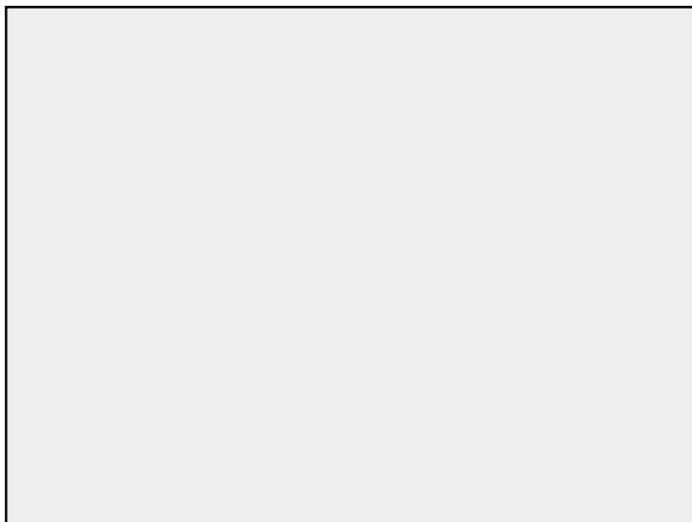


TRIBUTE TO DAVID BROWER

Founder of the Colorado River Restoration Movement

by Katie Lee



David Brower and Anne with Katie Lee at her home in Jerome, Arizona

Dear Sierra Club members and river lovers everywhere,

On Sunday, November 5, the Colorado River—and many of us who love the river—lost a friend. David Brower was a special person who did much to protect and restore the Earth. Nowhere did he make his mark more strongly than in the fight to preserve the canyons of the Colorado River.

The Sierra Club's new Glen Canyon Group asked me to write this tribute to David. I know that David was glad to know the Club is finally going to do something about that reservoir. I've been impatient about it too, and I'm happy the new Group is showing leadership. Now there's a light at the end of the diversion tunnel.

The Colorado River—my favorite river—is dying a long, slow death by dams and diversions. This poor old river just doesn't have anything left to give! It's time to perform CPR, as David would say—conservation, preservation, and restoration. The most important first aid we can give is to get rid of that damn dam and bring back the old Glen Canyon!

I had a personal relationship with that place, and it was that connection to the canyon which led to my long friendship with David Brower. Whereas David only saw Glen Canyon during and after the pouring of the concrete, I was fortunate enough to explore the river and its side canyons in great, loving detail on leisurely trips of several weeks—before the dam. I know that David's aesthetic sensibilities were as affected as mine by its magic. Those magnificent places that I still remember as only yesterday: Music Temple, Cathedral in the Desert, Dungeon Canyon—the list is almost endless. Such beauty!

For years I felt that we had nowhere to turn and nothing more to do than mourn. But that all changed on November 16, 1996 when the Sierra Club Board of Directors surprised the world by adopting a resolution, offered by none other than David Brower, calling for the "draining of the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam." When I heard that, it was music to my ears! David started a movement that has prospered, inspiring thousands of people, young and old to heed the call.

He spoke often about his desire that the Sierra Club take on the effort to restore the Colorado River, especially the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam. I'm pleased to announce that his dream is finally taking shape with the birth of the Glen Canyon Group. What more appropriate name is there for a group of Club activists motivated largely by David's ideas? In that spirit and to his memory, I will continue to dedicate myself to the cause as well, for I have decided to join the Glen Canyon Group.

David recognized that we are on the threshold of a new century, a Century of River Restoration. David joined myself, Ken Sleight and many others at Glen Canyon Dam in March of this year to sign the Glen Canyon Declaration, calling for decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam and studying all the other dams for potential decommissioning. We also said "no new dams" and we meant it. Admittedly, this is uncharted political territory, but we have left behind the twentieth century of unparalleled river exploitation.

David recognized that the past century has also been the century of unrestrained consumption, of unequalled callousness and disrespect toward nature. What does it say about us that we have dried up one of our great rivers to grow cotton and alfalfa in the desert? How can we stand by and permit the extinction of the vaquita porpoise, an inhabitant of the Colorado River's estuary? How can we be silent while endangered fish are sacrificed for fountains, golf courses and subdivisions in the desert? Human needs must at some point concede to the needs of ecosystems.

