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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Rain in San Antonio is typically a welcome sight, but the moisture often brings an unwanted side effect – floods of waste and litter. The city's urban waterways are frequently choked with plastic, Styrofoam, textiles, and endless bottles and cans. This trash tsunami harms aquatic life and saps the scenic beauty from the city's more than 80 miles of greenway trails.

Wanting a future with cleaner waterways for all, a group of motivated volunteers formed River Aid San Antonio in March 2021 with a mission to restore and protect the river and its tributaries through stewardship opportunities and community cohesion.

The group organizes multiple volunteer watershed cleanups per month, targeting trash hotspots alongside major creeks and the San Antonio River. With its infectious enthusiasm, River Aid has grown over the past two years to more than 700 members. Together, they've removed and properly disposed of more than 258,000 pounds of waste.

Under the leadership of River Aid's Executive Director Charles Blank, the organization has experienced a landmark year in 2023, taking on a leadership role in San Antonio's annual [Basura Bash](#), which has been going strong for 29 years. Despite a cold front with 15 mile-per-hour winds, the [most recent Basura Bash](#) on Feb. 15 involved more than 2,500 volunteers who signed up to remove trash from 22 sites, gathering 56,000 pounds in one day.

River Aid is now considering building on the strong momentum by adding an additional Basura Bash event in future years. Stay tuned for details on a possible fall cleanup. In the meantime, GEAA encourages our community to join River Aid in its efforts by joining its [mailing list here](#).

River Aid is also seeking volunteers with [Texas Stream Team](#) Standard Core training to help grow its water quality monitoring program. If you have completed the training and are looking to adopt a water monitoring site in San Antonio, please contact River Aid board member Brendan Gibbons at brendansgibbons@gmail.com.

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