Dr. Chad Nelsen
Chief Executive Officer



MAKING PROGRESS

Protecting Our Coasts For All People

By: Pete Stauffer,
Environmental Director

This year has been unlike any other in Surfrider Foundation's history. The COVID-19 pandemic created massive shifts in both how Surfrider advances our mission and also the prioritization of our work. The pandemic has also created new challenges for us to address, including an increase in plastic trash, such as PPE, in our coastal environment, as well as restrictions on beach access due to public health concerns.

As a grassroots organization, much of our work revolves around organizing community activities like beach cleanups, chapter meetings, outreach events, and advocating at public hearings. Since these activities have been curtailed, we have been adapting and innovating ways to maintain community-driven advocacy for our ocean, waves and beaches digitally. We've also modified our programs to allow for solo beach cleanups and established safe protocols for our water testing program.

Yet, the challenges of 2020 have also revealed the strength and commitment of our network. Through August, Surfrider had won 40 coastal victories to protect our ocean, waves and beaches. These campaign wins represent government decisions to protect the coastal environment, improve public access, or both. This success is a testament to the



Solo beach cleanups have allowed Surfrider activists to continue their work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

determination and adaptability of our network, as we continue to drive coastal protections in an ever changing world.

Nearly half of our victories this year address the plastic pollution crisis that is suffocating marine life and invading every strata of ocean ecosystems. Led by our chapters across the country, we have secured 17 victories to curb the wasteful consumption of plastic bags, straws, foam containers, and other single-

use products. These include groundbreaking wins in New York, Virginia and Washington to pass state laws that will help reduce plastic pollution.

Surfrider also won a monumental victory in the U.S. Supreme Court this spring to uphold Clean Water Act protections. The court's ruling in the Maui Injection Well lawsuit sets a major national precedent that polluters cannot discharge treated sewage into the ocean via groundwater transmission. The victory was the culmination of more than a decade of advocacy by the Surfrider Maui Chapter to address a glaring loophole in the Clean Water Act.

Another major Surfrider victory was the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act by Congress in July. This federal legislation guarantees full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which protects our nation's public lands and waters, and enhances recreational access to these places. Surfrider and our partners worked for years to

pass this historic legislation, including our advocacy at Coastal Recreation Hill Day in February where we met with over 130 Senate and House offices to rally support for the bill.

Finally, Surfrider has reaffirmed our commitment to addressing environmental justice through our efforts to protect the world's ocean, waves and beaches for all people. We acknowledge that systemic racism has historically resulted in more coastal pollution and less coastal access in low-income and communities of color. Accordingly, we are taking steps to ensure that our coastal advocacy includes outreach and collaboration with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in the communities where we are working.

While we're encouraged by the significant progress we have made on these and other issues, we also understand that our work is far from done. We invite you to join our efforts to protect our ocean, waves and beaches for the future.



The Great American Outdoors Act guarantees full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Photo by Byland Films

Kris Buchanan Spearheads Sustainable Dining Despite COVID-19

By: Rachael Coccia, Plastic Pollution Manager

For Kris Buchanan, eating healthy is all about the results. As an Olympic athlete, Kris indulged in processed carbs, fast food, and lots of sugary sports drinks. In her words, “Why? Because when you are young, fit and an Olympian, you can... and you burn it off. Athletes are notorious for eating poorly.” A few years after retiring, her poor food choices caught up to her and resulted in the development of celiac disease, Hashimoto’s disease, and hypoglycemia. Feeling empowered to restore her health, Kris enrolled in a school for holistic nutrition. There she learned 80% of the immune system is in the digestive tract—an obvious connection between food and overall health. This was a game changer for Kris, who says, “It’s pretty crazy we don’t learn about food and our bodies when we are young, and even chefs and restaurant owners don’t think of food this way. For GOODONYA it’s about nourishment, not just flavor. But the good news is when you work with simple, real, organic food, the flavor is naturally awesome.”

For GOODONYA it’s about nourishment, not just flavor.

Kris founded GOODONYA in 2001, to make real food that helps you feel good. GOODONYA Organic Eatery is located on the historic Route 101 in Encinitas, CA. The menu is all organic and as local as possible. They offer a 100% organic, fair trade coffee bar and biodynamic wines. As Kris says, “I created the menu around all my favorite things: hamburgers, tacos, salads, coffee...but in good-for-you, real food versions.”