(continued opposite)

GLEN CANYON GROUP
PO Box 622, Moab, UT 84532
www.sierraclub.org/chapters/ut/glencanyon



A COMMON VISION UNITES ACTIVISTS

Glen Canyon Group Forms in Southern Utah

by Patrick Diehl, Glen Canyon Group Executive Committee Member

The Glen Canyon Group of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club was launched in the summer of 2000. The roughly 125 Club members living in the Group's seven-county area (Carbon, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Kane, San Juan, Wayne) voted to name their group after the extraordinary canyon that lies at the heart of the redrock wilderness country of southern Utah.

In an act of callous disregard for the natural world that was unfortunately characteristic of the century just past, the Bureau of Reclamation erected a dam and drowned the glory of Glen Canyon—its arches, its Native American ruins, its rare and precious animals and plants, its fantastic sandstone architecture, and the swift serenity of its rapids-free river a hundred fathoms deep. The vision of the canyon that was, and that could be again, burns in our minds.

With this publication, the Glen Canyon Group joins the scores of other citizens' groups urging the American public to consider draining Lake Powell and restoring Glen Canyon (and the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River delta with it). Some of the many arguments for such an action are presented separately in this publication. One thing is certain: the sooner the reservoir is drained and the river set free, the easier the job will be.

The Group is also working on a host of other issues, all of which directly or indirectly affect the Colorado River, along whose course Glen Canyon is only one of many mansions, and into which our lesser streams and rivers flow. A watershed, including the great watershed of the Colorado basin, is a single contexture whose parts all cohere. Several committees—Colorado River, Forests & Grazing, Local & Political Issues, Nuclear Waste, Off-Road Vehicles, and Wildlife—have been established to oppose further abuse of the environment in southeastern and southcentral Utah, and to rectify the results of past abuses.

- The Colorado River Committee looks at the basin as a whole and seeks to halt the construction of more dams in the area, pressing for serious consideration of decommissioning existing dams.
- The Forests & Grazing and Wildlife Committees work on changing the heavily politicized, abusive handling of wildlife in the State of Utah and improving protection of public lands within the Group's region—lands managed by the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service, and the State Institutional and Trust Lands Administration.
- The Local & Political Issues Committee concentrates on the pressing planning and development issues in Moab and Grand County, where many of the Group's members live, and also works for the election of pro-environmental officials in the Group's area.
- The Nuclear Waste Task Force is trying to save Utah from becoming the dumping ground for this country's radioactive waste, with a particular focus on the Atlas uranium tailings near Moab and the White Mesa nuclear waste facility near Blanding.
- The Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) Committee is preparing a citizens' plan for halting ORV abuse in the BLM Grand Resource Area and is also organizing monitoring of ORV damage to wildlands in the Group's area.

We urge readers of this publication to join the Sierra Club, if they are not already members, and to support the work of the Glen Canyon Group (see coupon elsewhere in this publication). You will be adding your heart, mind and hands to the growing citizens' movement for the protection and restoration of the high forests, intricate deserts, wild rivers, and native species of southern Utah. We want to support and foster citizen activism throughout southern Utah, uniting scattered and isolated environmentalists and lending each other strength in our shared work.

Each year, members of one of the great human faiths say to each other, "Next year, we will meet in Jerusalem." We say, "One day, we will meet in Glen Canyon." Be with us now, so that you may be with us then.

(continued)

I don't have a lot of history with the Sierra Club, but I do know that it is the largest and best known of the many organizations that support restoring Glen Canyon. I'm here to urge you to become involved and help us with this "big idea," as *Sierra* magazine called it. Help all the organizations that care about our Colorado as well as other dying rivers. If it were not for the Sierra Club and David Brower, we might also be working today to decommission dams in the Grand Canyon and Dinosaur National Monument. The most fitting tribute to David's memory that I know of is for all of us to roll up our sleeves—today!—and get to work. Here are some things you can do right away to help us build this movement.

First and foremost, help us to educate and inspire a generation of young people. We must learn more about rivers and rethink the role of reservoirs. We must tell the world our story—that the untimely death of Glen Canyon was preventable, and that with faith, hope and determination, it can yet be resuscitated.

