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More than 10,000 pounds of Border Trash Collected during Cleanup of Santa Cruz River in Rio Rico on Saturday

PHOENIX (Jan. 30, 2012) – More than 10,000 pounds of border trash were collected by 123 volunteers during the Saturday, Jan. 28 cleanup event on the Santa Cruz River north of Nogales in Rio Rico.

The event was sponsored by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Friends of the Santa Cruz River, Anza Trail Coalition, Rio Rico Properties and Santa Cruz County.

The volunteer army collected more than 250 55-gallon bags of trash and a front-end loader hauled away various large items like discarded mattresses, sofas and desks that were along the river. About half of the trash was believed to be discarded by those who illegally crossed the border in the area and the other half by area residents who illegally dumped material.

“ADEQ would like to thank all of the great volunteers who stepped up in this noble effort to protect our environment,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. “There was a huge amount of illegally discarded border trash in this section of the river and they did an excellent job of collecting it and seeing to it that it was disposed of properly.”

ADEQ workers have been involved in a number of trail cleanups in the border region in recent years, including other cleanups in the Santa Cruz, the Arivaca region northwest of Nogales, the Colorado River area south of Yuma, arroyos near Douglas and in the Coronado National Forest near Sierra Vista and Green Valley.

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