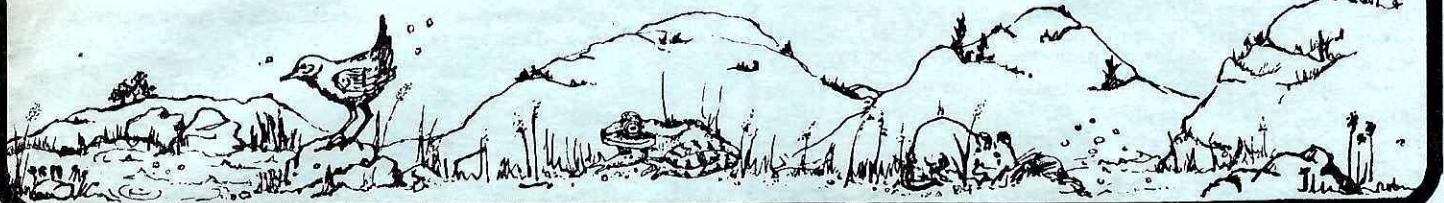




HEADWATERS

Official Publication of Friends of the River



Vol. 2, No. 3

MAY-JUNE 1977

Editor: Kathy Meyer

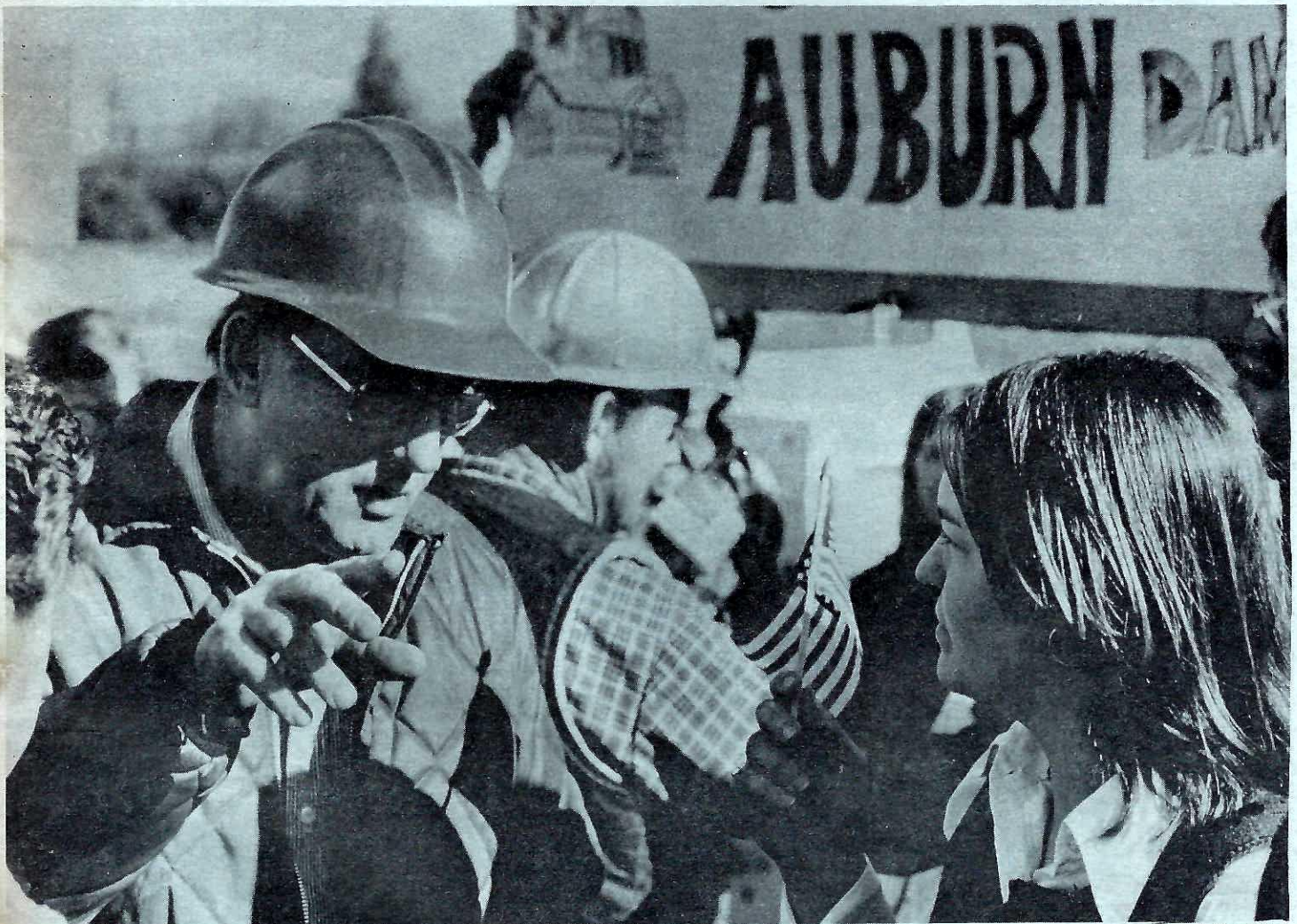


Photo by Don Briggs

Confrontation at Auburn Hearing between hard hatters and a Friends of the River rally to support President Carter.

Story on page 4.

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FROM THE EDITOR

In the early months of 1977, the American pork barrel system, a political fortress, encountered its first major confrontation in Jimmy Carter. With reevaluation and fund-cutting, Carter has attempted to bring outdated and costly water projects into the perspective of present day needs. However, in his integrity for government, Jimmy has assaulted the powerful keepers of the boondoggle profits. This action cannot pass without great political maneuvering, pressure, and reprisal.

