



2020
SAN DIEGO
COASTKEEPER
ANNUAL REPORT:
MEETING THE MOMENT



SAN DIEGO
COASTKEEPER®

Table of Contents

02	INTRODUCTION
03	2020 BY THE NUMBERS
04	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
07	ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS
09	OUR PEOPLE
10	FUNDERS AND DONORS
12	FINANCIALS
13	TAKE ACTION



"Hold up a mirror and ask yourself what you are capable of doing, and what you really care about. Then take the initiative - don't wait for someone else to ask you to act."

- Sylvia Earle

A NOTE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND MANAGING ATTORNEY MATT O'MALLEY SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON COASTKEEPER'S WORK THROUGHOUT 2020

Dear Supporter,

Each year as I sit down to write this letter to you, I reflect on what my mindset was going into the year this annual report covers. You may already see where this is heading.

As 2020 began, I was filled with hope, possibility, and pride. The year marked San Diego Coastkeeper's 25th year of hard-won victories for San Diego's waters, wildlife, and communities. I imagined celebrating all that staying power with staff reunions, supporter gatherings, and at least one giant party where we could toast the community that has supported us all along this two-and-a-half-decade journey. After all, people are at the center of so much of what we do.

In March, as the pandemic swelled around us all, uncertainty permeated every facet of life. Suddenly, the health of ourselves, our loved ones, our communities, and our economy was all in question. At Coastkeeper, we shifted into remote work and watched fellow non-profits make impossibly hard decisions about their ability to carry on.

In the months that followed, the pride I had in Coastkeeper's 25-year history grew into pride in our team's ability to adapt, react, and stay aligned to the Coastkeeper mission in the face of tectonic shifts in how we are all able to work. With persistence, vision, and the unwavering support of our community, we came out of 2020 stronger than ever before.

First, we swiftly and strategically adapted our programs to meet the needs of our community. That included transitioning our education program for delivery in a fully remote setting, reimagining and relaunching our cleanup program as a COVID-safe volunteer opportunity, and more program successes you can read about on page four of this report.

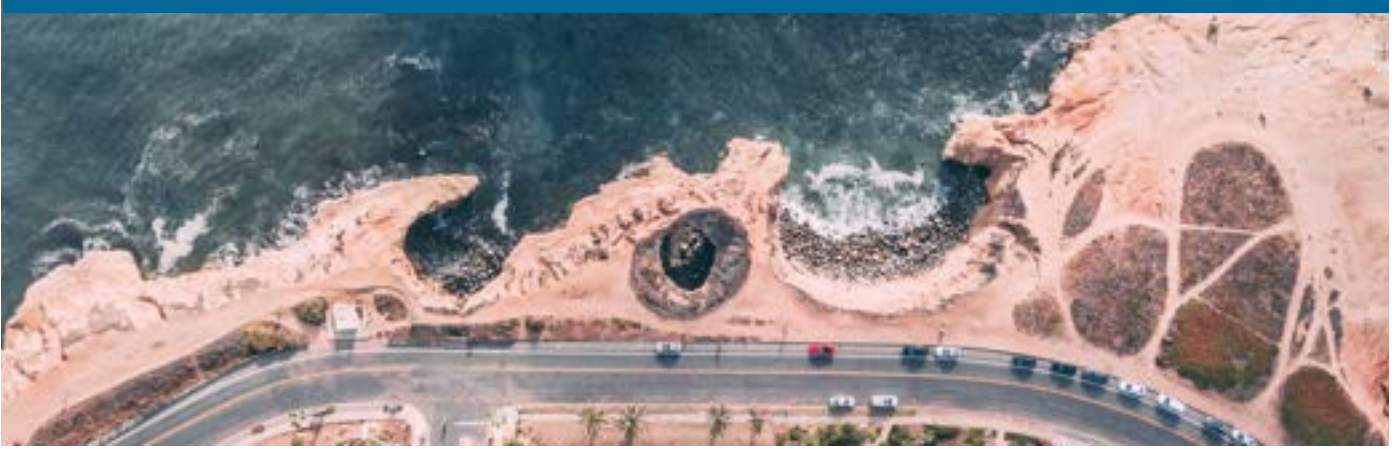
Second, we grew and diversified our team, both on the staff and the board levels. In September, we created two new positions at Coastkeeper and hired new staff members to increase our capacity to connect with diverse communities, hear their needs, and prioritize those needs in our work. I know there's still a lot we can do to bring greater diversity to the organization and better represent our region, and I look forward to leaning into that opportunity.

