

# Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Resolution

## Reaffirmation of Resolution Regarding Single-Use Plastic Bags

Whereas, the amount of debris in our marine environment has increased drastically over the last few decades, one of the sources being the 13-20 billion plastic grocery bags distributed in California each year.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags on our local beaches, and in our tributaries and ocean, are having detrimental effects on our ocean and coastal habitats and wildlife, and associated recreation and tourism.

Whereas, single use plastic bags are consistently among the top five most common types of litter found at beaches surrounding the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and over 47,000 plastic bags have been removed since 2007.

Whereas, local bag bans have resulted in an 80% reduction of plastic bags collected on the beaches since they started in 2011.

Whereas, plastic bags never fully biodegrade, they instead break down into tiny pieces called microplastics, which attract and accumulate various toxins that then enter the ocean food web.

Whereas, plastic bags threaten a variety of marine life including whales, sea otters, pinnipeds, sea turtles, and sea birds through ingestion, choking, infection and/or entanglement.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags are of particular concern to the health of the endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtle populations as they easily mistake these bags for jellies, their main prey source for which the waters of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary are a key foraging area.

Whereas, recycling is not a sufficient solution to plastic bag pollution and there exist readily and widely available alternatives to single-use plastic bags such as reusable bags.

Whereas, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council approved a Single Use Plastic Bag Resolution at the April 21, 2011 Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting in Carmel Valley with a vote of 12 in Favor and 0 opposed.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby reaffirms the 2011 resolution, as modified, to support: 1) local, statewide and federal ordinances or legislation to ban the use and distribution of single-use plastic bags; 2) efforts of local businesses to transition away from single-use plastic bags; and 3) efforts to remove plastic bag litter from the shores, rivers, and waters of the Sanctuary.