



Volume 9, Issue 7 - July 3, 2019

This issue includes:

- News & Updates
 - Save the Date! California River Awards, October 12, 2019
 - Return to the Dam-Building Go-Go Years?
 - Forest Management Plan Update
 - River of Song
 - FOR Requests an Open Process for Single Delta Water Tunnel Evaluation
- Get Involved!
 - Canoeing
 - Rafting
- River Currents

News and Updates

SAVE THE DATE!

California River Awards

October 12, 2019 6:00 pm
Marines Memorial Club & Hotel, San Francisco



Join us as we honor artist, naturalist and best-selling author of California Field Atlas and The State of Water, Obi Kaufman.

Tickets and Sponsorship opportunities available now!

[Register](#)

Return to the dam-building go-go years?

By Ron Stork, Policy Director

The U.S. big-dam go-go building years eventually slowed down around a half century ago when the nation ran out of the best dam sites and Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan put federal water projects on a fiscal diet (dam costs for water and power features had to be repaid). Declining project economics



(law of diminishing returns) and reduced tolerance for environmental damage also diminished the appetite for dams — at least among the general public.

So what is an aspiring deadbeat dam owner going to do? The answer, public relations and lots of it to convince the public and politicians that more dams are urgently needed — and at any price (as long as the aspirants don't have to pay).

Example one, California's Proposition 1, which made available up to \$2.7 billion California taxpayer dollars to deadbeat dam supplicants. Example two, California's recent drought allowed California's U.S. Senator Feinstein to create and pass the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016 (WIIIN). The WIIIN was to be an emergency five-year program to kickstart some of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation hoped-for dams — and provide grants and loans to other aspiring non-federal dam-builders. [Continue reading article here.](#)



Forest Management Plan Update

By Colton Johnson, On River Program Associate, Wild & Scenic Liaison

The Forest Service has released a revised draft of the forest management plans for Sequoia and Sierra National Forests. These forest management plans are reviewed periodically. This allows the Forest Service and public a chance to review past practices as well as adopt new ones to help with the ever-evolving world around us.

The plans currently adopted were developed over 30 years ago and have seen very little in way of changes and adaptation.

The Forest Service has found that 328 miles of river are eligible for Wild and Scenic designation within the Sequoia National forest and another 48 miles are eligible within the Sierra National forest.

This eligibility doesn't give the same protections as designation but it does protect it from anything that might alter its eligibility status. The next step would be for the Forest Service to determine if these rivers are suitable for Wild and Scenic designation. Suitability is based on numerous factors but weighs heavily upon the Forest Service to determine if it is in the nation's best interest to designate these rivers as Wild and Scenic.

If the Forest Service finds these rivers suitable it can recommend them for designation to the Secretary of the Interior and Congress. The updated draft was released on June 28th, 2019. Keep an eye out for more details pertaining to these management plans, as the draft progresses and public comment is heard.

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.

[Buy tickets](#)

FOR Requests an Open Process for Single Delta Water Tunnel Evaluation

By Robert Wright, Friends of the River Senior Legal Counsel

Friends of the River recently requested California agencies to establish an open process for evaluation of single Delta water tunnel project alternatives.



- Our letter requests the agency Secretaries to require the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to create a Delta tunnel project website and post all comments and correspondence received by DWR on the website.
- It also states that doing so "would increase overall understanding by Californians about the potential impacts and pros and cons of single tunnel project alternatives. . . The posting of all comments and correspondence on the public agency's website greatly improves public understanding by allowing all interested parties to see and consider the information, comments and views provided by other parties."
- Nine other public interest organizations joined our letter request.

Special interests promote massive public works projects seeking to make millions or even billions of dollars out of consulting for, constructing, or using the proposed project. There is academic confirmation of this reality, including, Flyvbjerg, Delusion and Deception in Large Infrastructure Projects, 51 California Management Review 170 (2009.) Project Draft EIR's (Environmental Impact Reports) that are supposed to be full environmental disclosure documents, often overstate project benefits and evade or minimize project costs and environmental harms.

It is essential that those concerned about a Delta water tunnel be able to see "the other side of the story" set forth in critical comments. The hoped-for result is to be able to obtain the rejection of bad projects and selection of better alternatives.

Our letter makes the same request for an open process for the water resilience portfolio, required by Governor Newsom's April 29, 2019, Executive Order on water. You can read our letter at [here](#).

Get Involved!

CANOE

Classes Clases- Fundamentals -
last day to register - 7/10

July 13-14, 2019 | Lake Natoma, Sacramento
[Register here.](#)

Canoe Adventures - next one July 28th!

[Register now!](#) [More dates.](#)



Join us for a day on the Cosumnes River with Melinda Frost-Hurzel. Her work collaboratively

RAFT

Friends and Family Weekend— August 3 (Gorge) & 4th (Chili Bar)

Want to come whitewater rafting with FOR? Want to bring a friend? Join us!



- Register now for 1-2 days of rafting (\$35/person/day).
- Camping is reserved at Camp Lotus (\$13/night/person).
- Friends and Family Dinner on Saturday night. FOR will provide BBQ chicken and vegetarian option. Bring a side to share!

[Register](#)

Questions? Email the Trip Organizer—Scott Arrants—raftscott@gmail.com

River Currents

By Ron Stork, *Policy Director*

[View Full River Currents Article!](#)

Shasta Dam raise lawsuits -- whither they goeth

Westlands Water District, the giant bad boy of California's water world and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's partner in attempting to bury more of the McCloud River under Shasta Reservoir, drew another lawsuit. This time the North Coast Rivers Alliance and the San Francisco Crab Boat Owners Association filed a lawsuit seeking to block Westlands' environmental impact report (EIR) using the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's prohibition on water districts' assistance in the planning of the Shasta Dam raise — and also alleging violations of the California's public trust doctrine and the Delta Reform Act...



Where hath the Westlands draft Shasta Dam raise EIR gone?

Westlands was scheduled to release its draft but illegal Environmental Impact Report for the Shasta Dam Raise Project sometime back in March. It is early July at this writing, and it hath not been seen. Whither it hath gone, I know not. But if the lawsuits hath their way, it will be banished to the netherworld, and Reclamation will lack its most willing and political powerhouse partner...

The Shasta Dam raise, coming to your water district?

According to public records, Reclamation is courting potential sponsors (especially their Central Valley Project water supply contractors) for their Shasta Dam raise by arranging for tours of the dam and the McCloud River. Sounds like a fun trip...

Salamanders, what do they have to do with raising the Shasta Reservoir

There's some rare salamanders who make the lands around Shasta Reservoir their home. On June 26, 2019, the Center for Biological Diversity announced a settlement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to speed up the Service's Endangered Species Act listing decision. According to the settlement, we'll know if they make the list by, April 30, 2021...

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

[Sign up for email updates](#)

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

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