

# New England District Recreation Areas Celebrate Earth Day

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The 47<sup>th</sup> annual world wide celebration of Earth Day to commemorate the beginning of the environmental movement was held at three New England District projects where volunteers worked to clean up the recreation areas and improve the environment, April 22.

The **Cape Cod Canal** in Massachusetts, in partnership with AmeriCorps, Cape Cod, the town of Barnstable, and the Massachusetts Service Alliance, held their annual event. Although overcast and raining, over 149 pairs of hands performed trash clean up along the canal and expanded the pollinator garden. At the end of the event, volunteers were able to fill 164, 50-pound trash bags, making the canal a much cleaner place. Mashpee National Junior Honors Society members created a marine debris Biodegradation Time Line for one of our recreation area display cases.

In addition, several local environmental groups took advantage of the event and its theme. Groups had displays and activities for cleanup volunteers as well as the public. Exhibitors who braved the bad weather to spread their environmental messages were the International Fund for Animal Welfare; the National Marine Life Center; Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Sustainable Cape; AmeriCorps, Cape Cod; Red Cross; the Barnstable Country Bee Keepers Association and the Mashpee National Junior Honors Society. Cape Cod Canal Team members who ran the District portion of the event were Samantha Gray, Michele Breen and Kyle Henderson.

**West Hill Dam** in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, in partnership with the Bay State Trail Riders, Inc., organized a cleanup event of their own. West Hill and the Bay State Trail Riders have been partnering on the project's Earth Day events for the last 26 years.

An estimated 22 volunteers donned gloves and other cleanup equipment to clear five miles of brush removal, pick up debris caused by wind and rain storm damage, clean and clear over 15 water bars and picked up about 25 pounds of litter from the project. Viola Bramel served as New England District's coordinator for the event this year.

The team at **West Thompson Lake** in Connecticut held three small events during April and May. Approximately 25 volunteers came out to help. During those events, local Boy Scouts picked up litter and performed trail maintenance; local group The Yankee Flyers split wood for the campground and the Connecticut Outboard Association, a local hydroplane boat group, used their boats to pick up litter and debris along the shoreline of West Thompson Lake. Team members that hosted the events were Catherine St. Andre, Michelle Cucchi and Mark D'Amato.

According to the Earth Day Network, an environmental nonprofit organization, the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. The passage of the landmark Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and many other ground breaking environmental laws soon followed. Twenty years later, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage.