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I believe I am the perfect candidate for this scholarship because - shoutout to my parents - I was conceived on the American River where we take the boat my family has had since before I was born. I guess you can say the river is in my blood. I grew up cruising the banks. I have experienced the rush of jumping into the cool green water on a 105 degree day. I have kayaked and paddle-boarded with my sister. As soon as we were old enough, we would kayak away from our boat to the far bank, spotting turtles sunning on driftwood and giggling as they slipped into the water when we approached. But my river stories stretch far past the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers. We have visited the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, often taking out-of-town visitors to learn about salmon habitat. I spent summers in aquatics camp on Nimbus Lake. I've been white-water rafting on the South Fork in Coloma and jumped from a waterfall along the North Fork where we have family. Living near Folsom Lake, we ride bikes and horses, walk our dogs, and swim from the beach. I truly can't imagine my childhood and my life today without the American River.

My personal connection to the American River and its canyons has made me aware of the delicate climate balance. I have seen drought years where the beach at Folsom Lake sits high above the shoreline, just a muddy strip where the receding waters reveal the lake bed. My family watches the weather and snow pack results to see what's in our future. I have seen patterns of local wildlife change when the water level drops. When the water level rises, so does the garbage that floats into the river, affecting water quality and marine life.

I try to do my part to help. I have participated in local river cleanups where we removed tires and other waste from creeks. My parents taught us to pack in what we pack out, clean up after our dogs, and pick up trash left by others to protect the lakes and river. We try to reduce our own carbon footprint by conserving water and energy whenever possible and reducing waste to the landfill. I hope that when I buy my first car I can purchase an electric car. These

small acts help, but it takes much more to impact climate change on the American River as well as protect the marine life.

I am studying Environmental Science in school and learning about how each person can influence global warming and climate change. I plan to go to law school and am considering environmental law as a career where I know I could influence people, help manage development and manufacturing, or improve human impact on the environment.

We still take that same boat out on the river today, and I hope we can preserve the American River and its canyons for my children to enjoy one day.