Kris Buchanan, Founder & CEO of GOODONYA



GOODONYA was one of the Surfrider Foundation’s first Ocean Friendly Restaurants. Photo by Christy Lang

GOODONYA was also one of the Surfrider Foundation’s first Ocean Friendly Restaurants. Ocean Friendly Restaurants are committed to reducing the amount of single-use plastic they use by only serving reusables for onsite dining, eliminating the use of plastic bags, plastic straws, and expanded polystyrene, only offering to-go utensils upon request, and properly recycling, among other sustainable practices. GOODONYA is proud to be single-use plastic free! In 2018, Kris kicked out all drinks in plastic bottles and only stocks brands who use glass or aluminum packaging, including their own drink, GOODONYA HYDRATE. She reformulated HYDRATE into a powder and it’s the only electrolyte drink that comes in a compostable package. For Kris, becoming an Ocean Friendly Restaurant was a no-brainer: “Just one look at the plastic island in the

Pacific...once we saw and learned about it, we had to change. Once you are awake to these issues, change isn’t an option.”

With all the obvious planet-saving benefits aside, running a sustainably-minded business does not come without challenges. For Kris, the biggest is changing customer expectations. She explains, “If we don’t put a fork, knife, etc. in the bag, then we can get a bad review or complaint. But how much of that to-go stuff is in people’s drawers at home?” The answer is likely high, but it’s something people have come to expect. Kris is calling for open dialogue with customers to better explain sustainable practices and provide what they need, only when they really need it. Disposable packaging presents another obstacle.



To address the issue of disposable takeout containers, Kris is helping pilot a reusable takeout program managed by reVessel. Photo by Christy Lang

As Kris explains, “There is a reusable or compostable substitute for everything a restaurant needs. The hard part is the overall waste, even the compostable stuff is wasteful.” This has been made even more challenging due to the increased takeout orders during COVID-19.

GOODONYA is one of 8 restaurants providing meals to frontline workers in reVessel’s reusable containers.

“Compostables aren’t much more expensive, but we are wrapping food to go for 80% of our orders – it used to be 20%,” says Kris. “It’s heartbreaking how much we are using.”

To address the issue of disposable takeout containers, Kris is helping pilot a reusable takeout program managed by reVessel. Based in San Diego, [reVessel](#) is a sustainable brand focusing on designing morally conscious products to better prepare, store, and carry food without compromising the environment. GOODONYA is one of 8 restaurants providing meals to frontline workers in reVessel’s reusable containers.

The hope is that this model could be expanded to help restaurants provide takeout in reusables, a solution we now desperately need. If there’s something innovative happening in San Diego around restaurant sustainability, you can bet Kris is at the helm.

GOODONYA has reopened for outdoor dining, with a few key changes. Menus can be scanned and browsed on your phone. They’re providing natural hand sanitizer from [The Nada Shop](#), a local refillery, who sells items in bulk and reuses containers. Condiments are not automatically provided at the tables, but are sanitized and brought out if requested. Takeout boxes are given if needed, but the customer handles their own leftovers to avoid any potential cross contamination. Additionally, cash payments and tips are not allowed, as bills can be dirty.

With a new to-go nook up front to keep customers out of the restaurant and her staff safer, Kris really covered all her bases!

Kris summarizes her journey by saying, “It’s been a whole life journey of getting to a place where you care about what you do and how it affects others. In the USA, money creates our world. If we buy GMOs, they will grow GMOs. We have more power than we know. So I want to be a business that does good because it feels good. And life is too short to feel bad.”



GOODONYA has reopened for outdoor dining, with a few key changes to accommodate public health concerns. Photo by Christy Lang

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act

By: Jennie Romer, Legal Associate, Plastic Pollution Initiative

The Surfrider Foundation has successfully fought plastic pollution at the local and state level for over a decade, with 274 plastic pollution policy victories to date. On February 11, 2020, introduction of the [Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act \(BFFPPA\)](#) marked the first comprehensive plastic pollution reduction legislation introduced at the federal level that strongly aligns with Surfrider's policy mission of advocating [first and foremost for a source reduction](#) of single-use plastics, then

recycling all remaining plastics. The BFFPPA includes many of the successful policies honed at the state and local levels for over a decade, and builds upon those by including broader and more ambitious policies including a national container deposit, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for product packaging, a moratorium on permits for new plastic production facilities, and a ban on international shipment of plastic waste.



The Surfrider Foundation's Washington D.C. Chapter and George Washington University student club both represented at the bill introduction rally. Photo by Kali Pepper



The moratorium on permits for new plastic production facilities and the ban on international shipment of plastic waste are examples of legislation that supports the fight for environmental justice in fenceline communities.

