

Great Sierra River Cleanup at New Melones Lake



On September 20, 2014, 95 volunteers ages 6 to 60 gathered to help clean up the shoreline at New Melones Lake as part of the Great Sierra River Cleanup (GSRC) 2014: this was a GSRC record! The annual event was accomplished in partnership with the local Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, Tuolumne County Land Trust, University of California Cooperative Extension, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, New Melones Lake Houseboat Owners Association, and New Melones Lake Marina.

The cleanup focused on sites around New Melones Lake in the Stanislaus River watershed as the declining water level has exposed trash and debris. Garbage removal yielded numerous tires, bottles, cans, vehicle parts and other items. The volunteers and organizers worked as a team to collect 2.75 tons of trash along 20 miles of shoreline in the

Tuttletown and Glory Hole Recreation Areas, Camp Nine, Old Town Melones, and the Parrotts Ferry Bridge area. After the cleanup, lunch was provided. Removing and properly disposing of shoreline trash and submerged debris is important to help protect the water quality and aquatic habitat in the lake as well as protect park visitors and wildlife from potential safety hazards.

Many of the volunteers have participated in other events at New Melones Lake, but there were also many first-time helpers. All participants left the event feeling a sense of ownership, accomplishment and pride by taking time to join in this wonderful stewardship project on public lands.

