

 **HEADWATERS**

Friends of the River

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## Friends of the River

is a political, research, and educational organization dedicated to the preservation of our remaining free-flowing waters, and to the conservation of our water and energy resources. Its main headquarters are located at 401 San Miguel Way, Sacramento, California 95819. Annual membership dues are \$15.00

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### About the cover.

*Despite appearances, much of Los Angeles is not accidental. Before the metropolis could assume its present gargantuan proportions, it had to assure itself an adequate water supply.*

*Shown under construction here is the Colorado River aqueduct, completed in 1941, which supplies water to Southern California. In the three decades following its completion, Los Angeles doubled in size.*

*-from the California Water Atlas*

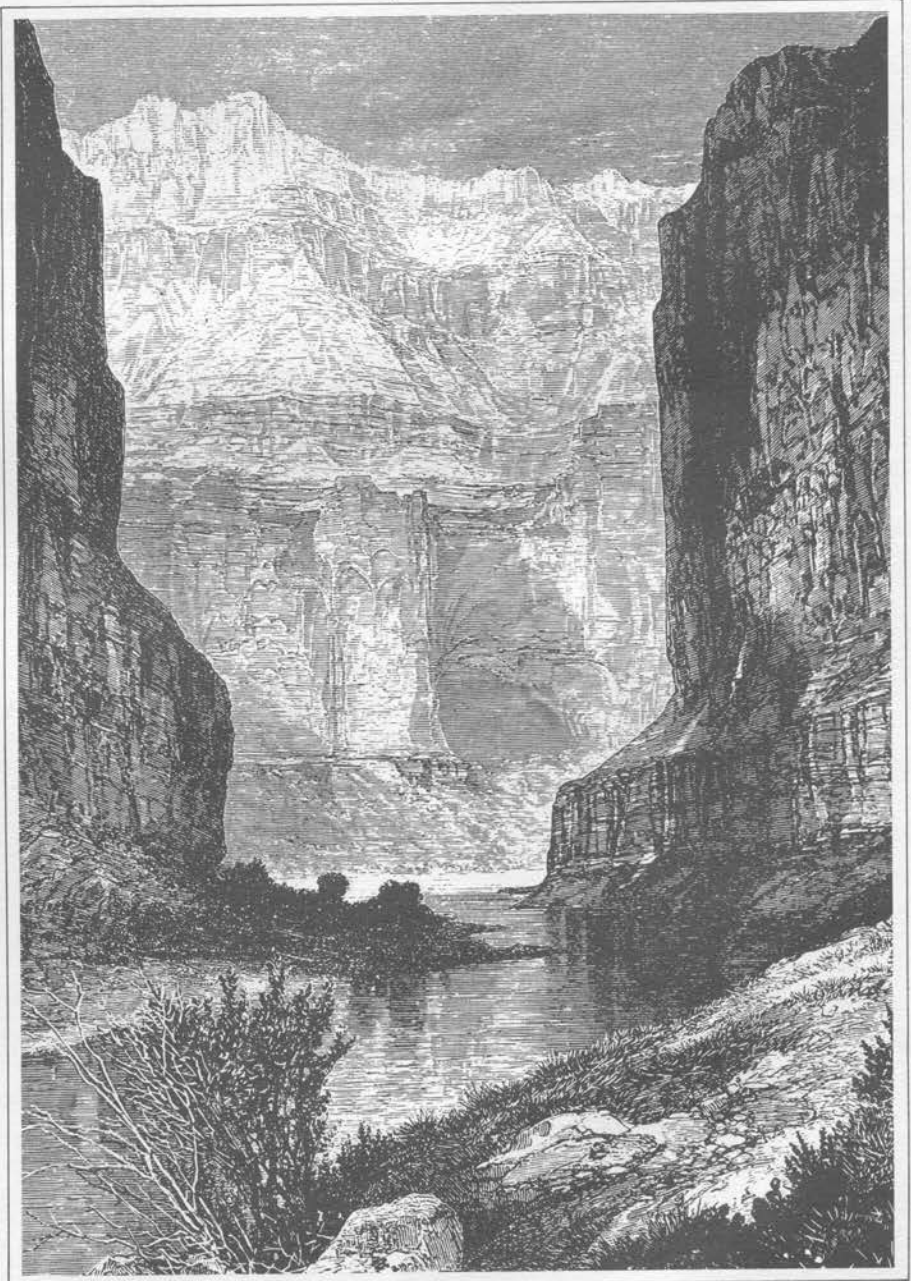
# Contents:

A new chapter in the Warm Springs Dam fight, a new publication, and three new reports are the focus of this issue of HEADWATERS.

