



Volume 9, Issue 12 - December 5, 2019

This issue includes:

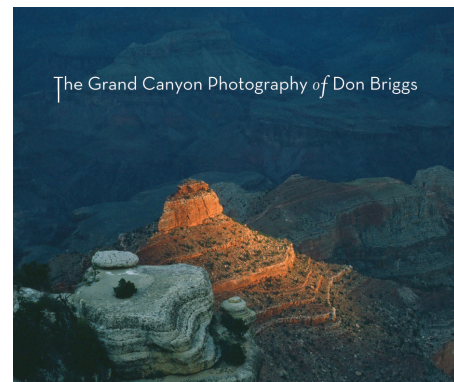
- Director's Corner
 - The Photography of Don Briggs
- News & Updates
 - Double your donation in December
 - Doors open for a new type of River Advocate!
 - Next stop? The House of Representatives!
 - Please welcome Colton Johnson as a full-time staff member!
 - Fisheries lost a champion, I lost a friend
- Get Involved!
 - Planning for next season begins for river programs in 2020.
- River Currents

Director's Corner

The Photography of Don Briggs

By Eric Wesselman, Executive Director

Don Briggs, a selfless and highly effective advocate on behalf of California rivers, passed away in September. He was one of the river community's most creative artists and advocates, and an unforgettable character. Don was a key leader in both the Stanislaus and Tuolumne campaigns, skillfully managing media efforts reaching millions of Americans.



Don also shot some breathtaking video and photography over the years. He was a celebrated photographer who worked for the likes of National Geographic. Millions saw his collection of Grand Canyon photography on the walls of the South Rim visitors' center.

Don will be missed and never forgotten.

John Cassidy, another river champion and admirer of Don's work, pulled together Don's "best of" Grand Canyon shots and assembled them into a beautiful coffee-table book.

Don's family has generously requested that all proceeds from the sale of this book go to Friends of the River; and John assembled and edited it pro bono as a benefit project for FOR. You can [preview and purchase the book online](#), so take a look and consider picking up a copy to celebrate Don's legacy and our shared love of majestic rivers.

Through his unmatched vision in seeing water's poetic flow in its myriad forms and light, his superb technical skill to record such natural magic, and his off-beat persistent charm that cultivated major media players, Don's artistic skills and "wily coyote" persona publicized the plight of California's endangered rivers to millions of Americans. Don was a key player in preserving hundreds of miles of California's most outstanding Wild and Scenic Rivers. He is dearly and fondly remembered.

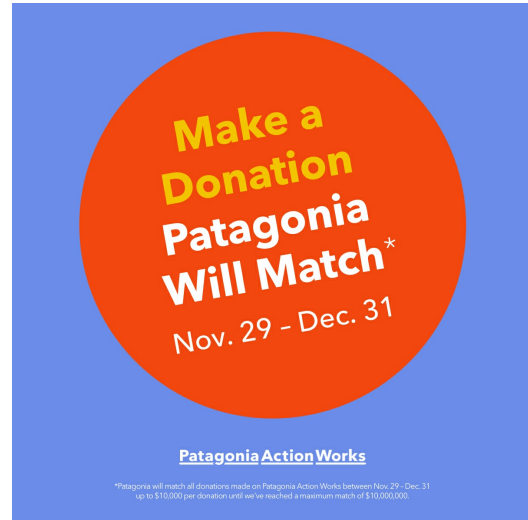
News and Updates

Double your donation in December

Patagonia is matching all donations to FOR this month up to \$10,000 per gift. This is HUGE!

It's also urgent because they are offering this to all of their environmental grantees. They set aside a total pot of \$10 million for the whole effort and those funds could run out any day.

To get the match, all gifts must be made via the Friends of the River page on Patagonia Action Works or click the button below.



[Donate Now!](#)



Doors open for a new type of River Advocate!

Last week to apply to train as a NGO RAT! Apply by 12/11.