EPR is a legal framework where producers are held financially responsible for the impacts of their product. EPR laws are already common for certain hazardous products like e-waste and paint, but in the context of plastic pollution we're talking about EPR bills for packaging. Under this EPR legislation, packaging must meet certain product design criteria, and other optional criteria are incentivized. Producers must pay into a fund for the cost of recycling, disposal, and cleanup of a product's packaging. Money from the fund directly manages clean up processes, or reimburses local governments or other entities for those costs. This policy is a game-changer. It shifts waste management and clean up responsibilities from local governments to the producers and drives changes in product design, including source reduction and the mandatory inclusion of recycled content in new products.

The moratorium on permits for new plastic production facilities and the ban on international shipment of plastic waste are examples of legislation that supports the fight for environmental justice in fenceline communities. Fenceline communities are communities that are directly affected in some way by the facility's operation, which could mean literally sharing a fence with or being downwind from a plastic production plant, known as an "ethane cracker," or an incinerator. According to a report from the NAACP, most [fenceline communities](#) in the U.S. are low-income individuals and communities of color who experience systemic oppression. The Surfrider Foundation is part of the [Break Free From Plastic](#) global movement, which inspired the name of the bill. The BFFP movement connects organizations working to reduce plastics across the supply chain, including groups working on shutting down dirty incinerators and stopping the expansion of petrochemical facilities.

The BFFPPA is very special to the Surfrider Foundation's Plastic Pollution Initiative policy team because we have been involved from day one in developing this bill. The journey towards this bill started in January of 2019, when the Surfrider Foundation and UCLA Law School's Emmett Institute on Climate Change and the Environment presented the findings of their joint report on federal actions to address marine plastic pollution at [two Congressional Briefings](#) on Capitol Hill. Soon after these briefings, Senator Tom Udall's and Representative Alan Lowenthal's offices reached out to Surfrider and we encouraged the legislators to work together in crafting a bill, and they've teamed up in a very big way.



The Surfrider Foundation has successfully fought plastic pollution at the local and state level for over a decade, with [274 plastic pollution policy victories to date.](#)

Instead of taking a more traditional approach of consulting with a few organizations, then drafting and introducing a bill, Sen. Udall and Rep. Lowenthal took a holistic approach and developed an [outline of bold federal legislation](#) to tackle the plastic pollution crisis and requested the best policies to address each of the topics in the outline. They reviewed hundreds of comments from environmental organizations as well as corporations, industry groups, and state and local agencies. Surfrider Foundation submitted a letter of support signed by 55 environmental and environmental justice

organizations highlighting the best practices for each of the policies included in the outline, in addition to flagging the importance of also addressing plastic pollution at its source through a pause on permits for new polymer production facilities under the Clean Air Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. Once the first draft of the bill was complete, it was released for public comment and Surfrider submitted detailed recommendations. Surfrider continued to work closely with the lawmakers on developing the legislation, and we spoke at the [bill introduction rally](#).



Surfrider continues to push for the passage of the BFFPPA through our activist powered [action alerts](#), presentations, and direct engagement with legislators. As of August 1, 2020, there were 84 cosponsors in the House and 9 cosponsors in the Senate. This bill is about more than just the prospect of passing at the federal level – it's also providing a model for state and local governments. Surfrider plans to continue this push for the BFFPPA as well as facilitate the introduction of [similar bills at the state level](#) during the next legislative session. Only through strategically pushing for a plastic pollution reduction policy in a holistic manner, at all levels of government, do we have a chance to truly curb plastic pollution.

The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act Will:



- Require producers of packaging, containers, and food-service products to design, manage, and finance waste and recycling programs.
- Create a nationwide beverage container refund program.
- Ban certain single-use plastic bags and place a fee on remaining carryout bags.
- Spur massive investments in U.S. domestic recycling and composting infrastructure.
- Prohibit plastic waste from being shipped to developing countries.
- Place a temporary pause on new plastic facilities until EPA updates and creates important regulations on those facilities.

INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Surfrider Fights For Safe And Equitable Beach Access

By: Pete Stauffer, Environmental Director

The Surfrider Foundation has a long and proud history of promoting public access to the beach for all people. Since our humble beginnings, we have worked to secure beach access as a universal right so that people of all communities can enjoy these special places. Unfortunately, beach access is constantly being threatened, so Surfrider's network works to meet these challenges through community outreach and advocacy campaigns. Surfrider chapters also promote inclusive beach access by bringing thousands of inland and underserved community members to visit the beach.

