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## NEWS

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### **PVSC's River Restoration Department Reaches New Cleanup Milestones** *More than 11,000 tons of debris removed from the Passaic River since 1998*

(NEWARK) – The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission recently completed its skimming and shoreline cleanup for the 2013 year by removing more than 647 tons of floatables, trash, vegetation and other debris from the Passaic River and its tributaries. The successful debris removal effort was the result of PVSC's skimmer operations and 107 PVSC-sponsored shoreline cleanups with schools, community groups and environmental organizations.

"I'm pleased that PVSC's work has brought real and lasting value to the Passaic River and related waterways. Our river restoration programs continue to make important contributions to the local environment. Over the years, PVSC has become an invaluable partner with community groups, concerned citizens and school children within PVSC's service area," said Executive Director Michael DeFrancisci. "Our hope is to instill a life-long appreciation for the Passaic River watershed and its environs so that we create good stewards of the River."

The PVSC created the Passaic River/Newark Bay Restoration Program in 1998 to promote the recreational and economic uses of the Newark Bay, the Passaic River and its tributaries. Through its programs, PVSC staff aim to reinforce the importance of preserving and protecting the waterways and wildlife habitat in the region. PVSC also worked with over 12,200 students at 43 different schools in the PVSC service area.

Notable cleanups in 2013 included: Earth Day at the Great Falls with over 200 volunteers from AmeriCorps, the National Park Service (NPS), and the New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) representing the Great Falls Youth Council (GFYC) and 5th graders at Paterson School #7.

PVSC's River Restoration staff also completed a massive tire cleanup in Fair Lawn, removing over 2,000 illegally dumped tires and other debris from the Passaic River. PVSC also performed cleanups at sites in advance of the re-opening of the Statue of Liberty on July 4 and the Barclay's Tournament in August.

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The river restoration program is comprised of three elements – volunteer shoreline clean-ups, skimmer vessel floatables removal, and community or municipality requested clean-ups. The volunteer shoreline clean-up element has been among the most successful programs of its kind in the nation.

PVSC assists volunteer groups (including public and private schools, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops and community organizations) in conducting shoreline clean-ups to remove litter and debris from along waterways within its service area by providing all necessary clean-up supplies including debris removal.

Since the program's inception, PVSC's River Restoration Program, which is charged with preserving and protecting over 100 miles of area waterways, has removed over 11,100 tons of debris from the Newark Bay, the Passaic River and its tributaries, and sponsored over 970 individual clean ups along shorelines and in communities.

Debris Removal from Local Waterways by PVSC Passaic River/Newark Bay Restoration Program (in tons)			
Year	Shoreline Cleanups	Skimming Program	Total
1998	85.60	NA	85.60
1999	88.71	NA	88.71
2000	203.55	68.00	271.55
2001	451.20	86.18	537.38
2002	894.94	248.49	1143.43
2003	946.20	221.02	1167.22
2004	732.92	209.94	942.86
2005	863.72	217.50	1081.22
2006	828.40	119.13	947.53
2007	547.17	145.77	692.94
2008	469.90	68.58	538.48
2009	403.02	86.00	489.02
2010	676.23	210.74	886.97
2011	559.14	164.46	723.60
2012	485.23	371.83	857.06
2013	396.97	250.16	647.13
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8632.90</b>	<b>2467.80</b>	<b>11100.70</b>

Finally, PVSC conducts community requested clean-ups in response to community or municipal requests for assistance. These projects require the specialized equipment, experience and resources of PVSC's River Restoration crew that community groups or municipalities may not possess.

“Engaging the community – especially kids – in hands-on service projects such as shoreline cleanups helps PVSC reinforce the important lesson of environmental stewardship,” said PVSC Commissioner Kenneth J. Lucianin. “Education is a key component to maintaining the quality of our waterways and to the overall long-term health of our environment.”

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To learn more about PVSC's shoreline cleanups, or to schedule a program for 2014, visit  
<http://www.nj.gov/pvsc/education/>.

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*In order to protect and preserve local streams and rivers from water pollution, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission operates one of the country's oldest and largest treatment plants for the wastewaters of northern New Jersey, serving over 1.4 million people in five counties.*