



Volume 8, Issue 2

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FOR News

Exciting things are afoot in the RATS world!

by *Tobby Briggs, Engagement Coordinator*



Our current cohort. They just completed their 3rd neighborhood canvass on Sunday,

March 25th. They knocked on over **600 doors in 3 hours** in McClintock's district near Sacramento. Our 3 rookie canvassers learned the ropes that day and were great!

If you are in the FOR community and want to learn to canvass, join us on **April 15th in Sonora, CA**. All you need is a willingness to talk with people—we'll provide the materials, what to say and lunch. [Email Toby Briggs](#) to express your interest.

The next cohort. We are seeking 10-12 motivated soon-to-be river advocates/community organizers for our summer push to send a message to our representatives and the California Water Commission. We want them to know that they should only fund infrastructure projects (like groundwater recharge) with public benefits—and not Sites, Temperance Flat and Centennial Dams!

Training starts on May 17th-21st. Applications are being accepted now through April 23rd!

[Learn more about becoming a River Rat!](#)

Apply Today!

Can't sign on to be a River RAT? Help us amplify our voice!

California needs to meet our water needs, but wasting public dollars on supporting projects that provide less than 1% of California's water is not a good use of the \$8 billion overall investment.

[Learn more about these proposed dams](#)

Tell the California Water Commission to **deny funding to Sites, Temperance Flat and Centennial Dams** and only fund projects with strong public benefits:

Sign the petition now!

Rivers Join The Resistance: State Bill To Protect Federal Rivers From Environmental Rollbacks

by Steve Evans, *Wild & Scenic Program Consultant*

California Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) has introduced AB 2975, a bill to provide state protection for federal Wild and Scenic Rivers in California threatened by environmental rollbacks proposed by the Republican-led Congress and the Trump Administration.

AB 2975 is a simple bill that directs the California Natural Resources Secretary to provide state protection for a federal Wild and Scenic River in response to legislation passed by Congress or an executive order signed by President Trump that either eliminates federal protection for all or part of a National Wild and Scenic River in California. The bill also would provide state protection if Congress or Trump attempts to weaken the provision in the federal act that prohibits new dams, reservoirs, and diversions on a federal river. The bill directs the Resources Secretary to hold a public meeting prior to adding a threatened federal river to the state system.

[read more about the bill here](#)

Take Action!

Contact your assemblymember to support AB2975

1. [Click here](#) a to identify your assemblymember by inputting your address
2. After clicking on their name, find the contact tab on their website then enter your name and address
3. Copy and paste [this email](#) into the comments section.

Prefer to email your assemblymember directly from your email account?

Email your AB 2975 support message to:

Assemblymember.*lastname*@assembly.ca.gov

The Saga of the Shasta Dam Rider

by Ron Stork, Policy Director

This is not an easy story to tell. To make it short, the efforts by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy to insert a rider into the 2019 FY Omnibus Appropriations bill pushing construction of the Shasta Dam raise failed. For now.



The Good. But there is a longer story to tell. Friends of the River and Cal Trout supported a bill by Assemblyman Byron Sher to protect the remaining part of the McCloud River from additional dams and reservoirs, including from the expansion of the Shasta Reservoir, the largest reservoir in the state. The bill became law in 1989, following a study started by the legislature in 1986.

The Crazy. Nevertheless, there have been decades of studies of a whole series of dam proposals, including the illegal Shasta Dam raise. It's pretty crazy, but the water-storage crowd have insisted on pushing the Shasta Dam raise studies along. In response, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) completed a dam feasibility study and environmental impact statement in 2014. No recommended project though.

Priming the Pump for Shasta Narrowly Avoided. All this was happening when, a few years back, Republican and San Joaquin Valley Democratic legislators demanded \$3 billion dollars in the California Water bond for "storage." Since it takes a two-thirds vote to put bonds on the ballot, they mostly got what they wanted — \$2.7 billion for the "public benefits" of storage projects, but no money could go for projects protected by the state and federal Wild and Scenic River Acts.

Reclamation made a half-hearted attempt to make the Shasta Dam raise automatically eligible (well, kind of) for bond funding when the regulations for the Water Bond were being prepared. We objected, and Reclamation lost.

The Reign of Trump. It appeared that the Obama Administration Reclamation was done

working this project. Enter Trump...

Finish reading about the Saga of the Shasta Dam Rider [HERE](#)

Get Involved!