This year has seen particular challenges to beach access as the COVID-19 pandemic has upended life across the globe. As confirmed cases swept across the U.S. this spring, many states closed beaches and issued "shelter in place" orders. Recognizing the need to curb the spread of the virus, Surfrider responded with our #StayHomeShredLater campaign to encourage the beachgoing community to act responsibly and follow stay at home orders.

Surfrider also provided our supporters with the latest science on COVID-19 and shared 'Beachgoer Best Practices' on how to stay safe and prevent spread. These best practices include staying close to home, maintaining physical distancing and wearing a mask.



Warning sign encouraging beachgoers to maintain physical distance at Avila Beach, CA.

Surfrider's advocacy to safely reopen beaches has been guided by science with emphasis on measures to protect public health. In May, Surfrider assembled an expert task force to address whether and how to allow access to the beach during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Beach Access Expert Panel was composed of highly accomplished experts in public health, coastal management, environmental justice,

and public policy. The resulting report, *Beach Access during COVID-19 Guidance*, provides a framework for coastal regulators to consider when making management decisions about beach access. Since the release of the report, Surfrider has been working with government agencies and community partners to ensure beaches across the U.S. can safely remain open.

Surfrider has also reaffirmed our commitment to beach access for all people, especially for communities of color in light of recent acts of racial violence that have exposed deep-seated issues of social injustice and inequality in our country. These inequalities extend to the issue of beach access, as many Americans, particularly Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), have historically

been denied opportunities to visit the beach. Surfrider recognizes that there are many types of barriers to beach access, which can extend beyond physical barriers. As our nation works to address the centuries of pain, oppression and injustice imposed on Black Americans, we must fight to ensure that our beaches are truly inclusive, public and open to all.

The Surfrider Foundation believes that beaches are special places that should be safe and accessible to everyone. To keep beaches open, beachgoers must act as good stewards of our environment and communities, and follow the best practices put forth by public health and coastal management experts. We ask that you play your part by following all government guidelines and regulations.



Following the guidance of experts will ensure our beaches can remain open for all to enjoy.

SURFRIDER IMPACT

Resilience In Trying Times

By: Chris Casey, Membership Manager

The summer of '20 will not be remembered fondly. Despite the social and economic turmoil caused by Covid-19, the threats to our ocean, waves, and beaches persist, unmoved by the global pandemic. Their need for protection remains unchanged, and in some ways, these needs have increased, as discarded PPE, such as masks and gloves, are added to the trash that continues to accumulate on our beaches, which are now less frequently cleaned. These threats have been exacerbated by the efforts of the plastics industry to roll back hard won limits or bans on single use plastic bags and foodware through false claims that they are safer to use during the current health crisis.

Surfrider's network of activists, volunteers, and supporters have demonstrated amazing resilience through these unprecedented times. Chapter meetings and other events have gone virtual. Beach cleanups are now solo activities rather than group gatherings. And our network is making adjustments and

evolving as needed, both to stay safe, and to continue to fulfill our mission.

Like many who meet crises with action, Kristin Finn found a way to amplify her impact. Kristin and her husband Johnny live in DelRay Beach, Florida, where they've been active Surfrider supporters for years. At the outset of the pandemic, Kristin responded to an appeal for masks for local healthcare workers by putting her sewing skills to good use. She shared this on Facebook and was soon shipping masks for healthcare workers more widely. When friends started asking if they could purchase a mask, she saw an opportunity to introduce them to an organization "near and dear to our family."

Using Surfrider's peer-to-peer fundraising platform, Kristin built a page where she accepted donations supporting Surfrider in return for her masks. Quickly surpassing her initial goal of \$100, she has since raised over \$500 for Surfrider, while using her skills to help keep others safe.

Our network is making the adjustments and evolving as needed, both to stay safe, and to continue to fulfill our mission.



Distressed by the amount of PPE he was observing along the shorelines of San Francisco, triathlete Michael Vulcanich set-up his own Surfrider fundraising page. In July, Michael set out on a six-day, 500 mile coastal bike ride, climbing 35,000 feet in elevation. Along the way, he successfully avoided any single-use food or drink products, cleaned beaches, raised awareness about plastics via social media, and steered his followers to his fundraising page, raising more than \$5,000 in the process.

We all look forward to life after this pandemic, to a return to some sense of normalcy, and the ability to again focus more on the 'enjoyment' aspect of Surfrider's mission. But for now, while faced with the immediate threats to our health and our environment, individuals like Kristin and Michael are representative of thousands of others across our network who have stepped up to face these challenges and to protect what we love – our ocean, waves and beaches – and given us something positive to remember from the Summer of '20.