Today's federal water agencies originated in legitimate national needs; in the old days, mammoth projects seemed a juicy prize for all. Few but John Muir understood the implications of reevaluation. Benefit/costs rose above 1.0, there were choice locations for dams, and earthquakes were scientifically no more than acts of god. The concept of environmental preservation had not been created - what could one bunch of engineers do to a vast frontier? Didn't we need flood control, power, irrigation water, lakes for boating...? When environmental awareness emerged and the public began to question, the Army Corps' analysis procedures sharpened in exaggeration, underestimation, and misplacement.

Over the years water agencies grew into uncontrollable monsters with a confusion of policies full of loopholes allowing projects to be authorized without hearings or agencies to serve cross purposes. Now, only a few reap the benefits of the mighty costs to the public. Land speculators, the related industries of dam construction, and their congressional heroes all live on pork barrel welfare. Hand in hand (or pocket) they retain a strangle hold on Congress.

Dams are no longer the answer to our water needs. They are energy and capital intensive, not labor intensive. The good sites are gone, and dismal benefit/costs devastate the taxpayer. Dam building has turned riparian sanctuaries into cement-lined funnels, estuaries into biological deserts, and buried pristine forests, bulldozed the sacred grounds of American Indians, and wiped out communities of wildlife. Dams encourage waste, mismanagement, and undue water related growth while postponing critical conservation planning. River miles are in finite supply on our earth: why wait to conserve until we have caught the last trickle?

This country needs change and it takes more than a president. When the fine American art of bargaining, learned innocently enough with bubblegum cards, can force a trade-off of \$50 tax rebate for 30 different billion dollar catastrophies, then it is time to uproot and replace the public officials feeding off this subsidized hog farm. The number of sympathetic legislators in Congress is growing, but without support they are powerless to combat strongholds like California's Water Giants: Bizz Johnson, Bernie Sisk, and John McFall. Without support, the bad water projects on Carter's list will survive to leave their trails of wreckage. HEADWATERS, it is hoped, provides an impetus for change by making FOR's information available to many people. But the future lies in how much each one of us is actually willing to contribute. And that's not political hogwash.

River Kate

FOR Meetings

FOR meetings are open to everyone. May and June meetings will be in Sacramento. Call 916/451-9955 for location.

Thursday, May 12: Steering Committee 4:30 pm General Meeting 7:00 pm
Thursday, June 9: Steering Committee 7:00 pm

FRIENDS OF THE RIVER is a political, educational, and research organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of our remaining magnificent free flowing rivers and to the conservation of our water and energy resources.

Director: Mark Dubois

Secretary: Nancy Magnuson

Treasurer: Tom Lovering

Steering Committee: Bruce Raley, Bill Center, Robin Magnuson, Alexander Gaguine, Kathy Meyer, Debbie Dohm, Shelly Sack, Cathy Fox, Anna Maria Gonzales, Brad Welton, and Jennifer Jennings (on leave of absence)

HEADWATER THANK YOU'S

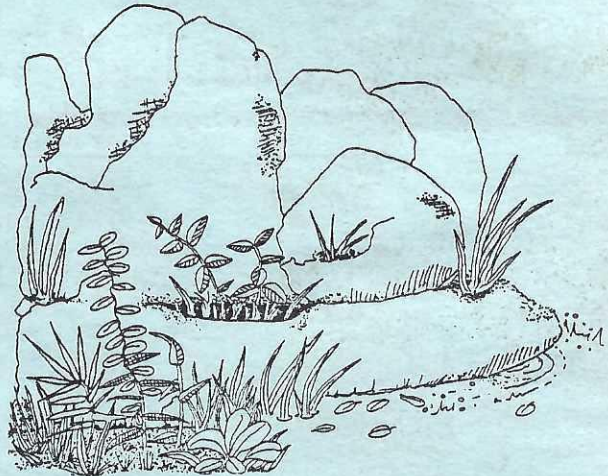
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Important Letters For May And June

Write: Your U.S. Senator and Representative supporting Carter's list of pork barrel cuts, deletion of the Auburn Dam Project, and a review of New Melones. Send copies to the President c/o Secretary Cecil Andrus, Dept. of Interior, 18th and C Streets, Washington, D.C. 20240 (Story on page 8).

Write: In opposition to Ayala's bill to repeal California's Wild and Scenic Rivers System (Details in SB 345, this page)

Write: Your Congressman to save Alaska's wilds or attend the June, S.F. hearing. (Details on page 6.)



HEADWATERS FIRST ANNIVERSARY IS IT TIME FOR YOUR RENEWAL?

The next issue of HEADWATERS (July-August) will be the sixth and the end of our first full year of publication. We urge those of you who have been with us for all six issues (or longer) to renew your membership in Friends of the River. Membership keeps your HEADWATERS coming and also keeps Friends of the River lobbying, organizing, and educating in support of our wild river heritage. Support is especially important during this second drought year with every drop of water under scrutiny.



Legislation

AYALA THREATENS WILD RIVERS SYSTEM

SB 345 (Rubin Ayala) This legislation would repeal the State Wild and Scenic Rivers System and allow construction of dams on the few protected wild rivers. The bill went to hearing on April 19 in the Senate Agriculture and Water Committee where it passed easily. There is a chance to stop it in the Senate Finance Committee, where it will be reviewed next. We are hopeful that this committee will uphold the wisdom of its colleagues who four years ago voted to protect these rivers in their natural state for future generations of Californians. Write Governor Brown commending his opposition of this bill. Write your Assemblyperson and Senator to register your disapproval of this irresponsible response to the drought "panic." Senator Rodda, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, should also receive copies. Addresses for all: State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

SB 346 (Rubin Ayala) Authorizes immediate funds for the Peripheral Canal.

