

# International Coastal Cleanup

## Media Release

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### For Immediate Release

## More than 200 volunteers participated in the International Coastal Cleanup

*Saturday, September 16, was the area's largest recorded participation in International Coastal Cleanup!*

Fernandina Beach, Florida, September 16, 2023: International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) is the world's largest organized cleanup designed to keep litter and debris out of our oceans. This year's local cleanup, held on Saturday, Sept. 16, was organized by Keep Nassau Beautiful with organizations including Amelia Beach Ambassadors, Eight Flags Jeep Club, First Presbyterian Church, Interact Club of Fernandina Beach, Memorial United Methodist Church, and St. Peter's Episcopal Church sponsoring sites at Main Beach, Seaside/Sadler, Peter's Point, Dee Dee Bartels, Fernandina Beach waterfront, and along Wade's Place under the Shave Bridge. Local Adopt A Road and Adopt A Spot groups also participated in litter clean-up along their adopted sections in Nassau County, including Amelia Island Parkway and a far west partner, 121 Church.

More than 220 volunteers including Nassau County residents and visitors donned gloves and trash grabbers and used reusable bags provided by Mocama Beer Company and White Oak Conservation to spend their Saturday morning helping remove improperly discarded litter and debris. During ICC volunteers work in teams to record the type and quantity of litter collected. The results are shared with the Ocean Conservancy through their free app, Clean Swell. Volunteer tracking has enabled the Ocean Conservancy to build the world's largest database on marine debris, totaling nearly 400 million items. Data collected from ICC events have informed science and policy. In 2022 and 2023 alone, over 50 peer-reviewed scientific papers and published book chapters cited ICC data. Data has also been used to support policies that tackle single-use plastics.

"Volunteers collected a lot of litter during today's event, but there are many places we did not reach. Through our events and programs, we hope to impact behavior so that each of us will commit to picking up one piece of litter or reducing the use of one single-use plastic item daily. Every action makes a difference," said Josh Baker, KNB Board Chair.

Locally, more than 12,000 pieces of litter were reported as collected, at a weight of more than 1,400 lbs. The most collected items were cigarette butts, pieces of broken-up plastic, food wrappers, and polystyrene (foam). The volunteer effort made an impact in keeping

litter from entering our ocean and harming our natural environment and the wildlife that call it home.

The event would not be possible without support from sponsors. Supplies for the cleanup and the Volunteer Appreciation Lunch held after the cleanup were sponsored by Surfing's Evolution and Preservation Foundation. V Pizza of Fernandina Beach hosted the lunch, providing pizza, wings, salad, and fountain drinks. Keep America Beautiful sponsored a drawing of forty individual cleanup kits which may be used by volunteers throughout the year. The City of Fernandina Beach and Nassau County Public Works departments provided disposal of the collected litter.

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit Keep Nassau Beautiful's website or the website of any of the participating organizations.

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For over 30 years Keep Nassau Beautiful has been dedicated to conservation, sustainability, and beautification efforts in Nassau County, Florida. Through its flagship programs--including Wild Amelia and Planting Nassau's Future--Keep Nassau Beautiful educates, engages, and activates residents and visitors to protect the natural environment, reduce litter and waste, and expand and preserve the local tree canopy. Recognized with numerous state and local awards, in 2022 the organization collected and properly disposed of over 68 tons of waste, planted over 1400 trees, and educated over 3400 individuals. To learn how to contribute to the work of Keep Nassau Beautiful visit [www.KeepNassauBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepNassauBeautiful.org).



Volunteers Zura, Virginia, and Darrell Powell remove litter and record items collected during International Coastal Cleanup.



Jerri Valverde, Alexis Buchanan, and Rachel Kerestes assist in distributing supplies during International Coastal Cleanup.



Members of Eight Flags Jeep Club participate in International Coastal Cleanup removing litter along Wade's Place, an environmentally sensitive area under the Shave Bridge.