

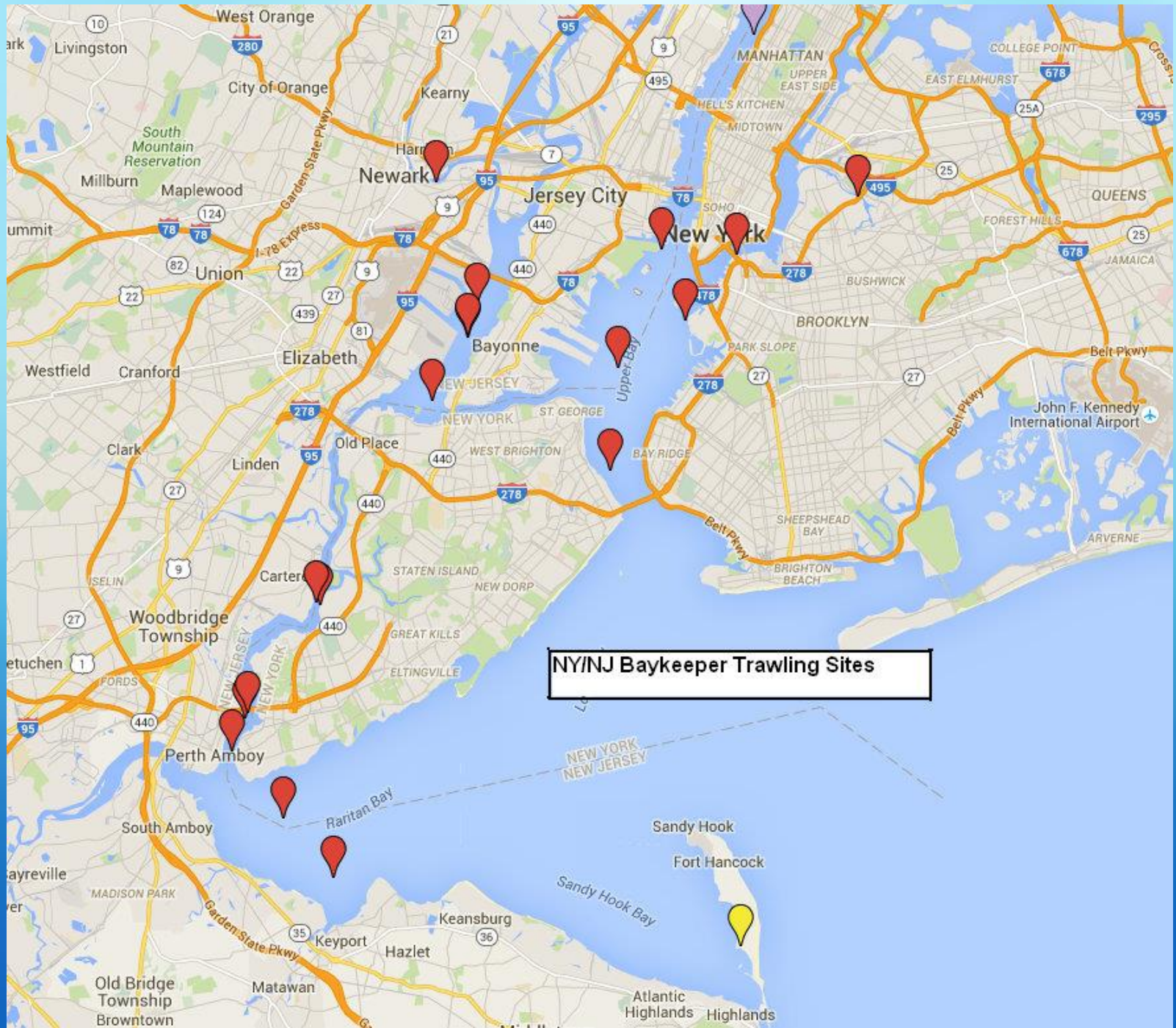
The Biodegradable Plastic Loophole



Sandra Meola
NY/NJ Baykeeper

Plastic Pollution Reduction Campaign

Research
Education
Policy



NY/NJ Baykeeper Trawling Sites











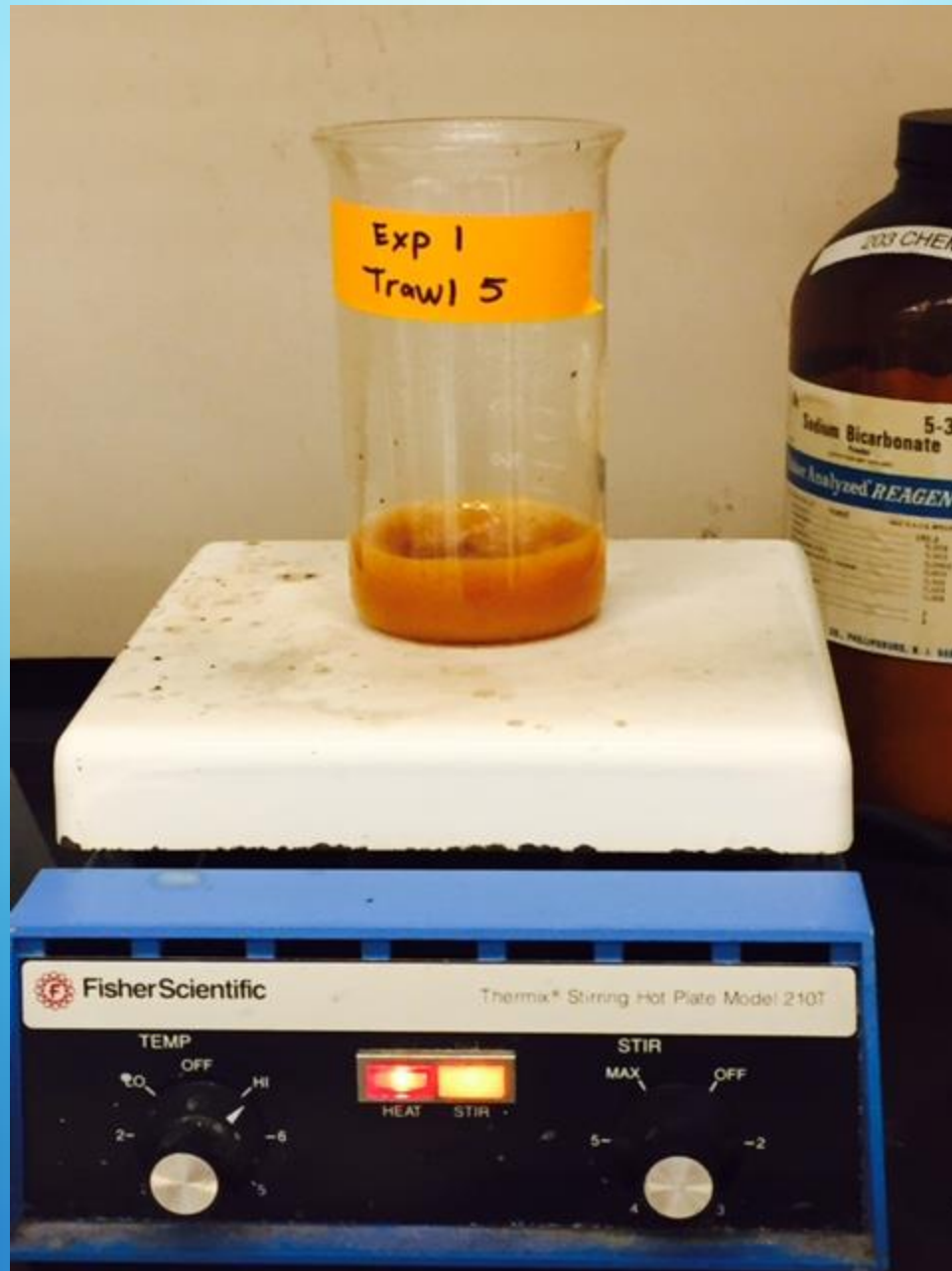
Trawl
Exp. 05
8/6/15



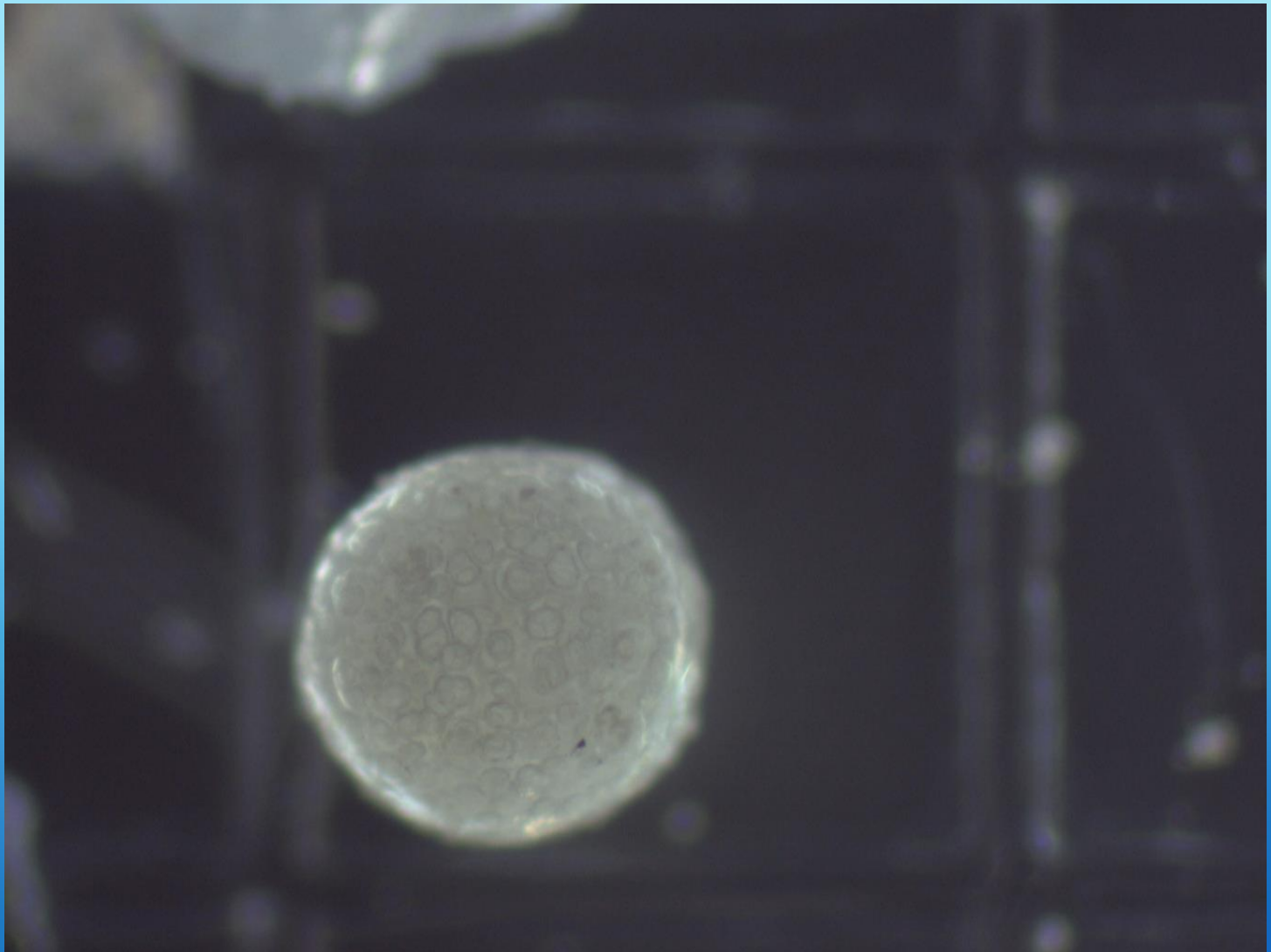
MASON

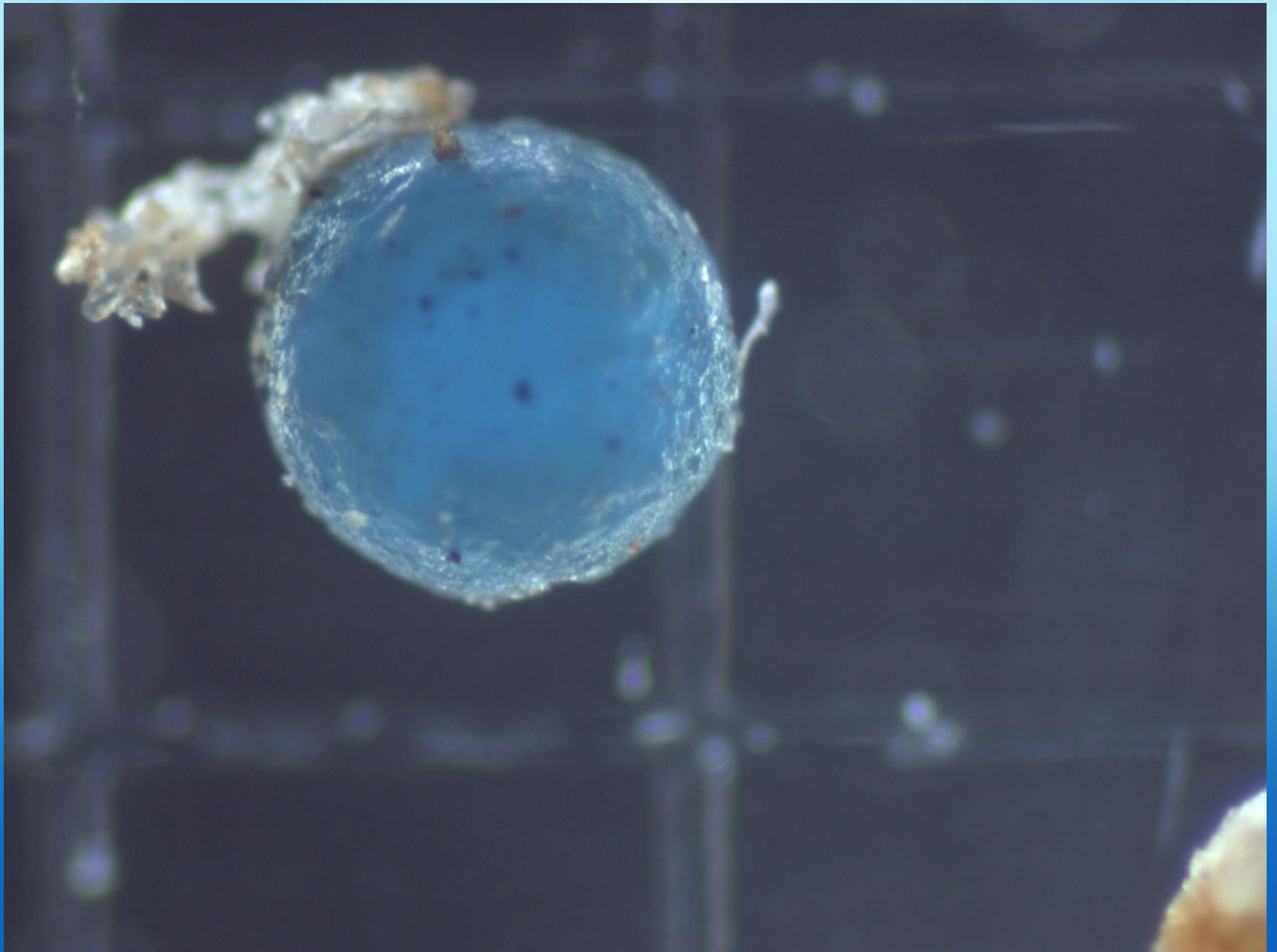
Ball

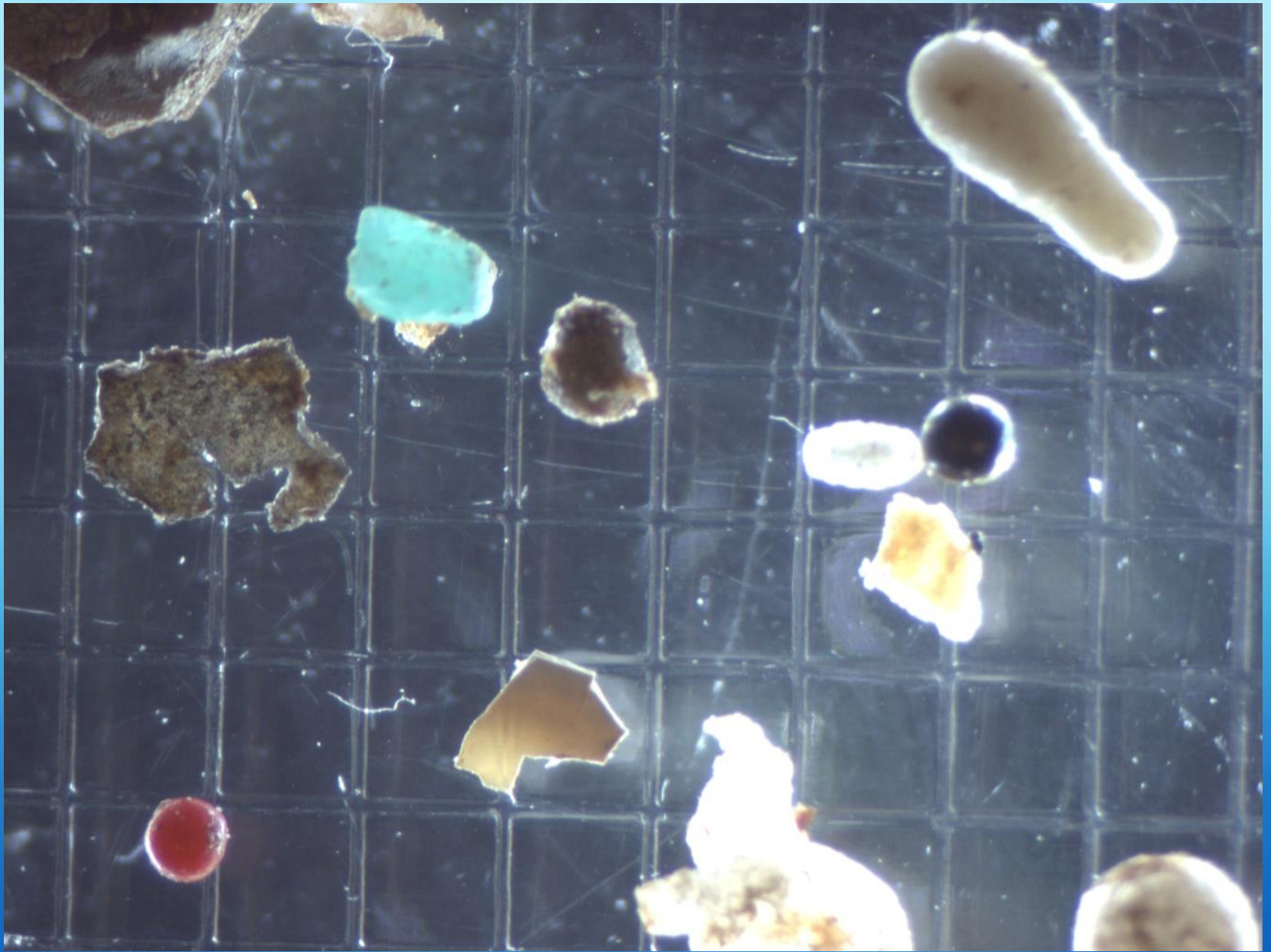












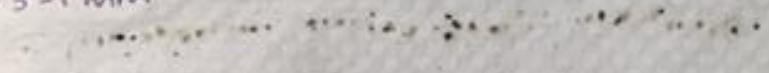
24 mm



1-9 mm



0.5-1 mm



