

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Resolution

Resolution Regarding Single-Use Plastic Bags in Galveston, TX

Whereas, over one million pounds of trash are cleaned up annually on the 32 miles of Galveston beaches.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags on our local beaches, in our bays and the Gulf of Mexico, are having a detrimental effect on our ocean and coastal habitats and wildlife, and associated recreation and tourism.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags are consistently among the top three types of litter found on Galveston beaches.

Whereas, Texas residents use over 9 billion single-use plastic bags every year or 25 million each day.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags never fully biodegrade, they instead break down into tiny pieces called microplastics, which accumulate various toxins that enter the ocean food web.

Whereas, single-use plastic bags threaten a variety of marine life including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, and sea birds through ingestion, choking, infection, starvation and entanglement.

Whereas, recycling is not a sufficient solution (less than 5% are recycled in Texas) and there exist readily and widely available alternatives to single-use plastic bags such as reusable bags.

Whereas, Turtle Island Restoration Network and Surfrider Foundation, Galveston Chapter, non-profit 501(c)3 organizations have established the Bring the Bag campaign, a community driven partnership to raise awareness of the impact of single-use plastic bags on the environment, as well as the impact of tourism and the perception of Galveston Island.

Whereas, the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council approved a Single Use Plastic Bag Resolution at the February 22, 2017 Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting with a unanimous vote.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council hereby affirms the support to: 1) local ordinances to ban the use and distribution of single-use plastic bags; 2) efforts of local businesses to transition away from single-use plastic bags; and 3) efforts to remove plastic bag litter from the beaches of Galveston Island.