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**Volume 8, Issue 7 - September 14, 2018**

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**FOR Action**

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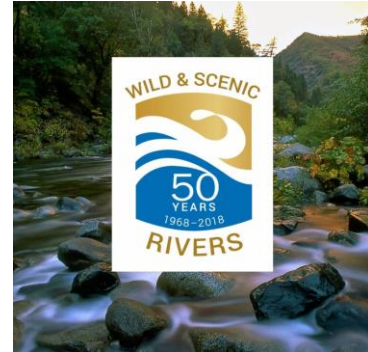
## California River Awards

**What:** A special evening celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act

**When:** Oct 20, 2018 6:00 pm

**Where:** City Club of San Francisco

We're honoring the river heroes who worked alongside FOR to win protection on more than 2,000 miles of rivers in California during the first 50 years of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act! Join us as we celebrate their achievements and gear up for the next 50 years!



**Early bird ticket prices on sale through Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>! Buy your tickets now!**

## Become a Sponsor

More than 25% of FOR's annual operating revenue and the majority of our unrestricted funds to preserve, restore, and sustain the magnificent rivers of California are raised at the annual California River Awards. All sponsorship levels come with tickets to the event.

[Purchase Tickets and Sponsorships](#)

## Stunning short film about the San Joaquin Gorge—take action!

Have you seen this film?

Check it out and send a letter to Senator Harris sharing your ideas about what should happen next!



[Watch Now!](#)

"Film made by Ben Cowan and Taliesin Black-Brown of Zephyr Visuals."

# Victory!

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## **Governor Signs AB 2975 Providing a State Safety Net for Federal Rivers in California**

*By Steve Evans, Wild and Scenic Program Consultant*

### ***New Law Safeguards Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers from Trump, Congress***

Seven hundred and fifty miles of California's Wild and Scenic Rivers were protected from the Trump administration and Congress when Governor Edmund G. Brown signed AB 2975 into law last night. The state law, authored by Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D-Glendale), provides state protection for a federally protected river in California if Congress or President Trump removes a river from the federal system or weakens the protection provided by federal law.

"California's wild and scenic rivers are worth defending," said Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D-Glendale). "AB 2975 ensures that regardless of the attempts from Washington to roll back environmental protections, we'll continue to do everything within our power to fight back and preserve our natural resources for Californians today, and for generations to come."

AB 2975 is California's latest response to anti-environmental efforts of the Trump administration and Republican majority in Congress to delist national monuments and weaken protections for federal lands. Conservationists fear similar threats to already federally protected rivers and other wild places in California. The House of Representatives, for example, has voted three times to eliminate federal protection for a portion of Merced Wild River to allow for an expanded reservoir.

"We sponsored this bill to defend our federal wild and scenic rivers from the Trump administration and members of Congress that are attacking our environmental protections left and right," said Ron Stork, Senior Policy Advocate for Friends of the River. "We're thrilled California is standing up for these iconic rivers and inspired by Assemblymember Friedman's leadership. And we couldn't have pushed this bill through the legislature to the Governor's desk without the help of our allies and river activists throughout the state." The bill requires the California Natural Resources Agency Secretary to hold a public meeting if Congress or President Trump were to eliminate or weaken protection for any of the 750 miles of federal wild and scenic rivers in California in existence as of January 1, 2018, and not already protected in the state wild and scenic rivers system. The Secretary can then choose to administratively add the federal river to the state system. The Secretary's authority to add a river to the state system and any protection afforded a river under the proposed statute sunsets as of Dec. 31, 2025. The California Legislature can

also consider permanently adding any of these rivers to the state system through legislation.

The state safety net applies to segments of some of California's most popular white water rivers on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada, including the Tuolumne, Merced, Kings, and Kern.

## Click Here to See Map of CA's Wild and Scenic Rivers

### Federal Rivers Covered By AB 2975 (Friedman)



- |                                  |                           |                              |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Smith River Tributaries       | 2. Black Butte River      | 3. Middle Fork Feather River |
| 4. Tuolumne River                | 5. Merced River           | 6. South Fork Merced River   |
| 7. Middle Fork Kings River       | 8. South Fork Kings River | 9. Kings River               |
| 10. North Fork Kern River        | 11. South Fork Kern River | 12. Owens River Headwaters   |
| 13. Cottonwood Creek             | 14. Amargosa River        | 15. Big Sur River            |
| 16. Sisquoc River                | 17. Sespe Creek           | 18. Piru Creek               |
| 19. North Fork San Jacinto River | 20. Bautista Creek        | 21. Palm Canyon Creek        |

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## Get Involved!

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## Your Opinion Needed!

Please take 3-10 minutes to fill out this survey if you have volunteered this season or usually volunteer. Your input shares valuable information on how we can continue to support the amazing people that support the river movement with their time, talents, expertise and enthusiasm.

