

Reduction of marine debris also includes direct outreach to government and industry leads in waste management in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, collaboration with a broad network of organizations in the U.S. and Mexico, and on-site education to the volunteer participants of Tijuana River Action Month. Over the years, we have worked on community based slope stabilization projects, erosion control measures, research studies about sediment and debris loads, and education and debris removal projects with different Mexican agencies. Additionally, the Reserve's Coastal Training Program (CTP) has worked on binational projects to control solid waste that enters into the Tijuana Estuary.

In September 2018, the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association (SWIA) and the Ayuntamiento de Tijuana signed a Memorandum of Understanding to decrease plastic pollution in the watershed. The Tijuana City Council also voted unanimously to ban the use of disposable plastic bags in stores within the Municipality of Tijuana. This document and future policies to reduce single-use plastic is an important step towards reducing plastic pollution in the City as well as downstream in the Tijuana Estuary and Pacific Ocean.

Designated by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, is one of 29 reserves in the country devoted to long-term research, education, and stewardship of coastal estuaries.

Tijuana River National
Estuarine Research Reserve
301 Caspian Way
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

www.trnerr.org
www.facebook.com/TRNERR
[@tijuanaestuary](https://www.instagram.com/tijuanaestuary)
619-575-3613



TIJUANA RIVER NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

MARINE DEBRIS CLEANUP AND REDUCTION PROGRAM



MARINE DEBRIS REDUCTION, PREVENTION, AND OUTREACH

The Tijuana River Watershed spans 1,700 square miles—with nearly 75 percent of this drainage located in Mexico.

Since the early 1980s, increasing volumes of debris originating in Mexico flow across the International border during flood events and are deposited in habitats of the Reserve.

California State Parks removes and prevents excess debris flows in the Tijuana Estuary through the support of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program's Community-based Removal grant, the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association, and Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR).

The Goat Canyon Sediment Basin complex, managed by California State Parks, captures large volumes of sediment and debris that directly impact the Reserve's habitats. Did you know? TRNERR and The Tijuana River Valley make up the largest intact coastal wetland system in Southern California.



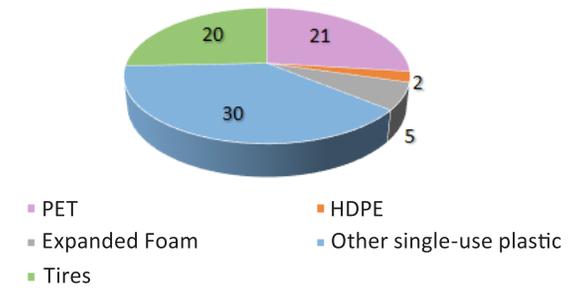
The Goat Canyon Sediment Basin complex includes the Sediment Basins and two floating debris barrier systems intended to capture debris during wet and dry season flow events. As water flows downstream from Los Laureles, a side canyon community located in Mexico, and into Goat Canyon, the flow often picks up pollutants which may have a negative effect on the habitats within the watershed. Since there is little enforcement of zoning laws in Mexico, trash collection and waste water discharge are problematic within the community and end up becoming a major source of pollution on both sides of the border. So, whatever activity goes on upstream in Mexico ultimately affects the downstream habitats of the Reserve.

A significant portion of the debris in Goat Canyon is composed of plastic products and foam (i.e. single-use plastic and food containers). As water flows through the basins, the booms remain on the surface to block debris. Each year at the end of the rainy season, a State Parks contractor will retrieve the trash booms from the basin, repair any damage, and remove the debris and dispose of it properly. This remains the only debris capture infrastructure in the Tijuana River Valley.

Although the complex is effective, facility maintenance must be coupled with hand debris removal from natural habitat areas within the Reserve, as well as education and outreach activities on reduction of debris at their source.

Reduction of marine debris within the Tijuana River NERR has been accomplished through

Percentage of Debris Captured by Weight



Tons of debris flows into our waterways every year. If we want to stop the flow of debris, everyone—including government, business, and people—will need to make some meaningful changes.

education and outreach efforts focused on a broad section of the international community. This debris removal effort is accomplished through volunteer-based clean-up and habitat restoration efforts. Tijuana River Action Month (TRAM) is a month long series of education and stewardship events from September to October each year. The goals of TRAM are to mobilize community volunteers to become stewards of the Tijuana River Watershed and recognize key efforts to protect and restore the Tijuana River on both sides of the border. By working together as a community, we can have a larger impact. During ten years of community events, over 20,000 volunteers removed a total of 80,000 pounds of debris from 30 acres within the Tijuana River Watershed. That's about six full dump truck loads!