I hope you will join me in reflecting on this past year with humility, a deepened sense of resilience, and hope for what's to come.

For our waters,



Matt O'Malley
Executive Director & Managing Attorney



2020 BY THE NUMBERS



**485 individuals and
105 groups**

Volunteers signed up for the Six Cleanup Challenge, our COVID-safe volunteer cleanup and community science program



11
Clean Water Act enforcement cases initiated, pursued, or settled in our favor



31
Remote learning videos and resources developed for teachers, students, and parents



767,959
Dollars raised to support clean water



1
Interactive online watershed map developed



5,661
Pieces of trash collected since the October launch of the Six Cleanup Challenge



67,500
Dollars of Supplemental Environmental Project funding we were able to direct to partner non-profits to conduct habitat restoration



1,188
Students provided with local water and climate science, both virtually and in-person



4
New staff members added to the team

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Coastkeeper's environmental programs keep our mission moving forward, our values enacted, and our communities engaged. By transitioning our hands-on education, outreach, and volunteer programs to interactive virtual opportunities in 2020, we were able to meet the moment with creativity and intentionality that ensured our work stayed relevant, focused, and effective.

COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

Coastkeeper's community cleanup program engages volunteers to remove harmful litter and debris from local canyons, parks, and beaches. This vital program prevents trash from entering our waterways and ocean and becoming marine debris. Qualitative and quantitative data collected at cleanups is a valuable resource that informs our science, education, and advocacy work in the community.

Meeting the Moment

When restrictions on gatherings suddenly took in-person cleanup events off the table, we knew we needed to adapt our cleanup program to continue to meet the needs of San Diegans. The solution? We launched the Six Cleanup Challenge program, which uses the Litterati app to categorize debris collected by participants as they explore and care for their watersheds.

An innovative, COVID-safe community science program, the Six Cleanup Challenge goes beyond the beach cleanup and encourages San Diegans to explore our region's unique geography while conducting a do-it-yourself cleanup and collecting data on trash types and sources.



The Six Cleanup Challenge goes beyond the beach and into our local watersheds.

By adapting our cleanup program and responding to the evolving circumstances, we were able to connect community members with the tools necessary to continue meaningful environmental and community stewardship in a safe and engaging way.

A Significant Story

We were thrilled when a local high school student approached us with a community service project idea about reef-safe sunscreen. We helped the motivated Eagle Scout create materials to educate their community on sources of pollution affecting our coasts and ocean. They created kits containing informative literature on the harmful impacts of chemical-based sunscreen and the importance of eco-friendly alternatives. They also featured complimentary samples of reef-safe sunscreen from local companies alongside the materials. We love seeing San Diego's next generation taking the lead on caring for our remarkable environment.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

CONTINUED

“Coastkeeper has provided our students an invaluable window into the real-world efforts to protect our oceans and watersheds.”

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Coastkeeper's K-12 environmental education programs have a long history of delivering locally rooted water and climate science education to schools across San Diego. Our education programs build relationships with students and teachers through inquiry-based learning experiences. By taking an interdisciplinary, place-based approach, our programs foster environmental literacy and build the foundation for lifelong environmental stewardship.

Meeting the Moment

When the pandemic shut down in-person learning in San Diego schools, our education team quickly and comprehensively adapted our hands-on education programs to a distance-learning format.

We compiled a digital library full of educational and engaging videos and downloadable resources to meet the urgent needs of teachers and parents adapting to a new and challenging learning environment.



Coastkeeper educators created remote learning videos and resources.

We also transitioned our standards-aligned science program into an innovative set of online learning modules, complete with lesson plans, hands-on tutorials, virtual classroom visits, and video field trips for remote learners.

