

# I

Tallapoosa  
Hiwassee  
Ochlockonee  
Coosawattee  
Amicalola  
Etowah  
Tugaloo  
Ocmulgee  
Tobesofkee  
Alapaha  
Ebenezer  
Kinchafoonee  
Spring  
Soque  
Satilla  
South  
Okefenokee  
Proctor  
Chattahoochee  
Flint  
Coosa  
Altamaha  
Savannah  
Suwannee  
Ogeechee  
Muckalee  
Chestnut  
St. Marys  
Sweetwater  
Ichawaynochaway  
Conasauga  
Chickamauga  
Allatoona  
Tallula  
Hartwell  
Atlantic  
Canoochee  
Lanier  
Armuchee  
Broad  
Apalachee  
Aucilla  
Brier  
Oostanaula  
Dukes

# Georgia

## 2017



*"Hurricane Irma school closings the week before our event impacted our ability to organize groups of students and caused us to have fewer participants than we were hoping for. We were very pleased with walk-up participation. Volunteers cleaned up trash around several river access points, around creeks, trails, and schoolyards near storm drain outlets, and around a large lake and surrounding park with trails, ball fields, picnic area, and playground."*

–Laurie Riley, Newton County Rivers Alive, Keep Covington/Newton Beautiful



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# 2017



## Annual Report

**Our Mission:**  
To create awareness of  
and involvement in the  
protection of Georgia's  
water resources through  
waterway cleanups.



## *From the Rivers Alive Board Chair ...*

Thanks once again to all of our organizers, volunteers, and sponsors for another successful series of clean-ups throughout 2017. From the Altamaha to the Withlacoochee, Georgians statewide continue to make a difference in keeping our Rivers Alive. Together, over 26,500 of you spent more than 80,000 hours removing in excess of 420,000 pounds from Georgia's streams, lakes, rivers, and coastline. GREAT WORK! In 2018 and beyond, the Advisory Board and I hope you continue to show your love for Georgia and our valuable water resources by continuing to participate in cleanups where you live, work, and play.



*Jonathan E. Wells*  
Rivers Alive Chair



# Look what we found!

13,802 Plastic bottles

3,784 Plastic grocery bags

10,825 Cigarette butts

2,566 Plastic bottle caps

10,461 Glass bottles

2,208 Fishing lines

7,841 Beverage cans

1,907 Plastic straws

5,924 Foam pieces

1,468 Construction materials

*Wigs*

1,359 Tobacco packaging

*A prosthetic  
leg!*

*A Bird cage*

*Steak knives*

*A plastic flamingo*

*A chicken coop*

*A typewriter*

*A headless  
Incredible  
Hulk doll*

*A mummified squirrel*

*A bowling pin*



# Rivers Alive Committee Reports

## Education & Messaging

The theme for 2017, "I ❤️ Georgia," highlighted the importance of preserving the 70,250 miles of rivers and coastline that make up Georgia's waterways, as well as the many services they provide. Engaging people in their local waterways allows them to build a stronger connection to their natural environment and understand the direct impact of their behaviors. Seeing the condition of these streams before and after proves that even small numbers can yield tremendous results! Thank you for your continued support in this effort.

Resources we made available:

- Rivers Alive education poster included a classroom activity on the back, The Watershed Tarp, to increase students' awareness of non-point source pollution in their watershed
- Rivers Alive bookmarks featuring River of Words art and poetry from Georgia students
- Quarterly e-newsletters to keep cleanup organizers and sponsors up-to-date on news and activities

## Event Coordination & Outreach

This year we provided our local organizers with resources, like trash bags and a land and paddle guide, as well as safety information and waiver forms. The awards ceremony continues to help celebrate the outstanding efforts of Georgia's cleanup organizers. Rivers Alive volunteers joined organized paddle trips around the state promoting cleanups and spreading awareness among other citizens about how everyday trash affects our rivers.

## Fundraising

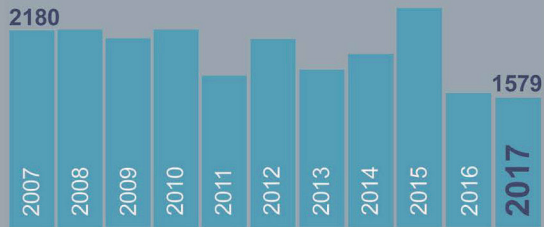
100% of state level donations were distributed to support cleanup groups. Groups also rely on local sponsors to provide trash bags, gloves, insect repellent and first aid kits. Some get contributions of refreshments and food. Many find additional funding to purchase extra Rivers Alive T-shirts for their cleanup volunteers.

