## Rouge cleanup set for June 6

## 5,000 volunteers sought to give drive momentum

It's a "hidden" river, brown with sewage and industrial sediment. But a local environmental impact group believes the Rouge River is worth saving. Its members dream of returning to the days when the Rouge was filled with cancelsts and fishermen, not recompilated worth

Houge was illied with canocists and fishermen, not accumulated waste from decades of abuse. Pursuing that dream, Friends of the Rouge kicked off its second an-nual Rouge Rescue project Thursday at Madonna College in Livonia.

at Madonna College in Livonia.
They seek to spur interest in the
Saturday, June 6, cleanup. A big
turnout — they're shooting for 5,000
participants — is necessary to maintain the momentum generated by
last year's Rouge Rescue, they say.
"If the public doesn't show its sup-

port, then the politicans and bureau-crats won't be able to do what's nec-

community groups.

Rouge Rescue '87 will take place
June 6 at 21 sites along the river in
metro Detroit. For information on

Video promotes

A 12-minute videotape seeking developed that incorporates the vi-support of the Rouge River cleanup deo and a workbook for schools par-effort is ready for 1,500 schools and ticipating in the pilot program.

Rouge cleanup

essary," group president Jim Mur-ray said.

NEARLY TWO dozen sites will be targeted in this year's cleanup. Birmingham, Farmington, Farm-ington Hills, Southfield and Bloom-field Township are among partici-pating Oakland County communities. Ford Motor Co. is a corporate sponsor.

Ford Motor Co. is a Corposition Sponsor.
Classes from 16 high schools in Wayne and Oakland counties will soon conduct water quality tests at various points along the Rouge. Their information will be fed into a Computer of Michigan computer. Their information will be fed into a University of Michigan computer bank, providing access to governmental officials in both countles, as well as at the Detroit Water Board. Boosters say the cleanup is an important first step toward getting government support for new sewers and expanded treatment facilities, both vital to the river's long-term

POLLUTION IS worst near Melvindale and River Rouge, where the
Rouge flows into the Detroit River.
"It's so had that it explodes black
inky clouds," Murray said.
In addition, older sewers are still
dumpling raw sewage and other
wastes into the river, according to
Jim Rogers, an environmental
planner for the Southeast Michigan
Council of Governments (SEMCOG).
"In the 1925 and 3'90s that was the
way to handle it — build just one
sewer to hanglie what storm sewers
and sanitary sewers do today," Rogers said.

sewer to majuse what sourm sewers and sanitary sewers do today," Rogars said.

While 180 of the older, combined sewers have been identified, group members acknowledge replacement sewers are long, and not altogether certain, in coming.

A super sewer planned in 1960 still sin't a reality, Rogers said. Getting local communities to build new sant-dary sewers is politically explosive, he added.

"Cleaning up these combined sewer overflows is going to be a tough job," Rogers said.

POLLUTION FROM a second

source — gas stations, auto repair shops and other businesses whose floor drains empty into storm drains trather than sanitary sewers — has been noted, but insufficiently handled, Rogers said.

Environmentalists are only beginning to locate these polluters, the SEMOGO official said.

At the same time concerns linger about the Detroit Treatment Plant's capacity to handle increased waste.

But the many problems make the Rouge Rescue even more important, boosters say.

environmental health.

Despite the success of last year's cleanup, which boasted 2,300 participants, and reduction of industrial pollution, environmental experts say the Rouge's problems remain "massive."

REMOVING LOGJAMS and other HEMOVING LOGJAMS and other debris will improve the river's flow, greatly enhancing its ability to "heal itself," executive director Bonnie Anderson sald.

"We need people to break up the logiams where they can," Anderson said.

id.
Public works crews will break up logiams in areas too polluted to al-low volunteers to go into the river,

low volunteers to go into the river, she added.
"In those places, volunteers will be asked to cart the debris off the riverbank," Anderson sald.
Despite the problems, and long-term nature of cleanup efforts, sup-porters say the question remains simple.
"Why should we drive 100 miles to cance and swim when we've got a river right in our own backyard?" Rogers said.

## How to volunteer

The following people are looking 473-7250. for volunteers to assit in Rouge Res-

Some 16 high schools will be using the Rouge River as an outdoor laboratory. Their students, armed with sclentific equipment provided by the Friends of The Rouge citters group, will study the problems experienced by rivers in an urban settling during field trips to the Rouge River. • Birmingham — Coco Siewert,
• Birmingham — Earl Billing,
• Farmington — Earl Billing,
354-9346.

• Farmington Hills - Dale Countegan, 473-9520.

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metro Detroit. For information on the program and this year's cleanup effort call: 42-ROUIGE (427-8843).

A WJBH-77V team, headed by meteorologist Ted Textor, a board member of Friends of The Rouges, spent two weeks in canoes videotaping wildlife, pollution and interviews with people up and down the river.

The video is an addition to high school science courses in metro Detroit. A curriculum guide has been Among the 16 are: Athens High School, Troy; North Farmington; De-troit Country Day, Birmingham; Churchill, Livonia; Redford Onlon; Garden City; Plymouth Salem; Wayne Memorial; and Southfield. Introducing the GREAT WEIGHT REBATE!!! We will pay you for every pound you lose. I LOST WEIGHT AND ATE: Vanilla & Strawberry Shakes YOU CAN TOO!!

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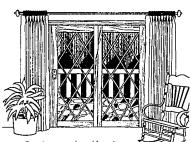
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