Second, please contact the Sierra Club's Glen Canyon Group to stay informed and find out what else you can do to help. Glen Canyon is an issue of international significance. So whether you're from Salt Lake, Seattle, Sarasota, or even Seoul, there's work you can do to help build support for Colorado River restoration. The latest information can be found on their website at: www.sierraclub.org/chapters/ut/glencanyon.

Third, if you're not a member of the Sierra Club, please use the coupon included in this newsletter to join today. Their effectiveness depends upon your participation and support.

Our effort to restore Glen Canyon is local in focus yet global in implication. Imagine! The world's 19th-largest dam and the nation's second-largest reservoir will be taken out of service as a result of grassroots political action! Think of the impact on the Chinese government's Three Gorges Dam project, or on the many destructive World Bank-financed dams built in homelands of indigenous peoples. This campaign is not just about Glen Canyon, it's about changing perceptions and river management strategies the world over.

While David will not be around to witness that glorious day when the plug is pulled, I hope I will be. And I hope you'll be there with us to celebrate and share a martini in David's honor as we watch the wonders of nature reappear from out of the murky depths.

“The Sierra Club supports the draining of

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SACRED SITES

Many sites used by traditional people for ceremonies were inundated or damaged by Lake Powell. The reservoir partially inundated Rainbow Bridge, one of the most sacred sites on the Colorado Plateau and a national monument designated by Teddy Roosevelt. This, the world's largest natural bridge, was unsuccessfully defended by lawsuits by Navajo medicine people and environmentalists. The Diné Medicine Men's Association has recently revived this effort, demanding that all their religious sites in Glen Canyon be “uncovered” by draining the reservoir.

In February, 2000, the *Stanford Environmental Law Journal* published an 88-page analysis of the Sierra Club's proposal to drain Lake Powell. An attorney with the Solicitor's Office, US Department of the Interior, (writing on his own behalf) concludes that no test is needed. He cites some of the key findings of Mr. Miller's report, and other reasons supporting action on this initiative now. For a copy of the report, contact the Sierra Club at 415/762-2200.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Glen Canyon was inhabited for at least 6,000 years. More than 2,000 archeological sites were documented before the reservoir filled, but only a few were studied in detail. Glen Canyon, one of the more significant areas for archeological research in the West, revealed that the Anasazi were far more innovative in agriculture and water control than had previously been suspected. Everything – granaries, petroglyph panels, artifacts – now lies beneath the reservoir.

ENERGY

Glen Canyon Dam has installed capacity to produce 1,300 megawatts (MW) of electricity. Under new operating restrictions designed to minimize erosion and other impacts of hydropower generation on the Grand Canyon ecosystem downstream, Glen Canyon's output has been limited to 800 MW, which account for approximately three percent of the Southwest's total potential production. This past summer, output was reduced to 300 MW. Loss of Glen Canyon's power could easily be offset through conservation and energy efficiency programs. California's 25-year program to cut energy demand has eliminated the need for 12,500 MW – equivalent to almost ten Glen Canyon dams.

RESTORATION POTENTIAL

The restoration of Glen Canyon is a linchpin in restoring the Colorado River, one of the most ecologically stressed rivers in the world. The actual cost of restoration will depend on the amount of human intervention required. The political support for large-scale restoration programs has already been established, as shown by the federal government's recent allocation of \$8 billion to restore the Florida Everglades. As the reservoir's waters recede, Glen Canyon's magnificence will reemerge. Repeat photography of side canyons during low water years has demonstrated that sediment flushing and plant regeneration takes place almost immediately.

COLORADO RIVER COMPACT

Ratified by Congress in 1928, the Colorado River Compact is an interstate compact regulating the use of the river among the seven states that comprise the river basin. By 1940, it had become apparent that the compact had overestimated the amount of water in the Colorado River by nearly three million acre-feet, or twenty percent. Thus, the Colorado River is over-allocated, with more claims on its water than can be met. A reexamination of the compact and changes in the law are needed to address the political, economic, and ecological problems of the river and its allocation. An honest review will affirm that Glen Canyon Dam is unneeded.

