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Press Release

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2009 RIVERFRONTS NATURALLY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Cultivating the Three Rivers Heritage Trail

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – (March 9, 2009) Get Involved! Friends of the Riverfront announces schedule for volunteer trail events along the Pittsburgh region's riverfronts. Riverfronts Naturally is a volunteer program of Friends of the Riverfront working to restore native vegetation to areas adjoining the Three Rivers Heritage Trail, desolate brownfield areas and other public spaces. Restoring the natural ecosystem, providing sustainable habitat for wildlife, reducing the need for fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and watering, enhancing the outdoor experience for land and water trail users, and providing educational opportunities and living laboratories for schools, universities and the general public are examples of results the Riverfronts Naturally Program provides to the region.

For complete listing of upcoming opportunities to get involved visit www.friendsoftheriverfront.org and click on "Riverfronts Naturally" under the "Trail Care" tab.

Many plants not native to our region have successfully established themselves in recent years, causing environmental damage in their new habitat. When invasives go unchecked, they crowd out native plants by competing for light and nutrients, greatly diminishing biodiversity. Our riverfronts are a prime example of this process. We have many invasive species—most notable and destructive is Japanese Knotweed—along the rivers and adjacent trails. You may notice large bamboo-like plants and no other flora and fauna. The Riverfronts Naturally mission attempts riparian (riverbank) restoration by eradicating invasives, reintroducing natives and controlling trouble areas.

For more information or to join the ongoing effort to restore natural beauty along Pittsburgh's riverfronts, please visit www.pittsburghtriathlon.com or www.friendsoftheriverfront.org or call 412-488-0212.