

No swim advisory issued for South Yuba River; E. coli found in tests

News | September 21, 2019

From a release:

The South Yuba River from below the town of Washington to Englebright, including Englebright Lake, currently have a NO SWIM ADVISORY due to unknown sediments in the water, and dangerous levels of E.coli. Additional testing by Nevada County Environmental Health shows increasing levels of sediments downstream of the South Yuba River near Bridgeport and Englebright Lake today. Nevada County Environmental Health extended the No Swim Advisory to include Englebright Lake earlier today.

E.coli levels found in preliminary tests by Environmental Health were identified as double the safe recommended levels by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and are toxic to humans and animals. The No Swim Advisory includes swimming, ingesting, bathing and recreational activities.

In addition to testing for toxic substances such as E.coli, the County is testing for toxic metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury. With Nevada County's history of mining, these metals are frequently found in the area and may be in the sediment flowing down the South Yuba River and into Englebright Lake. Full test results for metals testing will take about 3 to 4 days.

Upon initial notification, the County worked with CHP to fly a helicopter upstream and went out again today. The source appears to be above the State Highway 49 Bridge on the South Yuba River. Officials continue to work on confirming a direct source, but it appears to be a plume that is moving downriver.

The cause is still currently under investigation. The County is working with local, state and federal resources to identify the source and extent of the contamination, including South Yuba River Citizen's League (SYRCL), California State Parks, California Highway Patrol, the State Water Board, EPA, and Nevada County Consolidated Fire District.

Today, State Parks, SYRCL staff and volunteers assisted Environmental Health to collect additional water samples for testing in various locations from Humbug Creek on the South Yuba River to Englebright Lake. Volunteers from this morning's Yuba River Cleanup helped to post No Swim Advisory signs near common river recreation

River Cleanup helped to post No Swim Advisory signs near common river recreation locations. The Army Corp of Engineers and Skippers Cover Marina also assisted County staff in notifying boaters of the No Swim Advisory on Englebright Lake.

The County will continue to provide updates at <http://www.MyNevadaCounty.com/YubaRiverAdvisory>. In the meanwhile, we appreciate everyone's cooperation following the No Swim Advisory in the South Yuba River and Englebright Lake. Individuals may also call 211 Connecting Point for more information by dialing 2-1-1 or calling 1 (844) 319-4119.