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SYRCL & Briarpatch Team Up to Provide River-Friendly Sunscreen at the River

Nevada City, CA – BriarPatch Food Co-op has teamed up with the South Yuba River Citizens League’s (SYRCL) River Ambassadors to make river-friendly sunscreen available to Yuba river-goers each weekend through Memorial Day.

Beginning early this summer, River Ambassadors began fielding questions from river-goers about the slicks they were seeing on the river. While an oily film on the water can be the result of anything from gas to naturally occurring iron-oxidizing bacteria, the film being reported at busy river crossings was most likely sunscreen.

When SYRCL approached BriarPatch about the sunscreen problem, they enthusiastically agreed to donate two gallons of water-resistant “reef-safe” sunscreen, which is also river-friendly because it is free of harmful chemicals like oxybenzone and octinoxate that have been found to be lethal to some freshwater organisms, to the River Ambassador program. Starting this weekend, the River Ambassadors stationed at Highway 49, Bridgeport, and Purdon crossings will have large pump bottle available for visitors to use as an alternative to more conventional sunscreens.

“With the current drought conditions, we need to be extra diligent about protecting the river and its inhabitants from harmful chemicals like the ones found in most sunscreens,” said Melinda Booth, SYRCL’s Executive Director. “We are grateful that Briarpatch has stepped in to make an alternative available.”

With tens of thousands of visitors to the Yuba this summer, initiatives like this can make a big difference in the health of the Yuba.

“The Co-op is happy to support SYRCL in any way we can to do such important work to protect our environment, said Marketing Manager, Rebecca Torpie. “Our community really depends on this organization to keep our river clean. It’s more than a worthy investment.” In a commitment to reducing environmental impacts, BriarPatch carries only reef-safe sunscreen products.

BriarPatch also generously donated signage that explains the importance of waiting 15 minutes after applying sunscreen before getting into your favorite swimming hole. Doing so allows the sunscreen to absorb into your skin and do the work of protecting you from UV rays.

Choosing reef-safe sunscreen is one way to help keep the river clean and healthy. SYRCL also recommends wearing clothing with a UPF rating as an alternative along with hats and sunglasses.

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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.