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The American River connects Californians from all parts of the state. A reminder of all of our innate interconnectedness. The river begins in the Sierra Nevada mountain range collecting melted snow, and makes its way down to the Sacramento River in the valley, finally through the Sacramento River it connects to the San Francisco watershed. My connection to the river is my passion in forestry. From a young age, I was always curious about how the life around me flourishes. I grew up next to a creek, it was home to an array of trees and their little inhabitants ... birds. At age eleven I received a book, "Birds of North America Western Region." I would sit in between three redwoods with a handful of seeds and record the species I saw. Later I received a new book, "A Passion for Nature, the Life of John Muir". Inspired by Muir himself I climbed to the tops of these redwood trees, and read the novel. That summer my family took a trip to John Muir's infamous discovery ... Yosemite. And to the likes of my imagination, my family name is engraved in Yosemite's history. "Washburn Point" is a destination named after my ancestors. Through highschool I began to feed this passion through the involvement in my FFA (Future Farmers of America) program, and my AP Environmental Science class. Through these programs I was given the opportunity to participate in The Forestry Challenge which is a competition amongst students to display their knowledge in forestry. We are tested on tool skills and overall knowledge of the trade. I participated in the Watershed Education Summit, which allows students to learn how to survey rivers and gain an understanding of watershed health. Then most recently I was given the opportunity to work on the El Dorado National Forest through a program called Generation Green. This program is through the Youth Conservation Corps. and the National Forest Service. I specifically worked on the El Dorado National Forest for eight weeks of summer 2019. This is my connection to the American River as the drainage covers 1900 square miles of the Tahoe and El Dorado National Forests, including the Granite Chief Wilderness and Desolation Wilderness. Through my experience in working on the forest and attending the Watershed Education summit, I learned that a properly maintained forest creates a healthy watershed. Forests are the natural filters of the Earth. Through my college and career goals, I

hope to become a professional forester with a focus on sustainability and ecology. This will lead me to an active environmental stewardship, as I will strive to maintain the American River and its canyons through sustainable forestry. The impact of climate change on the American River could cause several communities to suffer a shrinkage in water supply as the global temperatures continue to rise and weather patterns continue to shift. Through sustainable forestry, the forests can continue to effectively filter the watershed and sequester carbon in the atmosphere.