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In by eight, out with five, good-bye to Looking Glass logjam

By **BOB BISHOP**

For Lansing Community Newspapers

DEWITT — For the first time ever, City of DeWitt public service employees joined regional environmental group Friends of the Looking Glass (FLG) to clear five difficult logjams from the river within DeWitt city limits.

Starting at 8 a.m. Sept. 28 in River Trail Park along East Dill Drive, the group began clearing a fallen three-foot diameter Green Ash tree that completely blocked the river bank to bank.

Several people out for a walk cheered the workers 20 yards downstream, as they passed over the pedestrian bridge that connects the park to city hall property.

By late afternoon the work group numbers had grown from seven to nine, and within a spin-cast up and downstream, four other logjams that



BEFORE — This shot is looking East on the Looking Glass River just prior to the logjam clean-out just downstream of the pedestrian bridge connecting Riverview Trail Park and DeWitt City Hall property. Residents are invited to take a look at that stretch of the river now.

had been building for several years, were also cleared.

FLG members Jon Morrison, Gary Kohlhepp, and Bob Bishop cut and cleared logs and limbs in the water. DeWitt city employees

Chet Davis, Mark Ballard and Jay Hine hauled the logs and limbs from the bank, and worked the backhoe and chipper.

FLG members began negotiating with DeWitt City Administrator Jason Eppler three months ago to assist FLG logjam clearing efforts within the city limits, by providing enough heavy equipment and operators to get the job done.

Seventy nine year old FLG president Gloria Miller — who helped city workers on the bank, said “These logjams were causing serious bank erosion, filling the riverbed with sand and clay — some were also very dangerous to canoeists and kayakers who get pinned against the jams during spring and fall higher water conditions.”

“Clearing these dangerous and deleterious jams was a tremendous accomplishment by a few people,” Miller said. “The Friends group and our board of directors want to

thank the city of DeWitt without whose heavy equipment and manpower, this would have been almost impossible. After all, this equipment belongs to the tax payers and the river is the one of the city’s major attractions, so it behooves us all to work to make it safe and enjoyable for all of us. We hope this will be an annual event in DeWitt, and we hope the other 30-some units of government along the Looking Glass’ six county watershed, will also be encouraged to do as we have done today.”

The debris piles that has accumulated against the midstream support on the Bridge Street bridge and at Schavey Road bridge remain to be cleaned out and city workers hope to get to those in the next few days.

For more information, or to become an FLG member, contact Gloria Miller at glormil727@aol.com