



Cleanup Chronicle

25th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup
September 24–26, 2021

Connecticut River Conservancy

Special edition
Volume 70 Issue 3

For the 25th straight year, volunteers scoured riverbanks, boat launches, trails, and more to get their feet wet and hands dirty for cleaner rivers. The Source to Sea Cleanup has grown from a few hundred to thousands of volunteers. In that time, you've cleaned up more than 1,245 tons of trash. It's truly astonishing what you have accomplished by persistence and working together. THANK YOU!

While this event connects people to each other across the four Connecticut River states, it also connects us to something much larger. Picking up trash here at home keeps it from traveling to the already massive garbage patches that are present in every ocean on the planet. The Source to Sea Cleanup is

25 Years
of Cleaner
Rivers

helping to keep our planet a cleaner place.

There is also real impact right in our own backyards. We all enjoy local rivers and our favorite river spots more when they aren't polluted with trash. And our communities are stronger when residents work together toward a common goal. It's those connections, growing and strengthening over time, bringing in new people and engaging the next generation, that instill hope for a brighter (cleaner!) river future.

As this event has grown, so too has our understanding of the waste systems that produce this litter. Our current reliance on disposable products is another example of inequity in our economy. It benefits some at the expense of others, where our current manufacturing system was designed to profit the producers while blaming us, the consumers, for the resulting waste. Sure, we need to stop littering, but it's bigger than that. Holding producers responsible for better design and recycling creates new markets, economic opportunity, and LESS WASTE in rivers and landfills.

We won't stop this work until we put ourselves out of the river clean-up business. But we can't just clean our way out of this mess. Head to page 8 to learn more about what we can do to stop trash before it starts.

"The Connecticut River and all of our area waterways are some of the most valued—and valuable—resources that we have. It's our responsibility, and our pleasure, to support the Source to Sea Cleanup each year."

—Matt Bannister, SVP, Marketing and Corporate Responsibility, PeoplesBank

While the Source to Sea Cleanup may be over, the online #RiverWitness community lives on! Keep getting out there to connect with your rivers and keep sharing your photos, videos, and stories.

Here is a small selection of the many wonderful images shared online during the Cleanup using #RiverWitness. Search that hashtag on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to see more great photos and connect with new river friends.



Essex-3 Villages, a new town-wide cleanup in Connecticut. Photo: Chris Zajac



Photo: Tanya Cutolo



Photo: Tim Lewis



Brattleboro
Outing Club Rowers



Essex, CT · Photo: Chris Zajac



Essex, CT · Photo: Alison Brinkman



Photo: Frontier Regional School Environmental Club



Plastic foam like this breaks off docks and pollutes rivers.
Photo: Deer Paths Nature School

Cleanup sponsor Eversource, hosts employee cleanup groups in NH, MA & CT!
Photo: Eversource



Cleaning in thrifted suits earns this group "Best Dressed!"
Photo: Keene High School AP Environmental Studies



Photo: Deer Paths Nature School



Hadley, MA - Photo: Allison Bell



Cleanup sponsor Hypertherm hauled two engines from the river in Norwich, VT! Photo: Hypertherm



Cleanup sponsor USA Waste & Recycling makes sure trash gets disposed of properly.
Photo: USA Waste & Recycling



