

**Background**

In 2009, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) began coordinating the Great Sierra River Cleanup – a volunteer event focused on removing trash from the rivers, lakes and streams of the Sierra Nevada. This project aimed to expand upon the cleanup efforts of numerous groups and organizations by establishing and supporting cleanups in watersheds throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. The Cleanup coincides with the California Coastal Cleanup Day. During the first two years, the event attracted more than 7,500 volunteers and succeeded in removing over 270 tons of trash from more than 700 streamside miles. In both 2009 and 2010 the event received support from legislators representing the Sierra Nevada, including participation by Assemblymen Jim Nielsen, Ted Gaines, and Dan Logue at cleanups in their districts.

**Current Status**

This year more than 3,600 volunteers attended the Great Sierra River Cleanup and removed more than 251 tons of trash and recyclables from 19 different watersheds. Cleanups occurred at 162 different sites with coordination from 50 nonprofits and local agencies in the following watersheds:

Watershed	Total Number of Sites	Number of Volunteers	Pounds of Trash	Pounds of Recyclables	River Miles Cleaned
American River	15	277	5,538	205	25.25
Carson River	1	NR	NR	NR	NR
Cosumnes River	2	29	750	NR	2.00
Feather River	6	106	1,324	189	24.75
Fresno River	1	7	70	10	3.00
June Lake	1	5	80	10	NR
Kings River	1	10	50	NR	12.00
Merced River	55	1,379	4,459	411,783	20.00
Mokelumne River	4	161	2,050	390	25.50
Owens River	1	11	180	40	NR
Pit River	1	12	300	NR	2.00
Sacramento River	1	58	1,019	NR	1.50
San Joaquin River	7	293	32,500	20,000	7.90
Squaw Creek (Truckee River)	1	8	76	NR	2.00
Susan River	1	90	2,000	20	3.00
Truckee River	4	51	1,000	NR	NR
Tule River	1	285	1,640	160	17.50
Tuolumne River	5	21	110	6	5.00
Volcano Lake (Yuba River)	1	4	33	NR	0.50
Yuba River, Bear River	35	633	9,383	4,657	99.00
Lake Tahoe (Truckee River)	15	147	1,309	1,059	26.00
Indian Lake (Fresno River)	1	6	100	10	NR

Mariposa Creek (San Joaquin River)	1	16	509	4	NR
Lake Almanor (Feather River)	1	35	300	100	10.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>3,644</b>	<b>64,780</b>	<b>438,642</b>	<b>286.90</b>

Sponsors for the 2011 Great Sierra River Cleanup included The California Ski Industry Association, Pacific Gas & Electric, The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, the Sierra Pacific Foundation, the CalTrans Don't Trash California Campaign, and the California Coastal Commission. Six California legislators pledged their support for the event by becoming honorary co-chairs. Senators Ted Gaines and Doug LaMalfa and Assembly Members Jim Nielsen, Beth Gaines, Connie Conway and Alyson Huber, all of whom represent a portion of the Sierra Nevada Region, worked to promote the event to their constituents through their newsletters, Web sites, and social media sites. In addition, Assemblyman Bob Wieckowski, representing the East Bay, added his support to the effort. Senator Ted Gaines and Assemblywoman Beth Gaines also joined cleanups in their districts.

Final results and data by cleanup site can be found on SNC's Great Sierra River Cleanup web page [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/rivercleanup.html](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/rivercleanup.html). Photos and video have been uploaded to the Great Sierra River Cleanup Facebook fan page and to SNC's YouTube account. Media coverage for the Great Sierra River Cleanup appeared in 10 online event calendars, 12 online news sites, 3 radio stations, 22 print publications, and one in-studio interview with the KQCA morning news in Sacramento.

### **Next Steps**

Mark your calendars! Next year's Great Sierra River Cleanup will be held on Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Planning for the 2012 event is already underway. Requests for sponsorship are being prepared, outreach materials are being developed and updated, and a brand new poster is being created for 2012. Staff will be working to coordinate two training sessions for Cleanup Coordinators in the spring of 2012. We will also focus on expanding the number of cleanup sites with existing partners and groups in watersheds and communities that do not currently have established events.

### **Recommendation**

**This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.**