A Significant Story

Throughout the school year, we worked with sixth-graders from Marston Middle School to explore local pollution issues. Before COVID-19, we led the students on neighborhood cleanups and set up a learning opportunity for them with a plastics expert from Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

"I learned a lot about microplastics, including where they are found, how they are made, and the damage they make. This project makes me despise microplastics and want to stop them from appearing in the first place. Thank you so much for this experience!" - Sixth Grade Student Ruby L.

Students like Ruby used their newfound knowledge to research microplastics and design infographics and public service announcements to share solutions with their community. They entered these projects in a district-wide competition and were awarded second place! We finished the year with an "Instagram takeover" to showcase their inspiring work.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

CONTINUED

ENVIRONMENTAL OUTREACH

The Coastkeeper team believes an engaged, informed, and empowered community is crucial to a sustainable and resilient future. We seek to promote meaningful discussions and a deeper understanding of San Diego's environmental and community health issues and to inspire community action and involvement.

Meeting the Moment

After the disruption to in-person outreach events and workshops caused by COVID-19, we transitioned outreach efforts online. For Earth Day, we produced a social media series called "Earth Day at Home," which shared tips for celebrating Earth Day and making positive change within the context of the California stay-at-home order.

Significant Stories

In partnership with the City of San Diego Think Blue, we launched a new interactive online watershed map that allows users to explore communities, environmental points of interest, protected areas, and recreational opportunities within San Diego's coastal watersheds.

"I approach each project like a new adventure: with the curious eyes of an anthropologist, the mind of a marketer, and the heart of an activist."

- Ally Senturk, Communications and Outreach Manager

We also created a lively animated video introducing the viewer to the elements and benefits of integrated water management, which we have begun to share broadly in order to help build community awareness of and support for sustainable regional water management.

Additionally, we hired a new outreach and communications manager, Ally Celones Senturk. Ally is a creative storyteller with a multimedia background in marketing, analytics, and science communication.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Science remains the backbone of Coastkeeper's advocacy, education, and community engagement work. As immediate and emerging threats to water quality and water supply reliability have changed over time, our science programs have evolved to support the most pressing needs of our community and environment.

We hired a new science program manager, Rachele Lopez, to identify workforce gaps and technical needs within our communities. She will develop and design a tailored science program to help meet those needs and further Coastkeeper's vision for a more sustainable and equitable future.



VICTORIES IN CLEAN WATER ADVOCACY

From stopping polluters affecting our waters and communities, to helping advance local, regional, and statewide legislation that protects clean water, to advancing regional integrated water management and multi-benefit projects. Fearless advocacy is at the heart of how Coastkeeper creates lasting change for San Diego.

01 | CALLING OUT THE COUNTY

Alongside our longstanding partners at Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation (CERF), we initiated a groundbreaking legal enforcement action against the County of San Diego. Over the past few years, we have investigated the County's stormwater and wastewater activities, including collecting water samples and analyzing them for pollutants such as bacteria, toxic metals, and excessive nutrients. Extensive data showed the County's long-term egregious failure to protect our waters and communities from pollution. Our goal is to ensure they comply with clean water laws and achieve meaningful progress toward a cleaner and more resilient future for all San Diegans.



"I want to be a voice for our waters and because I believe everyone should have access to clean, safe water."

- Lucero Sanchez, Community Policy Coordinator

02 | CLEANING UP WASTE MANAGEMENT

Also in partnership with CERF, we pursued several Clean Water Act enforcement cases against various facilities discharging excessive pollutants into our waterways. Many of these cases have led to agreements that will lead to improved practices and safer neighborhoods. One such case involved pollution emanating from two of the largest landfills in San Diego County, which discharge into the San Diego and Otay Rivers. This agreement protects thousands of acres of land and water from further degradation.

Another case helped reduce the flow of pollutants from a nearby waste transfer and recycling facility into Forester Creek, which flows through El Cajon's and Santee's communities. We remain engaged in litigation with another waste recycling facility located in the Chollas Creek watershed.

03 | ADVANCING LOCAL WATER SUPPLY

2020 saw meaningful progress toward providing San Diego with a secure, localized supply of fresh drinking water. Coastkeeper's advocacy team worked with local and state leaders to ensure that Pure Water San Diego - the City's forward-thinking investment in innovative water recycling - continued advancing through the first phase of its multi-year rollout plan. Our advocacy included working alongside decision-makers and stakeholders at all levels to advance federal legislation to resolve outstanding issues.

