Bag Basics

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Heal the Bay

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Plastic Pollution
Extent of the Problem

- 60-80% of all marine debris is plastic, and 90% of floating marine debris is plastic
- 6x the amount of plastic than plankton (up to 36:1)
- Plastic film the largest identifiable type of debris (1/4 of total)
- 35% of fish sampled had ingested plastic

Sources: CA Coastal Commission; C.J. Moore et al (2001); AMRF
Marine Life Impacts

Entanglement

Photo: Whale Rescue Team

Ingestion

Photo: MSNBC.com
Urban Blight
Economic Impacts

- Tourism largest industry in CA

- Ocean Economy valued at $46 billion

- Ocean-dependent industries add over $17 billion and 370,000 jobs to California’s economy

Sources: National Ocean Economics Program (2005); The Plastic and Marine Debris Waste Reduction, Recycling and Composting Act
Clean-up costs add up...
Solutions....
Trash TMDLs

- East Fork San Gabriel
- Ballona Creek and Wetlands
- Los Angeles River
- Legg Lake, Machado Lake, Ventura River Estuary, Lake Elizabeth, Munz Lake, Lake Hughes, Revolon Slough and Beardsley Wash
- Malibu Creek
- Santa Monica Bay
Santa Monica Bay Trash TMDL

“If within three (3) years of Regional Board adoption date of this TMDL, a city or county voluntarily adopts local ordinances to ban plastic bags, smoking in public places and single use expanded polystyrene food packaging, it shall receive a three year extension of the final compliance date.”
BAG LEGISLATION
Ocean Protection Council

  
  http://www.opc.ca.gov

  
  http://www.opc.ca.gov/?p=310
Clean Seas Coalition
AB 1998
Single-Use Bag Reduction Act

- Unique Coalition of Support
  - CGA, NGOs, local gov’t, UFCW, Governor

- Passes Assembly 42-27

- Media momentum (i.e. LA Times Editorials)

- ACC pours $$$ into ads and donations

- Dies in Senate 14-21 (despite leadership support)
The American Chemistry Council
Local Ordinances

- San Francisco
- Fairfax
- Malibu
- Palo Alto
- County of Los Angeles
- Long Beach (pending)
- City of Santa Monica (pending)
- City of San Jose (pending)
- Santa Clara County (pending)
- Many others
Common Myths

- Recycling and education are better solutions
- These policies will impact low income people
- Jobs are going to be lost
- Single-use bags are reused
- Reusable bags are contaminated
Bag bans make news

“L.A. County passes sweeping ban on plastic bags”
- LA Times, 11/16/10

“Pay $1 to use plastic bags? Texas city to impose fee”
- USA Today, 9/10/10

“California: Ban on Plastic Bags Spreads”
- New York Times, 11/17/10

“San Jose City Council considers plastic bag ban”
- San Francisco Chronicle, 12/13/10