



# FRIENDS OF THE RIVER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 05, 2023**

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## **“Reject the Sites Reservoir Boondoggle,” Friends of the River Urges State Water Resources Control Board During Water Rights Protest Period**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** — Today, Friends of the River (FOR), one of California’s most respected conservation organizations, announced that they will urge the State Water Resources Control Board (Board) to reject the Sites Reservoir boondoggle. This announcement comes at the start of an opportunity to for the public to intervene in the Sites water rights proceeding, which is facilitated by the Board. On Friday, June 2, the Board published a notice of this opportunity finding the Sites Water Authority’s water rights application to be “substantially complete.”

***“Sites Reservoir is a waste of time, money, and resources. It will not improve water security for California. We urge California to reject the Sites Reservoir boondoggle,”*** said Jann Dorman, Executive Director of Friends of the River.

***“The Sites Reservoir project will simply not provide enough new water to make the project worthwhile for California,”*** added Ron Stork, Senior Policy Advocate of Friends of the River. He continued, ***“California needs solutions that will provide water security as the climate changes. What the Sites Project will do, is allow investors to take more water from the already over-allocated Sacramento River, causing even more damage to collapsing populations of salmon and the Delta ecosystem. Sites will not create new water, but rather, will take from the environment and other users. I’ve said many times... you can’t dam your way to paradise anymore.”***

Ron has 35 years of experience in flood management, federal water resources development, hydropower reform, and Wild & Scenic Rivers, and is available for media interviews about the Sites Reservoir boondoggle.

## **About the Sites Reservoir Boondoggle**

If constructed, Sites Reservoir would only expand overall water availability in California by less than 1% – just 0.648% on average. During long drought spells, it would sit useless. Yet the harm caused to waterways throughout California would be permanent and irreversible.

The reality is California has over-allocated water from the Sacramento river by 151%—*that means that there are more rights to divert water out of the river than the river can provide in an average water year.* The Sites Reservoir project will allow its investors to divert and sell even more of the over-allocated water, further dewatering the Sacramento River and the Delta. The reservoir itself would drown thousands of acres of grassland, oak woodland, and riparian habitat, imperiling threatened and endangered species throughout the Sacramento River.

To learn more about the Sites Reservoir boondoggle, click [HERE](#).

## **Media Availability**

As the conversation around California's long-term water security continues, we believe it's paramount that news organizations seek out environmentalists and river experts to get a fuller and richer understanding of both the drought and flood issues at hand. There's another side to the dams. In that spirit, FOR's leadership is always available for interviews, quotes, and media availability. Our leading experts Jann Dorman and Ron Stork are happy to speak with the media regarding any statewide water issues, and we look forward to hearing from you.

## **About Friends of the River**

For more than a half century, Friends of the River (FOR) has been at the forefront of California's environmentalist movement, fighting the good fight to defend our treasured waterways. FOR is dedicated to protecting and restoring California's rivers, streams, and watersheds, while advocating for sustainable water management and water solutions that protect the environment. With the state's water crisis approaching a breaking point, FOR is in its toughest fight yet as it works to stop the Sites Reservoir boondoggle while offering more meaningful and sustainable alternatives that would preserve California's remaining healthy rivers.

FOR believes that California's water crisis cannot be solved by damming its way to paradise. While big corporate interests spend millions to convince Californians that new dams and reservoirs will solve our water shortage, FOR remains steadfast that the plurality of these projects will irrevocably destroy natural habitats and wildlife, while providing virtually no benefits for the average Californian. Our rivers are too precious and too vulnerable to survive more dams and diversions. Together, we have the opportunity to improve California's water system AND strengthen our rivers and the economies and habitats they support.

For more information on Friends of the River, please visit <https://www.friendsoftheriver.org>.

## **A Look at FOR's Achievements**

What began as a fight to save the Stanislaus River from New Melones Dam in 1973 has blossomed into a statewide and nationally-recognized movement for river preservation. Over that half-century, FOR has won the fights for permanent protection of countless rivers and streams — including the Kings, Kern, Merced, Tuolumne, upper Klamath, West Walker, East Carson, Sisquoc, and Big Sur Rivers, as well as Sespe Creek and Cache Creek. FOR is more committed than ever as it takes on some of its biggest challenges yet. In 2023, our top priority is stopping the Sites Reservoir Boondoggle.

## **Who We Are?**



### **Jann Dorman**

*Executive Director & Board Chair*

Jann Dorman is FOR's Executive Director and Board Chair. She has been a member of the FOR board since 2012. Jann worked for over 23 years for a large national non-profit healthcare organization, holding various roles as Vice President and leading large operations, improvement, and innovation efforts. As FOR's Executive Director, she has continued to advocate for people-first policies that value human beings over corporate interests.

Jann has always been drawn to the power of wilderness, water, and rivers. She spent most of the 1970s as a river rafting guide on the Stanislaus, American, Tuolumne, and many other great western whitewater rivers. Jann now lives across the street from the American River in Coloma with her husband Don.



**Ron Stork**

*Senior Policy Advocate*

Ron has 35 years of experience in flood management, federal water resources development, hydropower reform, and Wild & Scenic Rivers. He joined Friends of the River as Associate Conservation Director in 1987 and became its Senior Policy Advocate in 1995.

Ron was presented the prestigious River Conservationist of the Year award by Perception in 1996 for his work to stop the Auburn Dam. In 2004, he received the California Urban Water Conservation Council's Excellence Award for statewide and institutional innovations in water conservation.

Prior to coming to Friends of the River, Ron was Executive Director of the Merced Canyon Committee, where he directed the successful effort to obtain Wild and Scenic designation for the Merced River. He is a former member of the Governor's Flood Management Task Force and currently represents Friends of the River on the Sacramento Regional Water Forum. Ron holds a BS degree in Plant Science from UC Davis and he loves to visit and botanize in California's wild places.