

Carolina Canoe Club



River Clean-Up Handbook

Chapter 1 Six to Eight Weeks Prior to the Clean-Up Day

This section details things that you should be thinking about well ahead of the Clean-Up.

1. Obtain a map of your Clean-Up area.

Good sources for local maps are county offices, municipal agencies or town halls, real estate companies and banks.

2. Survey your Clean-Up area.

Familiarize yourself with roads, access areas, landings, etc.

3. Begin working on the preparatory checklist

Start preparing such details as access to watercraft and waste hauling. Also, prepare a backup plan (i.e. alternate date, etc.) if the water level or weather is not suitable.

4. Choose a meeting site.

This site will be the Clean-Up area headquarters. This will be the place where your volunteers will initially meet and where they will return at the end of their Clean-Up. Look for the following when choosing your meeting site:

- Good access to the site by volunteers. Sites that are difficult to locate will result in latecomers and no-shows.
- Ample parking facilities.
- Ample toilet facilities.
- Easy access to a phone (probably a cell phone).
- Areas for volunteers to congregate and distribute trash bags, data cards, obtain canoes or other watercraft, etc.
- Good placement and easy removal of waste containers.

5. Contact local officials if required.

Sometimes mass gathering permits are required by local ordinances. Also, you may be able to get special permission to engage in a normally restricted activity that will enhance the organization and control of the event. For example: vehicle operation is prohibited on Wrightsville Beach. But, through contact with the town, the Clean-Up area captain obtained permission to use two four-wheel drive trucks on the beach to collect full bags of trash, distribute extra trash bags and provide ice water for volunteers. The vehicles provided mobility and access in case of an emergency.

6. Contact the local law enforcement or E.M.T. if required.

These folks are an important asset in case of an emergency or if medical wastes are found during the Clean-Up. Also, they may waive parking fees in metered areas. A phone call in advance to the nearest E.M.T. or Rescue Squad is in order. This will allow them to schedule adequate personnel or locate an on-call unit closer to the area.

7. Promotion of the the Clean-Up

It is up to you as the organizer to solicit CCC volunteers to help with the Clean-Up. Here are some ideas to help you promote the the Clean-Up:

- Publish the event in the Paddler as well as posting updated information and announcements to the CCC email list.
- If you are planning a prize drawing for your volunteers, begin arrangements for acquiring the prizes.

Chapter 2

The Big Day

All of your preliminary planning is complete, and the day of the Clean-Up has arrived. Your volunteers are congregated at your meeting site awaiting your final instructions.

Your Role at the Site

As the organizer, you should remain available by phone contact if possible throughout the day. In this way you will be available to handle any situation, both logistical or emergency. If an emergency occurs, use your judgement to call the proper authorities if needed. Also, remember to fill out the Incident/Accident form.

You should arrive at the meeting site well ahead of time to set up for the day's activities. Duties should include:

- Setup for data card, pencil and trash bag/glove distribution
- Setup of food items
- Organize first aid and safety items
- Have canoes ready

1. Volunteer sign-in sheets are necessary.

They act as a waiver of liability for the Clean-Up and give you an accurate count and documentation of the total number of volunteers in your Clean-Up area. You can use this list to draw for prize giveaways.

2. It is your responsibility to address the volunteers.

Here is some information you will want to include in your speech:

- Welcome all your people. Let them know that their presence shows their concern for our rivers.
- Recognize any guests, sponsors or contributors (i.e. refreshments, gifts, financial support, local government, etc.).
- Let them know which river sections will be involved in the Clean-Up and where access points and dropoff points are. Have your volunteers divided into smaller groups to match the number of river sections.
- Ask each group to have at least one cell phone and have the Clean-Up leader's phone number available to them.
- Show them how to fill out the data cards. Repeat how important it is to correctly record the trash that they collect. If possible, tell them to work in pairs on collecting debris and the other recording data.
- Have each group designate one person to be responsible for making sure all data cards get back to the Clean-Up area team. Tell them to note unusual items.
- Emphasize these safety considerations:
 1. Stress the importance of wearing shoes and gloves, wearing hats and sunscreen. You should have sunscreen on hand at your Clean-Up area headquarters if possible.
 2. Remind your people not to overexert themselves. Remember that during hot, humid conditions, the heat index will be higher than the actual air temperature. Be familiar with the symptoms of heat disorders.
 3. If the weather is expected to be cold, make sure all participants are aware of this ahead of time, and are dressed appropriately. Be sure all participants are aware of symptoms of hypothermia and cancel the Clean-Up if weather conditions are dangerous.
 4. Inform your volunteers that there is a first aid kit at the site for the treatment of minor cuts, abrasions, bee stings, etc. (Be sure to tell them to fill out an accident report for any injury.)