NGO RATS train in a 2-day workshop at Camp Lotus. The \$250 fee includes training and all meals.

Do you wish you could build capacity for yourself, your staff or volunteers? Take this 2-day training to gain a deeper sense of the California's complex water issues and learn more about the basics of advocacy.

[Learn more](#)

[Apply now](#)

Make it ripple! Share this email with folks who you think might be interested or are part of our water community. [Share the flyer](#)

(Pictured Rats and other advocates at the Capitol on May 15th, 2019)

Next Stop? The House of Representatives!

On November 21st, 2019 the House Natural

Resource Committee heard a markup on number of public lands bills. Rep. Carbajal's Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, H.R. 2199, Rep. Chu's San Gabriel Mountains Foothills and Rivers Protection Act, H.R. 2215, and Rep. Huffman's Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation, and Working Forests Act, H.R. 2250.



The bills have passed through the committee markup process and are on their way to a vote on the house floor!

Of note is the bipartisan support for Rep. Huffman's Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation, and Working Forests Act. Utah Republican Rep. John Curtis had this to say "Although there are things I would do differently, there are a number of things I was impressed with," continuing that it was clear to him Huffman "worked hard to build consensus."

We at Friends of the River are proud to have been a part of the effort to get these bills closer to the goal of becoming law. We will continue our work on these bills and we look forward to pointing in a positive direction and protecting public lands.

Please welcome Colton Johnson as a full-time staff member!

Friends of the River is excited to announce that our On River Program Associate and Wild and Scenic Liaison, Colton Johnson, is now a permanent staff member on our 6 person team. Since joining the staff seasonally in May he has shown strong logistics support of river programs, trained as a whitewater raft guide, deepened his understanding of Wild and Scenic issues and

joined in the coalition work for 3 federal Wild and Scenic bills. Colton also created the first and only comprehensive map of California's state Wild and Scenic Rivers—since the bill passed in 1972! ([Check it out here.](#)) Colton brings a positive, friendly and team-oriented attitude to his work and has been a great addition to the staff. Please congratulate him next time you see him!



Fisheries Lost a Champion, I Lost a Friend By Bill Jennings, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance

Jim Crenshaw, longtime President of CSPA, suddenly and unexpectedly passed away Thursday, November 28, 2019. He had spent Thanksgiving Day with family, the evening with close friends, returned home and passed in his sleep. Jim's death is a grievous loss to those of us at CSPA, his myriad friends and the environment. Arrangements have not yet been finalized.

Jim had a zest for life and a passionate commitment for whatever he undertook. He never did anything halfway: whether it was motorcycling racing, rugby, whitewater kayaking or fighting for fisheries and the environment; he was always fully committed. And he traveled widely in pursuit of his passions.

A fly fisherman from the age of eight, Jim took over as President of CSPA from founder Roy Haile in 1981 and incorporated the largely volunteer organization in 1983. Over the next

four decades, the supervised CSPA's involvement in literally thousands of formal water rights, water quality, hydropower, environmental review and rulemaking proceedings to protect fisheries. He launched an enforcement campaign that led to more than seven hundred lawsuits to enforce environmental laws enacted to protect fisheries and water quality. A campaign that resulted in cleaner waters, healthier fisheries and, since CSPA cannot accept penalty funds from enforcement efforts, more than eight million dollars directed to foundations for distribution to other worthy environmental organizations.

Mere words cannot describe what Jim Crenshaw meant to CSPA and to me. He recruited me to CSPA in the mid-1980s and for more than thirty years served as a close friend, confidant, mentor and inspiration. He was an activists' activist: loyal, contagiously funny and relentlessly fierce in protecting fisheries. The environment had no better friend and its despoilers no greater foe than Jim Crenshaw.

