

For Immediate Release

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River Sweep a Sweeping Success

Volunteers Remove Four Tons of DuPage River Debris at The Conservation Foundation Event

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (July 11, 2008) – Seven 300-pound pipes topped the list of notable items in the four tons of debris volunteers removed from DuPage River waterways during the River Sweep event held in conjunction with National Rivers Month in June. Presented by The Conservation Foundation with sponsorship support by Waste Management and the DuPage County Storm Water Management Division, the River Sweep took place in multiple communities along the river including Addison, Carol Stream, Bloomingdale, Bolingbrook, Lisle, Lombard, Plainfield, Villa Park, Warrenville and Wheaton.

More than 375 volunteers helped clean up the DuPage River and its associated streams, tributaries and detention ponds. Individual, family and team volunteers included employees of ENSR, an international environmental consulting and construction firm with offices in Warrenville, Ill., and Ice Mountain® brand bottled natural spring water in Woodridge, Ill. Volunteers from the Naperville Evening Kiwanis, The Morton Arboretum, various area churches and several area Boy Scout troops also pitched in.

“As part of Ice Mountain’s goal to be good stewards of the environment, employees voted among a number of local initiatives and the River Sweep ‘won’,” said James Roberts, zone operations manager, who led the Ice Mountain team of 20 volunteers. “This is our first effort of this kind as a group and it was a great experience for employees and their families. We’ll be back next year.”

The Ice Mountain team removed the seven 300-pound pipes from the wetland adjacent to the river at the Hidden Lakes Park, a Bolingbrook Park District facility. Ice Mountain also donated bottled water for River Sweep volunteers; the bottles are among the lightest weight in the industry, which maximizes recycling ability and reduces shipping costs to responsibly manage resources.

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The Conservation Foundation//Add One

Since the River Sweep began in 1991, nearly 8,000 volunteers have removed a total of 184 tons of debris from DuPage River waterways. The amount of garbage removed from the DuPage River at the River Sweep peaked at more than 20 tons at the 1995 event, declining to six tons in 2007 and to an all-time low of four tons during this year's event. The drop is not from a lack of cleanup effort by volunteers, but from ongoing education on the need to properly care for waterway ecosystems for the benefit of all.

The four tons of debris removed during this year's River Sweep also included a vacuum cleaner, bookcase, CD player, computer monitor, plastic swimming pool, bicycle, road sign, leather jacket, man's suit, bedding (comforters, sheets and pillow cases), tires and hub caps, a pallet, an orange construction cone, numerous golf balls, CD/DVD/VHS media, and numerous bags of cans, bottles, Styrofoam and plastic bags.

"Our volunteers continue to find some amazing items in DuPage River waterways, but the ongoing decline in the amount of debris removed is great news. It shows people are getting the message about the importance of taking care of our resources properly," says Brook McDonald, president and CEO of The Conservation Foundation.

Among the various kinds of water pollution, the most visual forms are litter and debris. While some natural debris is good for fish and wildlife habitat, man-made litter and unwanted debris can be costly. It endangers fish and wildlife, detracts from scenic beauty, and clogs municipal and industrial water intakes. Debris is often a source of other water pollutants such as toxic chemicals and bacteria. Proper waste handling, including reuse and recycling, environmentally-sound farm and forestry management practices and volunteer cleanup activities like the River Sweep can help keep unwanted materials from entering waterways.

"The recent flood devastation of major rivers in Illinois and throughout the Midwest is a tragedy for flood victims as well as the ecosystem," says McDonald. "Ongoing clean-up efforts such as the River Sweep can help keep waterways flowing cleanly and reduce the likelihood of future flooding disasters."

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

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a gift certificate donated by Chipotle Mexican Grill.

Municipal support came from the villages of Lisle and Plainfield; the DuPage County Forest Preserve; park districts in Bloomingdale, Bolingbrook, Downers Grove, Lisle and Naperville; and public works departments in Lisle, Lombard and Addison.

For additional River Sweep 2008 information, visit www.theconservationfoundation.org or contact Sue George at sgeorge@theconservationfoundation.org or 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.

Editors, please note: 2008 River Sweep image captions are presented below. For print-quality, high-resolution images, contact Laura Glaza at lglaza@theconservationfoundation.org or 630-428-4500, Ext. 25.

Image Captions from the 2008 River Sweep event sponsored by The Conservation Foundation

PHOTO: Group shot under The Conservation Foundation banner

The teams from ENSR environmental consulting and construction and Ice Mountain brand natural spring water celebrate the success of The Conservation Foundation-sponsored River Sweep at the Bolingbrook location.

PHOTOS: Volunteers carry big pipes in grassy area (three separate images available)

A team from Ice Mountain brand natural spring water removes one of seven 300-pound pipes from the natural wetlands area adjacent to the DuPage River in Bolingbrook during the 2008 River Sweep event presented by The Conservation Foundation.

PHOTO: Ice Mountain team with all seven 300-lb. pipes

The Ice Mountain brand natural spring water team celebrates the removal of seven three-hundred pound pipes from the natural area adjacent to the DuPage River in Bolingbrook during the 2008 River Sweep event presented by The Conservation Foundation.

PHOTO: ENSR team members on a boat retrieve debris from the DuPage River

Volunteers from the ENSR environmental consulting and construction firm team utilized boats to remove debris from the DuPage River at the Bolingbrook location of the 2008 River Sweep event presented by The Conservation Foundation.