SB 107 (Peter Behr) This bill to expand the State Wild and Scenic Rivers System is presently being held in abeyance. The drought "panic" has created an atmosphere in the Capitol in which planning for the preservation of the planet is in short supply.

AB 380 (Eugene Gualco) Authorizes a pilot program in three California cities and counties to disseminate water conservation devices. Has passed both the Senate and Assembly - now awaiting the Governor's signature.

Stanislaus, Bitter Battle Continues

Alexander Gaguine

The Stanislaus River — the beautiful Lady of the Motherlode — has recently lost two important chances for reprieve from inundation by the waters of New Melones Dam, now over half completed. On March 16, New Melones was reportedly placed on President Carter's list of water projects which "flunk" his economic, environmental, or safety tests. Then, as abruptly as the first story appeared, there came a second report a week later that all Army Corps of Engineers' projects in California, including New Melones, had "passed." There has been no further explanation. Friends of the River's request, under the Freedom of Information Act, for material on the review has yielded no response from the Army Corps.

Friends of the River, which grew out of the long campaign to preserve the Stanislaus River, still strongly contends that the burial of this river and canyon is a brutal crime against the Earth, and is a great and unnecessary loss to all people of this and future generations.

Considering the onslaught from politicians of every level, it is heroic of President Carter to hold firm on the deletion of one California dam, Auburn. Yet Carter has long been aware of the tremendous support for preserving the Stanislaus and the validity of the objections to New Melones.

The second blow to the survival of the Stanislaus came on April 1, when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the federal government did not have to abide by Decision 1422. (In 1973, the California Water Resources Control Board stated in Decision 1422 that the upper portion of the proposed reservoir — the most popular part of the canyon — could not be filled until the Federal Bureau of Reclamation "demonstrated" a need for the water. The Bureau, who is to operate the project, still has not shown this need. Yet, the Appeals Court upheld a lower court decision against the State.) This decision affects not only California, but all 17 western states under the 1902 Reclamation Act. It allows the federal government to take unconditional control of any unappropriated water, without regard to the wishes of a state. California is expected to appeal this case to the Supreme Court.

New Melones is scheduled for completion in the summer of 1979, but filling operations are to commence in November 1978. There is currently nothing standing in the way of the Bureau's completely filling the reservoir all the way to Camp Nine, as quickly as the water can be collected. However, in response to the Ninth Circuit Court decision, Governor Brown has taken up the fight for the Stanislaus. Brown asked the federal government to act in good faith with regard to Camp Nine construction until a Supreme Court decision can be reached. In a letter to Army Corps' Lt. General Morris on April 11th, Brown's chief of staff, Gray Davis,

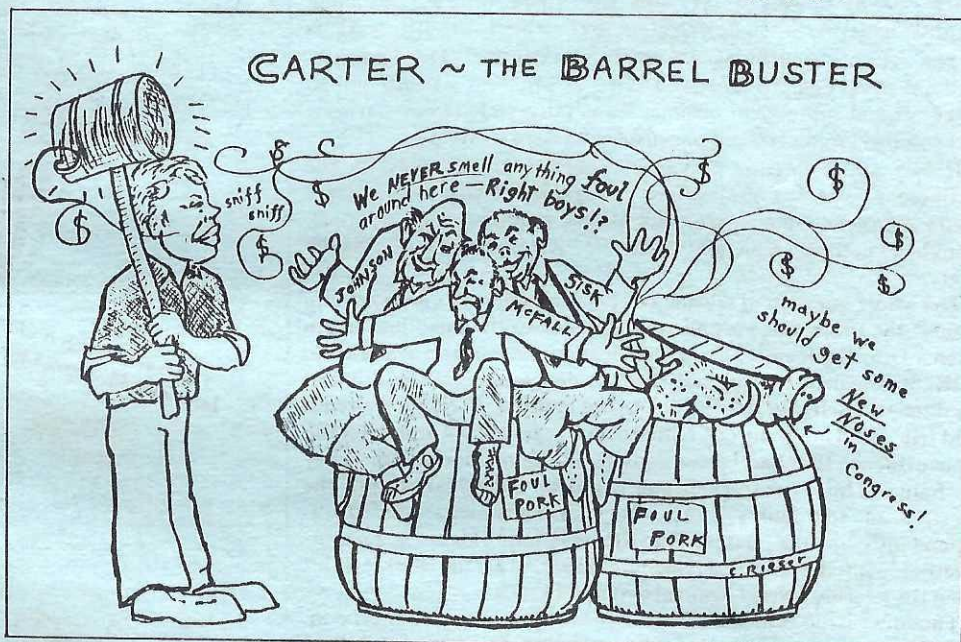
stated: "Defferal of the Camp Nine project for a reasonable period of time might permit the resolution of this matter by the U.S. Supreme Court and in any event would afford the Carter Administration an opportunity to review California water policy and decide whether as a matter of policy or comity or both it wishes to support the State's position on this matter."

Meanwhile the attack on the canyon continues. Work on a new, high Parrotts Ferry bridge is under way, and the hillsides are being torn up just below the river trip "take-out" point. At Camp Nine, Army Corps contractors are preparing to return to work on road and bridge relocation, blasting away the sides of the canyon. Camp Nine has been silent since December when State objections, urged by Friends of the River halted construction. The Corps also plans to

clear the canyon (remove all vegetation) below Parrotts Ferry, but has postponed letting the contracts while they wrangle with the State and the National Park Service over proper mitigation for the rich archeological and historical resources which would be wiped out by the bulldozing and inundation.

This is the latest chapter in one of the bitterest dam fights in the nation's history. The Stanislaus Canyon is home to a large and loyal community of river lovers, hikers, gold miners, cavers, naturalists, boaters, and people who simply feel present a closeness to perfection and God.