CSPA extends its deepest sympathy to Jim's family, including his sons William and David. It is particularly tragic that Jim was a week or so away from experiencing the birth of his first grandchild. Jim's legacy will be cherished and serve as a beacon for CSPA's continuing commitment to protect fisheries, water quality and the environment.

(Pictured on the right with friend Jonas Minton.)

Get Involved!

Planning for next season begins for river programs in early 2020.

- Canoe Planning Session—January 7th @ 5:30-7:00 in Sacramento
- Rafting Planning Retreat—February 1st @ 10 am-3 pm in Sacramento

Please email Toby Briggs (tobybriggs@friendsoftheriver.org) if you would like to participate in the planning for either program or are interested in volunteering next season.

River Currents

By Ron Stork, *Policy Director*

[View Full River Currents Article!](#)

Reclamation on the PR blitz

I know, I know, it's been illegal for thirty years for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to expand Shasta Reservoir. And it's similarly illegal for California water districts and local governments to partner with Reclamation to do so.

But that doesn't seem to matter to the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, Brenda Burman. She's on the stump for the dam raise. The latest is her op ed in the Fresno Bee where she extolls the virtues of the \$2 billion dollar dam raise that according to her agency could, if it was illegal, increase deliveries to Reclamation's customers by almost 1%. Yes, almost 1%....



And speaking of PR

It seems that someone is doing the work to add to the list of supports of the Shasta Dam raise. We know that Silicon Valley's Santa Clara Water District (Valley Water) is a "supporter." Perhaps its brethren at the San Luis and Delta Mendota Water Authority and

its constituent parts have gone on record.

Enter the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MDOC), a large district evenly divided between city and water district members. It is also a long way from the Central Valley and the giant federal Central Valley Project and the Project's Shasta Dam...

Rep. McClintock's era of abundance

A few weeks back Representative Tom McClintock (R-Elk Grove) introduced his Water Optimization for the West (WOW) Act (H.R. 5217) for, in his words, to "Provide Pathway to Water Abundance." The bill springs from his idea that California can enter into a new era of abundance once again, if we would only put the right people in charge of damming and diverting our way to Paradise (and giving them a lot of taxpayer money)...

Not getting it

In an era of declining news and editorial newspaper staffs, the Orange County Register and Fresno Bee reached pretty deep into the pit to find some op eds.

At the end of October, the Orange County Register tapped former Republican Congressman and nice guy of the previous generation of elected officials to pen an op ed in favor of raising Shasta Dam. It followed Westlands' and Reclamation's talking points, including never mentioning that raising the dam would violate the California Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. But most curious was Tom's concluding remarks that Californians should rejoice that the new Secretary of the Interior has made it so that the "dam construction is beginning..."

Tough times

Nowadays, it's tough to be an environmentalist in water. Whether it's Westlands (the big bad boy of California water) signing a permanent contract for 1.15 million acre-feet of government water, continued discharge of selenium-laden waters, and assuming more say about the federal facilities that bring it water, or the federal government deciding to pump harder from the San Joaquin/Sacramento River Bay/Delta, or the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California buying big chunks of the Delta or state government pushing to build a tunnel under the Delta and replacing regulatory actions to protect Delta water quality with voluntary agreements with upstream diverters, the picture is not pretty.

But that is, of course, the reason that "carry on." The world and California needs us more than ever.

Clean water

This column has carried month after month of bad news about the weakening of the role of the states and certain jurisdictional tribes in protecting water quality with the tools provided by section 401 of the Nixon-era federal Clean Water Act. I don't have any more news today.

We are still awaiting whether the California and U.S. Supreme Courts will take up appeals of lower court decisions that close-to-fatally injure effective use and judicial enforcement of the Clean Water Act. We are also awaiting the final rules of the EPA that are likely to accomplish the same thing. There, the federal judiciary may be our only near-term hope. And if the current Administration is re-elected, well, let's just say that a lot of damage can be done in five years.

Click here to read the December [*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, Toby, Kellie and Colton

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