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SYRCL Rallies People Power for its 20th Annual Yuba River Cleanup

Nevada City, CA – From the headwaters along Donner Summit to the confluence of the Yuba and Feather Rivers, hundreds of watershed stewards turned out for the 20th Annual Yuba River Cleanup. The numbers are still rolling in from 35 Cleanup sites. So far, we know at least 700 volunteers removed more than 12,000 pounds of garbage and recyclables from dozens of miles of rivers, creeks and lakes.

“It was wonderful to see so many families participating in the Cleanup yesterday. Our community is raising the next generation of water protectors and it is beautiful,” said Jenn Tamo, SYRCL’s Community Engagement Manager.

In addition to families, school groups and business teams pitched in to get their hands dirty for the betterment of several waterways including Deer Creek, Wolf Creek, Oregon Creek, the Bear River and Kentucky Ravine. Items pulled out of the river included office chairs, refrigerators, toilets, tires, and hundreds of cigarette butts.

Riparian Restoration

SYRCL volunteers also helped to restore riparian habitat at five locations this year in partnership with Tahoe National Forest, California State Parks, and the Bureau of Land Management. Volunteers removed highly invasive species such as Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, and English ivy from Oregon Creek, Carlton Flat, Fiddle Creek, Kentucky Ravine and Edward’s Crossing.

Volunteer Appreciation Party at Pioneer Park

After the Cleanup, SYRCL volunteers gathered at Pioneer Park to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Cleanup. They heard from Damian Fussel from California State Senator Ted Gaines’ office, Cheri West from California Assemblyman Brian Dahle’s Office, Nevada County Supervisor Heidi Hall, and Grass Valley Vice Mayor Lisa Swarthout. All presented official proclamations honoring the Yuba River Cleanup. Sierra District California State Parks Chief Ranger, Matt Green, expressed appreciation to all volunteers on behalf of the South Yuba River State Park. Volunteers also enjoyed lunch, local brews, and musical performances by Ayla Nereo and Scott Nice.

Farewell to SYRCL Executive Director, Caleb Dardick

After six years at the helm, Caleb Dardick stepped down as Executive Director of SYRCL. The Cleanup was his final day and party goers bid him a fond farewell. “The Yuba will always be my home and I will continue to root for SYRCL’s growth and success,” said Dardick. “Words cannot fully express my deep appreciation to the Board, Leadership Team, staff, members, volunteers, donors and community for your support and encouragement.”

SYRCL introduced its next Executive Director, Nevada County resident and SYRCL staff member, Melinda Booth. Shana Maziarz, Vice President of the SYRCL board said, “We are thrilled to promote Melinda. For the past six years, Melinda has directed the Wild & Scenic Film Festival and she brings an insider’s knowledge to SYRCL’s work. Her expertise in environmental advocacy, development, program leadership, events, and outreach makes Melinda the ideal person to lead SYRCL's efforts to unite the community to protect and restore the Yuba River,” said Maziarz.

Clean-a-thon Nearing Goal

The Cleanup and SYRCL’s River Ambassador program keep the Yuba healthy, clean and safe year-round, and they have real costs. SYRCL needs the community’s help to keep them going. So far, \$12,000 has been raised to fund these vital programs.

“We’ve had an outpouring of support, and we hope to close our fundraising gap in the next week,” said Julie Pokrandt, SYRCL’s Development Director. The Clean-a-thon Campaign will stay open on Crowdrise until September 30. “Please visit <https://www.crowdrise.com/20thAnnualYubaRiverCleanup> or visit the SYRCL office to make a donation to support these stewardship efforts.”

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) is the leading voice for the protection and restoration of the Yuba River watershed. Founded in 1983 through a rural, grassroots campaign to defend the South Yuba River from proposed hydropower dams, SYRCL has developed into a vibrant community organization with over 3,500 members and volunteers. See: www.yubariver.org

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