

American River Conservancy Achieves Milestone of 10,000 Acres Protected

Over the past 20 years, the American River Conservancy ("ARC") has focused on the purchase of river canyon lands that protect native fisheries and wildlife corridors, allowed for the construction of new public trails and helped preserve the excellent quality of water that flows from the high Sierra Nevada mountains downstream through El Dorado County to Sacramento, San Francisco and over 25 million water customers throughout central and southern California.

Two recent acquisitions completed by the ARC in April 2008 has pushed the total amount of lands protected by this regional river conservation group beyond the 10,000 acre mark.

In early April, ARC purchased 320 acres and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of North Fork Cosumnes River frontage about six miles upstream of Highway 49. This acquisition protects native fisheries, ancient valley and blue oak woodland, and endangered species habitat. Protected lands are immediately upstream of spawning gravels for the fall-run Chinook salmon. A number of other sensitive wildlife species occur within the project area including California red-legged frog, bald eagle, California spotted owl, northern goshawk, foothill yellow-legged frog and northwestern pond turtle.

A few weeks later, ARC completed the purchase of 40 acres fronting the South Fork American River four miles upstream of the Salmon Falls bridge at Folsom Lake. This acquisition will protect native fisheries, mature oak woodland and advance the completion of a new 8 mile trail from Highway 49 (Magnolia Ranch just north of Coloma) to the Salmon Falls Bridge at Folsom Lake.

Over this 20 year period, ARC raised \$55 million through competitive grant programs and private donations to complete 68 land acquisition projects protecting 10,081 acres of river canyon lands, public trail corridor, and endangered species habitat. Purchase funding came from federal, state, county and private sources. Major project partners include: the Bureau of Land Management, State Department of Fish and Game, State Wildlife Conservation Board, State Resources Agency, El Dorado County, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation.

"Our River Conservation program is a win-win for the greater Sacramento region," stated ARC Director, Alan Ehrgott. "We are protecting native fisheries and wildlife corridors, creating new public trails through our most scenic landscapes, and protecting the quality of central California's domestic water supply all with the same public dollar. I think we will all live better, healthier lives as a result of this program".

ARC Board President and past El Dorado County Supervisor, Penny Humphreys added, "There will be some who will complain about taking these lands off the County tax roll. But when you add up all the benefits and realize that we are substantially increasing the

attractiveness of El Dorado County and the greater Sacramento region to new residents and visitors that argument simply doesn't hold up under scrutiny."

In addition to its river and land conservation programs the American River Conservancy provides environmental education and field science programs to schools and the public and provides land stewardship and habitat enhancement services in partnership with public agencies.