

SAVE LAKE CLEMENTINE, THE NORTH FORK CANYON, & TRAILS

THE CONFLUENCE

December 2014

Thousand Letter Campaign:

Now is the time to send your comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.



Lake Clementine Hydro, LLC, is primarily Kruger Energy, a Canadian energy conglomerate with ties to Delaware and California. They recently filed their draft study plans with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the Lake Clementine Hydro project (FERC Project # P-13432) that

would permanently scar the canyon and obliterate the “Outstandingly Remarkable” recreational opportunities and wildlife values of the National Wild & Scenic eligible North Fork American River from the North Fork Dam to the Confluence and beyond.

The project would use the 1939 Army Corps of

Engineers debris-retention dam and public lands Congress has reserved for recreation purposes, as the authorized Auburn Dam is unlikely to ever be built. The Bureau of Reclamation has no legal authority to authorize an industrial hydro complex on these public lands. Similarly, the Corps of

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DATES TO ADD TO YOUR CALENDAR:

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Lake Clementine Hydro Project..

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Engineers has a mandate to operate Lake Clementine for recreational purposes and the North Fork Dam for debris-retention. The proposed hydroelectric project would operate approximately 6 to 8 months out of the year when the flow allows for hydro power to be generated. Home rooftop solar systems on about 4,300 homes would generate the same amount of energy during times of peak demand.

The public-interest gains from this project are far lower than the costs to public resources and the adverse impacts to the Auburn State Recreation Area used by approximately one million visitors annually. An industrial hydroelectric project of this magnitude in the Confluence Area, the most heavily used sector in the park, is incompatible with Congressional directives, the law and common-sense management of public trust resources.

The project construction, estimated to last at least 18 months, entails the building of multiple features that taken as a whole would affect the river and canyons from the Confluence to Lake Clementine –turning Lake Clementine, the surrounding canyon and the Clementine Trail into a hacked-up industrial zone.

•CONSTRUCTION DISTURBANCE TO WILDLIFE – This canyon-river-lake area is rich with wildlife and quality habitat. The project disturbance from blasting and earth-moving construction activities may adversely affect many animals including: nesting peregrine falcons, bald eagles, osprey, pond turtles, otters, beavers, bass, trout and crayfish all frequently observed inhabitants of the project area.

•CULMULITIVE EFFECTS TO

HABITAT FROM PROJECT OPERATION

– Considerable impacts from the construction disturbance and operation of the hydro plant to the food web have not been identified or studied. Sediment, temperature increase and petroleum byproducts are measurable collateral damage to the water quality from hydro plant discharge. Mercury levels may be elevated by operation and construction activities.

•CONSTRUCTION DISTURBANCE TO RECREATION - The intake and penstock structures would be located on the existing dam, and steep canyon walls just downstream forcing a partial relocation of the road serving the boat launch area. The boat launch area would serve as construction staging area forcing frequent if not total closure of the boat launch facility.

•A large powerhouse structure with 3 turbine generator units would be located on the river bar just below the dam destroying the river bar and the existing access trail to the big plunge pool and kayak put in for “Angel’s Run” just below the dam.

•An electrical transformer substation and switchyard, (estimated to be similar to the substation on Elm Avenue in Auburn), will also be constructed near the powerhouse structure on the steep canyon wall above the river floodplain to protect the substation electrical components. Buzzing noise and night security lights would also pollute.

•Transmission towers and lines will be located down river and across the river to transmit the electricity up canyon to the PG&E Halsey substation.

•The scenic, shady historic Confluence to Lake Clementine Trail –the most popular trail in the Confluence Area is the preferred route for delivering

construction equipment and supplies. This trail popular with casual and hearty hikers and mtn. bikers would be fully industrialized by widening, trimming, grading and surfacing with crushed rock.

Certainly, we would like to make our dams as efficient as possible so as not to have to dam any more of our precious endangered Sierra Nevada Rivers. Clearly, the long term losses to recreation, wildlife and scenic values far outweigh the meager short-term gains of a low producing hydro facility that destroys so much that we treasure. PG&E has a robust portfolio of renewable resource energy including solar that far exceeds the need to destroy our beautiful North Fork river and canyon and attractive foothill Lake Clementine. Lake Clementine Hydro, LLC exaggerates its claim to production based on optimum weather and flow conditions that may not occur. Ironically, the power generated may not flow through the grid to homes or essential services - it could just as easily be used for frivolous non-essential uses. We do not need to wreck our beautiful Auburn State Recreation Area for shortsighted financial gains to misguided energy corporations not aware of our attachment to our historic, wild, adventure and endurance themed American River canyons.

