



For Immediate Release:

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River Communities Comes Together to Clean Up Trinity River, One of the Nation's Most Endangered

Organizers Say 2024 Trinity River Clean Up Most Successful Yet and Announce More Trinity Events

Hoopa, California - Last Sunday marked the 2024 Trinity River Clean Up in Hoopa. The clean-up is an on-river and land effort to clean up, and share information about protecting, the Trinity River. This year at least 65 people collected over two truckloads of trash, while also swimming and rafting. The local Rios to Rivers 2024 Paddle Tribal Waters cohort and Warrior Institute were among them, along with many local youth.

“The river clean-up was a great success. It gave our community an opportunity to take pride in our valley and keep our rivers clean,” explained new Hoopa Valley Tribe councilman and longtime clean-up supporter Joseph Marshall. Marshall’s organization, the Warrior Institute, has aided Save California Salmon in the on-water part of the clean-up for years. Save California Salmon, the Yurok Tribe, and Warrior Institute will host a second local raft trip from Hoopa to Weitchpec on August 3rd.

Save California Salmon said they are organizing more raft trips and youth events on the Trinity River this year due to requests from youth, and the need to organize around threats to the river from diversions to the Central Valley. They say it is an important time to protect the river’s flows and salmon, as the Bureau of Reclamation is working with the Tribes to rewrite the Trinity River’s Biological Opinion. The Biological Opinion will control flows in the river, and this is the first time it has been updated in over 20 years. They say plans for the Sites Reservoir and Bay Delta Tunnel on the Sacramento River and Bay Delta are moving forward startlingly fast, and a strong Biological Opinion for the Trinity is one of the best options to ensure the Trinity River is not harmed by these massive new diversion plans.

Due to these threats and the opportunity that comes from a new Biological Opinion and state water plans, American Rivers named the Trinity River, the largest tributary of the Klamath River, among America's Most Endangered Rivers® of 2024.

“The Trinity River is of critical importance to the Klamath River salmon, and the people of the Hoopa Valley. However, during drought years diversions from the Trinity to Central Valley farmers usually increase due to the lack of protections for carry over storage in the river,” explained Regina Chichizola from Save California Salmon. “Our local communities have fought so hard to protect the river and salmon for generations. The clean-up is a chance to celebrate how far we have come and enjoy the river, and to make sure the youth can be a part of protecting and learning about the river.”

Chichizola said the amount of garbage they are collecting every year is decreasing. “I think this is because the community is coming together more often to clean up and appreciate the valley, which is amazing.”

An alarming amount of Trinity River water is diverted into the Sacramento River for the Central Valley Water Project. Outdated water management has led to reservoir depletion, rising river temperatures, and other environmental impacts that put threatened Coho and Chinook salmon at risk. The Hoopa, Yurok and other Tribes are also dealing with some of the lowest salmon returns in history and toxic algae outbreaks, which impacts cultural use, food security, wellness, and livelihoods.

When the river was named one of the country's most endangered, American Rivers and its partners called on the California State Water Board and the Department of the Interior to prioritize the health of the Trinity River in the Sites Reservoir and Delta Tunnel water right orders, Bay-Delta Planning phase 2, and the Central Valley Project Reinitiation of Consultation.

The clean up was not just about fighting for the river, it was also about having fun.

“It was great to see all the children and families coming together to take care of the river and the land while having a great time,” said Star Gibbens’ Save California Salmon’s youth coordinator.

“Building that relationship with the river and one another is part of who we are as Native people and I hope that we can see more of these opportunities in the future.”

Save California Salmon is hosting a second Trinity River whitewater raft trip this Sunday, July 23 in Big Bar, California and an Indigenous Science Camp with many local Tribes at Sue-Meg State Park next Monday, July 22. They are also helping to host an event in Orleans with the Karuk Tribe, Nature Rights Council and Seventh Generation Fund next Saturday, July 29, to celebrate construction of the first upriver

dugout Klamath River canoe in more than a century. All Save California Salmon events are family-friendly and free of charge for Tribal members. Space is, however, limited, so advance registration is required.

Participants can find out more on Save California Salmon's social media pages or register for the trips at the links below. Contact Star Gibbens for more information at Star@californiasalmon.org.

Upper Trinity River Whitewater Raft Trip at Pigeon Point July 21st: tinyurl.com/SCS-Raft-7-21

Sue-Meg Indigenous Science Camp Day July 22nd : <https://bit.ly/SCS-Camp-7-22>

Hoopa to Weitchpec Raft trip August 3rd: tinyurl.com/SCS-Raft-8-3

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