## T-Shirts

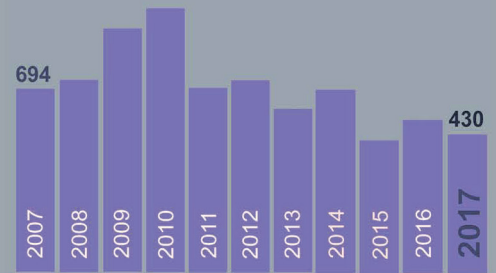
Once again, our most coveted "Thank You" to our volunteers comes in the form of our Rivers Alive T-shirt. Some volunteers have collected all 19 shirts ever produced!



# 2017 Stats



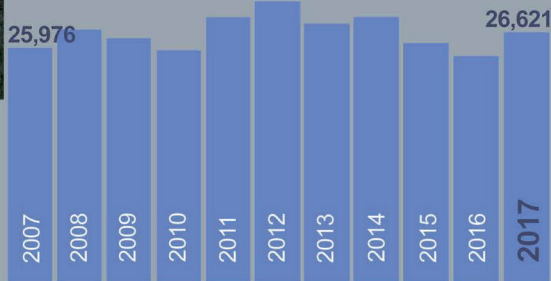
Estimated Miles Cleaned



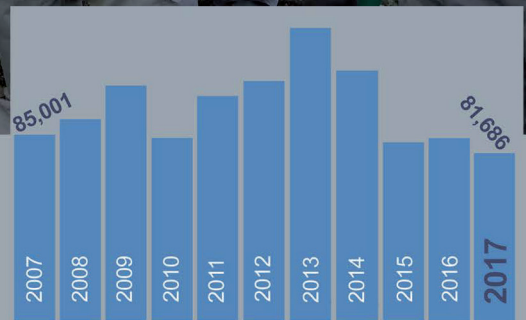
Pounds of Trash Collected (thousands)



Number of Events



Number of Volunteers



Number of Volunteer Hours



The Spotlight is on  
***Attracting Local Sponsorship***

Rivers Alive is dependent on corporate sponsorship to support cleanups across the state. However, many local programs have found ways to attract their own sponsorship, primarily through in-kind support.

This year, in-kind support came in the form of food and drinks, trash bags, gloves and trash grabbers. Cleanups received first aid kits, bug spray, sunscreen, sanitation products and even safety vests. Some organizers reported receiving prizes to incentivize volunteer participation, highlighting the most unusual item found or the most trash removed. Waterway cleanups found immediate partners with local outfitters, who provided free kayaks and canoes for volunteers to access hard to reach trash. Likewise, many local parks waived parking fees and provided shelters for participants. Without a doubt, the single biggest support came from local governments helping to collect and haul off the trash, dropping off dumpsters and taking care of tire disposal. Many local governments even footed the bill for extra t-shirts, and some paid for all the shirts for their volunteers. Local utilities even provided free advertisements, one estimated at a value in excess of \$13,000!

The total value of this in-kind support would be hard to calculate, but a quick review of the 2017 results indicates it was in the tens of thousands of dollars, maybe even matching or exceeding the total support Rivers Alive receives from state level sponsors. The common thread in all of this is--if you ask, you never know what you might receive. We recommend all organizers consider reaching out to request local support of your efforts. Businesses appreciate being associated with "feel-good" activities, and there aren't too many that can top a Rivers Alive cleanup.

Good luck in 2018 reaching out to new partners to help clean our rivers, lakes and coastal waters!





*"This was our tenth year of Lee County Rivers Alive and we are seeing less available debris in our waterways. We collected 500 pounds less during this event than we did last year!"*

*—Jim Wright, Lee County Rivers Alive, Lee County Code Enforcement*

## ***For 2018***

Join us in 2018 as we celebrate 20 years of Rivers Alive and successful statewide cleanups! Looking back at these impressive numbers and growth of the program, we are certain that none of this could be possible without the hard work and dedication of the organizers and volunteers that make up this effort.

Turning things up a notch, this year's t-shirt design will follow a Rock 'n' Roll theme modeled after a 20 year reunion tour. The shirt will feature the Rivers Alive logo with a never before seen funky font and phrase to go with it. The shirt will serve as a sort of timeline of past themes, leading up to the 20th anniversary of Rivers Alive. Coming to a watershed near you, we hope you will continue your support in rocking out Georgia's waterways in 2018!



*"Our 2017 Rivers Alive cleanup was a huge success. We had 155 volunteers show up and we cleaned up a 10 mile section of Cedar Creek in Cedartown, Georgia. I look forward to next year's cleanup. We are constantly finding new ways to keep Polk County as clean as possible."*

–Vance Voinche, Keep Polk Beautiful Rivers Alive, Keep Polk Beautiful Volunteers



To find out more and to volunteer as an Organizer,  
Participant or Sponsor please visit:

**[RiversAlive.Georgia.gov](http://RiversAlive.Georgia.gov)**

Georgia EPD, 2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Ste. 1462 E  
Atlanta, GA 30334 404-651-8514

# Thank You, 2017 Sponsors!

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Storm Water Systems

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