

2018 International Coastal Cleanup Post-Event Press Release

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For Immediate Release

124 Nassau County Volunteers #SuitUptoCleanup 425 pounds of Trash from Amelia Island Beaches as Part of World's Largest Single-Day Beach Cleanup

*Keep Nassau Beautiful, Kayak Amelia and Nassau County Volunteers Joined Hundreds of
Thousands Worldwide during Ocean Conservancy's 33rd International Coastal Cleanup*

Amelia Island, Florida, September 15, 2018 – 124 volunteers in Nassau County participated in Ocean Conservancy's 33rd International Coastal Cleanup (ICC), the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to remove trash from local waterways, beaches, lakes and rivers. Since the first ICC 33 years ago, nearly 13 million volunteers have removed nearly 250 million pounds of trash from beaches and waterway worldwide.

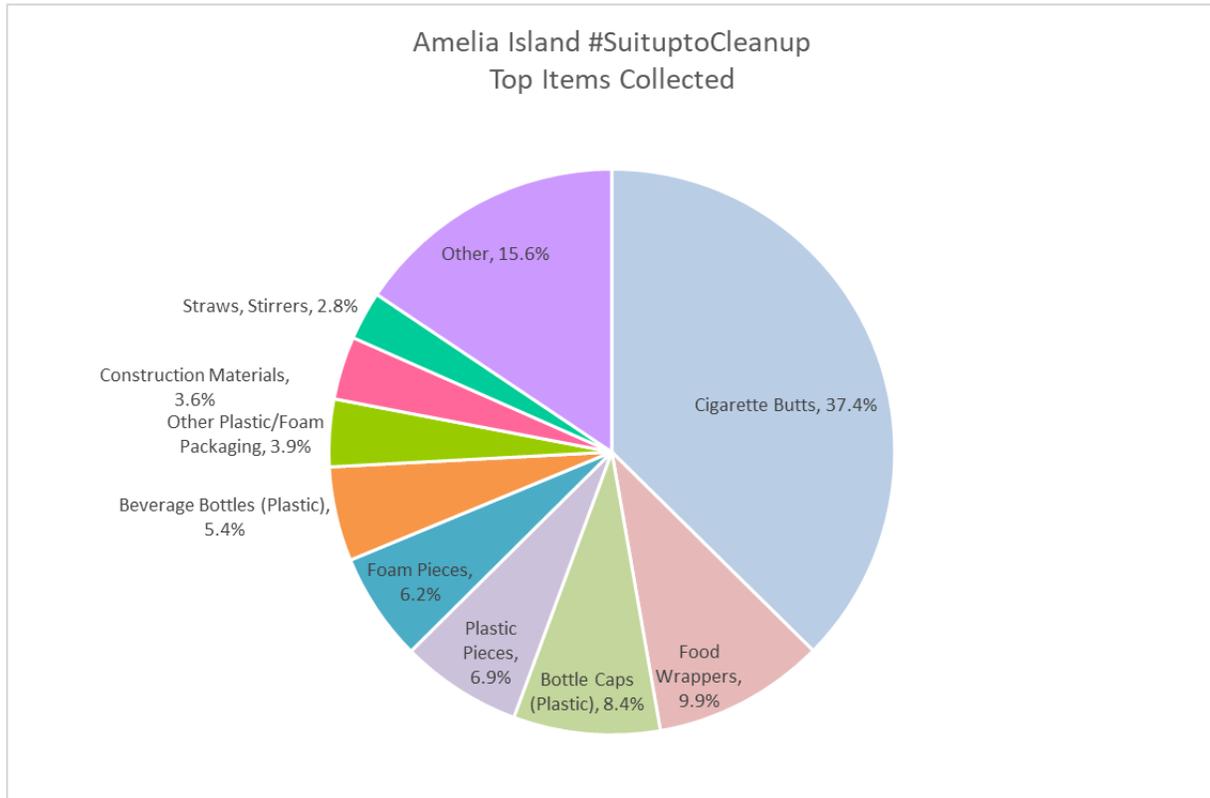
"When you #SuitUptoCleanup, you are advancing one of the most immediate and impactful solutions to keeping plastics out of the ocean," said Lynda Bell, Keep Nassau Beautiful Executive Director, "which is why we are so grateful to all the amazing site captains and volunteers who came out. Awareness has really grown around the issue of ocean plastic and it's great to see people taking action. Keep Nassau Beautiful is pleased to do its part in reducing the use of plastic. Gloves and totes provided to volunteers were all reusable."

In addition to removing 425 pounds of trash from 12.5 miles of Amelia Island beaches, site coordinators and volunteers contributed to the world's largest database on marine debris by logging each trash item in Ocean Conservancy's TIDES database. Scientists, researchers, industry leaders and policymakers rely on Ocean Conservancy's Ocean Trash Index to inform policy and determine solutions to the growing marine debris crisis.

Every year, millions of tons of trash—including an estimated 8 million metric tons of plastic waste—flow into the ocean, entangling wildlife, polluting beaches, and costing coastal municipalities hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Last year for the first time all ten of the top-ten most-collected items globally were made of plastic, including cigarette butts (which contain plastic filters), plastic bags, plastic beverage bottles, food wrappers, plastic bottle caps

and plastic straws. Plastics—which never fully biodegrade but rather break up into smaller and smaller pieces called microplastics—are of particular concern. Scientists predict that without concerted global action, there could be one ton of plastic for every three tons of fin fish in the ocean by 2025.

The top items collected and reported by Nassau County site captains – including Kayak Amelia, Wild Amelia, Dune Buggy Club, Amelia Surf Co., Wells Fargo, 8 Flags Jeep Club, AI Beach & Marine Life Protection Task Force and NEFL Master Naturalists Chapter – are shown in the chart.



“Given its scale, we will need to implement a suite of solutions to stem the tide of ocean plastic, including investing in waste collection and management in target geographies, reducing our reliance on single-use plastics, and rethinking how we produce and consume plastic products,” said Nicholas Mallos, Ocean Conservancy’s director of Trash Free Seas. “But cleaning up our beaches and waterways is an important piece of that puzzle, and we are so grateful for the hard work of local organizers, Keep Nassau Beautiful and Kayak Amelia, and all the Nassau County volunteers in helping us achieve our shared vision for a cleaner, healthier ocean.”

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Keep Nassau Beautiful, Inc. is working to inspire, educate, and equip individuals, groups, businesses and governments to take action to make Nassau County a place where residents, visitors and wildlife can thrive and experience the beauty of Nassau County. www.KeepNassauBeautiful.org

Ocean Conservancy is working to protect the ocean from today’s greatest global challenges. Together with our partners, we create science-based solutions for a healthy ocean and the wildlife and communities that depend on it. www.OceanConservancy.org



Kayak Amelia and volunteers – Dee Dee Bartels Boat Ramp



Dune Buggy Brothers site captains and volunteers from the New Berlin Honor Society



Wells Fargo volunteers participate in a Florida Day of Service