**2021 Marine Debris Work Group Plan and Progress Report**

**Text in black represents the work plan, which is unlikely to change. Text in blue is the progress report, which will be updated semi-annually.**

**LEAD(S):** Laura McKay (VA); Maureen Krudner (EPA)

**MEMBERS**: Work Group membership is open to government and non-governmental entities operating in the 5 Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia that are willing to participate in the activities of the work group. Members are expected to contribute on monthly work group calls and assist with implementation of projects. Current members include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Last Name** | **First Name** | **Organization** |
| Blair | Devon | NJ |
| Bristow | Avalon | MARCO |
| Carr | Emmalee | NJ |
| Chesnin | Noah | Wildlife Conservation Society |
| Gove | Matt | Surfrider |
| Gronostajski | Kyle | Alliance for a Living Ocean |
| Hassell | Kevin | NJ |
| Henderson | Helen | American Littoral Society - NJ |
| Huber | Sandy | NJDOT Clean Communities Council |
| Huber Jones | Sherryll | NY |
| Keane | Ellen | NOAA/NMFS/Protected Resources |
| Kehoe | Christy | NOAA |
| Krudner | Maureen | EPA |
| Kuriawa | John | NOAA/NOS/OCM |
| Mazzeo-Pfoertner | Christie | NY DOS |
| McKay | Laura | VA |
| Morrow | Donna | MD |
| Muthukrishnan | Swarna | Clean Ocean Action - NJ |
| Neusner | Gabriella | EPA Trash Free Waters |
| Raabe | Steve | OpinionWorks |
| Register | Katie | Clean VA Waterways |
| Robinson | Matt | D.C. |
| Rolfe | Jason | NOAA/NOS/Marine Debris |
| Shifren | Sheri | NJ |
| Somers | Kelly | EPA |
| St. Laurent | Kari | DE |
| Weis | Judith | Rutgers |
| Witmer | Virginia | VA |

**MACO (and/or 2016 OCEAN ACTION PLAN) GOALS, OBJECTIVES and ACTIONS:**

This work builds on Action 4 of the 2016 Mid-Atlantic Ocean Action Plan: "Develop a regionally appropriate strategy for marine debris reduction." For calendar year 2021, the Work Group is focusing on four activities: developing a Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) campaign to change behavior resulting in marine debris reduction at the Mid-Atlantic regional scale, with an initial focus on reducing balloon releases; conducting shoreline marine debris surveys and documenting the quantities and types of debris found; completing and implementing a Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Reduction Plan; and maintaining a marine debris projects inventory website. The Work Group may also, in late 2021, apply for a FY22 NOAA Marine Debris Program Prevention grant.

**ACTIVITY 1 - Continue the community-based social marketing campaign to reduce balloon releases**

**Expected Completion Date:** July 2022

Continue the balloon release reduction campaign based on community-based social marketing principles. This activity is funded by a 2018 NOAA Marine Debris Program grant to MARCO and builds off of the work conducted via Virginia CZM’s Joyful Send-Off Balloon Release Reduction Campaign. The Virginia work was advised by Doug McKenzie-Mohr, author of “Community-based Social Marketing.” He will be asked again in 2021, if budget allows and he is available, to review final messages for the campaign and overall dissemination strategy. In 2021, once the campaign materials are produced, stakeholder outreach will be conducted via digital content on the website, social media and other techniques that are expected to be effective. In the out years, data will be collected that will begin to measure and evaluate overall campaign success.

**A1 Progress Description**

*(Include results for the period, stakeholder engagement, impediments to progress, and budgetary/ resource needs)*

**A1 Progress Period**

January 2021 - June 2021

**A1 Progress Period**

July 2021 - December 2021

**ACTIVITY 2 - Conduct bi-annual assessments of balloon and other debris**

**Expected Completion Date:** July 2022

Monitoring will be conducted on 1 mile stretches of beaches in each of the five Mid-Atlantic states. Staff and volunteers will collect data on the number and type of balloons identified as well as other types of debris. Data will be shared on the MACO Work Group pages of the MARCO website. These surveys are being conducted with funding from the 2018 NOAA Marine Debris Grant mentioned above. The results from the surveys may inform other elements of this project, including campaign strategy and success measures.