The Bureau has a reputation on other projects for callous disregard of state and county needs. An indepth review of a catastrophic Bureau project is presented in "Remember the Trinity," page 7.



WASHINGTON REPORT

Mark Dubois

Sharon Hoyle, chairwoman of PARC, and I made our way around the halls of Capitol Hill supporting President Carter's challenge of the old pork barrel system, which has perpetuated so many disastrous water projects. Unfortunately members of Congress had not heard from many friends of the river. The arm twisting they were receiving from Congressman Bizz Johnson was having its effect. There is an amazing amount of strength in the pork barrel system: even the members of Congress who totally respected Carter's actions had problems giving their open support. These sympathetic legislators need the backing of their constituents — you.

During the first week of April, we presented testimony to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees. Warm Springs Task Force was the only other public

interest present in favor of project cuts. Our presentation was followed by a lineup of lobbyists for water development.

Next, we visited most of the California Delegation offices and various government agencies to update their information on Auburn Dam. At the end of the week, the American Rivers Conservation Council held their Dam Fighter's Conference; we joined 40 people representing 34 states and over 60 projects. It was very encouraging to find many folks working on similar problems across the nation.

We also enjoyed talks with some of Carter's staff and were encouraged to find out there are so many good people on the inside. Even more inspiring was the feeling of Carter's commitment to our environment and a more realistic future for rivers. (*The Motherlode Chapter of the Sierra Club paid for most of the cost of our visit.*)

AUBURN CONFRONTATION

John Cassidy

On the morning of March 21, Muzak was interrupted at the Woodlake Quality Inn in Sacramento. Jimmy Carter's review team had arrived from Washington to hear how Californians felt about the Auburn Dam project. The hearing was scheduled to last all day, with three hours in the morning reserved for dam proponent's testimony and an equal period in the afternoon for pro-river views.

Before the first witness was heard, the confrontation began when hard-hatted construction workers, bussed in to show support for the project, began heckling a Friends of the River rally being held outside. As Mark Dubois and Steve Cochrane dismantled the "Congressional Pork Barrel" in front of cheering supporters, voices in the background were hollering about Communists in the Sierra Club. It was to be no average public hearing.

Inside, the scene was substantially more subdued as Judge Steiner called to the stand a long list of politicians who dutifully recited their prepared statements in support of the project. Representative "Bizz" Johnson walked off with first prize in the "inflamed rhetoric" category when he promised that without Auburn, sections of San Joaquin County would return to "desert." The image of Bedouin tribes camped on the outskirts of Modesto was difficult to shake off and subsequent testimony was fairly pale in comparison. By 12 o'clock, audience and panelists alike were straining.

It was an impressive display of political muscle, despite the conspicuous absence of Governor Brown and Resources Secretary Claire Dedrick. Dam proponents always qualified their support, though sometimes reluctantly, on the determination of seismic safety.

The whole question of seismic safety, although it has always hung around the project like a pall, was thrust into the headlines again when a U.S. Geological Survey memorandum was made available to FOR. It revealed, for the first time, evidence of recent faulting at the damsite itself. On the day before the hearing, FOR sponsored a field trip with University of California Davis geologists to inspect the same evidence that had been discussed in the memorandum. They too found it highly suspicious and urged an investigation into the question of the fault's most recent displacement, funded independently of the Bureau of Reclamation. Their statement, together with the U.S.G.S. memorandum, was the first exhibit when the hearing started again at two o'clock.

The other issue, which surfaced repeatedly during the afternoon, was economics. Auburn is a very expensive project, 1.1 billion dollars and climbing, and the mathematical gymnastics necessary to bring the benefits anywhere near that figure are impressive. Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus' comment to the National Wildlife Federation was never more appropriate: "We may have developed the best hydroelectric sites, and having done so, the law of diminishing returns forces us to proceed with ever increasing caution." In the case of Auburn, the point of diminishing returns has clearly been exceeded. The proposed 700 foot high dam will yield only 318,000 acre-feet of water, while just downstream and at half the height, Folsom Dam yields four times the water.

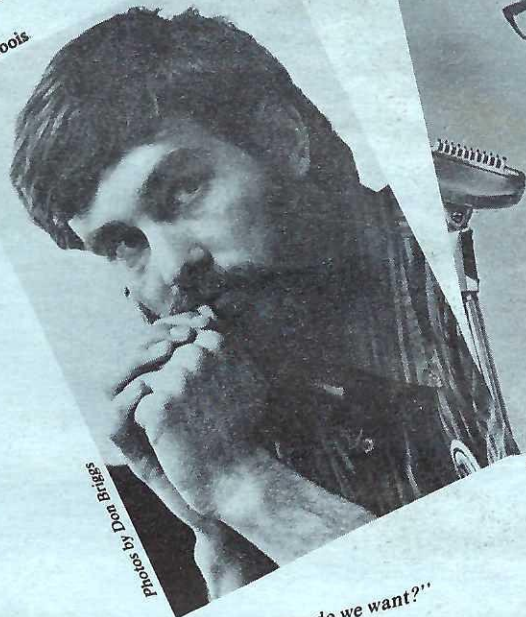
Friends of the River coordinated the afternoon testimony in opposition to the project. Among those speaking were Tom Graff, Environmental Defense Fund; Gordon Oakshott, Association of Engineering Geologists; Larry Moss, Planning and Conservation League; Brad Welton, FOR; and the Sierra Club; Friends of the Earth; American League of Anglers; Protect American River Canyons; and Audubon Society.

