

WESTERN STATES TRAIL HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY MOVES FORWARD

The Confluence

Summer 2009

Senator Barbara Boxer with support from Senator Dianne Feinstein has introduced legislation to authorize a study by the Department of the Interior to designate the Western States Trail a National Historic Trail. The 100 mile trail from Squaw Valley to Auburn, used by endurance horseback racers and runners, is also a favorite trail among day hikers and backpackers.

The majestic vistas, astonishing geologic features, climax old growth forests, river crossings, lush meadows, and sparkling streams make this trail an exceptional cross-section of Sierran natural history. The section of trail from Foresthill through the Auburn State Recreation Area to Auburn was designated a National Recreational Trail in 1974.

Western States Trail has its origins as a Native

American trail leading to High Sierra summer hunting camps that also enabled the eastern Sierran tribes to trade with the foothill and valley tribes. During the Gold Rush, the trail became a link between the colorful historic mining camps of Last Chance, Deadwood, Michigan Bluff, Foresthill and the many seasonal placer gold camps that sprouted along the

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Young participants at the 2009 American River Confluence Festival learn about river safety at the "Respecting the River Rapids" table. See story on page 2.



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DATES TO ADD TO YOUR CALENDAR:

- Aug 2- Lost Camp/China Bar Hike pg 4
- Aug 9- WST-Lyon Ridge Hike pg 4
- Aug 23- Indian Creek Hike pg 4
- Sept 18-20- Am. River Music Fest. pg 5
- Sept 19- Autumn River Clean-up pg 4
- Sept 20- Paddle Safety Day pg 5
- Oct 17&18- Picayune Hike/Camp pg 5
- Nov 20- River Rendezvous pg 5



"RESPECT THE RIVER RAPIDS" Table Popular at Confluence Festival

by Michele Craig State Parks, Interpretive Specialist

ASRA genius Mike Carr helped design and build the Rapids Table that replicates the kind of dynamics and hazards found in whitewater rivers. The rocks are all moveable so that the children can make the river change (as a real river does) and the flow can be turned low or high to simulate low and high water. The Rapids Table can also be used to illustrate habitat for aquatic insects and aquatic animals.

The idea of the portable rapids table is to teach children about water safety. We have cards that illustrate eddies, strainers, holes, "black holes," waves, and other common whitewater dynamics. We then challenge the children to

both build these and to "read" them in rapids other children construct. We then send Lego people and their raft down the rapids to see where they could be trapped, or which areas will be safe. This leads to many discussions about river accidents, how to keep yourself safe if YOU were to be the Lego swimmer, and how to enjoy the river.

I have two favorite stories from this year's Confluence Festival. The first involved a little boy who got a Lego man stuck in the middle of the river. I said, "That looks like a helicopter rescue to me, and he turned to me with shining eyes and said, "Where is the Lego helicopter?" The second story was

from an older man who had lost his son, a river guide, in a whitewater accident. His son had been pinned against a rock and drowned. One of the children had just pinned the Lego man to the rock and the older gentleman told us the story of his son's accident. He thanked me for making something to teach people about river safety. That, and the look on the kids' faces, made it really worthwhile.

Editors Note: Michele plans to demonstrate the Rapids Table at PARC's Paddle Safety Day on September 20th.
(See Outings page 5)

Trail Designation Study

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banks of the Middle Fork of the American River. Over the last century the trail has maintained its natural and historic integrity. Senators Boxer and Feinstein recognize the Western States Trail's national historic, scenic and ecological significance with the introduction of this study bill that would protect the integrity of the trail for athletes and outdoor

enthusiasts for generations to come. National Historic Trail designation enjoys broad local support from regional government agencies and from recreational and environmental groups.

For those interested in learning more about the Western States Trail, see the information About the WST Hiking Booklet and WST DVD on the next page.

The Confluence is a seasonal, or as needed, publication of **Protect American River Canyons**. *The Confluence* is included with basic annual membership.

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Passport to Better Health ~ Heart Healthy Hiking

Western States Trail:



A young rider cools her horse in the river after a training ride on the Western States Trail

Western States Trail Hiking Booklet

Day hikers or backpackers interested in hiking the Western States Trail will appreciate Hal Hall's WST trail guide booklet. It features maps and trail descriptions broken up into 16 segments as well as fascinating historical information. It is published by and available through the Western States Trail Foundation ~ 1216 High Street ~ Auburn, CA 95603 ~ 530-823-7282 www.teviscup.org/home

Western States Trail DVD Now Available

They Crossed the Mountains: A History of the Western States Trail, is a 52-minute documentary DVD that covers the usage and history of the WST. It is filled with rare photos, black and white film footage, interviews, historical accounts, race clips from both the horse ride and footrace, and scenic footage of the Sierra Nevada mountains. It is also available from the WST Foundation. (See above.)

PARC is a supporting partner to the Auburn Recreation District's Passport to Better Health" program. We are encouraging more folks to take advantage of ARD's Heart Healthy Hiking Passport component by hiking the Auburn State Recreation Area trails, or joining in on the hikes that originate at ARD park facilities. To purchase a Passport, (\$15 per person \$25 per family), or learn more about this important hiking fitness opportunity visit the ARD sponsored web site www.passportauburn.com, or contact ARD @ 530-885-8461. The Passport also entitles the holder to discounts at local participating businesses.



Which way to Paddle Safety Day???



Roger Groghan points the way to PARC's Paddle Safety Day. Don't miss this great opportunity to safely try out a variety of watercraft. See page 5 for details.

Summer American River Events Calendar & Volunteer Opportunities



Editors Note: The popular Codfish Creek Falls Trail Brochure is now available on PARC's website parc-auburn.org thanks to our web designer Ellen McKay and her business Webcrafters. Ellen works tirelessly to keep our website updated with current river information and education opportunities to facilitate, responsible safe enjoyment of our American River Canyons. Ellen loves to hike the river trails with her husband Scott Johnson, in search of fascinating wildflowers, mushrooms and birds.

Lost Camp/China Bar *

Wild & Scenic North Fork of the North Fork Hike

Sunday, August 2 ~ 9:00 am

This steep old mining trail will take you right into the heart of the canyon of the North Fork of the North Fork American River. Nearby all its major tributaries come together in a beautiful gorge. Approximately 1 mile to river with opportunities to scramble gorge up and down river. Meet in Auburn and carpool to Blue Canyon. Call Ron Gould @ 530-878-9232 Or Eric @ 530-885-8878 for info and meeting location.

***New North Fork American River Trails Guide Now Available.**

The China Bar hike is led by trails expert Ron Gould who recently published his North Fork Trails Guide with maps, trail descriptions and historic information on 40 NF trails. The guidebook is available only through the North Fork American River Alliance as a membership premium. You can join at www.nfara.org or simply send a \$50 donation to: NFARA, PO Box 292, Gold Run, CA 95717 or call Jim Ricker @530-389-8344.

Western States Trail - Lyon Ridge area

Sunday August 9 ~ 8:00 am all day

We will hike approximately 10 to 15 miles round trip on the steep Elephant's Trunk-Cougar Rock upper section of the WST above the French Meadows Reservoir area. The trail alternates between forest canopy and rocky volcanic outcroppings. It does offer outstanding views of the surrounding mountains and river valleys. This section of trail is rated difficult in the WST Guide book. The trail head is approximately 60 miles from Auburn. For more info and meeting location contact Eric @ 530-885-8878 or e-mail parc@jps.net.

Indian Creek Hike on North Fork

Saturday, August 23 ~ 11:00 am

Join PARC naturalists as we explore the fascinating world of aquatic life found in the American River and its tributary Indian Creek. Excellent swimming opportunities. Bring swimming goggles or masks. Approximately 4 miles round trip. The trail is fairly easy but narrow as it passes along the steep canyon slopes. Call Eric & 530-885-8878 or e-mail parc@jps.net for more information and meeting location.

Summer-Fall American River Clean-up

Saturday, September 19 ~ 8am to 1pm

Join in cleaning the Auburn State Recreation Area at the annual Autumn American River Clean-up. We will meet at the old Foresthill Bridge in the Confluence Area just beyond the Highway 49 Bridge 3 miles from Auburn. Check in at the PARC information booth to register, receive trash bags and a complimentary American River Confluence Parkway map. Bring gloves and wear sturdy shoes. For more info. Contact State Parks at 530-823-4141 A special thanks to co-sponsors Auburn Placer Disposal, Keep CA Beautiful and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Special Confluence Historic Bridges and Nature Walk begins @ 9:30 am.

This years clean-up will also include an interpretive hike on the historic bridges and natural history of the Confluence Area beginning led by Canyon Keeper expert guides Terry Cook and Charlene Carveth.

River Events Calendar & Opportunities

(Continued from page 4)

UPPER-LAKE CLEMENTINE PADDLE SAFETY DAY

Sunday, September 20 ~ 11am to 3pm

Join Protect American River Canyons, Sierra Outdoor Center and Canyon Raft Rentals for a free Paddle-Demo-Day at upper-Lake Clementine on Sunday, Sept. 20 from 11 AM to 3 PM. This free community event offers the public, (ages 12 & up), the opportunity to try out a variety of boats suitable for river paddling as well as lake and sea-kayaking in the calm waters of upper Lake Clementine, To access the Paddle Day take the Auburn-Foresthill Road to the Upper-Lake Clementine entrance to the Auburn State Recreation Area approximately 6 miles from I-80 and Auburn. In the event upper Lake Clementine road is closed early for the season we will be at the Lower-Lake Clementine boat launch area. Contact Guy Cables @ Sierra Outdoor Center 530-885-1844 or Roger at 530-878-6008.

AMERICAN RIVER MUSIC FESTIVAL

September 18-20

The 3rd Annual American River Music Festival is a celebration of music and moving water. The festival takes place on the banks of the beautiful South Fork of the American River in the Coloma-Lotus Valley. The festival features terrific Americana, Folk and Blues music performances and workshops. For more info call 530-622-6044 or their visit web site @ americanrivermusic.org.

AUBURN COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Saturday, October 17 ~ 10am to 4pm

Stop by the PARC booth with the kids and color a fall run salmon or make an animal mask to add to your collection of American River favorites. Learn more about the ecosystems that make our river so unique and interesting to explore in the Autumn. Come enjoy this fall celebration. For more info call 530-885-5616 or visit their web site @ auburncommunityfestival.com

PICAYUNE VALLEY DAY HIKE & OPTIONAL CAMP OUT

Saturday & Sunday ~ October 17 & 18

Picayune Valley is a 60 mile drive from Auburn up the Foresthill Divide past French Meadows Reservoir to the trail head at Talbot Campground. We will hike approx 6 miles round trip into the Granite Chief Wilderness Area to Picayune Valley. This Middle Fork headwaters glaciated valley is characterized by large old growth trees, waterfalls, ancient volcanic flows, petroglyphs, brilliant colors and the "raucous voiced" Clark's Nutcracker caching Western White Pine Nuts for the winter. Optional camp out in the valley. Call American River watershed hiking book author Tom Petersen @ 530-333-4911 e-mail twcoyote532@hotmail.com for meeting time, place and info.

AMERICAN RIVER FILM RENDEZVOUS @ THE STATE THEATER

Friday November 20 ~ 6:30 pm to 10:00 pm \$15 donation

Join PARC and KVIE film producer Kelly Peterson as we take you "ABOVE THE AMERICAN" on an aerial tour of the American River. The journey begins at the confluence of the Sacramento River and travels up all three forks. Included are incredible scenic views, Old West history, wildlife, Native American artifacts and a thrilling ride down some of the American's legendary whitewater rapids.

River inspired art, desserts, wine tasting and several other American River theme films will also be featured at this PARC fund raiser. For more information contact Eric @ 530-885-8878

PARC Membership Information

Protect American River Canyons is a river education and conservation organization dedicated to the protection of the natural, recreational, 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, river service and educational events each year. **PARC** remains vigilant to the political threats to the river canyons.

To schedule an American River Confluence Parkway presentation for your group, contact PARC at (530) 885-8878.

Visit our web site at <http://www.parc-auburn.org>

Yes! I want to join PARC and help shape the future of the American River!

Send to: PARC, PO Box 9312, Auburn, CA 95604

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS

- \$25 Regular Member**-Receive the new Confluence Parkway Map
- \$40 Membership**-Receive Eco River String Bag
- \$50 River Guardian**-Receive Tom Peterson's Georgetown Divide Hiking Trails of the American River or The Canyon Keeper's American River Trails Guide Book+ASRA topo map
- \$100 River Patron**
Receive John Muir Laws "Guide to the Sierra Nevada" flora and fauna book (Normally sells for \$24.95 + \$5 for shipping.)

Please don't send me the membership premiums

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

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NEW \$40 MEMBERSHIP PREMIUM
 Young Sarah Ballor shows off her new PARC River String Bag made of 100% Organic Cotton. PARC Board Member Michael Anderson's "Bag the Future" business provided the string bags. Fish not included!

The Auburn Chamber of Commerce's website has been changed to reflect the Board's decision to remove the phrase "including the construction of a multi-purpose Auburn Dam" from their declaration of principles on water resources and flood control.

It now reads:

"The Chamber is a strong proponent of comprehensive flood protection measures including the downstream levee strengthening, bank stabilization and other necessary protection improvements."

Now we just need to make the canyons
"Forever Wild & Scenic."



Mike Anderson

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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.*

Leaving a River Legacy

By Gary Estes, older PARC Board Member

Each day we are a little older. The older members of PARC's Board of Directors felt it is time to recognize this fact and think about the future of the American River canyons after we move on. How could we continue protecting the canyons from Auburn dam, helping clean up the trash, preventing inappropriate housing on the canyon rim to protect the viewshed, and installing new signage for canyon users? Our solution -- "Leaving a River Legacy."

We decided to start building a PARC Endowment Fund. The next generation will have some financial resources to help achieve our ultimate living legacy of the American River canyons Forever Wild & Scenic. Investing the money with the Placer Community Foundation, we know it will be professionally managed. We realized our limitations and know Board members change over time. Partnering with the Foundation ensures our endowment will grow into a living legacy. Like planting a seedling, our small start will grow larger each year and, hopefully, others sharing our vision will contribute.

You are invited to join us in the drive of "Leaving a River Legacy." The legacy is both the endowment, as a tool in our toolkit, and the canyons Forever Wild & Scenic, which is our mission.

Please contact Gary Estes, PARC Board member, at (530) 889-9025 with questions about PARC's mission and how the Endowment Fund supports these efforts. For questions about contributing to the Endowment Fund, including information about your giving options, please contact Veronica Blake, Placer Community Foundation at (530) 885-4920, or visit their website at www.placercf.org. If you would like to contribute to the Endowment Fund, you can:

(1) Send a check payable to "PCF/PARC Endowment." Mail to Placer Community Foundation, P.O. Box 9207, Auburn, CA 95604, or

(2) Donate on-line at www.placercf.org and look at the right side of the page and click on the box "donate now." Select "PARC Endowment" under "I would like to support:" Thank you.

