

The Rapids: US EPA's Trash Free Waters Monthly Update February 2021

<https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters>

Introduction

Hello all,

Happy February! This month marks a transition to a new Administration for the EPA. The new Administration has already signaled that aquatic trash will remain a priority issue for EPA to address. We are excited to expand our efforts to address the aquatic trash problem and continue to be inspired by the stories of the great work going on in communities across the nation.

Clean Virginia Waterways of Longwood University (CVW) recently released a report on the impact of balloons and plastic ribbons on Virginia's remote beaches. It is an interesting read I recommend browsing the report [here](#). CVW continues to use community-based social marketing campaigns to inform citizens of potential alternatives to using balloons and plastic ribbons for social events.

Please continue to share any upcoming events with Layne Marshall (marshall.layne@epa.gov) so that the Trash Free Waters team can advertise these opportunities with all of you on the first Monday of each month.

Thanks,
Romell Nandi
US EPA
Trash Free Waters Program Lead

EPA Announcements

Second GLRI Trash Free Waters RFA Posted

In early January, EPA announced that it is seeking a second round of applications under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant program focused on keeping trash out of the Great Lakes. Approximately \$5 million will be made available through this funding opportunity, an almost \$3 million increase from last year's GLRI TFW RFA. The grant program will fund the installation of a number of large-scale aquatic trash collection devices within the watershed. EPA expects to notify finalists this summer. Read the news release [here](#).

Administrator Wheeler Discusses Marine Litter During Visit to Costa Rica

In January, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler traveled to Costa Rica to speak about plastic pollution and ocean protection. The Administrator met with the Vice Minister for Environment and Vice Minister for Water and Oceans at the Ministry of Environment and Energy regarding marine litter and solid waste management in particular. He took this time to promote the recently released U.S. Federal Strategy for Addressing the Global Issue of Marine Litter and even visited a local plastic processing plant.

Marine Litter Strategy Mentioned in 2020 Year in Review Report

The EPA recently released the 2020 Year in Review outlining major accomplishments and environmental progress over the past four years. The U.S. Federal Strategy for Addressing the Global Issue of Marine Litter publication was referenced in the document as an example of how the U.S. provides a critical global leadership role in improving waste management and recycling. Read the full news release about the report [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

Protecting Marinas and Inland Waterways Via Stormwater Tech

Thanks to a new grant program sponsored by Dart Container Corporation and UltraTech International, Inc. Dart will provide up to \$100,000 in grants (\$4,000 per qualifying organization) for the purchase and installation of UltraTech's patented Ultra-Drain Guard stormwater management products, which prevent litter, oil, and sediment from entering waterways via storm drains. Apply for this funding opportunity via a form [here](#).

KAITEKI Challenge Program RFA

Greentown Labs requests applications from innovative startups who are reimaging proteins, plastics, or packaging. They are interested in startups with a post "proof of concept" solutions in recycling technologies and processes that are more energy and resource-efficient, recycling design and systems which improve the recyclability of waste plastic and help shift consumer attitudes, and innovative management systems that help facilitate a circular economy. Completed applications are due February 10. Learn more about the opportunity [here](#).

Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative Fund

The British Columbia government's Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative Fund is making \$9.5 million in grants available for groups and local governments to use for coastal cleanup projects. The fund is intended to support local governments, coastal First Nations, and non-profit groups in removing marine debris from B.C.'s coastlines. The Fund will support two types of projects: marine shoreline clean-up and derelict vessel removal. Applications for the funding close February 15. Submit your application [here](#).

2021 Pacific Northwest Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

The Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program is an environmental education program that supports locally relevant, authentic experiential learning in the K-12 environment. Funded projects provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs; defined below) for students, related professional development for teachers, and help to support regional education and environmental priorities in the Pacific Northwest. Apply by February 15, via Grants.gov [here](#).