**Write & EMAIL: Be sure to include the
FERC Project No. P-13432
Ms. Kimberly Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426
Jim Fargo Jim.fargo@ferc.gov
IMPORTANT: Please email your letters to
Helga White helgawh@gotsky.com also.
She will forward letters to appropriate
government agencies and politicians.**

Third Annual 2015 High School Scholarship Essay Contest



Congratulations to 2014 PARC High School Scholarship Essay Contest Winners Melissa Criddle, Ponderosa; Alyson Ennis, Union Mine; Erin Anderson, Golden Sierra; Zachary James, Placer; and Max Hennessy, Del Oro.

Melissa Criddle, from Ponderosa HS, and Zachary James, from Placer HS, received their 2014 Scholarship Awards from PARC Board member Tony DeRiggi at the State Theatre in Auburn.

Scholarship Award Totals Increased to \$1500 for 2015 Essay Contest

The Essay Contest topic for High School Seniors graduating in 2015 will be:

Why do I care about the American River, and what is my vision for protection of the river and its canyons for future generations?

Students can apply for the PARC Scholarships by submitting an original essay of no more than 500 words describing their response to the topic question about the North and Middle Fork American Rivers and canyons located upstream of Folsom Reservoir, in the Auburn State Recreation Area.

Details and application forms for the 2015 PARC High School Senior Scholarship Essay Contest are NOW available on the PARC website www.parc-auburn.org.

THE CONFLUENCE...

is a seasonal, or as needed, publication of **Protect American River Canyons**.

THE CONFLUENCE is included with basic annual membership. Email us to get on our digital e-news list.

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Membership and Donation Opportunities

Protect American River Canyons is a river education and conservation organization dedicated to the protection of the natural, cultural and historical resources of the North and Middle Forks of the American River and its canyons. PARC is very active in the community, sponsoring a variety of social, educational and river service events each year. PARC remains vigilant to destructive development and political threats to the river and canyons. Visit our website www.parc-auburn.org.

Yes! I want to join/renew membership with PARC and help shape the future of the American River!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS

- \$25 Regular Member ~ Receive three river cards
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- \$100 River PARCster ~ Receive the American River Insiders Guidebook
- \$250 River Crusader ~ Receive Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada
- \$500 River Champion ~ Receive both the AR Guidebook and Laws Field Guide to Sierra
- \$1,000 River Angel ~ Receive a surprise!

Please take a moment now to complete and return the enclosed envelope to renew your membership. If you prefer to renew online, go to ***www.parc-auburn.org*** and click on "Join PARC."

There is also a link on our website for contributing to the **PARC Legacy Fund**. Help PARC plan for the future. Follow the link for information on contributing to PARC through your trust or will.

PARC is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

You can request your entire donation go to protect the American River by us sending you no premium gifts.

Other Giving Opportunities Noted on Renewal Envelope:

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Auburn State Recreation Area Trails Update

CANYON CREEK BRIDGE: The new Canyon Creek Bridge on the Mountain Quarries Railroad Grade Trail (Pg. 42 of AR Insider's Guidebook) is inching toward completion. This complicated bridged creek crossing below the "Black Hole of Calcutta Falls" is being built by the CCC using hand stacked granite boulders for the bridge footing. Roman bridges were built using the same rock and timber labor-intensive techniques. Once completed the bridge will allow the casual hiker and family to cross the creek on the new bridge and trail alignment that avoids the rocky, chopped-up eroded trail currently in use. Equestrians will still be able to use the old trail and water their horses at Canyon Creek.