Highlights from Michael Vulcanich's 500 mile bike ride to raise awareness and funds to support Surfrider's fight against plastic pollution.



SUPPORTED BY: **CLIF**

Get Involved With A Solo Beach Cleanup

Solo beach cleanups are a great way to get outdoors and get involved making a positive impact in your community – not just on your own local beaches, but helping to influence future legislation to protect our coastlines nationwide.

Learn more at:
cleanups.surfrider.org



REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Historic Clean Water Victory On Maui

By: Lauren Blickley,
Hawai'i Regional Manager

In 2012, after years of trying to negotiate workable solutions, the Surfrider Foundation's Maui Chapter partnered with local environmental groups in suing the County of Maui for violating the Clean Water Act. The County of Maui pumps 3-5 million gallons of treated sewage into groundwater aquifers each day. This polluted groundwater eventually seeps into the ocean, impacting Maui's marine life and coral reefs.

The case made it all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States where, in April 2020, the justices ruled 6-3 in favor of environmental groups, determining that the polluted water traveling through groundwater can be a violation of the Clean Water Act.

The central question in this case is if the Clean Water Act requires a permit when pollution originates from a "point source" (like Maui's wastewater plant), would this requirement hold if the wastewater is first filtered through groundwater (a "nonpoint source") before reaching the ocean. Despite the mounting evidence, Maui County continues to argue that it does not need a federal water quality permit for the wastewater treatment plants. It instead maintains that the Clean Water Act only applies to pollution that very directly enters a water body, such as a pipe that dumps polluted water directly into a stream, lake, bay, or ocean.



Surfrider volunteers fight for clean water at the U.S. Supreme Court.

In one study, scientists concluded that more than 60% of the wastewater dumped into the Maui wells reaches the ocean. Additional studies have demonstrated that the polluted underground seep is both warmer and contains more phosphorous than the surrounding ocean water, two factors that promote algal growth. Unchecked algal growth can suffocate and kill corals, as well as other marine life. Coral and marine life declines have been documented in the immediate area around the seep.

After the Supreme Court ruling, the case was sent back to the District Court. The lower court will now decide whether Maui County needs a permit. If those judges follow their previous rulings, Maui County will likely need to develop solutions to decrease the amount of pollution it sends into the ocean. Options include diverting the treated wastewater to golf courses and agriculture, or improving the sewage treatment process. Surfrider Foundation continues to follow through on this litigation alongside our co-plaintiffs, including through settlement negotiations with the County of Maui.

The Supreme Court decision was a major victory not only for the Surfrider Foundation and environmental groups, but also for upholding the Clean Water Act. The ruling furthermore has far reaching implications, both locally in Hawai'i and for traditionally



Activists in Maui join together for a paddle out to show their support for clean water. Photo by Ryan Brewer

big polluters in the fossil fuel industry. Surfrider's Legal Director Angela Howe explains, "Surfrider Foundation was proud to be part of one of the most important environmental law cases at the U.S. Supreme Court of this generation. The Supreme Court decision upholds the intent of the Clean Water Act to protect the nation's waters and affects all future interpretations of the law for point source discharges to waters of the United States."

We are proud of our Maui Chapter volunteers for their many years of tireless dedication to this case.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Saving What Matters: Stasher's Commitment To Reducing Plastic Pollution

By: Rachael Cushing, Partnerships Coordinator

Stasher was founded with a mission to provide a radically functional and endlessly reusable alternative option to common single-use plastic items, and since 2016, Stasher bags have been doing just that. Made from durable platinum silicone, Stasher bags are designed to replace single-use plastic bags and containers for a variety of purposes, from storing food to keeping personal items splash- and sand-proof at the beach. Every Stasher bag, with its ability to go from the freezer to microwave to the dishwasher, has the power to replace thousands of single-use items in its lifetime.

In addition to being a leader in the plastic-free movement at the individual and community level by providing reusable products to replace single-use items, co-hosting community events and raising awareness, Stasher is also deeply committed to supporting organizations that are actively involved in tackling the plastic crisis in our ocean through source reduction efforts on a national and even global scale. Since 2019, Stasher has supported Surfrider's mission as an esteemed partner in our shared goal of eliminating sources of plastic pollution.

