

Volunteers sought for river cleanup

By EMILY LOOSE
Staff Writer

Keeping the area clean means a need for assistance.

Keep Huntingdon County Beautiful (KHCB) and Rothrock Outfitters are looking for volunteers to aid in the 8th Juniata River Cleanup that will take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 8.

According to Logan

See Cleanup

Page 3

Submitted photo

Volunteers from the 2019 Juniata River Cleanup remove pollution from the Frankstown branch of Juniata River. Volunteers are needed for this year's event, which is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 8.



Cleanup

Continued from Page 1

Stenger, watershed specialist of the Huntingdon County Conservation District and coordinator of KHCB, the project was started after Huntingdon County and three surrounding counties were awarded a grant by the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds in 2013.

"The goal was that all of the counties that the Juniata River flows through does their part to keep it cleaned up," he said.

Since 2013, KHCB and volunteers have been able to clear over 700 tires and 43,000 pounds of trash from the river.

The grant money helped aid in the cleanup until 2019. Due to the pandemic, there was no cleanup in 2020.

"The cleanup deals a lot with volunteers being close," Stenger said. "So we thought it was safer not to do it last year."

Though the grant from the foundation has been used up, there is some funding coming from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful for this year's cleanup.

Stenger said KHCB is also asking local businesses for donations. The money goes towards the disposal of the pollution and tires.

Though years prior saw an estimated 15 to 29 volunteers, Stenger hopes more folks will see the importance of the cleanup.

"Huntingdon County is unique in the amount of waterways we have that people can fish and swim in," he said. "There's a record number of people coming

out and doing activities as the pandemic dies down, but there's also a record number of pollution going on."

To get involved, Stenger said volunteers can call the conservation district office at (814) 627-1626 ex. 3021 or email him directly at watershed@huntingdonconservation.org.

Volunteers will meet at Smithfield Township Boat Launch. There will be free shuttles, food and T-shirts available. Volunteers will float in canoes through the river to clean.

"We aren't sure what we will see," Stenger said, "but we hope it helps people appreciate the area we have even more."

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