**Survey open until October 8<sup>th</sup>.**

**Fill out the survey!**

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*While many of the volunteer programs are wrapping up for the season, planning begins for the next year this fall.*

### **Upcoming volunteer opportunities—**

- **Rafting**—Dec 2018/Jan 2019—calendar planning (special planning event)
- **Canoeing**—Dec 2018/Jan 2019—calendar planning (during monthly meetings)
- **RATS**—January 2019—support the RATS Training with set-up and cooking at Camp Lotus or apply to train to be a River Advocate--application open in November.

(If you are not on the FOR Get Involved listserv, please email [Toby Briggs](#) to be added. We announce volunteer opportunities there.)

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### **Volunteer Appreciation**

FOR's beginning comes from passionate, dedicated people volunteering their time to protect rivers. That tradition remains strong with the people who share their time in on-river and advocacy work. A few highlights from each program are below. If you know someone who volunteers with FOR—thank them for their work!

#### **River Advocacy Training School (RATS)**

- Trained 13 new River Advocates who volunteered 1,000 hours since January
- Across 8 neighborhood canvasses—knocking on 1,725 doors—and other events, they collected 840 signatures
- Laurie Lewis & other musicians held 2 River of Song Concerts—Fresno and Berkeley
- River Advocates wrote and published 3 Letters to the Editor

#### **Rafting**

- 37 volunteers supported 18 river days.

- 4 volunteers guided 6-7 times this season
- 9 new guides were trained through Basic Guide Training and 4 additional already trained guides were checked off in our program.
- The rafting program reached almost 170 people this season.
- 20 new helmets were donated by the [Network of Professionals in Water and Environment](#). You can help donate \$25 for the last 10 we need!

## Canoeing

- 5 Advocacy Outings offered with 5 expert speakers
- 2 skills building classes offered and filled!
- 4 new ACA accredited Instructors trained
- 4 dedicated Canoe Committee Volunteers planning trips and making things happen—with the help of another 8 volunteers when boats hit the water.

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**Salmon Paddles on the Lower American River** this October 27<sup>th</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>



Each fall the canoe community offers 2 Salmon Paddles on the Lower American River. We hope you will join us for this annual natural event. No experience needed. Register today! Space is limited to 20 people per trip.

[Register Now!](#)

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## River Currents

by Ron Stork, *Policy Director*

[View Full River Currents Article!](#)

**Full article includes...**

### **Trump Administration plows ahead on storage**

The bad news just continues to come from Washington, D.C.

We learned that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has signed a cost-sharing agreement with the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority (SJWVIA) to advance the *Temperance Flat Dam*. Job one for them will be to create a Final EIS and a draft EIR that more closely match their interest to squeeze the last drop of water out of the San Joaquin River...



### **Interior goes rogue again**

The Reclamation Act requires that Reclamation complies with state water rights (usually,) and the Central Valley Project Improvement Act requires compliance with state law. Usually, this is not a problem, but when you have this kind of federal administration, things can go wrong, very wrong...

### **Governor Brown plays ball with Trump Administration, kind of**

The 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) provides authority for federal financing of up to 25% of non-federal dam projects in California. Two necessary but not sufficient steps to receiving this federal taxpayer subsidy is a request from the governor and findings from the California Water Commission...

### **Shasta Dam raise maneuvering**

Once we learned that Reclamation believes they have an agreement in principle with the Westlands Water District to cost share the Shasta Dam raise, it did not take long for a group of environmental groups to file Public Records and Freedom of Information Act requests. These were directed to the Westlands Water District, the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority, and Reclamation seeking information about illegal cooperation by these two state-created entities with the Trump-era Bureau of Reclamation...

### **So what's going on in Fresno?**

Fresno is the headquarters of the nation's largest irrigation district, Westlands, the Friant Water Authority (Friant), and San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority (SJWVIA), well, this last one is currently headquartered in Visalia, but that could change. In spite of their locations some or all of these groups are playing at both ends of the Central Valley, and the Delta for that matter...

## **Paying for it**

The State Water Contractors Association has been pushing hard to lock in long-term contract renewals, in part as a way to get all contractors to chip in for the now \$19 billion dollar California Water Fix twin tunnels project.

Even though few, if any, of the details of the contracts have been nailed down and made public, the contractors have been pushing for a legislative “hearing,” all that is needed for the contracts to be executed (well, a lot of what is needed). Just a hearing, even without any resulting action...

## **Don Pedro Reservoir takeout**

In the last Currents I reported that the owners of Don Pedro Dam and Reservoir, no fools, were taking advantage of a Trump Administration at war with the federal agencies they are in charge of to back down the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) boating takeout prescriptions in the once-in-two-generations relicensing of the dam...

## **Well, is there any good news to report?**

Sure, *Governor Brown signed AB 2975*, the measure by Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) to provide the California Natural Resources Agency the authority to put California national wild and scenic rivers not currently also in the state wild and scenic river system into the state wild and scenic rivers system — at least for a two-term Trump Administration — if the Congress or the Administration messes with them.

Not a bad defensive tool. And just in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national wild and scenic rivers system...

**Click here to read the September [\*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 Kellie

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