

ACCOKEEK, MD - Congressman Steny Hoyer today joined thousands of volunteers from throughout Maryland, Virginia, Washington, DC, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to participate in the 16th Annual Potomac Watershed Clean-Up sponsored by the Alice Ferguson Foundation which is located in Congressman Hoyer's district. Rep. Hoyer joined the Executive Director of the Foundation on the banks of the Potomac in Accokeek to talk to volunteers and help cleanup debris along the river.

"I am proud to join all of the hard-working, concerned volunteers who are dedicated to improving the quality of the Potomac River basin today," said Congressman Hoyer. "I am surrounded by hundreds of volunteers working to ensure that the Potomac River is cleaned up. I am particularly grateful to the Alice Ferguson Foundation for remaining committed to the Potomac and for sponsoring this growing event for the past 16 years.

"This region is an invaluable resource for all of us in the watershed. Approximately 5 million people live in the Potomac River Basin and enjoy its use for recreation, boating, fishing, transportation, and other outdoor activities. Working together we have, and can continue to make a positive difference to preserve and protect the Potomac Watershed and I will continue to fight at the federal level for funding which supports the wildlife habitats, the world-class recreational opportunities available on this waterway, and the enormous economic value the Potomac provides to the region," added Rep. Hoyer.

Congressman Hoyer has helped to secure over \$50 million in federal funds that have supported the work carried out by a number programs to preserve and protect the Potomac and the entire Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Specifically, in recent years, Rep. Hoyer has secured almost \$2 million for the Alice Ferguson Foundation to help support their program to teach environmental education and preservation to more than 10,000 students per year. The funding will also allow the Foundation to continue and expand programs that introduce students to the ecology and geography of the Potomac River.

Through his role as a senior member on the Appropriations Committee, Congressman Hoyer has also helped to secure almost \$18 million for the Accokeek Foundation and Piscataway Park which were established to preserve the land directly across the Potomac River from George Washington's Mount Vernon. Additionally, he has worked to secure federal funds for Friends of the Potomac which helps communities, businesses, governments & individuals protect and restore natural resources while fostering sustainable economic development.

This Potomac Watershed Clean-Up annual event began with 2 sites at Piscatway Park and within 15 years it has grown to 152 locations in four states and Washington, DC with over 3500 volunteers. Over 1.7 million pounds of trash have been removed since 1989 and it is anticipated that today's event will remove 200,000 pounds of garbage in three hours.

All volunteers are encouraged to count, sort and then recycle recyclable containers removed from their cleanup sites. The cleanup also aims to encourage and model alternative waste disposal actions, such as recycling.

###