



CLEANUP CHRONICLE

28th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup
Fall 2024

Connecticut River Conservancy

The 28th annual Source to Sea Cleanup has come to a close, and your efforts have had a tremendous impact this year. We are incredibly thankful to all the group leaders, families, businesses, nonprofits, schools, and volunteers who rolled up their sleeves to help keep our rivers clean and our riverbanks green! Trash tally results throughout the watershed in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut show that 117 groups collected a total of over 39 tons of trash in 2024.

Our rivers are home to an abundance of fish and wildlife, but trash can cause direct and indirect harm in these habitats. Improperly discarded materials can physically harm aquatic life if these items are consumed or if they become a trap from which fish cannot escape. They can break down into chemical pollutants or microplastics, reducing water quality. Some items float to the top, while others sink to the bottom and become embedded in the substrate, continuing to alter habitat structure and release byproducts into the water for a very long time. Either way, entire food webs can suffer the consequences of littered rivers.

Your trash removal efforts are bolstered by Connecticut River Conservancy's other work to fulfill a broader mission of clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities throughout the watershed.

CRC's research includes eDNA analysis that helps identify the presence of species such as the endangered shortnose sturgeon; our lab in Greenfield regularly conducts water quality testing; and dam removal projects over the past 10 years have restored 427 river miles for fish passage and climate resilience. All of these efforts are in service of life-filled rivers, just like the Source to Sea Cleanup. Every volunteer hour dedicated to healthier habitats makes a big difference for our finned, furred, and winged neighbors.

The Source to Sea Cleanup is an opportunity for us to come together as a watershed community crossing state and town boundaries, called by the many ways we feel connected to the river – as lovers of nature and recreation, or as stewards of local habitats. The Cleanup shows that passion for our waterways is alive and well.

THANK YOU for all that you do to support a healthy Connecticut River watershed!

CLEANUP COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS



FEATURED STORIES

Here are just a handful of examples representing the Source to Sea Cleanup's many amazing leaders and groups!



1 Hypertherm and B.R.A.T.

A huge effort by a crew of Hypertherm North America employees netted a full 15-cubic-yard dumpster worth of trash from the Black River in Springfield, VT! Team leaders Rick Paulsen and Ryan Gay coordinated with Black River Action Team (B.R.A.T) Director Kelly Stettner to tackle a three-mile stretch of the river between North Springfield and the Shopping Plaza. The Town of Springfield supported the effort by coordinating the dumpster, and by the end of the cleanup, it contained an estimated 295 pounds of rusted scrap metal, 108 tires, and more!

2 Essex 3-Villages



The Essex 3-Villages cleanup group in Essex, CT, had dozens of volunteers at the Connecticut River Museum before spreading out to a handful of trash sites where they collected and hauled all sorts of debris, both small and large. Special thanks to Sustainable Essex and the Essex Land Trust for their local leadership.

3 The Walker Group

New Source to Sea Cleanup lead sponsors, The Walker Group, held a cleanup in Ferry Park Boat Launch in Rocky Hill, CT, with CRC Board of Trustees member Tim Lewis and CRC River Steward in CT, Rhea Drozdenko. Walker Group employees used CRC's foldable kayaks to remove litter along the shores.



4 Noho Meadows



Led by group leader, Victoria Quill, in Northampton, MA, and joined by CRC Board Chair Bob Sproull, these volunteers collected about 400lbs. of trash, including lots of plastic bottles and scrap metal. Extra thanks to Pedal People who hauled away the trash!

5 Local Leaders of Massachusetts

Several legislators once again joined cleanups in Massachusetts, including Senator Jo Comerford, Lindsay Sabadosa (State Representative, 1st Hampshire District), Natalie M. Blais (State Representative, 1st Franklin District), and Mindy Domb (State Representative, 3rd Hampshire District). We greatly appreciate the involvement of local leaders!



6 Fort River Watershed

Kids of all ages were among the 120+ volunteers who rallied to Groff Park in Amherst, MA, before fanning out to locations across the Fort River watershed. Special thanks to Brian Yellen at the Fort River Watershed Association who again took the lead in organizing the popular event!



