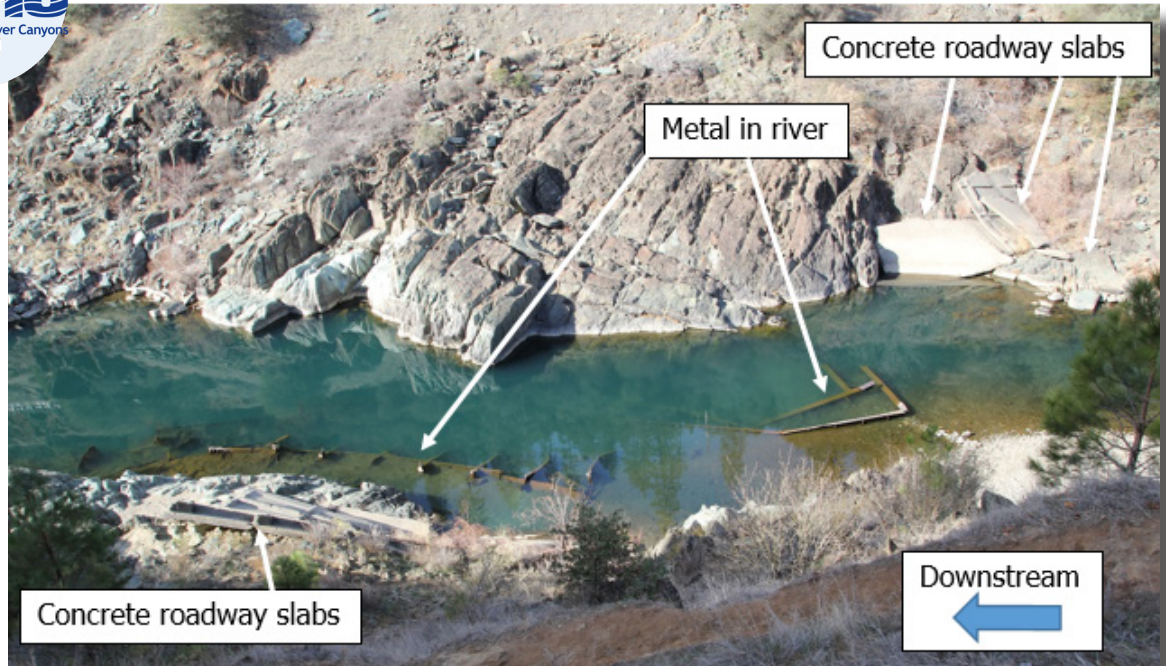




Highway 49 Bridge Debris Removal Project



PARC seeks collaboration for removing bridge debris caused by Hell Hole Dam failure in 1964 which remains a public safety hazard to people recreating in American River below Auburn.

On December 23, 1964, the Highway 49 bridge over the North Fork American River just below Auburn was washed away. Hell Hole Dam, being built for Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) on the Rubicon River, failed during an extreme precipitation event now recognized as an atmospheric river. The failure of the partially built dam sent a wave of water and debris downstream into the Middle Fork American,

where it eventually reached the Confluence and destroyed the bridge. Just nine months later the Auburn Dam Project was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Johnson on September 2, 1965. The metal and concrete bridge debris deposited in the river channel and along its banks was left where it was because it was assumed the Auburn Reservoir would soon cover it under

hundreds of feet of water.

Now 55 years later, Auburn Dam has not been built and no plans are being pursued to resume its construction. PARC believes the public safety hazard created by the metal debris in the river needs to be eliminated. PARC is now advancing a removal plan with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans),

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American River Wildlife Roams Streets of Auburn!

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Highway 49 Bridge Debris Removal Project

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which decided in 1965 to leave the bridge debris in the river. This was a reasonable decision at the time, but now it is time to remove the hazard to those who swim and boat this river segment in the heavily used Confluence area of the Auburn State Recreation Area.

PARC recently retained Advanced Marine Services to perform an underwater survey of the debris field. The

survey was completed in October 2020, and a removal plan is being developed for submission to Caltrans for action. PARC's goal is for the metal debris to be removed from the river channel in October 2021. There are many steps remaining to meet that timeline, but unless we have a goal to pursue, it is too easy to continue to put off the removal. As for the concrete roadway slabs, they are a bigger project that can be addressed later.