"It's no secret that so much of our plastic ends up in places it shouldn't, primarily in our ocean and waterways," Stasher's Brand Director, Katie Reinman said of the brand's motivation to provide reusable alternatives. "We have always been a mission-focused company, and we constantly look for opportunities to partner with organizations like Surfrider to further the critical work of addressing plastic pollution."



Stasher has committed to giving away over 100,000 Stasher bags, effectively replacing as many as 25 million single-use plastic bags.

To help bring awareness to the growing plastic pollution crisis, and to reduce access barriers to reusable alternatives, Stasher's "Save What Matters" initiative seeks to help get reusables into the hands of more people through direct community outreach. Throughout this year and next, Stasher has committed to giving away over 100,000 Stasher bags, effectively replacing as many as 25 million single-use plastic bags.

Stasher's philosophy on reducing personal impacts is grounded in the idea of favoring progress over perfection. "Individuals are essential for protecting our oceans and special spaces," Reinman said of Stasher's outlook. "Every single person that makes a decision to actively make more sustainable choices plays an important role in bettering our planet."

ACTIVIST PROFILE

Ally Celones Centurk

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

In 2017, I stumbled upon the Surfrider San Diego's Blue Water Task Force page. I had recently learned about a spill event that discharged over 143 million gallons of untreated sewage into the Tijuana River Valley and onto our beaches. I was inspired by the community response and got involved. Joining the chapter has allowed me to connect with like-minded advocates and help amplify important environmental issues affecting our region.

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

A lot of the work I do is about educating people on the importance of water quality and its connection to public health. We focus on regionally-specific community outreach across San Diego County, so it's important for us to be mindful of the different geological and hydrological aspects of a particular area, and how they relate to the issues that are most relevant to the residents there. For example, there are a lot of lagoons and river outlets in North County, where a lot of dredging and sand replenishment occurs. Mission Bay and San Diego Bay have a lot of tourism in the central region, and then we have the toxic border sewage crisis to the south. So there's a lot to balance and understand which issues are relevant to which audiences, while keeping the big picture perspective in mind.

What Surfrider projects have you worked on?

I really enjoy Blue Water Task Force projects that involve interacting with and getting feedback from the public. I'm not an expert in regional water quality issues, but I can be an expert in listening to what people say is important to them when they go to the beach.

I also like to channel my creativity into building communication tools like our weekly water quality email, [The Weekend Beach Report](#). I work in marketing and am just fascinated with how people learn and interact with the information we put out there.

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

You don't have to be a surfer to get involved! Honestly, all it really takes is commitment, consistency, and a persistent heart. If you love the ocean and you care about the planet and the people on it, then you're set. The Surfrider activist community empowers people to dream and work for a cleaner, healthier, and more protected planet.

The Surfrider activist community empowers people to dream and work for a cleaner, healthier, and more protected planet.





AMBASSADOR PROFILE

Otto Flores

How has your unique experience as someone from the Latinx community framed your perspective as an activist and as part of the Surfrider network?

As Puerto Ricans, we live in this paradoxical, liminal space where we are both insiders and outsiders. Yes, we are U.S. citizens, but we also come from a Latin descent influenced by the Spanish settlers that came to the Caribbean in the 1400s. I feel a sense of belonging to the Latinx community as I have put my energy into the region throughout my career, and my activist roots sprouted from working with environmental efforts like Granito de Arena and learning from Ramon Navarro while working to save Punta de Lobos in Chile. These experiences have inevitably aligned with the platform and opportunity that Surfrider provides to create effective programs to tackle important, local environmental issues.

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

The biggest issue we face is the fact that Puerto Rico's way out of its current economic state should not be selling our lands. Our economic issues keep leading to selling as a shortsighted alternative to paying our debts. This cycle is creating unnecessary development that threatens natural resources, endemic species, marine life and a long list of things, including water quality issues, that end up impacting our coastlines.

What Surfrider projects have you worked on?

Most recently, I worked on a collaboration between Dragon and Surfrider that showcases sunglasses made from recycled plastic bottles and will help fund The Blue Water Task Force, a very effective Surfrider program that helps monitor water quality. I also recently had the chance to go to Washington D.C. as part of Surfrider's Coastal Recreation Hill Day to speak with Puerto Rico's representatives in Congress about the issues we face in our community.

What's been your experience being a surfer and/or ocean enthusiast as someone from the Latinx community?

My experience, whether unique or not, is that I am able to communicate to all these different communities, understand their needs, and help advise and advocate for the best possible way to be effective. The surf community is a very blessed tribe, and if you can connect to it in a positive way, the possibilities are endless.