INDIAN CREEK TRAIL TREE CLEARING: The Indian Creek Trail (Pg. 85 of AR Insider's Guidebook) is suffering from the effects of the 2012 Robbers Fire. Oak, bay and pine trees killed by the fire are dropping across the trail making this narrow cliffy trail very dangerous for the casual hiker. Auburn SRA park aide Marv Curry and a PARC volunteer recently cleared the trail of dangerous hard to hike through tangles of branches and tree trunks. Future work to smooth, widen the trail tread in narrow sections and realign a section of trail is in the planning stages.

CODFISH CREEK INTREPRETIVE TRAIL MARKERS: Replacement of the Codfish Creek (Pg. 79 of AR Insider's Guidebook) wooden interpretive trail markers, vandalized in 2013, with steel markers is in the design stage. Former PlacerArts Director Angela Tahti successfully wrote a grant to pay for the new steel markers. The target completion date is set for Earth Day 2015.



Gene Markley Honored With Granite Paver

Gene is doing well with his family in Michigan where they moved him after a serious stroke in 2013. He talks with his sparkling eyes. He wishes all well and really lights up when the conversation drifts to the countless hiking adventures he led in the Sierra Nevada. Recently, a group led by his friends Evan Jones and Paul Whiting restored the trail from SunnySouth to the Hidden Treasure Mine, a gold camp mining site located above the North Fork of the Middle Fork American River that was rediscovered and popularized by Markley.

Markley Conservation Fund: The Placer County Conservation Task Force a group formed from Markley's Placer Adult School Gold Camps and Adventure Hiking Classes disbanded recently making a generous donation to PARC's American River Land Conservation Fund. PARC split the donation giving half to the Placer Land Trust for their American River properties acquisition fund and half to the American River Conservancy for their Granite Chief Wilderness Expansion Fund. Many thanks to this group for jumpstarting Placer County wilderness conservation in the 1970's and 1980's. PARC welcomes donations to our conservation fund for American River Watershed land protection.



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*Protect American River Canyons
is dedicated to the protection and
conservation of the natural,
recreational, cultural and
historical resources of the North
and Middle Forks of the American
River and its canyons for all to
responsibly care for and enjoy.*

Winter Outings-Two Solstice Hikes

Saturday, December 20 ~ Hike the Clementine Trail from the Confluence to Lake Clementine and back. Meet at 10 am at the Confluence Information Kiosk. About 5 miles round trip. This easy popular Confluence Trail along the North Fork is consistently rated the most popular Auburn Area trail for hiking and biking by Trails.com. Information will be available on the Lake Clementine Hydro Project impacts to recreation. Rain cancels. For more info email Eric at parc@jps.net.

Sunday, December 21 ~ American Canyon to Confluence
Meet at the Confluence Info Kiosk at 9 am. We will set up a car shuttle and hike from American Canyon to the Confluence for a distance of 10 + miles. This long hike that drops down to the river from 3rd gate at Auburn Trails picks up the Middle Fork at Maine Bar and continues on the Quarry Road Trail to the Confluence. We will pass by historic gold campsites, and an Indian grinding rock site. We may see California newts and bald eagles. Rain cancels. For more info contact Tom at twcoyote532@hotmail.com or Eric at parc@jps.net.

Saturday, January 17, 2015 ~ Applegate/Boole Road through the Codfish Creek Confluence with the North Fork to Ponderosa Bridge, meeting at 9 am. Led by "North Fork Trails" Guidebook author Ron Gould. This intriguing moderate 5 to 6 mile hike, not found in any guidebooks, pieces together old roads and trails that lead from the canyon rim in Applegate near Boole Road through Codfish Creek drainage to the North Fork at Ponderosa Bridge. There will be exceptional river views and possible views of the Applegate Fire burn area. We can do a short side trip up to Codfish Falls. Hike will require a pre-shuttle. Participants need to contact Ron at rgould@northforktrails.com or call 530-878-9232 for meeting location. Trails are in constant need of pruning especially the more obscure and remote. Toss hand pruners or loppers into your pack to help keep the trails clear.

Meet PARC's Wonk...



Gary Estes is a long-time PARC Board member whose passion is research, fact-truthing and political analysis. He initiated the PARC Legacy Fund for future generations of American

River Stewards. Gary will be traveling to Japan in 2015 to offer advice on extreme weather precipitation analysis. We are honored to have Gary as a Board member. Please consider joining the PARC Board or Advisory Council. Visit parc-auburn.org for further info.

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