VICTORIES IN ADVOCACY

CONTINUED

04 | SUPPORTING STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2020 we were successful in advocating for the City to begin conducting a comprehensive stormwater capture analysis, to help provide our region with additional local water supply while reducing pollution into our waters. We also partnered with environmental and labor stakeholders to lay the groundwork for efforts to secure long-term stormwater funding through a public measure. Stormwater advocacy isn't always glamorous, but it's a vital part of protecting our environment and communities for generations to come.

05 | OPPOSING DESTRUCTIVE AND UNNECESSARY BOONDOGGLES

While Coastkeeper advocates for innovative and sustainable approaches to water supply reliability, there are still efforts to take water supply management back to the 19th century. One such effort proposed by the County Water Authority is the regional conveyance system pipeline. This \$6 billion pipe dream threatens to wreak unimaginable environmental destruction on our protected backcountry. It would also increase water rates for at least three generations. The kicker? This pipeline would not increase San Diego's water supply, but merely provide a new (also costly and destructive) way to move water we are already getting.

One Water is a holistic and integrated approach to managing our water systems.

We authored a letter directed to the Water Authority opposing the pipeline and cosigned by two dozen leading environmental and social justice partners. Our letter called for holistic, integrated water management approaches and green infrastructure projects over destructive and outdated management practices. As the Water Authority continues to explore the pipeline, Coastkeeper is committed to fighting for better, more equitable solutions for all.

06 | SAFEGUARDING OUR SHORES FROM INDUSTRIAL FISH FARMING

In 2020, NOAA and the Port of San Diego proposed a large-scale pollution-spewing industrial fin-fish farm off the coast of Mission Beach. The project would turn San Diego's waters into a testing ground for environmentally reckless and under-regulated commercial aquaculture that threatens local fisheries, wildlife, and public health.

Our outreach and advocacy team rallied support from diverse sectors against the Pacific Ocean AquaFarms project and coordinated an outpouring of public comments against offshore aquaculture. We urged NOAA and the San Diego Port Commissioners to implement sustainable and responsible efforts that support native fisheries and economic activity while ensuring environmental protection.



2020 STAFF & BOARD

The people behind San Diego Coastkeeper

Matt O'Malley
Executive Director & Managing Attorney

Kristin Kuhn*
Programs Director

Stephanie Ritter
Development Manager

Patrick McDonough
Staff Attorney

Erika Bjorkquist*
Education Manager

Shannon Subers
Education Specialist

Marie Diaz
Marine Programs Coordinator

Jenny Cornelius
Education Video Specialist

Rachele Lopez
Science Program Manager

Lucero Sanchez
Community Policy Coordinator

Ally Celones Senturk
Outreach and Communications Manager

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Alisa Valderrama*
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Jim Perry
Science Advisor



**Left Coastkeeper in 2020. We miss you!*



2020 FUNDERS & DONORS

Thank you! Your generous donations help protect clean water that our communities and wildlife depend on.

\$100,000 or more

City of San Diego
Coast Law Group
Stiefel Behner Charitable Fund

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Hervey Family Fund at
The San Diego Foundation
Marisla Foundation