Please join us for the 10th Annual Capital River Awards

*Wednesday May 9, 2018 5:30pm
Delta King Hotel, Paddlewheel Room*

This festive evening is a great chance to re-connect with old friends and make some new ones all while supporting our treasured rivers and promoting their protection. **This year we are honoring Martha Davis and Dr. Robert Wilkinson.**

The Capital River Awards will raise money to make sure our state leaders guard against federal threats to rivers and advance sustainable water solutions that promote healthy rivers and livable communities along with a reliable water supply for all Californians.

Visit our website to read more about our honorees, learn how to become a sponsor or purchase tickets.



[Buy Tickets or Sponsor the Event!](#)

California River Day

May 9th

California Rivers Day at the state Capitol is a powerful step in this campaign. This event will bring at least **twenty river groups together from across the state to give rivers a stronger voice in the state legislature.** After a legislative briefing and training breakfast we will be meeting with most of our state legislators throughout the day. Then we'll celebrate our hard work that night at the Capital River Awards at the beautiful Delta King on the Sacramento River. This will be a big day and a critical part of building a more powerful river protection movement in California!

Other ways to get involved with FOR!

- **Sat, April 28th—Season Kick-off Event**—Join us for a fun afternoon of advocacy updates, rafting skills (throw bags, tie-downs, rescue review), how to be a head guide and a BBQ Potluck at Scott's place in Sacramento, CA. All volunteers welcome. [Email Scott Arrants](#) to RSVP.

- **May 12th-13th—Rusty Guide Training**—a weekend to brush off the rust and get some new-to-FOR raft guides checked off! [Email Toby Briggs](#) to express your interest.
- **Save the Date--River of Song**—a benefit concert for rivers with Laurie Lewis, Thompsonia, Jenner Fox and others!
 - **June 2nd**—Fresno (venue TBA)
 - **June 7th**—Freight and Salvage, Berkeley—tickets available soon.
- **June 9th-10th—[Canoe Fundamentals Class](#)**—This 2-day + 1 evening course (on 6/8) provides a solid foundation for any paddler—even those with a little experience. The course is held on Lake Natoma and taught by experienced instructors.
- **June 9th-17th—[Basic Guide Training](#)**—We are recruiting people who want to become FOR volunteers and learn to protect rivers through guiding and education.
- **June 16th-17th—Friends and Family Weekend kick off**—To celebrate our volunteers who actively work to protect rivers, we invite you to bring your friends and family for a day of shared cost rafting fun. FOR provides dinner on Saturday evening. Sign-ups coming soon!

Want to receive information about upcoming volunteer opportunities?

Join the FOR Get Involved Google Group to receive emails.

Contact [Toby Briggs](#), *Engagement Coordinator*, to express your interest to be added.

River Currents

by Ron Stork, *Policy Director*



[View Full River Current Article!](#)

Full article includes...

Gnarly Water in Washington DC

The California press spent some ink on the dramatic effort of Majority Leader McCarthy to clear the way for the Shasta Dam raise...

Gnarly Water at Home Too (or at least a difficult portage)

Back in 2005, the hydroelectric dam industry, long unhappy with the influence of federal land managers in the operations of hydroelectric dam projects located on federal land, managed to get an appeal process to try to reverse or modify the mandatory conditions placed by the land-management agencies on new or relicensed dams on national forests

and BLM lands...

Oroville Dam Doings

The Department of Water Resources has a big job on his hands with a two-year nearly billion-dollar reconstruction of Oroville Dam's spillway...

Water Commission Doings

The California Water Commission has a big job: giving away \$2.7 billion dollars for the alleged "public benefits" of new water storage projects...

What happens in Fresno should not stay in Fresno

The proposed Temperance Flat Dam is adopted as the local icon that will bring prosperity to a thirsty city and nearby fields...

California Green and Golden

It's spring in California. Time to enjoy the green hillsides dotted or covered with colorful wildflowers. And yes, the sky is bluer, and the clouds whiter this time of year too.

So don't waste the season. Friends of the River needs your photos to show off to the press, elected officials, and just anyone who needs to see California beautiful river and rivers-and-people scenes.



Videos don't hurt either. So please share.

And if you can help us to archive, collate, label, and edit this cornucopia of California beautiful, we could use your help too. We need to remind Californians and Americans about their national treasures — and the need to protect them.

[Click here](#) to read the March *River Currents* article by Ron Stork

Thank you for supporting rivers by staying informed. We can't wait to see you at our next event or talk!

Sincerely,
the FOR Staff--Eric, Ron, Brittney, Bob, Toby, and Kelsey

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