

Pooches for the Planet

Clean Waters. Clean Yards. And Clean Shoes.



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Tampa Bay Estuary Program

The Problem

Fecal coliforms and excess nutrients in dog waste are significant components of stormwater runoff in urban waterways

- ❖ *Recent studies have shown that as much as 95 percent of the fecal coliform found in urban stormwater comes from non-human origins.*
- ❖ *Just two to three days of droppings from a population of 100 dogs can contribute enough bacteria and nutrients to temporarily close a small bay (with a 20-square-mile watershed) to swimming. (EPA)*

A Solution?

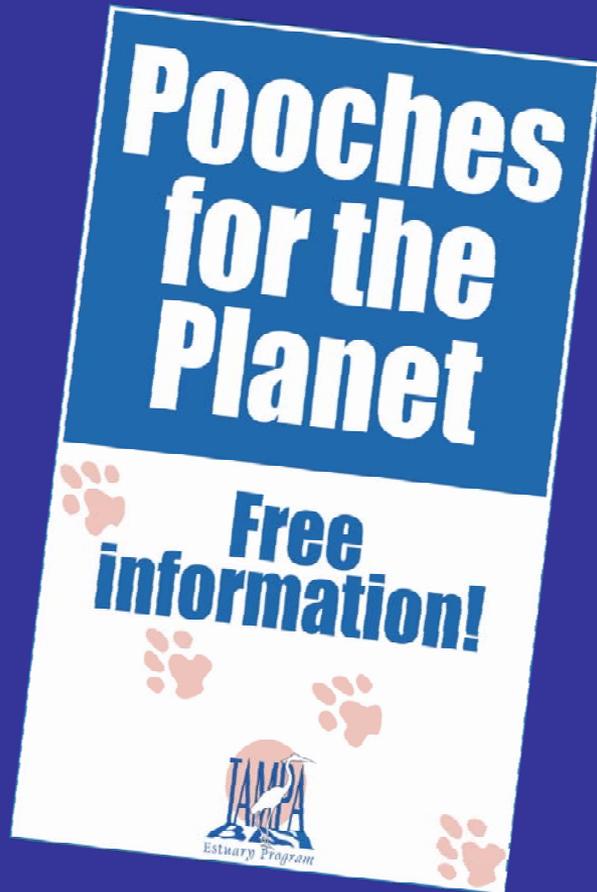
- *Concentrated outreach to dog owners in a park and greenway along the waterfront where they walk their dogs*
- *Emphasize link between dog poop and water quality to change behavior of dog owners regarding dog poop*



Project Summary

Location: Rivercrest Park and Greenway,
Tampa (along the Hillsborough River)

