

# *South Yuba River* COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN



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Tahoe  
National  
Forest



Bureau  
of Land  
Management



California  
State Parks



Nevada  
County



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## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

This document is a comprehensive management plan for the lower 39-mile stretch of the South Yuba River in Nevada County, California.

The Plan covers only **public lands** under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service (USFS), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (also known as State Parks). Public services, such as law enforcement and facilities (ie. road and bridge infrastructures) provided by Nevada County, are also included within the planning area.

The focus of the Plan is how to manage public land resources and uses within the planning area. The intent is to develop a shared vision in concert with the interested public for all public lands, and to the greatest degree possible, provide similar management direction for all three agencies that manage public lands along the South Yuba River.

Because of historic and continuing human uses, there are significant management needs that must be dealt with in the Plan. These include the need to identify management strategies that will successfully address Visitor Capacity, fuels and fire protection, public river access, public parking, trash collection, restroom facilities, public safety, private landowners concerns, and day and overnight use sites. The Plan also identifies other visitor services and facilities that will help reduce conflicts between users, landowners and other parties with rights in the area, while still protecting the “Outstandingly Remarkable Values” of the area. These Outstandingly Remarkable Values are identified as first-rate recreation waterplay opportunities, striking scenic qualities, and historic values. The Plan moves public resources, public uses and visitor services toward a “Desired Future Condition” as portrayed in a vision agreed-upon by the community and managing agencies.

This Plan satisfies a legal requirement for the federal agencies to protect the Outstandingly Remarkable Values, water quality, and free-flowing conditions that caused the river to be recommended by federal agencies as part of the Federal Wild and Scenic River System, and designated as a State Wild and Scenic River. It also serves as the Wild and Scenic River Management Plan for the state.

In creating a management plan for the South Yuba River, the agencies recognized the interests and desires of private landowners and other parties with legal and other interests in the planning area. These legal interests are integrated into the Plan. Desires that have reached community agreement have also been incorporated.

The remainder of this chapter describes the South Yuba River and how the Plan was developed. A community-based planning model was used to create the Plan. Two critical elements, a “vision” and a “purpose and need” statement, were developed with

the community's assistance and are considered critical by the agencies in guiding the overall planning process.

Chapter 2 is a brief description of the agencies and the associated laws and policies that guide their decision-making.

Chapter 3 describes the river's overall existing condition, a desired future condition, and the steps (called Management Actions) to be taken to achieve or move closer to the desired condition.

Chapter 4 focuses on Recreation Management. It describes the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum, Visitor Capacity approaches, and Management Actions to be applied both riverwide and in the specified planning units.

Chapter 5 outlines the framework for implementation and monitoring of the planning elements.



## Location

The planning area covers the lower 39-mile stretch of the South Yuba River. This portion flows between Lake Spaulding and Englebright Lake in Nevada County. All public lands within a quarter mile from the ordinary high water mark on each side of the river, approximately 12,609 acres, are included in the analysis area. This does not include public land managed by the Army Corps of Engineers. In certain cases the planning area was expanded to adequately address specific issues such as wildlife habitat, fire prevention, or visual quality.

About half of the river within the planning area flows through the Tahoe National Forest, while the other half flows through Bureau of Land Management-administered lands and the South Yuba River State Park. Nevada County owns no land, except for bridges and some roads in the corridor, and has jurisdiction over the river corridor's private lands.

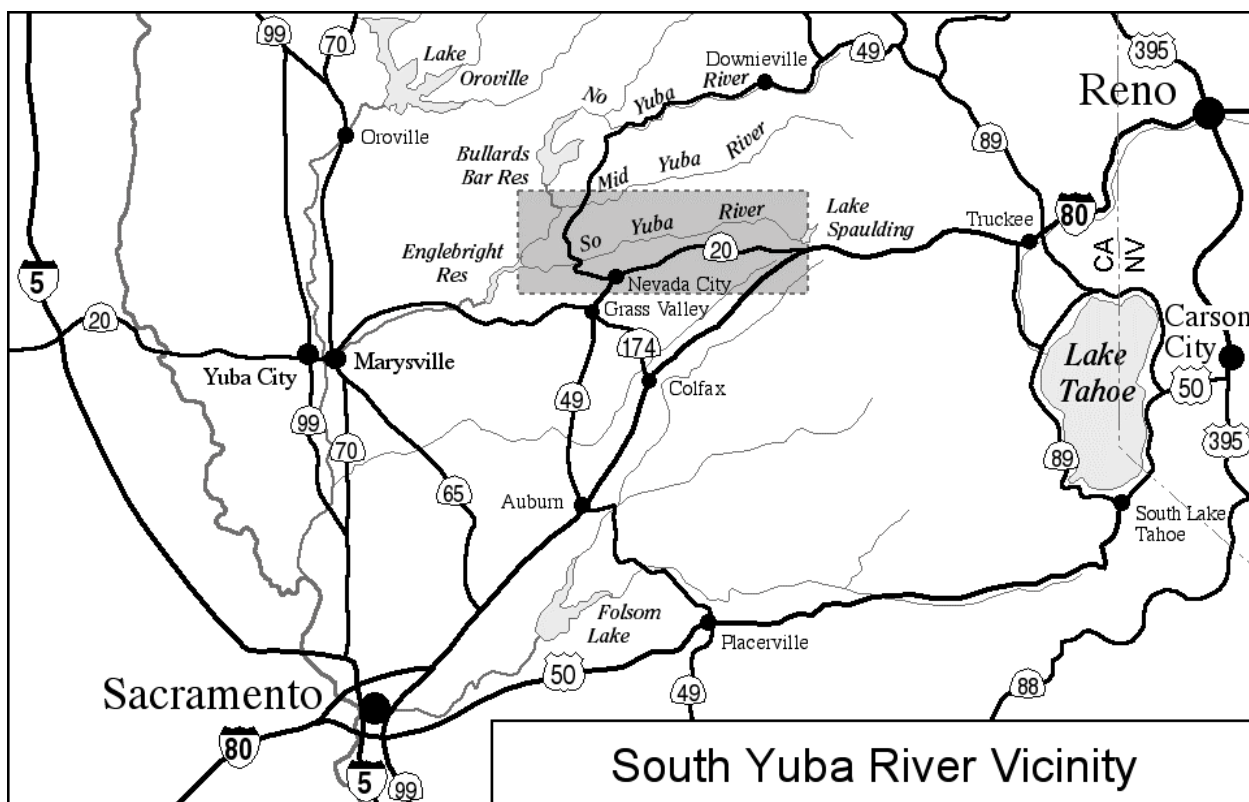


Figure 1 – Location of the South Yuba River

## **Description of Planning Area**

The river is characterized by deep pools, cascades, waterfalls, and exposed worn rock outcroppings. The gradual erosion of tertiary gravels of the ancient Yuba River have deposited placer gold into the river over time. The planning area is located within the Western Metamorphic Belt of the Sierra Nevada. In the higher elevations of the river corridor, the vegetation principally consists of mixed conifer, montane hardwood, and white fir forests. The lower elevations are covered with grasses, oak woodlands, chaparral, and mixed conifers.

Private and public lands are dispersed or intermixed throughout the river corridor. Large acreages of private land are owned by timber/land companies and managed for forest products. The remainder of the private land is in patented claims or tract parcels. There are many private homes within the river corridor. Some are within remote sections and many are clustered within or near the town of Washington.

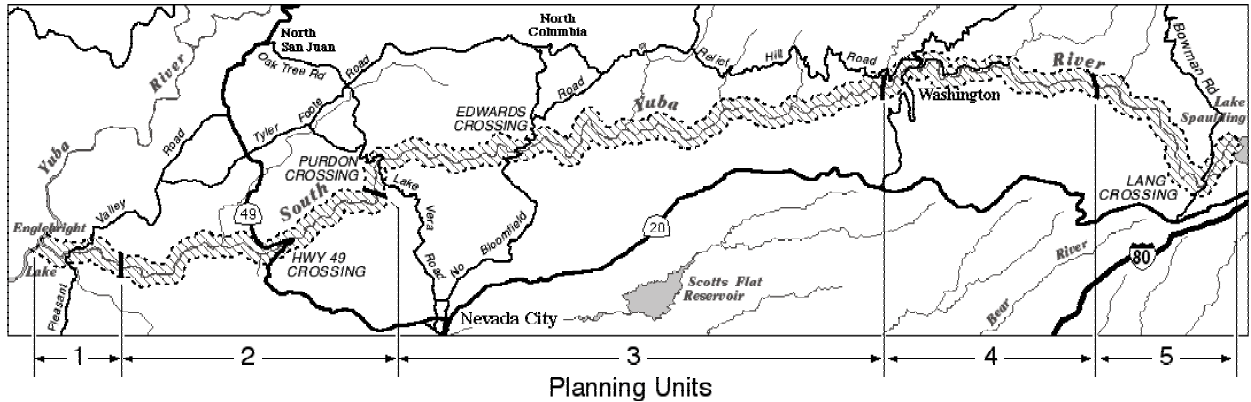
Following the spring snowmelt, the majority of its flow is diverted at Lake Spaulding for irrigation and power generation. River levels drop significantly, affording extensive waterplay opportunities to visitors. Lang Crossing, Golden Quartz and Keleher Day Use Areas, Edwards Crossing, Purdon Crossing, Highway 49 Crossing, and Bridgeport are the major access points to the river. The majority of human activity is focused at these access points. The South Yuba River Trail, located along the north side of the river canyon, extends from Poorman Creek near the town of Washington to Edwards Crossing northeast of Nevada City. At that point, the trail crosses to the south side of the river and continues to Purdon Crossing. Other major trails in the corridor include the Buttermilk Bend Trail at Bridgeport and a wheelchair accessible trail at Highway 49 called the Independence Trail. Recreation activities enjoyed by river users include waterplay, swimming, bird watching, whitewater boating, mountain biking, casual gold seeking, hiking, fishing, and sunbathing.

There are picnic areas at Bridgeport, Highway 49, Keleher, and Golden Quartz along the river. These areas have toilet facilities and picnic tables. State Parks lands, Hoyt Crossing, Edwards Crossing in the immediate vicinity of the bridge, and the portion of river from the Town of Washington up to Fall Creek are closed to overnight camping due to a high fire hazard and sanitation concerns.

The Bridgeport Covered Bridge is the focus of the South Yuba River State Park, just one example of the rich history of the river corridor. The South Yuba River also has significant paleoenvironmental and paleontological resources (i.e., evidence of life and environmental conditions that existed during past geological periods).

## Planning Units

The Planning Area is broken into five sections, Planning Units 1 through 5. Land use decisions called Management Actions unique to each area are discussed in Chapter 4 of this document.



**Figure 2 - Planning Area Map**

- **Planning Unit 1** – from Point Defiance to the eastern boundary of Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) administered land.
- **Planning Unit 2** – from the eastern boundary of ACOE administered land, to the western boundary of California State Parks below Purdon Crossing.
- **Planning Unit 3** – from the western boundary of California State Parks below Purdon Crossing to Poorman Creek west of Washington.
- **Planning Unit 4** – Poorman Creek west of Washington to the Forest Service (USFS) boundary past the Johnson Sink.
- **Planning Unit 5** - USFS boundary past the Johnson Sink to Lake Spaulding outlet.

## Community-Based Planning

The Lower South Yuba River is designated as a California Wild and Scenic River as well as a federally recommended Wild and Scenic River. These designations, coupled with an ongoing cooperative relationship between three agencies, the USFS, the BLM and State Parks, provided the impetus to develop a guidance document for managing the lands within the Wild and Scenic river corridor.

Due to the success achieved in planning for a similar river system, the agencies decided to use a collaborative, community-based planning process. This unique strategy directly involves the local community in the formulation of a comprehensive management plan.

Beginning in July 2003, agency managers held a series of public meetings in the vicinity of the South Yuba River to produce a plan. An outreach effort ensured people knew of the meetings and had the opportunity to participate. Anyone was free to participate, and the attendees were self-selected. The meetings occurred twice a month, on average, for a total of forty meetings, until December 2004.

Public attendance at the planning meetings varied from meeting to meeting. Most of the participants were local residents, but some were from outside the immediate area. Those either owned property along the river or represented a special interest group. The participants in the planning process brought with them first-hand knowledge of the river corridor, its uses, and ideas about how the agencies could best manage the river.

The basic strategy was to achieve agreement or total consensus among meeting participants on the management direction and actions to be taken by the agencies to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals. In order for the community to directly impact the decisions made in this plan, the agencies worked with the community on a definition of agreement. The group agreed that achieving a total consensus vote on every issue was an unrealistic expectation. The public agreed that 80 percent or greater of the persons voting constituted agreement on a particular issue, while total consensus was indicated by 100 percent. In many cases, the decisions described throughout this plan had a 100 percent total consensus vote. Consensus often means compromise, and compromise did not always come easily. Discussions were occasionally quite lively, but from the agencies' perspective, very productive.

This document is the result of those meetings. It reflects the values of local residents and river users, as well as the practical concerns of implementation. It is also generally consistent with the agencies policies and regulations. Management Actions are considered to be community recommendations. Wherever possible, the agencies will adopt and implement these recommendations. However, in certain situations, such as when direction is inconsistent with agency policy, the agencies may alter a specific recommendation due to fiscal constraints or timing needs.

It should be noted that this planning process did not address river flow issues. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has authority over river flow decisions

and will address these issues during the FERC relicensing process for the Yuba-Bear (#2266) and Drum Spaulding (#2310) projects scheduled to be completed in 2013.

Community is defined two ways in this process. There is the community of place, consisting of people who actually live on or near the river, and the community of interest, people who may live outside the area, but occasionally visit. The agencies were pleased that the self-selected group of individuals attending meetings week after week represented a wide spectrum of both communities.

Another reason for using the community-based process concerns the long-term goal of stewardship. The agencies believe that if the Plan is developed through collaboration with the local community, the individuals and organizations involved will also participate in the Plan's implementation.

River management is complex. To break issues down into manageable pieces, the agencies developed the list of Key Resource Categories described below. Next, agency specialists made presentations describing the existing condition of each category. Agencies then received input from the community describing issues of concern. A Desired Future Condition, an idealized but realistic concept of how the community wants the river corridor to be managed, was formulated for these categories. The result is a statement or series of statements that describe a Desired Future Condition for each category. Management Actions were then crafted to move the river's existing condition toward the desired condition.

The Key Resource Categories evaluated are:

- Cultural / Paleontological Values
- Fire Suppression and Prevention
- Hydrology/ Soils/Geology/Water Quality
- Recreation
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Wild and Scenic River Values
- Economy
- Fish, Wildlife, Plants and Ecology
- Public Safety/ Law Enforcement
- Scenic Values
- Vegetation
- Private Property

In order to address issues and achieve effective relationships with private landowners, a category for private property was added to the list of Key Resource Categories. In this case, the Desired Future Condition outlines the relationship between private landowners, the agencies, and river enthusiasts. The Management Actions describe agency responsibilities that will help make these relationships effective.

