

## **Annual Adopt-a-Beach™ Clean-Up Set for Sept. 20 Volunteers wanted for Indiana Dunes State Park (East Side)**

Volunteers will gather Sept. 20 for beach cleanups planned all along the Indiana Lake Michigan shore as well as along shorelines in Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin as part of the Alliance for the Great Lakes annual September Adopt-a-Beach™ event.

“Volunteers in this event come from all walks of life including: businesses, schools, community groups, family and individuals,” states Frances Canonizado, state coordinator for the event in Illinois. “The one thing they all have in common is their love for the Great Lakes and their commitment to help keep them clean.”

Each year Adopt-a-Beach™ participants pick up litter and record findings, to be entered later into a growing regional database that is central to the Alliance’s clean beaches education campaign. Beach litter is more than unsightly, it’s dangerous. Small children play with cigarette butts, fish are entangled in balloons, and birds trap their beaks in discarded food packaging.

Co-sponsors Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Indiana University Northwest Alumni Association, Indiana University Northwest School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management are coordinating an Adopt-A-Beach cleanup day on September 20 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Indiana Dunes State Park Pavilion. (East Side). Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the clean up next Saturday. Comfortable shoes and work gloves are recommended. Parking is free for volunteers - just let the front gate know that you are there to participate in Adopt-A-Beach.

Shandra Niswander, Development Coordinator at Shirley Heinze Land Trust remarks, “our organization is proud to be part of the Adopt-A-Beach program for the second year in a row. It is a great day for volunteers to protect and beautify the Great Lakes Shoreline.”

For more information or to participate, contact Shandra Niswander at Shirley Heinze Land Trust (219.879.4725) or via email at [development@heinzetrust.org](mailto:development@heinzetrust.org)

"This is a great opportunity for citizens to participate in an activity that will have a real impact on Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline," says Jenny Orsburn, Program Specialist

for the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Management Program. "We are proud to support this partnership."

As part of the world's largest shoreline cleanup, volunteers in the September Adopt-a-Beach™ event clear lakeshores of thousands of pounds of trash in a single day. Last year Indiana's coastal cleanup up resulted in 426 volunteers hauling away 1500 pounds of trash from more than 11 miles of shoreline. This year we hope to add at least five more cleanup sites thus greatly increasing the amount of trash picked up.

Have fun giving back to the places you care about. The Great Lakes' shoreline and beaches are in our backyards. The event is more than just a cleanup-it's a celebration of the Great Lakes! The information gathered is used to make positive changes for our Great Lakes.

The Alliance has coordinated volunteer efforts in the Illinois and Michigan cleanups since 1991 as part of the annual International Coastal Cleanup, which is coordinated by the Ocean Conservancy in Washington, D.C.

The Indiana cleanup is supported by Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program and NiSource. **For more information, visit [www.greatlakes.org](http://www.greatlakes.org).**

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*Formed in 1970, the Alliance for the Great Lakes is the oldest citizens' Great Lakes organization in North America. Our mission is to conserve and restore the world's largest freshwater resource using policy, education and local efforts, ensuring a healthy Great Lakes and clean water for generations of people and wildlife.*