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INTRODUCTION

All life comes from the sea. Our blood, like the ocean, is a balance of salt and water. Our lives revolve in cycles, tides and waves. The ocean is our wilderness, playground, and home. The beaches belong to all of us and now, more than ever, it’s critical that we protect our coasts, where the land meets the sea, for the future.

For the last century, our ocean and coasts have been suffering a death by a thousand cuts. We are polluting our waterways with runoff and plastics. Sea levels are rising and threatening our beaches. Privatization threatens access to the beach. It’s time for a change.

The good news is that there are solutions to all of these challenges, but these challenges are ours to solve together.

If we don’t take action, then who will?

The vision of the Surfrider Foundation is to protect 100% of our coasts. We are surfers and coastal enthusiasts who share a deep passion for the ocean and coasts because we live, work and play there. It’s our love for the coasts that drives us to be daily stewards of the coastal environment and protect our ocean, waves and beaches.

With one foot in the sand and the other in the water, our volunteers are the first to know and expertly respond to issues facing our coasts. Our network empowers everyday citizens to be leaders in their coastal communities and become defenders of our ocean and coastlines. When supported by regional and national experts, local volunteers and communities can drive scalable change.

The greatest strength of the Surfrider Foundation lies in our structure, which aligns our powerful grassroots network of volunteers with the world’s leading experts in community organizing, coastal science, policy and law. This structure of matching local knowledge with global expertise has proven to be a potent formula. Our ability to mobilize grassroots action has led to hundreds of significant coastal protection victories.

However, today’s political climate and the increased threats to the ocean and coasts demand a redoubling of our efforts. They also heighten an urgent need to expand our reach, influence, and effectiveness to all parts of the country and thereby increase our national influence.

Over the next three years (2018-2020), we will advance coastal protection by focusing on Clean Water and Healthy Beaches. We will also defend against threats and continue to grow stewardship at the local level. In addition, we will seek to increase our capacity to support Surfrider’s national network of chapters with regional field experts and scale our local campaigns to amplify state, regional and national impact.

We have a proven model that has shown effectiveness in regions of the country where we are well resourced and now we must expand it to every region. If we can provide activists with the tools, training and support to defend our coasts, we will achieve our vision. Our mission requires it, and our volunteer network deserves this level of support.

IF WE DON’T TAKE ACTION, THEN WHO WILL?
PROTECT 100% OF THE COASTS
OUR VISION

PROTECT 100% OF THE COASTS

WHAT WE MEAN BY 100% PROTECTION

For Surfrider, protecting 100% of the coasts means that we have local volunteers and chapters actively protecting all beaches in America and those chapters have the resources, training and support needed to be successful. Full coverage and full support leads to full protection of our nation’s coasts and define our future growth goals.

OUR MISSION

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world’s ocean, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network.
HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION

POWERFUL ACTIVIST NETWORK WITH SUPPORTING EXPERTISE

Over the last 34 years, the Surfrider Foundation’s theory of change has been focused on community-based grassroots action on coastal health and recreation.

Our volunteer network of more than 160 chapters and student clubs, organized into 10 regions, collectively works on hundreds of campaigns, programs and community events annually. Surfrider’s network has coalesced into a tremendous force for coastal protection by driving the success of stewardship programs and local, regional and national campaigns.

The nationwide network is also trained and supported by Surfrider staff. To develop and inspire volunteers, we have established a comprehensive training program that incorporates conferences, online resources through Surfrider University, and effective leadership transition.

Regional Chapter Leadership Conferences across the country educate and inspire our network. Each conference hosts Surfrider’s top leaders for intensive issue training, organizing techniques, strategy sessions and information sharing. These conferences are a cornerstone for our grassroots organizing.

The Surfrider Foundation currently employs regional experts in six out of 10 regions in North America. They support the work of our chapters and clubs, provide expertise in community organizing, legal, ocean and coastal policy, and help to implement chapter-led programs and campaigns at the federal, regional and local levels. These key staff actively work to impart this knowledge to our volunteers to build leaders and strengthen our network. In addition, we support our activist network with legal, science and policy experts in each of our five initiatives: Coastal Preservation, Ocean Protection, Clean Water, Plastic Pollution and Beach Access.

