



Volume 9, Issue 8 - August 7, 2019

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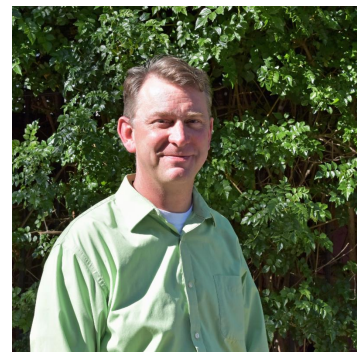
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Director's Corner

Point Positive Efforts

By Eric Wesselman, Executive Director

FOR's Point Positive campaign was buoyed in April when Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order directing the state to develop a Water Resilience Portfolio plan for California that allows us to meet our water needs while protecting and restoring watersheds. This Initiative is urgently needed as climate change will only drive greater water challenges that threaten rivers. It's also a tremendous opportunity to advance sustainable and innovative water solutions that move us away from the destructive water approaches of the past.



FOR is focused on organizing robust public engagement on the Portfolio by leading or participating in several efforts to generate constructive input on the plan. We've already gathered comments from hundreds of key stakeholders from environmental and fishing groups, innovative businesses, academia, and forward-thinking water agencies. Now we are finding areas of alignment and developing specific and actionable recommendations for the state by the end of the summer.

This has required a significant investment of FOR's time and energy and it has all been funded by individual donations from people like you. Thanks! We sincerely appreciate your generous support to take advantage of this opportunity to Point Positive for California Rivers in a changing climate.

News and Updates

River of Song

Third Annual "River of Song: A Musical Celebration of California's Life-Giving Waters," a special concert to benefit California river conservation.

Sunday, August 18, 2019 | 6 pm doors | Berkeley, CA



Laurie Lewis, Eric & Suzy Thompson with Thompsonia, Evie Ladin with Erik Pearson and Lisa Berman, and Rita Hosking

Come and listen to an incredible evening of music that supports Friends of the River. If you attended in previous years, you know what a gem this evening is full of river-themed songs. Proceeds benefit FOR and Foothill Conservancy.

[Buy tickets](#)

California River Awards

Saturday October 12, 2019 6:00pm

Honoring Obi Kaufmann, artist, conservationist and best-selling author of California Field Atlas and The State of Water.

[Learn more about Obi Kaufmann](#)



Tickets on sale now

Become an event sponsor and receive complementary tickets to the event, plus you'll get an exclusive opportunity to attend a pre-event book signing with Obi Kaufmann.

[Tickets and Sponsorships](#)

Ron Stork's KZFR Chico Interview on Shasta Dam raise

Friends of the River's Ron Stork was interviewed for Chico's Public Radio station KZFR show Ecotopia. Ron joined hosts Stephen and Susan Tchudi to discuss the Trump Administration and Westlands Water Districts' efforts to raise the Shasta Dam. Ron explains the lawsuit that State Attorney General Xavier Becerra, Friends of the River and other environmental organizations have filed to stop the dam raise.

Listen to the interview [here](#). Ron's interview begins at 30:39.

FOR requests DWR suspend negotiations on cost allocations for a new Delta Water Tunnel

Bob Wright, Senior Counsel

Friends of the River has requested the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to suspend its negotiation process with the State Water Contractors for State Water Project (SWP) contract amendments for new Delta Conveyance, meaning a Delta Water Tunnel. Our letter states that negotiating cost allocations for a Water Tunnel puts the cart before the horse.

DWR has announced that its negotiation process is separate from the water inventory and assessment being conducting as part of the Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative that Governor Newsom launched with his Executive Order on April 29, 2019.

The Water Portfolio requires embracing innovation and new technologies, which should reduce the need for water exports from the Delta and thus reduce any claimed need for a Delta Water Tunnel. In addition, Friends of the River has long-held that decisions on long-term SWP operations should not be based upon "paper" water as opposed to real water which is about five or six times less than the "paper" water. Consequently, it is appropriate that the State complete the required water inventory and assessment and then establish the required Water Portfolio, before it can be accurately determined if there is an arguable need for a new large upstream conveyance. A Water Tunnel would cost billions of dollars and could reduce rather than increase freshwater flows through the already impaired San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary.

With the welcome emergence of the Newsom Administration's Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative, it's time for DWR and the State Water Contractors to move past the siloed approaches of the past by suspending these negotiations on Delta Conveyance and investing in the integrated planning effort underway for the Water Portfolio.

Eight other public interest organizations joined our request letter. You can read our letter [here](#).

Get Involved!

CANOE

Canoe Adventures - 8/24 and 8/25 with evening lecture on 8/22

Keep an eye out for an separate email with a registration announcement for a joint lecture and trip with Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Join us for a lecture on Thursday, August 22nd and a follow up day of canoeing that weekend on Saturday or Sunday (August 24th or August 25th).



RAFTING

Meet our new Basic Guide Trainees

Nine folks trained with us in July gaining skills to be able to guide and advocate on/for rivers. It was an amazing training steeped in FOR tradition supported by those who have gone before them and share in the 40+ rafting history that underpins FOR's story.



From left top right. Kirk Schumacher, Alexandra Kunesh, Joe Houska (RAT), Colton Johnson (RAT/Staff), Iliana Villapudua, Armando Villapudua, Will Derwin, Nathan Kruger (Debbie Zeier not pictured)

Special thanks to the volunteers who supported that effort!

- Jeremy Anderson, Training Coordinator
- Nick Aghazarian, Training Coordinator mentor
- Carl Simoeau, Main Off-River Motivator (chef extraordinaire)
- Steve Evans (River Jedi), camp accountant
- Trainers—Richard Weiss, Anne Roberts, Harry Smith, Kelly Wigglesworth, Brian Kallen, Lance Gunnensen, Julia McIver, Gabe Ross, Alice Jorgensen, Bret Madhvani, Scott Arrants, Terri Gaines

River Currents

By Ron Stork, *Policy Director*

[View Full River Currents Article!](#)

Shasta Dam raise litigation against Westlands stays in Shasta County

Ruling against moves to transfer the litigation filed against the Westlands Water District for unlawful cooperation and assistance with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the Shasta County Superior Court kept the case in their court house. Well, perhaps understandable since the court's website home page banner is graced by, you guessed it, a photo of Shasta Dam...



Shasta County Superior Court Rules Westlands must stop their Shasta Dam Raise EIR

After a hearing on July 29, 2019, the Shasta County Superior Court granted a preliminary injunction shutting down the Westlands Water District environmental impact report (EIR process or planning for the Shasta Dam raise until the scheduled April 14, 2020, trial. It's a simple order.

1. Westlands is enjoined from planning for or the construction of the Shasta Dam raise

project, pending trial in this matter.

2. The CEQA process initiated by Westlands' issuance of an Initial Study/Notice of Preparation in November 2018 is enjoined, pending trial of this matter...

Reclamation still is responding to their inner Reclamation

As is often the case, the press coverage quotes from Reclamation can be revealing. Here's the response from Reclamation spokesperson Jeff Hawk to the preliminary injunction ruling against Westlands Shasta Dam raise EIR process:

Bureau spokesman Jeff Hawk said Wednesday he hadn't reviewed the court ruling, but said the project would likely continue to go forward. "We have not reviewed the ruling, however such a ruling would not prevent [R]eclamation from moving forward with the Shasta Dam and Reservoir Enlargement Project," Hawk said...

Getting greedy. Southern California Edison not making us proud.

The "victory" of the plaintiffs in Hoopa Valley Tribe v. FERC has, as we predicted, been profoundly destabilizing to the decades-old political power relationships in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydroelectric dam proceedings...

And speaking of the Klamath River

The Hoopa case removed one of the key impediments to relicensing PacifiCorp's four salmon-destroying dams on the Klamath River: California and Oregon water-quality requirements. Post-Hoopa, all it would take is for the dams' owner to back out of the settlement agreement and make a few calls to Washington and we'd be fighting for dam removal again at FERC...

Still subsidizing the rich

When it comes to taking care of their politically vulnerable party members, Democrats are not exactly without sin. Newly elected San Joaquin Valley Democrat Melissa Hurtado is managing, so far, to bring home the bacon to the Friant Authority, a founding member of the Temperance Flat Reservoir Authority, which failed to sell voters on giving it \$400 million dollars in the last general election...

And more subsidies for the rich on tap?

The U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee entertained Senator Feinstein's effort to make permanent the new U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) storage dam program started in her California drought emergency Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016...

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

Sign up for email updates

Contribute

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

Sincerely,
the FOR Staff: Eric, Ron, Brittney, Bob, Toby, Kellie and Colton

