



Volume 10, Issue 11 - December 15, 2020

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Director's Corner

FOR is Growing!



I'm excited to announce that **Amy Cottrell** joined the team as the Director of Finance and Administration last month. Amy has over twenty-five years of finance, accounting, and office management experience from positions she's held in San Jose, Placerville, and El Dorado Hills. She's no stranger to the banks of the American River and Cronan Ranch on the South Fork in particular. She's also an artist and nature photographer with work on display at: <https://hawthorntor.com/>. Amy will work with me and members of the board's finance committee to ensure sound fiscal management of the organization.

Amy is the first of a few staff additions we are planning for in the next few months. The coming years present tremendous challenges and opportunities for water and FOR needs to gear up to meet them. The additional program positions will build on our work to protect and restore California rivers by advancing sustainable water solutions while saving them from destructive dams and diversions. Our ability to add and sustain this larger organization depends on people like you. We'll only succeed with extraordinary people, relentless execution, and your support!

Thank you and please join me in welcoming Amy to the team!

Sincerely,
Eric Wesselman
Executive Director

News and Updates



We have some exciting plans for 2021 and beyond!

We are so inspired by the history we're building on at Friends of the River and where we're headed. It is all about making FOR a stronger force for protecting California's Rivers. Not just for the next few years, but for the next 50!

You can help FOR gear up by making a special year-end contribution today!

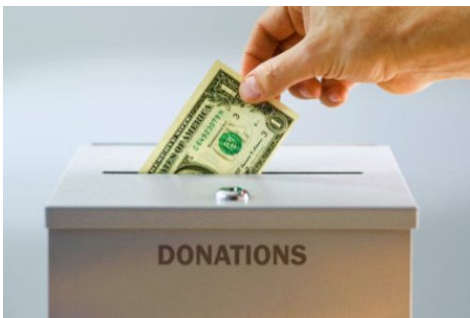
We plan to hire two new staff to build on the incredible work people like Ron Stork have been doing for years. That means more muscle to ensure the era of big dam building remains a thing of the past in California. More muscle to ensure we plan for a sustainable and climate-resilient water future where we have more water flowing down rivers, not less and less until they're bled dry.

We need to raise at least \$30,000 to ensure we have enough funding to grow in 2021. We can do that if 600 people contribute \$50 each! If you can give more, you'll help ensure this growth is sustainable.

[Donate](#)

[Learn More](#)

New tax deductions available in 2020 for charitable giving



The CARES Act signed into law this spring allows for a new "above the line deduction" for those who do not itemize. Individuals and couples filing jointly who take the standard deduction are now eligible to claim up to \$300 in charitable donations. Donations must be made in cash, so gifts of stock or gifts from a donor-advised fund are ineligible.

The CARES Act has also lifted a rule that limits cash donation deductions to 60% of AGI to allow for a full 100% deduction. The same rules apply that restrict the deductions to contributions of cash.

Keep in mind, there are many ways to include Friends of the River in your giving plan, now and in the future:

- Include Friends of the River in your will or trust
- Make Friends of the River a beneficiary of your retirement plan
- Set up annual distributions from an IRA plan if you are over 70½
- Set up annual donations from your donor-advised fund
- Contribute to the Ron Stork River Advocate Legacy Fund endowment
- Give appreciated stock or mutual funds held for more than one year (avoiding capital gains tax)

[More Ways to Give](#)

Special Limited Offer: River Trip to India!

One donation to Friends of the River will get you a Buy One Get One river trip on the Zanskar River in

India!

It doesn't get much better than this! The Zanskar offers all of the elements of the perfect river trip—Exciting but safe whitewater, spectacular canyon scenery, extensive cultural contact, lots of diversity, great monasteries and palaces, beautiful campsites, dry and pleasant weather, remoteness, and an excellent local crew.



The trip includes a 13 day, guided group tour with 6 days on the Zanskar River for two people with food and lodging included. *Airfare purchased separately.

Scheduled Dates: August 15-27, 2021. Also available for dates in August 2022.

Interested?

All you have to do is be the first person to [make a new \\$2500 donation to Friends of the River using this link](#) and you will receive a trip for two for the price of one (\$4,100 per person) from Wantok Adventures. You will hear back from our Development Director, Brittney McMahon, with information on how to book the trip.

This is a limited offer - ONLY ONE available!

Visit the [Wantok Adventures website](#) for some great photos of past trips and more information.

River Currents

By Ron Stork, *Policy Director*

[View Full River Currents Article!](#)

2020 Elections

Yes, those elections. Record turnout too. Most of the 2016 swing states reversed course in the 2020 Presidential election, albeit by relatively narrow margins. The President, as he predicted, is claiming election fraud, so far without persuading any states or courts that any reason for overturning the election exists...



Reclamation Goes to School and Flunks out

It's not hard to be a prophet when the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is so predictable. When Reclamation released a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) for its 2105 Shasta Dam raise EIS, I dove into it. It wasn't a long document. But it was amateurish with a great many mistakes...

Speculating on Reclamation's Next Steps

No prophesying necessary here. Reclamation has some bows to finish tying to get the Shasta Dam raise moved forward as a Christmas present to the Westlands Water District and House Minority Leader McCarthy.

They need to sign a Record of Decision for their environmental reviews of the project — a bit awkward since those reviews make a lot of mistakes that could be litigated...

Just When You Thought There Was Some Good News for the McCloud River

GOP Minority House Leader Kevin McCarthy is back at it. The trade press (Energy & Environment News) reports that he is holding the federal FY 2021/22 omnibus appropriations (spending) bill for the entire federal government hostage for a Congressional authorization of the Shasta Dam raise and an extension of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016 (WIIN); the latter, the authorizing vehicle for the Shasta Dam raise project, is set to expire this year...

Temperance Flat Dam stumbles

Since last year, it hadn't been much. The California Water Commission had proven to be tight-fisted with the Temperance Flat Reservoir Authority's request for a lot of taxpayer money for the dam: allocating for (tentatively committing to pay) only 6% of the dam's then estimated costs.

But no matter. The Authority, after all, was more sure that the U.S. Department of the

Interior, Bureau of Reclamation was prepared to front half the \$3 billion cost of their proposed giant dam on the San Joaquin River gorge...

And Another Dam Rises?

Well, what is the California Water Commission going to do with the \$171 million of taxpayer money that it allocated to the Temperance Flat Dam? Return it to the Pandemic-wracked state general fund? No way. They are going to spend that \$2.7 billion and not return a dime.

The staff proposal is to increase the funding allocation to the Willow Springs water bank and Kern Fan groundwater storage projects, adjust the allocations of the seven Commission storage projects for inflation, and begin looking around for new projects to potentially fund...

The Canal Road Show

At the behest of one of the recommendations in Governor Newsom's Water Resilience Portfolio, the California Water Commission is touring the state holding listening sessions to hear from water districts and agencies who would like the state to finance a canal or canal reconstruction to bring them water...

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

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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, and Amy

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