



SOUTH YUBA RIVER CITIZENS LEAGUE

June 24, 2022

Attn: Chair Susan Hoek
Board of Supervisors
County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 200
P.O. Box 599002
Nevada City, CA 95959
530-265-1480

RE: Letter of Support for Nevada County's No Parking Ordinance and Increase of Illegal Parking Fines

Honorable Chair Hoek,

Founded in 1983, SYRCL's mission is to *unite the community to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed*. We engage in and lead landscape-level conservation and restoration efforts from meadows in the Yuba headwaters to salmon habitat on the Lower Yuba. We hope, through the dedication of our members, staff, and 1,000 active volunteers, to achieve resilience for the Yuba River and our community.

As a community organization and member of the Nevada County Public Safety Cohort, SYRCL greatly supports the proposed Ordinance and Resolution to reduce illegal parking at recreation and open space areas. Increased visitation and the resulting illegal parking has created major hazards to public safety and the environment. Additionally, SYRCL would be pleased to support additional parking enforcement efforts, and increased signage regarding parking fines in popular recreation areas.

SYRCL is pleased to see additional protections for Dog Bar Road, Pleasant Valley Road, Soda Springs Road, and the addition of parking prohibitions on Boreal Ridge Road, Coyote Street, Donner Lake Road, Maybert Road, Relief Hill Road and Washington Road. This proposed Ordinance and Resolution will improve emergency vehicle access, reduce traffic obstacles, and traffic accidents. Additionally, many of these locations are in remote areas without cell service, which intensifies public and environmental safety concerns. In these remote locations, additional delay of egress or emergency services can mean life or death.

Through SYRCL's River Ambassador program, we educate Yuba visitors on river etiquette and safety, and have collected data on Yuba visitation over time. We found that visitation has increased approximately 570-600% since 2012. To gauge community sentiment about


this increased visitation, in 2021 SYRCL conducted a survey regarding visitor impacts to the Yuba. When asked what actions could reduce visitor impacts, 66% of respondents selected increased fines for parking violations, and 84% indicated that increased enforcement would help.

Unfortunately, with the simultaneous increase of devastating fires sweeping through the state and increased demand for open space recreation, illegal parking throughout the county threatens public safety by blocking emergency vehicle access and emergency evacuation routes. The 2020 Jones Fire and the 2021 River Fire made clear that fire in steep terrain, such as the beautiful canyons of the South Yuba, threatens nearby residences and regional communities with frightening speed. The smooth and orderly flow of traffic past rural recreation sites is paramount. The very people parking unsafely and then recreating nearby are putting themselves and their fellow outdoor enthusiasts at risk by also blocking emergency vehicle access to these areas.

We are pleased that Nevada County has prioritized policies and programs to reduce the risk of wildfire and its threats to life, property, and the environment. SYRCL supports the Ordinance and Resolution as a sensible measure to reduce risks of public safety, and strongly encourages the Nevada County Board of Supervisors to adopt the proposed actions.

SYRCL thanks you for this opportunity to provide input and appreciates your efforts to address impacts from increased visitation on our community. Please contact Keiko Mertz, Policy Manager at keiko@yubariver.org if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Melinda Booth
Executive Director



Daniel Elkin
Communications and Engagement Director