2021 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

California B-WET funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). MWEEs involve learning both outdoors and in the classroom as students engage in issue definition, outdoor field experiences, synthesis and conclusions, and action projects. The goal is to increase understanding and stewardship of the ocean, its local watersheds, and special areas like national marine sanctuaries. Apply by February 16, via Grants.gov [here](#).

Washington Sea Grant 2021 RFP

Washington Sea Grant (WSG) requests proposals for one- to two-year research projects from investigators at academic and research institutions throughout the state of Washington. Funded projects will contribute to WSG and state priority information needs by advancing knowledge in one of four focus areas: healthy coastal ecosystems, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, resilient communities and economies, and ocean literacy and workforce development. Applications are due February 18. Learn more about this funding [here](#).

FY21 NOAA Gulf of Mexico Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

The National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office (Southeast Regional Office) is seeking proposals under the Gulf of Mexico Bay Watershed Education and Training (Gulf of Mexico B-WET) Program. The goal of the Gulf of Mexico B-WET is to increase understanding and stewardship of the Gulf of Mexico watershed and its local population, geography, culture, and natural, financial, and human resources. To accomplish this, Gulf of Mexico B-WET funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) in Gulf of Mexico coastal communities. Apply by February 26, via Grants.gov [here](#).

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education and Training Grant Program (B-WET)

Chesapeake B-WET is a competitive grant program that supports existing, high-quality environmental education programs and fosters the growth of new, innovative programs. The Chesapeake B-WET Program funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) throughout the watershed. The goal is to increase understanding and stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and its local watersheds, including the rivers, upland streams, and natural habitats found throughout the region. Apply by March 1, via Grants.gov [here](#).

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program 2021 Partners Grants

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is accepting applications for Sarasota Bay Partners Grants to support environmental restoration or education projects focused on restoring Sarasota-Manatee bays and engaging communities. These grants for up to \$4,000 are available to groups that have projects within the NEP study area which focus on restoration, water quality, bay related environmental education, and community stewardship. The deadline for applications is March 1. Submit application materials [here](#).

Great Lakes Research Consortium Small Grants RFP

The Great Lakes Research Consortium, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the New York Great Lakes Basin Advisory Council have opened this program to provide seed funding for new, cooperative projects that improve understanding of, and/or management of, New York's Great Lakes basin. The program supports collaborative projects and grant awards that can be used for basic or applied research and project planning that will lead to larger projects. To learn more about funding criteria and to submit a proposal, click [here](#).

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative TFW RFA

EPA announced that it is seeking a second round of applications under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant program focused on keeping trash out of the Great Lakes. Approximately \$5 million is available through the Trash-Free Waters Great Lakes program to fund approximately 10 large-scale projects to remove trash from Great Lakes harbors, rivermouths, and waterfronts. The minimum award is \$300,000 and the maximum award is \$1,000,000. The deadline for applications is March 5. To learn more about the request for applications, click [here](#).

The Recycling Partnership's Polypropylene Recycling Grant Program RFP

The purpose of the Polypropylene Recycling Grant Program is to facilitate Material Recovery Facility (MRF) processing, sortation, and marketing of polypropylene packaging to ensure the widest possible access to polypropylene recycling in the community recycling collection programs in the United States. Publicly, privately and non-profit owned and operated U.S. MRFs are eligible for funding under this grant program. The next round of grant proposals is due by March 31. Learn more about this funding [here](#).

Coral Reef and Natural Resources Program 2021

The DOI's Coral Reef and Natural Resources Initiative provides grant funding for the management and protection of coral reefs and to combat invasive species in the U.S. insular areas. These funds have been used in previous years to combat land-based pollution and illegal dumping. Apply by April 1, via Grants.gov [here](#).

BoatUS Foundation and Berkley Recast & Recycle Contest

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water and Berkley have teamed up to seek out new ideas and improvements to the discarded fishing line and soft bait disposal process, new recycled product ideas, or offer a technology breakthrough for the current process that will increase the volume of line and soft baits that are recycled. A total of \$30,000 in prize money is at stake for any boater, angler, armchair technologist, team, student, or anyone willing to submit a contest entry now through May 14. Learn more about this funding [here](#).

