

Thousands of pieces of litter collected from Tahoe's beaches following Labor Day weekend

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Labor Day weekend is one of the busiest of the year in Lake Tahoe, and as visitors to the shoreline pack up after weekend-long celebrations, thousands of pieces of trash are left behind.

Instead of enjoying the holiday by relaxing and lounging around, more than 70 volunteers from Keep Tahoe Blue donated their day to picking up the litter left along 6.2 miles of shoreline in North Tahoe.

"It's amazing to see so many dedicated community members show up early on a holiday morning to help protect Lake Tahoe," said Marilee Movius, League to Save Lake Tahoe community engagement manager. "Even though the fireworks and crowds out to enjoy them eventually disperse, the plastic trash left behind would remain forever if not for the efforts of these inspiring community members."

224 POUNDS OF TRASH

The cleanup, which ran from 8:30 a.m. to noon at Commons Beach, resulted in 224 pounds of litter being removed, according to the league, of which 2,064 were cigarette butts and 1,520 were pieces of single-use plastic.

League staff ships the cigarette butts to a company on the east coast that upcycles them into new plastic products, according to a release from the league, but the rest of the plastic pieces, unfortunately, end up in landfills.

"While it's great to get this trash off our beaches the real solution is to not create the trash in the first place," said Movius. "Almost every one of these small plastic pieces of trash have a reusable and sustainable alternative and we encourage everyone enjoying Lake Tahoe to bring reusable items and 'Keep Tahoe Blue.'"

After years of hosting the annual Labor Day beach cleanup in South Tahoe, the league, in partnership with the Tahoe City Public Utility District, moved this year's event to Commons Beach.

"The partnership of volunteers and public agencies is a win-win situation for all including our very own Lake Tahoe," said Valli Murnane of the utility district.

Local business, Arcade Belts, was also on hand as a partner in the cleanup.

'NO ONE LIKES A DIRTY BEACH'

"We look forward to this event every year," said Kasey Wiese, marketing communications manager for Arcade Belts. "We take this opportunity to help Keep Tahoe Blue spread the important message of picking up after yourself at our beaches. Let's be honest, no one likes a dirty beach."

Moving forward, the League to Save Lake Tahoe will next take part in the 10th annual Great Sierra River Cleanup 9 a.m.-noon, Sept. 15. The cleanup, which runs in conjunction with California Coastal Cleanup Day, will take place at Chimney Beach, Zephyr Cove, Kiva Beach, Trout Creek and Regan Beach.

For more information visit KeepTahoeBlue.org.

Justin Scacco is a reporter for the Sierra Sun. Contact him at jscacco@sierrasun.com (mailto:jscacco@sierrasun.com).

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