THE NEXT THREE YEARS:
CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY BEACHES 2018-2020

For the next three years, the Surfrider Foundation will prioritize our Clean Water and Plastic Pollution initiatives, while continuing to support priority campaigns, such as stopping new offshore oil drilling. Clean Water and Plastic Pollution are the top initiatives for our chapters and student clubs because these are critical issues currently affecting the health of our ocean and coasts. Surfrider’s unique combination of grassroots campaigns, volunteer programs and staff expertise positions us to make a transformational impact in these two areas over the next three years.
The goal of the Surfrider Foundation’s Clean Water Initiative is to protect water quality so it’s safe to surf, swim and play in the ocean.

Every day, water quality at our beaches is threatened by pollution from urban and agricultural runoff, sewage and septic systems, and waste discharged into the ocean by various industries. These threats result in 20,000 health advisories each year in the U.S. to protect beachgoers from exposure to bacteria and other illness-causing pathogens. Pollution also fuels harmful algal blooms that endanger public health and wreak havoc on coastal ecosystems.

Despite these dramatic threats to public health and coastal communities, the current federal administration is scaling back funding and enforcement of water quality regulations and programs. Large and sweeping cuts in funding for the EPA and NOAA—the federal agencies responsible for protecting clean water and healthy coasts—are also being considered. This includes the proposed total elimination of the BEACH Act, which provides critical support to coastal states to monitor water quality at beaches.

Surfrider’s Clean Water Initiative strives to protect water quality in local waterways and reduce ocean pollution so it is safe to surf, swim and play in the ocean. To meet this goal, Surfrider chapters and activists are building awareness of water pollution problems, advocating for solutions that protect local waterways, and working to prevent pollution from reaching the coasts and ocean.
CLEAN WATER OUTCOMES
2018-2020

1. Surfrider will ensure that all 35 U.S. coastal states and territories have water quality information to protect public health at the beach.

Surfrider advocacy will ensure that the federal BEACH Act is funded to support water quality monitoring of a minimum of 3,500 beaches nationwide. We will also supplement agency testing through the Surfrider Foundation’s Blue Water Task Force. This program will support at least 40 volunteer-run water testing labs across the U.S. and monitor more than 400 beaches, perform over 5,000 water quality tests each year, and make the information publicly available.

2. Surfrider will work with local stakeholders and government agencies to identify pollution problems, health risks and reduce the sources of pollution.

Surfrider chapters will communicate water quality data and findings in their local communities to build awareness of pollution issues. They will also collaborate with key government and community stakeholders to identify and reduce the sources of pollution.

3. Surfrider will support education and advocacy campaigns that result in less pollution being discharged into our ocean and waterways.

Surfrider advocacy will stop administrative actions to roll back federal environmental and public health protections. In addition, we will reduce the total input of wastewater discharged into the ocean by 400 million gallons per day through improved treatment of sewage and wastewater recycling, and ensure coastal resources are not harmed by desalination projects.

4. Surfrider will work to prevent a minimum of 20 million gallons of polluted runoff from reaching the ocean every year through our Ocean Friendly Gardens (OFG) program.

Surfrider will lead 25 chapter and student club OFG programs and install 25 new Ocean Friendly Gardens. We will provide education and hands-on training annually for government agencies, landscape professionals and the general public to help communities transform their landscapes, hardscapes and prevent water pollution.
PLASTIC POLLUTION

The goal of the Surfrider Foundation’s Plastic Pollution Initiative is to reduce the impacts of plastic pollution on the marine environment.

Plastic pollution is an ever-present threat to the health and sustainability of our ocean, waves and beaches. The Surfrider Foundation members and volunteers know this because we regularly lead local beach cleanups where the problem is abundantly clear. Even though plastics have many beneficial uses in today’s society, single-use plastics pose a significant risk to our marine environment. Plastics do not biodegrade, but rather photodegrade into smaller pieces with exposure to the sunlight. As a result, virtually every piece of plastic that enters the ocean remains there, compromising the marine life and resources it supports.

The Surfrider Foundation has mounted a united effort to address the enormous issue of plastic pollution in the ocean. Our network works to reduce plastic pollution through education, advocacy, cleanup events and partnerships with businesses. A foundational element is encouraging people to change their habits to help reduce and prevent single-use plastic pollution. Surfrider also advocates for stronger policies to address pollution sources. To date, Surfrider has helped to pass more than 150 local, state, and national laws to address marine debris. In addition, Surfrider has launched the Ocean Friendly Restaurants program to recognize and reward businesses that limit plastic consumption and educate their patrons about the issue.
PLASTIC POLLUTION OUTCOMES
2018-2020

1. Surfrider will remove over 150,000 pounds of plastic pollution and other trash from the beach each year through our cleanup programs.

Surfrider will lead over 1,500 cleanup events, engage 30,000 volunteers, and report litter collected each year. Surfrider will use beach cleanup data to pass five new local ordinances annually to prevent plastic pollution.

2. Surfrider will prevent 10 billion single-use plastic items per year from reaching landfills, watersheds, and the ocean through the successful passage and defense of new plastic reduction laws.

Surfrider will advocate for 20 local and state plastics policies annually, including bans on single-use plastic items and the defense of existing plastic pollution reduction laws from repeal or preemption. Surfrider will also implement or support plastic pollution data collection to monitor the effectiveness of new ordinances.

3. Surfrider’s Ocean Friendly Restaurants program will result in 200,000 plastics-free meals per day.

Surfrider will register 500 Ocean Friendly Restaurants and businesses each year and develop quality assurance methods to ensure that plastic pollution reduction goals are met.

4. Surfrider will educate and activate five million people in the U.S. per year with messaging on the impacts of plastic pollution and how to be part of the solution.

Surfrider will provide robust education and outreach strategy on the impacts of plastic pollution and ways to be part of the solution. Strategies will include local events, print and digital communications, video public service announcements and a large-scale creative project to raise awareness and inspire action.
The goal of the Surfrider Foundation’s Ocean Protection Initiative is to protect ocean ecosystems and related recreational opportunities.

Our ocean is facing growing challenges from pollution, habitat loss, development, fishing pressure and climate change. Meanwhile, expanding industries such as offshore drilling, renewable energy, shipping, and aquaculture are threatening to crowd our ocean and degrade the health of the ecosystem. We need to protect special places in the ocean before they are threatened and stem the tide of bad industries such as offshore oil drilling. The recreational community (which consists of surfers, beachgoers, kayakers, kite-boarders, wildlife viewers, etc.) needs to have a powerful voice in decisions that affect the future of the ocean.

The Surfrider Foundation takes a proactive approach to ocean protection by mobilizing our grassroots network and the broader recreation community to participate in government planning and decision-making that affects ocean resources. Surfrider formally represents the ocean recreation sector in many state, regional, and federal processes, which provides a unique opportunity to advance ocean conservation on behalf of the largest ocean stakeholder group. In recent decades, Surfrider has secured a number of monumental wins to protect ocean ecosystems. These include victories to create marine protected area (MPA) networks in California and Oregon, in addition to our victory in 2016 to protect the Atlantic coast from offshore oil drilling.
1. Surfrider will protect the Atlantic, Pacific, Eastern Gulf of Mexico and Arctic from new offshore oil and gas development.

Surfrider will mobilize our grassroots network to build massive opposition to new offshore drilling and ensure that new offshore oil and gas drilling, along with seismic testing, are not allowed in the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and the Arctic.

2. Surfrider will support and defend marine protected areas (MPAs) in U.S. waters through strong community and stakeholder support.

Surfrider will support the implementation of over 50 existing MPAs in California and Oregon through public outreach and engagement. National Marine Sanctuary and Marine Monument designations will be protected from executive and congressional attacks. Ocean recreation interests will be represented in advisory bodies at the community, state and federal levels.

3. Surfrider will support regional ocean planning in U.S. waters that protect the marine ecosystem and recreational opportunities.

Surfrider will defend the National Ocean Policy from attacks by the administration and Congress. We will also advance the development and implementation of regional ocean plans where ocean recreation is represented and work to ensure important recreational areas are identified and protected.