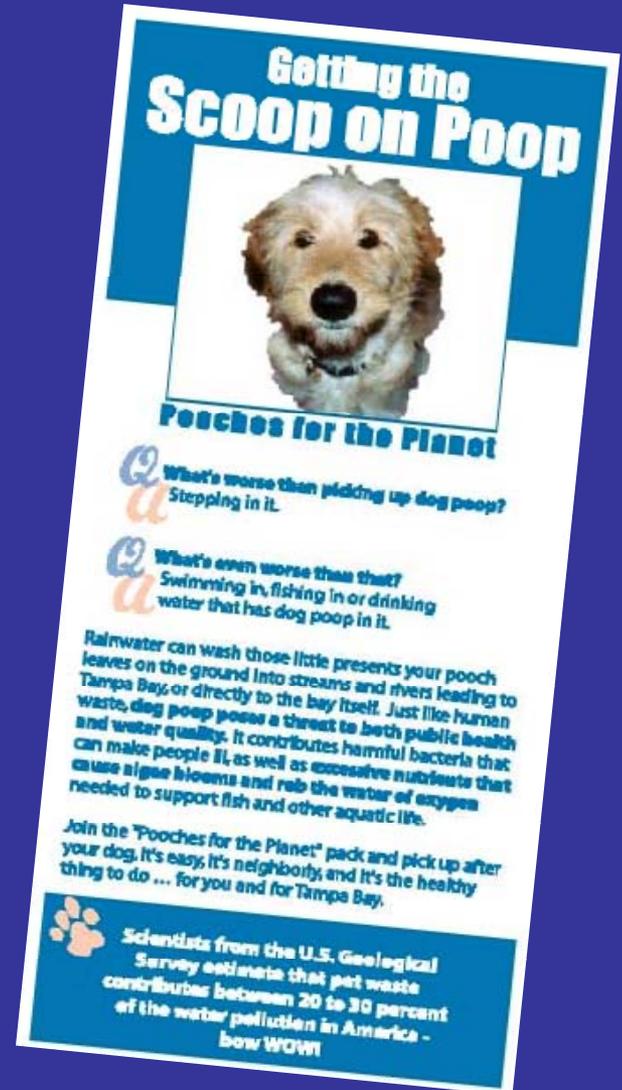
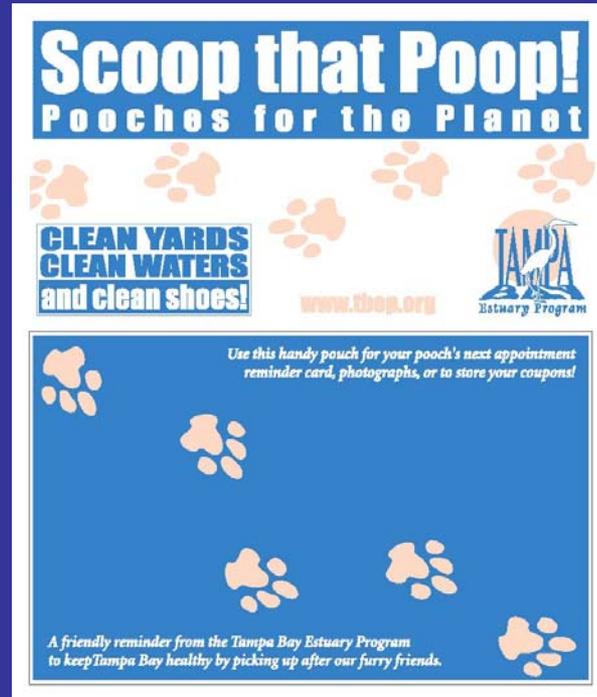
Considered Impaired for Fecal Coliform



- *Staff Information Station monthly to answer questions and distribute tools and educational info*
- *Recruit neighborhood residents to help*
- *Presentations to civic assn., articles in association newsletter*
- *Postings on Blog*
- *Monitor effectiveness of efforts*



Educational Materials



Locations of Dog Poop in Rivercrest Greenway and Park
June 4, 2006



Monitoring results

- Monthly GPS mapping August 2006-April 2007
- Visual observation of dog owners
- Dog Owner Surveys

An
average
of 25
people
stop by
the station
each
month



Spreading the Message

Homeowners in Hyde Park, Port Tampa and Ballast Point developing pet waste education programs



Letters to the Editor

Tampa Tribune 12/10/06

“It’s Not Easy Being Right”

- “Do you not have anything more important to write about than pet owners scooping up poop after their dogs?
One sewage line break, which might be reported at the bottom of page 99, or a heavy rain that overflow the wastewater treatment system equals more pollution than all the dogs’ poop in Tampa for the next 100 years.”
- “Maybe Nanette Holland could dispense biodegradable diapers to collect the reported 60 tons of pooch poop that piles up in Tampa every day and take it to a specially made power plant to use a renewable power source. We could name such a plant ‘The Nanette Holland P.U. Pooch Poop Power Plant’ in her honor.”

Preliminary Survey Results

- 90% of visitors to the station say they pick up after their dogs
- The number one reason they give for doing so is “neighborhood courtesy”
- Number one reason for not doing so is “I thought it was good for the grass”
- 70% knew that dog poop was a source of pollution to the river BEFORE stopping by the information station
- More women than men stop by the information station, but men are surprisingly receptive

Am I making a difference?