**A2 Progress Description**

*Include: results for the period, stakeholder engagement, impediments to progress, and budgetary/resource needs*

**A2 Progress Period**

January 2021 - June 2021

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State** | **Total Balloon Debris Pieces collected in Winter/Spring 2021** | **Total non-balloon debris[[1]](#footnote-1) pieces collected in Winter/Spring 2021** |
| **Virginia** |  |  |
| **Maryland** |  |  |
| **Delaware** |  |  |
| **New Jersey** |  |  |
| **New York** |  |  |

**A2 Progress Period**

July 2021 - December 2021

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State** | **Total Balloon Debris Pieces collected in Summer/Fall 2021** | **Total non-balloon debris[[2]](#footnote-2) pieces collected in Summer/Fall 2021** |
| **Virginia** |  |  |
| **Maryland** |  |  |
| **Delaware** |  |  |
| **New Jersey** |  |  |
| **New York** |  |  |

**ACTIVITY 3 - Support and Participate in the Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Action Plan**

**Expected Completion Date**: Plan developed by early 2021 and implementation to continue through 2026

The Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Action Plan would bring together the Mid-Atlantic marine debris communities to document entities working on marine debris with the purpose of increasing coordination, adding value to existing efforts, and identifying future actions. The Plan will strengthen Mid-Atlantic regional effectiveness by bringing our marine debris community together to develop a regional marine debris action plan that addresses current marine debris issues in the region and to create a road map for the future. In collaboration with NOAA Marine Debris Program, we will participate in Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Action Plan conversations, help set regional priorities, and attend a workshops to identify the needs of the Mid-Atlantic marine debris community.

In early 2021, the draft Action Plan will be distributed to both attendees and the broader Mid-Atlantic marine debris community for additional feedback and to provide further opportunity for other organizations to commit to implementing actions needing additional support. The NOAA MDP will then publish the Action Plan and share with partners and leads in early 2021. Once published, the MDP will lead semi-annual monitoring for the Action Plan with partners and leads through 2021. Action leads and partners will begin implementing/coordinating actions. MDP will coordinate semi-annual monitoring for actions with leads and partners and share summary updates through 2026.

**A3 Progress Description**

*Include: results for the period, stakeholder engagement, impediments to progress, and budgetary/resource needs*

**A3 Progress Period**

January 2021 - June 2021

**A3 Progress Period**

July 2021- December 2021

**ACTIVITY 4 - Update Projects Database in the** Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Collaborative Portal

**Expected Completion Date:** Continual

In order to determine on which type of marine debris and what type of projectes the work group should focus, the group created an Excel file of previously conducted projects in all five states. Meanwhile NOAA had been working with the Great Lakes states to create a collaborative website which served the same function, but also included a mapping feature for the projects. Subsequently NOAA offered to create a similar collaborative website for the Mid-Atlantic into which the data from the Excel file could be uploaded. This “Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Collaborative” website allows identified staff in each state to upload information about marine debris reduction efforts. This website can also be viewed by all stakeholders and the general public [here](https://midatlantic-mdc.diver.orr.noaa.gov/).

**A4 Progress Description**

*Include: results for the period, stakeholder engagement, impediments to progress, and budgetary/resource needs*

**A4 Progress Period**

January 2021 - June 2021

**A4 Progress Period**

July 2021 - December 2021

**ACTIVITY 5 - Conduct a 2021 Regional Marine Debris Summit**

**Expected Completion Date:** Summer 2021

The NOAA Office for Coastal Management awarded a match-free grant of $15,000 to the Virginia CZM Program to support a two-day day Mid-Atlantic Marine Debris Regional Summit in 2021. The goal of the Summit is to inspire and empower our partners with solutions to marine debris impacts. Summit attendees will represent state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, academia, and other groups that are conducting work related to marine debris reduction in any of the five Mid-Atlantic coastal states (New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia) and Washington, DC.

The funds will be used to: 1) hold the two-day summit virtually; 2) secure and disseminate resources, such as presentations and reports, that are presented at the Summit and post them online for other interested regional stakeholders via VA CZM’s website, as was done for the [2019 Summit](https://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement/CZMIssuesInitiatives/MarineDebris/2019Mid-AtlanticMarineDebrisSummit.aspx); develop and disseminate a post-Summit survey to inform future events; and prepare a summary report of the Summit proceedings.

**A5 Progress Description**

*Include: results for the period, stakeholder engagement, impediments to progress, and budgetary/resource needs*

**A5 Progress Period**

January 2021 - June 2021

**A5 Progress Period**

July 2021 - December 2021

1. Non-balloon related debris include but are not limited to: bags (paper, plastic, and other materials), bottles (glass, plastic, other), bottle caps, cans, cigarette butts, lighters, clothing, fishing materials, k-cups, foam fragments, hard or film plastic pieces, rope, shotgun shells, straws, construction material. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Non-balloon related debris include but are not limited to: bags (paper, plastic, and other materials), bottles (glass, plastic, other), bottle caps, cans, cigarette butts, lighters, clothing, fishing materials, k-cups, foam fragments, hard or film plastic pieces, rope, shotgun shells, straws, construction material. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)