## Vision Statement

A Vision Statement is a declaration of the agencies' and community participants' intent. Below is the guide for stewardship of the South Yuba River that all agreed upon.

*The South Yuba River will be managed in a fashion that balances human and ecological needs through a partnership between the BLM, State Parks, Forest Service, Nevada County, other agencies, landowners, businesses, the community, and recreational users. This partnership is an ongoing process that includes public participation in which agencies seek public input in developing and implementing plans for the South Yuba River. It will create and sustain community involvement in the stewardship of the South Yuba River.*

*The public lands along the Wild and Scenic South Yuba River will continue to provide an enjoyable experience for the general public and will continue to contribute to the quality of life of the local community.*

*In keeping with the Wild and Scenic status, public lands along the South Yuba River will be managed for present and future use to: 1) preserve and protect cultural resources, both prehistoric and historic, and 2) maintain scenic, recreation and habitat values.*

*Reasonable public access to the river via the public lands will accommodate a wide range of recreation uses from easy beach access to remote river experiences while minimizing human impacts.*

*The various terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and wildlife corridors found on the public lands will be protected, enhanced, and restored to be sustainable, stable, fire-safe, healthy, and diverse.*

*The public lands will be managed in a way that respects and protects private property rights and balances competing uses.*

*Valued aspects of public land management will be environmental education and volunteerism.*

*Water quality will be improved, and adequate flows maintained to allow the full range of native flora and fauna to flourish in a healthy environment while respecting legal interests.*

*Where appropriate to implement this vision, if the opportunity presents itself, the public lands may be supplemented by the acquisition of additional property from willing sellers only.*

*We take seriously our responsibility to practice stewardship, which will ensure that future generations of plants, animals, and humans can experience the river in an environmentally sound state.*

## Purpose and Need

The Purpose and Need was developed by the community and explains the general objectives of the Plan. These actions are needed because of the Wild and Scenic designation for the Lower South Yuba River and to have a cohesive management strategy with the agencies and the users.

1. Create a consolidated, interagency management plan for public lands in the 39-mile corridor between Spaulding and Englebright Reservoirs.
2. Focus will be on management of public resources and uses on public lands.
3. The Plan will develop a “shared vision” for public lands, and will strive to provide similar management direction on agency lands within the area.
4. The Plan will strive to resolve significant management issues relative to Visitor Capacity, fuels and fire protection, public river access, public parking, trash collection, restroom services, public safety, private landowners concerns, day and overnight use, visitor services and facilities, etc.
5. The Plan will satisfy federal and state needs to protect the “Outstandingly Remarkable Values,” water quality, and free-flowing conditions that caused the river to be recommended as a federal Wild and Scenic River, and designated as a state Wild and Scenic River.
6. The Plan will recognize the interests and desires of private landowners and other parties with a legal interest in the planning area. Legal interests will be integrated into the Plan. Desires that have reached community agreement will be incorporated into the Plan.
7. The Plan will recognize that human uses of the area are historic and will continue into the future.
8. The Plan will protect watershed health, including the flora and fauna in the planning area.
9. The Plan will move public resources, planning units and visitor services toward a “Desired Future Condition” as portrayed in the agreed upon vision. Community-based planning will assist with identifying important social and community concerns, defining Desired Future Conditions, and providing meaningful input at key assessment and planning steps.





## CHAPTER 2 – THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

This chapter explains who the partners are, the laws and regulations that authorize their participation, and the relationships to other laws and plans formed with the adoption of this Plan. Additionally, there is an explanation of the Existing Management Direction of each of the agency partners.

### The Partners

#### **California Department of Parks and Recreation**

Also known as California State Parks, this agency is part of the California Resources Agency, and is responsible for managing the State Parks system. The mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

The Sierra Gold Sector, located in Grass Valley, directly manages State Parks lands on the river. The contact telephone number is (530) 273-3884.

#### **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

A federal agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior responsible for managing 261 million acres of public land, most of which are remnants of the original public domain. The mission of the Bureau of Land Management is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Folsom Field Office directly manages BLM lands on the South Yuba River. The contact telephone number is (916) 985-4474.

#### **USDA Forest Service (USFS)**

A federal agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, responsible for managing National Forest lands. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The Yuba River Ranger District, part of the Tahoe National Forest, located in Camptonville, directly manages Forest Service administered lands on the river. The contact telephone number is (530) 478-6253.

### **Nevada County Planning Department**

A department within the local government of Nevada County responsible for overall county planning. The Department has regulatory authority over private lands, roads, bridges and other locally owned public facilities. The mission of the Planning Department is to develop and apply land use policies and standards in ways that protect environmental resources while promoting economic vitality. The telephone number is (530) 265-1798.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

In early March 1999, the Bureau of Land Management, Tahoe National Forest, and California Department of Parks and Recreation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the management of the South Yuba River. In the MOU, a series of mutual benefits and interests were recognized, and agreement was reached to jointly write a comprehensive, coordinated management plan for the South Yuba River. In November 2001, through a Board of Supervisors resolution, the County of Nevada signed the MOU as a fourth partner.

As of this writing, the three agencies have renewed this MOU. Nevada County remains a signatory.

### **Authority**

Bureau of Land Management: Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).  
Sierra Planning Area: Management Framework Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment (1988).

USDA Forest Service: National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by 2004 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment.

California State Parks: Public Resources Code, Sections 5001-5099.12.

Nevada County Planning Department: Nevada County General Plan; Nevada County Resolution (No. 01-355) to become a party to the MOU.

### **Relationships with Other Plans/Laws**

California State Parks: A park General Plan for the South Yuba River State Park will be produced incorporating elements of the South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan.

BLM: The South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan will be incorporated into the “Sierra Resource Management Plan” currently being written by the Folsom Field Office for all lands under its jurisdiction.

USDA Forest Service: The South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan will be incorporated into and become an amendment to the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by the 2004 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment.

Record of Decision: 22 Westside Rivers – Wild and Scenic Study Report. Outlines decisions and management direction for land management by the federal agencies.

The completed South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan will become the California Wild and Scenic River Management Plan – the first plan of such a comprehensive nature for a State-designated river.

If the South Yuba River should be designated a federal Wild and Scenic River, the completed Plan will become the federal Wild and Scenic River Plan.

### **Existing Management Direction**

The South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan must be consistent with existing state and federal laws and regulations.

#### **California Department of Parks and Recreation**

The state managed lands along the lower portion of the South Yuba River have been classified by the State Park and Recreation Commission as a State Park. The management direction for a State Park is provided by California Public Resources Code Section 5019.53. That section states in part:

"State Parks consist of relatively spacious areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archaeological, ecological, geological, or other such values. The purpose of state parks shall be to preserve outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, indigenous aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora. ...shall be managed as a composite whole in order to restore, protect, and maintain its native environmental complexes to the extent compatible with the primary purpose for which the park was established. Improvements undertaken ...shall be for the purpose of making areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values for present and future generations. Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities including, but not limited to, camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding, so long as such improvements involve no major modification of lands, forests,

or waters. Improvements which do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks."

The Public Resources Code provides the primary management direction for a state park until a General Plan is approved by the State Park and Recreation Commission. At that time, the General Plan can provide more specific management direction, consistent with the Public Resources Code.

### **Bureau of Land Management**

For the BLM, the management authority is derived from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Currently, the lands along the South Yuba River are managed with guidance contained in the Sierra Planning Area: Management Framework Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment (1988). This document will be replaced by the Sierra Resource Management Plan, scheduled to be completed in 2007.

In addition, the BLM Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan, adopted by the Bureau in 2002, is used for guidance.

### **USDA Forest Service**

For the USFS, existing management direction is contained in the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by the 2004 Sierra Nevada Framework. The Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan was approved in 1990. It has broad direction under Forestwide Standards and Guidelines and more specific direction within management areas. The South Yuba River corridor is located within the South Yuba Management Area 042 and contains about 50,000 acres of National Forest System lands. Most of the management area direction is broad in nature. However, specific to the South Yuba River is a management emphasis to "maintain the South Yuba River's primitive character by limiting motorized access to the river," and "maintain closure of the South Yuba River above Washington to Fall Creek for overnight camping due to fire and access concerns."

In addition to the above Forest Plan direction, there is an amendment to the Forest Plan documented in the Record of Decision, 22 Westside River Study Report and Final Environmental Impact Statement dated May 21, 1999 by Forest Supervisor Steve Eubanks. This amendment provides for interim protection for the South Yuba River based on the decision to recommend the river for federal designation as a Wild and Scenic River. Until such time as Congress takes action on this recommendation, the river will be managed to maintain its free flowing character, water quality, and protect or enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values identified for the river on an interim basis.

## CHAPTER 3 – RIVERWIDE MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

This section of the Plan contains Desired Future Conditions and Management Actions on a riverwide basis for a variety of resources. These will apply to all public lands along the river, regardless of agency jurisdiction. Desired Future Conditions are defined as “land or resource conditions that are expected to result if the vision is fully achieved.”

For each of the Key Resource Categories, a statement of the Desired Future Condition is followed by a brief description of the existing condition and Management Actions designed to achieve the Desired Future Condition. Both the Desired Future Conditions and the Management Actions were discussed and agreed upon in public meetings. It should be noted that funding might limit full implementation or timing of the Management Actions.

Because the Key Resource Category of Recreation is so multi-faceted, it is dealt with separately in Chapter 4.

### **Cultural/Paleontological Resources**

#### **Desired Future Condition**

Continue to identify, preserve, and enhance significant cultural and paleontological resources, and educate the public about these resources when appropriate. Continue to protect the historic and cultural Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

#### **Existing Condition**

The landscape of the South Yuba River, like many waterways of the western Sierra Nevada, has been shaped by a wide array of human activities over thousands of years. These activities have included hunting and gathering by Native Americans; road construction and the building of bridges across the river; industrial mining and logging; and residential settlement. These and other land-uses have, to one degree or another, left a mark on the river canyon.

A legacy of this long, varied land-use history is the vast array of cultural resources (i.e., bridges, archaeological sites, mining features, etc.) found within the river corridor today. Since some of them have unique qualities, historic/cultural resources were identified as one of the river’s Outstandingly Remarkable Values. The cultural resources specifically cited as outstandingly remarkable include the Bridgeport Bridge (built originally in 1862), Virginia Turnpike (1853-1901), Bridgeport Townsite (1849-1940s), Excelsior Ditch (1855-1961), Miner’s Tunnel (1872), Purdon Crossing bridge (1895), Edwards Crossing bridge (1904), and Highway 49 bridge (1921). The historic bridges are still in

use and are particularly well-loved South Yuba landmarks. The agencies are devoted to preserving and protecting the river's historic/cultural Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

The river corridor also contains numerous other cultural resources, some of which should be viewed as significant and worthy of protection (eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and/or the California Register of Historical Resources). The cultural resources include river crossings, mines and mining settlements, mining ditches, logging camps, lumber mills, and prehistoric camps and bedrock mortars ("grinding rocks"). Many of the cultural resources are linked in terms of the historical forces that led to their creation – they are elements of larger sites, districts, systems, and landscapes that may extend well outside of the river canyon. When understood in this context, the cultural resources could be seen as having a greater level of significance.

The agencies have done well to inventory the South Yuba's cultural resources, but much of the river corridor's history and prehistory remains to be discovered and studied. Regardless of who takes on this future challenge, cultural resources on public land within the river corridor will continue to receive consideration and protection under various state and federal laws, including the California Environmental Quality Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

The river corridor also contains fossil and geological evidence of biological life and environments that existed thousands, even hundreds of millions, of years ago. These resources are rare, fragile, and significant. They have helped paleontologists and other scientists reconstruct ancient life and environmental conditions in western North America, including what is today the Sierra Nevada.

At present, paleontological resources receive limited protection under federal and state law. Some paleontological localities in the general area are well-known and have been collected by the public for years, causing serious degradation of their scientific research potential. Other resources are nearly pristine and hold great promise to paleontologists and other scientists studying ancient life.

### **Management Actions**

1. Design and install interpretive signs and find other ways to disseminate interpretive information about cultural and paleontological resources suitable for this use. Management agencies will encourage and coordinate with local groups to organize guided tours of these resources suitable for this use.
2. Select suitable cultural resources that display the Outstandingly Remarkable Values that this river was partially listed for, to interpret, and develop interpretation plans. Ensure sensitive cultural resources are protected.
3. Interpretation of South Yuba River cultural resources should reflect the long, varied human use of the river canyon, not just the early years of the Gold Rush or

the lives of prominent people. Other themes of interest to the public include prehistoric/Native American use of the canyon, Chinese and other immigrant mining and settlement, life during the Great Depression, ranching families, and more recent uses and conflicts.

4. Land acquisition from willing sellers could be used as a way to bring significant cultural and paleontological resources into public ownership.

## **Economy**

### **Desired Future Condition**

The river continues to provide economic benefits to the community. Preservation of natural, cultural, and recreational values are balanced with economic needs.

### **Existing Condition**

Visitors to the South Yuba River spend money in the local community in conjunction with their trip to the river. Local citizens may not spend as much as regional users of other areas, but a certain amount of gasoline and other personal items are still purchased specifically for river recreation.

### **Management Actions**

1. Where possible, agencies will work proactively with local businesses and community members to develop marketing strategies that enhance tourism related business opportunities that minimize impacts on the river.
2. Recognize the economic benefit of and encourage programs that utilize volunteers.

## **Fire Suppression and Prevention**

### **Desired Future Condition**

Public Resource Agencies, Fire Safe Councils, Fire Districts, and other stakeholders have developed a coordinated fuels reduction and fire suppression strategy plan, as well as a coordinated fire prevention program that includes information, education, engineering, and enforcement for the South Yuba River corridor.

### **Existing Condition**

Fire history studies for the Sierra Nevada mountains and similar ecosystems indicate that the fire regime for the watershed consisted of frequent fires of generally low severity with short fire-return intervals. (A fire-return interval is an estimate of the average amount of time between historic wildfires for a particular area.). In the past, frequent fires of mixed low and moderate severity killed some overstory trees, and thinned or eliminated understory stems.

The absence of periodic, low-intensity surface fire in ecosystems where fires were formerly frequent allows rapid changes in vegetative composition, structure, and density. These changes often promote epidemic insect and disease outbreaks, increase dead and down fuel loading, increase shade-tolerant species in the understory, and promote severe stand-replacement fires. Continuing to suppress low to moderate severity fires ensures that any wildfires that occur will be larger, with higher severity, and stand-replacing.

The South Yuba River corridor, with its local weather and steep topography, can produce wildfires with the potential to quickly and intensely spread across ownership boundaries.

Human-caused fires are the primary concern both in the corridor and in the watershed. Human-caused fires have created the most damage, per event, of all fires within the watershed. Lightning fires are of secondary concern.

