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SWPPP INTERNS PROPOSE CITY-WIDE BAN ON PLASTIC NET STRAW WATTLES

Earl Warren Middle School students propose plan to reduce city's contribution to plastic in ocean

SOLANA BEACH, FEBRUARY 28, 2019 -- Last night at the Solana Beach City Council meeting, 24 seventh and eighth grade students from Earl Warren Middle School presented a recommendation to further the city's commitment to reducing plastic by switching from plastic net straw wattles to wattles that use biodegradable natural netting.

The students at Earl Warren participating in the SWPPP Internship™ Program noticed the plastic netting on the straw wattles being used on their campus was degrading into smaller pieces of plastic and being washed into the storm drains, contributing to the overwhelming microplastic pollution in the ocean.

"We are asking you, our distinguished City Council members, to join us in making a city-wide switch to reduce Solana Beach's plastic use, by eliminating the plastic wrap on the city-purchased straw wattles and by committing to purchase only wattles with biodegradable natural netting, such as burlap, hemp, or jute," presented eighth grade SWPPP intern Emerson Hoyle.

The interns have been studying how stormwater runoff from their school site can contribute to polluting San Dieguito Lagoon and the Pacific Ocean. They have made visual observations in the areas around their campus storm drains and collected runoff samples during rain events which were sent to a certified lab for analysis. This data allowed the interns to then design and implement solutions to improve stormwater quality.

Straw wattles are used to help retain eroded soil on slopes and at construction sites to prevent dirt and debris from flowing off the site and into the storm drains.

A SWPPP, which stands for storm water pollution prevention plan, is a water quality document produced to help industry and municipalities prevent pollutants from entering storm drains and polluting our waterways and oceans. The SWPPP Internship™ Program educates and empowers students to develop sustainable solutions to reduce stormwater pollution from their school site while developing real-world skills, including scientific observations, data analysis, collaboration, engineering design, project management and public speaking.

Since 2013, over 1,100 elementary, middle and high school students in San Diego County have participated in the SWPPP Internship™ Program, accomplishing real-world improvements at school and in the community. BCK Programs administers these internships with sixteen programs in place this 2018-19 school year.

Additional resources:

- Brief student produced program video overview: <https://youtu.be/FKLOkMKP19o>
- [Photos](#) from 2/27/19 Solana Beach City Council. All students have photo releases on file.
- www.swpppinternship.com

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