The Tuolumne River report, three years in the making, finally emerged into the light at a series of public hearings. The report itself is favorable, but it quickly drew a lot of opposition and it's clear that the fight for this river, begun by John Muir in 1898, is a long way from over, (page 3).

Les Ayers reports that the Warm Springs Dam battle has moved onto the local ballot, (page 5)...the California State Office of Planning and Research has published the definitive California water reference work; Stewart Brand, who helped coordinate the project, said: "No other State Government has ever published anything like it." (page 6)

The Colorado River through the Grand Canyon will be managed by a radically different set of rules (page 6)...Noel Dubois relates the tale of the South Fork of the Trinity, and some much-too-long-neglected Friends of the River finally receive their due.



From *Powell Through the Grand Canyon*,  
Houghton Mifflin, 1933.

# The Tuolumne River Wins a Round



photo courtesy Sonora Daily Union Democrat

**THREE YEARS AGO, IN THE FALL OF 1976**, public hearings were held in the Bay Area, Modesto and Sonora to kick off the U.S. Government's four agency study of the Tuolumne River. Originally scheduled for 18 months, the study dragged on through repeated postponements until finally, in July of 1979, the draft Environmental Impact Statement was completed and announcements were made that the concluding set of hearings were scheduled for the first two weeks of August. Once again, the Bay Area, Modesto and Tuolumne County would be the meeting sites.

The purpose of the study was to determine if 83 miles of the Tuolumne River from its source on the Dana and Lyell Forks down past Hetch Hetchy, the "Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne", Cherry Creek, Lumsden campground and terminating in the headwaters of the reservoir behind Don Pedro dam, qualified for protection within the Federal Wild and Scenic River System. The agencies involved were mandated to study the various features and qualities of the river, outline several management alternatives, and finally, make a "recommendation."

Five alternatives are described in the EIS, they range from Alternative "A" recommending full protection of the entire stretch, to Alternative "E" which is described as "no action". Alternatives "B", "C", and "D" separate the studied section into smaller parcels, recommending protection for some, no action for others.

None of the alternatives is formally "recommended"—an apparent violation of the authorizing legislation—instead Alternative "A" is called the "preferred alternative". This is not as minor a point as it appears and may well assume greater significance as the report moves on to Congress for final approval. Interestingly, rumors circulating before the report was publicly released held that the writers had been forced to back off their recommendation of Alternative "A" by some of the political muscle that the dam builders could call upon. It appears as if the document was already printed before they finally caved in. Page 76 includes a line inked out by hand which reads, "Alternative 'A'", the recommended alternative, would generate some additional recreational opportunities..."

The hearings themselves were fairly well attended, although neither Oakland nor San Francisco drew the kind of numbers that might have been assumed. In Columbia a rough head count showed about 200 present, in Modesto some 300 and in San Francisco and Oakland 150 each. Approximately 200 speakers came forward to offer testimony concerning the report with a very roughly estimated 60% in favor of Alternative "A" and 40% in support of "E". None of the compromise measures gathered any significant support.

Predictably, politicians in Tuolumne County and the Modesto and Turlock area came forward in support of "E" because it

was the one alternative that would allow the Clavey-Ward's Ferry tri-dam project to be constructed. Dire warnings were issued about dry taps, cold nights and hot days if the hydroelectric dams were not installed with all possible haste.

There was an evident lack of coordination between proponents of Alternative "E". Nearly half of the speakers urging "no action" based their arguments on the belief that it provided the greatest number of "options"—as opposed to "A" which they characterized as "locking up the river". Unfortunately for the credibility of these speakers, the other half of those in favor of "E" dwelt entirely on the perceived benefits of the hydroelectric project—"options" were not what they were interested in.

