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WASHINGTON
RIVER FESTIVAL
&
MISSOURI RIVER CLEAN-UP
SATURDAY, JUNE 14TH, 2008
Washington Riverfront Park

Results

Clean-up Stats

Clean-up Volunteers: 22
Boats: 3 MRR Boats
Rivemiles: 15.4 miles (74.6-59.2) only by boat
Scrap Tons: .8 tons
Landfill and recycled tons: approx .5 tons
Tires: 23 on rims
Estimated Total Tonnage: 1.6 tons
River level: 21.7 feet (Washington gage)
Media: Three radio, one newspaper (with four articles)

Festival Stats

Festival Volunteers: 12
Exhibitors & Musicians at Festival: 20 groups
Estimated attendance: 400



MRR Crewmembers Anthony Pettit and Karla Wilson net and spear bottles, tires and styrofoam from drift piles accumulated in the flooding river.

Photo by Vicki Richmond

Clean-up Plan B:

Rolling with the River

As soon as the word came in that the lower parking lot at Washington Riverfront Park was going to be flooded during the weekend of our scheduled clean-up, we realized we had to cancel the event.

With no space left to stage a public clean-up and essentially no banks to drop volunteers off on to clean-up, we made a decision. We cancelled the public volunteer clean-up event but vowed to put our trained crew out on the river to pick up what floating trash we could from our boats.

Because the River Festival was located on higher ground, it could go on as planned. Our clean-up would become part of the whole festival atmosphere, and folks on bankside could get a hint of what kind of

junk was floating by as they marvelled at the flooding river.

We attacked the river in force, with our two plate boats and one of our Bass Trackers. Each boat was supplied with nets, tools and even frog gigs and a harpoon. Boats would nose into drift piles while all on board would net, scoop, spear and grab all the trash in reach. Coast Guard buoys were towed into shore and a refrigerator was hoisted over the gunwales on board.

Working from the boats, we covered some serious miles...15.4 in all. It was a productive haul for so few workers, while crews of kids walked the park picking up bags of trash and recycling them.

Trash Tally!

- 13 bags of trash (5 bags of plastic recycled)
- 23 tires on rims
- 1 refrigerator
- 2 metal refrigerator racks
- 7 large chunks of Styrofoam (countless small chunks)
- 2 coolers
- 3 plastic 5-gallon buckets
- 1 55-gallon metal drum
- 1 glass bottle of Diazonon insecticide
- 1 glass Clorox bottle circa 1951
- Coast Guard navigation buoys
- 2 55-gallon plastic barrels
- 4 propane tanks
- 1 6-foot piece of black plastic drain tile
- 33 balls (all types and sizes)
- 2 jugs of liquid oil-based wood stain
- 3 duck decoys



The World Bird Sanctuary naturalists showed off a diversity of injured birds rescued from the wild. This was just one of many presentations and exhibits geared toward educating the public on our river resources and the plants and animals that depend on them.

photo by Melanie Cheney

Thanks and Praises

Washington Clean-up and River Festival Sponsors

Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources
L-A-D Foundation
John & Alex Jansen
Washington Boat Club

Washington Partners

Ameren UE
Americorps
Anheuser-Busch
Bass Pro Shop
Gloria & Michael Bauermeister
City of Washington
Pat Jones
MannWell's Coffee
Missouri Dept. of Conservation
Missouri Stream Team
Missouri River 340
Mike & Maria Smith
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Washington Missourian
Washington Parks & Rec. Dept.
Williams Brothers Meat Market

Festival Exhibitors

Area High School Students
Washington Historical Society
Washington Public Library
The Greenway Network
Leftovers, etc.
St. Louis/Midwest Turtle & Tortoise Society
Hillerman's Nursery & Florist
The Open Space Council
US Geological Survey
Missouri Master Naturalists
Missouri Water Patrol
Missouri River Relief
Botanical Walk with Bill Davit
Shaw Nature Reserve
Bourbeuse Stream Team #3

Festival Entertainment

World Bird Sanctuary
River Songs
Babaloo
Greg Krone, Wayne Roy & Ginny Blankenship
Augusta Bottoms Consort

Washington River Festival:

Celebrating the Big Muddy

Soon after Washington high school teacher Mike Smith and Missouri River Relief decided on a date for a Washington clean-up, Mike's friend Gloria floated the idea of a River Festival. She had in mind a day to not just clean-up the river, but to celebrate the river through education and music.

And she took off from there! The festival included educational exhibits on Missouri River history, biology and ecology and advocacy. Kid's activities drew in the children to thinking about fish, the river and their place in it all. Music, much of it centered on the river or in engaging the audience (especially children), flowed all day long. The event kicked off with a presentation by the World Bird Sanctuary, with owls, hawks and turkey vultures present to give the audience a close-up view of what they ordinarily see high in the sky above.

Local vendors participated in an experiment for the city of Washington: create as much of a "trash-less" event as possible. Plastic, glass and aluminum were recycled. Vendors were required to use corn-starch-based biodegradable plates and containers (supplied by Gloria and the festival). These were collected separately to be composted at a local tree farm.

The mission of the festival was to engage a diverse citizenry in a celebration of a natural resource that is integral to the history of Washington, but is not often celebrated.

Once again, a Missouri River Relief Clean-up (even one ultimately cancelled by that same river's whims) provided a networking opportunity for river lovers to create something even bigger.

for more results, stories and photos, check out our blog: <http://riverrelief.blogspot.com/>