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Sea Coast Echo



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REVISED: Coastal Cleanup Nets 4,032 Bags of Trash

Boaters and land-based volunteers flocked to Mississippi's beaches, islands and waterways to pick up marine debris at **43** designated cleanup sites during the 18th annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, part of the International Coastal Cleanup—the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment. More than **3,200** volunteers picked up **4,032** bags of trash along **147** miles of Coastal waterways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the Barrier Islands during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

Volunteers collected **63,111** pounds of trash—that's *more than 31.5 tons* of marine debris—including **4** dump truckloads of marine debris too large to fit in trash bags, such as the two refrigerators found on Deer Island. Other items collected were: tires, a car battery, a television, two riding lawn mowers, tires, 8-track tapes, a kitchen cabinet door, ceramic serving dishes, a bundle of foreign mail, a swim fin, wooden pallets, Princess Diana Royal Wedding commemorative coin, two cars, a Tennessee Williams novel, and boxer shorts. There were **4** bird entanglements reported, one turtle, and a raccoon. The most peculiar item reported was a breast implant found on Horn Island. The DMR Fisheries Dive Team did an underwater cleanup of the pier at West Ship Island and removed three bunches of fishing line, including some with treble hooks and some with a mirror lure.

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup—in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup—takes place each year on the third Saturday in September. Hundreds of thousands of people across the world spend three hours combing the beaches and waterways to pick up trash that pollutes our waters, harms marine life, hampers tourism and poses health risks to beach-goers. During last year's International Coastal Cleanup about 450,000 volunteers worldwide removed debris from 18,000 miles of coasts spanning 74 different nations. They collected 8.2 million pounds of debris, including enough picnic supplies for a family of four to have a picnic every day for the next 60 years.

More than 50 percent of the debris found during the last Mississippi Coastal Cleanup came from land-based sources such as beach picnics, inappropriate or illegal dumping and general littering. The source of most debris is human activity. "Debris generated on land can be blown, swept, or washed out to sea. While storms like Katrina are one source of debris, most debris can be traced back to a single source—people," said Lauren Thompson, state coordinator of the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and public relations director for the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. "If we change our behavior, we can keep marine debris out of the water."

The mission of the international cleanup is to remove debris from shorelines, bayous, bays, rivers, waterways and beaches; collect valuable information on the amount and types of debris collected; educate people on the issue of marine debris; and use the data collected to affect positive change. Volunteers clean beaches and collect information on what they find, using the International Coastal Cleanup Data Card, so that sources of marine debris can be targeted for education or pollution prevention campaigns. State coordinators mail the data cards to the Ocean Conservancy in Washington, D.C. where the data is tabulated. Over the years, data from the cleanups have been used to enact local, state, national, and even international legislation and agreements.

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After the cleanup, John Graham of Outback Steakhouse in D'Iberville and his staff—assisted by 50 Girl Scouts—provided a free lunch of hamburgers, chicken sandwiches, chips, fruit and drinks to **1,500** volunteers between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. In Jackson County, **500** volunteers received a free lunch of beef and chicken sandwiches, sides and drinks at The Shed Barbeque in Ocean Springs courtesy of The Shed and Chevron. In Hancock County, the Office of Congressman Gene Taylor and the Bay St. Louis Rotary Club treated volunteers to hotdogs and drinks at a cookout held at the foot of Garfield Ladner Memorial Pier and Coleman Ave. at the beach in Waveland.

“The community came out in full force to make this year’s Mississippi Coastal Cleanup a huge success. Thousands of South Mississippians and visitors rolled up their sleeves to clean up their coastal communities and make our shoreline and waterways a safer and more enjoyable place for people and wildlife,” Thompson said. “The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup was made possible only through the dedication and hard work of the coordinators, sponsors and volunteers who planned and participated in this hands-on educational event.”

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup is sponsored by the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force, which is made up of representatives from Allied Waste Services; Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Gulf Islands National Seashore; Hancock County Chamber of Commerce; Hancock Insurance; Harrison County Beautification; Harrison County Sand Beach Department; Home Depot; Jackson County Solid Waste; Keesler Air Force Base; Mississippi Air National Guard CRTG-Gulfport; Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium; Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Mississippi Department of Marine Resources; Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College; Mississippi State University Coastal Research & Extension Center; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Naval Construction Battalion Center; Naval Station Pascagoula; Office of Congressman Gene Taylor; Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State; Outback Steakhouse; Rotary International District 6840 and Sea Coast Echo.