7 Farmington River Watershed Association



For the past 37 years, residents of the Farmington River Valley have met to clean up banks, stream corridors, and floodplains of the Farmington River and its tributaries. The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA) organizes this charge annually as part of their mission to protect and preserve the river, and help curb stormwater pollution from entering Long Island Sound. They have been affiliated with the Source to Sea Cleanup since 2005. Their partnership with CRC allows them to expand their reach and connect with people who live outside the watershed, many of whom actually receive their drinking water from the Farmington River.



Heather Geist, Aquatic Habitat Manager at FRWA, has been coordinating the annual cleanup since 2022. She also coordinates biological surveys and infrastructure assessments throughout the Farmington River watershed, manages invasive aquatic species, hosts educational programs and workshops, and promotes FRWA's work and mission through a quarterly newsletter.

8 River Roads Festival Cleanup 🎵

Over 1,000 festival goers came out for a beautiful day of music and merriment at the River Roads Festival in Easthampton, MA, curated by musician Dar Williams, to highlight the importance of our rivers. CRC was there all day conversing with the audience, playing corn hole, and demonstrating with the Enviroscape how pollution gets into our waterways and what we can do about it.



Led by Owen Zaret, City Council member, the following day we came back together for a cleanup! 39 volunteers - including Dar and the performers, High Tea - collected over 240 pounds of trash that included 610 nip bottles, 600+ beverage containers, clothing, cigarette butts, and all manner of plastic and styrofoam debris.



Special thanks to Dar Williams and the team at Laudable Productions for naming CRC as a beneficiary of the festival. We're so grateful for this support as well as the opportunity to continue our partnership with Owen and the community.



9 Green River | Franklin County Rivers

In Greenfield, MA, a mega-group consisting of over 170 volunteers in 25 crews celebrated their 21st year of being part of the Source to Sea Cleanup. Once again there was incredible leadership from David Boles, Michael Pattavina, and Charlie Olchowski who organized the cleanup and made sure that all trash items - thousands of pounds of trash - were tallied in detail.

10 Ashuelot River

In New Hampshire, 56 enthusiastic volunteers came together to clean up the Ashuelot River in Keene and Swanzey, as well as Beaver Brook. They successfully removed approximately 2,450 lbs of trash!



TRASH TALLY

117

GROUPS
(OF 5-200)

39.04

TONS OF TRASH
OR 78,078 LBS.

150

MILES CLEANED



16,824 BEVERAGE
CONTAINERS



5,603 LBS. OF
SCRAP METAL*



475 TIRES



3,290 NIPS*

FREQUENTLY FOUND ITEMS:

Plastic bottles: 4,524
Aluminum cans: 5,673
Glass bottles: 3,337
Electronics: 127

Automotive*: 1,003
Clothing/footwear: 911
Personal hygiene: 211
Construction materials: 266

Styrofoam pieces: 120 kitchen-sized bags
Mattresses: 20
Toys: 199
PPE: 253
Cigarette butts: 3,853



UNUSUAL ITEMS:

Spiderman helmet, laundry dryer wool ball, portable toilet seat, antique wall phone, coconut, 10 lb. kettle ball, wheelbarrow basin, claw hair clip, car seat, 100 lbs. of carpet, fireworks, and kiddie pool!

1,146 TOTAL TONS
SINCE 1999



*Data reported from CRC Trash Tally only. All other data is reported from CRC Trash Tally + Clean Swell app.

All data based on submitted information from volunteers which does not include all volunteers or all trash collected. True totals are likely higher.