Perhaps the most compelling testimony against the dam was offered by Harry Cedergren, retired structural engineer with forty years experience in dam design and construction. He pointed out that Auburn, should it fail, would do so almost instantaneously (a consequence of its thin arch design) allowing no more than 2 hours advance warning to the Sacramento County Office of Emergency

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WILD River

Mark Dubois



Senator Peter Behr

SKIT. Ju
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mean we
ceptable

"The real question is what kind of society do we want?"
John Zierold, Sierra Club

"The spirit of our people is our most valuable asset.
Preservation of beauty is man's highest art."
Jerry Kreger



Water Resource Management Panel: (L to R) John Zierold, Sierra Club; John Bryson, Chairman, Water Resources Control Board; Billy Martin, Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation; Norman Murray, President of consulting engineer firm; and not seen in picture, Tom Graff of EDF.

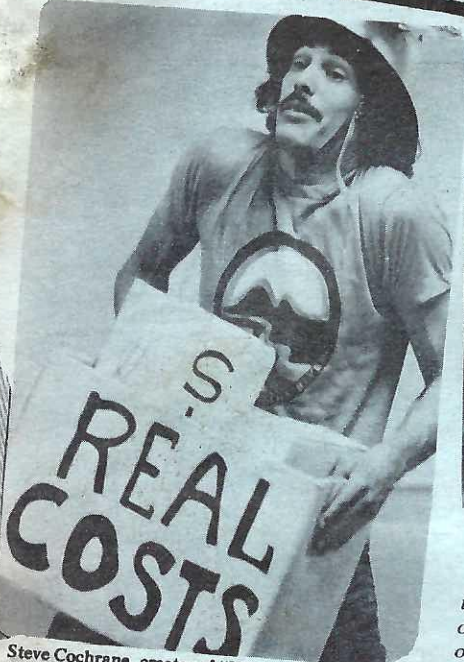
"Sure it's bad
tremendous loss
the drought of the
turning point of
in California."
Pam Lloyd, Mari
ty District

"Once again we've got to resolve
money changers away from the ter
The victories of conservation are
and the defeats often are all too
Senator Peter Behr.

"Dams don't do a great deal
when a drought comes around. A
You create new users of water.
ing water and people make in-
vestments and tend to rely on
them."
John Bryson, Chairman Water
Resources Control Board

"In our society we've often been too
significant, but if we choose one direction a
that direction, we can have an amazing
take off a little bit and start working with it
way. That's what has given me encoura
Sacramento ... we're in a changing system
Mark Dubois, FOR Director

Confluence



Steve Cochrane, creator of "Where did my water go?"



Conference coordinators: Debbie Dohm, Robin Magnuson, and Gracielle Rossi



Dennis Banks

"All of these relations (the deer, the buffalo, the eagles) have done nothing to harm us, yet we continue to build and destroy our relations. I have pledged my life to speak for those relations."
Dennis Banks, National American Indian Movement Director

"You have to evaluate the overall project (CVP) and not take a look at individual settlements. By definition if the overall project is in the red . . . maybe the price of the output, such as power, should be increased to cover the costs."

Billy Martin, Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation.

"There's no secret to running your media campaign,"
Rob Caughlin, Roanoke.

Can you imagine a group of environmentalists holding a three-day anti-dam conference in the middle of the biggest drought in California history? And far from acting like an embattled minority, . . . they would carry on like they already had won the war, except for some mopping up skirmishes.

Santa Bee 3/21

WHEREAS: This conference on California Resource Management was organized to raise and debate the issue of whether dams in the California mountain regions are a necessary element in the long-range planning process to ensure a lasting water supply for all segments of California society.

WHEREAS: The overwhelming evidence presented by scientists, economists, State and local officials, community activists, and national and statewide environmental leaders indicated:

A. Dams are not the solution to the present or future drought conditions. Wiser management and use of present water supplies is the key to solving our long range water resources problems. Dams encourage waste and mismanagement, delay necessary conservation planning for the future, and serve to intensify the efforts of droughts by creating new users and new investments based upon new supplies. Experts endorse conjunctive use principles including off-stream storage, conservation, waste water reclamation, and ground water recharge.

B. Dams are energy and capital intensive, not labor intensive, and create jobs of short duration. Dams create fewer jobs per federal dollar spent than almost any other type of investment. We urge the President to push hard for public works job programs, which are beneficial to workers and the public, such as reforestation, sewage treatment, waste water reclamation, mass transit, and home insulation.

C. Dams destroy natural habitat for fish, wildlife, and plant life. They remove evidence of ancient civilizations and inundate burial and ceremonial grounds that are sacred to American Indians. Dams eliminate free-flowing river resources, a resource fast diminishing in California. Dams destroy large land areas having unique wilderness values.

RESOLVED: That this Conference adopt the following resolution:

Give full support to President Carter's attempts to curtail the abuses of the Army Corps and Bureau of Reclamation to save Billions of taxpayer dollars which are desperately needed for other purposes with true social and economic benefits to all Americans, to preserve our remaining rivers, and specifically to STOP the Auburn Dam on the American River, the New Melones Dam on the Stanislaus River, the Warm Springs Dam on Dry Creek of the Russian River, the Marysville Dam on the Yuba River, and all other projects which are found to be without justification; and be it further resolved that the sponsors of the Conference inform all elected officials with a relevant interest in same.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY on March 20, 1977

"There is no need to dam the North Coast Rivers. We need realistic water management and conservation with major attention to below ground water, off-stream storage, and reclaimed water for certain uses . . . we're all going to have to work together."
Claire Dedrick, Secretary of Resources

"With the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers, I think it is most valuable, as a general policy, if you're talking with one of the 'biggies' to take a tape recorder. Be on your guard constantly."
Jennifer Jennings, D.N.O.D. Commissioner.