Photo: Chris Zajac



Plogging = Picking up litter + Jogging Photo: Luppoleto

PARTICIPATING GROUPS

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

Academy at Charlemont · Adventure East · All American Waste / USA Hauling & Recycling* · Amherst College Sustainable Ocean Alliance · Ashuelot River & Beaver Brook in Keene and Swanzey, NH (3 groups) · Audacity · Bellows Falls Improvement Initiative · Bement Family Association · Benesch 2021 · Biocitizen Corps · Black River Action Team · BlissLife Foundation · Bobo's Beach Busters · Brattleboro Outing Club-Rowing · BUHS Student Environmental Advocates · Chicopee Comp · CHS Carbon Club · Claremont Conservation Commission · Clean, Clear and Free Flowing · Connecticut River Academy · Conway Trashpickers · Cooley Brook Friends_LCSOP · Cromwell Middle School · CT DEEP Adopt-a-Park Volunteers · CT River Coolidge Bridge Area—Public Clean-up · Cub Scout Pack 13/Girl Scout Troop 63000 · Dartmouth Club of Pioneer Valley · Deer Paths Nature School · Deerfield River Watershed Trout Unlimited #349 · Easthampton Oxbow Cleanup Crew · Essex 3 Villages River Cleanup · Farmington River Clean Up · Fort River Cleanup · Four Rivers Charter Public School 7th grade · Franklin County Rivers—Gill-Montague Group · Franklin County Rivers—Green River Cleanup · Franklin County Technical School · Friendly Cleanup 420 · Friends of Machimoodus and Sunrise · Frontier Regional · Fuss & O'Neill · Girl Power · Girl Scouts Troop 64980 · Goodwin University · Great Meadows Conservation Trust · GZA Green Team* · Hampshire College Trail Maintenance & Restoration · Hard Workers · Hartland Conservation Commission · Hope Street Cleaners · IMI Precision Engineering · Jarvis Island · Jewish Community of Amherst · Kleinfelder* · League of Women Voters of Franklin County · Ledyard Canoe Club Cleanup Crew · Lindsay's Clean Team · Mascoma River Cleanup—Lebanon Rotary & Conservation Commission · Meriden Motor Boat Club (MMBC) · Middletown Rotary Club · Mill Pond Cleanup · Montague River Guardians · Mountain Lodge—Guiding Star Grange · Mystical Mountain Maple Syrup LLC · Northeast Paving · NRG* · Patch Neighborhood Clean Up · PeoplesBank* · Plogging Persons for a Pristine River · Pratt & Whitney Great River Park Cleanup · Pratt & Whitney Union Pond Cleanup · Prentiss Smith & Company* · Putney Rowing Club · PV Squared · PPCI Environmental Club · River Roaders · River's Edge River Rats · Scout Troop 5 Cleanup Crew · SLR CT* · SLR Trash Slayers MA* · SLR VT* · Smithfield Foods · South Hadley Volunteers Conservation Corps · Southeastern Vermont Watershed Alliance · Sunderland Families · SWCA Environmental* · Team ECOS at Forest Park · Team Erving · Team Eversource CT* · Team Eversource MA* · Team Eversource NH* · Team Exquisite · Team Flinchbaugh · Team Hypertherm* · Team Wood · The Greenwood School · The Trash Slinging Trashers · The Trashers · Tri-Town Cub Scout Pack 13—Chester/Deep River/Essex · Turners Falls Hot Tickets · Turners Falls HS · Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst (2 groups) · University of Hartford · Vaneks · VHB · Western Mass Trash Pandas · Westfield River Watershed Association—Agawam · Westfield River Watershed Association—Westfield · Wethersfield Cove · White River Partnership · Woodard & Curran

*Source to Sea Cleanup Sponsor



Unusual Items Found

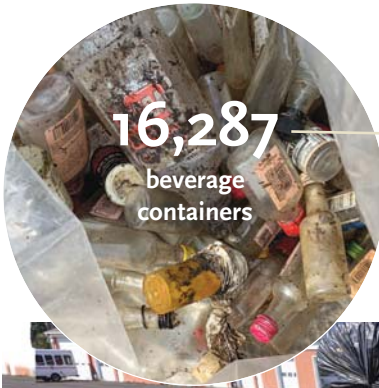
- Pig Garden Gnome—Saxtons River, VT
- Several Sports Balls (returned to Parks Dept.)—Springfield, VT
- Safe & Pitch Fork—Northampton, MA
- Unopened Can of Chili Beans—Middletown, CT
- Intact Mooring Buoy (returned to owner!)—Essex, CT
- Old Agricultural Trailer (still functional & used to haul more trash!)—Whately, MA



Photo: Ron Grosslein

Trash Tally 2021

Hardworking Source to Sea Cleanup groups haul so much trash from in and around our rivers and streams that it's impossible to account for everything. Volunteers used Ocean Conservancy's CleanSwell app as well as CRC's Trash Tally form to report trash data. CRC received this information from approximately 53% of registered Cleanup groups. Actual numbers/ weights are likely much higher than listed here.



