

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

At this time there are 49 groups planning to participate in Cleanup efforts in 19 Sierra Nevada counties. Sites being hosted by these groups also stretch into 2 neighboring valley counties. Sponsors committed to this year's event include PG&E, the California Ski Industry Association, CalTrans, the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, and the Sierra Pacific Foundation. The event is also supported by a variety of in-kind support from the California Coastal Commission, Whole Foods, Nature's Path, and Crystal Geyser.

Interested volunteers are now able to register for the 2011 Great Sierra River Cleanup by visiting the [Cleanup location](#) map on SNC's Web site. The map may be used to locate local cleanup events and provides instruction for volunteers on how to pre-register with the local cleanup organization using the contact information provided. Site information from this map is also transferred to the California Coastal Commission's Cleanup location map on www.coast4u.org and to the International Ocean Conservancy's map at www.signuptocleanup.org in order to attract even more volunteers from outside of the Region.

In addition to outreach through the Web sites listed above, SNC has also pursued various other approaches to advertising the Great Sierra River Cleanup. A concentrated effort was made by SNC student assistant Candice Heinz to increase the presence of the Great Sierra River Cleanup on Facebook and Twitter. A YouTube video advertising the Cleanup was created and posted on the [SNC YouTube](#) channel. Nominations for Cleanup sites were created on the Sierra Nevada Geotourism web page in an effort to appeal to travelers using the site to plan vacation activities. Outreach was done to the 230,000 state employees by including a call for volunteers on the bottom of all state paycheck stubs during the month of August. The Great Sierra River Cleanup was featured at the Forest Foundation's California Forest Center during this year's California State Fair resulting in distribution of approximately 300 posters and flyers to potential volunteers from all over the state. Lastly, a significant effort was made by SNC Information Officer, Pete Dufour and all of the local organizations participating in the 2011 event to distribute news releases to attract media coverage throughout the Region and the state.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to coordinate with cleanup groups to promote the September 17 event, recruit volunteers, and establish connections between area legislators and local cleanup events. Outreach will be made to both local and larger regional media outlets and efforts to secure sponsorship for the 2012 Great Sierra River Cleanup will continue.

Recommendation

This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to sign up and participate in one of the Cleanup sites.