

Coastal Cleanup nets two tons of trash

October 29, 2020



The Marszal family picked a beautiful day to take an outing to Crescent City's south beach Oct. 17. Only this particular cloudless day, instead of a casual stroll, Jeff and Cassandra brought their kids Luca, 3 and Nova, 4 months, to get dirty, picking up discarded garbage in the Smith River Alliance's annual Del Norte Coastal Cleanup.

"We're just trying to do the right thing clean up some garbage," Jeff said about volunteering for cleanup for their first time ever. "We thought it was the right time to come out and contribute to the effort. Also, we thought it would be a good learning opportunity for our son. We're really glad they're doing it."

The Marszals were among nearly 50 volunteers in SRA's cleanup team for an event that overcame multiple challenges to remove two tons of trash.

With coronavirus concerns and nearby wildfires causing evacuations and hazardous breathing conditions, organizers and project partners chose to reschedule what is normally a September event. Dates were pushed

back, air quality monitored and a series of precautions adopted to assure participant safety. The outcome was a successful fourth year of SRA coordinating the Coastal Cleanup.

“It was really heartening to see our Del Norte community turnout to maintain the health and beauty of our coastal areas in spite of this year’s challenges” said Tara Dettmar, a cleanup coordinator with SRA.

While last year’s event drew in 250 volunteers, with the proper precautions, this year’s cleanup drew participants from the Disaster Animal Response Team, the Del Norte High School Interact Club and even a few from nearby counties. Dettmar said the total recovered trash, metal and recycling was 4,040 pounds from along the coastline and up the Smith River.

“We especially appreciate our many business partners who support this work and the Whale Tail Grant Program. Our business partners are recognized as River Guardians on the SRA website,” she said.

SRA is now recruiting volunteers for a Fall and Winter cleanup at areas within the Smith River National Recreation Area (NRA). Up to 80% of coastal trash originates inland so the goal is to clean up the NRA and prevent that trash from reaching the ocean. If interested, please email Tara@smithriveralliance.org.