

# South Fork Newsletter

County of El Dorado Environmental Management Department  
River Management Program

October 2009

## ≧Public Notice:≦

### Annual review of the El Dorado County River Management Plan

Held by the River Management Advisory Committee

Location: Marshall Gold State Historic  
Park Museum building  
310 Back Street, Coloma, CA

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Please come ready to discuss issues related to river use on the South Fork that have arisen in 2009. Only through the understanding of area residents' perceptions of whitewater recreation can the County take measures to address your concerns in the future.

Public comments from this meeting and any River Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) recommendations formed as a result of your comments will be presented to the County Planning Commission within the Annual Report.

### The River Management Advisory Committee

The River Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) provides a forum for the discussion of river use issues, ideas and conflicts. RMAC is a formal advisory body which makes recommendations to both the County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on matters related to whitewater recreation and campground development along the South Fork American River. The County established RMAC to be representative of a broad base of interests concerning the river. Currently all RMAC positions are filled. There are seven members of the committee:

- a permitted commercial outfitter
- a non-commercial boater
- a local business representative
- a local resident
- two members-at-large
- a California State Parks representative

RMAC usually meets the second Wednesday or Thursday night of each month, January through November, at the Lotus Fire Station. The public is invited to attend and participate at these monthly meetings. If you would like to receive the minutes and agendas via email please sign up on the County web site:

[https://service.govdelivery.com/service/subscribe.html?code=CAELDOR\\_1](https://service.govdelivery.com/service/subscribe.html?code=CAELDOR_1).

Monthly minutes can also be viewed on the web at [www.edcgov.us/emd/Rivers/river\\_advisory\\_com.html](http://www.edcgov.us/emd/Rivers/river_advisory_com.html)

The 2009 RMAC meeting schedule is posted on the web site listed above.

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### Invasive Species Alert !!!

### Don't Move a Mussel !!!

### Prevent the transport of nuisance species.

### Clean all boating equipment!!!

There is a **new invasive species** in California. The zebra and quagga mussels, originally from Ukraine, landed in the Great Lakes in the 1980s and have spread steadily throughout the Midwest and Mississippi River. The mussels have explosive reproductive rates and can quickly carpet the bottom of lakes and slow-moving rivers, disrupting the food chain (as filter feeders they deplete the phytoplankton from the water) and clog water works. In recent years the mussels have invaded Lake Mead and the lower Colorado River. They have moved through the Metropolitan Water District's Colorado Aqueduct and now have infested about a dozen reservoirs in Southern California. The California Department of Fish and Game is responsible for stemming the tide and sequestering the mussels in Southern California. While the most common threat is mussels "hitch-hiking" on the hulls and in bilge water of trailered boats, there is also a threat they can be transported by whitewater craft that move from river to river. The adult mussels can attach to the bottom of boats or in mud attached to the boat. More problematic to whitewater boating is larval mussels (called veligers), tiny organisms that drift down rivers and can live easily in splash water inside the raft/kayak. The most sure-fire way to avoid distributing them is to make sure rafts and kayaks are clean (mud free) and dry as they are transported river to river. Adult larval mussels die within a week when out of

the water, and veligers can be eliminated by simply draining the boat of residual water. Even though it's not a serious problem right now within Northern California, it's a good idea to get in the habit of a clean and dry raft/kayak between put-ins on different rivers.

More information on this issue can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/invasives/quaggamussel/>  
<http://www.100thmeridian.org/>

Photos of zebra/quagga mussels are provided below.



Mussel Shell on palm of human hand



Boat hull coated with Mussels

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## River Cleanups in 2009

The County led three river cleanups on the S. Fork in 2009. One cleanup on the upper, one cleanup on the lower and one low water river cleanup on the State Park to Greenwood Creek section. River cleanups are coordinated by El Dorado County Parks, CA State Parks, Bureau of Land Management and the American River

Conservancy. If you are interested in participating in a river cleanup in 2010 or other volunteer projects please contact El Dorado County Parks or the American River Conservancy at 530-621-1224. El Dorado County River Patrol and the Environmental Management Department would like to thank the following entities for their contributions to these efforts:

