

Tuesday, August 20, 2019

EstacadaNews

Beautifying the river - one bag at a time

Emily Lindstrand Tuesday, August 20, 2019

Annual cleanup event at parks along the Clackamas River will draw hundreds of volunteers



COURTESY PHOTO - Working from boats is one way that participants in the annual Down the River Cleanup remove trash from the Clackamas River.

During an upcoming event on the Clackamas River, volunteers will hunt for trash using boats, flotation devices and scuba diving equipment.

The 17th annual Down the River Cleanup, organized by the Clackamas River Basin Council and We Love Clean Rivers, is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 8. Participants will work from Milo McIver State Park, Barton Park, Carver Park, Riverside Park and Clackamette Park.

The cleanup spans 20 miles along the river and draws hundreds of participants each year. Volunteers pick up trash on the river and on land, sort through their findings, act as safety captains and help with the barbeque at the end of the day.

In 2018, 330 volunteers collected 4,300 pounds of trash.

"We get people to come back each year, and there's a crowd that's really dedicated to this event. It's a time to come together as boaters, scuba divers, hikers or just someone who has a passion for the environment," said Alix Danielson of We Love Clean Rivers. "People come from all walks of life and from all over the region."



PMG FILE PHOTO - Volunteers from last years Down the River Cleanup sort trash found along the Clackamas River.

Danielson noted that this year's cleanup features several additional steps toward increased sustainability, such as using burlap bags and reusable gloves to pick up litter.

"At the end, we have a really tangible result. It's really rewarding," Danielson added. "People rally behind the excitement and thrill of doing this environmental thing. It's a joyful day."

Pre-registration is required for those who wish to participate in this year's cleanup and can be done at www.welovecleanrivers.org. Once the cleanup is finished, all volunteers will be invited to a barbeque at Barton Park.

Danielson noted that there are many rewarding elements of the day.

"(The Clackamas River) is an incredible resource for people in the area. Protecting the river is why we come back every year," she said. "There's also introducing people to the river, and getting people out on the river. We get new people every year."

She appreciates both new volunteers and ones who return each year.

"The community aspect of the cleanup can't be overstated," she said.



COURTESY PHOTO - Participants in the Down the River Cleanup often search for trash while scuba diving.