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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROCLAIM TRASH-FREE WATERS PARTNERSHIP DAY

Community groups join forces to prevent litter and debris from entering local waterways surrounding the Hillsborough River



(From left to right): Back row- Hillsborough County BOCC; Front row- Christina Arenas, Trash-Free Waters Project Coordinator; Bryant Johnson, President, KTBB Board of Trustees; Tom Damico, Environmental Program Coordinator; Debbie Evenson, Executive Director; Emily Schwartz, Development Coordinator; Nathan Carney, Vice President, KTBB Board of Trustees.

TAMPA, Fla. – (September 28, 2015) – The Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough County recently signed a proclamation honoring the Hillsborough River Trash-Free Waters Partnership.

The proclamation acknowledges the Partnership of the EPA’s Trash Free Waters Gulf of Mexico Regional Strategy with Nestle Waters North America and Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful. It encourages residents to join with this Partnership in preventing litter and debris from entering local waterways contained within the Hillsborough River watershed.

The Partnership focuses on community improvement initiatives coordinated by Keep America Beautiful affiliates whose jurisdictions lie within the river’s watershed. This includes Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, Keep Pasco County Beautiful and Keep Polk County Beautiful.

“Our mission is to provide environmental education and volunteer opportunities for the community,” said Debra Evenson, executive director, Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful. “With the support of our volunteers and sponsors, we will be able to expand our involvement in cleanup events, meeting at area parks and disseminating throughout communities along the Hillsborough River, to help to preserve the delicate ecosystem that is one of Tampa Bay’s most vital watersheds.”

It is estimated that 80% of litter and trash on land ends up in our waterways. The ever-increasing volume of trash, litter, and debris entering inland watersheds, coastal waters, and oceans creates a water quality and habitat challenge that warrants attention. Litter and trash that enters these environments can cause aesthetic blight, ecological effects, economic impacts, and possible human health risks.

The Partnership will work to educate the community about ways to prevent litter from entering waterways. In addition, the focus will drive volunteer efforts to counteract behaviors that damage water quality.

“Clean water is a vital resource for Tampa Bay area residents, as it provides thriving habitats for native plants and animals, and offers recreational opportunities for the community and visitors alike,” said Bryant Johnson, board president of Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful.

For information on how you can be a part of the Hillsborough River Trash-Free Waters Partnership, visit KeepTampaBayBeautiful.org or call 813.221.8733.

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About Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful

Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, Inc. (KTBB), a Keep America Beautiful Affiliate, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide environmental education and volunteer opportunities that develop individual responsibility and environmental stewardship. Since 1989, KTBB has formed partnerships with local governments, corporations, schools, and neighborhood organizations to engage individuals and provide opportunities to enhance the community through volunteer participation. To get involved with KTBB, call (813) 221-8733 or visit KeepTampaBayBeautiful.org