Such testimony tended to undermine the "let's-leave-our-choices-open" line of argument and it quickly became clear that two choices only were being presented—save the river, or dam it. Attempts to create an imaginary middle ground were merely attempts to blur the issue, and they were given little credence by either camp.

During the San Francisco hearing, the State of California took its "official position" on the report, coming out in favor of Alternative "A". Department of Water Resources Director Ron Robie read a prepared statement which said, in part:

"The Tuolumne River is already well-tapped and provides for the energy and water needs of a great many. It is in the spirit of multiple use that we support Alternative "A" as a management plan."

A sampling of the more prominent speakers opposed to Alternative "A" would include: Clair Pilcher, Chairman of the City of San Francisco's Public Utilities Commission, Assemblyman Norm Waters, Hetch Hetchy Power Company's General Manager Oral Moore and Modesto Irrigation District Manager Ernest Geddes.

A sampling of prominent speakers in favor of Alternative "A" would include: David Brower, President of Friends of the Earth; John Sanger, member San Francisco Public Utilities Commission; Representative Don Edwards' administrative aide.

After the closing date of September 15, all final testimony (both written and oral) will be appended to the report and the whole sent to Congress where officially they will have to act to approve or disapprove within the next eighteen months. One of the critical factors obviously will be the position of the California delegation. Future issues of **HEADWATERS** will be asking for your help in the form of letters, calls and appointments with these men so that protection for the river can be mandated and the Tuolumne can finally rest easy.



# The South Fork of the Trinity

Noel Dubois

Not many years ago Russian trawlers were blamed for the decline of the salmon catch off the West Coast. Our government responded by extending territorial limits to 200 miles offshore.

In 1978 responsibility for dwindling salmon runs in Northern California was shifted to Indians on the Klamath River and added to the backs of sport and commercial fishermen who "overfished."

While I don't presume to know all the answers to the salmon problem, I would like to discuss the management problems associated with one small river while pointing out that dam construction isn't the only way to kill a canyon.

Almost too small to classed a river (a long, large creek perhaps) the South Fork Trinity is a beautifully clear flowing stream that originates in a drainage dominated by South Fork Mountain.

South Fork Mountain, in its early life, made one big mistake. It grew what is called by the Forest Service, "The largest stand of Douglas Fir in the Shasta Trinity National Forest." And a well-known fact, to all but the poetically inclined, is that a standing tree has no value.

Until the early 1950's, the upper canyon was a wilderness. Only two rough roads were cut parallel to it. The area, in a naturally blanced state, except for some trapping and "harvesting" of bear and deer, swarmed with wildlife. The river teemed with salmon (key link in the animal food chain), steelhead, crayfish, eels, mussels and other interlocked species. How many centuries, or thousands of years it took South Fork to attain and maintain its delicate balanced state is anyone's guess. How long man took to destroy that balance was approximately ten years.

As lumber demand accelerated after World War II, the number of easy-to-log places began to diminish. This stand of Douglas Fir became increasingly coveted and roads to get to it were punched up the canyon.

Initially the area was logged with what is known as conventional or selective logging. Sometime after 1955, South Fork was introduced to the innovative, efficient practice of clear cutting. With the clear cut method, all trees are removed. Large, small, desirable, undesirable: good, bad and ugly. The quality trees are trucked away. As garbage, those remaining are stacked and burned. Some time later a contractor replants the newly created desert with fir seedlings. "And so", says *The Theory*, "in fifteen to twenty years a new forest sprouts up for 'harvesting'."

(continued on page 5)



Tim Palmer

## The Auburn Damsite

On July 30, Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus announced that he had approved the dam design requirements which the State of California had conditioned their support of the Federally funded Auburn Dam upon. Specifically, this means that the dam, currently stalled in the early stages of construction on the North Fork of the American River, will have to be able to withstand a foundation slip of 9 inches during a single seismic event. Andrus said that such a figure of 9 inches "reflects the best thinking of a large number of experts who have considered the matter during the past year."

