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September 18, 2016
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SYRCL rallies record-number of volunteers for its 19th annual Yuba River cleanup

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Submitted photo by John Hart |

SYRCL's 19th Annual Yuba River Cleanup, held Saturday to clean up trash around the 30+ sites in the Bear and Yuba River watersheds, and held a party at Pioneer Park, Nevada City, Saturday afternoon. Bo Littig with his first bucket of trash at the Bear River, Highway 174 at the county line. Above, the Daisy Troop 1630 from Auburn helping clean up the trash on Idaho-

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From the headwaters at Donner Summit to where the Yuba meets the Feather River, an historic number of volunteers turned out for the 19th Annual Yuba River Cleanup. At least 790 volunteers enthusiastically removed approximately 7,465 pounds of trash and 1,180 pounds of recyclables from 85.25 miles of river, creek and lake shoreline at 32 cleanup and four restoration sites within the Yuba River and Bear River watersheds.

Families, school groups and business teams pitched in to get their hands dirty for the betterment of numerous local waterways. Interesting items found included a kayak, rubber raft, television set, apple-shaped cheese grater, a brand new pair of shoes, boogie board, a VHS Bill Cosby tape and a bowling pin. The front end of a vehicle was pulled from Englebright Lake

and an amethyst crystal was found in Deer Creek.

"I am humbled and in awe of the overwhelming support of this incredible community. It is so inspiring to see what a committed community can achieve when we pool our resources, time and love for the river. Thank you to the families, colleagues, club members and teams that came out yesterday to help remove everything from harmful garbage like car batteries and glass, to micro-trash and household waste," said Jenn Tamo, SYRCL's Community Engagement Manager.

Some of the heroic efforts included: A new partnership with Yuba County, SYRCL added the "Horseshoe" as a high priority cleanup location in Marysville.

Students from Nevada Union, Bear River High School, and Sierra Academy of Expeditionary Learning teamed up with community members at the Highway 49 and Hoyt's crossings. Together, they scrambled over boulders to remove 22 bags of micro-garbage, like cigarette butts and bottle caps and a turtle-shaped bean bag.

Volunteers, led by members of the Wolf Creek Community Alliance, spent the morning removing 2,300 pounds of trash and 350 pounds of recycling from Idaho-Maryland Road along Wolf Creek.

Volunteers hiked six-miles roundtrip to tackle the trash issue at the South Yuba River Primitive Campground. Their load of multiple abandoned encampments will be helicoptered out next week.

Long-time SYRCL volunteer, Rick Sharkey led the efforts at Purdon's Crossing. Sharkey has been with the cleanup since the very start.

Since its inception 19 years ago, Waste Management of Nevada County has generously supported trash removal of the Cleanup. This year they donated trash and recycling dumpsters, as well as vouchers for complimentary waste disposal for volunteers transferring debris from the shores of the Yuba River. "We're thrilled to continue to support this community effort that keeps Yuba River and Nevada County clean and green," said David Adler, District Manager at Waste Management of Nevada County.

"Our priority is to provide safe, reliable and friendly service to the residents and businesses of Nevada County. Our contributions during the Yuba River Cleanup are another way we are trying to help."

After the Cleanup, volunteers celebrated at Nevada City's Pioneer Park. Field representative Damian Fussel presented SYRCL's Executive Director, Caleb Dardick with a certificate of recognition from California State Senator Ted Gaines. Mr. Fussel spent the morning volunteering at the Champion Mine site, and thanked SYRCL for its wonderful work for the river on behalf of Senator Gaines.



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Bo Littig with his first bucket of trash at the Bear River, Highway 174 at the county line.



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Kris Phillips comes out of the bushes with trash near Wolf Creek, Idaho-Maryland Road in Grass Valley.