



10/26/23 Media Release

98-Yards of Trash Removed from Homeless Encampments

Grass Valley, CA – On Oct. 26, the Sheriff's Office, in partnership with Hospitality House and 60-plus volunteers, came together to clean up nine homeless encampments in the Grass Valley vicinity. Over a period of approximately five hours, volunteers filled two 40-yard dumpsters and three 6-yard dumpsters for a total of 98 yards of waste removed.

Waste Management originally donated one 40-foot dumpster to Hospitality House for the cause, but upon learning of the greater need, they immediately donated four more dumpsters during the cleanup to ensure as much waste as possible could be safely removed. Ophir Fire Protection District also burned piles of wood and other natural fuel sources as an added safety measure.

Momentum for this cleanup originated from the Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO). After learning about an abundance of illegal camping bordering city and county jurisdictions, the Sheriff's Office brought both city and county property owners together to address the encampments, listened to concerns and identified potential solutions, which included a partnership with Hospitality House. During such discussions, property owners agreed a cleanup was necessary and Hospitality House immediately began recruiting volunteers for the effort.

"This was the spirit of cooperation," said Nevada County Board of Supervisors, Lisa Swarthout. "It was rewarding to work in conjunction with the Nevada County Sheriff's Office, my supervisorial officials, Hospitality House and property owners to facilitate this cleanup and to help mitigate fire danger in the process."

"Cleanups will not solve the homeless issues in our community, but by coming together and working towards a common goal, we are making our community safer," explained Sheriff Shannan Moon. "Threats to wildlife are reduced and the criminal aspect of trespassing on private property is addressed."

Active campers on the property were offered shelter and housing services from Hospitality House. Property owners are taking steps to prevent and reduce future camping, such as by closing off easements and access points, adding no trespassing signs and fencing, and enforcing no trespassing ordinances with enforcement from NCSO, who is actively patrolling the affected properties.

Homeless residents receiving shelter at Utah's Place participated in the cleanup as well as individuals on probation who requested to volunteer for the effort.

Approximately 15 local city and county entities participated, in addition to the general public, including: Grass Valley Police Department, Waste Management, Nevada County Behavioral Health, the Enhanced Care Management Team, Nevada County Probation, Yuba Harm Reduction Collective, The Union, DeMartini RV Sales, Hills Flat Lumber Co, K.P. Martin General Engineering, Millennium Planning &

Engineers, Advanced Towing, Ophir Hill Fire Protection District, and Nevada County Health & Human Services Agency to name a few.