16,287
beverage
containers

- 6,032 plastic bottles
- 4,743 aluminum cans
- 3,011 glass bottles
- 2,501 nips*



129.8
miles cleaned



43.3 tons of trash



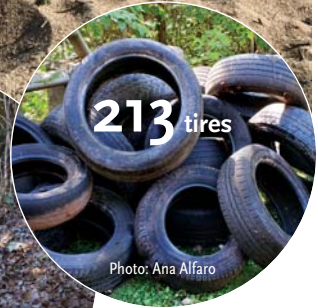
113
cleanup groups

Photo: GZA



1,394 Volunteers

Photo: Chris Zajac



213 tires

Photo: Ana Alfaro

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

Additional Items

Item	Quantity Reported
Styrofoam	1,018 pieces including foam dock pieces, packaging, food containers, and cups*
Electronics & Appliances	20 appliances* including a mini fridge and AC unit + 169 electronics* (phones, batteries, etc) + 57 e-cigarettes
Pharmaceuticals & Personal Care	618 items including condoms, cotton swabs, diapers, tampons, and syringes + 418 pieces of personal protection equipment (PPE)
Automotive	196 items including an old farm trailer
Clothing & Shoes	534 pieces of clothing + 328 pieces of footwear*
Construction Materials	343 items + 31 paint cans*
Scrap Metal*	1,835 pieces including BBQ grills
Mattresses*	9
Toys & Balloons	412



Photo: Great Meadows Conservation Trust



LEAD SPONSORS

EVERSOURCE 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 efficiency solutions and successful programs to integrate new clean energy resources like solar, offshore wind, electric vehicles and battery storage, into the electric system.



As local, family owned companies, **USA Waste & Recycling** and **All American Waste** recognize and embrace their role as a leader in the community. Giving back to communities has always been a value of its management and has been embraced and embodied by its employees. They are proud to be stewards of the environment and support the communities in which their employees live and work.

WATERSHED SPONSOR

Brookfield Brookfield Renewable U.S., based in New York City, is a leading owner, operator, and developer of renewable power, delivering innovative renewable power solutions that accelerate the world towards a sustainable, low-carbon future. Our diversified portfolio of hydropower, wind, solar, and storage facilities extend across 34 states, totaling approximately 8,050 megawatts of generating capacity.

MAIN STEM SPONSOR



RIVER SPONSORS



Thank you
Windham Solid Waste Management District for your trash disposal support!



Windham Solid Waste Management District
Recycling Today For A Better Tomorrow

STREAM SPONSORS

Aquarion Water Company	Jamrog HVAC
Ashuelot River Hydro, Inc.	Kleinfelder
Casella Waste Systems, Inc.	NorthEast Solar
CDM Smith, Inc.	SLR
Chroma Technology	SumCo Eco-Contracting
Essential Power Massachusetts, LLC	SWCA Environmental Consultants
Greenfield Savings Bank	

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

The Source to Sea Cleanup is a collaborative effort with many helping hands. This list is sure to miss some. Thank you to all who help make the Cleanup a success.

