

'Trash Hunter' Boat Is Cruising Passaic River For Filth

Though the Passaic River is the "cleanest it has been in decades," debris continues to wash in with the tide every day, the PVSC said.

By Eric Kiefer, Patch Staff | Mar 28, 2018 10:06 am ET | Updated Mar 28, 2018 10:08 am ET



ESSEX COUNTY, NJ — The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) has a new weapon to help combat the perpetually unpleasant problem of floating trash and debris in the Passaic River: a state-of-the-art "Trash Hunting" vessel.

The PVSC launched its Aquarius System Trash Hunter-34 Skimmer Vessel into the Newark Bay last week, sending it off on its first wave of "rigorous" river trials. The 50-foot long, 13-foot wide, 27,500-pound boat features twin catamaran hulls and a water jet propulsion system, all of which will help it with its mission... to patrol the Passaic River and Newark Bay area for trash.

Though the Passaic River is the "cleanest it has been in decades," debris continues to wash in with the tide every day, the PVSC said. Last year, the agency removed 12,960 tons of "debris" from local waterways.

The PVSC released the following statement about the cleanup status of the maligned river on Wednesday:

"It is no secret that the Passaic River has been subjected to significant pollution for many years. Two centuries of industrial dumping is buried in layers of silt and muck at the bottom of the river. While the river faces one of the most challenging and expensive environmental cleanups in United States history to remove chemicals, pesticides and heavy metals at the bottom, PVSC is making a significant difference at the top."

According to the PVSC, their new trash hunting vessel – which has yet to be named – will be a key resource in dealing with the thousands of tons of river garbage to come in future years.

"This new skimmer vessel is a big investment to reclaim our waterways," PVSC Chairman Thomas Tucci Jr. said.