Foundation work already completed for the dam was built to support a thin arch double curvature dam. Experts outside the Bureau of Reclamation (the dam's constructors) are in general agreement that such a design would fail to survive a 9 inch foundation displacement.

For its part, the Bureau says that it is studying "alternative designs". "A final recommendation on dam design will be made," a Bureau press release states, "at the conclusion of these studies."

What the press release doesn't mention is the quite likely prospect that the only even remotely economical exit from this horrendously expensive project is a general clean-up of the foundation work already done, and a quiet, seemly departure from a dam-site that was never meant to be.

### HELLS CANYON

The Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Planning Team has completed the analysis of its public input survey. The survey was designed to delineate areas of general agreement and disagreement in the proposed management of the Snake River through Hells Canyon.

Forty percent of the respondents wanted all RARE II and Wilderness Study areas

designated as wilderness, while 25% wanted none of them.

Commercial use of the river was felt to be allowable, but not at the expense of private users.

For a more complete description of the survey results, as well as a copy of the upcoming Draft EIS, contact the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Planning Team, P.O. Box 907, Baker, OR 97814.

# Warm Springs Dam Up for Referendum

Les Ayers

Members of Friends of the River have followed the continuing story of how the people of Sonoma County have fought the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Warm Springs Dam-Lake Sonoma Project since filing a lawsuit in 1974 over the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Statement. That case is under advisement in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, having been heard in May 1978. The three judge panel has yet to hand down a decision, but in the meantime they have refused to issue an injunction against any further construction work at the site. The result of this refusal is that, legally, the hands of the appellants have been tied while actual work on the dam goes on apace.

Meanwhile, public sentiment over the impact of the project has been turning increasingly sour. Local costs, loss of farmland, the destruction of the once-fine sport fishery in the Russian River basin, uncontrolled urban sprawl, potential earthquake induced disaster, and finally, a statewide dissatisfaction with business-as-usual, boondoggle, porkbarrel spending by our Congress in these times of skyrocketing inflation are just some of the reasons cited.

Recently, public dissatisfaction catalysed into an initiative drive to put the dam on the ballot. Over 24,000 signatures were obtained on petitions circulated by nearly 400 workers. The result: On November 6, Sonoma County voters will have a chance to stop the Warm Springs Project. If passed, the measure would require the county to withdraw from its conditional (and out-dated) contract with the Secretary of the Army to store county water in Lake Sonoma. It would further request the Army Corps to cease all further construction.

Sonoma County voters are not alone in this problem. They learned how to fight bureaucratic bungling by watching the people of Santa Barbara County, supported by one small weekly newspaper and opposed by all the local daily papers, the real estate lobby, construction trades, and land developers, mount a political campaign and overwhelmingly defeat the water merchants. The final tally was 70% against, and 30% for an expensive (\$275 million) project. Santa Barbara County voters were led and supported by Senator Omer Rains, Assemblyman Hart, Supervisors Hedlund and Wallace and many groups and associations. It was hard work and effective political leadership that led the taxpayers to victory.

The people of Sonoma County will count on their own political

leaders to join Supervisor Eric Koenigshofer and Assemblyman Douglas Bosco this fall in battling against fiscal waste and pork barrel politics.

At the national level, many Friends of the River members are aware of the dynamic leadership provided to embattled taxpayers all over the country by the American Rivers Conservation Council whose July newsletter carried a detailed summary of the battle against Warm Springs Dam in the halls of Congress where the pork barrel system was born and where it continues to live on as a major contributor to inflation and the waste of national resources. In Washington, ARCC leaders Brent Blackwelder and Howard Brown work tirelessly to represent the taxpayers on Capitol Hill. They have

enjoyed some success and suffered lots of defeats because the old pork barrel mentality dies slowly in the House of Representatives. Fortunately, there are leaders like Phillip and John Burton who represent thousands of Bay Area citizens who wish to preserve and protect our natural areas. The youth of the country will be thankful for that leadership when they are able to pass on to their children a living environment instead of a dying world.