The Truth about “Biodegradable” Plastics

- Biodegradable plastics aka bioplastics are commonly made from polylactic acid (PLA) plant based polymer
- They ONLY biodegrade at an industrial composting facility with exposure to micro-organisms and temperatures warmer than about 140 degrees F
- Our waterways are too cold to allow these plastics to biodegrade



NJ Bill S2178

“Synthetic plastic microbeads: any intentionally added **non-biodegradable**, solid plastic particle measuring less than five millimeters in size and used to exfoliate or cleanse in a rinse-off product.”

NJ Bill S2178

Conditionally Veto the Language to:

“Synthetic plastic microbeads: any intentionally added **solid plastic particle** measuring less than five millimeters in size and used to exfoliate or cleanse in a rinse-off product.”

Other States Passed or Introduced with Loophole Language

Passed:

- New Jersey
- Illinois
- Colorado
- Wisconsin
- Indiana
- Maine
- Maryland

Introduced:

Vermont

States with Strong Bead Bans

Passed:

- Connecticut
- California

Introduced:

- Michigan
- Ohio
- New York
- Minnesota
- Massachusetts

Federal Legislation

H.R. 1321 - Microbead Free Waters Act

Rep. Pallone, Frank, Jr. Introduced

03/04/2015

Effective date January 1, 2018

Next Steps

Policy:

- Advocate for an amendment to the NJ bill
- Urge the passage of a strong NY bill

Education:

- Visiting schools and hosting corporate cleanups
- Educating city council members and state officials

Research:

- Complete analysis of 18 trawling samples
- Analyze toxicology of plastics and how they impact marine life once entering the body

What You Can Do to Help

- Call your Congressman or Congresswoman and urge them to support the federal Microbead Free Waters Act
- Spread the word on plastic photodegradation
- Stop using personal care products with polyethylene and polypropylene in the ingredients
- Move away from plastics and use natural alternatives
- Reduce, reuse, recycle!

Questions?

Sandra Meola

Communications and Outreach Associate

NY/NJ Baykeeper

732-888-9870 ext 7

sandra@nynjbaykeeper.org

nynjbaykeeper.org