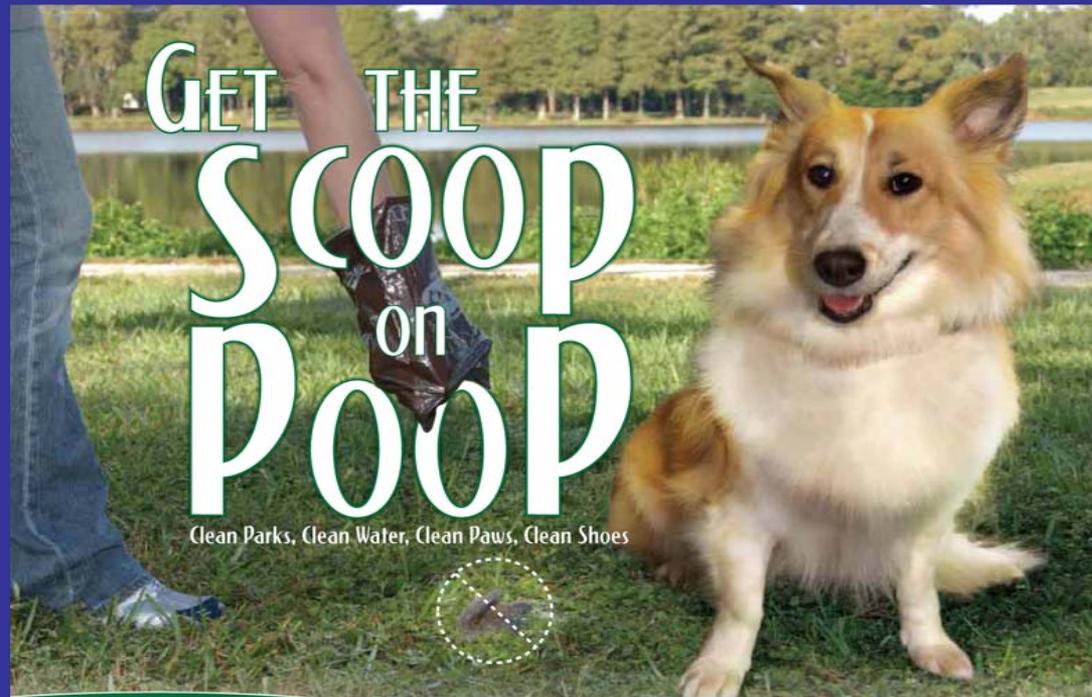
- Number of dog poop piles in Rivercrest Park decreased 35% from baseline survey to second survey in October (after 3 months of outreach). Piles decreased another 10% percent from November-February. Final survey in May showed another slight decrease, about 3%.
- Number of dog poop piles in the linear park (greenway) *increased* by 25 % over the initial survey period, then decreased by 20% following installation of pet waste bag stations.

Future Ideas

- *Distribute doorhangers*
- *Install signs at Park and Greenway*
- *Supply “Pooches” Kits to other neighborhoods and train volunteers*



Sign at Pinellas County Dog Parks



GET THE SCOOP on POOP

Clean Parks, Clean Water, Clean Paws, Clean Shoes

Did You Know:

- ▶ Dog poop can transmit disease to other dogs and to humans.
- ▶ One ounce of dog feces contains about 23 million microorganisms of bacteria.
- ▶ Leaving it on the ground can spread Salmonella, E. coli, roundworms, hookworms and more to children & adults who share the grass.
- ▶ Unscooped dog poop washes off into waterways and provides nutrients (pollutants) that may cause algae blooms and fish kills. Stormwater runoff may become your drinking water.
- ▶ Approximately 95% of the fecal coliform found in urban stormwater was nonhuman in origin. Pet waste contributes between 20 to 30% of water pollution in America.
- ▶ Four in ten U.S. households have at least one dog. Pinellas County has approximately 185,000 dogs.
- ▶ Each dog creates between 1/3 to 3/4 pound of excrement per day.
- ▶ Pinellas County dogs generate between 31 and 69 tons of poop per day.
- ▶ Roughly 40% of Americans do not pick up their dog feces. In Pinellas this means 12 - 28 tons of poop per day is left unscooped.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Please clean up after your pet and place waste in a trash receptacle.



This sign funded by a grant from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program.

“Pooches” On The Road



It Happens. Just Deal With It.

