

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteers to Be Honored for Cleaning Streams

Volunteers and stream cleanup organizers from across the state will gather at Georgia Power on Friday, February 24, 2006 to celebrate the accomplishments of the state's largest cleanup, Rivers Alive. Rivers Alive, Georgia's annual statewide waterway cleanup, is sponsored by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division's Adopt-A-Stream Program and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Keep Georgia Beautiful Program, in cooperation with Help The Hooch. The award ceremony will recognize small and large groups as well as individuals and businesses. The keynote speaker of the award presentation will be Jeff Swanagan, executive director of the Georgia Aquarium.

Through its education programs, the Georgia Aquarium is helping to lead the way for students, adults and business owners to become good stewards of the environment. Swanagan will highlight the importance of protecting and preserving water resources and address how natural resources and ecosystems are greatly affected by everyone's actions.

The Rivers Alive awards honor the efforts of individuals and groups who are working to improve Georgia's waterways one trash bag at a time. Citizens in the metro area and throughout Georgia remove trash from local rivers, lakes, streams and the ocean annually as part of the continuing statewide campaign to clean and preserve over 70,000 miles of Georgia's rivers and streams as part of Rivers Alive each fall. During the 2005 river cleanup, more than 24,500 volunteers cleaned over 2,900 miles of waterways and removed over 680,000 pounds of trash and garbage including refrigerators, couches, a shower stall, televisions, microwaves, tires, shingles and general trash.

The Outstanding Waterway Cleanup Award recognizes groups that have successfully involved their local community to create an awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's water resources. The Leadership Award was established to recognize the efforts of individuals and businesses for their hard work and dedication to protecting Georgia's water resources.

The award presentations will take place February 24, 2006 at Georgia Power in Atlanta.

This event is supported by sixteen sponsors: Ocean level sponsors: Georgia Power, The Ocean Conservancy; Lake level sponsors: Canon, The Coca-Cola Company, International Paper, Plum Creek Timber, UPS; River level sponsors: BellSouth, Georgia Ports Authority, Kodak Polychrome Graphics, MeadWestvaco, Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Plum Creek Timber. Contributors to Rivers Alive include Georgia Pacific Corporation, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Gold Kist and Chevron.

Other sponsors of the statewide campaign include: Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division, Keep Georgia Beautiful, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Clean Coast, Inc., Clean Water Campaign, The Coca-Cola Company, Columbus Waterworks, Georgia Land Trust, Georgia Project WET/River of Words, Georgia Power, Georgia River Network, Georgia Wilderness Society, International Paper, Keep Columbus Beautiful, Lake Lanier Association, Macon Water Authority, MeadWestvaco, National Park Service – Chattahoochee Recreational Area, Ogeechee-Canoochee Riverkeeper, Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center, Plum Creek Timber, and dozens of other local organizations will be sponsoring individual cleanups around the State.

About Rivers Alive

Rivers Alive targets cleanups across all waterways in the State of Georgia including streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The mission of Rivers Alive is to create awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's water resources. To volunteer/participate in a local cleanup effort or to obtain more information about the statewide campaign, call the Environmental Protection Division's Rivers Alive State Coordinator 404-675-1636 or go to www.riversalive.org.

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