On other fronts:

- A group of taxpayers filed a class-action lawsuit against the County challenging the collection of a Warm Springs Dam tax beyond the ceiling permitted by Prop. 13. The action seeks a refund of the \$114,000 collected this year and a prevention of further taxation. The matter is scheduled to be heard in San Francisco Superior Court about August 20th.

- The County Board of Supervisors completed the most exhaustive review of any aspect of Warm Springs Dam ever undertaken by that body when it studied the Master Plan for recreation prepared by the Corps. Unfortunately, many important questions are still unresolved due to lack of data on the manner in which the Corps will mitigate the threats to the environment of the peregrine falcon. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service presented a detailed plan for protection of the endangered birds to the Corps. The County leaders heard from staff what effects the dam will have on costs for roads, law enforcement, utilities, waste disposal and many more aspects that will call for changes in the County General Plan and expenditures of large blocks of tax monies over the next one hundred years. Decisions by the Board now will set the fiscal direction to be followed by the county from now on.

• For more information on how to get involved write: **Taxpayers Organized Against the Dam P.O. Box 1306, Healdsburg, CA 95448**

(South Fork...from pg. 4)

As applied in Colorado or Montana, *The Theory* might be considered a success by some. On South Fork Mountain though, paper projections have not squared with results. The experiments have proved to be a disaster. As the canyon became logged, it became evident that the area was geologically fragile. The root systems which held the slopes together dissolved and the heavy rains of 1964 brought massive land slips and slides. The river filled with gravel. Once large, deep pools became

unrecognizable. The eggs of the few remaining salmon were smothered; the entire interdependent scheme of animal life was altered. It has never recovered.

Opposition to further degradation of the South Fork drainage has begun to gather around Joseph Bower (P.O. Box 1055, Hayfork, CA 96041). He is looking for support (moral, financial, time... whatever).

A final footnote: In 1964 State Fish and Game employees counted 11,604 salmon. In 1974 there were 30 sightings of King Salmon in the South Fork.

## PERIPHERAL CANAL BILL ON BALLOT?

Senator Ruben Ayala (D-San Bernardino) will seek the "moral and financial support of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District" to get a statewide initiative on the ballot authorizing construction of the Peripheral Canal. Ayala has been unsuccessful for three years in getting approval for the project out of the State Senate.



# The California Water Atlas

QUITE POSSIBLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT publishing event in many years on the California water scene occurred this July when the State of California, through its Office of Planning and Research, published the **California Water Atlas**.

The physical facts alone about the book are impressive. It is a 124 page hard-bound volume, measuring 16 by 18 inches. Printed on high quality, glossy stock it contains hundreds of color and black and white illustrations. The quality of the reproductions is outstanding and their size and vividness combine for a stunning visual impact.

Between its oversized covers it contains a wealth of information about the "...framework of our prosperity, and the substance of our life, water." But what makes this work so remarkable is the outstanding use of maps and graphic display. Not only are the facts there, but they are accessible—not buried in some indecipherable table.

The narrative is written by twenty-one contributors, each an expert in his own field. The discussions are clear, lively, and the language avoids the pitfalls of pedanticism that limits most reference books to the "serious reader". It more than just answers questions, it reads.

The **California Water Atlas** is available from: *General Services, Publications Section, P.O. Box 1015, North Highlands, CA 95660*. It costs \$37.50 plus shipping and tax.

Even the most casual student of water in California will treasure it for a lifetime.

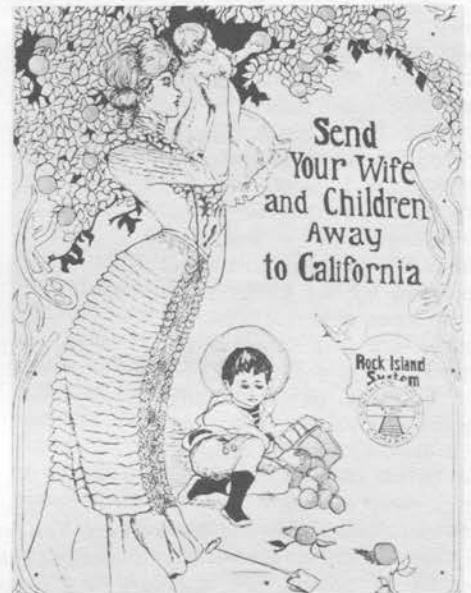
*"In our urban centers today, the use of water in homes averages 150 gallons per*