"We could go on about the effects of damming . . . we have to learn a lesson. It's not just what's behind the dam, but what happens down stream from it."
Martin Litton, former Sierra Club Director.

AND NOW, ARTIFICIAL WHITEWATER

Hurry, Hurry While It Lasts

Only \$2,500 Per Foot

Senator Taft of Ohio asked the Corps to study the feasibility of making an artificial whitewater course. In March of 1973 the Corps (Huntington District) issued a "Feasibility Study for Whitewater Canoe-Kayak Slalom Course." Thousand Two thousand feet of rapids would cost \$5 million! That's \$2,500 per foot! That price doesn't include any niceties like trees or critters or canyon cliffs.

Using these figures, about \$125 million would

be needed to mitigate the loss of "whitewater" on the Stanislaus ... gee! that makes their benefit/cost ratio not look so good. Wonder how much a tree costs? And those caves should be fun to rebuild — Disneyland has one. Priceless maybe, but who says canyons are irreplaceable?

AYALA ROBBING RIVERS

Last month we commended Senator Rubin Ayala's wisdom in introducing a bill to encourage drip irrigation. As fast as he gained enlightenment, he lost it. While greedily looking toward the North Coast Rivers and avidly pushing his bill to repeal our State Wild and Scenic River System, he stated: "We stole it (northern California water) fair and square, and we ought to hang on to it." What an outrageous lack of sensitivity to our planet.

TUOLUMNE

The Study Team report on whether to include the "T" in the Federal Wild and Scenic River System is due on June 1, 1977. The Forest Service has decided to notify persons on their mailing list of the availability of the report instead of sending out copies. Write immediately requesting: (1) a copy of the report as soon as it is available, and (2) a hearing in the Bay Area, where a large segment of concerned people reside (one hearing is presently planned in Sonoma). Address: Tuolumne Study Team, P.O. Box 90, Groveland, CA 95321

The City of San Francisco has requested the Secretary of Interior to reduce the minimum required flows down the Tuolumne this year in order to conserve more water to combat the drought. FOR finds this request incredible with San Francisco wasting large amounts of water because it has failed to implement a comprehensive waste water reclamation program. San Francisco is only beginning to conserve water. The sensitive ecological balance of the River should not be further disrupted until the City makes a serious effort to conserve water. Protests should be registered with Cecil Andrus, Secretary of Interior, 18th & C St., Washington, D.C. 20240.

WATERSHED WORKSHOP

A day long workshop on watershed awareness will be held at Fort Mason in San Francisco. The purpose of this event is to raise the consciousness of public awareness about WATER - not only how to conserve it, but where it comes from and how it gets here via the natural and manmade systems. Come to the Visitor's Center on Saturday, May 21st, 10:00-4:00. For further information or suggestions contact Laurie McCann, (415) 441-5705.

CALIFORNIA WATERWAYS COALITION

As an outcome of the Wild Rivers Confluence, FOR feels the need for river lovers to gather and discuss overall strategies for our rivers. We hope that a representative or two from each river or stream will come to share experiences, so we can learn from each other, and most important, work on long range plans for protection of our waterways. We will meet in Santa Cruz on May 7. Please call for more info: FOR, (916) 451-9955 or Mary Hammer, (408) 388-6884.

NORTH FORK AMERICAN

The public review period for alternatives suggested for the North Fork American Wild and Scenic River Study has been extended to May 15, 1977. FOR testified at two public hearings and suggested that the best alternative had not been included: full protection for the river up to its headwaters. The Study Team's most protective alternative would not have included the upper 6 miles. FOR has since discovered that the Bureau of Reclamation has an old proposal for a dam in that area.

Also, off-road vehicle clubs have an organized interest in a "do-nothing" alternative which would allow continued vehicle access. It is imperative that comments be made now since public input will be far less effective later. Write to Robert Peterson, Tahoe National Forest, Nevada City, CA 95959.

SOUTH FORK AMERICAN

Sometime in May the El Dorado Irrigation District plans to poll the public for opinions on alternative projects for the South Fork American River. This hearing will be crucial to be continued existence of the South Fork as a free flowing river and recreational asset. FOR encourages everyone to find out the date and attend the hearing to voice your concern. You can request a notice of the hearing from EID, P.O. Box 1047, Placerville, CA 95667. Ask EID for a description of the various alternatives so that you can prepare in advance.

NORTH FORK STANISLAUS

Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) have not come to an agreement on the S dam plan for the North Fork. A coalition, organized by FOR, stopped the project in December, buying six months for reevaluation. CCWD has indicated that it is opening negotiations with the Northern California Power Agency on a less grandiose, consequently less objectionable, scale. This plan includes the enlargement of Spicer Meadows Dam and the construction of Utica-Union Dam, which would inundate two smaller reservoirs. Boards Crossing and Ganns Dams would be omitted, insuring the preservation of the main North Fork. However, along with new plans comes a new set of problems relating to flow regimes, river fluctuations, and impact on the Gabbotts Meadow winter range for deer herds. FOR has encouraged CCWD to explore this alternative, but has taken no official position on it.



WALK THE FAULTS

For those interested in exploring the faults of the Auburn Dam area and/or getting a feel for the American River canyons, FOR will be meeting at the Bureau of Reclamation's dam overlook in the town of Auburn on both June 18 and August 6 at 10:00 a.m. Hope you can join us!

COSUMNES RIVER STATE PARK

Since 1961, the State Parks and Recreation Department has had a proposal in its planning process to create a State Park at the confluence of the Cosumnes and Mokelumne Rivers in the eastern Delta region. In 1974, the voters approved a Bond Act giving the State the authority to acquire lands for the park. Money is presently budgeted for acquisition in 1977-78. Local landowners with growing political support are objecting to the loss of agricultural land, increased vandalism and an adverse impact on wildlife. The Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and FOR have agreed with the farmers and recommend that the

State acquire lands not presently being farmed for a Nature Preserve. The unique oak groves, once characteristic of the Sacramento Valley, have all but disappeared and cry for protection against incursions of agriculture.

