

Background

In May of 2009, SNC contracted with Community Action Partners to implement the inaugural year of the Great Sierra River Cleanup. For the 2009 event, 33 organizations hosted cleanups in 20 Sierra Nevada counties. More than 3,500 volunteers participated and over 130 tons of trash and recyclables were removed from rivers up and down the Sierra Nevada. Assemblymen Jim Nielsen and Ted Gaines joined cleanups in their districts to show support for their local volunteers and to show their commitment to good stewardship of the watersheds.

This year's event, which occurred on September 25, 2010 was planned and coordinated in-house by SNC staff members. Brittany Juergenson did an outstanding job of coordinating the event for the SNC, with support from many SNC staff. Boardmember Jardine and 12 SNC staff participated in the Saturday cleanup.

Current Status

This year more than 4,000 volunteers attended the Great Sierra River Cleanup and removed over 141 tons of trash and recyclables from 22 different watersheds. Cleanups occurred at 150 different sites with coordination from 125 nonprofits and local agencies in the following watersheds:

American River	Kern River	Owens River	Truckee River
Bear River	Kings River	Pit River	Tule River
Carson River	Lake Tahoe	Sacramento River	Tuolumne River
Cosumnes River	Merced River	San Joaquin River	Yuba River
Feather River	Mokelumne River	Stanislaus River	
Fresno River	Mono Lake	Susan River	

Sponsors for the 2010 Great Sierra River Cleanup included The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, The California Forestry Association, Sierra Pacific Foundation, the California Coastal Commission, Sierra Commons, and the Houston Group. The event was also supported by a variety of in kind donations from CalTrans, Waste Management, Inc., The California Ski Industry Association, Whole Foods, Nature's Path, and Crystal Geyser. Six California legislators pledged their support for the event by becoming honorary co-chairs. Senator Dave Cogdill (R) and Assembly Members Jim Nielsen (R), Ted Gains (R), Connie Conway (R), Tom Berryhill (R) and Dan Logue (R) worked to promote the event to their constituents through their newsletters, Web sites, and social media sites. Assemblyman Dan Logue also joined a cleanup in his district.

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. Photos and video have been uploaded to the Great Sierra River Cleanup Facebook fan page and to SNC's YouTube account and include interviews with 3 of the honorary co-chairs on the importance of the Great Sierra River Cleanup. A Twitter account was created for the

event and up to date totals, facts, and interesting items found were posted throughout the day of the Cleanup. Media coverage for the Great Sierra River Cleanup appeared in 19 online event calendars, 18 online news sites, 17 radio stations, 10 print publications, and 7 television stations including an in-studio interview with the KQCA morning news in Sacramento.

Through the efforts of the Great Sierra River Cleanup, the SNC staff has been able to contribute to meeting the goals set out in the Education and Communication Plan. This event helps to connect locals to the larger region they live in thus furthering goal 2.1 set out in the Education and Communication Plan. Also, the involvement of six Sierra legislators in this year's Great Sierra River Cleanup contributes to the accomplishment of Goal 2.4.1 by linking local officials to a successful project and helping them to feel more connected to the Region and the efforts of SNC. Connection to the statewide efforts through Coastal Cleanup Day also serves to highlight the importance of the Sierra Nevada, a goal called out in the SNC Strategic Plan. In 2010 trash picked up during the Great Sierra River Cleanup accounted for approximately 30 percent of the entire statewide total. Media generated as a result of this year's cleanup also supports the goal of highlighting the importance of the Sierra Nevada Region especially considering that the majority of the coverage for the event came from outlets outside of the Region.

Next Steps

Mark your calendars! Next year's Great Sierra River Cleanup will be held on September 17th, 2011. Planning for the 2011 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 2011. Staff will be working to coordinate two training sessions for Cleanup Coordinators in the spring of 2011. 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. To support and expand the 2011 event, SNC will be exploring the option of bringing on additional outside resources.

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.