

NEWS RELEASE

For information:

Nicole Hardiman at 422-1014.

2010 West Fork Cleanup Big Success!

June 29, 2010

On June 5, 96 volunteers collected approximately 1.52 tons or 3,040 pounds of trash and recyclables – including 28 passenger tires and two semi-truck tires – from the West Fork-White River during the 5th Annual West Fork Watershed Celebration & Cleanup.

“We collected 1,000 more pounds of debris this year than last year,” said Nicole Hardiman, interim administrator for the Beaver Watershed Alliance, a new partner in the event this year. Hardiman chaired this year’s planning committee.

“Other items pulled from the river included the shell of a big screen television set, as well as a newspaper dispensing box,” she said.

Riverside Park in downtown West Fork served as headquarters again this year. The cleanup began at 8 a.m. and ended at 11 a.m., when volunteers were treated to a BBQ chicken lunch with all the fixings, as well as music from Bernice and Bryan Hembree and door prizes from numerous contributors. Those in attendance also had the opportunity to visit with a handful of exhibitors who provided games and education. Exhibitors included the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association, the Arkansas Watershed Advisory Group, Watershed Conservation Resource Center, Audubon Arkansas, Beaver Water District, the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Arkansas Stream Team, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Washington County’s Conservation District, and Washington County Environmental Affairs.

“The cleanup brings attention to the need to take care of the West Fork of the White River,” Hardiman said. “This tributary flows into Beaver Lake, which is our supply of drinking water. We hold the cleanup as a way to continue to protect our source of drinking water and protect wildlife habitats.”

Cleanup volunteers included teams of youth and adults from the Church of Latter Day Saints-Fayetteville, the Ozark Society, the Arkansas Canoe Club, and Washington County 4-H.

This year’s event partners included the West Fork Watershed Alliance, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, Arkansas Stream Team, Beaver Watershed Alliance, Watershed Conservation Resource Center, Washington County Environmental Affairs, the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, and Beaver Water District. Sponsors included the City of Fayetteville, the City of West Fork, Audubon Arkansas, Bank of Fayetteville, Arvest Bank, Tyson Foods, Pack Rat, Waste Management and Keep Arkansas Beautiful.

“We couldn’t hold the event without generous partners and sponsors such as the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and Arkansas Stream Team, who helped us with funding to ensure we had what we needed to facilitate the event, and Tyson Foods, who donated all the chicken for the event,” Hardiman said. “All of the partners, sponsors, exhibitors, and volunteers who helped clean the stream and cook the chicken and gathered and donated door prizes—everyone deserves a big thank you.”

The West Fork-White River Partners, in conjunction with the local West Fork Watershed Alliance, plan to determine next year’s date no later than the end of August. Tentative dates

being considered include April 16 and April 30 of 2011. The committee will begin meeting 12 weeks in advance of the 2011 event, to ensure that there's ample time to plan all the details for the event, including maximizing outreach efforts to communities that live and work in the watershed.

“With an earlier date, it's likely to be cooler and also we may have more success recruiting teams of young people from schools in the West Fork-White River watershed,” Hardiman said. “This watershed includes all or part of four cities -- West Fork, Greenland, Winslow, and Fayetteville. We want to expand our reach to include more volunteers from the watershed as a whole.”

For more information, contact Hardiman at 422-1014.

Cutline: Volunteers load trash at West Fork Cleanup on June 5, 2010.

