

The Big Shell Beach Cleanup: A Look Back At Two Decades of Data

Aaron S. Baxter

Friends of Padre, Inc.

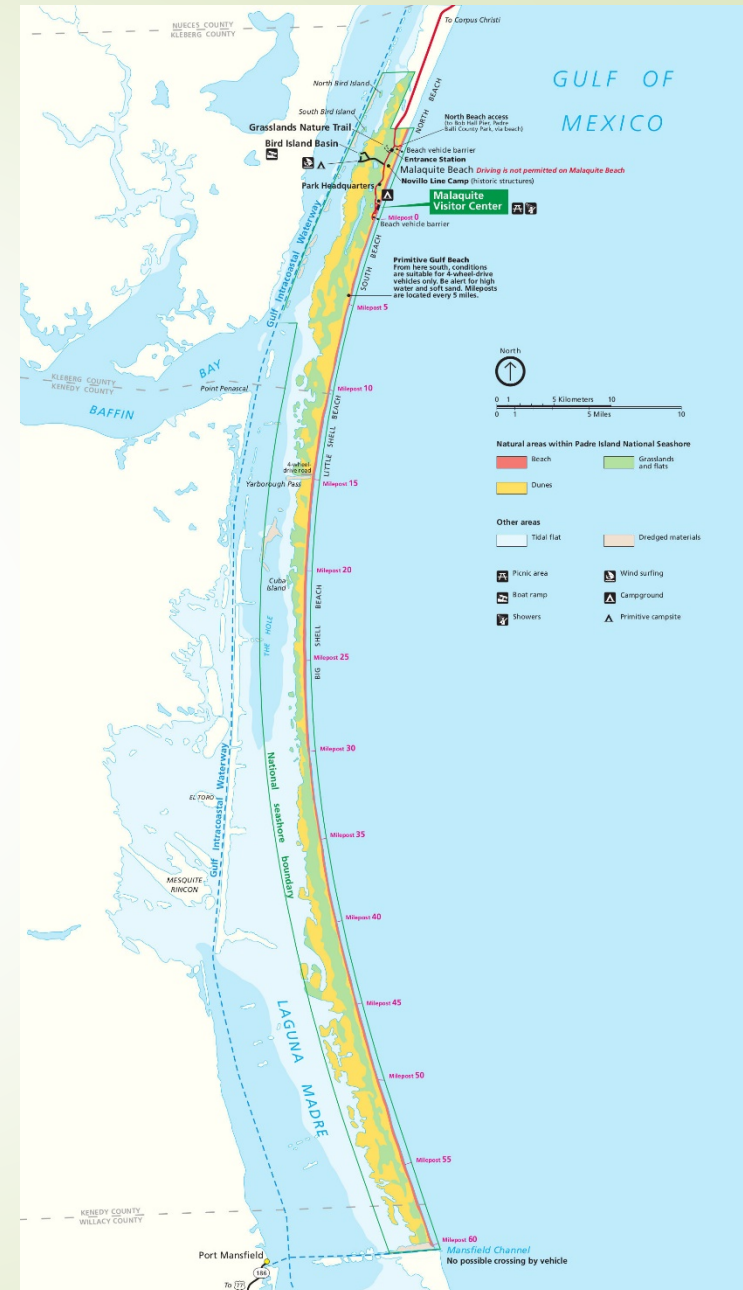
Texas Plastic Pollution Research Symposium

October 30, 2018



Big Shell

- Located on the Padre Island National Seashore
- Area of loose sand and large shell fragments located 20-30 miles down the beach
 - Narrow Beach
 - High Tides
 - Four Wheel Drive
- Convergence of currents results in large amounts of debris
 - Originates in several countries
 - Majority is rigid plastics



Big Shell Beach Cleanup

- Started in 1995 by Capt. Billy Sandifer
- Fishing guide on PINS
- Saw a problem and decided to do something about it
- Grassroots effort
- Has grown over the last 2 decades
 - Participation
 - Miles cleaned
 - Tonnage removed



Friends of Padre, Inc.

