

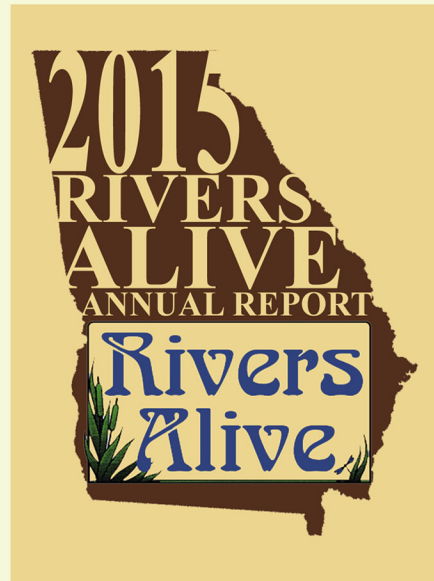
**YOU**  
28,000  
VOLUNTEERS  
**YOU&ME**  
260 CLEANUPS  
**OUR STATE**  
700,000  
POUNDS CLEANED  
**RIVERS ALIVE**  
70,000 MILES WATERWAYS  
**STATEWIDE**  
ESTABLISHED 1999

RiversAlive.com  
404-651-8514

# OUR NUMBERS COUNT







Join us as a

- Volunteer
- Organizer
- Sponsor



RiversAlive.org



### 2015 Annual Report



**Our Mission:**

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



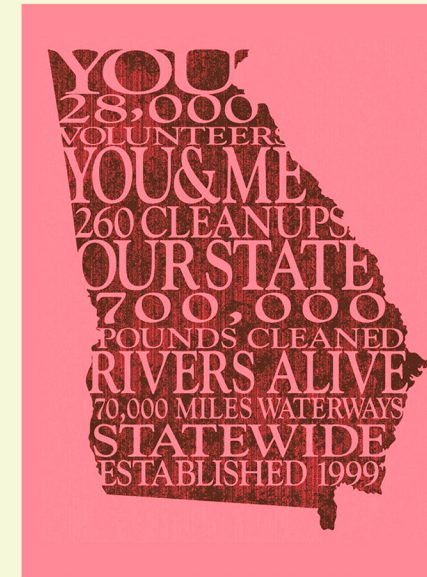
A program of GA EPD  
2 MLK Jr Dr SE  
Suite 1462 E  
Atlanta, GA 30334



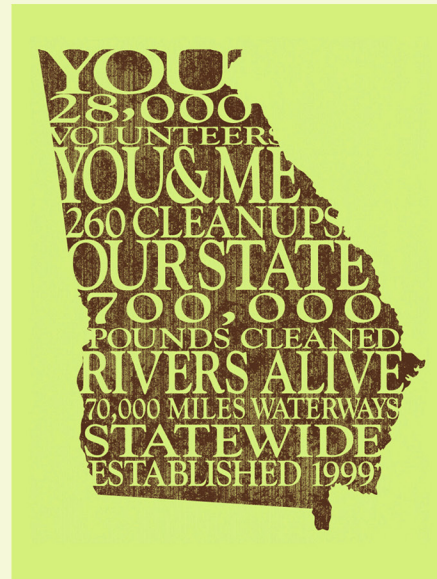
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### NEXT YEAR

Join us in 2016 as we celebrate “Watershed Moments,” reflecting on our shared experiences enjoying waterways throughout Georgia. Tapping into our creative side, we encourage participants to note the significant role clean water plays in our lives, by photographing, painting, meditating or otherwise expressing our feelings regarding watersheds and what they mean to us. It’s a whimsical thought, and a nod to bygone days, of idly fishing from a dock in a backwoods Georgia creek; but even in our busy lives, rivers still draw us, the beach still beacons; let’s heed their call.







