



LOWER WAPSIPINICON

RIVER CLEANUP PROJECT

P.O. Box 333, Long Grove, IA 52756

www.lowerwapsicleanup.org

POST-EVENT PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOLLETTTS, IA SEPTEMBER 6, 2007-- The second annual Lower Wapsipinicon River Cleanup Project, a canoeing- and camping-based river cleanup event, took place August 24-26, 2007. Forty-three volunteers removed four tons of trash from approximately ten waterway miles. Much of that tonnage was recycled. The odd part is that they never got on the waters of the Lower Wapsipinicon River.

“Mother Nature was flexing her muscles for weeks prior to our cleanup,” said coordinator Melisa Petersen. “We watched helplessly as the Wapsipinicon continued to swell from the long stint of rain that accumulated in the area of its massive watershed. The ironic thing is that we do this cleanup in late August because water levels are low and garbage visibility is high.”

Because the Wapsi was flooded, Petersen worked closely with Clinton County Conservation Board naturalists Mark Roberts and Chuck Jacobsen on a new plan focusing on a water area that is rarely accessible. “The high water kept us out of the Wapsi, but afforded us an opportunity to get into the beautiful backwaters maze of the Mississippi where much refuse gets trapped in the early spring floods. I knew the volunteers we had signed up would be happy to clean any watershed they could get their canoes onto, and the last thing we wanted to do was cancel the whole event.”

Happy they were – despite a questionable forecast, losing their targeted river to flooding, their base camp at Rock Creek Marina and Campground slowly being encroached upon by the swollen backwaters, and working conditions that included waist-deep mud and standing in waters chock full of hidden poison ivy and stinging nettles (both of which still function well underwater).

The program provided free canoes, free camping, low-cost catered meals including a fish boil on Saturday night, an evening GPS class by Jacobsen, and a complimentary Blue Heron Eco-Cruise on the Mississippi led by Roberts.

Sponsors for this event included: Clinton County Conservation Board; Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc.; Clinton County Pheasants Forever; G. Baker Distributing; Allied Waste Services; Clinton County Area Solid Waste Agency; Clinton Salvage; The Outhouse; Custom-Pak; Hy-Vee; MidAmerican Energy Company; Kimberly Crest Veterinary Hospital, P.C.; Target; and IPSCO Tubulars Inc.

The Lower Wapsipinicon River Cleanup Project is a grassroots organization with a two-fold purpose: To remove trash from the river and dispose of it in an environmentally responsible manner; and to educate

the public about the environment and the importance of caring for natural resources. They will be cleaning up a different section of the Lower Wapsipinicon each year in late August.

Next year they will be targeting the stretch they had to leave behind this year: Allen's Grove (near Donahue, IA) to McCausland, IA. For further information, or to get on a mailing list for next year, please write to LWRCP, PO Box 333, Long Grove, IA 52756, or visit <http://www.lowerwapsicleanup.org>.

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