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# Cleaning beaches and changing attitudes on New York City's shoreline

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## Abstract

For over forty years, the American Littoral Society's Northeast Chapter has been the NYC metropolitan area's leader in beach clean-ups, and habitat protection and enhancement. Over this time period, while monitoring data from beach debris sweeps, we have noted measurable variations in the qualitative and quantitative accumulation of materials - particularly plastics.

The presentation will provide a history of our beach sweeps, methods and materials, staff and volunteer training, trends we have observed both in beach debris collected and data recorded, and most importantly, changes we instill in the attitudes of the public.

Perhaps the most important trend we have observed is recognition of the issues and the increasing enthusiasm of individuals - especially young people - to address the situation.

As a result, our efforts have achieved great success - creating public awareness and facilitating action on the part of individuals, the public at large and governmental agencies.

**Keywords:** Beaches, Beach sweeps, Volunteer efforts, public participation and awareness, NYC

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