



Vail Valley volunteers tidy up Eagle River

About 50 teams of volunteers hit the Eagle River on Saturday morning in Valley Valley

[LAUREN GLENDENNING](#)

LGLENDENNING@VAILDAILY.COM

VAIL VALLEY, CO COLORADO,

- DON GOLDEN/Special to the Vail Daily

VAIL VALLEY, Colorado — From a floral wedding bouquet to fishing rods to construction cones to golf balls galore, it's amazing how much junk sits on the banks of the Eagle River and Gore Creek in Colorado's Vail Valley.

If you think people are more environmentally conscious in the mountains, you're probably right, but don't count on everyone.

From the Lionshead skier bridge to the Cascade Resort in West Vail alone, there was enough garbage to fill at least a dozen heavy-duty trash bags.

About 50 teams of volunteers hit the Eagle River on Saturday morning for the annual Eagle River Cleanup, an Eagle River Watershed Council project. The council also sponsors the highway cleanup in the spring — another cleanup intended to protect the river and its habitats.

Donald Golden, of the Watershed Council, cleaned a section of the river in Edwards. His group found a lot of tires, an oven door and an old Volkswagen Beetle that looked like it had been lodged in the river for years, he said. The group wasn't able to get the car out.

Further upstream, along Gore Creek near Dowd Junction, Gore Creek Fly Fisherman employees did their part. The guys said they enjoy the river throughout the year, so cleaning it up once in a while is the least they can do.

"We wanted to give back to the river," said Josh Tolles, who manages the Vail store. "(The river) gives so much to us each year — it's our livelihood."

Volunteers from the Gore Range Natural Science school also found value in cleaning the river.

"It aligns with our mission," said Tiffani Hoole, office manager at the school.

Sue Mott, a cleanup volunteer and organizer, said the cleanup is so important because it helps fish and other species who call the river home. Each year, the cleanup gives its "toilet seat award" to the group that finds the weirdest trash.

Past winners' items included a full container of marijuana, a bear skeleton, a cooler full of beer and a canoe with a dog skeleton in it. She wasn't sure of this year's winner yet.

Community Editor Lauren Glendenning can be reached at 970748-2983 or lglendenning@vaildaily.com