

The River Advocate

Friends of the River

The voice of California's Rivers
friendsoftheriver.org



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FOR News



SAVE THE DATE - OCT 4th for River Rendezvous

Mark your calendar for **Friday, October 4th, 2025**, for the **4th Annual River Rendezvous** at Camp Lotus. In a year of major environmental challenges, this evening is our chance to reconnect with community, recharge by the river, and recommit to the work ahead.

Join us for a night of food, live music, and shared purpose—all in support of protecting California's rivers.

*****Tickets go on sale September 1st, 2025.**

We Hired a River Scientist!

Meet Dr. Devon Pearse, FOR's New Lead Scientist. From whitewater kayaking to decades of fisheries research, Dr. Devon Pearse brings deep experience, passion, and scientific insight to Friends of the River. Learn more about his journey and why he's excited to advocate for California's rivers. [Read more.](#)



River Trip - Rafting for the Resistance

On the weekend of **July 26–27**, Friends of the River welcomed 21 spirited guests for our *Rafting for the Resistance* trip on the South Fork of the American River. These river champions won their spots at FOR's California River Awards, and together we shared two days of laughter, learning, and inspiration. Between rapids and riverside meals, we explored the threats facing this iconic watershed and how each of us can speak up to protect California's rivers.



10 River Etiquette Tips for a Safe, Family-Friendly California Adventure

Planning a trip to one of California's rivers? Whether you're rafting, swimming, hiking, or just relaxing by the water, it's essential to know how to stay safe and protect the river environment. These 10 river etiquette tips will help you and your family enjoy a safe, respectful outdoor adventure—while keeping California's rivers clean, healthy, and thriving for future generations. [Read more.](#)



Currents: *Victories and Threats*

We are excited to bring you this month's *Currents* articles, which highlight key news about California's rivers, and what FOR is doing to protect them.



Friends of the River Challenges Delta Tunnel Water Rights Proposal

On Friday, July 11, Friends of the River [submitted expert testimony](#) in opposition to the California Department of Water Resources petition to permit the construction and operation of the proposed Delta Conveyance Project (Delta Tunnel). The testimony lays out a clear case that the project would cause serious harm to California's rivers, fisheries, and communities while failing to provide the long-term water supply benefits claimed by proponents. [Read more.](#)



Sites Reservoir Costs Balloon: Are We Still Pretending This Project Makes Sense?

The Sites Reservoir price tag has ballooned to nearly \$7 billion—over 50% more than previous estimates—raising serious doubts about the project's affordability and benefits. As costs soar and promised public benefits vanish, it's clear that California deserves better water solutions than another bloated and outdated mega-dam. [Read more.](#)



AB 43 (wild & scenic) Charmed Life (so far)

AB 43, sponsored by Friends of the River, would permanently extend the state's authority to protect federally designated wild and scenic rivers. With strong momentum and no formal opposition so far, the bill now heads to the Senate floor for a final vote. [Read more.](#)



Beauty Can Be Deceiving

The "Big Beautiful Bill" quietly opens the floodgates to billions in taxpayer subsidies for controversial dam and canal projects in California. While pitched as infrastructure, these projects could devastate rivers like the Sacramento and San Joaquin—benefiting powerful water districts at public expense. [Read more.](#)



A Tale of Two Water Contract Worlds

Water contract conversions are quietly reshaping control over California's rivers and water supply. A recent court ruling has cleared the way for permanent water repayment contracts under the 2016 WIIN Act—reducing oversight, consolidating power, and raising serious concerns about long-term environmental impacts. [Read more.](#)



Raising some Tuolumne River dams and other Tuolumne River mischief

The Turlock and Modesto Irrigation Districts are advancing a massive water grab that would raise dams, build new reservoirs, and claim nearly all remaining unappropriated water from the Tuolumne River. These sweeping plans threaten river flows, recreation, ecosystems, and the future of California's largest San Joaquin River tributary. [Read more.](#)

Please Donate

Please consider a generous gift to help FOR fight the Triple Threat to Rivers. This is a critical year to stop Sites Reservoir, the Delta Tunnel and the Voluntary Agreements.



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