Save the Dates/Calendar

February 2nd (11AM EDT): Circular Economy for Plastics in Canada

To address the challenges of plastic waste proliferation, a circular economy for plastics has been proposed as a viable pathway to limit or eliminate the waste disposal problem by collecting, separating, recycling, and reusing plastic products. Hosted by the Canadian Energy Research Institute, this webinar will discuss plastics materials flow analysis, recycling technologies, and the economic impacts of plastic circularity. To register, click [here](#).

February 8th- 11th: Coastal GEO Tools

Coastal GeoTools continues to be the place to experience what's new and forward-thinking in terms of technology and coastal management. In this virtual environment, you will continue to experience everything this conference has to offer – top-notch sessions, training opportunities, the tools showcase, plenaries, and the exhibit hall. Read the conference program and register [here](#).

February 9th (2PM EDT): Building a State Plan to Monitor and Assess Marine Litter: Lessons Learned

Marine litter monitoring programs are essential to determining and promoting feasible and effective actions to combat marine litter, but consistent long-term programs are scarce worldwide. To address this gap, a statewide plan to assess marine litter was developed for São Paulo, Brazil. The plan introduces a set of suggested indicators that can be applied by a wide group of stakeholders and in a variety of locations and contexts. Speakers include representatives from the Oceanographic Institute of the University of São Paulo, Brazil. To register, click [here](#).

February 10th (12PM EDT): Microplastinar 7 - Topic TBD

Seventh in an interactive webinar series hosted by the EU project LimnoPlast, this series will take a closer look at the wicked problem of plastic pollution and microplastics. Specific microplastics topic TBD. Register for the event [here](#).

February 10th-12th: North Carolina Marine Debris Symposium

Mark your calendars for the 8th Annual North Carolina Marine Debris Symposium at the Duke University Marine Lab and virtually worldwide. Meeting themes include holistic solutions to marine debris prevention, new or expanded marine debris research, policy and advocacy updates, optimizing regional and global solution-based partnerships, and creative virtual outreach. To learn more about the event, click [here](#).

February 16th (2PM EDT): Marine Plastics- From Local to Global

This lecture will discuss the amounts and sources of plastics reaching the oceans, and (focusing on microplastics) the processes by which they may be trapped and accumulate in river and coastal environments, their potential impacts, current knowledge gaps, and methods of reducing the ocean plastic burden. This webinar will be presented by Dr. John Hardy, a lecturer in materials chemistry at Lancaster University and Programme Secretary for the Royal Society of Chemistry Lancaster. Register for the event [here](#).

February 18th (2:30PM EDT): The California Trash Monitoring Playbook

Second in the California Trash Monitoring Webinar Series, this webinar will feature presenters Tony Hale, Program Director at Information Technology Systems, and Shelly Moore, Executive Director at the Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research. The event will introduce the San Francisco Bay Estuary Institute (SFEI) and Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) joint project: The California Trash Monitoring Playbook, which provides info and comparison of various standard trash monitoring methodologies. Watch the webinar [here](#).

February 24th (12PM EDT): Microplastinar 8 - Topic TBD

Eighth in an interactive webinar series hosted by the EU project LimnoPlast, this series will take a closer look at the wicked problem of plastic pollution and microplastics. Specific microplastics topic TBD. Register for the event [here](#).

February 24th (3PM EDT): Salvaging Solutions - Knowing the Ropes

Join for NOAA Marine Debris Program's online webinar series, Salvaging Solutions to Abandoned and Derelict Vessels Webinar: Knowing the Ropes. Nancy Wallace, Chief of the NOAA Marine Debris Division, Hilary Wilkinson, Executive Coordinator Support for the Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force - Veda Environmental, and Paula Gillikin, Central Site Manager at the North Carolina Coastal Reserves and National Estuarine Research Reserve will be presenting on common issues arising from abandoned and derelict vessels. Join the webinar via Adobe Connect [here](#).

