

NEWS RELEASE

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Thousands of Volunteers Ready for the Fifth Annual Great Sierra River Cleanup Sept. 21

(Auburn) – About 3,500 volunteers are expected to head to the banks of Sierra rivers, lakes and streams Sept. 21 for the fifth annual Great Sierra River Cleanup, sponsored by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC).

During the first four years nearly 15,000 volunteers joined together to clear more than 550 tons of trash and recyclables from watersheds throughout the Sierra Nevada. Hundreds of community groups have spread across 22 counties and 1,280 river miles to remove appliances, cigarette butts, beverage cans, baby diapers, tires, furniture, shopping carts and plastic items from the rivers and streams that supply California with more than 60 percent of its water.

This effort, in partnership with the California Coastal Cleanup Day, serves to promote good stewardship on all of our waterways, from the source to the sea.

“As this year’s fire season has demonstrated, we are all connected to the Sierra Nevada through our watersheds,” said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. “The Great Sierra River Cleanup is a great way to get involved and give something back.”

Most cleanup events are from 9 a.m. until noon, and involve picking up litter along the shorelines. Some organizations have taken to scuba diving to remove submerged items clogging the river, or have organized a flotilla of rafts and kayaks to float downstream and search for trash to pick up.

There are opportunities for people of all ages. Volunteers are encouraged to register by clicking on www.SierraNevada.ca.gov to find the cleanup location of their choosing. Contact information is on the interactive map. There is a short, descriptive video on the site as well.

Thirteen members of the state Legislature have signed on as co-chairs of the event this year. Sponsors include the California Coastal Commission, Camp-California, California Ski Industry Association, SMUD, YubaNet.com, Caltrans, Sierra Heritage, Sierra Pacific Industries, The Nature Conservancy, and Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

About the Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Created in 2004, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a state agency whose mission is to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. In its first five years, the SNC, which receives no general fund tax dollars, has awarded approximately \$50 million in grants for projects including fuels reduction, conservation easements and acquisitions, and watershed and habitat restoration. Funding for these projects comes from Proposition 84 passed by voters in 2006.

The Sierra Nevada Region spans 25 million acres, encompasses all or part of 22 counties, and runs from the Oregon border to just southeast of Bakersfield.

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