PARTICIPATING GROUPS

Academy at Charlemont • Arcadis-CT One Water • Ashuelot River & Beaver Brook River Cleanup • B Hart • Beachgrounds Park Cleanup • Benesch 2024 + Great Meadows Conservation Trust • Black River Action Team • Bobo's Beach Busters • BSC Group • Canalside Rail Trail • CDM Smith • Choate Environmental Action Coalition • Claggett, Sykes & Garza, LLC • Clean, Clear & Free Flowing • Coghinchaug River Vets Park Crew • Colonial Daughters of the 17th Century • Connecticut River Academy • Connecticut River Expeditions • Connecticut River Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited #450 • Deer Paths Nature School • Deerfield Doors Volleyball • Deerfield Eagles • Dover Elementary School • Easthampton Oxbow Cleanup • Essex Land Trust • Essex 3-Villages Cleanup • Eversource Climate & Sustainability • Farmington River Watershed Association • First Hampshire Green Team • Fort River Watershed Association • Four Rivers Charter Public School 7th Grade • Franklin County Technical School • Friends of Lake Wallace • Frontier Regional Environmental Club • Fuss & O'Neill (CT & MA) • GHS 8th Grade • Girl Scout Troop 64980 • Goodwin University • Great Falls High St. Woods • Great River Hydro (NH & VT) • Greater Gill-Montague Super Group • Green River Cleanup • Green River Super Sorters • GZA Green Team • Hartland Conservation Commission • Hawlemont Elementary • Holyoke High School, DCR & Friends • Holyoke Rotary Club • Hypertherm INC (NH & VT) • King Arthur Baking Company • Kleinfelder Rocky Hill River Cleanup! • League of Women Voters Franklin County • Leyden Woods Resident Cleanup • Love for Longmeadow • Love Manchester, Live Green! • MMBC • Mystical Mountain Maple Syrup LLC • Noho Meadows & Pedal People Cleanup • Packaging Corp. of America • Pequabuck Cleanup • Pioneer Panthers • Portland River Access Committee • Pratt & Whitney – Middletown • Prentiss Smith & Co • Pumpyananakis • Putney Landing • River Roads Cleanup • Rockingham Conservation Commission • Roy Lab • SEAG • Shaker Scoop Up • SLR (CT & VT) • Smith College • South Greenfield Neighbors • South Hadley Falls Neighborhood Association • SpiritPaddlers • Sullivan Garden & Ecology Club • Sunderland Bridge Cleanup Crew • Sustainable Essex • SWCA • Team Erving • Team Eversource (CT, MA, NH) • Team Holyoke DPW • Team O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun • Team Verdantas • The Rotary Club of Springfield, MA • The Walker Group • The Wildflower Alliance • Troop 5 Scouts • UMass Sophomores Serve • Unitarian Society of New Haven • USA Waste & Recycling / All American Waste • Vermont River Conservancy • VHB • VMG • West River Marina Wetland Cleanup • Western New England University American Society of Civil Engineers • Wethersfield Dad's Club • White River Partnership • William Raveis Real Estate

This list represents those who registered or submitted a trash tally. There were likely more groups out there!



SUPPORT A CLEANER, HEALTHIER CONNECTICUT RIVER!

THANK YOU for all you do for our rivers. While the Source to Sea Cleanup is a major annual event, the work of the Connecticut River Conservancy and our many regional partners happens all year round. From removing outdated dams and aquatic invasive species to advocating for better policies and testing water quality in our lab, we take a watershed-wide approach to just about everything. And your support makes it possible!



Connecticut River Conservancy staff in Holyoke, 2024

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION FOR CLEANER RIVERS. VISIT [CTRIVER.ORG](https://ctriver.org).

If you'd like to support our work on the Connecticut River, please consider making a contribution.

To donate, please return the enclosed envelope with your gift, or support us online at ctriver.org/donate.

You can also contact Brett Morrison, Director of Development, at bmorrison@ctriver.org or 413-772-2020 ext. 218 to get in touch or become a Source to Sea Cleanup sponsor for next year!

Connecticut River Conservancy:
15 Bank Row, Greenfield, MA 01301
413-772-2020
CRC@ctriver.org
ctriver.org

River Updates: ctriver.org/news
Events: ctriver.org/events
E-newsletters: ctriver.org/email



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

LEAD SPONSORS



The Walker Group delivers premier technology and digital marketing solutions to help organizations maximize their technology investments. They are proud to be a Social Enterprise, a registered Benefit Corporation, and the first Perpetual Purpose Trust-Owned Company in Connecticut.



