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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PLASTIC-FREE PARKS TRASHBLITZ WILL REVEAL DATA ON PLASTIC POLLUTION  
IN U.S. NATIONAL PARKS**

*The Results Will Support and Advise Legislation to Protect Public Lands from Single-Use Plastic*

**SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA (June 24, 2022)** – The 5 Gyres Institute and partners are calling on the public to compile data on plastic pollution in U.S. National Parks using the organization’s research platform, TrashBlitz. The data will contribute to a report that unveils the top items, materials, and brands of waste found in all 63 national parks.

Plastic-Free Parks TrashBlitz follows a recent announcement by the U.S. Department of the Interior to phase out single-use plastic on federal lands, including national parks<sup>1</sup>. The order calls for a reduction in the procurement, sale, and distribution of single-use plastic products and packaging, with the goal of phasing out single-use plastic products by 2032.

“While we applaud Secretary Deb Haaland for her leadership and commitment to reducing plastic waste on public lands, a 10-year timeline is far too long,” said Alison Waliszewski, Policy and Outreach Manager at 5 Gyres. “We hope that the data from Plastic-Free Parks TrashBlitz can help to identify the top items and brands that are polluting national parks to determine where we need to shift our focus first.”

Earlier this year, nearly 70,000 citizens petitioned the Department of Interior to eliminate the sale and distribution of single-use plastics throughout the National Park Service, an initiative that is supported by over 80% of voting Americans<sup>2</sup>. According to Interior Department

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<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/secretary-haaland-issues-order-phase-out-single-use-plastics-protect-public-lands-0>

<sup>2</sup> <https://usa.oceana.org/american-voters-support-ending-sale-of-single-use-plastics-in-national-parks/>

reporting, almost 80,000 tons of municipal solid waste was generated on Interior lands in 2020, and plastics accounted for a significant portion of that total<sup>3</sup>.

In addition to guiding the Department of Interior in the best steps to take, the results from Plastic-Free Parks TrashBlitz can also be used to leverage additional support for the *Reducing Waste in National Parks Act*<sup>4</sup>.

Plastic-Free Parks TrashBlitz will run from July 1 - September 30. To register and for more information, visit [www.5gyres.org/national-parks-trashblitz](http://www.5gyres.org/national-parks-trashblitz).

Nonprofit and brand partners supporting Plastic-Free Parks TrashBlitz include 5 Gyres, Azulita Project, Ban SUP Refill, Break Free From Plastic, ChicoBag Company, Community Environmental Council, Costa Sunglasses, Dream Into Action, Gnarwhal Coffee Co., Inland Ocean Coalition, Klean Kanteen, MOM's Organic Market, Natracare, Oceana, Oceanic Global, Oceanic Preservation Society, Plaine Products, Plastic Pollution Coalition, Port Arthur Community Action Network (PACAN), prAna, Preserve, ProGrade Digital, Resilient Palisades, Sarama Inc, Shark Stewards, Story of Stuff Project, Sway, The Bay Foundation, The Last Plastic Straw, Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Zero Waste Washington.

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### [About TrashBlitz](#)

TrashBlitz is a data collection platform and community-focused research project created by The 5 Gyres Institute. The community-based project is designed to engage local stakeholders in measuring plastic pollution and other trash across various cities - from shorelines to riverbeds to urban neighborhoods - and utilizing data to generate relevant action plans. TrashBlitz provides robust research protocols, a web-based platform that identifies problem products and brands, and a network to bring diverse stakeholders together to co-create solutions to stop plastic pollution at the source.

### [About The 5 Gyres Institute](#)

The 5 Gyres Institute is a leader in the global movement against plastic pollution with more than 10 years of expertise in scientific research and engagement on plastic pollution issues. Since 2009, the team has completed 19 expeditions, bringing more than 300 citizen scientists, corporate executives, brands, and celebrities to the gyres, lakes, and rivers to conduct first-hand

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/elips/documents/so-3407.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://quigley.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/quigley-re-introduces-reducing-waste-national-parks-act>

research on plastic pollution. Through this research, 5 Gyres engages diverse stakeholders in understanding the science to drive impact as well as conduct community outreach and citizen science to implement data-driven solutions. With over 1,400 Ambassadors in 66 countries, 5 Gyres supports and is supported by community members with information, tools and connections to help drive local change to fight this global crisis.