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## 12 tons of trash pulled from rivers during 8th annual Great Sierra River Cleanup

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Samantha Vigil, California State Parks

Volunteers from Grant High School Latino Outdoors is helping at Protect American River Canyons' cleanup along the American River in Auburn, California.

Recently, over one thousand volunteers worked together to remove more than 12 tons of trash from the rivers, lakes and streams of the Sierra Nevada region as part of the 8th annual Great Sierra River Cleanup. This event, coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and held in partnership with California Coastal Cleanup Day, serves to promote good stewardship throughout the state's watersheds, from the Sierra to the sea.

The Sierra Nevada region is the primary source of drinking and irrigation water for California - more than 60 percent of the state's developed water supply originates in the Sierra Nevada region. Thanks to the volunteers who worked side-by-side today to remove refrigerators, bottle caps, shopping carts, tires and more, California's primary water source is now a little bit cleaner. Some of the more unusual items found today include dentures, bowling pins and a cappuccino machine.

"The energy our Great Sierra River Cleanup volunteers invest each year shows just how important the watersheds of the Sierra are to all Californians," says Jim Branham, executive officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. "This is where our water comes from, and we need to take special care of it."



Samantha Vigil, California State Parks

Garbage pulled from the Kern River during the 8th annual Great Sierra River Cleanup. Photo by Kern River Conservancy

The Great Sierra River Cleanup also kicks off Sierra Nevada Watershed Protection Week. Last year, Assembly Member Brian Dahle (R - Bieber) authored Assembly Concurrent Resolution 22, which set aside the third week of September as Sierra Nevada Watershed Protection Week to bring attention to the challenges that the Sierra Nevada region is facing. The measure passed both houses of the legislature without a dissenting vote.

The Great Sierra River Cleanup would not be possible without the hard work of thousands of volunteers, dozens of local community groups, and our supporters at the California Coastal Commission, the California Conservation Corps and Sierra Pacific Industries.

Final results from this year's event, a list of participating organizations, and additional event information are available at <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov>. Photos will be shared on <http://www.facebook.com/GreatSierraRiverCleanup><https://twitter.com/GSRCleanup> and <http://www.instagram.com/sierranevadaconservancy>.