AUBURN MEETING

A "town meeting" with the theme "Can we risk living under Auburn Dam?" is planned for May 25, at McClatchey High School. Call FOR for details.

Remember the Trinity!

Keith Ulisse

Weaverville, 1953: *"There is no project in the Central valley (sic) that can be developed which anywhere compares with the Trinity project. It is the best left in the United States. It can pay itself out and help reduce the payout of the Central Valley Project."* (Senator Clair Engle from the Trinity Journal, February 28.)

Weaverville, 1976: *"ENTERING THE HOME OF THE TRINITY RIVER. STUDIED TO DEATH, RUINED THROUGH NEGLIGENCE AND MISMANAGEMENT BY THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION"* (A sign posted outside the town.)

PROJECT'S HISTORY

The Trinity River Project (TRP) includes Clair Engle Lake formed by Trinity Dam, Lewiston Afterbay, and tunnels for diversion of water into the Sacramento River via Whiskeytown and Keswick Reservoirs. Final authorization was granted in August 1955 and ground breaking took place in 1956. TRP began operation in 1960 at a cost to taxpayers of \$225 million.

To Trinity County residents in the early 1950's, the TRP sounded like a godsend. The county was poor following the end of commercial mining with lumber income dwindling from massive clear-cutting. By far the major income for the county was its tourism, primarily hunters and especially fishermen who yearly journeyed from all over the United States to keep their date with the Trinity River's famous salmon and steelhead. Proponents of the project stressed jobs and economic growth. Fisheries were guaranteed enhancement. Twenty five percent of the power generated by the project (an estimated 56,000 kilowatts) was earmarked for Trinity County. Diversion of large amounts of water from the watershed to the Sacramento River worried some, but the maximum allowed diversion was to only amount to 60% of a year's given runoff. In addition to a guaranteed 160 cfs for fisheries, fifty thousand acre feet was set aside in writing for use of Trinity and Humboldt Counties. The dam promised an end to the floods for which the Trinity was notorious. (If rivers are capricious, 1955 was a record last fling for the Trinity; flood flows of 70,000 cfs crippled roads, knocked out bridges, and destroyed riverside property.)

The Trinity Project's construction caused growth. Real estate boomed, and the local newspaper excitedly reported changes: new schools, a new town at the Construction Camp, new post offices, more teachers and summer homesites. However, growth was not without pains. The whole town of North Fork had to be moved; it was to be inundated, and the residents did not like moving or the prices offered. Emergency zoning rules had to be enacted to control builders. In the hustle and confusion, some mining claims that were sold, weren't for sale. The police force had to be enlarged. One mid-construction complaint rated front page billing: "The building of an earthfill dam, such as Trinity Dam, was an equipment job and would not require a large force of laborers," August Stillman, project engineer, Trinity Journal 1958. Equipment jobs went to the construction companies' permanent employees imported for the job, and locals found union labor jobs were not easily available. Still, in an era marked by mild depression nationwide, Trinity had the fastest growth rate in California.

Following completion of the project, change continued. An estimated 70% of the dam workers left immediately for another project in Pakistan. General unemployment skyrocketed, schools emptied. The "new town" at the Construction Camp became and is today a ghost town paid for by taxpayers. Overall population plummeted. Only in 1975 did Trinity's population again equal that of 1960. Schools, roads, and services suffered from a net loss in taxes since previously much of the Bureau's 17,000 acres had been privately owned — the Bureau pays only 5¢ an acre in land tax while private citizens pay 22¢ per acre. Quite soon it became apparent

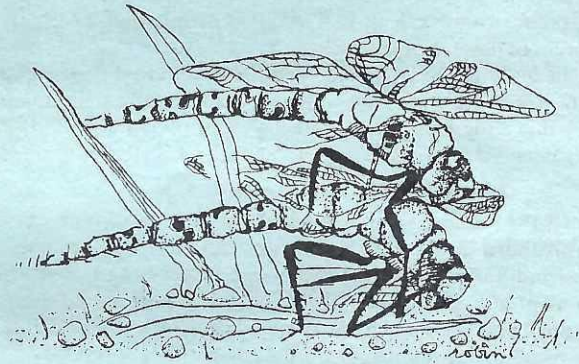
that the Federal Bureau was not the most dependable promise-making agency.

UNKEPT PROMISES

The promised 25% of the electric power has never been delivered to Trinity county despite repeated legal requests. Today a member of the Trinity River Task Force, Roger Hardison, pays \$87 a month for electricity in a house heated with wood.

Ironically, the Trinity still floods. In 1970 and again in 1974 uncontrolled "spills" from the reservoir of 7,000 and 16,500 cfs destroyed bridges, homes, and trailers. Not that this is on the order of the 70,000 cfs of the 1955 flood, but at least in 1955 there was a respect for the river. Since then downstream residents have become victims of real estate speculators and the Bureau's assurances of a maximum 2,000 cfs flow. Also, at the time of the 1974 spill, the reservoir was at 98% capacity, unable to accommodate spring flows. Although people were safely evacuated in time, the damage was expensive, greatly reduced land values, and posed health problems.