[Save the dates for future months...](#)

March 1st-5th: Eighth Annual World Ocean Summit Virtual Week

This week-long event will feature more than 60 sessions and 130 speakers discussing how to create a sustainable ocean economy. One industry track will focus on changing the course of plastic pollution from source to sea, discussing the role of the consumer-goods sector to minimize plastic use, and covering opportunities for waste collection infrastructure and management. Register for free [here](#).

March 2nd-4th: International Symposium on Plastics in the Arctic

Hosted by the government of Iceland, this conference will cover a range of topics including everything from sources and transport of plastics in the region to insight on research methodologies and a deep-dive on the ecotoxicological impacts of plastic pollution on Arctic habitats. Read the agenda and learn more about the event [here](#).

March 4th-5th: Third Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium

The 3rd Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium will take place both virtually and on South Padre Island, TX. The research symposium and poster session will be held on the first day, and workshops and a beach cleanup will be held the following day. Poster presentations will cover a wide range of topics, including 1) Monitoring, 2) Policy and Urban Communities, 3) Chemistry of Plastic Pollution, 4) to Fish and Wildlife, and 5) Solutions. Registration will cap at 150 people, so remember to register for free [here](#). The call for abstracts is open and closes on February 4, 2021. Submit your abstract [here](#).

March 16th-April 6th: SETAC Virtual Seminars, What We Know and What We Need to Know – The Analysis, Monitoring, and Effects of Microplastics in Humans and the Environment

Save the date for the upcoming series of expert seminars on Microplastics in Humans and the Environment, hosted by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC). Stay tuned for 7 virtual keynote sessions scheduled from 16 March until 6 April 2021. Be sure to check back for more information [here](#).

March 24th (3PM EDT): Salvaging Solutions- Weathering Stormy Waters

Join for NOAA Marine Debris Program's online webinar series, Salvaging Solutions to Abandoned and Derelict Vessels Webinar: Weathering Stormy Waters. Matthew Bethel & Niki Pace from Louisiana Sea Grant, Michele Jacobi from NOAA's Assessment and Restoration Division, and Nilda Jimenez, PhD from the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) will be presenting on common issues arising from abandoned and derelict vessels. Join the webinar via Adobe Connect [here](#).

April 22nd (2:30PM EDT): NOAA's Marine Debris Monitoring and Assessment Project

Third in the California Trash Monitoring Webinar Series, this webinar will feature presenters Sherry Lippiatt, California Regional Coordinator at the NOAA Marine Debris Program, and Hillary Burgess, Monitoring Coordinator at NOAA. The event will cover the Trash Monitoring and Assessment Protocol (MDMAP), a citizen science initiative engaging citizens to survey and record the amount and types of marine debris found on shorelines. Watch the webinar [here](#).

Other Opportunities...

EPA Call for Nominations for the 2021 President's Environmental Student and Teacher Awards

The EPA's Office of Environmental Education is now accepting applications for the 2021 President's Environmental Youth Awards (PEYA) and Presidential Innovation Awards for Environmental Educators (PIAEE). The program recognizes outstanding students and educators who have advanced environmental stewardship in a range of environmental topics, including marine litter and ocean pollution. Applications for both awards programs are due no later than February 19, 2021. To learn more about the PEYA and PIAEE awards, click [here](#) and [here](#).

Ocean Changemakers Challenge: The Next Wave of Innovators

The Ocean Changemakers Challenge aims to showcase innovators working to develop business solutions to ocean-related sustainability challenges. Researchers, early-career professionals, local change agents, entrepreneurs, and innovators with solutions to tackle some of the ocean's greatest challenges, including marine pollution, overfishing, and overexploitation of marine resources, are invited to apply. Entries will close on February 5th, 2021. Learn more about the opportunity [here](#).

**If you'd like to see your posting in this email, please email
Marshall.Layne@epa.gov with any suggestions!**

US EPA - Trash Free Waters | nandi.romell@epa.gov | <https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters>