



2018 ANNUAL IMPACT — REPORT —

ABOUT FRIENDS OF THE RIVER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- **Bob Cushman**, Chair
- **Jeff Depew**, Vice Chair
- **Marian Bender**, Treasurer
- **Richard Weiss**, Secretary
- **John Yost**
- **Scott Armstrong**
- **Jann Dorman**
- **Donnelle Morgan**
- **Jonas Minton**
- **Heike Schmitz**

STAFF:

- **Eric Wesselman**, Executive Director
- **Ronald Stork**, Senior Policy Advocate
- **Robert Wright**, Senior Legal Counsel
- **Toby Briggs**, Engagement Director
- **Brittney McMahon**, Development Director
- **Kellie Dawson**, Program and Development Assistant
- **Steve Evans**, Wild and Scenic Program Consultant
- **Arminda Montoya**, Contract Accountant



Staff from left: Ron, Kellie, Toby, Eric and Brittney

OUR MISSION:

Friends of the River protects and restores California Rivers by influencing public policy and inspiring citizen action.

ABOUT US:

Friends of the River was founded in 1973 during the struggle to save the Stanislaus River from New Melones Dam. Following that campaign, we grew to become California's statewide river conservation organization.

Friends of the River is dedicated to preserving and restoring California's rivers, streams, and their watersheds and advocating for sustainable water management.

Friends of the River is nationally recognized as an authority on the adverse impacts of dams on rivers and ecosystems and is the most effective grassroots organization working on behalf of rivers. We have led successful campaigns for the permanent protection of many outstanding California rivers and streams - including the Kings, Kern, Merced, Tuolumne, upper Klamath, West Walker, East Carson, Sisquoc, and Big Sur Rivers, as well as Sespe Creek and Cache Creek.

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you for making 2018 an incredible year!

To protect California Rivers from the Trump Administration we sponsored and passed a bill that ensures California can protect rivers under state law if the Trump Administration or Congress removes wild & scenic protection for any rivers in California, like the Merced. Thanks to our enduring partnership with Katherine Evatt and Pete Bell at the Foothill Conservancy, we also won state Wild and Scenic protection for 37 miles of the

Mokelumne River. Finally, we convinced the State Water Commission to cut their funding for Temperance Flat Dam on the San Joaquin River to just 7% of what they need for that boondoggle.



Your support made this possible. People have always been the key to our success which is why we launched the River Advocacy Training School in 2015. Each year we recruit, train and mentor a new crop of organizers through this program. We now have nearly fifty organizers throughout the state who are helping to build grassroots support for river protection and sustainable water solutions.

Last fall we turned our attention to the next Governor of California. We want Governor Newsom to be a champion for a climate resilient water future in California. We convened allied organizations in September to craft a water agenda for Governor Newsom and helped recruit 52 signatories from the

environmental, environmental justice, tribal and fishing communities. We are now using this momentum to build a robust statewide effort to advance this shared agenda.

The climate crisis has arrived. The Trump Administration is pushing to weaken environmental protections as our communities and environment face growing risk from increasingly severe droughts and floods. The time for bold action is now. Thanks to your support, we are building a stronger movement for a sustainable and climate resilient water future so we can have the healthy and vibrant rivers we all envision.

THANK YOU!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Wesselman'.

Eric Wesselman

OUR PROGRAMS



River Advocacy Training School 2018

The River Advocacy Training School (RATS) offered two RATS trainings in 2018, training 13 new River Advocates. The River Advocates focused on canvassing in districts impacted by legislation that threatened California's rivers. Across 8 canvasses, 6 events and two concerts, River Advocates gathered almost 900 signatures and postcards urging Senator Kamala Harris to stand up for California's rivers!

We delivered 1,500+ communications to Senator Harris:

- **500 Petition signatures** urging Senator Harris to stand up for rivers and champion them like Senator Barbara Boxer did for over 20 years.
- **755 postcards** signed asking for Senator Harris to protect CA rivers from destructive and expensive dams and diversions like Temperance Flat and the Tunnels project.
- **181 signed letters** urging Senator Harris to vote down HR 1654, HR 2898 and HR 23.
- **123 handwritten letters** written on multiple whitewater rafting trips asking for Senator Harris to make rivers a priority during her term.

