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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.

## Rivers Across the Region

River-focused projects gave volunteers opportunities to care for waterways and the communities connected to them. In Portland, volunteers gathered at **OMSI** before spreading out along the Eastbank Esplanade and surrounding streets to remove litter before it could reach the Willamette River. Additional Portland projects along the riverfront included cleanups at Peace Memorial Park, the Eastbank Esplanade and Duckworth Dock.

Farther east and south, volunteers took action along the **Upper Clackamas River** and at **three cleanup events along the Molalla River**, removing litter from river corridors and recreation areas while helping care for trails and surrounding natural areas. In Salem, volunteers gathered at **Cascades Gateway Park** to remove litter before it could flow into Walter Wirth Lake and Mill Creek.

## Community Action in Vancouver, Washington

Across the Columbia River in Vancouver, Washington, five Beach & Riverside Cleanup events drew volunteers to a mix of litter cleanup and habitat restoration. Projects ranged from removing litter at Waterfront Park and Esther Short Park to ivy removal at Historic Covington House and Ellsworth Springs West, helping protect trees, wildlife habitat and recreational spaces.

The projects highlighted the many ways everyone can contribute to healthier waterways and natural areas, whether through picking up litter, removing invasive plants or caring for the public spaces they use every day.

## *Pick It Up, Milwaukie!* | September 19

For the second year, *Pick It Up, Milwaukie!* united residents, local businesses, and families in downtown Milwaukie and at Milwaukie's Bay Park, in partnership with Bob's Red Mill. Volunteers removed litter from downtown streets, business corridors and green spaces, including the river's edge at Bay Park, before gathering at the Sustainability Fair.

*Pick It Up, Milwaukie!* 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](https://solve.org).

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**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](https://solve.org) for more information or follow SOLVEPNW on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#).