

# Plastics in the Environment: What does it mean to act locally?

Nandini Checko

Association of NJ Environmental Commissions  
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# What is an Environmental Commission?

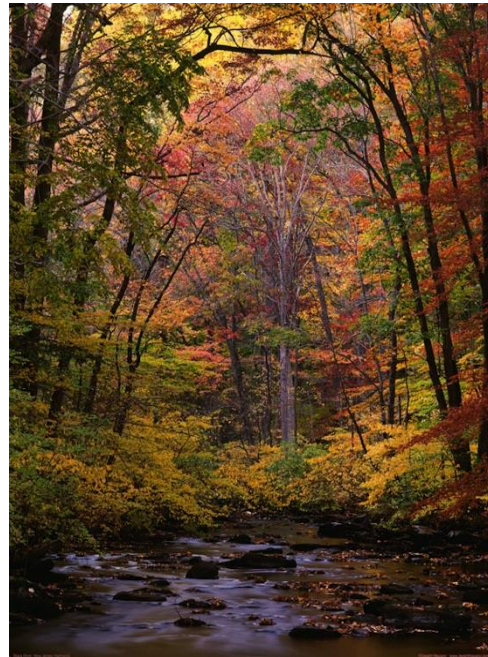


- 1968: NJ Legislature passed enabling legislation (NJSA 40:56A) which authorizes but does not require municipalities to set up environmental commissions (EC)
- EC's advise governing bodies and boards of health on a variety of environmental issues
- EC's have up to seven volunteer members and two alternates who are appointed by mayor

# ANJEC Mission

To protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources and environmental health by being a resource for 270+ Environmental Commissions, providing education, training and support.

Patterson Falls



The Highlands

Port of Newark



# Plastic Bag Pollution



# Ordinances

- So far in New Jersey, there are 35 towns that have plastic bag ordinances



# Key Components of Successful Bag Ordinance

- Gold Standard – Ban/Fee on Reusables
- Bag Fee – who keeps it?
- Reusable Bag Definition
- Data Collection/Reporting Mechanism
- Enforcement
- Education & Outreach



# Reusable Bag Definition

- CA set the standard many years ago with standard language but now know better.
  - 2.25 mils thickness (loophole)
  - 10 mils NJ State Bill S2776
- Compostable and Biodegradable are not the answer!



# Sample Definition of Reusable Bag

*A reusable bag is a durable carryout bag with **stitched** handles for reinforcement made from any natural or synthetic material other than plastic film including, but not necessarily limited to, woven or nonwoven plastic or cloth, that is at least 10 mils thick, and that is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse, and that is machine-washable or is made from a material that can be cleaned or disinfected regularly. ANJEC Model*