Agawam Department of Public Works	Holyoke Department of Public Works
All Waste	Home Depot–Greenfield
American Rivers	James Plumbing & Heating Co.
Audacy	Keney Park Sustainability Project
Big Y	Ledyard Canoe Club and Dartmouth College
Brattleboro Department of Public Works	Leverett Town Transfer Station
Casella Holyoke Transfer	Longmeadow Department of Public Works
City of Greenfield Public Works Department	Montague Department of Public Works
City of Hartford Department of Public Works	Ocean Conservancy International Coastal Cleanup
City of Lebanon NH Department of Public Works	Pete's Tire Barns, Inc.
City of Middletown	Pioneer Valley Brewery
City of Northampton Department of Public Works	Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters
Cold River Materials	Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters (Greenfield)
Cold Springs Orchard	South Hadley Department of Public Works
Easthampton Department of Public Works	Springfield Parks Department
Essex Fire Department	Town of Amherst, MA
FastLights	Town of Hartland
FirstLight Power	Town of Norwich, VT
Friends of Reusable Bags, a project of Greening Greenfield	Town of South Hadley – Planning and Conservation Department
Glastonbury Refuse Disposal, Water Pollution Control Division	USA Waste & Recycling
Greening Greenfield	Windham Solid Waste Management District
Henion Bakery	WRSI



Photo: EverSource



Thank you for getting dirty for cleaner rivers!

We hope you enjoyed this year's special 25th anniversary Source to Sea Cleanup t-shirts. If you didn't get one or would like more, head to CRC's online store to order for FREE. Bandanas also available. www.ctriver.org/shop

Together, we all own our rivers. And together we will protect them. Please join us in this work by becoming a CRC member today. Donate online at www.ctriver.org/donate, return the enclosed envelope, or contact Corey Kurtz, Development Director, at ckurtz@ctriver.org or 413-772-2020 ext. 202.



Be part of the solution for cleaner rivers. Visit www.ctriver.org/cleanup.

Connecticut River Conservancy is the voice for the Connecticut River watershed, from source to sea. We collaborate with partners across four states to protect and advocate for your rivers and educate and engage communities. We bring people together to prevent pollution, improve habitat, and promote enjoyment of your river and its tributary streams. Healthy rivers support healthy economies.

CRC is a membership organization and relies on your support to protect our rivers. Visit www.ctriver.org to become a member and sign up for our email news.

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 MA 413-772-2020
 CT 413-772-2020 x216





Trash Data— What’s It Good For?

More than
you think.



The trash totals that are reported here come from the many volunteers who count and report to us the trash they find. While not every cleanup group reports their trash to us, many provide us with estimates or even detailed reports of what they collect. Submitting a trash tally is one of the most important parts of the Source to Sea Cleanup. Your data help show the scope of the trash problem so we can focus solutions where they’re needed most.

For example, in the 2020 Source to Sea Cleanup, a total of 10,654 beverage containers were reported. Nearly a quarter of those were miniature spirits bottles called “nips!” We are lucky that three of the four Connecticut River states already have bottle bill programs that, if expanded to include nips, can help keep these little bottles from becoming a big pollution problem for rivers.

CRC’s trash data had already helped support a major update to Connecticut’s bottle bill in 2020 to include more types of bottles and a ten-cent redemption increase. Unfortunately, the update did not include nips. Currently, Vermont and Massachusetts are also working to update and expand their bottle bills. So, as part of this year’s Cleanup, we used your trash data and photos to support that effort. CRC targeted MA and CT legislators to take action because Cleanup data showed more nips found there than in NH and VT.

This is just one example of your trash data at work. It has also supported solutions for mattresses, and is helping motivate solutions for dumped tires. We didn’t always live this disposable, trash-filled lifestyle. And just like we got rid of lead paint and smog, we can achieve a future free from single-use and petroleum-based plastic and dumped tires. Together we must urge our legislators, businesses, and other decision-makers to put people and planet above profit.

This change is going to take time, decades even. And we’ll keep at it as long as it takes. But rivers need us to start now. Thank you for joining us to speak up for rivers and for being part of the solution. Get involved, sign up for Action Alert emails, learn more about the nips campaign, and more at www.ctriver.org/TakeAction.