Advanced Marine diver measures metal debris in river.



Dive team performs underwater video survey of debris field using tethered system.



Dive team repositioning video equipment for another dive location

Water In Motion

The first stream in my consciousness was as a toddler at a family picnic, water slipping over round stones.

I created my own alluvial fan with a garden hose, sand and mica separating into streaks and swirls according to their weight and flakiness.

The sweep of curves in the meanders of a large river; I always ask for a window seat when I fly.

My first encounter with the North Fork was a spring flow, river rocks "clink, clink" as they roll.

I suppose any river will do, but this has become home.

Standing at the bottom of Clementine Falls, dark sky, full of a February storm, offers exhilaration and humility.

Or lounging on a rock with notebook and pen after a dip, dripping with sensations that struggle for words.

Or the new view of this crease in the earth at full moon.

I need some place to question civilization. In the canyon I'm a little more enclosed with the wild.

---Roger Groghan

American River Wildlife Roams the Streets of Auburn

At last the streets of the City of Auburn will be enhanced with roaming American River murals “wrapped” onto the City’s two new fully electric Ford Zeus buses. The scenic designs featuring American River wildlife are created by local design artist Laurel Mathe, owner of Mystic Designs Studio in Colfax. Each side of the bus features river-canyon wildlife in a scenic view of the American River. A river otter, great blue heron and a spotted skimmer dragonfly grace the driver’s side of each bus. The passenger’s side features a belted kingfisher, rainbow trout and a painted lady butterfly in yet another scenic view of the river and “No Hands Bridge”. These remind us of the complexity of wildlife in our American River and Canyons that we enjoy so much as we recreate and meditate in the canyon -lately also our natural antidote to the Corona virus.



Gary Hughes Photo

Auburn Mayor Daniel Berlant, left, gives bus design artist Laurel Mathe, right, a PARC and City Council commendation recognizing her superior river design talents.

While the buses will initially serve the community of Auburn it is hoped that during the busy summer river recreation weekends the buses will provide shuttle service from Auburn to the Confluence and China Bar on a scheduled basis. This will take a detailed planning effort. City Transportation Manager Mengil Deane quipped, “as long as the electric motors have juice they will do anything you ask of them,” this as the hefty electric motor easily powered up the canyon road to Auburn with a load of 11 grinning riders!

This project is the result of almost 2 years of graphic design preparation and PARC partnership with the City of Auburn. Many thanks to the generous memberships and donations to PARC that made it possible for us to pay for our share of the costs and to the City of Auburn for collaborating with PARC.



Gary Hughes Photo

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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Thanks to our advertisers. Special thanks to Laurel and LeAnn of Mystic Design.

Edited by Eric Peach

Layout by Alice Tenschler Dunbar

Printing & Mailing by API-marketing



Ninth Annual PARC Scholarship Essay Contest...

...\$17,500 Awarded to local high school seniors since 2013



View 2020 winners reading their essays at: shorturl.at/tDHUY



Up to \$2,500 in Total Scholarship Awards for 2021 Essay Contest
The Essay Contest topic for high school seniors graduating in 2021 will be:

What is your personal connection to the American River and its canyons, and how has a current concern, such as the COVID pandemic, climate change, social media influence, racial inequality, or another concern you have, impacted the American River and its canyons?

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 Forks of the American River and their canyons located upstream of Folsom Reservoir, in the Auburn State Recreation Area. Deadline for submission is March 15, 2021. Details and application forms for the 2021 PARC Scholarship Essay Contest are NOW available on the PARC website www.parc-auburn.org.

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Wild & Scenic Film Festival Update

PARC's 6th Annual "On Tour" Wild & Scenic Film Festival at the State Theater in Auburn was held virtually this past October. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend our virtual event.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is considered to be one of the nation's premiere environmental and adventure film festivals. These films combine stellar film making, beautiful cinematography and first-rate storytelling to inform, inspire and ignite solutions and possibilities to maintain and restore the earth and human communities while creating a positive future for the

next generation. We always include a few locally produced films that highlight our Northern California region. We're planning to be back in the State Theater, live and in-person, next October with our 2021 Film Festival!

