

# Aquariums Unite to Reduce Single-Use Plastic Pollution

W. Mark Swingle

Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center  
Aquarium Conservation Partnership





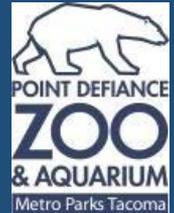
# Aquarium Conservation Partnership

## ACP Vision

Use the collective power of aquariums to increase ocean & freshwater conservation impact.



22 U.S. Aquariums

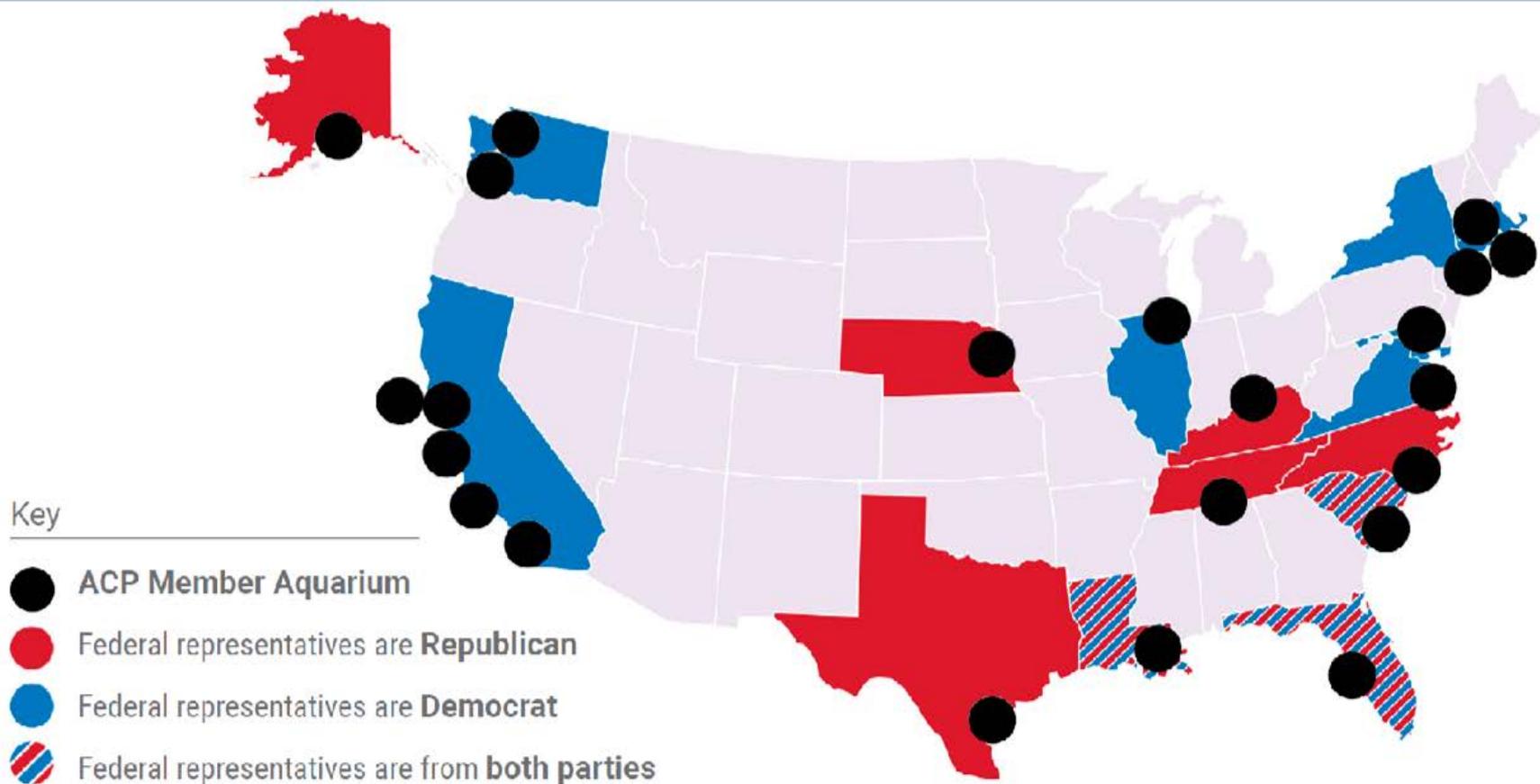


# ACP Conservation Goals

1. Reduce sources of plastic pollution
2. Increase ecosystem protection
3. Improve sustainability of fisheries



## ACP Aquariums Are Well-Positioned to Influence Federal Ocean and Freshwater Policy





# Plastic Pollution Initiative

ACP aquariums aim to empower their 21 million annual visitors, and millions more in their communities, to drive a national shift away from single-use plastic and toward innovative alternatives.

---

Aquarium  
Conservation  
Partnership

# 2014 Sei Whale Death By Plastic



# 2019 Osprey Chick



Reese Lukei – Center for Conservation Biology



All species of sea turtles have been impacted.



Over 99% of seabird species—and over 90% of individual seabirds—will ingest plastic by 2050.



Over 50% of all marine mammal species have been impacted.



**Problem:**  
Production of plastic is outpacing our ability to manage it in a sustainable way.





## **Solution:**

Consumers and producers transition away from single-use plastic and toward something better.

# What can aquariums do?



We reach millions.

We are businesses.

We have a policy voice.

# 3 Pillars of ACP Plastic Pollution Initiative

## 1. Consumer Strategy



Increase awareness of and demand for alternatives.

## 2. Business Strategy



Work with business partners to model change.

## 3. Policy Strategy



Promote science-based policies to accelerate change.

# Consumer Awareness Campaign

## Digital campaign & earned media strategy





# FIRST STEP

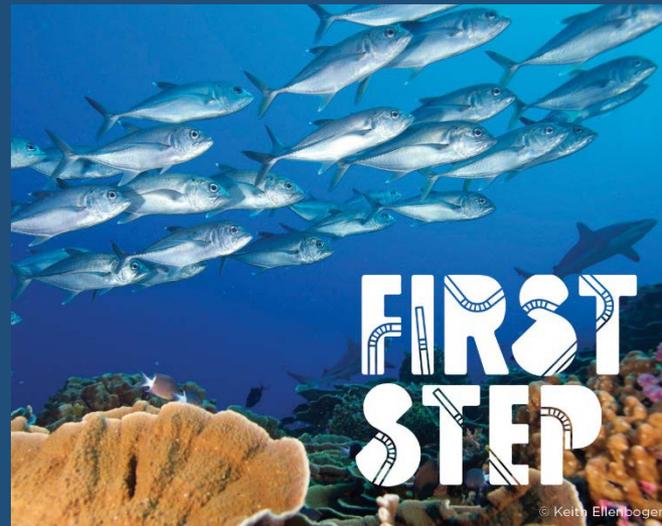


**If you don't need that  
plastic straw, skip it.**

**Your last straw is the first  
step.**



# Excellent Campaign Graphics & Tools



# Social Metrics



Over  
**100** tweets  
 reaching over  
**308,000** viewers



Nearly **130** posts,  
 with approximately  
**62,000** Likes  
 reaching close to  
**1.7** million people



# Earned Media

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

### AQUARIUMS BAND TOGETHER FOR "NO STRAW NOVEMBER"

November 1, 2018

November is the month of *not shaving facial hair*, and now thanks to a new conservation campaign, the month of *not using straws*.

Branded as "No Straw November," the campaign is a push to eliminate single-use plastic. The effort is led by the Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP), comprising 22 aquariums in 17 different states. They're pushing 500 businesses to commit to only serving plastic straws upon request. Already, the ACP has worked with large businesses like United Airlines, the Chicago White Sox, and Dignity Health hospitals.

They hope to commit the additional 500 by Earth Day, April 20, 2019.

The No Straw November campaign is also lobbying cities and regional governments to pass ordinances that encourage businesses to use fewer straws. Individuals are also being asked to sign an online pledge to limit their own personal single-use plastic. The efforts are part of

- 221 media placements
- Total readership: Over 286 million
- Highest readership – New York Times

### 22 Top Aquariums Up the Ante in National Push to Cut Plastic Pollution

With 5 million straws a year eliminated and almost 500 businesses on board as partners, #FirstStep campaign presses for new public policy commitments through Earth Day 2019.

NEWS PROVIDED BY  
Aquarium Conservation Partnership —  
Nov 01, 2018 09:00 ET

SHARE THIS ARTICLE

MONTEREY, Calif., Nov. 1, 2018 (PRNewswire) — Twenty-two top aquariums across the United States have already eliminated 5 million straws in their coordinated campaign to reduce sources of plastic pollution. Now they're upping their game by encouraging individuals, businesses and cities around the country to cut back on single-use plastic—starting with plastic straws—by Earth Day 2019.



## Metrics of Success:

1. Number of people reached

These will be measured by:

- ✓ Media Coverage
  - Individual stories
  - Readership of stories
  - Types of media coverage
  - Number of markets covered
- ✓ Social Amplification of Media
  - Number of social followers
  - Number of social shares
  - Social amplification rates
  - Social conversion rate
  - Viral reach

## The New York Times

### *Tennessee Aquarium Promotes No Straw November*

By The Associated Press

Nov. 2, 2018

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — The Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga wants Tennesseans to pledge to have a No Straw November.

The pledge is part of the First Steps campaign sponsored by aquariums across the United States to eliminate plastic waste in the country's oceans, rivers and lakes. A German chemistry

# Individual Pledges

STEP 01

**Pledge to skip the straws you  
don't need**



JOIN THE OTHER

**151,760**

WHO HAVE TAKEN THE PLEDGE



# 3 Pillars of ACP Plastic Pollution Initiative

## 1. Consumer Strategy



Increase awareness of and demand for alternatives.

## 2. Business Strategy



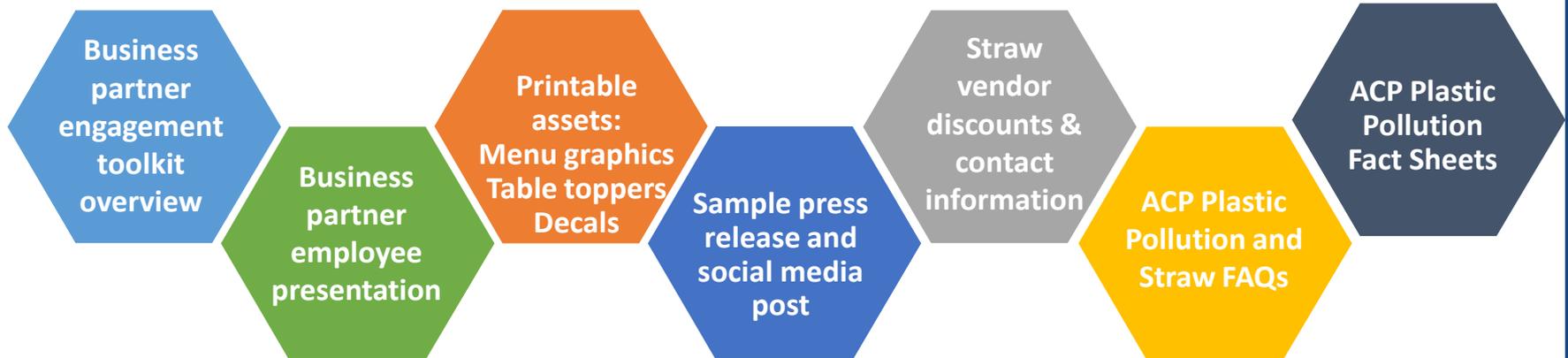
Work with business partners to model change.

## 3. Policy Strategy



Promote science-based policies to accelerate change.

# Assets for External Business Partners



Toolkit elements can be branded by each ACP member prior to distribution.



# Business Partner Signup Form



## "First Step" Business Partner Sign-Up Form

Thank you for taking this important first step to ending plastic pollution! Please fill out this form to commit to serve straws only on request, and our aquarium representative will be in touch with more information to support you.

**\* Required**

**Business Name \***

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address**

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



# Business Partner Employee Training Presentation



# Business Partner Printable Assets



# ACP External Business Partner Engagement – Highlights



## Shedd Aquarium Shedd the Straw

140 new partners in 2018 including White Sox, United Airlines and Loew's Chicago Hotel.



## WCS' New York Aquarium Give a Sip

Over 170 business partners have joined.



## The Florida Aquarium Skip the Straw

Challenged the City of Tampa, Tampa Airport, Tampa Bay Lightning, Amalie Arena, Bank OZK, *That's So Tampa*, and area restaurants.

## Aquarium of the Bay/Pier 39 Skip the Straw

...and more!

# External Business Engagement

## Metrics of Success:

1. Number of business that take action

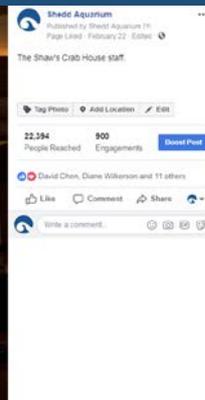
These will be measured by:

- ✓ Number of ACP aquariums that engage with external businesses
- ✓ Number of businesses that join campaign via sign-up form
- ✓ Number of businesses that complete surveys throughout campaign
- ✓ Number of businesses that have joined existing ACP aquarium straw campaign (including New York Aquarium, Shedd Aquarium, Aquarium of the Bay, etc.)



Over 100 businesses have joined via First Step from:

- South Carolina Aquarium
- Audubon Aquarium of the Americas
- Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium
- Newport Aquarium
- New England Aquarium
- Tennessee Aquarium
- Shedd Aquarium
- Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center



# 3 Pillars of ACP Plastic Pollution Initiative

## 1. Consumer Strategy



Increase awareness of and demand for alternatives.

## 2. Business Strategy



Work with business partners to model change.

## 3. Policy Strategy



Promote science-based policies to accelerate change.



# Plastic Pollution Initiative Outcomes

**ACP is engaged with consumers, businesses and government leaders to achieve the following in 2018-2019:**

- Increased consumer demand for alternatives to single-use plastic.
- Reduced use of single-use plastic in ACP aquarium operations.
- Reduced use of single-use plastic by external business partners.
- Increased number of government measures that promote alternatives to single-use plastic.

# Latest ACP Commitments

## By 2021:

1. Significantly reduce or eliminate single-use plastic packaging in retail products.
2. Dining area tableware (including plates, cups, lids, dishes and utensils) are single-use plastic free.
3. Reduce single-use plastic in back of house operations.

Image: Ranger Rick