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| O.A.R.S.                   | Sierra Disposal           |
| Bureau Of Land Management  | Adventure Connections     |
| River and Rock Adventures  | Marco's Cafe              |
| Coloma Resort              | Café Mahjaic              |
| Camp Lotus                 | Peak Adventures           |
| All Outdoors Inc.          | Whitewater Connections    |
| W.E.T. River Trips         | Kokatat                   |
| American River Conservancy | Patagonia                 |
| Sierra Nevada House        | The River Store           |
| Tributary WW Tours         | Pacific River Supply      |
| American WW Expeditions    | Northwest River Supply    |
| CA State Parks             | Immersion Research        |
| American River Resort      | The River Shuttle         |
| Ponderosa RV Park          | Travis OAP                |
| Sierra Rizing Bakery       | Beale OAP                 |
| The Coloma Club            | Gringos Restaurant        |
| River Shack Pub and Deli   | ARTA                      |
| Mad Dog Pizza              | Mariah Wilderness Exp.    |
| Beyond Limits Adventures   | Action WW Adventures      |
| River and Rock Adv.        | Mother Lode River Trips   |
| Whitewater Voyages, Inc.   | SMUD                      |
| California Canoe and Kayak | Gold Rush Outfitters Env. |
| American River Recreation  | Traveling Companions      |
| Friends of the River       | UCD Outdoor Adv.          |
| Project Great Outdoors     | River Runners, Inc.       |
| PG&E                       | Calvary Chapel, Concord   |

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## What can riparian land owners do to prevent the amount of trash getting into waterways?

To help reduce the amount of debris that washes into the river during minor flood events or winter high water, you can do the following:

- 1) Locate the periodic high-water mark (2006 flood elevation) and put a stake (mark) where that is so that you or the next tenant knows that elevation. If you would like help locating the high water mark you can call County River Patrol for assistance @ (530) 621-6052.
- 2) Between the months of November to May do not leave manufactured items unattended below the high water mark of January 1, 2006. Examples of manufactured items would be canoes, BBQ's, lawn furniture, shade tents, picnic tables, RV's, etc.

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River Patrol Educating the public about the need to wear life vests

## El Dorado County River Patrol

### Who are they and why do they hide in the bushes?

In 2008 approximately 100,000 people boated the 21 mile stretch of the South Fork American River between Chili Bar Dam and Folsom Reservoir. This number takes into account passengers of commercial and non-profit companies, as well as all private boaters. Such usage of a natural recreation resource such as the South Fork American River needs monitoring and managing. The El Dorado County (EDC) River Patrol exists to help provide this as required by the EDC River Management Plan (RMP).

The EDC River Patrol consists of three seasonal staff (River Instructors) and the EDC River Recreation Supervisor. The seasonal help is brought on at the early stage of whitewater season and begins its preparations for the season ahead. The patrol provides a manifold of functions throughout the season which include:

- Boater/river-user education
- River safety
- Boat density data collection
- Water quality monitoring
- Facility maintenance
- River clean-up coordination
- Quiet-zone monitoring

The EDC River Patrol focuses much of its energy on educating and reminding boaters of safe and ethical boating practices and behavior. The education regime also includes informing and reminding boaters of the rules and regulations pertaining to the river. The patrol staff also makes contacts with anglers, inner-tubers, and other recreation users. The purpose of these contacts is to provide friendly advice and reminders about river safety and problems such as litter, private property trespass issues and the quiet zone. Though the EDC River Patrol does not have law enforcement authority, the tools of education, persuasion and self-reproach are employed to facilitate

compliance with the rules, regulations and ethical recreational practices.

River safety is on the water monitoring for safety issues and mishaps. The patrol staff certainly cannot be everywhere at once but tries to keep a watchful eye on areas of common concern in the class III sections of river. On weekends, or times of heavy river usage, the patrol staff may be found at rapids such as: Meat-Grinder, Trouble-Maker, Fowler's-Rock, Satan's-Cesspool, or Hospital-Bar.

Patrollers might be perceived as "hiding" in the bushes commonly at Fowler's Rock and Trouble Maker because they are sitting in the shade collecting boat density data and data for permit compliance. Boat density counts are required by the RMP to ensure there are not too many people using the river at once. Staff count all boats, their passengers and guides, as they pass a given point and the time of passage. All data is later tallied along with counts used from photographic records.

