



**Tillamook County**  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
*Department of Solid Waste*  
*Waste Prevention and Recycling*

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*Land of Cheese, Trees and Ocean Breeze*

For Immediate Release:  
August 29, 2016

### **Cleaning Neskowin Beach**

Tillamook County, OR – When David McCall, Tillamook County Solid Waste Program Manager, spoke to the Neskowin CPAC about microplastics contaminating our beaches, Mary Kimball of Neskowin Community Association (NCA) immediately took action. Working with McCall and other community leaders, Kimball organized a cleanup event on Sunday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Three dozen people turned out, using screens provided by the County Solid Waste Department, gloves and bags provided by SOLVE, and people power from the community. Under McCall’s direction, the volunteers removed 182 pounds of debris by screening microplastics from an approximately 9,600 square foot section of the beach.



“Microplastics on our beaches are the result of mistakes made decades ago, when plastics were intentionally or inadvertently dumped in the ocean,” said McCall. “Over time, UV rays break the pieces down, and during the winter, storm surges throw them onto the shores. Most of the microplastics are located just under the surface, covered by less than two inches of sand. The danger is not limited to wildlife, but to humans as well. Children, who are generally more likely to be playing or sitting in the sand, have increased chances of exposure and are often attracted to ‘colorful pieces of sand.’ Bonfires are often lit atop the debris, potentially exposing those enjoying the fire to toxic fumes.”

“Microplastics pose a threat to the serenity many of us enjoy here on the Oregon Coast. We may not be able to stop microplastics from washing up on our shores, but coordinated efforts such as this mean that we can assist our local communities in maintaining the quality of their beaches at little or no cost. We have had two previous events in Manzanita, and now a first

event in Neskowin. I would like to see us expand these efforts throughout Tillamook County, to support not only the efforts of Tillamook Coast and other organizations, but also for the benefit of local residents.”

“When David McCall educated us about microplastics at the Neskowin CPAC meeting, I was hooked,” said Kimball. “Concerned about all the little pieces of plastic I had been seeing on the beach every day while walking my dog, it was a no-brainer for me to volunteer to try to get the 24 volunteers needed for each day's sand sifting to rid the Neskowin beach of the tiny toxic monsters. Then Jim Boyer, Manager of Neskowin's RV park, not only signed up to volunteer himself, but said he could bring along about five others from the park. Now, that's the spirit!”

The NCA has scheduled another cleanup for September 8<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in participating, contact Mary Kimball at [kimballmary00@gmail.com](mailto:kimballmary00@gmail.com).

The event organizers would like to thank the *Café on Hawk Creek* for providing pizza and refreshments for the volunteers.

**For additional information, contact:**

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The closing crew with bags of microplastics removed from Neskowin Beach on August 28, 2016.

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In accordance with Tillamook County Solid Waste Ordinance No. 4, Tillamook County regulates solid waste management, providing a coordinated solid waste management program “to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people, and the natural and scenic resources of Tillamook County.” The Tillamook County Solid Waste Department operates as a function of Public Works. Please visit [www.co.tillamook.or.us/gov/solidwaste](http://www.co.tillamook.or.us/gov/solidwaste) for more information on waste prevention and recycling.