### **Management Actions**

1. Implement the existing coordinated fire management plans. These plans include a coordinated fuels reduction and fire suppression strategy plan, as well as a coordinated fire prevention program that will include information, education, and enforcement for the South Yuba River corridor.
2. Seek full funding to implement those plans.
3. Support collaboration for funding opportunities to implement those plans.

## **Fish, Wildlife, Plants, and Ecology**

### **Desired Future Condition**

**Aquatic:** Streams (perennial and intermittent), springs, seeps, and ponds provide conditions that support viable populations of native plants and animals. Streams provide corridors for migrating fish. Populations of rare plants and animals are protected or enhanced.

**Terrestrial Animals:** Habitats of various age and size classes are provided for native plants and animals. Parts of the planning area are managed so that they remain remote. Non-native vegetation is removed and prevention measures effectively stop



reintroduction of non-native plants. Populations of rare plants and animals are protected or enhanced. Native wildlife is not harassed by domestic animals or human presence. Migratory routes are identified and managed.

### **Existing Condition**

Vegetation within the corridor includes riparian, chaparral, foothill woodland, and mixed conifer. Riparian vegetation grows along the river and stream banks and contains deciduous trees and shrubs. Riparian vegetation is also found in other areas of the corridor where the terrain is moist, particularly along tributaries, and adjacent to springs and seeps. There are patches of mixed conifer old growth within the corridor.

The river provides an important wildlife migration corridor for a variety of wildlife. The corridor has potential habitat for northern goshawk, Pacific fisher, California spotted owl, bald eagle and Sierra Nevada red fox. The lower river supports warm water and cold water fisheries, as well as native and introduced species. There are no known federally listed threatened or endangered aquatic species known to reside in the corridor.

### **Management Actions**

1. Identify and evaluate migratory routes, if affected by any additional ground disturbing activities, and look for ways to mitigate effects.
2. Collect site-specific data to support Management Actions.
3. Identify non-desired plants and animals, prioritize them for treatment and eliminate them.
4. Identify areas that should remain remote.
5. Inventory and map the distribution of rare plants and animals.

## **Hydrology, Soils, Geology, and Water Quality**

### **Desired Future Condition**

The water quality of the South Yuba River meets the goals of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. The water in the South Yuba River and its tributaries is fishable, swimmable, and suitable for drinking after normal treatment. Instream flows are sufficient to meet free flowing criteria and sustain Desired Future Conditions of riparian, aquatic, and wetland habitats and human uses. The soil ecosystem functions to support plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and to support human uses. Soils have favorable infiltration characteristics and support diverse vegetative cover to absorb and filter precipitation and sustain favorable conditions of stream flows. The physical structure and condition of stream banks and shoreline minimizes human-caused erosion and sustains habitat diversity.

## **Existing Condition**

The South Yuba River is on a gently sloping to moderately steep plateau with steep canyon slopes. Glacial erosion has modified the valleys in the higher parts of the watershed. Some erosion occurs naturally. Fluvial erosion (river-caused) and mass wasting (e.g. landslides) in the river canyon are the main active geomorphic processes. Considerable human-caused erosion is evident in areas where gold was removed (historic and modern day mining sites).

The South Yuba River is part of the Yuba River Basin. While the entire system drains 1,350 square miles, the South Yuba River drains a total of only 352 square miles (225,282 acres). Peak run-off is typically during rain-on-snow events in the winter months (December-March). August and September typically have the lowest flows of the year.

The primary soils are derived from granitic, metavolcanic, and metasedimentary deposits. The soils within the inner gorge are shallow to moderately deep. Soil productivity is low to non-productive and there are numerous rock outcroppings.

In general, the water quality within the river corridor meets the standards of the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Health Services with a few exceptions.

Two types of bacteria have been monitored for and found in the South Yuba River: *E. coli* and *Enterococci*. Neither has been determined to be in quantities large enough to threaten river users. *E. coli* spikes during the first flushing rains in the fall, generally a time when no water contact recreation occurs.

During the 1850s, gold mining operations used mercury to extract gold throughout the Sierra Nevada. Much of this mercury remains in sediment deposits as elemental mercury. Elemental mercury has not been identified as a major impact on water quality, but in certain conditions, it has the potential to convert to an organic form, methylmercury, which can be toxic.

Beneficial uses of water from the South Yuba River include agricultural supply, cold freshwater habitat, freshwater replenishment, municipal and domestic water supply, water contact and non-contact recreation, fish reproduction and development, and wildlife habitat.

## **Management Actions**

1. Survey all roads and trails within the corridor for road/stream interactions within five years. Determine if road or trail is negatively impacting the stream/river and recommend remedial actions. If road or trail is not needed, based on a variety of factors, including public input, decommission it. Maintain roads and trails in good condition.

2. Minimize sediment input into streams/river from roads/trails, construction sites, mining sites, or other disturbed areas by implementing interdisciplinary planning, Best Management Practices, and effective erosion control.
3. Survey all tributaries with historic mining in the watershed within 5 years for sedimentation or other mining pollutants and prioritize by remediation need.
4. Continue to apply for appropriated and grant money to reduce the amount of mercury and other mining pollutants (historic and current) in the watershed.
5. Humbug Creek is listed for copper, mercury, sediment, and zinc on the 303-d list for impaired water bodies. Work to decrease the negative watershed impacts from hydraulic diggings at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park and its surrounding watershed.

## **Private Property**

### **Desired Future Condition**

River users, public agency personnel and private property owners understand and respect each other's rights and responsibilities in the South Yuba corridor and work together to find ways to manage the river effectively.

### **Existing Condition**

Land ownership in the South Yuba River corridor is a patchwork of private and public lands. As a result, visitors have the potential to pass through private lands when accessing and recreating on public lands within the corridor. Some property owners welcome visitors to share their land. Others prohibit public access. There are conflicts at times between the visiting public and private property owners. Private property has been misused and occasionally damaged by thoughtless (and sometimes malicious) recreation visitors.

Wild and Scenic River status is controversial among private property owners, with some of them fearful the government will use the power of eminent domain to acquire their property. Some private property owners are also concerned that Wild and Scenic designation will greatly increase the visitation of the river.

### **Management Actions**

1. Develop a stewardship program to enhance on-the-river presence, monitor effects, and work with agencies and private land-owners to enhance river management.
2. Provide public education and signage about private/public boundaries, river conservation and rules.
3. Land purchase and exchange will only be undertaken when there is a willing seller and a willing buyer.

## **Public Safety/Law Enforcement**

### **Desired Future Condition**

Adequate funding is available to public safety and law enforcement agencies to enforce local, state, and federal laws and regulations, and to provide adequate emergency medical, search and rescue services.

Law enforcement activities provide a safe environment, protect resources, and encourage river users' respect for the environment they have entered. A high priority is placed on minimizing unlawful activities that impair the enjoyment of other river users and neighbors, or damage cultural and natural resources.

All public agencies cooperate in performing their public safety and law enforcement responsibilities to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.

### **Existing Condition**

There are several agencies with law enforcement/public safety responsibilities within the planning area. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) has primary or concurrent jurisdiction on both public and private property throughout the county, which includes all of the management planning area. While California State Parks peace officers' jurisdiction includes the entire state, their primary duties are focused on State Parks property and within an established "Zone of Impact" near the parks. BLM and USFS peace officers enforce federal regulations and investigate crimes that occur upon, or involve lands or resources they manage. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CDF) investigate fires, and both CDF and USFS enforce fire regulations. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has statewide authority, but is primarily engaged in activities involving roads and highways, state facilities, motor vehicles, and vessels. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) also has rangers. They work primarily on Englebright Lake and ACOE lands adjacent to the lake.

The primary law enforcement activities within the planning area involve activities that affect public safety. Enforcement of laws concerning crimes against persons, such as theft, auto burglary, assault, indecent exposure, being under the influence, etc., are the highest priority. Fortunately, these crimes occur infrequently. More common infractions involve minor drug and alcohol crimes, illegal parking, and various other nuisance violations. State Parks Rangers and federal peace officers also act as first responders to accidents on the river. Nevada County Sheriffs Office has the primary responsibility for search and rescue.

### **Management Actions**

1. Standardize, to the extent possible, regulations throughout the corridor.

2. Minimize conflicts by providing for the separation of incompatible uses.
3. Provide public information through placement of signs, informational contacts, and public outreach.
4. Develop mutual aid agreements
5. Ensure access for fire and safety vehicles in all areas through education and enforcement.

## **Scenic Values**

### **Desired Future Condition**

The existing Scenic Values of the South Yuba River are maintained, protected or enhanced over time. Management activities continue as needed, but are implemented in a way that the desired Scenic Values are protected.

### **Existing Condition**

Both the federal recommendations and the State Wild and Scenic River designation identified scenery as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value for the South Yuba River. The Scenic Values were considered of “particular note because of the wide variety of high quality features over the 39 mile length of river. Large sculptural smooth boulders and bedrock are major attractions both for scenic and recreation values. Other water features such as pools and falls along with the steep canyon walls that provide a dramatic steep canyon setting are the other Scenic Values” (22 Westside Rivers, Wild and Scenic River Study Report, Final Environmental Impact Statement, 1999).

The interplay of smooth sculpted rocks and wide variety of shapes, sizes, and depths of emerald pools provide unending viewing opportunities while also supporting wonderful waterplay opportunities that attract thousands of people to the river. Many of the pools are accented by small waterfalls, riffles, or rapids that add to the high scenic values. These same water features provide additional swimming opportunities where people can slide over the rocks and water into deep pools. Every segment of the river has a unique set of pools and rock formations that people enjoy viewing, exploring, and using. Many of the historic features listed under the Cultural Resources section also contribute to the aesthetic values along the river. Some notable examples include historic bridges such as the covered bridge at Bridgeport. The small town of Washington provides a rustic and historic character to that part of the river and can be seen as part of its aesthetic value.

The canyon walls along the South Yuba River vary from dense coniferous forests on the north facing slopes at the higher elevations to brush, oak scrub, and manzanita on the south facing slopes, particularly at the lower elevation near Bridgeport. Overall the slopes look quite natural with only a few road incursions down into the canyon at the

various bridge crossings of the river. The deep canyon walls provide dramatic settings for the river corridor, and in many areas offer a strong sense of isolation from the large towns and cities of California.

### **Visual Quality Objectives**

The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have **Visual Quality Objectives and Levels (VQO)** set in their Land Management Plans that describe the level of alteration to the natural landscape that is acceptable. A **Retention VQO** means that management activities must mimic the natural landscape. No alterations to the landscape should be apparent to the casual observer within six months of project completion. A small parcel of National Forest System lands near Lang Crossing is set for a Retention VQO. Partial Retention means that management activities must borrow from the natural landscape in regards to line, texture, shape, and color. Alterations to the landscape can be somewhat apparent to the casual observer but they should look fairly natural when viewing the broader landscape. For the Forest Service, almost the entire corridor is set for a Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective. For the Bureau of Land Management, the corridor is set for a Visual Resource Management Class II, which is equivalent to a Retention VQO. State Park lands do not have formal Visual Quality Objectives, however their mandate is to maintain and protect the natural landscape as well as heritage features. This would equate to managing for primarily retention VQOs and some Partial Retention in the more popular day use sites.

Since the Wild and Scenic River recommendation came after the Forest Plan adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) the VQOs need to change to better reflect the need to protect or enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Scenic Values on the South Yuba River. A Retention VQO within the 1/2 mile river corridor is the best way to protect Scenic Values. This is one of the issues that will be addressed for the entire river and may be addressed differently for different river segments. There also may be a need to provide more latitude with fuel management activities and allow a one to two year recovery period for those activities to meet a retention condition.

### **Management Actions**

1. Scenic standards will protect or enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Value of Scenery. For BLM, the standard is VRM Class II. For the Tahoe National Forest, the standard is Retention VQO for within the quarter mile corridor. State Parks will manage consistent with federal agency scenery standards.
2. Scenery management will be directed towards public land, not private land.
3. Scenic standards will allow for short term visual effects (up to 2 years) from fuel management activities occasionally while maintaining the overall, long-term visual quality of the corridor.

## **Transportation Infrastructure**

### **Desired Future Condition**

Consistent with the Vision Statement, local governments manage the transportation infrastructure to maintain and improve roads and bridges that support human uses on the South Yuba River.

### **Existing Condition**

There are six points for vehicular access to the South Yuba River Canyon: State Highways 49 and 20, four county, private and Forest Service roads that parallel or cross the South Yuba River. These road systems provide access points to the river wherever they cross, and multiple access points where they parallel the river, such as North Bloomfield and Maybert Roads. Over time, these roads will continue to receive varying levels of maintenance, and occasionally bridges may be replaced, and/or upgraded as necessary.

A powerline across the canyon is located just west of the bridge over the South Yuba River at Highway 49. Any proposed utility infrastructure project would be subject to project-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. Additional utilities will be placed in existing utility corridors where possible.

### **Management Actions**

1. Seek help and input from the community in maintaining roads and bridges.
2. Explore possibilities of public transportation to river crossings. (County reports two constraints; one fiscal, the other physical. The roads to Edwards and Purdon Crossings are unpaved and very difficult for buses to navigate.)
3. Maintain current extent and quality of transportation infrastructure.
4. Identify, retain, and maintain historic bridges as appropriate.

## **Vegetation (Habitat)**

### **Desired Future Condition**

Native Riparian Vegetation: Native riparian vegetation is disease-free and located within all areas where habitat conditions are favorable for its growth. Native riparian vegetation is maintained and/or improved so it provides healthy soil, plant, and water flow conditions.

Terrestrial Vegetation: Terrestrial vegetation within the corridor is maintained and/or improved so that it provides healthy soil, plant, and water flow conditions.

### **Existing Condition**

Mixed conifer forest covers most of the corridor and watershed. It is found on a variety of slopes, aspects, and soils within and adjacent to the corridor. Tree species composition is varied. Incense cedar and Douglas-fir are frequently present, but sugar pine is found in much reduced numbers compared to historical estimates. Ponderosa pine is found in most of the low elevations, and above 5,000 feet, Jeffery pine replaces the Ponderosa pine. Black oak is widespread and dominates in areas that have been disturbed by fire, timber harvest, clearings, and in areas of poorer soils. Hardwood-dominated forests do exist at the lower elevations. Shrubfields are present and scattered throughout the corridor, primarily on sites with lower soil productivity, and in disturbed areas.

Vegetation within the corridor is known to be infected and/or susceptible to insects and disease, although these are not considered significant issues at this time.

The corridor is considered relatively weed free in the eastern portion. Small occurrences of weeds do exist, and are generally associated with areas of heavy use and ground disturbance.

### **Management Actions**

1. Prevent, eliminate, and/or control undesired non-native vegetation in selected areas.
2. Develop a stewardship program to prevent, eliminate, and/or control undesired non-native vegetation. Work with stakeholders to share information.
3. Ensure a renewable supply of snags and large downed logs.
4. Identify and prioritize areas in need of vegetative improvement.
5. Improve riparian and other vegetation in selected areas.
6. Inventory and evaluate special aquatic features for potential improvement.