- Formed in 2008
- 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization
- Operates entirely on donations
- Primary function is to organize the Big Shell Beach Cleanup
- Other activities
 - Adopt-a-Highway
 - Support other local cleanups
 - Local festivals/events
 - Monetary donations
 - NPS Sea Turtle Program
 - ARK
 - Texas Sealfie Center



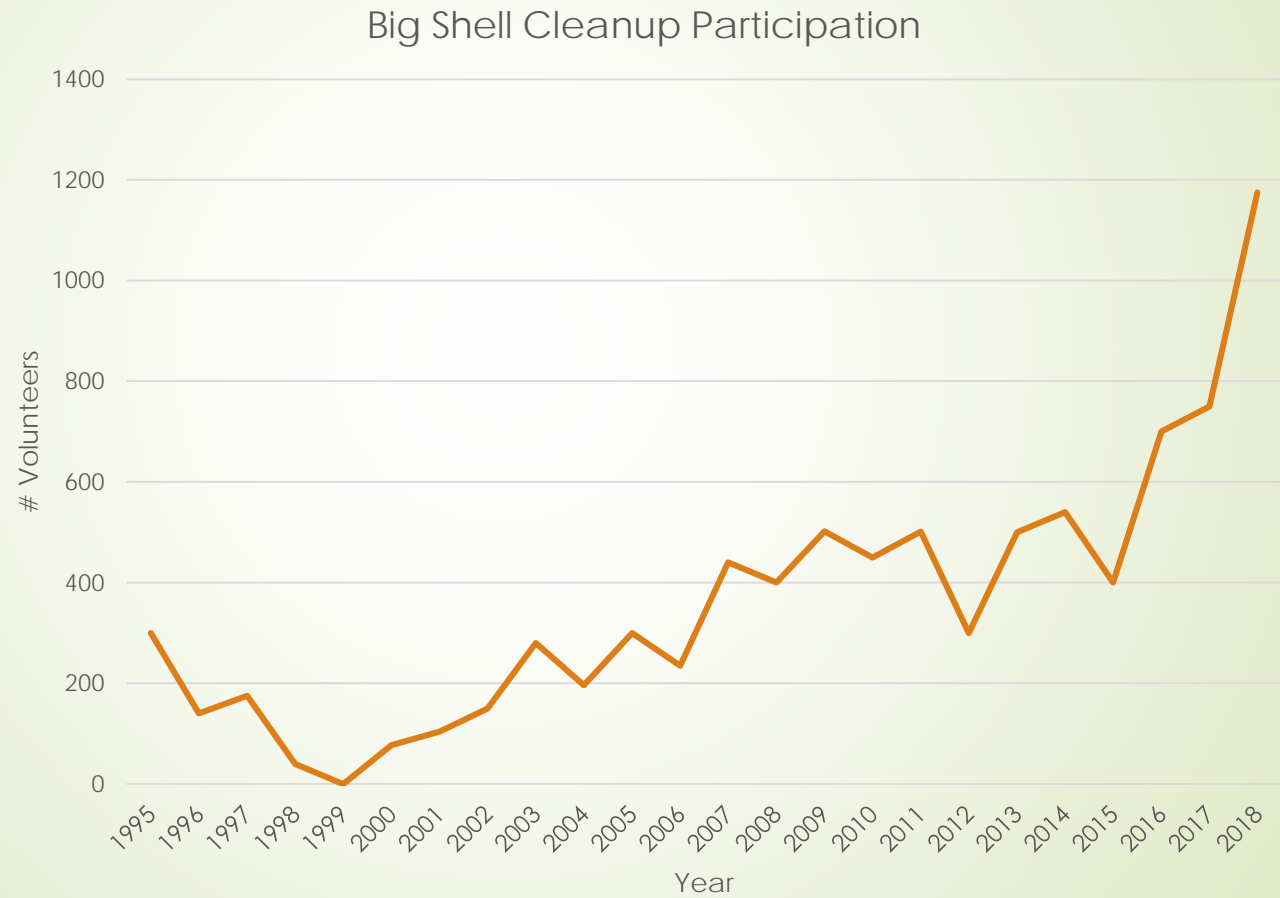


By the numbers

- The Big Shell Beach Cleanup has continued to grow
 - Volunteers
 - Mileage
 - Overall Tonnage