*day for each person in the United States. Per capita use in California is generally greater than the national average and varies greatly with the season of the year, location and climate, and with the density and affluence of our population. During the winter months in high density neighborhoods, per capita use averages 100 gallons per day, but during the summer in the hot Central Valley, suburban dwellers may use as much as 660 gallons."*

*"A further ramification of the way in which we treat water as a free good is that no scarcity value is assigned to water in California. Diamonds, in contrast, achieve a high scarcity value and the diamond market works to limit the supply at any given time so that prices will remain high. But when water supplies decline in California, as in a drought, prices do not automatically go up. Instead, when water supplies become scarce or overdrawn, more incentive is given to developing new supplies of water rather than letting the market mechanism raise the price to allocate the water to the highest value use."*

*"The dominating natural fact in the San Joaquin Valley was not water abundance and overflow, but water scarcity. In its natural condition the valley, from the Delta to its southern terminus at the Tehachapi Mountains, was a spacious dry grassland hundreds of miles long, a Kansas in California. Just as the grasslands of the eastern Great Plains were grazed by huge herds of buffalo, so the San Joaquin Valley had its own large animal herbivora, which roamed the flatlands by the thou-*

*sands, the tule elk and pronghorn antelope. Early settlers of the Central Valley consequently turned these vast grasslands to cattle ranching, which seemed to offer a surer means to profit that the uncertainties of farming in a land of rainless summers. Between 1846 and 1860, the state's cattle population grew from an estimated 400,000 to more than three million."*



Despite appearances, much of Los Angeles is not accidental. Railroad tycoons, land speculators, and water project dreamers did all they could to lure Midwesterners into California's arid Southland when the Imperial Valley was known as the Colorado River desert.

The poster (circa 1919) is from the new **California Water Atlas**, reviewed on page 6.

## Grand Canyon Gets New Management

The final environmental statement for the proposed Colorado River Management Plan in Grand Canyon National Park is currently open for public review and input. Closing date is officially September 3, but late entries may be accepted.

The EIS makes the following proposals for action:

- (1) The use of motorized craft on the Colorado River through the National Park will be gradually phased out over the next five years. By 1985 all boats must be oar powered only.
- (2) Total use of the river will be increased to 175,950 user days. During the summer season, this translates into 9,150 commercial

passengers and 2,745 private trip takers. The current ration of commercial to non-commercial users is 93% to 7%. Under the new proposals it would become 70% to 30%, although in absolute terms

**"motorized boats on the Grand Canyon...will be phased out by 1985."**

the number of commercial passengers will stay about the same while the number of private passengers will increase.

- (3) A new permit procedure for non-

commercial trip takers has been proposed. The basis will be first-come, first-served. A standing list of applicants will be established and updated.

- (4) On-river fires will be limited in use to aesthetic and/or warming purposes.
- (5) Solid human waste will be carried out of the canyon.

National Park Service Director William Whalen stated, "The plan will be adopted in its final form after the 30-day review period."

For a more detailed summary of the EIS and its proposals, send your request to: *Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023*.

*In the midst of our national energy crunch, FOR has been receiving thousands of megawatts of clean, unpolluting, and very inexpensive energy from its many volunteer and staff workers.*

*In particular a few names deserve special commendation.*



Bill Center

**Don Briggs.** Don's photographs have frequently appeared in **HEADWATERS** and his talents in that direction are apparent at a glance. What is not so quickly seen though is his untiring energy in support of the goals of FOR. For several months Don has been working long hours to secure funding for a film based on the battle over the Stanislaus. He has been an active member of FOR for seven years and has given more than generously of his time, energy and rapidly dwindling funds.



Erin Wilson

**Shortcut Schifferlee.** Shortcut has been in residence in Washington D.C. since mid-Winter lobbying full-time for FOR and concentrating on the Stanislaus issue. It is in large measure through her efforts that the Edwards-McCloskey bill (HR 4223) to protect the river is now in committee.