All American Waste is a local, family-owned company committed to its customers, their communities, and the planet. For generations, giving back to local communities has been a value of its management. This is embraced and embodied by its employees, making the areas they live and work a better and cleaner place.



Eversource harnesses the commitment of approximately 8,300 employees across three states. The company is empowering a clean energy future in the Northeast, with nationally recognized energy efficient solutions and successful programs to integrate new clean energy resources like solar, offshore wind, electric vehicles, and battery storage into the electric system.



Family owned and operated since 1974, USA Waste & Recycling is committed to their communities and the planet. Sustainability and the environment have remained at the forefront of all company operations. For decades, USA Waste & Recycling has invested in cleaner technologies for healthier people and a healthier planet.

RIVER SPONSORS



TRIBUTARY SPONSORS



STREAM SPONSORS



Ashuelot River Hydro, Inc.	Packaging Corporation of America
Chroma Technology	Prentiss & Smith Co
Florence Savings Bank	Rare Forms, Inc.
Fuss & O'Neill	Reynolds Boats & Reynolds Subaru
Guilford Savings Bank	SLR Consulting
Jamrog HVAC	SWCA Environmental Consultants
King Arthur Baking Company	Walmart - Northampton, MA



IN-KIND GIFTS

SUPPORTERS

Beyond Green Construction, Inter-Fluve, Inc.,
Stone Environmental, Walmart - Hadley, MA

CRC wishes to thank all the cities and towns in our watershed who provided in-kind support in the form waste pick-up and/or disposal: city & town departments in CT: Cromwell, E. Hartford, E. Lyme, Essex, Glastonbury, Haddam, Hartford, Manchester, Middletown, Portland, Rocky Hill, Southington, W. Hartford, Winchester, Windsor; city & town departments in MA: Agawam, Amherst, Charlemont, Chicopee, Easthampton, Greenfield, Hatfield, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Montague, Northampton, So. Deerfield, So. Hadley, Springfield; city & town departments in NH: Claremont, Cornish, Hinsdale, Keene, Lebanon, Stratford; city & town departments in VT: Hartland, Norwich, Royalton, Springfield, Windham Solid Waste Management District, Windsor; and USA Waste & Recycling.

And the generous restaurants and stores that donated food and supplies: Atkins Farms, Brick & Feathers Brewery, Casella Holyoke, Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Cold Spring Orchard, D'Angelos, Dunkin Donuts, FastLights, Foster's Supermarket, Franklin County Sheriff's Office Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, Greenfield Recreation Department, James Plumbing & Heating Co., Mesa Verde, New Fortune, People's Pint, Pierce Brothers Coffee, Real Pickles, Ryan and Casey Liquors, Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters, Tapestry Health Systems, The Stewardship Network/Gloves for Good, The Works.



Connecticut River Conservancy

15 Bank Row, Greenfield, MA 01301

TAKE ACTION FOR HEALTHIER RIVERS

Wondering how you can continue to make a difference? Start with these steps:

Stay consistent – Keep a trash bag and gloves in your car to pick up trash from natural spaces wherever you encounter it. Invite friends, family, and co-workers to join you in this effort.

Speak up for your rivers – Contact your elected representatives to show them the trash problem. Let them know this is an issue that is important to you and deserves their attention and legislative action.

Use the power of your purchase – Buy items that are reusable or made with eco-friendly materials, and refuse single-use plastic and foam.

Lead by example – Don't litter, dispose of your waste properly, and continue volunteering!

Get involved when there's a bill to support or oppose
Sign up for CRC's state-specific advocacy emails at ctriver.org/email. These include notifications for when there is legislation you can take action on.



In addition to organizing the Source to Sea Cleanup, the Connecticut River Conservancy works to support clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities in many ways. Stay tuned for upcoming volunteer opportunities, community events, and ways to get involved in spring 2025. Visit ctriver.org for more details.

Special thanks to our national nonprofit partners, Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup and American Rivers National River Cleanup, for teaming up with CRC's Source to Sea Cleanup to support cleaner waterways around the U.S. and the world.