SEDIMENT ACCUMULATION

Sediment is a critical factor affecting the operational lifespan of Glen Canyon Dam. Some predict that sediment accumulation will, in about 150 years, force the dam's decommissioning, at which time the reservoir will resemble a massive mud flat. Waiting until this occurs will make much more difficult the restoration of Glen Canyon and the Grand Canyon downstream.

GRAND CANYON ECOSYSTEM

The Colorado River through the Grand Canyon is no longer natural, but a regulated canal between Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Mead. The impact has been enormous: the dam's cold water releases have contributed to extirpation or endangerment of five of the Grand Canyon's eight native fish species. In addition, sediments that should be replenishing sandbars are trapped behind the dam. As a result, riparian and terrestrial ecosystems within the canyon have been dramatically altered. Such changes, combined with continued erosion and invasion by non-native species, will continue as long as Glen Canyon Dam remains in place.

RECREATIONAL ECONOMY

Motorized flatwater recreation on Lake Powell is an industry that is destined to disappear as the reservoir fills with sediment. By contrast, human-powered recreation in a restored canyon will bring a new form of economic vitality to the region – to continue in perpetuity. Outdoor enthusiasts interested in hiking, rafting, biking and viewing wildlife and the canyon itself will generate significant income, as already occurs elsewhere on the Colorado Plateau. Draining Lake Powell will replace the regulated canal character of the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon with a wild river. The restoration process itself will also encourage visitation, contributing further to the new tourism economy. Because sediment accumulation affects both flatwater recreation and the time necessary to restore Glen Canyon, the sooner such an economic transformation begins, the more effective it will be.

GULF OF CALIFORNIA/ COLORADO RIVER DELTA

The Colorado River no longer reaches the sea. The river's annual flow is entirely diverted. Once one of the world's great estuaries, the delta is today a dry salt flat. Extensive, flourishing wetlands near the Gulf of California, constituting 80 percent of the total riparian habitat of the river, provided habitat for 200-400 species of plants and animals. Less than five percent of that original ecosystem is estimated to remain today. The endangered vaquita porpoise is virtually extinct. Draining Lake Powell will make more water available to help restore the delta and allow the gulf ecosystem to flourish once again.

WATER STORAGE

Lake Powell can store more than 100 million acre-feet of water – approximately the entire annual flow of the Colorado River. An acre-foot of water is the equivalent of the needs of an average family of four for a year. Lake Powell's reservoir provides an “insurance policy” for water delivery downstream during drought. In the Colorado River basin, there exist another 37 million acre-feet of water storage within the basin, more than sufficient to meet the needs of the basin.



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of the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam.”

irectors November 17, 1996)

o decommission Glen Canyon Dam. This is the best study of the proposal's viability yet produced. Author Scott Miller, technical, legal or economic hurdles exist to restoring Glen Canyon, only political ones. Contained here is a summary of of Mr. Miller's report, contact the Glen Canyon Group.



RESERVOIR POLLUTION

Aside from trapping water and sediment, Glen Canyon Dam traps tons of heavy metals each year. Although inconsequential under natural flow conditions, the accumulation and concentration of these minerals can become toxic. Uranium mill tailings – including those from a mill inundated by Lake Powell and the Atlas mill at Moab – contribute toxins and salts to the reservoir, as do industrial pollutants and agricultural runoff from other upstream sources. Human waste, deposited by recreationists in and around the reservoir, has caused frequent beach closures. Each decade, motorized recreation on the reservoir results in oil spillage equivalent to the amount dumped by the Exxon Valdez.

GLEN CANYON

Glen Canyon, intersected by dozens of side canyons, was a redrock wonderland of hidden arches, grottos, stone chambers, and slots. Its oak-set glens, fern-drenched alcoves, and hanging gardens added to Glen Canyon's uniqueness. "Glen Canyon," wrote Wallace Stegner, "was for delight." The gentle gradient of the Colorado River through the canyon made it all the more peaceful and contemplative for those who journeyed there.

SAN JUAN RIVER

Glen Canyon Dam drowned segments of four rivers: the Colorado, Escalante, Dirty Devil and San Juan. Sixty miles of the San Juan River now lie submerged beneath the reservoir's waters. With one of the world's heaviest sediment loads, the San Juan has created a massive, spreading delta of mud – and a glimpse of Lake Powell's future: a new waterfall, ranging in height up to 14 feet, cutting through heavy sediment deposits where the river meets the reservoir. This waterfall blocks travel both up and downstream, forcing river runners to disembark at Clay Hills Crossing, often knee-deep in sludge.