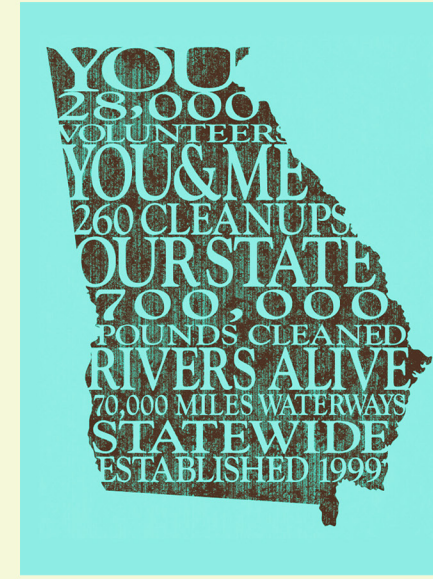
“To live is a gift; to protect life is an honor.”  
 -The League of Protectors: Secret of the Jewel

In 2014 Ryan and Nissa Hall published a book titled *The League of Protectors: Secret of the Jewel*, after a family trip to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center ignited a passion for coastal conservation. Though The League of Protectors began as a fictional group, it has now become a very real, dedicated volunteer organization making measurable impacts on coastal pollution. Driven by a passion for service and a love for Georgia’s barrier islands, the Hall family and other volunteers have collected hundreds of pounds of trash in coastal cleanup efforts, including more than 130 pounds of trash during a recent Rivers Alive event on Jekyll Island.

The devoted volunteers of The League of Protectors routinely travel more than 10 hours roundtrip to their cleanup sites, visiting Bloody Marsh on St. Simon’s Island at least once a quarter. They frequently partner with other community organizations, especially working to educate and involve kids in conservation efforts. They have helped scout troops earn merit badges and are currently holding an essay contest, used to select two students to attend a junior marine biologist camp on the coast this summer.

Community partner Lea King-Badyna with Keep Golden Isles Beautiful adds, “The League of Protectors demonstrate that, anyone of any age and at any time, can make a positive impact on our environment. Their actions will surely inspire and engage countless Georgians to also find ways to make a difference.”

**Our 2015 Spotlight is on  
 The League of Protectors!**



**Message from the Chair**

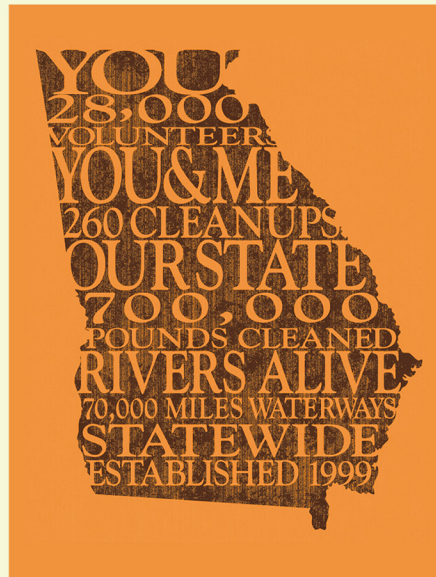
*Doug Fuller*

Our theme for 2015 was, “It all adds up; my cleanup counts,” and the results described in this Annual Report prove that phrase. We had another excellent year with over 25,000 volunteers engaged in cleanups throughout the state removing over half a million pounds of trash from Georgia’s waterways in some 268 cleanup events.

Many thanks to the cleanup organizers for doing what they do to scout locations, make all the arrangements, line up the volunteers, get the work done and report the results. Thanks to the staff of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division for keeping the program running and to the Rivers Alive Advisory Board for their ideas and support. Thanks also to the corporate sponsors for providing the funding. Finally, and most importantly, thanks to the volunteers who get the trash in our streams, rivers, lakes, coast and adjacent lands cleaned up and recycled or properly disposed of. We recognize that it is a tremendous amount of work and truly a team effort.

It does really “all add up.” Each cleanup makes a difference and adds to the tremendous amount of trash that has been removed over the years by Rivers Alive volunteers. While it is hard work, most volunteers find the effort very satisfying and participate year after year. The numbers show that progress is being made, but clearly there is more work to do, and we look forward to another successful year in 2016.





