Volunteers Sought for Coast Cleanup

Local News

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The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is putting out a call to volunteers to hit the beaches for a huge beach cleanup effort on Saturday, April 21, the day Governor Christine Gregoire has proclaimed “Washington Coast Cleanup Day.” The coastal cleanup efforts are in conjunction with Earth Day.

The Commission is one of eight founding members in the sponsoring organization, the Washington Clean Coast Alliance. The CoastSavers program of the Alliance organizes a huge coastal cleanup each year around Earth Day. Last year, more than 1,000 volunteers removed more than 16 tons of marine debris from Washington’s Pacific beaches. Other members of the Alliance are the Grass Roots Garbage Gang, the Pacific Northwest Four-Wheel Drive Association, Discover Your Northwest, Lions Club International, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, Olympic National Park and the Surfrider Foundation.

Marine debris is a serious threat to our ecosystems and our enjoyment of the coast, garbage and debris harm coastal vegetation, wildlife and marine organisms and mar the beauty of our coastline. It is sincerely heartening to see the hundreds of people who come out for the cleanup and phenomenal to see the amount of debris they take off the beaches. - Don Hoch, State Parks director

Volunteers of all abilities are needed. If you can hold a bag, you can help. While some people carry garbage bags to roadside dumpsters, others simply fill the bags so that four-wheel drive vehicles can pick them up along the beach. Volunteers can learn more and sign up on the CoastSavers website, www.coastsavers.org/washington. Rangers at ocean-side state and national parks also are signing up volunteers for the cleanup day.

Stay connected to your state parks by following Washington State Parks at www.facebook.com/WashingtonStateParks, www.twitter.com/WaStatePks_NEWS and www.youtube.com/WashingtonStateParks.

The Commission manages a diverse system of more than 100 state parks and recreation programs, including long-distance trails, boating safety and winter recreation. The 99-year-old park system will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2013.

Support state parks by purchasing your Discover Pass today, and enjoy a whole year of outdoor fun on Washington’s beautiful state-managed recreation lands. For more information, visit www.discoverpass.wa.gov.