\$20,000 - \$49,999

The HW Fund at
The San Diego Foundation
San Diego Gas & Electric

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Coastal Environmental Rights
Foundation
The San Diego Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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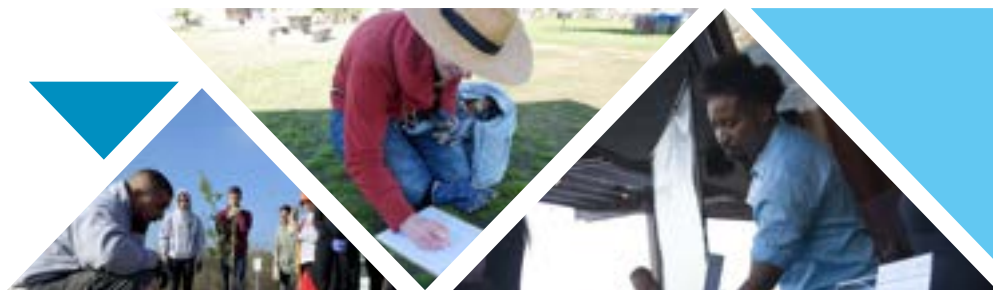
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Allison Rolfe
Amanda Sousa
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Annie Shatley
Anthony Speier
Apple
April Denny
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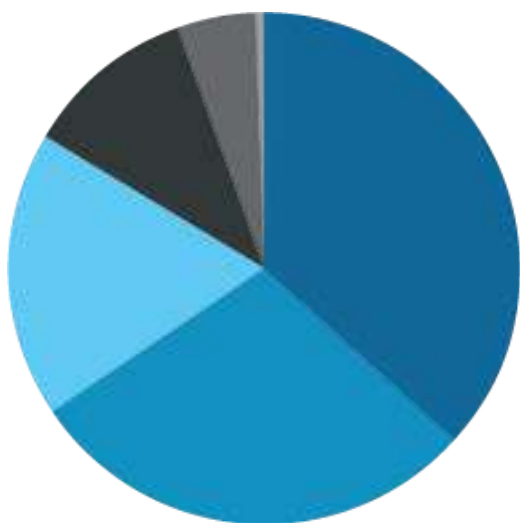
FY2020

2020 Revenue

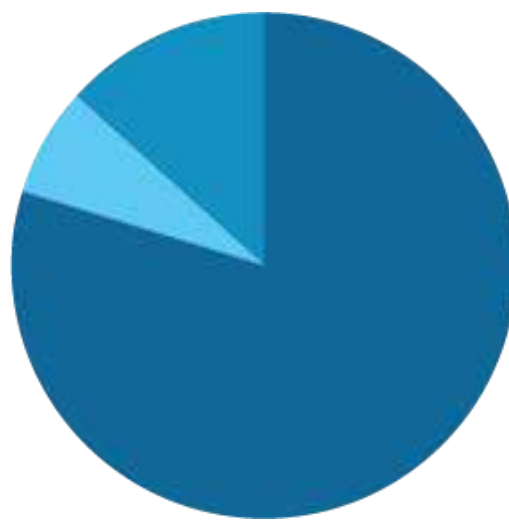
Individual Giving	\$281,934
Legal Income	\$221,810
Government Grants	\$137,697
Foundation Grants	\$82,633
Corporate Giving	\$40,467
Other	\$3,418
.....	
Total Revenue	\$767,959

2020 Expenses

Programs	\$509,588
Fundraising	\$86,256
Management and General	\$47,844
.....	
Total Expenses	\$643,688



■ Individual Giving [37%]
 ■ Foundation Grants [11%]
■ Legal Income [29%]
 ■ Corporate Giving [5%]
■ Government Grants [18%]
 ■ Other [<1%]



■ Programs [80%]
■ Fundraising [13%]
■ Management & General [7%]

Take **action** to protect clean water.



01 **Join**

Coastkeeper membership brings together passionate and dedicated community members committed to protecting clean water for all San Diegans. With informative updates, tailored impact reports, and new quarterly membership gatherings with like-minded folks, there's never been a better time to join.

02 **Participate**

With beach and neighborhood cleanups, advocacy opportunities, and scientific monitoring, there are many ways you can turn your time and talent into meaningful change. Stay involved and informed on local water issues and action alerts by subscribing to our email newsletter and following us on social media.

03 **Partner**

Community partnerships bring the strength of strategic collaboration to environmental challenges. Whether a company is sponsoring a cleanup or a teacher is working with our education team to bring new knowledge and skills to their students, our partners are valued members of the Coastkeeper family.

04 **Donate**

Coastkeeper gives our waters a voice. We need your help to fuel this movement. Your donation supports the time, tools, and tenacity it takes to protect San Diego's rivers, streams, and coastline for the communities and wildlife that depend on clean water.

Visit sdcoastkeeper.org to learn more.



San Diego Coastkeeper protects and restores the rivers, streams, bays, beaches, and coastline across San Diego County. We defend clean water for the communities and wildlife that depend on it through education, community engagement, outreach, science, and advocacy.
