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## Army, navy of volunteers clean trash at Jordan Lake

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BY CLEAN JORDAN LAKE

JORDAN LAKE -- On Saturday, an army of about 200 volunteers of all ages swarmed the woods along remote coves of Jordan Lake to pick up trash and haul it to the shoreline. Meanwhile, a navy of 50 volunteers launched from Robeson Creek Boat Ramp in boats, kayaks and canoes to cross the lake, load up trash and ferry it back to the

boat ramp.

A steady stream of vessels passed back and forth between the ramp and the coves. By afternoon, 700 bags of trash had arrived at the ramp, enough to overflow two trash bins. Even more startling was the stack of 600 tires, many still on rims, brought back on boats and piled six high in four rows along the side of the ramp. Recreational users launching their boats at the ramp were shocked by this ugly sight.

Clean Jordan Lake coordinated the assault on trash. Tom Colson, co-founder and president, said that "the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, N.C. Dept. of Transportation, North Carolina Forest Service, N.C. Big Sweep Program, Chatham County Waste Management and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary were invaluable to the tremendous success of the effort."

Fran DiGiano, co-founder of CJL added that "Chatham County Waste Management provided Dumpsters and covered the disposal costs in a landfill, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers paid the disposal fee for the tires, the Department of Transportation and Big Sweep gave us trash bags and gloves, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary provided logistic support to the effort, the Wildlife Resources Commission improved road access to trash sites for volunteers, and the North Carolina Forest Service provided off-road vehicles."

"Much of the trash is from stormwater runoff that originates in the watershed of the Haw River and eventually ends up on the shoreline," Colson said. "Trash is not just visual pollution," he added. "It disrupts the natural habitat of birds and harms the balance in the ecosystem. Sections of Jordan Lake could become ecological disaster areas if this trash is not removed and moreover, the restoration cost to the state will be high."

Junior high and high school volunteers, some studying environmental science, were astounded by the amount of trash that people carelessly throw away. Colson noted among the items were 55-gallon drums, a hot water heater, many propane tanks, thousands of glass bottles, aerosol cans of all types, and one 400-pound tractor tire.

"This was CJL's fifth cleanup event since its founding in August 2009," Colson said. "At the first event, 70 volunteers filled a Dumpster and two DOT dump trucks with several hundred bags from just an acre of shoreline. The outpouring of volunteers and service donors since then shows a strong desire to restore Jordan Lake's shoreline."

DiGiano added that "over 600 volunteers have removed about 2,000 bags of trash and 1,100 tires. In addition to our open public events, a young adult group (Mix, Meet, and Make a Change) and 150 from GlaxoSmithKline conducted their own cleanups under our supervision. Chatham County Waste Management has removed most of the trash, with a year-end total of seven full-sized Dumpsters." For details, visit [www.CleanJordanLake.org](http://www.CleanJordanLake.org). The next lakewide cleanup will be held on Big Sweep Saturday in October 2011.

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