

Taking a dip at Loch Lomond

Loch Lomond

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SECCHI DIP-IN : Annual event measure water clarity

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FELTON — Parkgoers took a different kind of dip into the Loch Lomond Reservoir Saturday when they lowered a device that tested the clarity of the water.

Put on by the City of Santa Cruz and the Coastal Watershed Council, the annual Secchi Dip-In is aimed to increase community

awareness and involvement with keeping the water clean.

"Today was about educating people on the watershed processes, what the City of Santa Cruz is doing to protect watersheds and also to get good data," said Chris Berry, watershed compliance manager for the city of Santa Cruz.

Saturday's dip was one of 2,000 such dip-ins taking place across the country.

While city officials have measured the quality of water for decades, the community involvement aspect was started in 2000.

A group of 26 people met on the docks of the reservoir to measure the visibility. Using a black-and-white disk tethered by rope to a piece of foam — labeled a Secchi disk — volunteers lowered the device into the depths of reservoir. Once the black and white colors on the disk blend together, the volunteers marked the depth

on the rope.

Loch Lomond is the only reservoir in Santa Cruz County. While the city also relies on streams as a source of water, in drought years — such as this year — the city relies on the reservoir for some of its water supply.

"So protecting this water source is the most paramount thing we have on our plates right now," Berry said.

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