



Russian River Watershed Association

300 Seminary Ave, Ukiah, CA 95482 • (707)833-2553 • www.rrwatershed.org

RRWA September Environmental Column Russian River Watershed Creek Week 2011 – September 17-24

The Russian River watershed's second annual Creek Week is September 17-24, 2011. Events planned for the week will raise awareness of our local creeks and the Russian River, as well as the 1,500 square miles of land that drain into our streams, wetlands, groundwater, and to the Russian River. Creek Week is the perfect time for residents to learn about the water resources in their communities and take a stewardship role by participating in cleanup campaigns and other events throughout the Russian River watershed.

There are over 150 creeks within the Russian River watershed that create a rich and diverse system which provides water supply, wildlife habitat, flood capacity, recreation and aesthetic values to our communities. Unfortunately, trash and debris in the creeks and on stream banks damage the aesthetic and biological qualities of local waterways, impacting efforts to restore and enhance habitat for fish and other wildlife. Over time, the trash makes its way to the Pacific Ocean, where up to 80% of debris originates from land-based sources.

Creek Week offers numerous opportunities to make a difference. Throughout the Russian River watershed, cities, counties and other stewardship organizations are coming together to declare September 17-24, 2011 "Creek Week" to encourage the protection, restoration and maintenance of natural streams and creeks. A key goal of this campaign is to create local stewardship and education opportunities for the general public on the aesthetic, recreational and ecological values of our creek systems.

Here is what Creek Week has for you:

September 17 – International Coast Cleanup Day

Sonoma Coast and Creek Cleanup – a full day cleanup campaign. Coastwalk will provide all needed materials and equipment. To participate, contact Coastwalk at 829-6689 or at <http://coastwalk.org/volunteer/cleanups/>.

Mendocino Coast Cleanup – 9:00 am to noon campaign to clean up Mendocino County's beaches, creeks and rivers. Contact Jez Anderson at 962-0470 or find info online at the Mendocino County Land Trust site:
http://www.mendocinolandtrust.org/?Home:Coastal_Cleanup_Day.

Friends of Gibson Creek Cleanup – Registration is at 8:30 am at Oak Manor Park, Ukiah. Lunch and liquids provided and free raffle for participants. Campaign ends at 2:00 pm. Wear long pants and bring gloves. Children need to be accompanied by parent/guardian. For more information contact Friends of Gibson Creek at 463-2721 or kaderli@juno.com.



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September 17-24

The City of Santa Rosa is sponsoring daily events, from creek walking and cycling tours to naturalist field talks. Here are a few of the details: On Sunday, September 18, you can explore the headwaters of Santa Rosa Creek; on Monday, September 19, explore the culvert that runs under downtown Santa Rosa; on Thursday, September 22, join fisheries biologists and learn about fish lifecycles and interactions of fish species. For the full schedule of events and more information, visit www.srcity.org/creekweek online or call 543-3845.

September 24

Russian River Watershed Cleanup - a full morning cleanup campaign along 55 miles of the Russian River, from Cloverdale to Duncans Mills. Get involved by participating or contributing to this enormous effort. For more information, visit <http://www.russianrivercleanup.org/> online or call 887-2302.

Pull out your calendars and schedule some Creek Week activities. Our creeks and rivers need every member of the community to take care of them, and Creek Week 2011 is a good way to start.

This article was authored by Virginia Porter, Executive Director of the Russian River Watershed Association. RRWA is an association of local public agencies in the Russian River watershed that have come together to coordinate regional programs for clean water, fisheries restoration and watershed enhancement.