The surf community is a very blessed tribe, and if you can connect to it in a positive way, the possibilities are endless.

Gear That Gives Back



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

shop.surfrider.org



BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Adriana Estrada

*Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Chair, Board Diversity Committee*

Why and how did you get involved with Surfrider?

Growing up in Los Angeles, my family spent a lot of time at Santa Monica beach. When we learned about the pollution in the bay that made the water unsafe, my parents got involved with a local organization and set the example for me about how important it was to take care of the environment.

I started surfing in San Francisco and first heard about Surfrider at WISE surf shop. I decided that if I was going to surf, then I should be a part of an organization that worked to protect our ocean, beaches and waves. Plus, for my small donation, I got a cool sticker that I could put on my car.

The ocean is foundational to our survival, even if you live in the middle of the country.

Describe your work to bring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to our organization. What does this work mean to you personally?

When I started surfing there weren't a lot of women in the water, and when there were, they didn't look like me. The irony was that when I went to Mexico, Costa Rica or Hawaii, I resembled the people in the lineup. I began to wonder why there weren't more POC surfing at home? And why weren't more POC involved with an organization like Surfrider?

Being a Surfrider board member is both a tremendous honor and a great responsibility. When I joined, I made a commitment to Dr. Chad Nelsen, Surfrider's CEO, to work with him in diversifying our board so that it reflects the diversity of our activists and sets the stage for our future. Today, I think our board normalizes what it means to look like an environmentalist, a surfer or a beach lover.

What is the most important thing you tell others about the difference they can make?

The ocean is foundational to our survival, even if you live in the middle of the country. Every day you can do one small thing to lessen the burden on our oceans – use less plastic, use reef-friendly sunscreens, or go to a Surfrider meeting. Basically, if you enjoy the beach, leave it a little better than when you arrived – if you catch ten waves, pick up ten pieces of trash. Easy.





ARTIST PROFILE

DJ Javier

When was the first time you went surfing (and/or visited the ocean) and what was it like?

Although I grew up going to the ocean on weekends with my family, the funny thing is that we never really went in the water. We frequented Goleta Beach, in Santa Barbara, which was mostly BIPOC working-class families all having BBQs on the grassy area up against the sand. Growing up, the ocean was nice, but not something you necessarily jumped into. I actually didn't even learn how to swim until I was about 17 years old, and it wasn't until I was 18 that two friends asked if I wanted to learn to surf – I figured I'd give it a shot. After getting absolutely rocked on knee high waves, I caught a wave and was hooked. The feeling was unmatched to anything I had ever felt before.

I always figured that surfing was never a sport for a brown kid like me to get into. The narrative in my head throughout my teenage years was, "Well, that's a white kid sport, I don't really have any business surfing." But when I caught my first wave, and felt the board glide across the surface of the water for the first time, all these ideas and stereotypes about who was and wasn't allowed to surf, what a surfer should look like, how they should dress, what music they should listen to, etc. went completely out the window. I became obsessed and it's been totally intertwined in my life ever since.

What inspired you to want to work with Surfrider (or to reach out to us)?

I have always admired Surfrider. They have a great balance of having the know-how to really create change, being genuine in their intentions and communication, passionate about topics they're invested in, and from a creative standpoint, always have great visuals and merchandise – which is just icing on the cake for me. Our collaboration wasn't really planned. I had emailed Surfrider a few months ago, asking for a list of ocean-focused organizations that supported BIPOC communities and youth. I wanted to learn more about these organizations and get involved, especially as a brown surfer who felt like there was a lack of community in and around the water. Surfrider supplied an extensive list of these organizations, and before signing off, I said thanks and that I'd be stoked to work together if the opportunity ever arose. Luckily, the team at Surfrider enjoys my work and were into teaming up for a good cause!

When I caught my first wave, and felt the board glide across the surface of the water for the first time, all these ideas and stereotypes about who was and wasn't allowed to surf went completely out the window.

How did you come up with the concept for the collaboration collection?

The basis of the collection was to create a body of work that would ultimately support getting BIPOC youth in the water. Unfortunately, whether people see it or not, systemic racism has absolutely affected surfing and beach culture. At least in Santa Barbara, BIPOC families and youth are few and far between on the beach. Most beach communities are affluent and even the act of surfing comes with a barrier to entry, with the costs of equipment, accessibility to even get to the beach, knowing how to swim, and trying to deal with aggressive localism, among other things. More often than not, you'll meet surfers that are all "good vibes" out of the water, but when you get in the water next to them, they portray the complete opposite.