## **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

### **Desired Future Condition**

The South Yuba River continues to be a free flowing river and water quality is maintained or improved over time. Outstandingly Remarkable Values for the South Yuba River are effectively protected and enhanced over time. Management that helps protect or enhance Outstanding Remarkable Values for the South Yuba River are clearly directed toward public lands. Public land management agencies seek opportunities for



cooperation with private land-owners but clearly do not require or restrict choices on private land.

### **Existing Condition**

#### **California State Designation**

The South Yuba River was designated a California Wild and Scenic River on January 1, 2001 after the governor signed a bill to add the river to the California Wild and Scenic River System on October 10, 1999. The law states that the South Yuba River “shall be preserved in its free-flowing state, together with its immediate environment, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the state.” Free-flowing means existing or flowing without artificial impoundment, diversion or other modification of the river.

The State-designated rivers are regarded as "self-administering." Normally there are no comprehensive Wild and Scenic River Management Plans developed for State-designated rivers. The goal of the South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan is to develop Management Actions to support the state designation as well as a State Wild and Scenic River Management Plan.

The South Yuba River is designated as Scenic and Recreational in the state statute. A Scenic river is one that is “free from impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.” Recreational rivers are those that are “readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.”

The South Yuba River is:

**Scenic** – from Lang Crossing to the confluence with Fall Creek

**Recreational** – from the confluence with Fall Creek to the confluence with Jefferson Creek below the town of Washington

**Scenic** – from the confluence with Jefferson Creek to the confluence with Kentucky Creek below Bridgeport

#### **Federal Recommendation**

The lower South Yuba River was formally recommended by both the BLM and the Forest Service for Recreational and Scenic designation under the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. This recommendation is found in the *Record of Decision for 22 Westside Rivers*, Tahoe National Forest and BLM, dated May 1999. The usual way a recommended river is added to the Wild and Scenic River System is through Congressional action. The Governor of California can request the Secretary of the Interior to administratively designate the river as a part of the federal system. However, this process is seldom used and Governor Davis specifically stated when signing the legislation that he would not recommend it.

The formal recommendation carried some management obligations for the two federal agencies. These include:

1. To the extent the Forest Service and Bureau of Land management are authorized under law to control stream impoundments and diversions, the free-flowing characteristics of the South Yuba River cannot be modified.
2. Outstandingly Remarkable Values for the South Yuba River shall be protected, and/or enhanced, to the extent practicable. Outstandingly Remarkable Values are defined as outstanding broad recreation opportunities and high scenic qualities, water associated recreation activities, and historic values.
3. Protect these public land corridors from any dramatic change in land management activities that would preclude the river from Federal Wild and Scenic River designation or lower the classification status of any river segment.

### **Management Actions**

1. The agencies shall quantify the instream flows of the South Yuba River and its tributaries.
2. Protect and enhance the free flow character of the river, water quality, and the Outstanding Remarkable Values as mandated by law.

## CHAPTER 4 – RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Outdoor recreation is by far the dominant use of public lands along the South Yuba River, and the use most in need of new management direction. For this reason, it is being treated separately from other management topics. Recreation that either utilizes the entire river corridor or is managed consistently riverwide is first discussed in general terms. Following the riverwide discussion, an explanation of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is given. ROS is a planning tool that explains user expectations of recreation experiences at various locations along the river corridor. Next is a description of how many users the river corridor can accommodate called Visitor Capacity. Management Actions are then described; first by those common to all planning units, and then by those unique to the individual planning units.

### Riverwide Recreation

#### *Desired Future Condition*

The South Yuba River corridor will be managed to protect and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values that qualified the river for inclusion in the California Wild and Scenic River System.

Opportunities will be available for a broad range of recreational activities, consistent with social, environmental, physical and managerial visitor capacities as established by the Plan.

#### *Existing Condition*

The South Yuba River provides visitors with superb opportunities for water-related recreation and associated day use activities in a wide range of settings amid great natural beauty. The river is within a steep walled canyon and consists of a series of rapids and attractive pools with large blocks of water-worn granite, gravel bars, and sandy beaches interspersed at random. Clear, relatively warm water provides very good opportunities for waterplay and swimming for extended periods, which is uncommon for the Sierra. The waterplay and swimming were values found outstandingly remarkable in the Federal Wild and Scenic River Study.

These unique qualities of the South Yuba River have endeared it to many local residents who see it as part of the eclectic cultural fabric of Nevada County. While many people use the river for traditional recreation activities, others see it as an opportunity for spiritual growth, inspiration, or meditation. The most common activities along the river corridor are swimming, waterplay, sunbathing, exploring the rock formations, rapids, and

“water slides,” picnicking, fishing, bird watching, gold panning, photography, or just appreciating nature and enjoying the scenery and dynamics of the river. In addition to the river-associated activities, users like to hike or ride mountain bikes on the trails along or near the river.

Most visitors to the South Yuba River are local residents or visitors from the nearby urban areas of Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, or Reno. In the warmer months, they spend afternoons at their favorite places along the river, and are usually home before dark. Use of the river triples on the weekends, but the general pattern of afternoon use continues. People still visit the river during the winter, but not in the same numbers as during the summer.

High priority challenges associated with recreation on the South Yuba River are sanitation, impact on private property and public health and safety. Restroom facilities are few and widely scattered. There are also problems with parking, conflicts between recreation groups (perhaps the biggest of which involves rowdy drinking parties), occasional crowded conditions in certain areas, and people with dogs. Leaving behind trash and glass bottles that can break is another general concern. A serious concern of local residents is the possibility of a wildfire starting along the river, and burning up the canyon slopes toward residential areas. Drowning accidents happen with distressing frequency during periods of high flow.

In terms of numbers of people, outdoor recreation is easily the dominant human use of the South Yuba River.

### **Recreation Opportunity Spectrum**

A Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is used to identify key broad categories of recreation activities and experiences that occur on the South Yuba River. If these recreation activities can be identified, then these opportunities can be administered by managing the setting, the facilities, signing, level of management presence, level of law enforcement, and kinds of access to these areas. The terminology for this Recreation Opportunity Spectrum has been customized to fit the South Yuba River. The definitions and categories are directed toward summer, peak use, water-oriented activities. Other recreation activities may be important and equally valued, but may not require ROS characterizations for management purposes.

The recreation opportunities for the South Yuba River are organized into three major categories, followed by the recreation experiences associated with that area. The three areas are described as follows: 1) High Use/High Management Areas, providing opportunities for high levels of social interaction characterized by high levels of use with people in close proximity; 2) Transition Areas, providing opportunities for moderate levels of social interaction characterized by moderate levels of use with people in close to moderate proximity to each other; and 3) Remote Areas, providing opportunities for low levels of social interaction characterized by a focus on appreciation and a sense of solitude or remoteness.

A more detailed description for these three areas and their associated recreation experiences is listed below:

### **High Use/High Management Areas**

- High level of social encounters. Social interactions are an important part of the recreation experience. Gregarious behavior is typical.
- Crowds, crowding together and high levels of uses are typical. People are willing to tolerate higher densities of people, expect amenities, seek interpretation, and desire social group situations. Family groups and group interaction are often important.
- Access: People of any age or physical ability. This results in agency attention to access and safety, such as sidewalks, steps, footbridges, wider trails, handicapped access and parking, barriers/rails, poison oak control, and provision of toilet facilities.
- Group dynamics and large groups are typical or can be accommodated.
- Remoteness is not particularly important or the focus of users.
- Developed facilities such as parking lots, restrooms, trash containers and collection, picnic tables, interpretive signs, interpretive programs, information signs, bulletin boards, and rules and regulations postings are all typical in these areas.
- Law enforcement and “public education” are more active and visible. Visitors expect to see law enforcement available and expect provisions for their safety.

### **Transition Areas**

- Moderate level of social encounters. Social interactions of moderate importance as part of the recreation experience.
- Crowds are fewer and smaller in size. Crowding together is moderate and levels of use moderate. Family groups and interaction may continue to occur but typically with moderate or small family groups.
- Provides a buffer between the high use and remote areas. Allows for some use to overflow to the transition area during peak use days.
- Access: People are willing to travel further or across steeper or more difficult terrain. People tend to be more destination-oriented and have more outdoor skills. Agencies typically provide trails and signs but the trails may be narrower, less developed, and possibly more strenuous.
- Group dynamics and large groups are less typical.
- Remoteness is starting to be a value or the purpose of destination.
- Developed facilities and associated interpretive signs, information signs, rules and regulations and other indications of agency management either do not exist or are low-key.

- Law enforcement is present, but less visible. Focus tends to be more on public education and public safety.

### **Remote Areas**

- Low levels of social encounters are typical or expected and sought after.
- Crowds are not encountered. Crowding together with others is avoided and levels of use are very low. Family groups and interaction may continue but tends towards small family groups.
- Access: People are destination oriented and are willing to deal with difficult terrain or travel further to enjoy specific river settings in relative isolation. A sense of accomplishment is associated with just getting to the remote area. People in remote areas typically have better physical abilities and outdoor knowledge that enables them to access these remote areas. Agencies may provide some trail and information signs but the trails will be narrow, possibly steeper, and less developed. People may also access areas by rock hopping, floating, kayaking, or hiking cross-country.
- Group dynamics, particularly with large groups, is not typical.
- Remoteness, self-reliance, appreciation of solitude, self-learning, and self-discovery are all important recreation experiences.
- Developed facilities purposely do not exist. People are expected to use their own skills and knowledge to enjoy these areas. An occasional sign may be placed to identify land ownership or key information about trails.
- Law enforcement is very low key and not present on a regular basis.

All ROS designations were approved by the community group. These designations are described in each of the individual planning units. These designations are also displayed visually on maps, located in Appendix B.

## **Recreation Visitor Capacity**

### **The Basic Idea**

The concept of Visitor Capacity is intended to help land management agencies sustain recreation opportunities while maintaining environmental conditions in an acceptable fashion. It is a complicated system, involving judgments on the relative acceptability of recreational impacts on a case-by-case, site-specific basis.

Visitor Capacity is currently defined as a prescribed number and type of visitor that will be accommodated in an area. Two general factors enter into this: First, the land itself, and second, the quality of the recreation experience.

The land is the setting for outdoor recreation activity. There is a direct correlation between the quality of the outdoor environment and the quality of an outdoor recreation experience.

All recreation activities will have some degree of physical or environmental impact on the condition of the land over time. In some instances, these impacts are acceptable, but in others, they are not. It depends on the nature of the activity, and on the location and type of natural habitat where the activity takes place. Environmental factors that can be impacted by recreation include water quality, soils, wildlife, density, cultural resources, and variety of vegetation. Most of these can be accurately measured and evaluated.

Recreation facilities such as parking lots, picnic tables, restrooms, or trails are also a part of the outdoor setting, and can be impacted by continuous use. Like the environmental factors, the condition and use of facilities can be measured and evaluated. These same facilities can also be used as a tool to control capacity. For example, a parking lot can only hold a certain number of cars for a facility and therefore limit the number of people that can visit the facility.

Recreation quality is harder to measure than the physical aspects of the environmental setting because it is subjective. The quality of the recreation experience – personal satisfaction and associated benefits - is essentially a perception by an individual person and more difficult to measure. One way is to visit a recreation area and systematically ask people how they are doing. Observation is another way – are there lines to use the restrooms? Do people seem inhibited from fully enjoying themselves? Do new arrivals take one look and go somewhere else?

Much of the perceived quality of a recreation experience has to do with the number of people at a recreation site. For any given setting and site, people have an expectation for the number of people that is acceptable. Developing some idea of an acceptable level or number of people for a site or area is considered to be the Visitor Capacity. A previous recreation study for the South Yuba River developed by the consulting firm WRC Environmental took an initial look at the Visitor Capacity for different areas of the river. The study developed three categories of use that characterize the sense of crowding as follows: low contact, crowding is not apparent; moderate contact, crowding is just becoming apparent but people are only aware of some crowding; high contact, crowding is clearly apparent to people and arrangements or adjustments are made to accommodate more people. A fourth category was developed called the Maximum Theoretical Capacity, but this level is expected to be socially unacceptable. For each site a number of visitors is recommended in a range that would be considered acceptable for each site. One of the tasks for this planning effort and in subsequent evaluations will be to validate numbers for these sites.

To make a decision on Visitor Capacity, objective information provides the starting point of discussion on what is or isn't acceptable. Judgments on the acceptability of impacts will vary widely, depending on the physical and social characteristics of a given site, the sort of activities people want to do at that site, and on the types of people themselves.

### **Follow-Up: Adaptive Management**

Once the acceptable limits of impacts are decided, the managing agency has something to work with. Thresholds can be established that will indicate if a site is beginning to exceed its prescribed Visitor Capacity. If that is the case, the agency can then take the actions necessary to correct the situation. Typically, this will be some sort of restriction on visitor behavior, or perhaps an expansion of recreation facilities. The policy of the managing agencies will be to first utilize the least restrictive Management Actions required to resolve the problem, then, if necessary, progress to more restrictive rules. Organized groups and commercial permittees typically will be restricted before casual users.

### **Visitor Capacity for the South Yuba River**

A Visitor Capacity was developed through the community planning process for Planning Unit One. There was general agreement that peak use at Bridgeport was past its threshold for Visitor Capacity at its two major beaches, Kneebone Beach and Family Beach at certain peak weekends in the summer months. The peak use took advantage of almost unlimited parking on the local highway which allowed parking in areas never intended for State Park use but close enough to be effectively used. Community members, to determine the Visitor Capacity for these beaches at Bridgeport, conducted two surveys in August 2004. As part of the survey, the number of parked vehicles was counted. Another factor in determining the Visitor Capacity for Bridgeport was to meet the broad State Park Planning mission. The numbers developed by the group were similar to the ranges identified in the South Yuba River Recreation Survey report. The capacities developed are listed in this chapter under the Planning Unit Management Actions. Parking established to meet Visitor Capacity threshold in Planning Unit 1 is set at 160 spaces.

For the other Planning Units there was agreement that the Visitor Capacities were not close to reaching the threshold of Visitor Capacity. It was observed that in each of these planning areas, the parking areas were the limiting factor and would continue to limit use unless some major increase in parking capacity was developed. Due to steep terrain and community opposition, there are no proposals to significantly increase parking at this time. Therefore, the group agreed to let the parking limit the amount of use. With that in mind, the group agreed that there was no need to develop a specific threshold or capacity for these Planning Units. For now, and into the foreseeable future, the agencies will use the recreation visitor use range for low to high social contact developed in the recreation survey mentioned above. This range of recreation visitor use will be used as a reference point for monitoring the Visitor Capacity for Planning Units 2 through 5. Monitoring would also continue at these sites for water quality, vegetative trampling, and other possible recreation impacts. This commitment is documented under planning unit management actions and in Chapter 5 monitoring.



