



SYRCL

Water education program aims to inform youth

In the shadows of the lush forest landscape of Nevada City, a group of about 20 individuals work together to educate and advocate for protecting and restoring the Yuba River watershed.

Heather Kallevig, 29, splits her time with the South Yuba River Citizens League inside her cubicle doing project management duties and working out in the field with youth as the river education coordinator.

"With our education program, we're reaching out to youth and up and helping them understand what is special about the Yuba River, as well as water conservation," Kallevig said.

SYRCL's education program, which lost most of its funding following the recession, was rebooted in 2014.

Rachel Hutchinson, river science director for SYRCL, played a large role in helping get the program back on its feet.

"When I came on-board (in 2013), the education program didn't really

exist," Hutchinson said.

"I was able to work with our executive director to get them going again. We were really lucky to hire Heather in August so she could run the program."

Since being hired last year, Kallevig and her team at SYRCL have been traveling around to schools working with students, taking people on salmon tours in rafts or on hiking trips, as well as establishing water audit programs where students assess their school to find ways to conserve water, among many other things.

More recently, SYRCL hosted a Youth for the Yuba event on June 3 in which youths were encouraged to submit artwork.

SYRCL received a total of 90 submissions. The winners were able to display their artwork in a local gallery or read their work on local public radio station KVMR.

Junet Bedayn, who will be a

senior at Nevada Union High School in the fall, worked with Kallevig on the Water Audit program at her school. Bedayn has been working as a volunteer with SYRCL for the past year on various projects, including the Youth for the Yuba event, after meeting the education coordinators through her school's environmental club, EcoNU.

Hutchinson said SYRCL has been working to expand its outreach to include Yuba County. While SYRCL works with the Yuba County Water Agency on restoration efforts, she said there are efforts being made to recruit local schools for some of the education programs like the Salmon Tours.

SYRCL's next series of events will be in July, when they partner with Earthwatch and other local organizations to take adults and teens on weeklong excursions to the Sierra Nevada meadows to monitor and examine the ecosystem.

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