WATER LOSS THROUGH EVAPORATION

As many as one million acre-feet of water are lost to evaporation at Lake Powell each year; an additional 350,000 acre-feet are lost annually through seepage into the porous sandstone underlying Lake Powell. Combined, this represents up to ten percent of the Colorado River's annual flow. As early as 1959, experts recognized that losses from evaporation at Lake Powell and other reservoirs would offset storage benefits. Evaporative losses on a single Labor Day weekend could satisfy the needs of 17,000 western homes for an entire year. Draining the reservoir will conserve this water, increasing the total availability of water for downstream users and ecosystem restoration needs.

FLOOD CONTROL

Glen Canyon Dam does not serve a major flood control function. The dam is operated to minimize the likelihood that Hoover Dam downstream will need to open its spillways to release excess water in wet years. However, in the 20 years that Hoover Dam operated before Glen Canyon's construction, no such releases occurred. Today, nine million acre-feet of additional storage above Glen Canyon exist to manage flows in high-runoff conditions.

DAM SAFETY CONCERNS

Large dams can and do fail. The Teton Dam in southern Idaho, for example, experienced a catastrophic collapse in 1976. During the wet year of 1983, Glen Canyon Dam nearly spilled over the top because of massive damage to its spillway tunnels from normal operation. This flood, described as a once-in-25-year event, will certainly be surpassed in the future. The highly porous sandstone in which the dam is set is prone to slump and spall throughout the length of Glen Canyon. A similar splintering of rock close to the dam itself could cause catastrophic failure.

CATARACT CANYON

In addition to Glen and Grand Canyons, draining Lake Powell will also restore Cataract Canyon, one of the world's most challenging whitewater river sections. Waves up to 30 feet, falls, massive holes, and a host of other hydraulic challenges fill the 49-mile canyon, two-thirds of which is now submerged by the reservoir. John Wesley Powell, the famed Colorado River explorer, wrote of Cataract, "The water fills it from wall to wall, giving us no landing-place at the foot of the cliff; the river is very swift and the canyon very tortuous, so that we can see but a few hundred yards ahead."

WATER WASTE

The problem is not the availability of water, but how Colorado River water is allocated – and conserved. Eighty percent of the river is diverted for industrial irrigated agriculture, much for low-value crops grown in the desert. A switch by Arizona farmers to drip irrigation could eliminate demand for nearly ten percent of the Colorado River's annual flow. Alfalfa and other cattle feed crops dominate the use of Colorado river water, using ten times the amount of water as many food crops. In addition, fields planted with food crops can net up to 30 times the caloric value for humans as compared to those planted for cattle feed. Much of the water used for municipal purposes is not for drinking and sanitation, but instead for lawns, gardens, golf courses, fountains, and now even desert water ski parks.

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REVIVE THE SPIRIT OF THE RIVER

by Thomas Morris, Jr.

Yáá'téh! Greetings from the Navajo Nation. Please join me and the Diné (Navajo) Medicine Men's Association in our efforts to restore Glen Canyon and the Colorado River. Many of our sacred sites were drowned when Glen Canyon Dam was built. These sacred places tell about our creation and the things we need to know to live in harmony with Mother Earth. It is important to our people that we uncover them.

Recently the Sierra Club and others helped support our efforts to preserve the sacred San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, Arizona. We appreciate this help, but there is so much more to do if we are to restore our sacred sites and preserve our cultural heritage.

The Diné have a long history of which we are very proud. We have learned many things about the land and waters where we live. Stories tell the history of our people, stories written on the land, in the rocks, in the places where rivers come together. We have no Bible; our sacred texts are the petroglyphs, including those drowned by the waters of Lake Powell reservoir. Just as we have respected the white people's beliefs, their temples and holy places, and their Holy Book, we ask the same respect from them.