**Look what we found!**

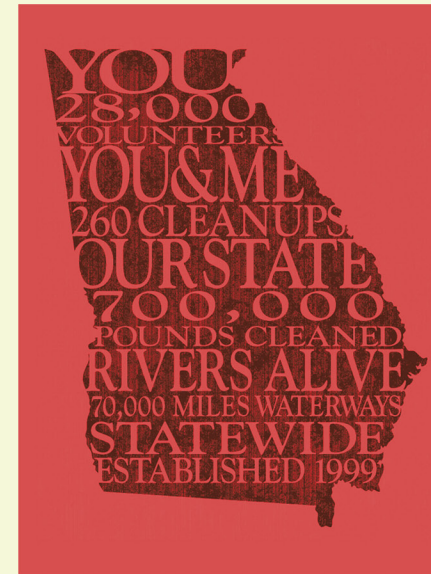
- 39,756 Cigarettes
- 15,629 Aluminum parts, cans
- 15,527 Plastic Bottles
- 11,581 Glass Bottles
- 10,853 Yards of Fishing Line
- 3,216 Straws
- 2,917 Tobacco Packages
- 2,465 Paper Bags
- 1,862 Cigars
- 1,447 Pieces of Clothing
- 1,436 Yards of Rope
- 1,234 Bleach Bottles
- 1,216 Styrofoam
- 1,215 Building Materials
- 1,059 Pull tabs
- 991 Tires
- 622 Lighters
- 519 Six Pack Holders



And . . .

**Our most unusual items---**

- A refrigerator door
- A globe
- Fiber optic cable markers
- A marine toilet
- Half of a canoe
- A slinky
- Ceramic figurines
- A scrap metal giraffe
- A rocking horse
- A vacuum cleaner



**THANK YOU 2015 SPONSORS!**

- Georgia Power Company
- Coca-Cola Company
- Oglethorpe Power Corporation
- Perdue
- Golder Associates
- GA Assoc. of Water Professionals
- Southwire
- EPS
- Enterprise Holdings Foundation
- Jones Day
- Stormwater Systems
- Alston & Bird LLP
- New Fields
- Dalton Utilities
- Black & Veatch
- Sutherland
- GE Power & Water

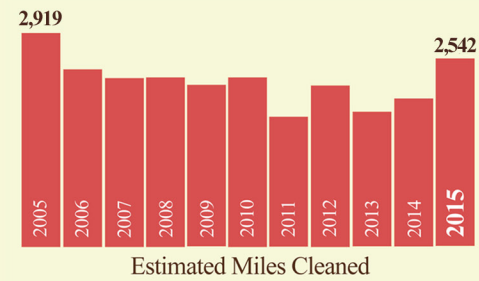
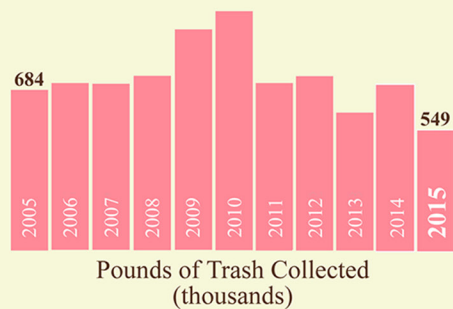
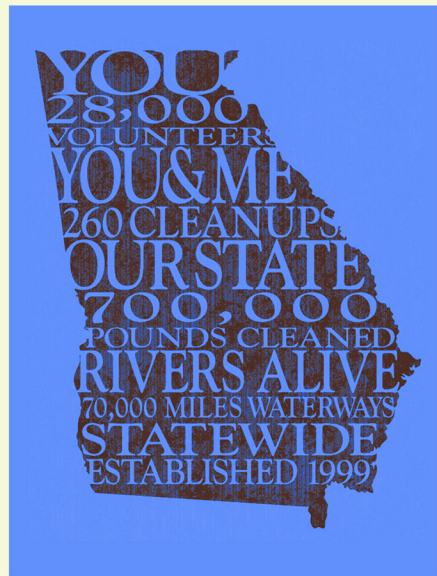
Also: MEAG Power, Burns & McDonnell Foundation, Premier Industrial Services, Trinity Consultants

**Our board members represent:**

- Alston & Bird LLP
- Atlanta Regional Commission/MNG WPD
- Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
- Centennial High School, Roswell
- Cobb County Water System
- ERM
- Georgia Association of Water Professionals
- Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Power Company
- Georgia River Network
- Georgia Wildlife Federation
- Keep Forsyth County Beautiful
- Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation
- Keep Liberty Beautiful
- Oglethorpe Power Corporation
- Southern Environmental Law Center







“We had good participation from 86 people in the community. Local business support in donations for breakfast and lunch. There is lots of enthusiasm for this event and the shirt you get for participating.”  
 –Katherine Atteberry, Tucker Civic Assoc.

