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Earth Month in Action: Communities Across the Region Unite for Month-Long Environmental Action and Creative Expression

Portland, Ore., May 4, 2026 – SOLVE’s annual Earth Month initiative, in partnership with Portland General Electric, wrapped up this week with powerful results and even stronger community spirit. For the first time, the program expanded to span the full month of April, turning Earth Month into coordinated action across Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Altogether, **over 5,000 volunteers** of all ages participated in **200+ cleanup and restoration projects** across urban communities in Portland, Vancouver, Salem and Medford, along the Oregon Coast, and in rural and natural areas of Southern and Eastern Oregon. Together, they removed over **45,000 pounds of litter and marine debris**, cleared half an acre as well as 50+ trees **of invasive species** such as English ivy and Himalayan blackberry, and mulched over 8,000 plants, helping restore natural spaces and protect waterways throughout the region.

From downtown cleanups to coastal restoration efforts, events throughout April highlighted the diversity, creativity, and energy of community action.

Earth Month Highlights:

Detrash Portland with Fred Meyer and the Portland Trail Blazers, Director Park, April 8

Earth Month began in downtown Portland with a high-energy kickoff event at Director Park, hosted in partnership with Fred Meyer and the Portland Trail Blazers. 89 volunteers alongside special appearance by Blaze the Trail Cat cleaned surrounding streets and public spaces from 200 pounds of litter, while a live DJ, snacks and a photo booth set the tone for a month of action.

Lents Park Cleanup with Dillon T. Pickle and Saucy T. Sausage, SE Portland, April 18

Midway through the month, 75 volunteers gathered at Lents Park for a lively neighborhood cleanup. The mascots of The Portland Pickles and Portland Bangers, Dillon T. Pickle and Saucy T. Sausage, brought energy and fun to the event as community members of all ages worked together to remove litter and care for the park.

Earth Day Cleanup at Tom McCall Waterfront Park, Portland, April, 22

On Earth Day, more than 300 volunteers **braved the rain** and showed up for a large-scale cleanup along

the Willamette River. Participants removed **1,050 pounds of litter** from one of Portland's most iconic public spaces. Local artist Mike Bennett with a sneak peek of SOLVE's new mascot, snacks and drinks helped keep spirits high throughout the event.

Inaugural *Pick It Up, Medford!*, April 22

In Southern Oregon, the first-ever *Pick It Up, Medford!* event brought volunteers together at Pear Blossom Park to care for the city's historic downtown. As part of SOLVE's expanding *Pick It Up!* series, the event introduced the community-driven cleanup model to Medford, bringing residents and partners together for a shared day of action.

Microplastic Cleanup, Rockaway Beach, April 23

On the Oregon Coast, nearly 300 volunteers, the majority of them students from Central Valley Catholic Middle School, participated in a microplastic cleanup at Rockaway Beach. Efforts included sifting sand for microplastics and removing marine debris, highlighting the connection between inland litter and ocean health while engaging the next generation of environmental stewards.

Making Earth Cool Community Cleanup and Parade, SE Portland, April 25

Earth Month concluded on a celebratory note in Portland's Sunnyside neighborhood, where the Making Earth Cool cleanup and parade combined environmental action with creativity and community connection. Volunteers collected litter before joining a neighborhood parade, followed by a costume contest, music, and activities that highlighted sustainable living in a fun and engaging way.

"This year's Oregon Spring Cleanup showed the incredible impact of expanding Earth Month into a full month of action," said Kris Carico, CEO of SOLVE. *"From Portland to Medford and communities along the coast, volunteers came together to make a difference where they live. It's inspiring to see this level of engagement grow, and it highlights the power of local action in creating a cleaner, healthier region."*

Building on this momentum, SOLVE continues to support volunteer-led cleanup and restoration efforts year-round, providing resources, tools, and opportunities for individuals and groups to stay involved in caring for their communities.

2026 Supporters

The Oregon Spring Cleanup 2026 was made possible through the partnership with Portland General Electric and generous support of Clean Water Services, Fred Meyer, Metro, Oregon State Park & Recreation, The Standard, AAA Oregon/Idaho, Intel, Kaiser Permanente, KOIN6, LAM Research, Lithia & Driveway, National Parks Recreation & Parks Association, and PepsiCo.

About SOLVE

SOLVE brings communities together to take care of our environment and enhance our waterways. Since 1969, the organization has grown from a small, grassroots initiative to a national model of volunteer action. Today, SOLVE mobilizes and trains thousands of volunteers of all ages across Oregon, and SW Washington, to clean and restore our neighborhoods and natural areas, while empowering a community of environmental stewards for our state. Visit solve.org for more information or follow SOLVEPNW on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#).