Sparky Kramer

**Marty Booth.** Marty is another seven year veteran who has most recently been in charge of the FOR river trips on the Stanislaus. Since early Spring he has coordinated dozens of trips for officials, media people, potential contributors and others who have come to be acquainted with the Stanislaus through Marty's efforts and FOR's invitation. When the Secretary of Resources, or a California Assemblyman says, "I have been to the Stanislaus and I know the value of saving that place," he probably rode on Marty's truck to get there.

## Senate Bill 14

### **Reclamation Act of 1902 Threatened**

A bill which would dramatically curtail the restrictions of the Reclamation Act of 1902 has been passed out of committee and on to the Senate floor.

The Reclamation Act has been under fire for most of its 77 years of existence, but this most recent threat seems to have significant new momentum.

The purpose of the Act, as it was originally conceived, was to provide the small farmer with an incentive to reside on his farm and to irrigate it with water that was paid for, in part, by the tax paying public. It was meant to apply only to small farms with 160 acres or less and thus specifically discouraged the amalgamation

of large holdings into great estates owned by absentee landlords and farmed by hired labor.

Despite its intentions, the restrictions of the Act have been largely ignored, while the subsidized water that it provides has been gratefully consumed by agribusiness interests with huge holdings.

The new bill, S.B. 14, would effectively gut the Reclamation Act and remove its restrictions. The 160 acre limit would be raised to 1,280 acres with numerous loopholes provided for evading even this figure. Residency on the farm would no longer be a requirement and Army Corps of Engineer's project water would be completely free of any restrictions.

This type of legislation not only jeopardizes the small farmer and increases the taxpayer's subsidy of corporate agribusiness, it also forms the basis of the financial support of such boondoggles as

New Melones.

- Write a letter to Senator Cranston and urge him not to support S.B. 14.

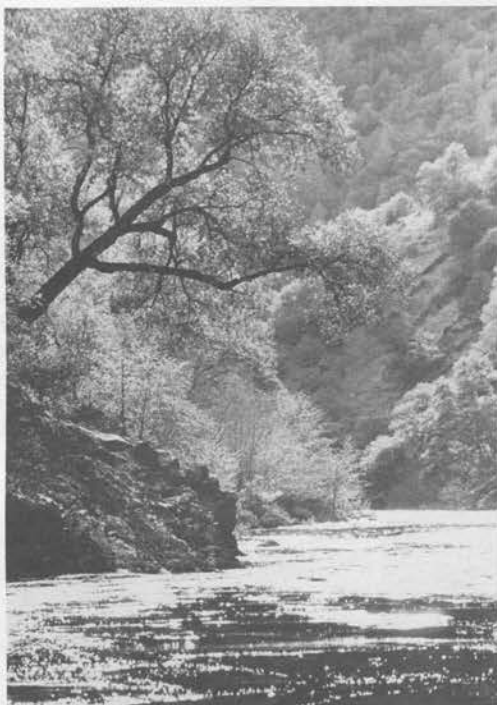
#### **BOTTLE BILL**

The "Bottle Bill", SB 4, which would require a mandatory 5¢ deposit on all beverage containers sold in the state, passed through the Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee by a vote of 5 to 2. Voting "Aye" were Senators Rains (sponsoring), Keene, Nielsen, Rodda and Watson. Voting "No" were Senators Ayala and Richardson. Senator Garamendi abstained.

The new bill now moves directly onto the Senate floor. Write your State Senators urging them to support SB 4.

## Revolutionaries of the Status Quo

The Tuolumne River  
1979



The Tuolumne River  
10,000 A.D.

*(artist's conception)*



**We really don't favor great changes. At Friends of the River our greatest goal is often reached when nothing happens.**

**Of course it sometimes takes a lot of time, money, energy and commitment to see that nothing happens. But if we can leave some of our beautiful places for the next generation to enjoy, just as we found them, then we'll have done nothing — and accomplished a great deal in the process.**

**Join FOR and be a part of the fight.**

My \$15.00 membership will help support FOR as an ongoing political and educational program to protect rivers. I will also receive HEADWATERS for one year (6 issues).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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