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USU Extension Water Quality Program Leads Statewide Trails and Waterways Cleanup

By Lynnette Harris

Utah State University [Water Quality Extension](#) leads Pack It Out Utah, Utah's second statewide trails and waterways volunteer cleanup, Sept. 11 to 19. Local governments, nonprofits, organizations and volunteers across Utah will partner to remove garbage from public lands and near waterways to help improve water quality.

"The idea behind the event is to encourage people across the state to take initiative and act as stewards of our watersheds," said Hope Braithwaite, USU Extension assistant professor for watershed quality. "Our goal is to help people recognize that the garbage in their neighborhoods and public lands can eventually end up in our waterways, affecting the water quality."

Participants are encouraged to sign up, choose a location or local cleanup event, collect trash and document results by recording what they collect using the submission form included on the website below. Volunteers can share results on social media using #PackItOutUtah and #PackItOutUtah2021.

"A new offering this year is participation in local cleanup events," said Braithwaite. "Some of our partners have scheduled in-person cleanups and invite volunteers to join. Of course, participants can also choose to pick up trash in their neighborhood or at a favorite trail, campsite, park or wherever. Anywhere trash is collected will have a positive impact on water quality and our local environment."

Brian Tonetti, executive director for Seven Canyons Trust, said outdoor recreation, especially close to home, is one of Utah's best assets – the trail through your backyard or the creek that flows in your favorite park.

"We must all contribute to leaving places better than we found them by packing out our trash," he said.

Visit <http://bit.ly/PackItOutUtah2020> for event information and to sign up as a volunteer.

Partner organizations in this effort include Seven Canyons Trust, Save Our Canyons, Utah Water Watch, Friends of Great Salt Lake, The Trails Cache, Jordan River Commission, Central Wasatch Commission, Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter, Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, City of Cottonwood Heights, Aggie Blue Bikes, Inland Ocean Coalition, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, Tracy Aviary, The Wildlife Society (USU Chapter), Alta Environmental Center, Fish for Garbage, Trout Unlimited (Chapter 187), Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (USU Chapter), Sunrise Movement (SLC), UServe Utah, Utah Conservation Corps and Pliking. More partners are being added daily.

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