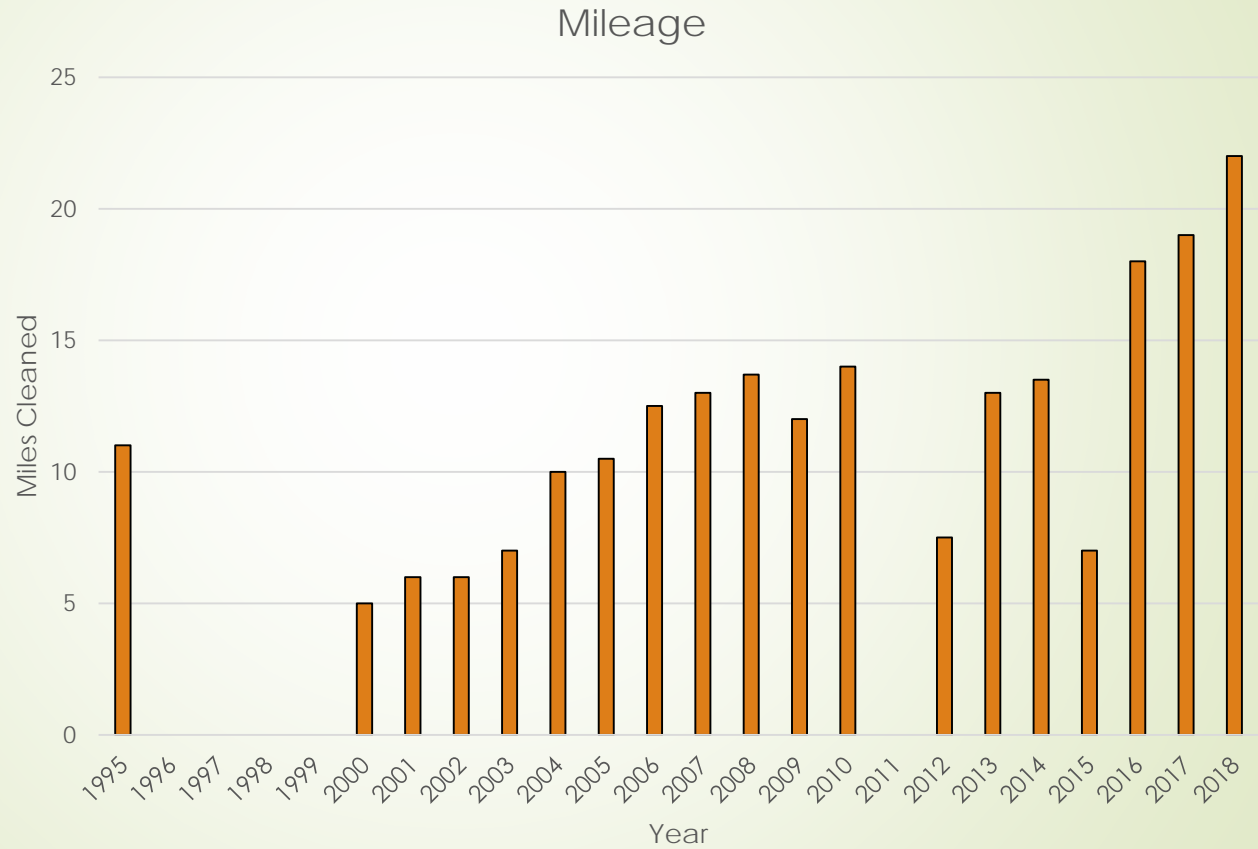
Volunteers



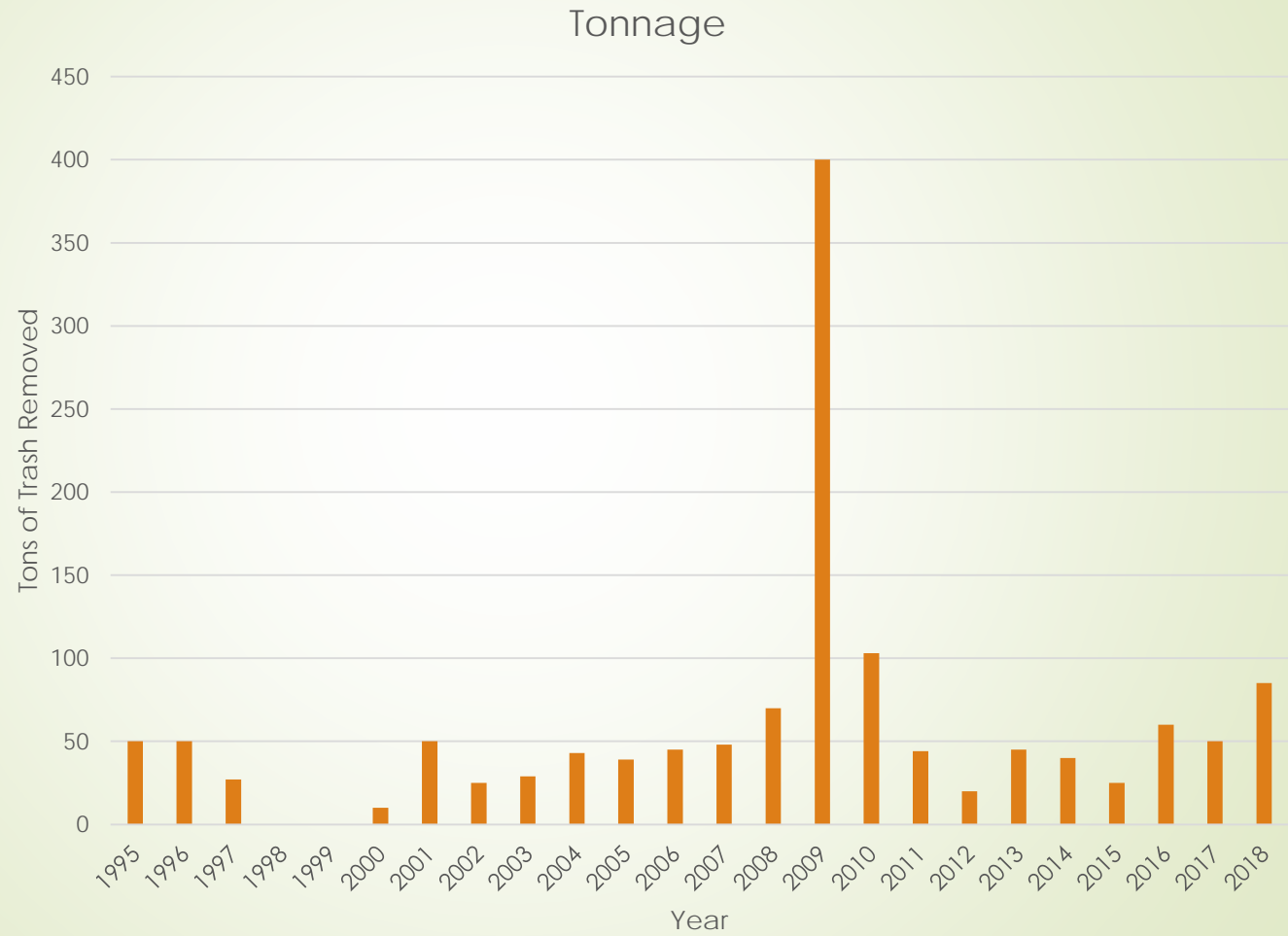
- Come from all over Texas and the United States
- Range in age from toddlers to seniors
- Numbers are highly weather dependent



Mileage



Tonnage



- Tonnage is variable from year to year
- Dependent on
 - Number of volunteers
 - Weather (Tropical Storms, Hurricanes, etc.)
- Over 2.7 million pounds of trash removed to date



Plastic Recycling

- Majority of debris is rigid plastics
- Opportunity to recycle
- Issues
 - Biofouling
 - Sand
 - "Dirty"
- Recycling companies wanted clean plastic



Plastic Recycling

- 2017
 - TerraCycle
 - Proctor and Gamble
 - 3 tons
- 2018
 - Killian-Calderon Disposal
 - Local
 - 17 tons
- 2019
 - Hoping to continue and expand recycling program



2019 Big Shell Beach Cleanup

- 24th Annual
- February 23, 2019
- Padre Island National Seashore
- www.friendsofpadre.com
- info@friendsofpadre.com
- Find us on Facebook and Instagram!

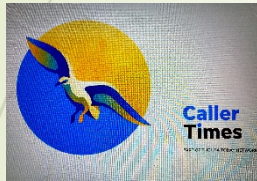
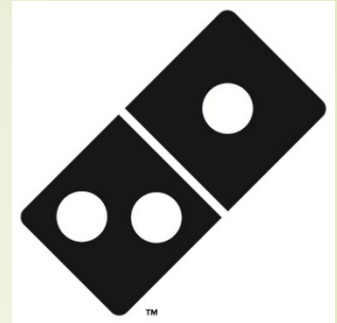


➤ **We hope to see you there!**

Ruth Parr Sparks Foundation

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Questions?



Capt. Billy Sandifer
1947-2018