



For Immediate Release, May 26, 2021

Contact:

Betsy Brunner, Communications & Engagement Director
South Yuba River Citizens League
Tel: (530) 265-5961 x220
E-mail: betsyb@yubariver.org

Reaching our Diverse River Community: Bilingual River Signage

Nevada City, CA – This year, guests to Highway 49 and Bridgeport river crossings will be greeted with signs in both English and Spanish—a new communication initiative that’s part of the River Ambassador program, jointly led by the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) and California State Parks.

The River Ambassador program is aimed at educating guests about river safety and etiquette. Having signage posted in both English and Spanish will help communicate more effectively to the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the South Yuba River each summer. It will also create a more welcoming environment for our increasingly diverse visitors.

“This is an exceptionally important year to have clear and effective communication at the river given the high fire danger in the South Yuba River canyon,” said Daniel Belshe, Community Engagement Manager. According to local fire officials, the lower fuel moistures, continuity of fuels, and dryer conditions create a recipe for enhanced fire development and growth if a fire were to start.

“We want to make certain everyone is aware of the fire ban in the Yuba River corridor, which will be effective from this Friday to the end of fire season as declared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) through 2021” said Belshe, “as well as parking regulations, restrictions on glass, and the importance of packing out what you pack in so we can keep our communities safe this summer.”

This year’s river safety bandana, which was created as part of the Yuba River Public Safety Cohort’s (Safety Cohort) messaging efforts, also includes safety guidelines in both English and Spanish as well as a map of all 39 miles of the state-designated “Wild & Scenic” Yuba River. River Ambassadors will distribute the bandanas at the river crossings each weekend Memorial Day through Labor Day. The Cohort plans to deliver bandanas to local businesses as well so they can share them with customers and spread the word.

“We are excited to be able to more effectively reach river-goers this year with bilingual signage and are grateful to the County for helping make this possible by donating translation services,” said Betsy Brunner, SYRCL’s Communications and Engagement Director. While signage is important, SYRCL hopes to

do even more. According to Brunner, the organization is currently seeking a Spanish speaking River Captain, a paid position that oversees volunteers, who can help with in-person messaging. For more information on how to apply, go to www.yubariver.org.

With so many people coming from out of town, the Safety Cohort is working to amplify safety messaging. “Cohort member agencies collaborate to develop and distribute the free bandanas, issue press releases, put out coordinated messaging on social media, and so much more,” said District 4 Supervisor and Vice Chair of the Board, Sue Hoek.

These new initiatives complement and enhance SYRCL’s River Ambassador program, which is currently in its 9th year. In collaboration with California State Parks, this volunteer-based program has been an important presence at the river and an effective way of outreach. Since 2012, volunteers have logged 6,300 hours talking to over 57,000 visitors while also collecting 40,000 pounds of trash and recycling. If you are interested in becoming a River Ambassador, contact Daniel Belshe at (530) 265-5961 ext. 201.

About the Yuba River Public Safety Cohort: Made up of County supervisors and staff, local and regional fire protection districts, law enforcement, state and federal agencies, local NGOs, and community representatives, the Yuba River Safety Cohort has been collaborating for five years in an effort to address public safety issues within the South Yuba River canyon such as access, fire prevention, stewardship, and responsible use.

About SYRCL: The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL, pronounced “circle”), based in Nevada City, CA, is the leading voice for the protection and restoration of the Yuba River watershed. Founded in 1983 through a rural, grassroots campaign to defend the South Yuba River from proposed hydropower dams, SYRCL has developed into a vibrant community organization with over 3,500 members and volunteers. See: www.yubariver.org.