

Project WASTE



Water And Street Trash Elimination

- = Westchester Parks Foundation data collection boom
- = Bronx River Alliance data collection boom
- = Dept. of Env. Protection maintained boom

Project WASTE examines the issue of trash pollution in the Bronx River and engages volunteers in stewardship through hands-on trash assessments. Documenting the types, materials, quantities, brands, and sources of trash on our streets and in our rivers has helped us develop community-driven education, outreach, and advocacy focused on reducing trash pollution into the Bronx River. Better still, the data we collect inform policy decisions in the watershed.

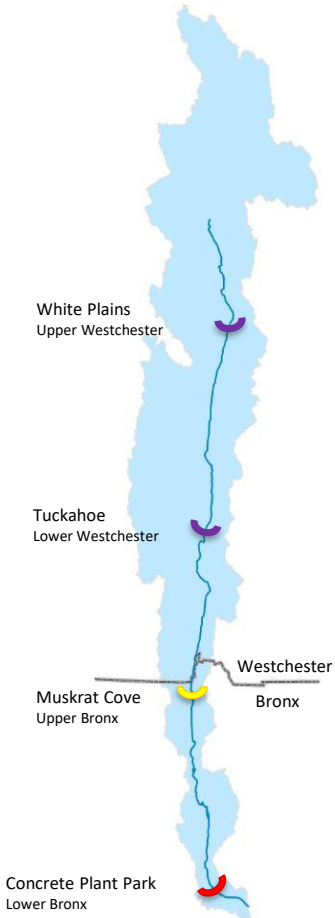
How does Project WASTE work?

Since the summer of 2016, volunteers have been assessing floatable trash that is collected from capture points called “booms” at different points in the Bronx River. All three northern booms are maintained by volunteers that wade into the river to categorize and count every single piece of floatable garbage that they collect in order to investigate sources of pollution. The southernmost boom in Concrete Plant Park catches all remaining floatables before they can pollute the East River and Long Island Sound.

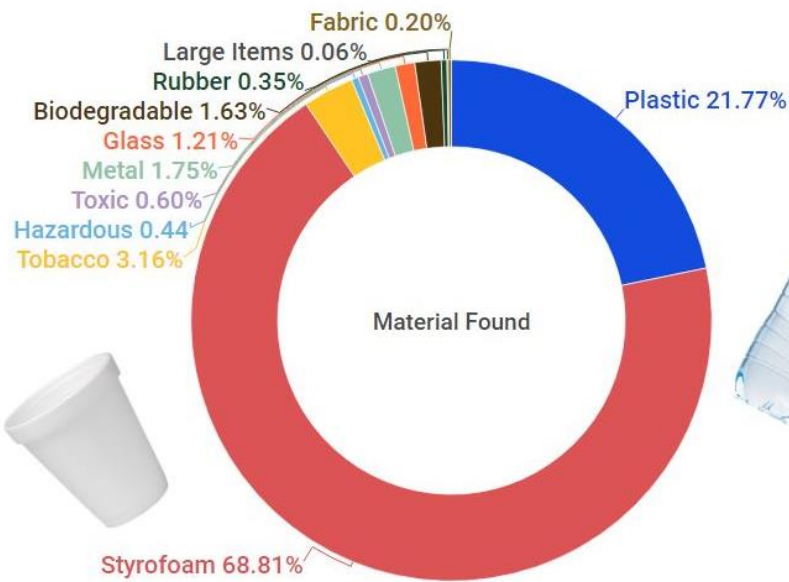


Source: NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection

By engaging over 3,500 students, educators, and interested residents, we have collected and assessed over 200,000 pieces of garbage from the Bronx River! Through our actions, we hope that we are able to improve the health for our communities and all wildlife living in or near the Bronx River.



Students and members of the community volunteer to clean up and collect data for Project WASTE.



Styrofoam is the #1 Problem!

Over the past four years, **volunteers have helped us remove almost 215,000 pieces of floatable trash.**

From 2016-2019, the majority of trash collected was Styrofoam (69%) and plastic (21%), mostly in the form of single-use items.

Styrofoam and plastic are harmful to aquatic life because they do not biodegrade (i.e. decompose naturally); instead they break down into tiny particles that look like food to fish and other wildlife.

91% of trash collected through Project WASTE is **Styrofoam** or **plastic**.

Most of the trash comes from streets

We found that **up to 67% of the floatable trash in the river originates in Westchester County** and is linked to rainfall, likely because of storm drains without screens. This shows just how important it is to dispose of items properly in trash/recycle bins or to use reusable items instead! We are working with local community organizations, municipal officials, businesses, and schools to address trash sources and launch an outreach campaign informed by our data.



Project WASTE participants pose with their reusable bags and mugs.

How Can I Help?

- ❖ Contact christian.murphy@bronxriver.org to join a Project WASTE event in the Bronx, or contact erin@theWPF.org to join a Clean River Project event in Westchester County.
- ❖ Reduce your trash by bringing reusable coffee mugs, water bottles, and bags with you! Take the Birdie Pledge at www.nyc.gov/greenyc
- ❖ Check out Project WASTE on our website at www.bronxriver.org for more ideas!

The Bronx River Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit that seeks to protect, improve, and restore the Bronx River corridor for the communities through which the river flows. To get the latest news and updates on the river, follow us on social media!



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Project WASTE is made possible by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Westchester Community Foundation, and Patagonia.