4. Surfrider will protect critical ocean and coastal management programs by defending NOAA’s budget for fiscal years 2019-2021.

Surfrider will support NOAA’s Coastal Zone Management (CZM) program to ensure effective coastal management in 30 states and territories and NOAA’s Coastal Resilience Program so states and communities can address the impacts of climate change. Surfrider will also defend NOAA’s Sea Grant Program to support applied science and management through a network of 33 programs located in every coastal state, in addition to Puerto Rico, Lake Champlain and Guam.
COASTAL PRESERVATION

The goal of the Surfrider Foundation’s Coastal Preservation Initiative is to protect beaches and shorelines from development and climate change impacts.

Our world’s magnificent coastlines are increasingly under siege from a range of threats. Global sea level is projected to increase by up to six feet by 2100 due to rising temperatures, putting our coasts in harm’s way. In the U.S., scientists estimate that over 50% of surveyed coastlines on the East Coast, West Coast, and Gulf of Mexico are at high risk for beach loss from sea level rise and coastal erosion. Meanwhile, development proposals of all types, including seawalls, shoreline structures and energy projects, threaten coastal resources and our ability to enjoy them. Hanging in the balance is a recreation and tourism economy that contributes billions of dollars to coastal communities and the nation as a whole.

Surfrider’s Coastal Preservation Initiative works to protect beaches and shorelines from these threats through public education, grassroots advocacy and volunteer stewardship. Our network fights to defend outstanding coastal areas from harmful development threats of all types. We embrace proactive approaches by advocating for coastal parks and engaging in shoreline planning to ensure appropriate development standards. Our chapters organize dune restoration projects to build resilient coastlines that can withstand erosion and sea level rise. Surfrider is also proud to be part of the global movement to address climate change by advocating for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and supporting adaptation strategies at the local and regional levels.
COASTAL PRESERVATION OUTCOMES
2018-2020

1. Surfrider will protect the coasts from harmful shoreline development and armoring projects.
Surfrider will influence permitting decisions at the local, state and federal levels to avoid seawalls and other types of shoreline armoring. In addition, Surfrider will advocate to protect national parks and monuments along the coasts from executive and congressional attacks and also protect iconic coastal places from poorly planned development.

2. Surfrider will work with communities to plan for coastal erosion and sea level rise.
Surfrider will ensure that local municipalities develop shoreline plans that include proper development standards and climate change adaptation measures to prepare for future sea level rise. Surfrider will also work to mitigate impacts from beach fill projects and will lead dune restoration projects to enhance coastal resilience. Each year, Surfrider will publish the State of the Beach Report to influence how states manage coastal erosion and plan for sea level rise.

3. Surfrider will educate elected officials and the public about climate change impacts.
Surfrider will conduct outreach in local communities on climate change impacts and solutions, including programs like the Smartfin project, to foster climate change awareness with surfers and the broader public.

4. Surfrider will support and defend climate change policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote coastal resilience.
Surfrider will promote state and federal legislation to reduce emissions while defending existing climate change policies from administrative and congressional attacks. At the coast, Surfrider will advocate for insurance reform to disincentivize poorly planned coastal development and promote policies that support coastal resilience.
The goal of the Surfrider Foundation’s Beach Access Initiative is to secure universal, low-impact beach access for all people.

The Surfrider Foundation views beach access as a universal right of all people. We work to secure beach access on every coast so that people of all communities can enjoy valuable coastal resources. Unfortunately, beach access is constantly being challenged by private property owners, developers, recreation restrictions and even sea level rise. Surfrider’s network is committed to meeting these challenges through both community outreach and partnership building, in addition to grassroots advocacy and legal strategies.

Surfrider also works to bring diverse communities to the beach to enjoy the wealth of natural resources and create a new generation of coastal stewards. Our efforts include promoting low-cost visitor access to the beach, as well as connecting inland and underserved communities with the coasts. Many of our chapters partner with local organizations to teach youth from disadvantaged communities how to surf and about the mission of the Surfrider Foundation. Surfrider is committed to reducing barriers to beach access for inland and low-income communities, along with advocating for solutions to those impediments at a policy level.
1. **Surfrider will open new access, or protect threatened access, at 5 to 10 beaches in the U.S. every year.**

The Surfrider Foundation will support 15 beach access campaigns per year, many in active litigation cases. These campaigns are multi-year battles. To achieve our goal of maintaining and opening beach access, we will win litigation or pass legislation to keep beaches open to surfing and public access.

2. **Surfrider will support inclusive beach access by bringing 5,000 inland or underserved community members to visit the beach every year.**

Surfrider will partner with 10 organizations that help provide kids with access to the coasts. We will also build upon existing programs that teach underserved youth to surf and create educational opportunities for Title 1 schools.

3. **The Surfrider Foundation's Student Leadership program will bring an additional 2,000+ youth to the beach through our 80+ student clubs around the nation.**

Surfrider Student Leadership Clubs will organize beach cleanups, recreational beach outings, and include conservation education in all activities.

4. **Surfrider will protect beach access nationally and provide meaningful access for 180 million people to visit the beach.**

Surfrider advocacy efforts will provide meaningful beach access opportunities with more parking, services and amenities to the public. Surfrider access campaigns will have a unified, overarching goal of ensuring everyone has a right to get to the beach.
SURFRIDER’S KEY STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

The Surfrider Foundation will employ the following strategies to achieve our mission and our vision of protecting 100% of the coasts. These strategies leverage Surfrider’s core strengths of volunteer engagement, community outreach, grassroots activism and connection to coastal recreation users.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH
Raise awareness of coastal issues and ways for supporters to engage in advocacy and stewardship.

Surfrider will communicate coastal issues to supporters and the public through chapter events, community outreach, and Surfrider channels. Surfrider will also generate media coverage on coastal issues to build public awareness and political will to advance environmental priorities.

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY
Mobilize Surfrider supporters and recreation users to advocate for environmental protection and coastal access.

Surfrider supporters and recreational users will participate in public hearings and comment periods regarding coastal issues. Surfrider will promote online engagement campaigns that allow supporters and recreation users to easily communicate with decision-makers. Surfrider will organize an annual federal advocacy day in Washington, D.C. to meet with congressional offices and agency leadership.

STEWARDSHIP AND RESTORATION
Advance stewardship of coastal resources through volunteer events and projects.

Surfrider will conduct cleanup events at beaches and in watersheds to remove plastic pollution and other trash. We will also work with government agencies and stakeholders to resolve stormwater and sewage infrastructure issues affecting water quality. In addition, we will install and maintain Ocean Friendly Gardens to filter stormwater runoff, prevent ocean pollution, mitigate climate change, and support the restoration of beach dunes and watershed habitats through plantings and other volunteer activities.

CITIZEN SCIENCE
Collect and report scientific information on coastal health through Surfrider chapters, student clubs and volunteers.

Surfrider’s Blue Water Task Force water quality monitoring labs will collect and report data in coastal communities. We will also gather plastic pollution data at Surfrider beach cleanup events and share with supporters, decision-makers and the public. In addition, we will collect and report information on coastal recreational use through studies that engage recreational stakeholders in providing geospatial and economic information.
PARTNERSHIPS AND COALITIONS

Grow a powerful and diverse movement to advance environmental and coastal access priorities.

The Surfrider network of volunteers and experts lead and participate in coalitions at the local, state, and federal levels to advance conservation and public access. In addition, we provide outreach to recreational businesses and groups across the U.S. on coastal issues and ways to engage customers and their members. Through the registration of Ocean Friendly Restaurants, we use local outreach to reduce plastic consumption and educate diners about ocean sustainability while seeking partnerships with diverse groups and constituencies to increase coastal stewardship and access. We also collaborate with government agencies and elected officials to resolve coastal resource threats and advance stewardship.

LITIGATION AND LEGAL STRATEGIES

Engage in strategic litigation and legislation campaigns to accomplish mission objectives.

