

Ways to take action in cleaning up camps in western Nevada County's watersheds

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KNOW & GO

WHAT: 22nd annual Yuba River Cleanup

WHEN: 9 a.m. Saturday

WHERE: Various sites in the Yuba River and Bear River watersheds

INFO: www.yubariver.org or 530-265-5961, ext. 201

MORE ON THE SERIES

Part 1: [A discussion on homelessness in western Nevada County and its watersheds](#)

Part 2: [Advocates: Helping western Nevada County's homeless people takes a village](#)

SYRCL thanks Hospitality House for sharing their knowledge and expertise on the homeless issue in our watershed and for all the work they do for our community. To find out more, visit their booth at the volunteer appreciation party following the cleanup or visit their website at <https://hhshelter.org>.

The mission of Hospitality House is to bring homeless people in Nevada County into a circle of community caring that offers shelter, sustenance, medical care, advocacy, opportunity, dignity, and hope as we assist them in transitioning from homelessness to housing.

About SYRCL: Based in Nevada City, the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL, pronounced "circle") 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 more than 3,500 members and volunteers. See: www.yubariver.org.

Editor's note: This is the third in a three-part series produced by nonprofits Hospitality House and the South Yuba River Citizens League to discuss issues surrounding homelessness in western Nevada County and its watersheds, as the 22nd annual Yuba River Cleanup approaches on Saturday. See parts one and two with this story at TheUnion.com.

In preparation for the Yuba River Cleanup, the South Yuba River Citizens League is taking action to become better informed citizens to understand the homeless issue in our Yuba and Bear watersheds.

During SYRCL's annual Yuba River Cleanup we often come across homeless encampments and abandoned camps at sites along Wolf Creek and Deer Creek. This week, we are sharing what volunteers should know for cleaning up around homeless camps and how to stay safe, have fun, and perhaps help our homeless community after the Yuba River Cleanup.

Volunteer safety is SYRCL's number one priority. Before the Yuba River Cleanup, SYRCL spends the summer scouting dozens of beaches, trails, meadows, creeks, gullies and forests for unsightly, unhealthy and potentially dangerous trash. We assess each location with volunteers in mind, and prepare the supplies and tools required to remove trash and debris safely. On occasion, we ask Hospitality House and Nevada County to send social services to homeless camps to let them know that our cleanup will be taking place near the area.

For anyone volunteering at the cleanup, we've put together a list of safety recommendations to follow while working at your designated Cleanup site:

Always use the buddy system when picking up trash.

Stay away from active encampments. Do not remove items that appear to be in use. If in doubt please talk with the cleanup site leader, who can notify SYRCL if we need to follow up.

Don't pick up syringes, needles, or any sharp objects. Mark the area and notify the cleanup site leader or local official of their location. Each site is supplied with sharps containers.

Call the Homeless Outreach and Medical Engagement (HOME) team to report someone in need at 530-470-2686. The team will visit homeless residents who may need assistance.

Immediately following the Yuba River Cleanup on Saturday, we will be hosting the volunteer appreciation party where Hospitality House will be available to answer questions on illegal camping, homeless folks, and the services Hospitality House provides. SYRCL volunteers (and the general public) are also invited to tour the shelter at 9 a.m. Oct. 3 to learn more about their operations and the state of homelessness in general.

Ways to take action today:

Join the Yuba River Cleanup from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. We are recruiting 1,000 volunteers to help keep our river and community healthy and clean. Our sites span from Donner Summit down to Marysville. Volunteer registration is now open at <https://yubariver.org/annual-events/yuba-river-cleanup/>.

Volunteer for the Hospitality House Cleanup on Oct. 12. Full details are available at: <https://hhshelter.org/camp-cleanups/>

Sign up for our newsletters to learn about future cleanups and more ways to get involved. Sign up with SYRCL at yubariver.org and Hospitality House at hhshelter.org.

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