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New Disposable Foodware Source Reduction Project Helps LA Restaurants Reduce Waste and Cut Costs

LOS ANGELES (January 30, 2019) Through a one-year pilot funded by the Environmental Protection Agency's Trash Free Waters program, ReThink Disposable has partnered and trained The Bay Foundation (TBF) to help Los Angeles food businesses reduce disposable serviceware. This reduction of single-use disposable items – such as spoons, forks, cups, etc. – reduces landfill, street and waterway pollution and delivers considerable cost savings to the restaurants themselves. [The Bay Foundation](#) is proud to announce its first four ReThink Disposable Certified restaurants: The Conservatory for Coffee, Tea & Cocoa; Scoops Chinatown; Gus' Tacos Mexican Grill; and Palette Food and Juice.

[ReThink Disposable](#) is an award-winning technical assistance program of [Clean Water Action \(CWA\)](#) and [Clean Water Fund \(CWF\)](#), which prevents waste before it starts by working with local governments, businesses, institutions, and consumers to conserve resources, prevent waste, and reduce ocean litter pollution by minimizing single-use disposable packaging in food service. A CWA/CWF study in the San Francisco Bay area found food and beverage packaging to be the primary component (67%) of trash on commercial streets that enters and pollutes the Bay.

"ReThink Disposable provides a great method for us to engage our restaurateurs. They quickly recognize that they can save money, enhance the experience of their customers, and benefit the environment by eliminating their use of disposable serviceware," states Tom Ford TBF Executive Director. "We're very proud of the first four restaurants in Los Angeles to complete this process! Source control is the most direct way to eliminate trash in our communities, waterways and ocean. With this program, ReThink Disposable and our restaurants are helping The Bay Foundation deliver on our mission to clean up Los Angeles."

Businesses who participate in the ReThink Disposable certification process receive individualized assistance from trained specialists who offer recommendations for cost-saving practices to reduce single-use food packaging — such as cups, containers, straws and utensils. The annual impacts of recommendations are calculated including pieces of disposables eliminated, pounds of waste eliminated, and net cost savings. In total, [The Conservatory](#), [Scoops Chinatown](#), [Gus' Tacos Mexican Grill](#), and [Palette Food and Juice](#) will collectively reduce single-use disposables by 246,570 pieces and prevent 2,637 pounds of waste from entering the waste stream or ending up as litter on our streets and beaches every year. On average,



participants are projected to annually save \$2,000 from reducing or eliminating targeted disposable foodware.

Program video testimonials are available to watch from [Gus' Tacos Mexican Grill](#) and [Palette Food and Juice](#). In each video, the business owners share their ReThink Disposable experience as well as annual waste reduction and cost saving impacts achieved from reducing and eliminating disposable food packaging in their operations.

"Participating restaurants are benefiting consumers, communities, businesses, and the environment by dramatically reducing waste, protecting public health, saving money, and keeping litter out of streets and waterways. These four business champions have demonstrated the value of source reduction and will serve as excellent case studies for other businesses considering transitioning to reusables. The added benefit of this partnership in Los Angeles with TBF is that we have the opportunity to show this program's impact in a large city with national visibility," said Samantha Sommer, CWF Waste Prevention Program Manager.

To learn more about ReThink Disposable, visit rethinkdisposable.org.

For more information, please contact Georgia Tunioli at gtunioli@santamonica.org.

About The Bay Foundation (TBF)

The Bay Foundation (TBF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit environmental group founded in 1990 to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay and local coastal waters (from the LA-Ventura county line to the Palos Verdes Peninsula). The Bay Foundation is a partner in the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program along with the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and many other organizations. TBF works collaboratively with a broad group of stakeholders, including government agencies, industry, environmental groups, and community members. TBF engages scientists and conducts research while mentoring student interns and volunteers in conjunction with the Frank R. Seaver College of Science and Engineering through the Coastal Research Institute at Loyola Marymount University. (TBF: www.santamonica.org, CRI: lmu.edu/cri)

About Clean Water Fund (CWF)

Since 1974, Clean Water Fund has helped people campaign successfully for cleaner and safer water, cleaner air, and protection from toxic pollution in our homes, neighborhoods and workplaces. Organizations and coalitions formed and assisted by Clean Water Fund have worked together to improve environmental conditions, prevent or clean up health-threatening pollution in hundreds of communities and to strengthen policies locally and nationally. Clean Water Fund's programs build on and complement those of Clean Water Action, a one million member national organization which has helped develop, pass, strengthen and defend the nation's major water and toxics laws such as the Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Superfund and others, including their state-level counterparts. Clean Water Fund is a nonprofit organization under section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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