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Volunteers with the Marimed Foundation attempt to pull rope stuck in between the rocks at Makapuu Beach Park during a cleanup organized by B.E.A.C.H. (Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawaii).

Photo by ANDREW SHIMABUKU | The Honolulu Advertiser

Makapuu cleaned of nets, trash

By Suzanne Roig

Advertiser East Honolulu Writer

MAKAPUU – Small knots of volunteers combed the rocky shoreline and sandy hills of the popular bodyboarding beach Sunday in search marine and man-made debris at the second beach cleanup at Makapuu this year.

They removed more than 3,000 pounds of trash Sunday, 2,000 of which were piles of rope and fishing net rubbish, said Suzanne Frazer, Beach Environmental Awareness Campaign Hawai'i organizer. They also found three tires, a discarded surf board and 60 bags of trash, mostly beer bottles and plastic bottle caps, Frazer said.

The cleanup organized by BEACH included students from the Putney Student Travel group, the Marimed Foundation and Kiewit Building Group. BEACH organizes cleanups around the island. The last time the group was at Makapuu was in February, Frazer said. A third cleanup of Makapuu is scheduled to coincide with the statewide cleanup called Get the Drift & Bag It from 3-5 p.m. Sept. 15.

Susan Williams, a member of the Putney Student Travel group here to do community service, said she found all kinds of trash including discarded socks and a lot of plastic bottle caps and shards of plastic and glass.

“It’s pretty gross,” Williams said. “The beaches are a lot cleaner in Hawai’i than on the east coast where I live. But this is my second time emptying my bucket out.”

Gwen Vargo, a Hawai’i Kai resident, tries to participate in beach cleanups whenever she can. A beachgoer, she feels she has a responsibility to the community to help preserve the marine life from the debris and to keep her environment clean.

“There are tons of glass and cigarette butts,” Vargo said. “I like the beach and love the marine life. I came to help take care of the land. I do what I can.”

Frazer works with volunteers who catalog the debris information for the National Oceanic Institute and Atmospheric Administration who keep statistics on marine debris to determine where it comes from.

“Most of the rubbish comes from the ocean,” Frazer said. “The rest comes from the people on the beach.”

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BEACH, a non-profit organization, schedules beach cleanups around the island. For more information go to www.b-e-a-c-h.org or call 393-2168.

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