

THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

(Lake Trash Removal, Fountains, Education, Lake Expertise)

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VOLUNTEER LETTER

JULY TRASH TALK: Low (but persistent) levels of trash and clear water have continued to dominate the summer of 2003. During July we entertained **120 people** who removed **780 pounds** of trash, much of it in the **43 bags** we took to the transfer station. This is a far cry from the typical month during the rainy / storm drain runoff season when we take out 3,000 – 9,000 pounds.

As in summers past, students from Project YES in the East Bay Conservation Corps made up most of our volunteers, learning about urban runoff through educational presentations while working to remove it. Unusual items removed included a dead cat, several articles of clothing (well, it was hot) a skateboard, a park bench and a sheet of plywood.



By summer's end, EBCC will have sent crews to Lake Merritt seven times for clean up events. Each crew received an educational presentation including videos and discussions about urban runoff, littering and watersheds.

BACTERIAL SAMPLING: Samples of Lake water are taken weekly from four stations and analyzed for fecal coliform bacteria, which is an indicator of potential pathogens, not a pathogenic organism in itself. While samples from the Lake center and Sailboat House indicate that body contact, such as swimming and wind surfing, are appropriate, some of the samples from the upper ends of the arms of the Lake suggest that these activities should not occur in these areas. Water fowl, such as geese, are the most likely source of such bacteria during the summer months. For details on monitoring lakes for recreational water quality, see the summer 2003 issue of LakeLine, published by the North American Lake Management Society.

GOOSE NUMBERS DROPPING: Our last count of goose numbers showed that 689 geese were using the Lake and Lakeside Park. This is down from the summer peak of 1,935 on June 25th.

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