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Local Action, Regional Impact: Volunteers Clean Beaches, Rivers and Community Spaces

Portland, Ore., September 29, 2026 – From September 18 through September 27, communities across Oregon and Southwest Washington came together for SOLVE’s annual *Beach & Riverside Cleanup*. During a 10-day volunteer effort, **1,553 volunteers** participated in **96 cleanup and restoration projects across 15 counties**, contributing more than **3,100 hours of service**. Projects took place in Clackamas, Clark, Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Deschutes, Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Washington, and Yamhill counties.

Together, volunteers removed nearly **9,000 pounds of litter and debris**, helping prevent pollution from traveling through local waterways to beaches and the Pacific Ocean. Volunteers also **cleared over 9,450 square feet of invasive species**, an area larger than three tennis courts, and **mulched 300 plants** to support healthier habitats and more resilient landscapes.

“Every year, Beach & Riverside Cleanup shows what is possible when people unite to care for the places they call home,” said Kris Carico, CEO of SOLVE. “This year, we saw that community action take many forms, from cleaning beaches and rivers to removing invasive plants and caring for neighborhood spaces. These local efforts add up to a meaningful regional impact.”

A Season of Environmental Action

The Beach & Riverside Cleanup showcased the range of community members, partners and projects that make SOLVE’s work possible across Oregon and Southwest Washington. From established cleanup initiatives to hands-on restoration projects, highlights from this year included:

Oregon Coast: Cleaning Up for People and Wildlife

Along the Oregon Coast, **25 cleanup events from Astoria/Warrenton to Gold Beach** invited volunteers to remove litter and marine debris from beaches, shorelines and coastal recreation areas.

In Gold Beach, **Paws for Nature** combined a community beach cleanup with a dog walk, giving people and their four-legged companions a chance to care for the coastline.

Rivers Across the Region

River-focused projects gave volunteers opportunities to care for waterways and the communities connected to them. In Southern Oregon, volunteers joined projects across the Rogue Valley as part of Bear Creek Stewardship Day, caring for the Bear Creek watershed through litter removal, invasive plant removal and pollinator garden maintenance. Projects took place in Ashland, Talent, Phoenix and Medford, uniting neighbors, organizations, local partners and volunteers to care for the waterways and natural areas that connect community members throughout the valley.

These projects reflect the breadth of river-focused action taking place through *Beach & Riverside Cleanup*, from urban riverfronts and popular recreation areas to watershed and habitat restoration projects across the region.

***Pick It Up, Bend!* | September 27**

Following its inaugural event in 2025, *Pick It Up, Bend!* returned for a second year at the Old Mill District. 42 volunteers spent the morning removing 175 pounds of litter from some of Bend's most popular recreational spaces. The event also continued SOLVE's partnership with the Johnson Ohana Foundation. SOLVE joined Jack Johnson's concert in Bend as a Village Green partner, connecting a morning of local volunteer action with an evening focused on community and the environment.

Pick It Up, Bend! 2026 was made possible through the support from Old Mill District, Hayden Homes Theatre, Lithia & Driveway, and Cascade Disposal.

Pick It Up, Bend! is part of SOLVE's growing *Pick It Up!* regional cleanup initiative, which unites residents, businesses and local organizations to improve shared public spaces city by city.

Thank You to Our Volunteers and Partners

SOLVE extends its gratitude to the volunteers, event leaders, business partners and organizations who made the 2026 Beach & Riverside Cleanup possible. Their time and effort helped make a visible difference across Oregon and Southwest Washington.

SOLVE's **2026 Beach & Riverside Cleanup** is proudly supported by Clean Water Services, Kaiser Permanente, Knife River, Keep America Beautiful, Metro, Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation, Owens Corning, Portco Packaging, Tillamook, Harper Houf Peterson Righellis Inc., and KOIN.

To learn more about SOLVE and find upcoming volunteer opportunities, visit solve.org.

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](#).