## **Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation**

The Purpose and Need described a “shared vision” for public lands. The managing agencies attempted, wherever possible, to offer consistent management direction in the corridor. This direction provides for more effective land management and consistency for public uses in the corridor. During the process of evaluating the various Planning Units, the community group and the managing agencies crafted a list of Management Actions that apply to the entire river corridor.

### **Trash/Sanitation**

1. Where provided, keep trash cans from overflowing.
2. Add recycling bins where feasible.
3. Emphasize “Pack your trash home.”

### **Stewardship**

4. Develop a stewardship program to enhance on-the-river presences, monitor effects, and work with agencies and private landowners to enhance river management.
5. Consider organizing a community watch/education group as a first contact group. Work in conjunction with the land management and other law enforcement agencies.

### **Trails**

6. Do an inventory of the feeder trail system. Evaluate, improve the keepers, close the rest.
7. Continue maintenance, encourage volunteer assistance, control poison oak.
8. New trail development in transition and remote areas may be considered through an additional public process. Maintaining the Outstandingly Remarkable Values and Recreational Opportunity Spectrum classification will be important evaluation factors in the planning process.
9. Provide accessibility where practicable.
10. For all major artery trails, adopt maintenance, educational signs and design aspects for each trail to reduce erosion and speed to improve safety and in accordance with established Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.

### **Fees**

11. Continue existing policy of charging no fees because collection of fees is not cost effective.
12. If, in the future, fee collection becomes cost effective, fee collection will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Campfires**

13. Open campfires on public lands are not allowed anywhere within the corridor year round. Where camping is allowed, gas camp stoves are allowed unless fire

restrictions are in effect. Fires are allowed only in agency-provided pedestal grills and fire rings in designated sites.

### **Alcohol**

14. Continue the policy of the prohibition of alcohol on State Park lands. Ban possession of alcohol in high use areas on BLM and Forest Service lands. Consumption allowed in transition and remote areas on both BLM and Forest Service lands. Monitor for compliance and problems and modify if needed.

### **Nude Sunbathing**

15. Continue policy of enforcing public nudity laws at river crossings, developed sites, and where complaints are received.

### **Angling**

16. Angling is allowed throughout the corridor, subject to California Department of Fish and Game codes.

### **Public Safety/Law Enforcement**

17. Ban all glass containers.
18. Explore feasibility of placing emergency phones at strategic locations.
19. Increase patrols as budgets allow.

### **Dogs**

20. Encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs.

### **Hunting**

21. On State Parks lands, maintain current policy of no hunting. This includes no possession of bows or arrows. On BLM and Forest Service lands, allow bow hunting in transition and remote areas only. Monitor for compliance and problems and modify if needed.

### **Shooting**

22. No discharge of firearms within river corridor on BLM lands. No possession of firearms on State Parks or Forest Service lands.
23. Target shooting with firearms is prohibited on all public lands within the river corridor.

### **Signs**

24. Develop a riverwide signing plan. Install signs on:
  - Interpretation
  - Trespass (Private/public: Need to delineate boundaries)
  - Nature appreciation
  - Develop signs created by locals
  - The “know” information (alcohol, dogs, bottles, campfires, etc).
  - Maps
  - Wildlife encounters

## **Lands**

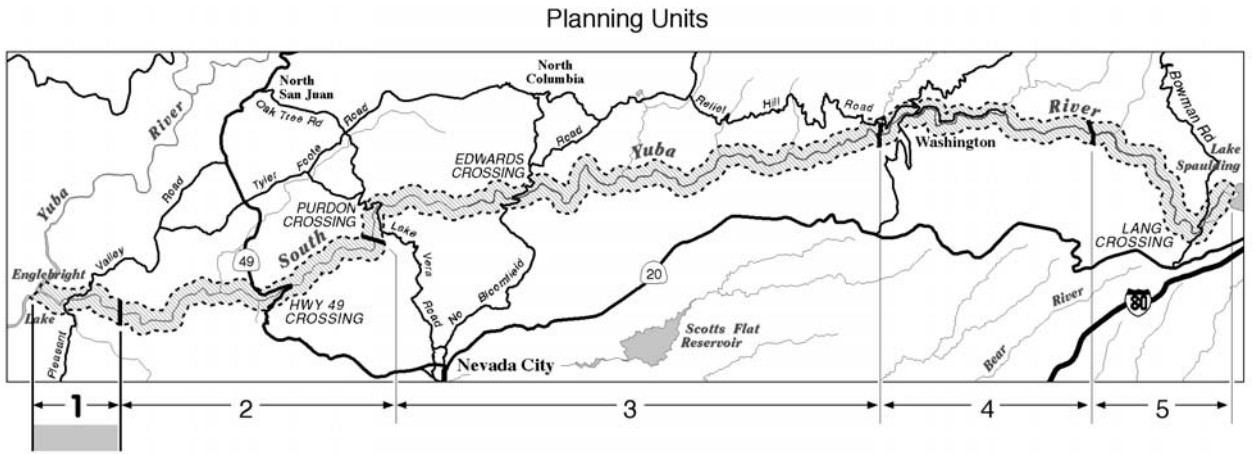
25. Publicly-owned lands shall be managed to preserve scenic, biological, geological, and historical values while providing public access and outdoor recreation at a level consistent with resource preservation.
26. All agencies will follow the policy of working with willing seller/willing buyer relationship only. Condemnation will not be used.
27. California Department of Parks and Recreation, BLM, and USFS will make a reasonable effort through willing seller/ willing buyer relationships to acquire additional property where it is clear the aquisition will enhance the public benefit and management of the South Yuba River. Newly acquired lands within the South Yuba River corridor will become part of the Planning Unit where it is located and it will be subject to the management prescriptions for that Planning Unit.

## **Miscellaneous**

28. Apply modified Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) to South Yuba River corridor. (See description for each planning unit on the following pages.)
29. Do a feasibility study for commercial boating with appropriate public input addressing issues about protection of Outstandingly Remarkable Values, private property rights, boater transportation and access, flow regimes, camping locations if overnight trips are allowed, compatibility between private and commercial boaters, and use of fees to help manage the river. Funding source to be provided by the private sector and administered by the agencies.
30. During FERC relicensing, consider opportunities to improve whitewater boating and angling.
31. Consider accessibility needs and implement wherever possible.
32. Maintain the status quo on equestrian use in the river corridor.
33. Special use permits, including commercial ventures, will be considered on a case by case basis, with appropriate analysis.



# Planning Unit 1





## **Planning Unit 1**

### **Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Designations**

1. From Point Defiance (Englebright Reservoir) to Kentucky Creek, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
2. From Kentucky Creek to French Corral Creek, the ROS Designation is – **HIGH USE**.
3. From French Corral Creek to the waterfall located 800 feet upstream from the washout on Buttermilk Bend Trail, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
4. From the waterfall 800 feet upstream from the washout on Buttermilk Bend Trail to the eastern Army Corps of Engineers boundary (end of Planning Unit 1), the ROS Designation is – **REMOTE**.

### **Visitor Capacity Designations**

1. Request County to eliminate some parallel parking on the roadside to meet Visitor Capacity requirements.
2. Establish a Maximum Visitor Capacity in the range of 400 – 600 people at one time in the entire Planning Unit by limiting parking to 160 spaces. (Current number of spaces is approximately 200).
3. If more than three days are over capacity during the six high-use weekends (June 15 to July 30), take action to reduce visitation. (See adaptive management in Chapter 5.)
4. Annually monitor the people-to-car ratio two to four times during peak periods.

### **Management Actions**

#### **Nature Appreciation**

1. Establish a self-guided nature trail.
2. Provide a better variety of guides and other books at the Visitor Center.
3. Provide more docent-guided tours for general visitors.
4. Provide more children's activities.
5. Continue wildflower labeling on the Buttermilk Bend Trail.

#### **Commercial/Special Events**

1. Investigate the suitability of a food service concession that complements the park's aesthetics.
2. Allow special events with appropriate stipulations.

## **Parking**

1. If determined that parking needs to be modified based on the Visitor Capacity in Planning Unit 1, study the feasibility of reconfiguring existing onsite parking. If it is determined at a future time that visitor capacity should be increased, a parking lot redesign will be an issue for the State Park General Plan.
2. Establish a limited number of short-term parking spaces to accommodate visitors who are planning a short stay at the park.

## **Trash/Sanitation (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Investigate, plan, and implement increased restroom facilities, including composting toilets where feasible.
2. Empty trash containers more often and/or provide more trash containers in heavy use areas.

## **Stewardship (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Park Facilities**

1. Develop a plan to use the barn for interpretation and implement the Plan when possible.
2. To elaborate the educational opportunities, encourage expansion of Visitor Center during the General Plan process.
3. Improve supply of drinking water.
4. Investigate the need to increase the number of picnic tables and benches.
5. Install sign and improve pedestrian walkway under Pleasant Valley Road.

## **Trails (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Waterplay**

1. Regularly monitor the use and take appropriate action to protect and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

### **Fees**

1. No fees will be proposed at this time.

### **Camping**

1. Designate smoking and non-smoking areas.
2. No developed campgrounds are recommended in Planning Unit 1. Army Corps of Engineers will continue to manage facilities at Point Defiance.
3. Continue policy of no camping on State Park lands until the general plan is considered.



**Campfires (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Alcohol (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue current policy of prohibiting alcohol in Planning Unit 1.

**Nude Sunbathing (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Angling (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue agency participation in Upper Yuba River Study.

**Public Safety/Law Enforcement (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Dogs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue current policy of limited dog access on Kneebone and Family beaches. Otherwise, dogs allowed on a leash.

**Gold Seeking**

1. Keep as is (hands and pans) for all of Planning Unit 1.

**Hunting (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue policy of closing State Parks in Planning Unit 1 to hunting and shooting.
2. Close BLM lands to shooting in Planning Unit 1.

**Shooting (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue policy of closing State Parks in Planning Unit 1 to hunting and shooting.
2. Close BLM lands to shooting in Planning Unit 1.

**Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)**

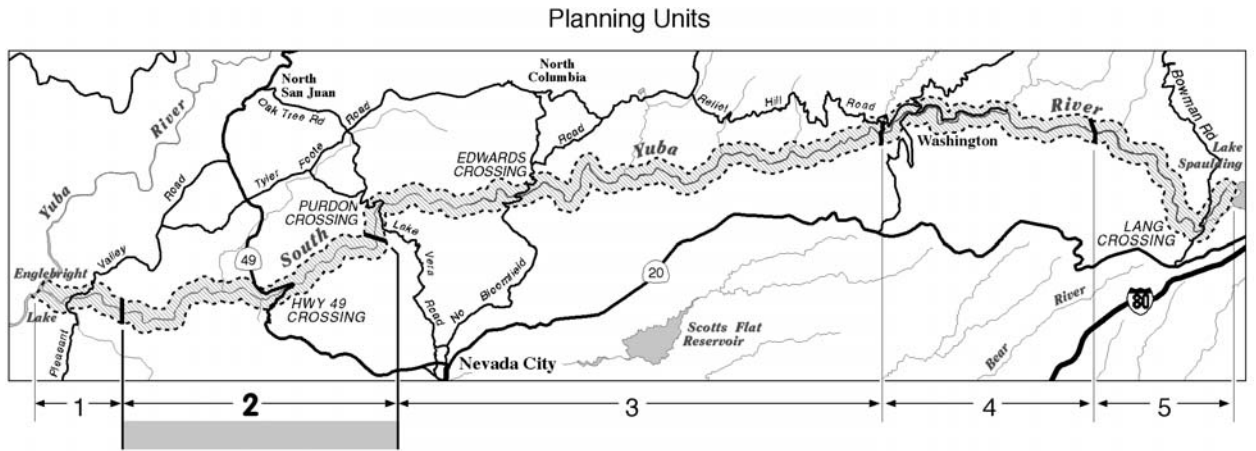
1. Continue current OHV ban in Planning Unit 1.

**Signs (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Lands (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**



# Planning Unit 2





## Planning Unit 2

### Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Designations

1. From the eastern Army Corps of Engineers boundary to the eastern Troutwine property boundary in Section 32, the ROS Designation is – **REMOTE**.
2. From the eastern Troutwine property boundary in Section 32 at the river to the boundary between Sections 32 and 33, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
3. From the Section 32/33 boundary to the top of Pan’s Pool, the ROS Designation is – **HIGH USE**.
4. From the top of Pan’s Pool to the eastern end of the bench downstream from Devil’s Slide, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
5. From the eastern end of the bench downstream from Devil’s Slide to Rock Creek (end of Planning Unit 2), the ROS Designation is – **REMOTE**.

### Visitor Capacity Designations

#### Highway 49 Crossing

Low Contact:	Fewer than 111 people at one time
Moderate Contact:	112-170 people at one time
High Contact:	171-250 people at one time

Current limitations in parking spaces preclude reaching Visitor Capacity on the river. Visitor Capacity will be monitored annually and included in the annual assessment.

### Management Actions

#### **Nature Appreciation**

1. Expand program as much as possible to include all crossings.

#### **Commercial/Special Events**

1. Continue existing policies. Agencies will appoint a lead agency in permitting events that cross boundaries.

#### **Parking**

1. Maintain the current parking capacity based on the 2000-2001 South Yuba River Recreation Study.
2. Enforce parking regulations.
3. Develop a plan that addresses pedestrian/parking safety issues at the crossings and the Independence Trailhead.

### **Trash/Sanitation (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Educate the public. Include “Pack Your Trash Home” signs. Involve local school children in developing the signs.
2. Experiment with trash can removal and eliminate recycling containers, but investigate single stream alternatives. Initiate stewardship program.
3. Work to install vault toilet facility at Highway 49 Crossing.

### **Stewardship (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

#### **Facilities/Roads**

1. No motorized vehicles will be allowed in the BLM portion of Excelsior Ditch Camp Road. This portion will be revegetated.
2. Excelsior Ditch Camp Road (aka. Hoyt Crossing/Augustine Road) - No motorized vehicles (general public use) on BLM and State Parks lands. Allow access to inholdings and valid claimants as needed, but strive to improve road location to minimize erosion.
3. Independence Trail- Maintain and improve toilets, benches, picnic tables along the trail.
4. Improve shade structures at Highway 49 Crossing.
5. Install an informational kiosk at each crossing.

### **Trails (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue with maintenance of Independence Trail.
2. Allow planning for the extension of the Independence Trail, taking into account the need for preserving and protecting the Excelsior Ditch and cultural resources associated with the ditch. ADA access will be considered in the planning, all actions dependent upon available funding.
3. Work cooperatively with public/private groups to develop a plan to preserve the Ditch on public lands.
4. Provide trail access down Excelsior Ditch Camp Road (non-motorized) to mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers.
5. Develop a parking plan and signs addressing safety on Highway 49 for the Independence Trail.
6. For all major artery trails, adopt maintenance, educational signs, and design aspects for each trail to reduce erosion and improve safety. Do this in accordance with the established Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.

### **Waterplay**

1. Regularly monitor the use and take appropriate action to protect and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

## **Fees**

1. State Parks and BLM will continue existing policies. No fees will be charged.

## **Camping**

1. No camping allowed in high use areas.
2. No camping on State Park lands.

## **Campfires (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Alcohol (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Nude Sunbathing (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Angling (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Public Safety/Law Enforcement (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Enact cooperative law enforcement agreement between agencies.

## **Dogs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. State Parks will continue leash law requirement.
2. BLM will institute a leash requirement in high-use designated areas during May through September.
3. Continue dog ban at the pool below the Hwy 49 bridge from May through September.

## **Gold Seeking**

1. Continue current policy for all three agencies.

**BLM:** BLM lands east of Edwards crossing withdrawn from mineral entry. Permits recreational dredging between Overlook Point and the Tahoe National Forest boundary. Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on all BLM lands with the exception of mining claims.

**Tahoe N.F.:** Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking only between Poorman Creek and Missouri Bar. All other National Forest lands open to mining.

**State Parks:** Allows only “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on state parks lands.

**Hunting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Shooting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)**

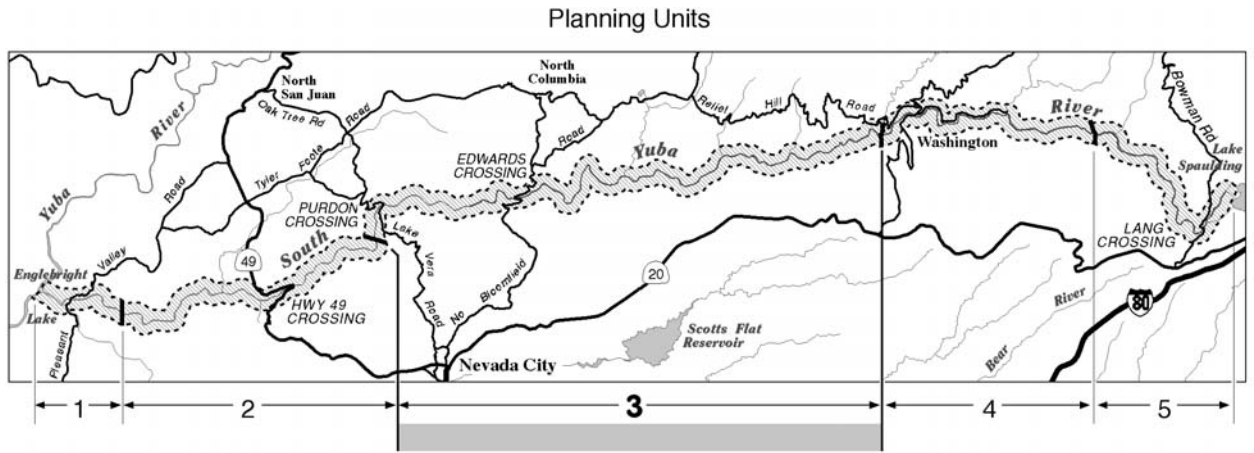
1. No OHV use on State Park lands.
2. One-half mile corridor closed to OHV on BLM lands.

**Signs (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Lands (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**



# Planning Unit 3





## Planning Unit 3

### Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Designations

1. From Rock Creek to ¼ mile downstream from Purdon Crossing, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
2. From ¼ mile downstream from Purdon Crossing to 100 yards upstream from China Dam, the ROS Designation is – **HIGH USE**.
3. From 100 yards upstream from China Dam to the State Parks boundary near Section 17/20 boundary, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
4. From the State Parks boundary near the Section 17/20 boundary to ½ mile upstream from Edwards Crossing, the ROS Designation is – **HIGH USE**.
5. From ½ mile upstream from Edwards Crossing to Primitive Camp, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
6. From Primitive Camp to the location where the South Yuba Trail leaves the river downstream from the eastern end of the National Forest Pans & Hands zone in Section 11, the ROS Designation is – **REMOTE**.
7. From the location where the South Yuba Trail leaves the river downstream from the eastern end of the National Forest Pans & Hands zone in Section 11 to Poorman Creek (end of Planning Unit 3), the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.

### Visitor Capacity Designations

#### Purdon Crossing

Low Contact:	Fewer than 132 people at one time
Moderate Capacity:	133-199 people at one time
High Contact:	200-272 people at one time

#### Edwards Crossing

Low Contact:	Fewer than 165 people at one time
Moderate Contact:	166-224 people at one time
High Contact:	225-285 people at one time

Current limitations in parking spaces preclude reaching Visitor Capacity on the river. Visitor Capacity will be monitored annually and included in the annual assessment.

### Management Actions

#### **Nature Appreciation**

1. Expand program as much as possible to include all crossings.

### **Commercial/Special Events**

1. Continue existing policies. Agencies will appoint a lead agency in permitting events that cross boundaries.

### **Parking**

1. Maintain the current parking capacity based on 2000-2001 recreation study.
2. Establish a No Parking/Tow-Away Zone between Purdon Road and the parking lot.
3. Enforce parking regulations.
4. Develop a plan that addresses pedestrian/parking safety issues at the crossings.
5. Post “No Parking” signs along the guardrail on the south side approach to the Edwards Crossing Bridge.

### **Trash/Sanitation (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Educate the public. Include “Pack Your Trash Home” signs. Involve local school children in developing the signs.
2. Experiment with trash can removal and eliminate recycling containers. Initiate stewardship program.
3. Work to install vault toilet facility at Purdon Crossing.

### **Stewardship (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Facilities**

1. Install a kiosk at each crossing.
2. Improve the access road to the Purdon Crossing parking lot.

### **Trails (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Diamond Arrow Trail: construct a trail connecting the Diamond Arrow Camp to the South Yuba River Trail near Edwards Crossing.
2. South Yuba River Connector Trail: reconstruct and realign the trail from South Yuba River Campground to approximately ¼ mile east of Edwards Crossing Bridge.

### **Waterplay**

1. Regularly monitor the use and take appropriate action to protect and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values.

### **Fees**

1. State Parks and BLM will continue existing policies. No fees will be charged.

## **Camping**

1. Continue BLM policy: no camping allowed at Day Use zone from ¼ mile below Edwards to ½ mile above Edwards.
2. No camping allowed in high use areas.
3. No camping is allowed on State Parks lands.

## **Campfires (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Alcohol (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Nude Sunbathing (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Angling (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Public Safety/Law Enforcement (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Enact cooperative law enforcement agreement between agencies.
2. Provide minimal, safe access from road to river at Edwards and Purdon Crossings.

## **Dogs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. State Parks will continue leash law requirement.
2. BLM will institute a leash requirement in high-use designated areas during May through September.

## **Gold Seeking**

1. Continue current policy for all three agencies.
  - BLM:** BLM lands east of Edwards crossing withdrawn from mineral entry. Permits recreational dredging between Overlook Point and the Tahoe National Forest boundary. Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on all BLM lands.
  - Tahoe N.F.:** Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking only between Poorman Creek and Missouri Bar. All other National Forest lands open to mining.
  - State Parks:** Allows only “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on state parks lands.
2. BLM will manage mining operations at the Lucky Lady mining claim near BLM’s Primitive Camp according to federal regulations (43 CFR 3809).

## **Hunting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Shooting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)**

1. No OHV use on State Park lands.

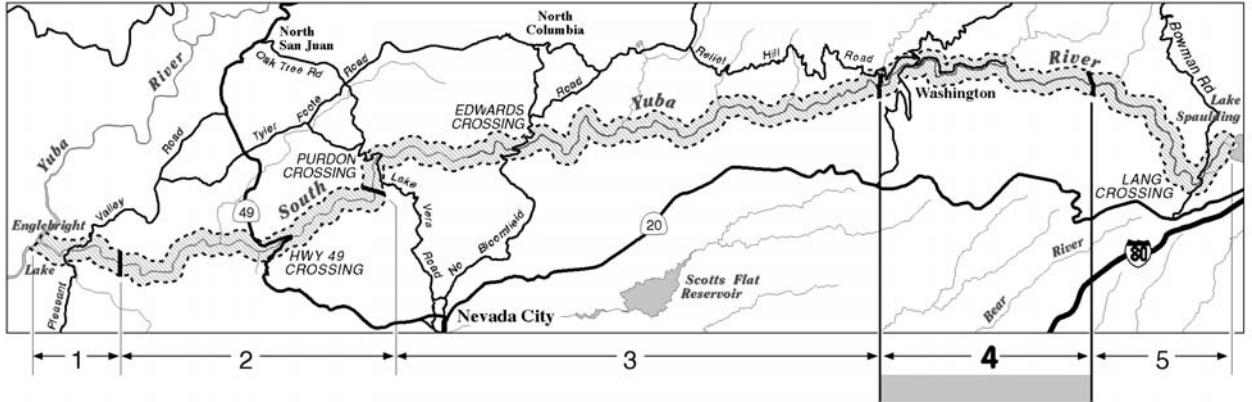
2. One-half mile corridor closed to OHV use off roads on BLM and National Forest lands.
3. Continue current policy on National Forest lands. This is: OHV land travel restricted to designated routes only.

**Signs (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

**Lands (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

# Planning Unit 4

Planning Units







## Planning Unit 4

### Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Designations

1. From Poorman Creek to the National Forest boundary just west of the town of Washington, around Section 1 and 12 boundary, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.
2. From the National Forest boundary just west of the town of Washington, around the boundary between Sections 1 and 12, to the National Forest boundary about 1 mile east of town at the boundary between Sections 7 and 8, the ROS Designation is – **HIGH USE “Modified”**.

**Note:** The High Use “Modified” is used to indicate that the ROS opportunities are different here than other segments of the river. The small community of Washington, located right along the river, introduces a more intensively developed environment of private homes, some small businesses, and two commercial campgrounds. On National Forest System lands there is only one high use area, at Keleher Picnic Ground. Most of the high use actually occurs on private land upstream of Keleher where there are attractive pools and a waterfall on Scotchman Creek. Interspersed between these high use nodes, there is private land with some permanent residences and seasonal residences. The density of use on private land is fairly low with the exception of the use at the main bridge crossing the South Yuba River just outside town.

3. From the National Forest boundary about 1 mile east of the town of Washington, at the boundary between Sections 7 and 8, to the eastern Forest Service boundary past Johnson Sink in Section 11 (end of Planning Unit 4), the ROS Designation is - **TRANSITION**.

### Visitor Capacity Designations

#### Keleher/Scotchman Creek Area

Low Contact:	Fewer than 66 people at one time
Moderate Contact:	67-95 people at one time
High Contact:	96-166 people at one time

#### Golden Quartz Area

Low Contact:	Fewer than 17 people at one time
Moderate Contact:	18-50 people at one time
High Contact:	51-88 people at one time

## **Management Actions**

### **Nature Appreciation**

1. Expand program to include Golden Quartz (see sign program for more details).

### **Commercial/Special Events**

1. Continue existing policies. Agencies will appoint a lead agency in permitting events that cross boundaries.

### **Parking**

1. Pursue fire lane designation for Maybert Road. Install “No Parking/Tow Away” signs.

### **Trash/Sanitation (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Emphasize agency/citizen cooperative efforts.
2. Emphasize “Pack Your Trash Home.”
3. Continue volunteer recycling program.
4. Replace toilet at Golden Quartz.
5. Continue to work with County’s recycling program and transfer station to improve cooperation.

### **Stewardship (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Facilities**

1. Keleher Day Use Area: Install signs addressing river access and private land, improve access trail to river on USFS property. Law enforcement effort to enforce glass, alcohol, parking and trespass. County to designate a fire lane and install No Parking signs along Maybert Road. Initiate an agreement with the Town of Washington Fire Department to tow illegally parked vehicles. Establish a camp host. This action plan will be monitored for three years. If parking and trespass problems are significantly improved through these measures, Keleher will remain open. If problems are not significantly reduced, close the site and obliterate. If opportunities for a land exchange are available, land-exchange the property, preferably for other river corridor lands.
2. Install an updated restroom at Golden Quartz.
3. Install directional signage on Maybert Rd to Golden Quartz and South Yuba Ridge Trail.
4. Install a low-key sign at Golden Quartz showing location of restroom, trails, access, etc.

5. Install a directional sign made by children on Maybert Rd. at Washington Rd. that shows location of Relief Hill Rd.
6. Work with PG&E/NID to understand timing and volume of release flows on Memorial and Mother's Day holidays or high-use times. Work with PG&E to ensure flows are as safe as possible.

### **Trails (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Doolittle Trail: make trail sign that reads "Most Difficult."
2. Continue maintenance, encourage volunteer assistance, control poison oak.
3. Complete the reroute and reconstruction of the western end of the Ridge Trail. This trail will be renamed the South Yuba Ridge Trail.

### **Waterplay**

1. Regularly monitor the use (Visitor Capacity and protection of water quality) and take appropriate action. Note: specific issues related to waterplay are listed in other topics

### **Fees**

1. Continue existing policy.
2. If fee demo is authorized for the Forest, explore fee opportunities in the corridor.

### **Camping**

1. Continue existing policy and extend restricted area (no camping or campfires) to and including South Yuba River Trailhead (boundary of Planning Unit 3/4).
2. Work with County Sheriff for better enforcement.

### **Campfires (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Alcohol (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Nude Sunbathing (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Angling (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Public Safety/Law Enforcement (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue cooperative law enforcement agreement between Forest Service and Nevada County and look for opportunities to increase enforcement capabilities.
2. Ban alcohol on public lands in Planning Unit 4.
3. Plan occasional, intensive, coordinated weekends to enforce laws and change perception of lawlessness at Keleher and Golden Quartz.

### **Dogs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Keleher and Golden Quartz: continue current policy of requiring dogs to be on leashes at Golden Quartz and Keleher Day Use Areas.

### **Gold Seeking**

1. Continue current policy in accordance with BLM, Forest Service and Fish and Game regulations.
  - BLM:** BLM lands east of Edwards crossing withdrawn from mineral entry. Permits recreational dredging between Overlook Point and the Tahoe National Forest boundary. Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on all BLM lands.
  - Tahoe N.F.:** Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking only between Poorman Creek and Missouri Bar. All other National Forest lands open to mining.
  - State Parks:** Allows only “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on state parks lands.
2. As new lands are acquired, designate as pans and hands for:
  - a. Consistency with Wild & Scenic Outstandingly Remarkable Values.
  - b. Lessening impact on recreation.
  - c. Expanding opportunities for recreational mining.
3. Require 4-cycle engines on dredges to reduce noise and oil in the river.

