

Media Release



bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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19th Annual May River Cleanup is Saturday, April 27

Town of Bluffton representatives are asking residents to help clean up the May River, her shores, nearby streets and parks of the Bluffton Historic District, Saturday, April 27, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

“This annual event is a wonderful way to honor our May River as we join together with our neighbors first thing on a Saturday for a cup of coffee and a fun morning of working together to protect Bluffton’s most cherished natural resource.” Mayor Lisa Sulka said.

May River Cleanup Highlights:

- Volunteers will meet at Oyster Factory Park located at the end of Wharf Street.
- Boats and kayaks are needed to assist with cleanup efforts (Please arrive at 8:30 a.m. to allow time for setup).
- Marshgrass Adventures, The Outside Foundation, Outside Hilton Head, Sun City Kayakers and local kayak club members will be assisting with cleanup efforts on the water. May River Blend coffee will be provided by Corner Perk.
- All supplies including gloves, bags, vests and water will be provided by the Town of Bluffton, American Rivers, Palmetto Pride, Keep Beaufort County Beautiful and Beaufort County Solid Waste & Recycling.
- Personal supplies such as sunscreen, bug spray and water will be provided.
- Snacks and lunch will be provided by the Hardeeville Wal-Mart. In addition, Be Green Packaging will be providing compostable dishware in an effort to support the event’s waste reduction goal.

In addition to the Cleanup, several organizations, such as Lowcountry Stormwater Partners, the Coastal Conservation League, and Beaufort County Conservation District will have educational displays about how to improve water quality in our local watersheds, including the May River Watershed. Some volunteer groups will have specific tasks designed to reduce watershed pollution.

Bryan McIlwee, the town's director of engineering, said each year this event grows in the number of participants and organizational partners.

"Nearly 300 people come to this event and it has become the community service project for many students, scout groups and civic organizations. Nearly 20 event partners also join together to protect and nurture our most cherished natural resource," McIlwee said, "This is truly a collective community effort."

Event Partnerships include:

- The Levi's Outlet Store 234 will be working to mark storm drains with a "No Dumping, Drains to Waterways" tile throughout the Historic District. Storm drain marking offers an excellent opportunity to further educate the public about the link between our storm drain system and the water quality of our local rivers, including the May River. If interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact Beth Lewis, water quality program administrator, via email blewis@townofbluffton.com.
- The Town of Bluffton is also partnering with Michael C. Riley Elementary School to host the 6th Annual School Participation Challenge. Students and their families will have the opportunity to take part in the Cleanup and waste reduction efforts provided by i2 Recycle. Coastal Kingdom will be partnering to assist the Town with the School Participation Challenge and participants will be given a live animal presentation at the end of the school year.
- Bluffton Police Department will be also be on the May River to ensure the safety of the Cleanup's volunteers.
- Continued support of the Town's two annual Cleanups is provided by the Outside Foundation, Outside Hilton Head, and the Beaufort County Stormwater Utility.

Event Has Waste Reduction Goal:

In the last 18 years, volunteers, community partners and Town staff members have removed more than 23 tons of litter, debris, discarded appliances and abandoned boats from the May River and Bluffton Historic District.

Three years ago, the event added a waste reduction goal. Together with i2 Recycle, a local recycling business, the Town again has made ongoing efforts to reduce event waste. This goal encourages the reuse and recycling of suitable materials. Volunteers are encouraged to take part in the sorting efforts during the event.

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