



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
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**Contact:** Upper Guadalupe River Authority  
(830) 896-5445

### **Successful UGRA 18<sup>th</sup> Annual River Clean Up**

The 18th Annual UGRA River Clean Up was held from July - October 2021 in a modified format which provided participants the opportunity to cleanup in small groups, at their own pace, while maintaining social distancing. In all 489 volunteers spent 1,121 hours collecting 7,781 pounds of trash from the Guadalupe River watershed in Kerr County.

UGRA supported the volunteers by providing supplies and coordinating trash drop off areas. The volunteers reported the amount of trash collected and submitted photos of their group and any unusual items found. Along with the expected paper and plastic trash, participants retrieved binoculars, a car cooling pump and compressor, electric skillet, frying pan, lid of a pot, Adirondack chair, basketball, mop head, cell phones, dog leash, jet ski sled, recliner, mini fridge, mattress, piece of an artificial Christmas tree, retainer, shopping cart, valve wrench, Xbox, and a glass medallion from the Pantheon Basilica in Rome. The volunteers who recovered these items entered them into the most unusual items contest.

UGRA released a video that summarized the success of the cleanup and included a message to the volunteers from UGRA General Manager Ray Buck applauding their efforts. “This is an amazing accomplishment and on behalf of the UGRA Board of Directors and staff, I thank you for your dedication to the health of the Guadalupe River watershed. We focus on the watershed because it is the area of land that drains to the river and has a direct influence on the river. Keeping the river clean does not just happen at the water’s edge. It starts on the land – the watershed. We hope that your efforts during the last few months will encourage the entire community to be mindful of the impact of litter every day and throughout the year,” said Buck.

The dedicated groups of volunteers included many coworkers, friends, and families as well as groups from Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Girl Scout troops from Kerr County and the San Antonio area, ADMT Home Health, Center Point Garden Club, City of Kerrville Make a Difference Committee, Gibson’s Discount Center, Guadalupe Ranch Estates, Heart O’ the Hills Camp, Ingram National Junior Honor Society, Kerr County Women’s Chamber, Kerrville Fire Department, Kerrville Morning Rotary, Kerrville Rotaract, Ladies Auxiliary #6409, Martin Marietta, Peterson Health, Rotary Club of Kerrville, Riverside Nature Center, Schreiner University Purposeful Lives Initiative, Texas Hill Country Advisors, Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter, Tivy High School Air Force Junior ROTC, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country. Disposal of the trash collected by these hardworking volunteers was made possible through assistance from the City of Kerrville and Kerr County.

All volunteers received a 2021 River Clean Up t-shirt. The t-shirt was designed by young Kerr County artist, Madellyn Fiedler, whose artwork won the t-shirt design contest earlier this year.

In addition to the t-shirt, volunteers received snacks, bottled water, McDonald's meal cards, and were eligible for the raffle prize drawing. These items were made possible due to generous donations from Atmos Energy, The Cailloux Foundation, City of Kerrville, Garrett Services, HEB, James Avery Artisan Jewelry, Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District, Kerr County, Kerr Screen Graphics, Kerrville Garden Club, Kerrville Kayak and Canoe, Ladies Auxiliary #6409, Martin Marietta, McDonald's, Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Ranch 92.3, The River 106.1, Scrap Solutions, Security State Bank & Trust, Unitarian Universalists Church of the Hill Country, and Wheatcraft Materials, Inc.

The Annual River Clean Up is just one component of UGRA's Trash Free Initiative. Since 2004, UGRA has routinely picked up trash from 15 low water crossings throughout Kerr County which results in the removal of tens of thousands of pounds of litter each year. As a proactive measure to reduce littering, UGRA is continuing to fund summertime litter patrols with licensed peace officers at the most popular river crossings to promote the message, "Pack it in, Pack it out." In addition, UGRA's environmental education programs focus on preserving the water quality of the Guadalupe River.

"Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, and community partners for recognizing the need to take care of OUR river. The River Clean Up would not be possible without your support and participation," said Tara Bushnoe, UGRA Natural Resources Manager. For more information about the Annual River Clean Up and to view the recap video, visit [www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/river-clean-up](http://www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/river-clean-up)

### **Let's Keep *Our* River Clean**



Ingram National Junior Honor Society students removed a mattress from the banks of Johnson Creek during the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual River Clean Up.





Schreiner University's Softball team came out in force to Keep OUR River Clean.



Volunteers from ADMT Home Health used kayaks to remove trash from the Guadalupe River near Schumacher Crossing.



Scouts from Pack 25 celebrated after their cleanup in Flat Rock Park.