### **Hunting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Shooting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

### **Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)**

1. Continue current policy on National Forest lands. This is: OHV land travel restricted to designated routes only.

### **Signs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

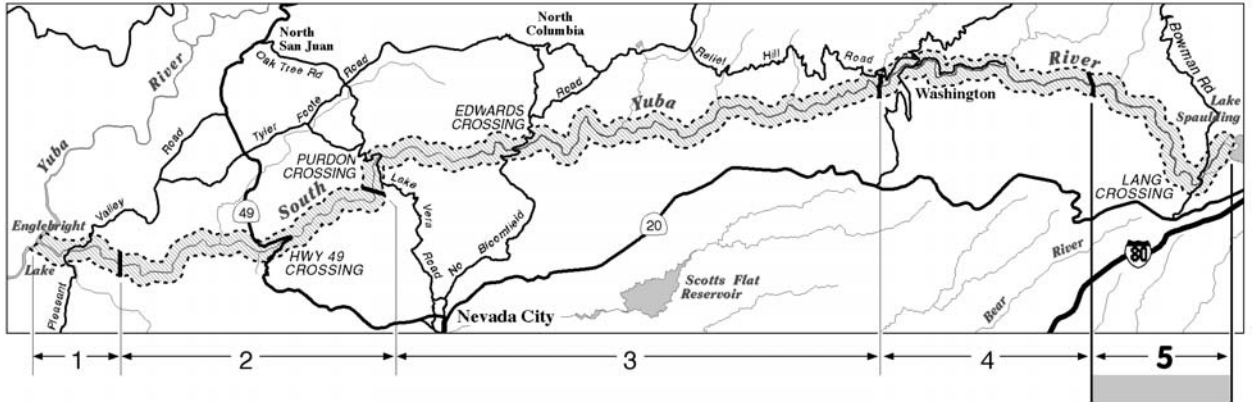
1. Develop a sign plan and entrance strategy in cooperation with the town of Washington. Emphasize durability of signs.
2. Install signs on:
  - a. Interpretation
  - b. Trespass (private/public: need to delineate boundaries)
  - c. Nature appreciation
  - d. Develop signs created by locals
  - e. Safety
  - f. The “know” information (alcohol, dogs, bottles, campfires, etc)
  - g. Maps
  - h. Wildlife encounters
3. Pursue grants to help with children making signs.

**Lands (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**



# Planning Unit 5

Planning Units







## Planning Unit 5

### Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Designations

1. From the eastern Forest Service boundary (same location as Planning Unit 4/5 boundary) past Johnson Sink in Section 11 to the waterfall at the box canyon below Emerald Pools, the ROS Designation is – **REMOTE**.  
**Note:** This waterfall was chosen because people cannot hike past the falls from upstream due to the steep rock walls.
2. From the waterfall at box canyon below Emerald Pools to Lake Spaulding outlet, the ROS Designation is – **TRANSITION**.  
*End of South Yuba Planning Corridor*

### Visitor Capacity Designations

#### Lang Crossing

Low Contact:	No data
Moderate Contact:	No data
High Contact:	Greater than 90 people at one time

### Management Actions

#### **Nature Appreciation**

1. Expand program to include Lang Crossing (see signage program for more details).

#### **Commercial/Special Events**

1. Continue existing policies. Agencies will appoint a lead agency in permitting events that cross boundaries.

#### **Parking**

1. Improve parking at Lang Crossing with a few more sites. Delineate spaces.

#### **Trash/Sanitation (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Emphasize agency/citizen cooperative efforts.
2. Emphasize “Pack your trash home.”
3. Continue volunteer recycling program.
4. Provide toilet at Lang Crossing (may involve land exchange).
5. Continue to work with County’s recycling program and transfer station to improve cooperation.

#### **Stewardship (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Facilities**

1. If willing seller and funds become available, consider purchase of Kibbe property.
2. Work with PG&E/NID to understand timing and volume of release flows on Memorial and Mother's Day holidays or high-use times. Work with PG&E to ensure flows are as safe as possible.

## **Trails (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue maintenance, encourage volunteer assistance, and control poison oak.
2. Continue to maintain the Ridge Trail, which will be renamed the South Yuba Ridge Trail.

## **Waterplay**

1. Regularly monitor the use (Visitor Capacity and protection of water quality) and take appropriate action. Note: specific issues related to waterplay are listed in other topics

## **Fees**

1. Continue existing policy of not collecting fees.
2. If fee demo is authorized for the Forest, explore fee opportunities in the corridor.

## **Camping**

1. No camping ½ mile below Lang Crossing to Spaulding Dam.
2. Work with County Sheriff for better enforcement.

## **Campfires (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Alcohol (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Nude Sunbathing (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Angling (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Public Safety/Law Enforcement (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Continue cooperative law enforcement agreement between Forest Service and Nevada County and look for opportunities to increase enforcement capabilities.
2. Increase patrols within budget constraints.
3. Plan occasional, intensive, coordinated weekends to enforce laws and change perception of lawlessness at Lang Crossing.

## **Dogs (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Dogs allowed off leash.

## **Gold Seeking**

1. Continue current policy in accordance with BLM, Forest Service and Fish and Game regulations.

**BLM:** BLM lands east of Edwards crossing withdrawn from mineral entry. Other BLM land, mining is allowed pursuant to Public Law 359 or 43 CFR 3809 federal regs. Permits recreational dredging between Overlook Point and the Tahoe National Forest boundary. Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on all BLM lands (with permission of claimant).

**Tahoe N.F.:** Allows “Hands and Pans” gold seeking only between Poorman Creek and Missouri Bar. All other National Forest lands open to mining.

**State Parks:** Allows only “Hands and Pans” gold seeking on state parks lands.

2. As new lands are acquired, designate as pans and hands for:
  - a. Consistency with Wild & Scenic Outstandingly Remarkable Values.
  - b. Lessening impact on recreation.
  - c. Expanding opportunities for recreational mining.
3. Require 4-cycle engines on dredges to reduce noise and oil in the river.

## **Hunting (also see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

1. Hunting allowed in remote areas only.

## **Shooting (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)**

1. Continue current policy on National Forest lands. This is: OHV land travel restricted to designated routes only.
2. Further explore situation on Eagle Bird Trail for possible negative impacts.

## **Signs (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**

## **Lands (see Riverwide Management Actions for Recreation)**



## **CHAPTER 5 – PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this Chapter is to explain some key activities that are foreseen to happen that will allow for plan implementation. Some management actions identified in the plan are easily understood and will be implemented directly by the three managing agencies. Some management actions are more complex and will require several steps for implementation or follow up and feedback to ensure success. The following three areas are key to implementing this Plan: Visitor Capacity, Monitoring, and Adaptive Management. Visitor Capacity is important because it can set the total number of people allowed in an area at one time. Monitoring is important because it gives feedback as to whether the management actions are successful in meeting objectives or failing. Adaptive Management is important because it provides and organizes some possible courses of action if thresholds are exceeded. Both visitor capacities and adaptive management requires monitoring, so these three key activities interact with each other in many ways. More detailed information on these three topics follows. The last part of this chapter will discuss stewardship and how volunteer efforts will be vital to implementing and monitoring many aspects of this Plan.

### **Visitor Capacity**

Visitor capacity is defined as the number and type of visitors that an area can accommodate. For some facilities like campgrounds or day use sites, the visitor capacity is easily established by the number of parking spaces provided for the facility. On the South Yuba River many of the river crossings have informal parking areas without striping or defined spaces which can accommodate a varied range of use depending on how close people park together and how far along key roads people are willing to park. Establishing the visitor capacity for these areas has been more complex. The other aspect of visitor capacity is to look at the carrying capacity of various segments (or Planning Units) of the river. Carrying Capacity is defined as the number and type of visitors that can be accommodated in an area with no unacceptable impacts on the quality of environmental resources and /or recreational opportunities. Easily measured threshold levels for various impacts will be established that will indicate if a site is beginning to exceed its prescribed visitor capacity. This will give managers an opportunity to resolve problems before they become serious. Up to now, no environmental resources have been identified that are approaching those thresholds, but it is believed that that the social carrying capacity for Planning Unit One has been passed. With this in mind the parking at Bridgeport will be reduced to 160 spaces to meet a range of visitor capacity from 400 to 600 users at one time.

A range of possible visitor capacities are listed for the other Planning Units, but more monitoring is required before maximum visitor capacity is determined. This will give managers an opportunity to resolve problems before they become serious. Monitoring will be used to determine if Visitor Capacities are meeting their objectives and whether thresholds are being reached.

## Monitoring

Existing monitoring within the South Yuba River Corridor: Presently the main formal monitoring for the South Yuba River is a water quality program run by the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL). Volunteers have been collecting water quality data for five years. Refer to Table 1 (Below) for a summary of the data being collected for SYRCL.

**TABLE 1**

Resource	Meaningful and measurable indicator for monitoring the resource	Monitoring by BLM	Monitoring by Forest Service	Monitoring by State Parks
Water quality	1. Water temperature 2. Air temperature 3. Dissolved oxygen 4. Turbidity 5. PH 6. Metals 7. Bacteria 8. Connectivity* 9. Macro invertebrates *Note: Items 1-8, criteria are set by Regional Water Quality Board.	SYRCL and volunteers collect the data. Information is shared at the technical advisory committee meetings held every 3 months.	SYRCL and volunteers collect the data. Information is shared at the technical advisory committee meetings held every 3 months.	Sediment monitors are present on a few tributaries to the SYR, and data is collected regularly. Other monitoring based on funding. SYRCL and volunteers also collect data. Information is shared at the technical advisory committee meetings held every 3 months.

Monitoring of other resources also takes place currently. For example, known occurrences of Federal or state listed rare, threatened, or endangered species are given special attention. In many cases, these limited resources have their own specific management plans, which include monitoring. Other programs such as the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) program monitor within the corridor to identify sites for restoration (removal/stabilization of hazardous material). In addition, other studies such as those conducted by the Upper Yuba River Corridor Studies program have monitored many of the resources within the corridor and have provided baseline data on those resources.

Many aspects of recreation are observed in a variety of ways that might best be described as informal monitoring. Such considerations as number of visitors at various sites, amount of trash left behind, sanitation problems near the river, number of public safety incidents, number of complaints from private landowners about litter, fires, or trespass, condition of existing trails, numbers of users on trails, condition of existing facilities, and general condition of soil and vegetative resources are observed by various agency staff and volunteers.

**Proposed Monitoring Program:** Monitoring is an important aspect of the Plan, used to determine the success of management actions in achieving the Desired Future Condition for the Key Resource Values. Depending on available funding, an active program of monitoring within the South Yuba River corridor will be developed and implemented in addition to existing monitoring efforts. The managing agencies, along with other organizations involved in monitoring, will work together to ensure compatibility of information through the Yuba Watershed Council's Monitoring Subcommittee. As a result, all monitoring will be more fully integrated between agencies and volunteer groups to better compare baseline data, identify trends, and to evaluate progress in achieving the desired condition of the river.

The South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan (SYRCMP) is designed to move resources, planned uses and visitor services toward the desired future condition. Monitoring is required to see if this is happening. The SYRCMP addresses these resources, uses and services within 1/4 mile from the ordinary high water mark of about 39 miles of the South Yuba River. The SYRCMP developed strategies that target the following areas to maintain and/or improve the outstandingly remarkable values of the South Yuba River (recreation, scenery, and cultural resources):

- Visitor capacity
- Public river access
- Public parking
- Trash collection
- Restroom facilities
- Public safety
- Private landowner concerns
- Day use
- Overnight use
- Visitor services
- Visitor facilities

Information from the monitoring program will be arrayed into four general categories:

1. Social Factors
2. Physical Factors
3. Environmental Factors
4. Managerial Factors

A variety of techniques that indicate the overall condition of the South Yuba River corridor may be included in the monitoring program. Some of these fit into more than one of the general categories. Examples include:

- Random recreation surveys of river users that address social issues; to be done several times a year.

- Number of unauthorized trails developed
- Site observations on current use and behavior
- Photographs from established photo points for signs of erosion, soil compaction, or significant vegetation loss.
- Evidence of trash, human waste
- Illegal dumping
- The waiting time to use toilets
- Number of vehicles
- User displacement
- Complaints
- Vandalism
- Crowded conditions
- Noise
- Public Safety
- Cultural resource vandalism and looting

The river crossings can be used as a starting point for monitoring. Monitoring frequency will vary from several times a year, to once a year, to once every five years, depending on the need and the kind of information being collected.

To be effective, monitoring results over a period of time need to be studied to identify trends, and acceptable limits of change.

Results from the Monitoring Program will be reviewed and evaluated with the public on a periodic basis. Indicators and standards will be established or adjusted as information comes available.



## **Adaptive Management**

In addition to monitoring, the managing agencies will follow the principles of Adaptive Management on the public lands of the South Yuba River. Basically, this means that if a management problem arises, the managing agencies will first propose the least restrictive solution to resolve the problem (Level 1). If that doesn't work, then a more restrictive action will be taken (Level 2). If that doesn't work the most restrictive action (Level 3) will be taken. Essentially, the managing agencies will progress from the least restrictive solution to a problem to the more restrictive until the problem is resolved. **At the majority of the crossings, current parking limitations restrict visitation to well below maximum capacity. The managing agencies do not expect to implement Level 3 Actions. However, should maximum capacity continue to be exceeded, these Actions offer options to reduce visitation to an acceptable level.**

The Adaptive Management Table below explains, by Planning Unit, the recommended Adaptive Management Actions for visitor capacity, the three Outstandingly remarkable Values (ORV's) of recreation waterplay, scenery, and cultural values. Except for Planning Unit 1, the visitor capacity ranges are considered initial recommended ranges based on a recreation survey conducted in 2000-2001. **The Actions outlined below are an initial outline of possible Management Actions to be taken by the agency managers. Monitoring will provide feedback on the Plan's success and assess the need to implement these actions.** Below is a table displaying the recommended Adaptive Management actions for visitor capacity, and the three Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV's) of recreation waterplay, scenery, and cultural values by Planning Unit. Except for Planning Unit 1, the visitor capacity ranges are considered initial recommended ranges based on the 2000-2001 recreation survey. Further monitoring will need to validate and possibly modify or refine these figures.

