

## *The Hawaii Partnership Project*

Plastic marine debris and litter has been at the forefront of public policy discussions and media attention at the state and local level in Hawaii for years. In recent years, proposals to restrict the use of plastic packaging, such as polystyrene food service packaging have been introduced in the State Legislature and at the county level on several of the Hawaiian Islands. . Additionally, a number of environmental organizations (NGOs) have active chapters in Hawaii, including the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club and Surfrider, helping lend local support for these initiatives. Locally based NGOs(Kokua Hawaii Foundation, Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii, etc) have also been active on this issue.. NOAA's Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) is also located in Hawaii.

The focus on plastics as a significant contributor to Hawaii's marine debris and litter situation will be further highlighted later this year when Hawaii hosts the IUCN's World Conservation Congress (held every 4 years throughout the world) September 1-10<sup>th</sup>.

To help address both the legislative pressures and the "anti-plastics" messaging, as well as to better position the plastics industry as responsible entity working to identify science based, local solutions that can be implemented to help reduce marine debris/litter, ACC undertook a multifaceted lobbying/public affairs/grassroots/communications program to meet these objectives. Highlights of "The Hawaii Partnership Project" include:

In response to a proposed local Honolulu ordinance that would have restricted the use of polystyrene food service packaging, ACC initiated a dialogue with Councilmember Ann Koybayashi. This dialogue resulted in the understanding that restrictions on one material type do little to address the root cause of litter and that more data – and a better understanding of the sources of litter – was necessary to help guide effective public policy.

*The Study.* The plastics industry, working with local government partners, commissioned Environmental Resources Planning (ERP) to conduct a comprehensive study of the solid waste (litter and trash) and storm water management systems, particularly as they relate to litter control and diversion opportunities in Honolulu. The goals of this study were to identify specific, actionable and sustainable strategies for improving and integrating litter control functions with the solid waste and storm water management systems. The study was completed in early 2016 and we began to move towards implementing its recommendations.

*The Challenges.* Based on the conclusions in the ERP study, meetings were had with the Honolulu Department of Parks to discuss implementing some of the study recommendations by targeting a high-profile beach for a pilot project that would include installing more substantial rubbish bins with lids, and tracking the result. We were met with great opposition from the Department of Parks.

### *Partnerships and the Path Forward.*

Since our primary objective was met with opposition, we built on the ERP study and recommendations, to establish several partnerships and opportunities with Hawaiian organizations sharing a desire to help Honolulu better understand what they can do to reduce litter, trash and prevent marine debris. Opportunities were identified and are now underway. Industry has fostered partnerships with a number of groups, including:

#### *KHIB (Keep Hawaiian Islands Beautiful) and KAB (Keep America Beautiful)*

- ERP, KHIB, KAB and the William S. Richardson Law School in Honolulu is development and presenting enforcement training materials based on local ordinances and state laws related to litter, illegal dumping, marine debris and storm water trash. Training to law and code enforcement officials, prosecutors and justices will also explain how litter-related problems negatively impact Honolulu as a community as well as the vitality of its tourism industry.

### *Local Hawaiian Restaurants*

- Hawaiian local restaurants play a special role in Hawaii culture. Led by Zippy's and several other local restaurants, with the guidance of ACC consultants, they have developed a local restaurant pledge based on *Aloha Aina* (Love of the Land), called "Malama 808" to take measures to prevent trash and litter from leaving their establishments. "Malama" is the Hawaiian word for "care for" or "take care of," and 808 is Hawaii's area code.

#### *KUPU and KHIB*

- KUPU, whose mission is to empower youth to serve their communities through character-building, service learning, and environmental stewardship opportunities that encourage integrity (pono) with God (Ke Akua), self and others, is working with KHIB in an intern program to help foster positive litter prevention and education messages.

#### *Commercial Harbor (implementing EPA and Hawaii Department of Health/HDOH) HDOT Consent Decree*

- ERP will coordinate with KHIB to develop materials for and conduct a workshop to educate harbor tenants on and help them implement best practices for reducing harbor litter and storm water trash that can become marine debris. This training and promoting tenant's participation in the Adopt-a-Harbor program will show that the Harbor and its tenants are making good faith efforts to comply with the HDOT Consent Decree of 2014.

#### *Primary Objective Breakthrough.*

Discussions to implement a recommendation from the ERP study to ensure litter receptacles have lids that allow trash to be easily placed inside, while not allowing litter to fly out, were elevated to the Mayor's office and we now have a path forward to establish a partnership on a pilot program in Ala Moana Park. We expect those bins to be placed before the IUCN World Conservation Congress meets in September.