Co-sponsors (in-kind donations) include: Allen Beverages, Inc.; Applewhite Industries; The Bay Press; Beverage Association of Mississippi; Cellular South; City of Biloxi; Club Caribbean Diver and Travel; Coast Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Inc.; Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Consolidated; First American Printing and Direct Mail; K99FM, Magic 93.7, 92.5 Hallelujah, and News Radio 104.9; Lamar Advertising of South Mississippi; Macland Disposal Inc.; Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Mississippi Media; Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce; Rainbow Water; The Shed Barbeque, Ship Island Excursions; The Ocean Conservancy; The Sun Herald; and WLOX-TV 13.

The cleanup site statistics are as follows:

Hancock County: 225 volunteers collected 428 bags of trash

Hwy. 90 to Jourdan River	40 volunteers and 70 bags
Clermont Harbor/Lakeshore	45 volunteers and 95 bags
Bookter St. to Bay Oaks	28 volunteers and 31 bags
Bookter St. to Hwy. 90	70 volunteers and 125 bags
Coleman Ave. to Buccaneer State Park	13 volunteers and 42 bags
Bay Oaks to Coleman Ave.	29 volunteers and 65 bags

Harrison County: 1,455 volunteers collected 2,393 bags of trash

Biloxi—Rodenberg Ave. east	396 volunteers and 424 bags
Gulfport—west of Grand Casino	395 volunteers and 506 bags
Deer Island	26 volunteers and 111 bags
D'Iberville Boat Launch	33 volunteers and 15 bags
Fountain Pier	72 volunteers and 38 bags
KAFB Marina	17 volunteers and 8 bags
Forrest Avenue Pier	4 volunteers and 11 bags
Gulfport Lake	30 volunteers and 32 bags
Keegan Bayou (Back Bay)	115 volunteers and 276 bags
James Hill Park	75 volunteers and 50 bags
Long Beach Harbor west	143 volunteers and 298 bags
Pass Christian Harbor	103 volunteers and 609 bags
Lower Turkey Creek	46 volunteers and 15 bags

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Jackson County: 1,215 volunteers collected 1,079 bags of trash

Bluff Creek	5 volunteers and 9 bags
Gautier City Park	30 volunteers and 35 bags
Pine Island (West Pascagoula River)	5 volunteers and 5 bags
I.G. Levy Park	39 volunteers and 55 bags
Graveline Road/Shepard State Park	50 volunteers and 73 bags
Shell Landing	53 volunteers and 42 bags
I-10 Boat Launch	63 volunteers and 40 bags
Front Beach	195 volunteers and 70 bags
East Beach	69 volunteers and 64 bags
Fort Bayou Boat Launch	18 volunteers and 9 bags
Davis Bayou (GINS)	32 volunteers and 11 bags
Ocean Springs Fishing Bridge	18 volunteers and 39 bags
Gulf Park Estates Public Pier	89 volunteers and 75 bags
Belle Fontaine Beach	125 volunteers and 250 bags
Pascagoula Beach	209 volunteers and 165 bags
The Riverfront (Moss Point)	103 volunteers and 37 bags
Hwy 63 Boat Ramp	77 volunteers and 48 bags
Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Bayou Heron)	35 volunteers and 52 bags

Barrier Islands: 343 volunteers collected 132 bags of trash (#bags is preliminary, boaters still calling in results)

Horn Island	142 volunteers and 56 bags
Petit Bois Island	28 volunteers and 6 bags
West Ship Island	65 volunteers and 70 bags
East Ship Island	4 volunteers and no report
Sand Island	20 volunteers and no report
Cat Island	72 volunteers and no report

PHOTO CREDIT: Photos courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.



Volunteers dig debris out of the sand on Biloxi's beach during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup held Sept. 16, 2006. Of the more than 3,000 volunteers participating, nearly 400 volunteers picked up 424 bags of trash at Biloxi's Rodenberg Avenue site.



About 115 volunteers from the Naval Construction Training Center at the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport picked up 4,940 pounds of debris at the Keegan Bayou site in Biloxi during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup held Sept. 16, 2006.

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