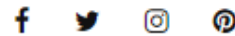




About Sierra Living

Sierra Living (formerly Sierra Heritage) is a regional Sierra Nevada magazine published six times a year. Its territory includes the Gold Country foothills, Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Reno-Sparks-Carson-City, Yosemite National Park, Mammoth Lakes and the Eastern Sierra.



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH US

Carbon Footprint / Locally Sourced

The upcoming Wild & Scenic Film Festival is a key part of ongoing citizen efforts to protect and conserve the Yuba River and watershed.

By Pamela Biery

Photo of People Biking by Josh Miller

Photo of The Yuba River by Anna Schwyter

The South Yuba River weaves and wanders its way from Donner Summit to the forebay of Englebright Dam, east of Marysville.

In 1983, two hydroelectric dams were proposed on this river. One of these was at the popular recreation destination, Hoyt Crossing, at the Highway 49 bridge in Nevada City (now part of South

River Citizens League (or SYRCL, pronounced “circle”). The name—particularly the nickname—stuck.

And ultimately, SYRCL won: In 1999, 16 years after the first members gathered, 39 miles of the South Yuba River gained federal designation as a Wild & Scenic River, permanently preventing the construction of dams. “Without SYRCL, you would have a brown muddy series of reservoirs instead of this beautiful river with its sparkling pools and waterfalls,” says Caleb Dardick, the organization’s outgoing executive director.

With this victory under its belt, however, why does the league continue to exist, 35 years later? “The river is the heart and soul of the community for many people,” says Roger Hicks, the league’s founding president. “SYRCL has been the lens that focuses the community’s love for the Yuba.”

It also brings people together in broad ways through the creation of its successful programs, some of which have become models for other communities and organizations. For instance, the league’s Wild & Scenic Film Festival is an annual event and fundraiser in Nevada City, but there are now 165 global locations that host the Wild & Scenic On Tour Program. Similarly, SYRCL’s annual River Cleanup was used as a model for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s Great River Clean-Up, which today draws volunteers throughout the SNC’s 22-county region.

And SYRCL’s work protecting wild and free rivers is far from over. The league now has its eye on another proposed dam project, Nevada Irrigation District’s Centennial Dam: If built, this 275-foot dam would block the last six miles of publicly accessible free-flowing river on the Bear, and opens the pathway for depleting water from the Yuba. SYRCL also leads an ongoing effort to restore salmon and steelhead in the Yuba River. And finally, it is committed to environmentally responsible cannabis cultivation in the Yuba watershed, and offers a series of “Growing Green” workshops.



How You Can Help

To donate or volunteer, contact the **South Yuba River Citizens League**
313 Railroad Ave. Nevada City, CA
530-265-5961 • yubariver.org

Wild & Scenic Film Festival 2018

Spread across five days and 10 venues, more than 125 of the world's premiere environmental and adventure films will screen alongside activist workshops, panels, live music, art exhibitions and appearances by filmmakers.

Melinda Booth, current Wild & Scenic festival director and recently named SYRCL executive director, reminds attendees that activism and inspiration are key elements to the event: "Wild & Scenic Film Festival is film for a bigger purpose—it's not what people do while in the theater, but what happens when they walk out the door into their community."

What: 16th annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival

When: January 11–15

Where: Nevada City & Grass Valley (multiple venues)

Tickets & Info: wildandscenicfilmfestival.org

A River Runs Through Us

Caleb Dardick

Englebright Dam

Melinda Booth

Pamela Biery

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

SYRCL

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Yuba River

December 7, 2017 By Dan

