

## **RIVERS ALIVE CLEANUPS TARGET GEORGIA WATERWAYS**

**ATLANTA, GA, September 1, 2016** – Rivers Alive volunteers throughout Georgia are preparing to spend their fall weekends cleaning up the state’s more than 70,250 miles of waterways and coastline, as the annual campaign to clear trash from our rivers, lakes and coastal waters gets underway. The cleanup is expected to once again be the largest single volunteer effort to beautify Georgia’s water resources.

Rivers Alive, a program of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), was created in 1999 to organize the numerous cleanup events held throughout the state. The mission of Rivers Alive is to create awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's water resources.

“The dedicated volunteers of Rivers Alive have a dramatic and measurable impact on the overall cleanliness and health of Georgia’s water resources. Their passion and initiative make Rivers Alive successful each year and facilitate the continued expansion of cleanup events throughout the State,” said Richard Dunn, Director of the Georgia EPD. Volunteers and sponsors removed 417,173 pounds of trash from rivers and streams last year alone. More than 24,000 volunteers cleaned 2,419 miles of Georgia’s waterways, hauling out tires, refrigerators, cans, bottles, cigarettes, and other trash items.

For over 15 years, Rivers Alive has also worked to educate people on the importance of protecting local water resources. This year, Rivers Alive will focus on its mission by encouraging volunteers to reflect on special moments they have had in their local watersheds. Participating in cleanups fosters a connection between people and the natural resources we use every day. Educational materials and activities for volunteers, organizers, community leaders and school teachers can be found on the Rivers Alive website at [www.RiversAlive.org](http://www.RiversAlive.org).

Statewide sponsors providing generous financial support and assisting with local cleanups include: Georgia Power, Oglethorpe Power, Southwire, Golder Associates, Brown and Caldwell, Sutherland, Anheuser-Busch, Jones Day, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Shaw Industries, Burns & McDonnell, Environmental Planning Specialists, Storm Water Systems, GE Power Systems, Black & Veatch, Georgia Association of Water Professionals, Alston & Bird LLP. Dozens of other local organizations will be sponsoring individual cleanups around the state.