We employ direct strategic litigation on numerous state and federal court cases to further clean water, healthy beaches and accessible coastlines. In addition, we provide legal expertise to active campaigns in order to effectively advocate on coastal issues and establish standing to sue if necessary. Our experts analyze and assess the need for legislation on coastal conservation and beach access issues and recommend statutory language or amendments when necessary. We also communicate important legal and legislative advocacy efforts to our powerful grassroots network for meaningful engagement in the issues.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Represent Surfrider Foundation members and recreation stakeholders in discussions with government officials.

We maintain regular dialogue with government agencies and elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels and represent the coastal recreation (non-fishing) sector on government advisory bodies at the regional and federal levels.
Above: Surfrider activists taking part in an event to gather signatures from businesses in the coastal recreation industry that are opposed to offshore oil drilling.
Surfrider’s model of success lies with our nationwide network of local chapters and clubs supported by experts in science, legal, policy and organizing at the national level. When chapters are fully engaged and have regional staff support, we see victory after victory for our coasts. (Surfrider has achieved more than 450 victories for the protection of our ocean and coasts since we began tracking wins in 2006.)

Unfortunately, the Surfrider Foundation currently operates at a 56% capacity. We employ staff experts in six of 10 regions in North America who support and implement chapter-led programs and campaigns at the federal, regional and local levels. Staff provide expertise in community organizing, legal, and ocean and coastal policy to support the work of our chapters and clubs. These key staff work actively to impart this knowledge to our volunteers, build leaders and strengthen our network.

To achieve our vision of protecting 100% of our coasts, the Surfrider Foundation will need to invest and expand our scale in our core capacities. This includes:

**MISSION AND OUR NETWORK**

Based on our experience, a model of a minimum of two staff members for every region provides the level of expertise and support to maximize our chapters’ impact. Currently, the Surfrider Foundation employs staff experts in six of 10 regions in North America who support and implement chapter-led programs and campaigns. We are looking to hire regional staff and policy experts in every region to provide our network with the backing needed to succeed.

Each of our five mission initiatives and associated stewardship programs need to be led by professional staff. Experts on clean water, plastic pollution, beach access, ocean protection and coastal preservation are necessary to support the chapter network and represent Surfrider as a leader in the field. Currently, we have staff for clean water, plastic pollution, and coastal preservation, but need additional program staff.

**OPERATIONS**

Surfrider needs systems and technology platforms to fully support our headquarters and chapter network with the tools for advocacy, finance, organizing and fundraising. In order to support chapters and work with regional staff, we must use modern technology for information sharing, webinars, trainings and communications. Further, we will need additional staff to support Human Resources and Accounting.

**MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Over the past 34 years, Surfrider has built an incredible brand. We must continue to attract and retain a robust marketing and communications team to develop awareness, inspire and activate around the issues threatening our coasts. As marketing trends change, we must stay ahead by utilizing social and digital strategies.

**REVENUE**

In order to increase capacity, additional fundraising staff is needed to manage, cultivate and acquire new members, major donors, foundations and corporate partners. We also need to increase our ability for planned giving to attract bequest and estate gifts.

The Surfrider Foundation is working to build over the next five years, if not sooner, to reach our goal of 100% capacity. By building capacity, the Surfrider Foundation will be able to increase our scale, reach, and effectiveness in meeting our mission of protecting our coasts.
CONCLUSION

Now more than ever, we must protect the places we love and defend our coasts. Clean water and healthy beaches are vital for our communities, coastal economies, tourism and recreation and livelihoods. But plastic and ocean pollution, offshore oil drilling, rollbacks to federal protections, development and rising tides threaten our ocean and coasts.

Through Surfrider’s history of more than 450 victories achieved for the protection of our ocean, waves and beaches, we have demonstrated that our model—thousands of local citizens participating in community-based advocacy—is a powerful, effective method to reclaim and protect these resources which are critical to our health and prosperity.

Through the successful implementation of this plan, the Surfrider Foundation will be able to achieve our vision of 100% protection of our coasts.

We each have a stake in taking action to ensure the places where we surf, swim, play and live are protected for this and future generations. As one of the nation’s leading grassroots coastal protection organizations, the Surfrider Foundation and our network of members, supporters and activists will continue to stand up and fight for scalable change from the ground up for the protection of our ocean, waves and beaches for the future.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT