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**The Blackstone River Watershed is a Cleaner, Healthier  
Place For Us To Enjoy Thanks to Our Amazing Volunteers!**

On Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, you may have noticed individuals or groups of volunteers walking along the banks of the nearby streams and rivers with garbage bags in their hands. This dedicated group of volunteers were participating in the Annual Earth Day River Cleanup organized by the Blackstone River Watershed Association (BRWA) in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Park Serve Day, and sponsored by [Savers Bank](#) and [Control Point Mechanical](#).



Over 140 volunteers cleared 31 areas in nearby towns including Auburn, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. An incredible amount of trash was pulled from wetlands, streams, rivers, ponds, and shorelines amounting to 145 trash bags. Other items found included car parts, a vacuum cleaner, an office chair, mattresses, tires, paint cans, and a bed frame to name a few.

Dumping can ruin the beauty of our natural landscape, and can also be a harmful pollutant that negatively impacts our rivers. Some of those impacts can be seen in

declining water quality, reduced water flow, decreased accessibility for wildlife to access water bodies, and harmful ingestion of items mistaken for food.

Our champion volunteers included many individuals, families, organizations, and groups like the girl scouts, church groups, concerned citizens, national honor societies, trail ambassadors, businesses, and garden clubs who worked tirelessly to clean up these areas.

As a small token of appreciation, all volunteers were invited back to DCR's River Bend Farm Visitor Center in Uxbridge for pizza, cookies and refreshments. As an added bonus to a successful day, Alternatives Unlimited, Inc. (Alternatives) and the BRWA organized a "Clean and Green Fair". Displays and activities included a seed planting demonstration and free tomato seedlings compliments of Kelly's Farm in Upton, a demonstration on blanket making for the homeless using plastic bags, a presentation on how to raise chickens, face painting and other fun kids' activities. Leslie Reichert, the Green Cleaning Coach, was on hand to promote all natural cleaning methods and Pure Haven Essentials promoted their safe, non-toxic health and beauty care products made right in Rhode island!

The BRWA would also like to express their sincere appreciation to the DCR, [Alternatives](#), the [Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.](#), and the [National Park Service](#) who provided invaluable support for our cleanup. An additional thank you to all the town DPWs for hauling the trash away, and cable access and local media who helped us spread the word for our event.

The BRWA's mission is to engage, educate and advocate for improved water quality in the Blackstone River watershed. Please visit our website at [www.thebrwa.org](http://www.thebrwa.org) for more information.