RATS alumna, Laurie Lewis also organized two River of Song concerts in Fresno and Berkeley again this year. Thank you to performers Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum, Blame Sally, Thompsonia and Jenner Fox. Her efforts and the generous offerings of fellow musicians raised \$3,300 in support of rivers.



California Rivers Day

23 river organizations and 50 advocates gathered at the Capitol to lobby for Wild and Scenic Rivers and efficient water use in urban and agricultural sectors. The bill, AB 2975, sponsored by Friends of the River, was eventually signed into law on August 27th protecting state wild and scenic rivers from efforts by the Trump administration to weaken federal protections.



Rafting Program

Friends of the River offered 16 days of rafting for 166 people. Special thanks to the volunteer guides who offered 56 days of their time! We offered a 9-day Basic Guide Training and trained 9 volunteer guide advocates. Friends and Family trips were open for friends and family of our volunteers opened and closed our season.

FOR shared impactful river experiences with legislative staff, New Voices Are Rising youth and Sacramento Area water professionals (NPWE). We partnered with Foothills Conservancy to host a trip on the Mokelumne River celebrating the passage of its State Wild and Scenic status.

Special thanks to the Network of Professionals and Environment (NPWE) who donated 20 new helmets to our program!



Canoeing Program

Our Canoe Outings Program expanded this year with 5 river outings in 2018. 45 river lovers joined us this year for a lovely day on the water and learned about issues currently facing our rivers.

Featured speakers included:

- **Brian Wardman**, Principal Engineer, Northwest Hydraulic Consultants
- **Dan Airola**, Naturalist, Audubon Society
- **Guy Galante**, Roots of Connection and Sac State Professor
- **Katherine Perkins**, Consulting Scientist for Water Forum
- **Jamie Sweeney**, Fisheries Technician at Cramer Fish Sciences

FOR canoe class sizes grew this year as well. In addition to the Fundamentals of Canoeing, we offered a Basic Moving Water class on the lower American. Five of our canoe guides trained to be American Canoe Association (ACA) Flatwater Instructors.

OUR EVENTS



Wild & Scenic River Hero honorees



Honorees Martha Davis, and Bob Wilkinson with ED Eric Wesselman and former ED Betsy Reifsnider

California River Awards

The California River Awards this year was one for the record books. 175 attendees, including 44 Wild and Scenic River Heroes, descended on the City Club for an evening of celebration, reflection and looking ahead. The evening program featured speakers Mark Dubois, FOR Founder; Steve Evans, FOR Wild & Scenic Consultant; Eric Wesselman, FOR Executive Director; and a very special performance by Grammy award winning singer and songwriter, and FOR River Advocate, Laurie Lewis.

We paid homage to the many heroes who helped to designate over 2,000 miles of river into the State and Federal Wild and Scenic Systems over the last 50 years. These folks worked together to build a strong and lasting community of river advocates that now spans the globe. We are truly honored that so many could attend this commemorative event.

With your help, we raised over \$180,000 through the live and silent auction, sponsorships and generous donations! This makes up 25% of our annual budget and will help FOR launch a plan for protecting rivers for the next 50 years.

We want to send a special thank you to our generous sponsors, auction donors, board members, staff and volunteers for making this evening a huge success!



Courtesy of Hotshots Photography

Capital River Awards

We saw a fantastic turnout at the Capital River Awards on the beautiful Delta King Hotel and Riverboat. We were joined by over 90 river lovers who came together to honor Martha Davis and Dr. Bob Wilkinson for their many accomplishments over the years promoting wise water use and conservation in order to protect California rivers.

Thanks to all of our sponsors, we raised over \$50,000 to continue our work to preserve the flow of rivers for future generations.



Toby energizes the crowd at the Wild & Scenic Film Fest

Wild and Scenic Celebration

We celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 with a daylong event on August 4th. During the day, 75 commercial guides and 50 boaters showed support by wearing Wild and Scenic River racing bibs on their PFDs. Each rafter wrote in their favorite Wild and Scenic River and raised awareness.

In the evening, we hosted a **Wild and Scenic Film Festival** in Cool, CA attracting 130 film enthusiasts. Eight inspiring films such as Shadow of a Drought, Forget Shorter Showers, Selah: Water from Stone, and Protected: A Wild & Scenic River Portrait highlighted the work by ordinary people that has brought about change in public policy and environmental protections to rivers, lakes and watersheds in the US.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY



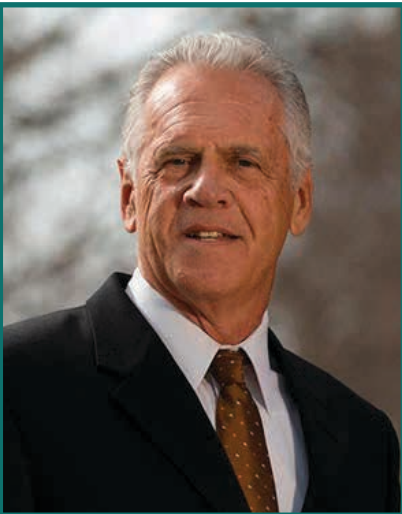
Storage Response Group

Storage Response Group – by Ron Stork, Senior Policy Staff

For dam builders, it's all about the subsidies. 2018 was the year where the \$2.7 billion of California Water Bond began to be felt — with the giant \$5.3 billion proposed Sites dam complex off the Sacramento River receiving an \$818 million dollar allocation and the \$2.8 billion dollar Temperance Flat dam on the San Joaquin River eking out a bare \$171 million. In both cases, the dam builders continue their efforts to put together the rest of the funding to move to construction.

This was also the year where it became clear that the federal government and California's largest and most powerful irrigation district, Westlands Water District, intends to inundate more of the McCloud River behind an expanded Shasta Reservoir, in spite of its more than three-decades of protection under the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

2018 was also a time where federal land-management and natural resources agencies, under new orders, allied themselves with dam builders and owners, retreating from their environmental land & water-stewardship missions that go back to the New Deal and the preceding Progressive Era. Friends of the River convened the Storage Response Group in response to these tactics.



Bob Wright, Senior Counsel

Legal Action in 2018 – by Bob Wright, Senior Counsel

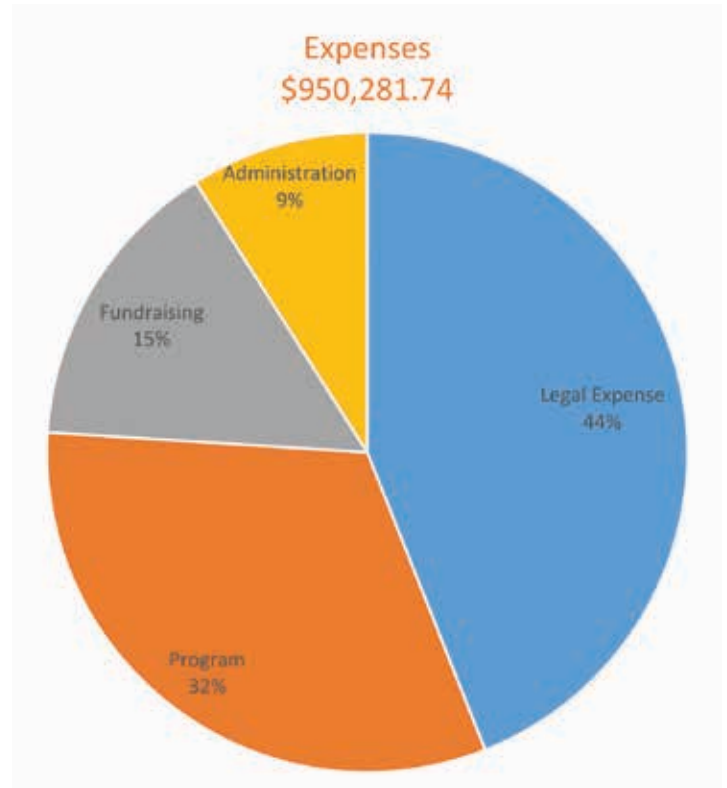
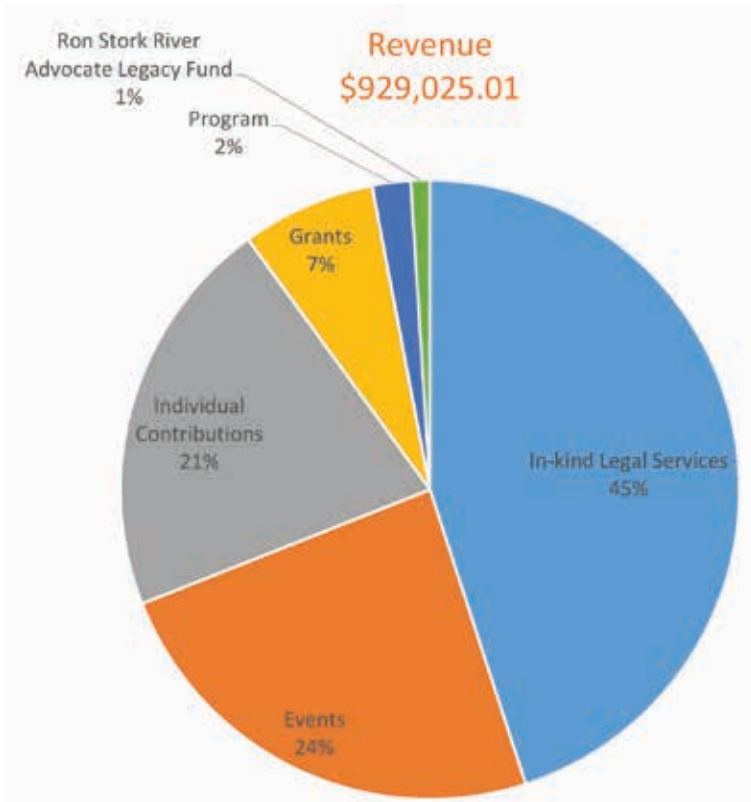
Friends of the River (FOR) continued to lead strategy and tactics conference calls with attorneys challenging the Water Fix Delta Tunnels project approvals. The project would severely damage the already degraded San Francisco Bay Bay-Delta Estuary by greatly reducing freshwater flows through the Delta by taking water upstream from the Delta instead of from the south Delta as is presently done. The project would also increase pressure to increase upstream storage meaning more dams.

FOR continues to lead a coalition of 10 public interest groups advocating real alternatives to a Tunnel Project and dams, such as the FOR and Environmental Water Caucus alternative, A Sustainable Water Plan for California (2015), that would increase freshwater flows through the Delta by reducing exports and focus on modern, 21st century water measures such as conservation and recycling.

Action taken in 2018 includes an appeal on behalf of eight organizations of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) certification to the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) that the Water Fix Delta Tunnels project is consistent with the Delta Plan. We obtained a Staff Recommendation that DWR's evidence failed to show that the Water Tunnels project is consistent with the Delta Plan. This was a major success and as a result, DWR withdrew its consistency certification in December. The Water Tunnel project cannot proceed unless and until the DSC certifies consistency with the Delta Plan.

FOR also participated extensively in CEQA and Delta Reform Act litigation against DWR's approval of the Water Fix project and in defending against DWR's validation action that seeks to validate bond resolutions authorizing the issuance of about \$9 billion worth of bonds to pay (partially) for construction of the project.

2018 FINANCIALS



unaudited financials

WE THANK YOU!

Friends of the River receives support from individuals, corporate giving and foundation grants. We could not do what we do without these generous contributions. We would like to send our deepest gratitude to the foundations who provided much needed support this year:

Appleton Foundation
Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation
Patagonia
Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Your help has been invaluable in making Friends of the River a powerhouse for river protection!

— PLAN YOUR LEGACY OF GIVING —

You have the power to make a lasting impact in the future of California's rivers. Years from now, as people enjoy and revere these beautiful rivers, our hope is that some will look back and say "Thank goodness that people had the foresight to realize that some things should be protected forever."

The generous gifts of our legacy donors are dedicated to keeping Friends of the River at the absolute forefront of river conservation in America.

There are many ways to include Friends of the River into your future planning:

- Include Friends of the River in your will or trust
- Make Friends of the River a beneficiary of your retirement plan
- Set up annual donations from your donor advised fund
- Set up annual distributions from an IRA plan if you are over 70 ½
- Contribute to the Ron Stork River Advocate Legacy Fund

Bequests large and small speak powerfully to future generations about who you are and the causes and places that are important to you. Each bequest received by Friends of the River has served as a powerful boost to our ability to advocate, organize and operate effectively. You may also qualify for significant tax benefits, even under the new tax laws.

To learn more about planned giving options, please call our office at 916-442-3155 ext. 214 or visit <https://www.friendsoftheriver.org/support-for/planned-giving>.