5. Instruct volunteers not to touch medical waste. They should note its location and report back to you for collection by proper authorities. This procedure should be followed for any other suspicious materials such as unknown chemicals, blasting caps, etc.
 6. Comments should be made concerning boat safety and the use of life jackets (PFDs).
- Explain to your volunteers how to conduct a quality Clean-Up. Remind your volunteers that the smaller pieces of persistent debris are the ones most often mistaken for food by birds and are just as important to target for collection as the larger, more obvious debris.
 - Finally, tell your volunteers what time to return to the meeting site. Relay details for any post-Clean-Up events or drawings for prizes.

Be sure to ask if anyone has questions about the information you have just presented to them. When all questions have been addressed, have your volunteers line up for area assignments and area maps, distribution of data cards and garbage bags, and dispersal to their areas to begin their the Clean-Up activity.

Wrap-Up

Your volunteers will report back to the site and prepare for the post Clean-Up activities. But before we can call it a day, there are a few items that must be taken care of:

- Make sure all collected debris has been transported to the proper disposal site and that the number of bags collected has been tallied/recorded.
- Distribute any prizes you may have aquired.
- Final data should include the total number of bags collected, the total number of volunteers, river sections cleaned, total number of tires collected and any interesting/unusual items found.
- Your meeting sites must be cleaned and packed up. When all is completed, stop, take a deep breath, pat your Clean-Up area team and yourself on the back and take the rest of the day off.



Carolina Canoe Club

River Clean-Up Tally Sheet

Clean-Up Information:

Number of Team Volunteers (See Sign Up list for names): _____

Clean-Up Coordinator(s): _____ Date: _____

River Section: _____ Miles of River? _____

Method of Trash Disposal (please add contact information if possible): _____

Were photos taken? Yes / No (Please email photos to jsailus@gmail.com)

Tally Information:

Total # bags of Trash collected: _____

Kinds of Trash Collected: (check if found)

plastic bottles _____ glass bottles _____ aluminum cans _____ Tires _____ styrofoam _____

cigarette butts _____ plastic and paper bags _____ steel (cans, etc.) _____ Clothing _____

Most unusual, large, and weird trash collected (describe):

Other Comments:

Email: conservation.chair@carolinacanoecub.org

SAFETY RULES FOR PARTICIPANT OF CCC RIVER CLEAN-UPS

Be Smart and SAFE

Safety Tips to Remember

- *Protect yourself from the sun* by wearing a hat or visor, sunglasses and sunscreen.
- *Dress for the weather, heat or cold*, and wear old, comfortable (fleece or polypro) clothes that can get dirty.
- *Don't take salt tablets* unless your doctor prescribes them.
- *Wear gloves* to protect your hands & sturdy, closed-toe shoes to protect your feet. Do not go barefoot.
- *Wear a whitewater PFD and helmet* or any other necessary gear if you're cleaning by boat, and don't wade into water to pick up debris unless you're an experienced swimmer, are wearing a life jacket and know the depth of the water.
- *Take a snack and a drink along*, plus lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Have all adult leaders, and at least one in each group, *carry a cell phone* & list of important cell phone numbers to call in case of emergency, including the organizer's cell phone number.
- *Stay with a partner or group*. Avoid getting too far from the main group or at least inform others if you are moving to a secluded area. Be sure that children are supervised by an adult. If anyone gets hurt, tell your organizer immediately!
- *Watch for poison ivy*, snakes, yellow jackets and other stinging insects.
- Immediately after the Clean-Up, do a "tick check". The sooner you find & remove a tick, the less chance it will have to bite. Light-colored long pants & long-sleeved shirts will help make spotting ticks easier. Tuck shirt into pants and pants into socks for best protection.
- *Be careful on creeks and riverbanks*. They can be steep, slippery, and unstable. If you're unsure of the conditions, find a safer access.
- *Don't pick up anything that looks heavy*. Alert your organizer so it can be picked up later. If you find an animal—dead or alive—don't touch it. Animals carry diseases, and trapped or injured animals may bite. Report any animals found to your organizer.
- *Do not touch medical waste*, chemical containers, barrels, pesticides, or anything marked "dangerous", "toxic", "explosive", "hazardous", or "poison". Tell your organizer if you find any of these items and s/he will contact Illicit Discharge specialist and/or the proper authority.
- If it looks dangerous...it probably is! Stay away from it and stay safe!
- Have a safe, fun time! Please know that your efforts are making a difference for our watersheds, our communities, and our quality of life. THANK YOU!