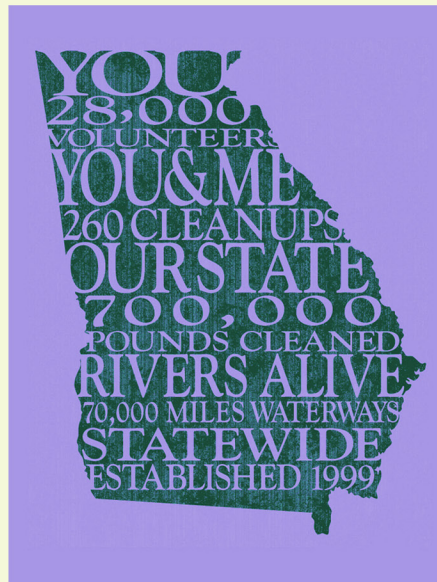


“Despite the rain everyone was in good spirits, especially the kids. They loved getting muddy for a good cause.”  
 – Vicki Culbreth, City of Roswell



“There is so much interest in involvement that we are planning a second annual cleanup event. This location has improved so much over the years that we will need to consider finding other places to clean up. People enjoyed getting together to help the community.”  
 – Frank Carl, Savannah Riverkeeper





## The Rivers Alive Committees

### Event Coordination & Outreach

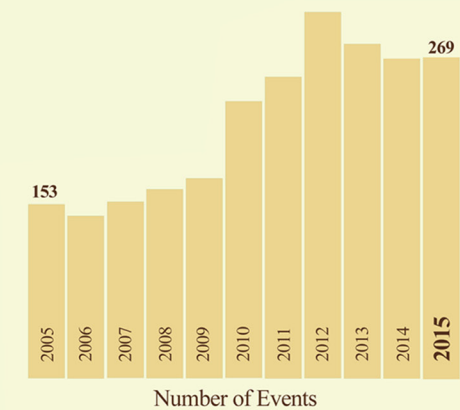
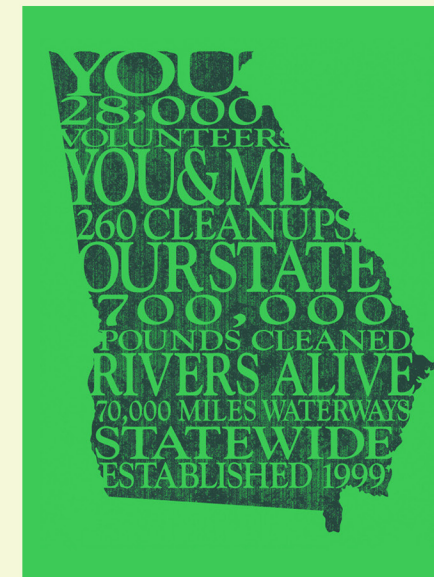
In addition to providing trash bags and field data forms for tallying cleanup data, Rivers Alive makes available guides for land and paddle cleanups for local organizers. Other resources, like safety information, PSAs and waiver forms can be found on the website. The awards ceremony continues to recognize the outstanding efforts of Georgia's cleanup organizers. And, for the first time, Rivers Alive partnered with Georgia Association of Water Professionals to produce No Water No Beer, a fun networking gathering at a local craft brewery, to celebrate the need for clean water in all walks of life. Rivers Alive joined in organized paddle trips around the state promoting cleanups and spreading awareness among citizens about how everyday trash affects our rivers.

### Education & Messaging

Focusing on the journey trash makes in Georgia waterways, the theme for 2015 highlighted the need to collect complete data reports on the health of our watersheds. The trash we find tells a story; each piece gives us an idea of the challenges we face in safeguarding our environment. By piecing together these reports, we can begin gathering valuable data on priorities for future Rivers Alive cleanups. Thank you for your continued support in this effort.

Resources we made available:

- Rivers Alive education poster included a classroom activity on the back, My Trash Journal, to increase students' awareness of the amount of waste they generate and the implication of that waste
- 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



### 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 17 shirts ever produced!