Ecologically, the TRP is a disaster. First to go where the animals of the riparian habitat displaced by the dam. A large herd of deer, estimated at 8,500 to 10,000, which utilized the canyon in the winter, perished directly as a result of the loss of its sanctuary. The famous steelhead and commercially important salmon are going or gone from the Trinity. The reasons are many and complex, but stem mostly from poor project planning and a callous, even criminal refusal by the Bureau to release adequate water to the lower river. Before completion of the project, the State Department of Fish and Game made known their request that minimum flows be set at 250



rather than the 160 cfs granted by the Bureau. Incredibly, the 160 cfs has only been loosely adhered to.

Pollution blocks the river annually from Douglas City to the confluence with the Klamath. Though largely unforseen, siltation from side streams below the dam has choked the Trinity from lack of the river's annual spring floods. In the 30 miles just below the dam, silt has raised the bed of the river from 8 to 12 feet, filling the coarse spawning gravels and slowing the water, thus allowing warming of the water which increases pollution and drives off oxygen. The silt in combination with low water release stimulates uncontrolled growth of shoreside vegetation, further stabilizes the silt, further chokes the river, and raises organic detritus loads. This dense bankside undergrowth increases flood danger and limits public access for fishing and boating.

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A hatchery was installed in Lewiston to mitigate losses of natural spawning upstream of the dam, and for salmon, but not steelhead it has been marginally successful. Recently this hatchery was identified as a major source of pollution. Meanwhile, natural spawning of salmon and steelhead on the lower river has all but died out. The numbers are obscene: between 1960 and 1975 the number of steelhead and salmon spawning on the Trinity has dropped over 99%. The answer? More water down the natural course of the river.

Despite preproject promises ("We do not contemplate diversion

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AKASKAN WILDS

The future of the most extensive, wild, undeveloped lands left in the country will be decided this year. Decision makers in Washington will determine which lands in Alaska will be developed, which should be protected for future generations, and of the thousands of miles of untouched rivers, which shall be Wild and Scenic Rivers.

To give you an idea of the immensity of the decisions being made, Congressman Morris Udall's new bill would protect over four million acres in the Wild and Scenic River System alone. (That's roughly 20 rivers of 3,000 miles.)

On June 18, public hearings will be held all day at the San Francisco Board of Education Offices at 135 Van Ness Ave. It is important for anyone with an interest in Alaska to attend. Those wishing to speak should write and ask to be placed on the agenda; Subcommittee on General Oversight of Alaska Lands, 1327 Longworth, Washington, D.C. 20515. * *



FOR T-SHIRTS

(See Picture Page 5)

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Auburn

Operations. This fact alone, he said should rule out an arch dam.

"In my judgement," he concluded, "a dam of such unprecedentedly high, long, and thin dimensions (which must be considered experimental) should not be built at such a vital location where a failure could kill up to 1,000,000 people and flood 1,000 square miles of developed lands."

After the hearing was completed with three hundred pages of oral testimony taken down, review team leader James Flannery's comment that "the most significant new testimony had to do with the safety issue" stands out as a monument to understatement.

On April 18, President Carter made clear that his administration questions Auburn Dam on environmental and economic grounds as well as seismic safety. His final recommendation is expected after completion of the Woodward-Clyde seismic report in late June. Carter stated that even if the safety question is resolved, no funds would be recommended until the Bureau signs firm contracts for the water, the financially shaky Central Valley Project is audited, and federal officials make "every effort to reach agreement" with the State on American River flows. ~



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From Page 7

Trinity

one bucketful of water needed on this watershed," Clair Engle, Trinity Journal, 1952) and the written-in promise of 50,000 acre feet of water annually for Trinity and Humboldt Counties (incidentally never delivered), current diversion of Trinity water stands at over 90% of yearly runoff — 30% more than originally authorized. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, Trinity River Task Force and many other state, federal, and civic agencies have repeatedly demanded that more water be released. The Bureau refuses to do so unless the water is paid for by Humboldt and Trinity Counties at the inflated rate of \$15 per acre foot. Interestingly, the Bureau's fiscal reports indicate that only 10% of the diverted water is being sold and it is sold to subsidize recipients in the Central Valley Project at \$3.50 to \$8.00 per acre foot. It is said that Trinity water is being used to prevent similar problems from happening on the Sacramento River. Does that mean that for \$15 per acre foot the Bureau will sell out the Sacramento instead? There are more votes on the Sacramento, you see...

WE ARE STILL PAYING

Has the TRP "paid itself out?" In a study done by the Department of the Interior in 1973 (NTIS#PB-220-966) to evaluate the current methods used by the Bureau of Reclamation and similar agencies in setting their benefit/cost estimates for water project, the Trinity was studied in operation with benefit/cost applied "after the fact." At a rate of 6% interest, with a project life set at 50 years, it was found that the Trinity will pay only 20¢ for every dollar invested. Over a hundred years this rises to 22¢. It is necessary to read this evaluation to understand how often the Bureau was given the benefit of the doubt. In short, it was an unlawful project.

It is the duty of every citizen to know what happened on the Trinity — for when it is all said and done, we are still paying. Remember the Trinity! * * *

An in depth study of the Trinity Project, also entitled "Remember the Trinity," or an amazing comparative analysis of the Trinity and New Melones projects, "Not Another One," both by Keith Ulisse, are available for \$1.00 by writing FOR.

PHOTO EXHIBIT

Friends of the River's photographic exhibition, "Condemned Rivers of the Motherlode," has moved from Governor Brown's office in Sacramento to the Oakland Museum's Natural Sciences Exhibits Gallery, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland. The exhibit contains portraits of the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and South Fork American Rivers and life that depends upon them. Additions, since leaving Sacramento, are sections on the history of rivers and alternatives to dams. Many thanks to Don Briggs who has coordinated this showing through the months of May, June, and half of July, with photos by Don Briggs, Bill Center, and Ron Pickup. For information call the Oakland Museum, (415) 273-3401.

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