

For the 20th year, it's time to Renew Our Rivers



Former LMLPA president Donn Brascho

Former LMLPA president recalls many years of cleaning up lake and shorelines

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Photographed by TUCKER WEBB

Having kicked off March 30, the annual Renew Our Rivers clean-up initiative continues through April 6, organized by the Logan Martin Lake Protection Association and Alabama Power Company.

Renew Our Rivers is celebrating its 20th year of cleaning up shorelines, rivers and lakes in Alabama. Logan Martin quickly became part of the initiative.



This year's Renew Our Rivers clean-up campaign on Logan Martin Lake continues through Saturday, April 6.

Former LMLPA president and long-time member Dr. Donn Brascho finds volunteering his time and effort for the clean-up every year to "rewarding" and "a great way to contribute to a clean, healthy lake environment," and he encourages others to join the efforts on Logan Martin.

"I've been participating in the clean-up

for 15 years or more," he said. "I pick up trash along the shoreline in the area where I live, but volunteers can choose any lake area they want to clean up. Most people return to the same area every year, and it's usually close to where they live."

Volunteers are asked to report to one of



During the past two decades, as many as 120,000 Renew Our Rivers volunteers have removed more than 15.5 million pounds of trash and debris from Logan Martin and other lakes and waterways in Alabama.

eight designated collection sites to register between 8 a.m. and noon on Saturday, April 6th.

"The collection sites will be at Lakeside Landing, Clear Creek Marina, Poor House Marina, Riverside Landing, Woods Surfside Marina, Pell City Lakeside Park, Caribe Club and

Marina and Coosa Island Marina," Brashco said. "When people sign up, they will receive a T-shirt, garbage bags and gloves, and they will walk along the shore and pick up plastic cups, plastic bags, plastic bottles and things like that. A lot of plastic washes up on the shore, and the recent flooding we've had caused more trash and



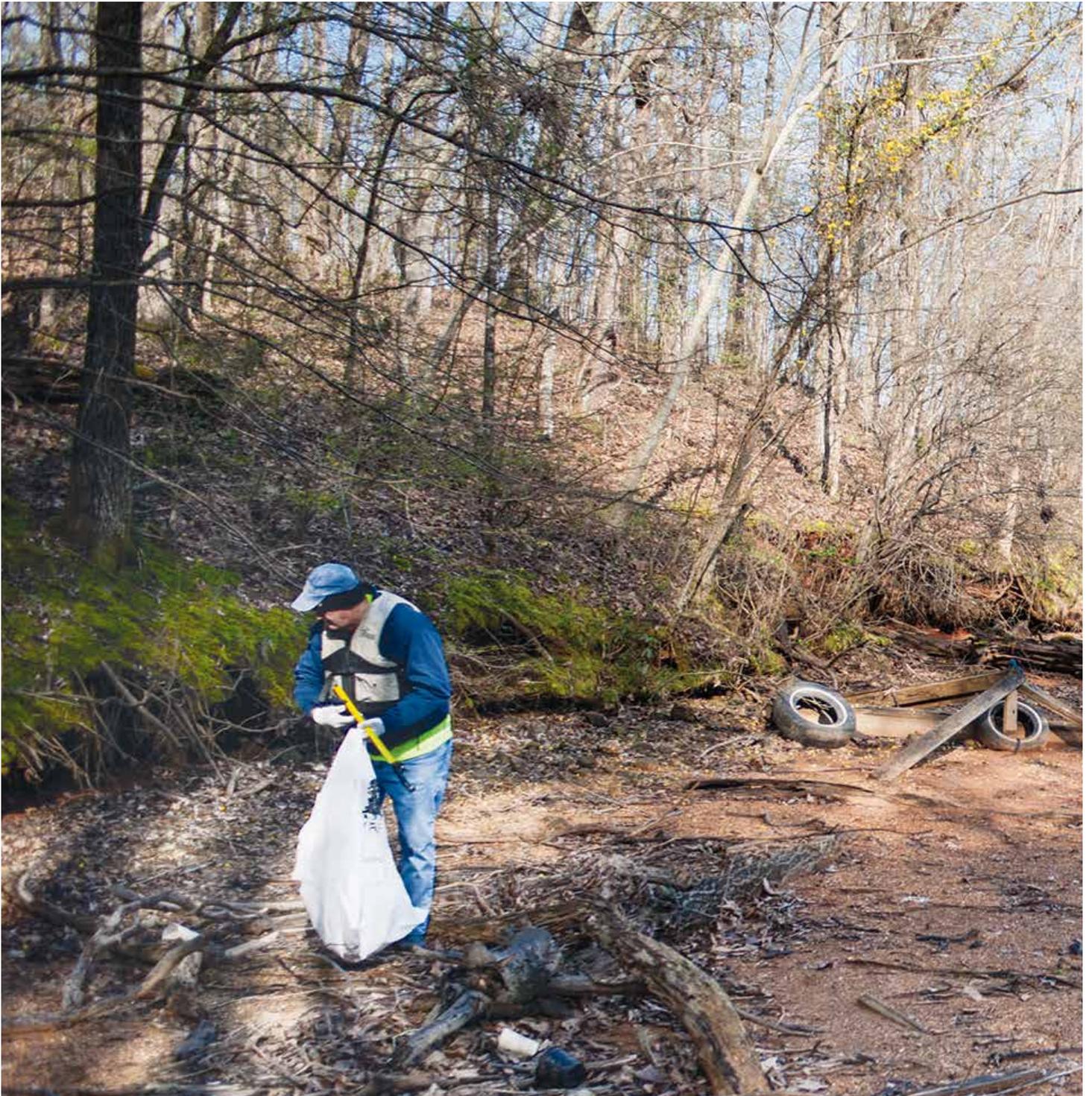
Much of the refuse removed from local shorelines consists of small items, but occasionally larger items have to be removed.

debris to be deposited on the land, and it needs to be picked up, or it will make its way back into the water."

While most of the collected trash is small enough to put into the garbage bags that are provided during registration, some large items are recovered every year.

"We find a lot of tires, and there's really nothing we can do with those. We make a separate pile next to the dumpster because the rules are that we can't put tires in the dumpster. One of the biggest, and most unusual thing I've ever recovered was a refrigerator."

When such a large item is spotted, it takes a



The annual clean-up event is scheduled when the lake is at winter pool, making it possible to thoroughly clean shorelines.

special effort to remove it from the lake. Usually a truck and rope or chain are involved, or a boat.

“We also need people who have pontoon boats to volunteer to drive their boat on these days,” Brascho said, adding that it is important for volunteers to wear comfortable shoes that

they won't mind getting dirty. “We always hold the clean up when the water is low, so there will be some areas that are muddy.”

Some areas will have tall grass and brush, so long pants are recommended for volunteers in those areas, and sunscreen is recommended for everyone.



The Renew Our Rivers initiative is organized locally by Alabama Power Company and the Logan Martin Lake Protection Association.

The number of people who volunteer varies from year to year, and some areas of the lake have more participants than others.

"In the past, we haven't had many volunteers from the Talladega side, and some areas of the lake don't get tended to at all," he said.

"This is an excellent project for a Boy Scout troop or a Sunday School class or a youth organization to participate in. It's always more fun to walk with friends."

The clean-up will be held rain or shine, and a picnic will be held for all volunteers on April 6 at Pell City Lakeside Park at noon. Volunteers must wear the 2019 Renew Our Rivers T-shirts they receive during registration for admission to the event which will include an afternoon of music and free food.

For more information about volunteering at this year's clean-up, or for information about membership in LMLPA, visit their website at www.lmlpa.org.