Throughout the year, and more frequently in the summer months, patrol staff collect water samples. These samples are collected following a strict protocol and are analyzed by the EDC Health Lab. The water is tested for e-coli and fecal coliform bacteria. This testing is to ensure that the river remains safe for human contact.

Another function of the River Patrol is basic facility maintenance. The patrol staff assists the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) River Patrol in the upkeep and cleaning of the three composting toilets along the river. EDC Patrol coordinates with the BLM to ensure that restroom facilities are functioning, clean, and stocked with toilet-paper and woodchips. Patrol staff also stock and maintain various information kiosks at access points along the river with private boat registration tags, waterproof river maps and large group registration forms.

The EDC River Patrol staff organizes and conducts River cleanups of the South Fork at least twice a year to remove trash and dangerous debris from, in and along the river. One clean up is usually done on the Chili Bar run and the Gorge run. One sweep is also sometimes done on the Coloma-Lotus section at "fish flow" to focus on the river bottom in that section. These river cleanups are accomplished with the participation of local businesses, river industry companies, rafting companies and conscientious volunteers.

River Patrol staff spend time along the unique quiet zone section of the South Fork to make a concerted effort to ensure that the County quiet zone ordinance is abided by. Violations are reported to the River Recreation Supervisor who has the authority to cite commercial outfitters. Violations by the public can only be cited by an El Dorado Sheriff. Often these incidents are corrected by friendly reminders.

Hopefully the synopsis above helps paint a picture of the functions performed by the River Patrol and why you see them “hiding” in the bushes. From working with the patrol, I can honestly say that the patrol is out there to protect the South Fork American River as a quality recreation resource and quality experience for all who visit and live by the river. Enjoy the river and be safe!

Kyle Lloyd, EDC River Patrol

## What is the River Trust Fund?

The River Trust Fund (RTF) is a County Special Revenue Fund which sole purpose is to fund the implementation of the County’s [River Management Plan](#). The majority of funds to the RTF come from Commercial Outfitter fees. A small amount comes from put-in and take-out fees at Henningsen Lotus County Park (HLP). Parking fees go into an HLP trust fund which help pay for the park and improvements like the shade structure over the playground. The County River Patrol and the River Recreation Supervisor positions are also funded out of the RTF. In addition to this, annual contributions from the RTF to the River Shuttle and Chili Bar acquisition and Chili Bar planning efforts have been made for the past few years.



Another day on the Rio for this happy cataraft boater

## Winter Release Schedule

There are reliable flows on the South Fork American River below Chili Bar. The current flow and release schedule can be found at <http://dreamflows.com/> or the [County River’s web page](#).

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## Events in the Coloma-Lotus Valley

- 2nd Sat of each month @ Marshall Gold Discover State Historic Park – Live History Days – Docents imparting their knowledge from the days of the Gold Rush.
- Christmas in Coloma December 12&13 @ Marshall Gold Discovery State Historical Park
- Gold Discovery Day Jan. 23 @ Marshall Gold Discovery State Historical Park
- ARC Events – Please visit - [arconservancy.org](http://arconservancy.org)

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## Agency Contact Information

[El Dorado County, EMD River MGMT](#)

2850 Fairlane Ct., Build. C  
Placerville, Ca 95667  
530-621-6052

Bureau of Land Management, [Mother Lode Field Office](#)

5152 Hillside Circle  
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762  
Phone: (916) 941-3101

[Auburn State Recreation Area](#)

501 El Dorado Street  
Auburn, CA 95604-3266  
530-885-4527  
Dispatch for On Duty Ranger (916) 358-1300

[Folsom Lake State Recreation Area](#)

7806 Folsom-Auburn Road  
Folsom, CA 95630-1797  
916-988-0205  
Dispatch for On Duty Ranger (916) 358-1300

[Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park](#)

PO Box 265  
Coloma, CA 95613  
530-622-3470

**Note:** You can also find this newsletter on the El Dorado County Rivers web page:

[www.edcgov.us/emd/Rivers/index.html](http://www.edcgov.us/emd/Rivers/index.html). If you want to continue to receive a paper copy of this newsletter please contact the El Dorado County Parks office. We would prefer to send an electronic version to you in the future. Please email [Noah.Rucker-Triplett@edcgov.us](mailto:Noah.Rucker-Triplett@edcgov.us) to have an emailed copy sent.