The concept of the collection was to communicate this overarching idea that, "The Beach is Yours." The hope is that the messaging of the artwork will serve as an encouragement to those who feel the way I did growing up, that, "Surfing is only for white people," and to show people that the beach is for anyone and everyone – no matter the color of your skin, socioeconomic class, gender, etc.

A lot of my work is inspired by growing up in Santa Barbara and the community that influenced my style. I wanted to create a collection that was true to me, my style, my experiences, and something that wasn't your typical surf brand art. Something that my community and fellow BIPOC family around the world would be down to wear, whether or not they'd consider themselves frequent beach-goers. Hopefully the artwork encourages young brown kids, similar to me growing up, that the beach is as much theirs as it is the rich kids who grow up right on the beach.

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

Not only do we need to protect the ocean and beach, but we need to share it. For a city like Santa Barbara that has a huge BIPOC population, most beaches and line-ups don't have many BIPOC in them. It takes most people ten minutes or so to get to any beach within Santa Barbara, but there's not too many people that look like me, or my family frequenting them. So yes, protecting the beach is absolutely important, but sharing the beach, by empowering younger generations is critically important too.



Coastal Victory Update

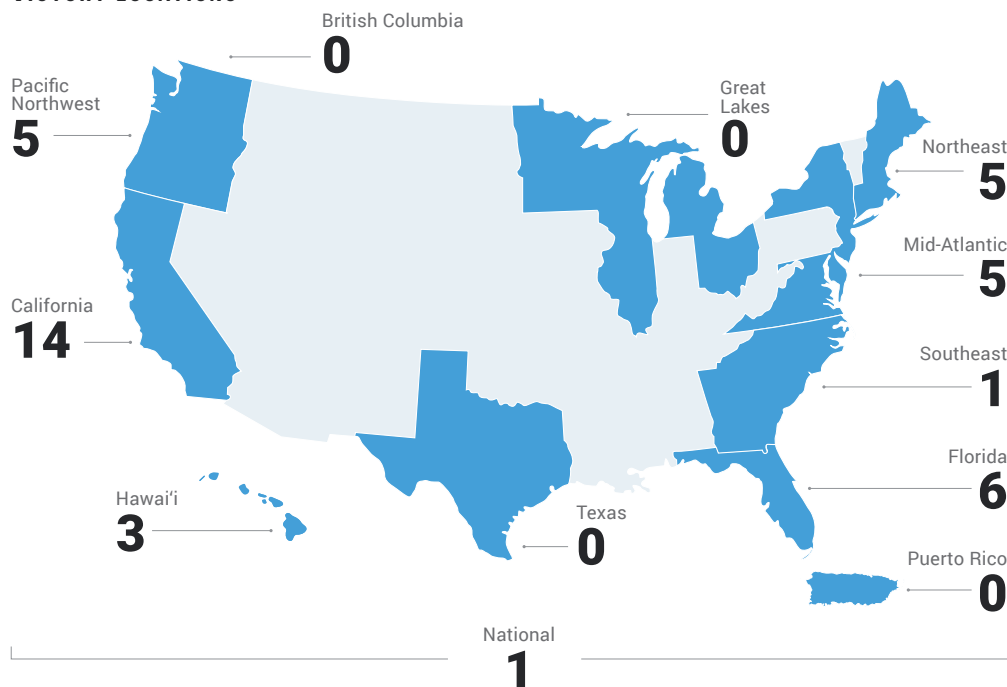
A coastal victory is a decision made in favor of the coastal and ocean environment that results in a positive conservation outcome, improves coastal access, or both.

For more information visit surfrider.org/campaigns.

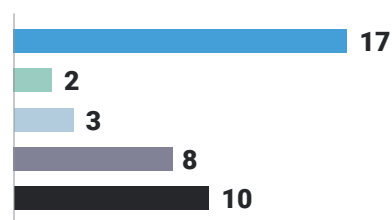
40

Total Victories as of August 2020

VICTORY LOCATIONS

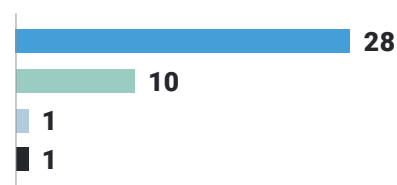


VICTORY TYPE



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

VICTORY SCOPE



● Local
 ● State
 ● Regional
 ● National



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Help the Surfrider Foundation to advance the protection of our ocean, waves and beaches for future generations.

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