

For Immediate Release:
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Surfrider and DEQ to Host Beach Bacteria Workshop

Newport, OR: On April 28, 6:30pm at the Pacific Heritage Maritime Museum in Newport, Surfrider Foundation and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will be hosting a joint workshop on beach bacteria, demonstrating some new tools and collaborations to improve water quality at beaches with ongoing bacteria issues. Find out how the [Oregon Beach Monitoring Program](#), Surfrider's Newport and Siuslaw Chapters' [Blue Water Task Force](#) (BWTF) monitoring programs and local knowledge is being used in [DEQ's Midcoast Water Quality Management](#) process.

For over 12 years Surfrider volunteers along the central coast of Oregon have been taking samples at recreational beaches for their BWTF water quality testing program. These efforts have not only provided important information to recreational users, the local communities and visitors, but are now also helping to inform management plans required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address beaches with chronic bacteria problems. Now that's citizen science and agency collaboration at it's finest!

Surfrider's Oregon Policy Manager, Charlie Plybon, will kick off the workshop to help set the stage with some of the historical efforts of beach monitoring on the Oregon coast and the importance of supporting ongoing funding for state beach monitoring programs. "The Federal BEACH Act of 2000 made big advancements in setting water quality standards and funding state monitoring programs to ensure public safety", says Plybon. "Once again, the EPA has proposed to cut all federal funding for beach water quality monitoring programs, which underscores the importance of these sorts of collaborations."

The workshop will continue with presentations from Kevin Brannan, Natural Resource Specialist with DEQ and Tim Gross, Public Works Director for the City of Newport. With the help of [Oregon Consensus](#) and in partnership with EPA, Brannan leads up a bacteria workgroup within a local stakeholder advisory committee to help determine the actions needed to improve and protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Mid-Coast Basin. The Mid-Coast Basin encompasses four subbasins: the Alsea, Siletz-Yaquina, Siltcoos and Siuslaw subbasins. This geographic area contains a wide variety of ecosystems and habitats, including high elevation Coast Range temperate forests, low elevation valleys, coastal wetlands, shallow lakes, estuaries and beaches. While the process addresses a variety of systems and water quality indicators, Brannan will be focusing his presentation on beach bacteria analysis and collaborations.

Tim Gross will wrap things up by describing some of the on-the-ground work by the City of Newport to help advance water quality improvements and talk about some potential collaborations to address areas where more information and data is needed. "I think people will be interested to hear how we track this data to better understand and address our stormwater and sewer systems," says Gross. The City of Newport has undergone many capital improvement projects and continues to work on longterm strategies to support cleaner beaches and this is a great opportunity to learn about that work.

Help bring together local knowledge and shared data from Surfrider's BWTF and Oregon's Beach Monitoring Program and learn about DEQ's online mapping tool to support integrating these partner efforts. Some light snacks and beverages will be provided, please RSVP at:

<http://tinyurl.com/beachworkshop>