



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Sea World Research & Rescue Foundation partners with Healthy Waterways to fight Marine waste**

Sea World Research & Rescue Foundation and Healthy Waterways are uniting in the fight against the staggering amount of litter entering South East Queensland's waterways and threatening marine wildlife with the announcement of the Community Marine Debris Grant.

The Community Marine Debris Grants are now open and offers grants to support catchment groups, schools, landholders and the general community to undertake on-ground waterway litter cleanup activities with each successful applicant receiving up to \$1,500 to assist with their efforts.

This is the third year that the two not-for-profit organisations have joined forces to offer the grant scheme with last year's groups collectively removing over 15,000 items of litter, such as plastic bottles, plastic bags and cigarette butts, plus a staggering 36km of discarded fishing line also collected.

Sea World Research & Rescue Foundation Director, Trevor Long said marine debris is a huge problem for marine life especially for some of the many turtles rescued and rehabilitated each year.

"This program aims to gather information regarding the extent of marine debris in South East Queensland while also raising community awareness about the issue," Mr Long said.

"Together with Healthy Waterways and the community, we feel we can make a difference in addressing this growing problem."

Healthy Waterways CEO, Julie McLellan said she hopes the grants will inspire the community to help in the ongoing fight against marine debris, as well as boost awareness about the issue to help reduce littering behaviour in the first place.

"Studies show waterway litter has profound negative impacts on marine wildlife, coastline aesthetics, the economy and human health," Ms McLellan said.

"In recent years, entanglement and ingestion of marine debris have become one of the most common sources of mortality observed in endangered sea turtles globally.

"Litter also impacts on the community's use of waterways, polluting natural areas which underpin recreation and tourism opportunities, and support healthy and happy communities."

Grant applications close Tuesday 19 April. To apply for a grant or for more information on the Community Marine Debris Grants or the Sea World Research and Rescue Foundation please visit <http://seaworld.com.au/research-and-rescue/events-and-grants.aspx>

Healthy Waterways is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to protect and improve South East Queensland's waterways. Together with our members, we have one clear vision to achieve healthy waterways for a healthy economy.

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