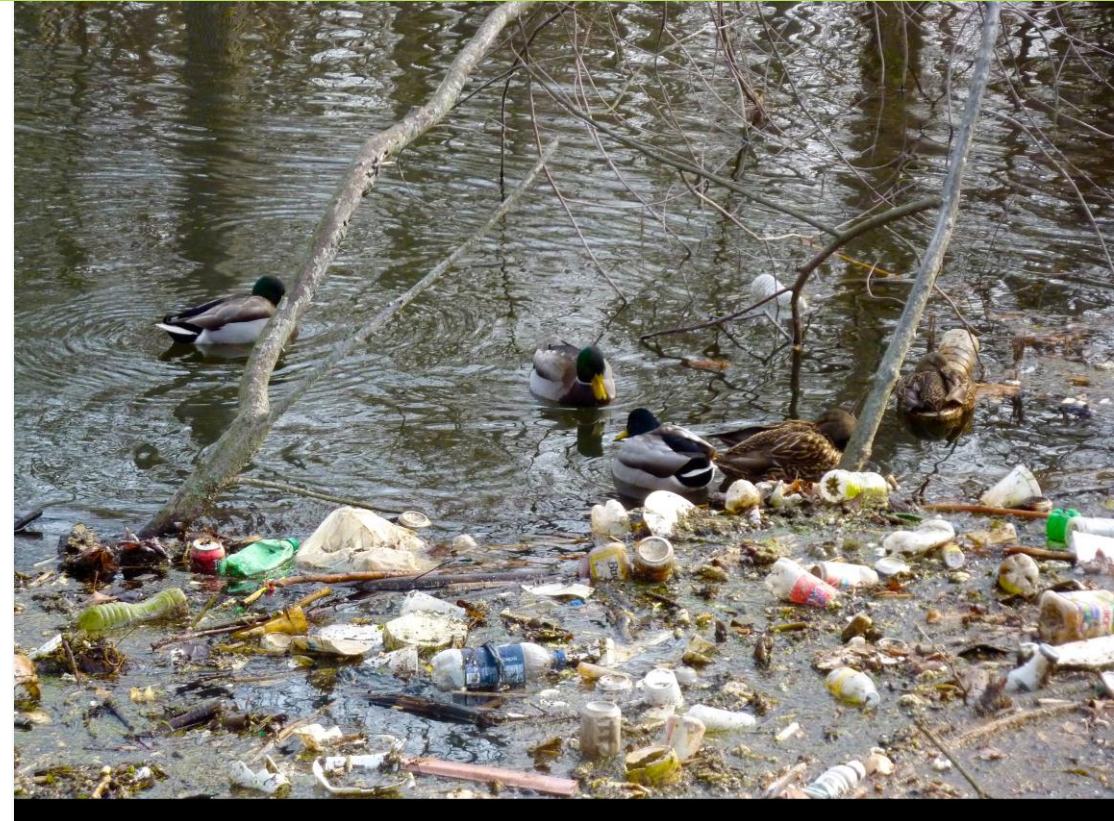
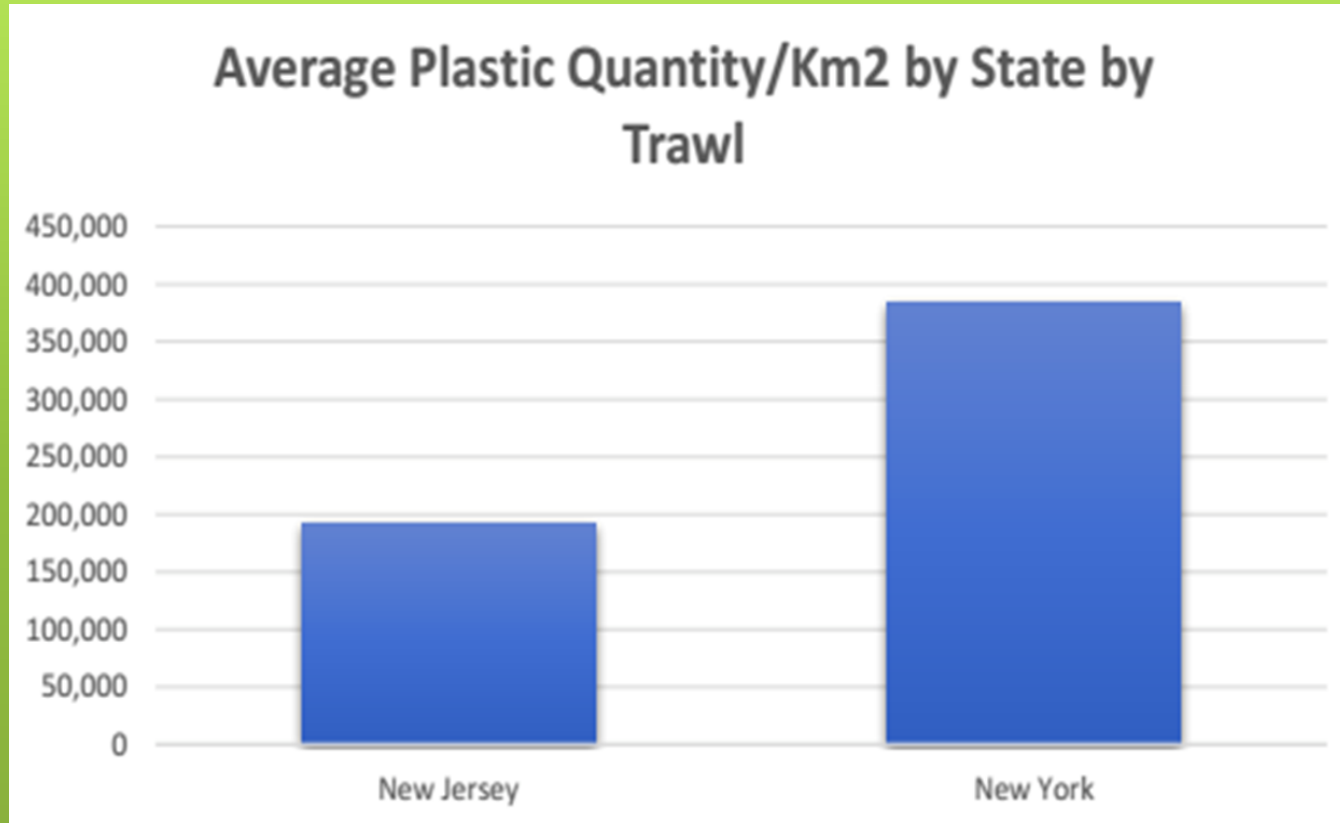
# Data Collection

- Baseline and on-going necessary
- Be specific on what's being measured
- For example: Are the number of plastic bags in natural/vegetative creeks changing? With 2 years of monitoring and a 95% confidence interval?
- Who's in charge of reporting and enforcement?





# In Our Garden State



NY/NJ Baykeeper

At least 165 MILLION plastic particles floating in NY-NJ Harbor waters at any given time.

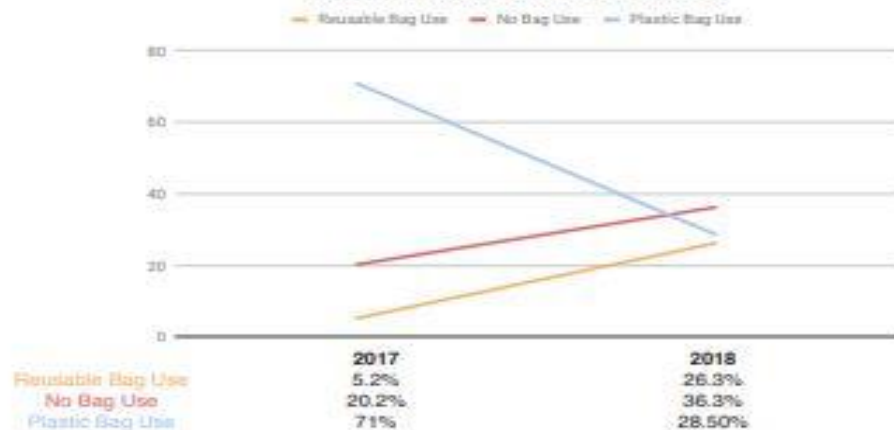
<http://eac.rutgers.edu/srri/>

# ONE YEAR IN: HOW EFFECTIVE IS SUFFOLK COUNTY'S SINGLE-USE BAG LAW?

## Top Five Take-Aways

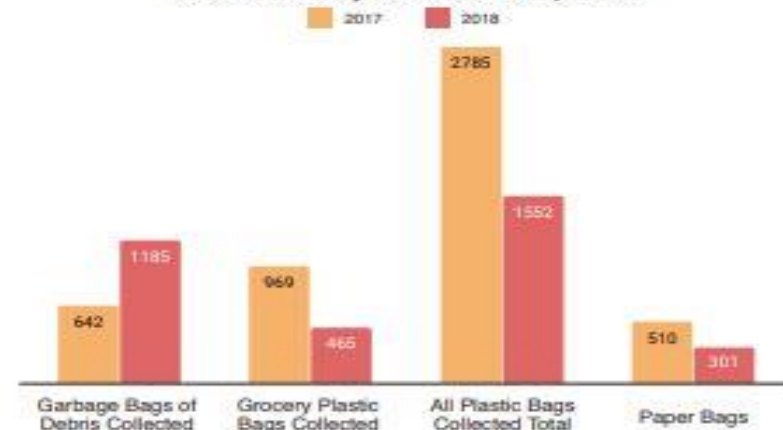
- Plastic and paper bag use at stores has been reduced over 80%.
- Suffolk County is using approximately 1.1 billion less plastic bags per year.
- The majority of consumers (62.6%) are bringing their own bag or opting for no bag.
- Consumers still using single-use bags are using less of them per visit (Less double bagging, more items per bag).
- We are finding 41% less plastic bag litter on our beaches.

Suffolk County Carryout Bag Survey



Carryout bag surveys done in Nov/Dec 2017 and Nov/Dec 2018 measured type of carryout bag per person, not number of bags per person.

Suffolk County Beach Cleanup Data



\*Based on Data from the Northeast Chapter of the American Littoral Society.

# ENFORCEMENT



# Education

Chambers of Commerce

Schools

Movies/Events/Tabling



# Plastics & Recycling

- ❑ Many plastics not accepted for curbside recycling especially plastic bags
- ❑ 1% of plastic bags returned for recycling
- ❑ Processing costs for a ton of plastic \$120; profit at around \$30/40 ton
- ❑ Plastic bags and contamination of recycled material – top 2 problems
- ❑ Costs taxpayers money
- ❑ Endangers employees at sorting center

# Pending Plastics State Legislation

- S2776/A4330 Bill banning all single-use plastic/paper bags, polystyrene foam food containers & plastic straws
- Petition – End Plastic Pollution Now





# Local Ordinances

So far in New Jersey, there are 88 plastic-free ordinances



**THANK YOU!!**

**[nchecko@anjec.org](mailto:nchecko@anjec.org)**

