

## California's McCloud River Among "Most Endangered" in U.S.



by: [Suzanne Potter](#)

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Chief Caleen Sisk of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe opposes efforts to raise the Shasta Dam and enlarge the reservoir because it would flood her tribe's ancestral lands.  
(Winnemem Wintu Tribe)

REDDING, Calif. The 2021 top 10 list of America's "Most Endangered Rivers" is out - and the McCloud River in Shasta County is number seven.

The report from the group [American Rivers](#) noted the McCloud is threatened by a [40-year-old plan](#) that had been revived by the Trump administration to raise the Shasta Dam by more than 18 feet. Caleen Sisk, chief of the [Winnemem Wintu tribe](#), said that would flood 5,000 acres upstream on the McCloud and drown 39 sites sacred to her people.

"Winnemum Wintu people still go to the ceremonies, and go to the sacred places to pray and carry on the traditions," she said. "We've lived there for thousands of years, and so we have very deep-rooted connections to the river."

The tribe takes its name, Winnemem, from the original name of the McCloud River. The [Shasta Dam](#), finished in 1945, creates a reservoir that supplies water to the Central Valley.

Supporters of raising the height of the dam have said it would create more water storage and generate additional power. Environmental groups have noted that the dam also obstructs the native salmon population.

Amy Souers Kober, American Rivers' vice president for communication, said she'd like Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, as the first Native American Cabinet secretary in U.S. history, to reject the plan to make the Shasta Dam taller and enlarge its reservoir.

"We need the Biden administration to do what's right here," Kober said. "It does not make any sense to further damage this river and the tribe's sacred sites when there are better, available, more cost-effective water-supply solutions."

The report and a related petition is on the [American Rivers website](#), and the tribal efforts to stop the project are online at [run4salmon.org](#).

References:

[Report](#)  
[Shasta Dam project](#)  
[General Shasta Dam info](#)  
[Winnemem Wintu Tribe](#)

<https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2021-04-14/water/californias-mccloud-river-among-most-endangered-in-u-s/a73909-1>

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