

For Immediate Release

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Annual Event Improves DuPage River Quality

Volunteers Sought for The Conservation Foundation's River Sweep on June 7

NAPERVILLE, ILL. (May 5, 2008) – What do a sofa, a wheel chair, golf clubs and a car battery have in common? Each is part of the 180 tons of garbage removed from the DuPage River since the 1991 launch of the annual River Sweep, sponsored by The Conservation Foundation, Waste Management and the DuPage County Storm Water Management Division. Volunteers are being sought for this year's event, to be held Saturday, June 7, from 9 a.m. to noon.

River Sweep volunteers are needed at multiple locations along the river and its associated streams, tributaries and detention ponds in DuPage County as well as in Bolingbrook and Plainfield in Will County. "Tools of the trade," including garbage bags, work gloves and trash pokers, will be provided. Water for volunteers is donated by Ice Mountain, and a light snack will be available.

Among the other items removed from DuPage River waterways since the River Sweep began in 1991: Folding chairs, shopping carts, sofas, a Barbie Jeep, trash cans, a gas pump, carpeting, plastic sleds, bicycles, a cement chute, tires, chain link fencing, computers and thousands of cans, bottles and plastic bags. The amount of garbage removed from the DuPage River at the River Sweep peaked at more than 20 tons at the 1995 event, and has declined to a low of six tons in 2007.

"Citizens in DuPage County are becoming increasingly aware of the damage that can be created when our valuable resources are not taken care of properly," says Brook McDonald, president and CEO of The Conservation Foundation. "As a result, each year less garbage makes its way to our waterways."

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The River Sweep is the ultimate win-win-win, McDonald reports. Since the event kick-off 17 years ago, 7,300 volunteers have participated as individuals, families and groups in a positive community service activity that likewise provides beneficial outdoor exercise. The quality of waterways improves, reducing flooding potential. And at the same time, fish and other wildlife in DuPage River waterways benefit from the removal of hazards.

The DuPage River Sweep is supported by American Rivers, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency grant. Marketing support is received from WEVR-FM 95.9, "The River."

To register, volunteers can contact the representatives at the individual clean-up locations listed below. Walk-in volunteers are also welcome on the day of the event.

2008 DuPage River Sweep Community Liaisons:

Addison: Ron Remus, 630-620-2020

Carol Stream: Jim Knudsen, 630-871-6220

Bloomingtondale: Ed Reidy, 630-529-3650, Ext. 25

Bolingbrook: Alice Eastman, 630-783-6570

Lisle: Mary Lou Kalsted, 630-271-4107

Lombard: Dave Gorman, 630-620-5765

Plainfield: Jonathan Proulx, 815-609-6139

Villa Park: Jan and Ellen Stortz, 630-832-4876

Warrenville: Jim Kleinwachter 630-553-0687, Ext. 302

Wheaton: Phil Landrum, 630-653-4588

For additional River Sweep 2008 information, visit www.theconservationfoundation.org or contact Sue George via email at sgeorge@theconservationfoundation.org or by phone at 630-428-4500, Ext. 22.

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The Conservation Foundation is a nonprofit land and watershed protection organization. Established in 1972 by business and community leaders, the Foundation is dedicated to preserving open space and natural lands, protecting rivers and watersheds, and promoting stewardship of the environment in northeast Illinois. Working closely with citizens, elected officials, developers, land use planners, park district and forest preserves, the Foundation has contributed to the protection of more than 30,000 acres of open space lands in northeast Illinois. The Conservation Foundation has more than 4,500 donors and members, and is headquartered at the 60-acre McDonald Farm in Naperville, Ill. A program office is located at the historic Dickson-Murst Farm in Montgomery, Ill. For additional information about The Conservation Foundation, including its programs and services, visit www.theconservationfoundation.org or call 630-428-4500.