One place that is very special to us is Rainbow Bridge, the great Rock-Arch, which stands near our sacred Navajo Mountain. Today, the waters of Lake Powell reservoir flood the canyon beneath the Rock-Arch, in violation of US law. Years ago, some Diné medicine people went to the US courts to stop the filling of the reservoir, but the judges said that protecting the dam was more important than protecting our traditions and religious freedoms.

In those days the Sierra Club also worked to save Glen Canyon. Mr. David Brower fought to protect Rainbow Bridge. We met Mr. Brower earlier this year at Glen Canyon Dam. More than seventy groups and hundreds of individuals gathered there for prayer, songs and blessings, to let the world know of our desire to see the sacred sites restored and the reservoir drained. We are sad to learn that Mr. Brower is no longer in this world, but we are continuing his work.

Someday soon we will be able to walk to the great Rock-Arch and perform the ceremonies as in the old days. There is a Navajo saying, there is beauty in front of me, beauty behind me, beauty above me and beauty below me; beauty is all around me. That is what we are seeking, to bring back the beauty to Glen Canyon.

Please ask your friends, family, local Sierra Club leaders and other organizations to support our efforts to restore the Colorado River and our sacred sites. The traditional Diné seek your help in making these things come to pass, and in making a better world for the future for all of us.

Thomas Morris, Jr.

President, Diné Medicine Men's Association

PO Box 1702

Window Rock, AZ 86515

ROUND THREE: The Campaign Continues

By Ken Sleight, Glen Canyon Group Executive Committee Member

Greetings!

On behalf of the Glen Canyon Group, we want to welcome you and invite you to visit us in southern Utah—home of magnificent redrock wilderness and dramatic canyons. The Sierra Club is working hard to protect the beauty that surrounds us, and restore the rest—especially our beloved Glen Canyon. We can use your help.

For those of you who don't know me, I've been involved in Colorado River conservation for quite a while. As one of the early members of the Western River Guides Association and the Friends of Glen Canyon, I worked with other conservationists, boatmen and Native Americans in the 1950s and 1960s to prevent the construction of Glen Canyon Dam. Good friends and river pioneers such as Katie Lee, Kent Frost, Tad Nichols, Moki Mac Ellingson and Harry Aleson are people I'm proud to have known and worked with.

We tried like hell to stop it, but the dam builders beat us. In over three years' time the concrete plug rose from the riverbed, forming a giant tombstone for the canyon we knew and loved so well. The river waits patiently, of course, for its resurrection at a later date.

Many years have passed since the day in 1963 when they closed the gate on Glen Canyon Dam and the Colorado River began its long (and for me, painful) transformation into a reservoir. We lost Round One. But our attention turned to fighting the second battle of Glen Canyon—saving Rainbow Bridge from the rising waters of so-called "Lake" Powell.

The law that authorized Glen Canyon Dam required protection of Rainbow Bridge. But the government ignored the law and allowed the water to back up permanently beneath it. We sued, as did Navajo leaders and traditional practitioners, to lower the reservoir and protect the bridge—one of the Indian people's most sacred sites. We won at trial but the government successfully appealed. When the Supreme Court refused to hear our case, we had lost Round Two.

We did win something important, however. We feel we've built a foundation for working with native people, to build bridges between our cultures and to work together to protect and restore the Earth. Rainbow Bridge has thus become a symbol of unity and commits us to correcting environmental injustices wherever they may occur.

Someone said that all our victories are temporary, all our defeats permanent. Well, we're showing that even defeats can be temporary. In his book *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, my friend Edward Abbey dreams of dynamite. And I've called for divine intervention—a precision earthquake. But today we're advocating a different approach—a carefully controlled release that minimizes ecological disruption. Our campaign to drain Lake Powell seeks to restore 250 miles of canyon, four endangered species of fish, and a multitude of Native American ceremonial sites. Draining the reservoir now will save the Grand Canyon from ecological collapse and make more water available for downstream uses including restoration of the Colorado River delta.

As we move forward in educating people about the urgent need to let the Colorado River flow wild and free again, we need your help. People in the cities can help by conserving their use of water and electricity. Irrigators—users of more than three-quarters of the river's flow—can adopt aggressive conservation to reduce their diversions. We need to send a message to Washington, DC that we want our river back. Please join us for Round Three—and help make this one a knockout punch!

Join the Sierra Club—for our families and for our future.

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