PARC Presents Two Volunteer Awards in 2020



Gloria "Wild Ginger" Lee who is a relative newcomer to the river and canyons has taken over as administrator of PARC's Instagram account, @OFFICIAL_PARC. She has been posting incredible photos and videos of river-canyon recreation, scenic views and intimate detailed photos of the river-canyon web of life for over a year. She loves canyon botany and her interest in identifying trail flora earned her the nickname Wild Ginger. She traded her gym workout routine for rigorous hike-workouts in the canyon.

It was a pleasure to spend time with Ginger and her fiancé Warren on a fun Confluence paddle adventure this past summer. We wish her well and please follow us and tell your friends to follow PARC on Instagram.

NOTE: Ron Gould, our other 2020 volunteer awardee, was featured in a previous PARC newsletter available at our website, parc-auburn.org.



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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 a PARC window sticker
- \$50 River Guardian ~ Receive waterproof version of PARC's Auburn SRA Trails & River Map
- \$100 River PARCster ~ Receive the American River Insiders Guidebook
- \$250 River Crusader ~ Receive the American River Insiders Guidebook and Cool Trails Bandana map
- \$500 River Champion ~ Receive Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada
- \$1,000 River Angel ~ Receive both the AR Guidebook and Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada
- I want to support the PARC High School Scholarship Program with an additional tax deductible donation of \$_____.
- I want to support the PARC Legacy Fund with an additional donation of \$_____.
- I want my entire donation to go to PARC. Please do not send a premium gift.

For your convenience, 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 and Scholarship Award Fund**.

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

Estate Planning and Leaving Your Own River Legacy



The PARC Legacy Fund is available for those who want to protect the American River and its canyons forever. This endowment fund will grow and provide PARC with a solid financial foundation to continue protecting this unique and irreplaceable environment. The Placer Community Foundation professionally manages the PARC Legacy Fund. There are many ways you can help. Your Giving Options for now or later include but aren't limited to: **Bequests, Retirement Plans, Securities, Real Estate, Life Insurance, Cash and Charitable Trusts.** To learn more about your

Estate Planning options, please contact Jessica Hubbard at Placer Community Foundation. She is available for free consultations to support your charitable interests and answer your questions. No obligation is necessary. jhubbard@placercf.org or (530) 885-4920.

California Poppies vs Trash Talk



PARC, Auburn SRA staff, the California State Parks Foundation and the Canyon Keepers teamed up on Sat. Oct. 23 to remove trash left behind from the busy summer recreation season in the

river canyons. Also removed were invasive non-native scotch broom plants that choke out trails and native plants. Volunteers were given packets of CA native poppy seeds to spread in the canyon for the Spring 2021 bloom. Looks like the poppies are on a roll to rout the trash talkers! Please report any illegal dumping to Auburn SRA at 530-823-4141.

Above: John & Merrill Hallett remove trash from steep trails.

Our seasonal cleanups are an important opportunity to focus on trash removal but more important are the spontaneous, ongoing cleanups that friends of our American River perform themselves. Enormous quantities of trash are removed because folks are offended by it and take it upon themselves to restore the scenic beauty of the canyons. Thank You!



In mid-November Amanda Tufts led her scout group to cleanup an area near No Hands Bridge that netted an umbrella, river float toys and miscellaneous trash.



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Protect American River Canyons (PARC) protects the natural, recreational and cultural resources of the North and Middle Forks of the American River through leadership and collaboration.

Kick Back and Enjoy PARC’s Picnic Table Donations

For years PARC has been purchasing picnic tables for use in the Auburn SRA. Our latest donation went to White Oak Flat an obscure meadow above the Middle Fork in the Ruck-a-Chucky Area. It is located off the former Mckeon-Ponderosa Rd., now a trail, in a gorgeous spring wildflower meadow saturated with rainbow colors and a grand white oak enjoyed by hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians.

Replacement picnic tables are planned for the China Bar Area in 2021. Thank you members for making these donations possible.



White Oak Flat is a favorite rest area for people from all user groups.