



County of Sonoma

State of California

Date: June 13, 2022

Item Number: _____

Resolution Number: _____

☐ 4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution Of The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Sonoma, State Of California, to
Provide Visitor Education and Outreach to Significantly Reduce the Amount of Trash and
Litter in the Coastal Watersheds, in Collaboration with Marin and Mendocino Counties, and in
Coordination with Local Jurisdictions, Federal and State Agencies, Tribal Partners and
Community Nonprofits.**

WHEREAS, the Northern California Coastline is known around the world for its scenic beauty, biological diversity, and recreational values and is enjoyed by local residents, Northern Californians, and visitors from around the world; and

WHEREAS, Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino Counties welcome visitors and wish to ensure that they do not adversely impact the beautiful landscapes, seashore, and habitats of the coast; and

WHEREAS, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a federally recognized Tribe and sovereign nation, whose ancestral territory includes Sonoma and Marin counties, has a profound interest in protecting, preserving, and supporting environmental stewardship along the coastline of Sonoma and Marin; and

WHEREAS, the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians, a federally recognized Tribe and sovereign nation, whose ancestral territory includes Sonoma County, has a profound interest in protecting, preserving, and supporting environmental stewardship along the coastline of Sonoma; and

WHEREAS, Marin, Sonoma and Mendocino counties are home to 15 federally recognized tribes; and

WHEREAS, an average of 11,522 pounds of Coastal trash is picked up annually in Marin County as part of the California Coastal Cleanup Day and an additional 2,500 pounds is removed annually during Litter Bugs Me Roadside Cleanup. In Sonoma County, Coastwalk reports 38,890 pounds of trash were collected in the most recent California Coastal Cleanup Day, and an average of 3,052 pounds is annually collected in Mendocino County with over 85,000 pounds state-wide; and

WHEREAS, California Coastal beaches and public parks are experiencing rises in visitation year over year as important outlets for mental and physical health; the 2021 Outdoor Participation Report found the outdoor participation rate increased 52.9 percent in 2020, up from 50.7 percent in 2019; and over the last three years outdoor participation continues to grow more than 3 percent annually; in Marin County, the Point Reyes National Seashore hosts more than 2.5 million visitors annually, in Mendocino's Coastal visitation hosts more than 1.5 million visitors, in Sonoma County, coastal parks receive more than 5 million annual visits.

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has also spurred an increase in informal camping, especially along our coastal beaches, where visitation guidance, wayfinding information and adequate facilities for human waste and trash disposal are lacking, setting the stage for contamination in our waterways, bays, oceans, and food supply; and

WHEREAS, single use plastics use has increased between 250-300 percent since the COVID-19 pandemic began, while waste increased 30 percent in 2020 due to PPE (personal protective equipment), packaging, and disposable foodware, and U.S. online shopping and takeout services increased 78 percent during the height of the pandemic -- the highest increase world-wide; and

WHEREAS, trash causes major impacts on our enjoyment of creeks, bays and the ocean, and creates significant impacts on aquatic life and habitat in those waters; trash eventually enters the global ocean ecosystem, where plastic persists in the environment for hundreds of years – if not forever; and

WHEREAS, trash in the ocean and waterways creates physical impacts to aquatic species, entangling them and often being ingested; plastic ingested by aquatic life, concentrates organic toxins, moves up the food chain, into our human food systems: and

WHEREAS, microplastic particles and fibers generated from the breakdown of mismanaged waste are now so prevalent that they cycle through the earth in a manner akin to global biogeochemical cycles; and

WHEREAS, while our local jurisdictions, agencies, counties, cities, and many non-profit entities have separate existing trash reduction efforts underway, this effort is intended to unify messaging and provide direction to the public to strengthen our collective impact; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County of Sonoma, in cooperation with Marin and Mendocino counties, will implement a coordinated coastal trash reduction and “Leave No Trace” education and environmental stewardship campaign. The Leave No Trace (LNT) is an educational framework, led by a nonprofit by the same name, that provides innovative education, skills, research, and science to help people care for the outdoors with the focus on educating people as the most effective and least resource-intensive solution to land protection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Sonoma, in cooperation with Marin and Mendocino Counties, commits to working with private, Federal, State, County, local public land managers, jurisdictions, and non-profit partners to develop education programs that fit their missions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Sonoma, in cooperation with Marin and Mendocino Counties, commits to resolve this great threat to our coastal economies, communities, and environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of Sonoma, in cooperation with Marin and Mendocino Counties, commits to significantly reducing coastal trash by July 1st, 2027; a three-county five-year commitment to this program.

Supervisors:

Gorin: Rabbitt: Coursey: Hopkins: Gore:

Ayes: Noes: Absent: Abstain:

So Ordered.