

Addie Farmer and Lainey Randall

2017 People's Choice Award

For their work to keep plastics and other pollution out of Casco Bay

As residents of Portland, Addie Farmer and Lainey Randall live nearly surrounded by ocean water—which means they also see the litter that pollutes it. So when a national environmental awareness competition challenged middle and high school students to engage their communities in addressing the problem of ocean debris, Addie and Lainey stepped up in a big way. They introduced the people in their community to NOAA's Marine Debris Tracker mobile app, which helps users track the litter they find at beaches and provides data that helps experts determine marine debris problems at the local level. Addie and Lainey set an ambitious goal for Portland to collect and log 5,000 pieces of trash in about a month. They conducted outreach activities informing local residents about the tracker app and encouraged them to use it to help protect the oceans. Addie and Lainey engaged teachers, parents, and students through posters, newsletters, morning announcements, and events; they testified before the Portland City Council, and even presented at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. They concluded their campaign with a cleanup and tracking day at East End Beach in June, and were joined by 30 volunteers who picked up litter and used the debris tracking app to log in data. Together, they collected nearly 6,000 pieces of trash, bringing the month-long total to almost 8,000 items—3,000 more than their goal. Best of all, according to data from NOAA, residents have continued to pick up and track the litter in their community. For all of this great work, it is a pleasure to present to Addie Farmer and Lainey Randall the 2017 Natural Resources Council of Maine's People's Choice Award.



Natural Resources Council of Maine

3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine • 04330

(800) 287-2345 • www.nrcm.org