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Litter is everywhere you look: on our streets, in our creeks, and on our beaches. Help clean up litter on Saturday, September 15 at the 20th annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup. Since 1987, 48,446 volunteers in Alabama have removed a total of 902,242 pounds of debris and cleaned 2,847 miles of Alabama coastline. Not only does the cleanup help rid our beaches of unsightly garbage, the International Coastal Cleanup helps shape coastal legislation and promote education on problems associated with marine debris.

Litter on our beaches and waterways can come from many sources. Visitors may leave litter behind. Marine debris is trash deposited in the water. Litter can also reach our waters by traveling through storm drains. These drains, designed to reduce flooding on roadways, lead directly to the nearest water body. Litter deposited on roadways and gutters can be flushed down storm drains after a rainstorm.

Data collected over the years shows the majority of litter collected on our beaches comes from land-based recreational and shoreline activities, ocean/waterway activities, smoking-related activities, dumping activities, and medical and personal hygiene.

There are 21 Coastal Cleanup zones in Mobile, Baldwin, Covington, and Conecuh counties. Each volunteer will receive a T-shirt, can hugger, decal, and drinks. Boy and Girl Scout troops are welcome. So put on some sunscreen and plan to join us from 8-12 am on Saturday, September 21. For more information on the cleanup, or to find a zone near you, visit www.alabamacoastalcleanup.com.