## Adaptive Management Indicators, Standards, and Actions for South Yuba River Planning Unit 1

Value to be Protected and Enhanced	Key Indicator	Management Standard/ Plan Implementation	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 1)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 2)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 3)	Sampling Method (M) Frequency (F) Participants (P) Other Factors to Consider (O)
Social setting.  Visitor Capacity	Number of people encountered at Bridgeport.	After parking is reduced to 160 spaces, Encountering no more than 400-600 people at Bridgeport at one time. No more than 3 times during the high use season.	State Parks will provide web-site notification of times when visitor capacity is exceeded. A “Park Full” sign will be placed at the intersection of Hwy. 20 and Pleasant Valley Road	Enforce parking restrictions with more effort. Some users will be turned away	State Parks will consult with steward- ship council, other agencies and public to identify successful strategies including possibly charging fees.	M: Survey- Site Observation  F: Minimum of 4 randomly selected weekend days and two weekdays during the high use season of June –September  P: St. Parks, Stewardship Group, other partners / agencies.  O: Number of vehicles, survey of users when thresholds are met, staff observations of user anti-social behavior- user displacement observation.
Outstandingly Remarkable Value (ORV) Water-play	Ability to participate in water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to participate in water play activities.	St Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	St Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	St Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	M&F: Survey a minimum of a 100 users every 5 years during the high use season when crowds hit the 400-600 threshold.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies.
Water-play	Ability to enjoy water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy their water play activities.	State Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	State Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	State Parks will employ same strategy as for visitor capacity above.	M&F: Survey a minimum of a 100 users every 5 years during the high use season when crowds hit the 400-600threshold.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies.
Scenic: Outstandingly Remarkable Value (ORV)	Ability to enjoy the scenic values of the South Yuba.	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy the scenic qualities of the South Yuba.	State Parks and BLM will work with Stewardship group and others to monitor, educate, and maintain the natural scenic values.	State Parks and BLM will work with Nevada County to help them identify ways to insure that scenic values are protected in the canyon	State Parks and BLM will not permit activities or uses that will have a long term affect on scenic values on the public lands.	M&F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years.  P: State Parks and BLM Stewardship, other partners / agencies.
Cultural ORV: Preserve cultural resources	Observed lack of degradation to sites and bridges.	Continue to increase site data base and maintain sites free from vandalism, theft, and other forms of destruction.	State Parks and BLM will encourage management practices to educate the public on preservation and stewardship monitoring.	State Parks and BLM Will increase law enforcement patrols.	State Parks and BLM, Will increase law enforcement patrols	M&F: Annually visit and maintain photo record of sites most vulnerable.  Continue to educate and build on the California Archaeological Site Stewardship program. (CASSP)  On going.  P: State Parks, Stewardship, other partners and agencies.

**Recreation Monitoring**  
**Indicators, Standards, and Actions for South Yuba River Planning Units 2 & 3**

Value to be Protected and Enhanced	Key Indicator	Management Standard	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 1)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 2)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 3)	Sampling Method (M) Frequency (F) Participants (P)
Social setting. Visitor Capacity	A. Number of people encountered at Highway 49 Crossing at one time.  B. Number of people encountered at Purdon Crossing  C. Number of people encountered at Edwards Crossing	A. Encountering no more than (250-350) People at one time (PAOT) Highway 49 site at one time.  B. Encountering no more than (150-200 PAOT) at Purdon Crossing.  C. Encountering no more than (150 – 200) PAOT at Edwards Crossing	A State Parks & BLM provide web notice if visitor capacity exceeded & disseminate info on days & times when use is not a problem.  Same as A.  BLM will take lead on providing web-site information	A St Parks will reduce the number of parking spaces available and or some users will be turned away  Same as A.  BLM will reduce parking area available for use.	A State Parks will consult with stewardship group, public, and other agencies to identify strategies to deal with over use.  Same as A  BLM will consult with stewardship group, public and other agencies.	M: Survey- Site Observation  F: Minimum of 4 random weekend days and 2 weekdays during high use season - June –September.  P: State Parks, Stewardship Group, other partners / agencies.  P: BLM, Stewardship Group, public and other Agencies.
ORV-Water-play	Ability to participate in water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to participate in water play activities.	State Parks & BLM will use same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	State Parks & BLM will use same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	State Parks & BLM will use same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	M&F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years during the high use season.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies
Water-play	Ability to enjoy water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy their water play activities.	State Parks & BLM will use the same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	State parks & BLM will use the same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	State Parks & BLM will use the same strategy as used for visitor capacity at Highway 49 above.	M&F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years during the high use season.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies
Scenic: ORV	Ability to enjoy the scenic values of the South Yuba.	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy the scenic qualities of the South Yuba.	St Parks, BLM, USFS will work with Stewardship group and others to monitor, educate, and maintain the natural scenic values.	St Parks, BLM, USFS will work with Nevada County to help them identify ways to insure scenic values are protected in the canyon	State Parks, BLM, USFS will not permit activities or uses that will have a long term affect on scenic values on the public lands.	M&F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies.
Cultural ORV: Preserve cultural resources	Observed lack of degradation to sites and bridges.	Continue to increase site database and maintain sites free from vandalism, theft, and other forms of destruction.	St Parks, BLM, USFS will conduct management practices to educate the public on preservation and stewardship.	St Parks, BLM, USFS Will increase law enforcement patrols.	St Parks, BLM, USFS Will further increase law enforcement patrols	M&F: Annually visit and maintain photo record of sites most vulnerable. Continue to educate and Build on a California Archaeological Site Stewardship program (CASSP) On going.  P: St. Parks, Stewardship, other partners / agencies.

## Indicators, Standards, and Actions for South Yuba River -Planning Units 4 & 5

Activity to be monitored	Key Indicator	Management Standard	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 1)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 2)	Potential Management Actions if Standards are not met. (Level 3)	Sampling Method (M) Frequency (F) Participants (P)
Keleher Day Use Site.	Number of people engaged in trespassing across private land from Keleher to Scotchman Creek area and associated swimming areas	Observing trespass at Keleher per monitoring session.	Tahoe National Forest (TNF) will review signs, law enforcement methods and access to river. If not adequate TNF will improve to discourage trespass.	TNF will increase law enforcement efforts and presence of TNF staff and have a host present.	TNF will close Keleher. Note: an effective approach to controlling off site parking will have to be in place before Keleher is closed.	M: Survey- Site Observation and employee reports  F: Minimum of 4 randomly selected weekend days including a holiday weekend and 2 weekdays during the high use season of June –August. Duration will be a minimum of one hour during peak arrival period  P: TNF, Stewardship Group, other partners / agencies. Note: Private land owner will be periodically consulted. Adjacent neighbors, law enforcement, and Fire Chief will also be interviewed.
Golden Quartz Day Use Site	A. Number of people encountered at Golden Quartz	A. Encountering no more than (51-88 PAOT) at Golden Quartz.	A. TNF will validate if maximum PAOTs are causing crowding or resource concerns at the beach.	A. TNF will close off some parking areas to reduce the total area available for parking.	A. TNF will consult with stewardship group and public to develop further successful strategies.	M. Survey – Site Observation.  F. Minimum of 4 randomly selected weekend days and 2 weekdays during the high use season during June to August.
Lang Crossing	B. Number of people encountered at Lang Crossing	B. Encountering no more than (90 PAOT) Lang Crossing	B. TNF will provide signing that encourages people to go to other sites when parking is full.	B. TNF will reduce the area available for parking.	B. TNF will consult with stewardship group and public to identify successful strategies to reduce use.	Same as A.
ORV-Water-play	Ability to participate in water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to participate in water play activities.	TNF will disseminate information on days and times when high use is not a problem.	TNF will consult with stewardship groups and public to identify future strategies.	Same as Level 2	M&F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years during the high use season.  P: TNF, Stewardship group other partners / agencies and public
Water-play	Ability to enjoy water-play activities	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy their water play activities.	TNF will disseminate information on days and times when high use is not a problem.	TNF will consult with stewardship groups and public to identify future strategies.	Same as Level 2	M&F: Survey a minimum of 00 users every 5 years during the high use season.  P: TNF, Stewardship, other partners / agencies and public
Scenic: ORV	Ability to enjoy the scenic values of the South Yuba.	85% of visitors reported they were able to enjoy the scenic qualities of the South Yuba.	TNF will work with Stewardship group and others to monitor, educate, and maintain the natural scenic values.	TNF will work with Nevada County to help them identify ways to insure the scenic values are protected in the canyon.	TNF will not permit activities or uses that will have a long term affect on scenic values on the public lands.	M & F: Survey a minimum of 100 users every 5 years.  P: TNF, Stewardship, other partners / agencies and public
Cultural ORV: Preserve cultural resources	Observed lack of degradation to sites and bridges.	Continue to increase site database and maintain sites free from vandalism, theft, and other forms of destruction.	TNF will conduct management practices to educate the public on preservation and stewardship.	TNF Will increase law enforcement patrols.	TNF Will further increase law enforcement patrols	M&F: Annually visit and maintain photo record of sites most vulnerable. Continue to educate and build a Stewardship watch program. On going.  P: TNF, Stewardship, other partners / agencies.

## **River Stewardship**

In order to manage the South Yuba River Corridor and watershed it will take a tremendous amount of time, effort, and dedication on the part of agencies, partners, and volunteers. The relationship between the managing agencies and several other agencies and organizations is coordinated through the Yuba Bear Watershed Council, a consortium of agencies, organizations, and individuals interested in maintaining and improving the South Yuba River and Bear River watersheds.

The agency managers are hopeful that the community-based planning process will encourage additional local stewardship of the river corridor. Many programs that fall into the stewardship category already exist. State Parks maintains an active pool of volunteer docents to run their Visitor Center, conduct wildflower and nature hikes, give history talks, demonstrate gold panning, and provide foot patrol for State Park Rangers. On summer weekends, men and women in gold vests provide informational assistance to recreationists at Bridgeport and Highway 49.

The Yuba-Bear Watershed Council focuses on issues related to the South Yuba River watershed. The Council has an education and outreach committee that has organized two “Runoff Festivals,” hosted many lectures on watershed topics, and provided an opportunity for stakeholder information exchange on a bimonthly basis. Partnerships to acquire grant funding have been successfully developed and maintained through this council and its companion foundation, the Yuba Watershed Foundation, a 401(c)(3) classified non-profit organization.

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) also provides stewardship opportunities on the South Yuba River. In addition to organizing an annual clean-up day every September, they have a team of volunteer water quality monitors. These monitors commit to monthly sampling at specific locations along the entire river corridor. SYRCL also has education and policy programs that focus on issues related to the Yuba River and its forks. They also sponsor community festivals on environmental and river-related issues.

In the Town of Washington, a local resident and several of her neighbors have led local school children in painting and installing large signs asking visitors to be fire safe. She also established recycling facilities at the two USFS day use areas, as well as at Scotchman Creek, a popular water attraction. In addition, she has collected trash from the popular beaches and shoreline areas. Numerous other groups, too many to name here, have contributed time, money, and considerable effort to improve the South Yuba River.

All the existing volunteer efforts make a tremendous difference and significantly contribute to the high quality recreation experience visitors have at the South Yuba River. The agencies really appreciate the dedication and efforts these volunteers make. As this Plan is implemented, the agencies will encourage local citizens and communities with their volunteer activities and, wherever possible, expand these programs and partnerships.

The managing agencies shall prepare a periodic report to be presented to the local community at a public meeting. At that meeting, the public will be given ample opportunity to raise issues, identify opportunities, and be updated as to future actions anticipated in relation to this plan.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **NAVIGABLE RIVER ISSUES**





## **Navigable River Issues**

### **The History**

This Supreme Court ruling is based on the doctrine that all navigable rivers, lakes, and streams have been public since ancient times in all civilized societies, and that in colonial America they were held for the public by the King of England. When the individual states took sovereignty of the land after the American Revolution, they became owners of the lands underlying navigable waters. Under the Equal Footing Doctrine, states subsequently entering the Union became owners of those same lands as of the date of statehood.

### **Navigability**

The courts have ruled that the South Yuba River is a navigable river. The U.S. Supreme Court has held that all rivers, lakes, and streams that are navigable, for title purposes, are owned by the states, held in trust for the public. Title in this context means ownership. This public-trust ownership extends up to the ordinary high water line, also referred to as ordinary high water mark. This line or mark of delineation refers to the submerged and submersible land, but not to the upland areas.

### **High Water Line**

As with the definition of navigable river, the courts have not formulated a scientific, measurable definition of ordinary high water line (or ordinary high water mark.) The lack of a scientific definition contributes to some of the confusion regarding this issue. Short of a court ruling for a specific case, at a specific location, we define the ordinary high water line as the highest that the water gets under normal conditions during the course of a year, but not the highest it gets during extreme flooding. The courts have not been scientific regarding the difference between normal and extreme conditions. In the arguably related matter of the high water line on ocean beaches, courts have referred to the “debris line” left by the highest water at high tide, with normal waves but not under storm conditions.

In reference to the notion of the high water line along rivers, the courts were referring to something ordinary river users and adjacent landowners could see on the ground and could agree on. In the case of rivers, such a line would be the line below which the vegetation and soil show the effects of submersion. Below the line, you typically see water dependent vegetation, sand, gravel and rock washed clean by passing water. Above the line you see dirt, soil and vegetation more typical on the surrounding upland area.

## **Public Trust Doctrine**

Federal courts have held that a state does not simply own the river and the riverside land, it holds it “in trust for the public.” These court decisions, taken together, are known as the Public Trust Doctrine. That means the state holds these resources in trust for the benefit of all the people. The general public has a right to use these resources for a wide variety of uses including navigation, recreation and fisheries. The state cannot divest itself of this public-trust ownership. They can, however, sell or lease pieces of land along a river for such purposes as the development of public or private docks, but not the entire river. These transactions must be beneficial for the use of the waterway and they cannot interfere with public use of the waterway.

## **Public Use Below the High Water Line**

Public use of this area below the ordinary high water line is not an easement, rather it is actual public ownership of the land. The courts have ruled that any and all non-destructive activities on these lands are protected, including picnicking, camping, walking, fishing and other activities. The key here, for planning purposes, seems to be the issue of “non-destructive” activities. While the public clearly has the right of access below the ordinary high water line, they do not have the right to conduct activities that are either destructive to the lands below the high water line or to the adjacent upland areas (private property).

Since the right of public access to the areas below the ordinary high water line is clear, the thrust of any recommendations for the control of these activities must deal with the issues of destructive or potentially destructive uses. The public’s right to use this area (below the ordinary high water line) does have some reasonable restrictions however. Government agencies can and must restrict or prohibit activities that conflict with the Public Trust Doctrine. While “responsible recreation” must be allowed, offensive activities can be limited to certain areas or not allowed. Destructive activities may be prohibited altogether. Leaving trash, building fires and making excess noise can and should be limited or prohibited as appropriate for the specific area and/or season.

State and local restrictions on river use have to be legitimately related to the enhancement of the public trust values, not the reduction of those values. For example, rivers cannot be closed or partially closed simply to appease adjacent landowners, fishermen who want to dedicate the river to fishing only, or to make life easier for local law enforcement agencies. State and local regulations can and should control activities for the purposes of public safety or to prevent the destruction of the public trust values.

The Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service and California State Parks can and do regulate public usage of the areas below the high water line that affect adjacent upland areas that they manage. Under normal conditions, these regulations do not preclude public access along the river.

## **Access Across Private Property**

Federal court decisions seem to allow for a person to briefly walk on private property for the purpose of navigating a river, e.g. to scout a rapid. Some state laws allow certain trespasses under emergency or specified urgent conditions. (It is not known at the time of the development of this fact sheet if California is one of those states.) Even if California is one of the states allowing certain trespasses under urgent or emergency conditions there is normally no right to cross private land to get to and from the river. Courts have found it unlawful for a state to close off an existing public access route when there are not other public access routes nearby.

## **Landowner Liability**

Often, private property owners are unwilling to open up their land to public use for the reason of liability. While this is a valid concern, California has legislation that addresses this issue and usually offers the landowner protection from liability, under specified conditions. The laws that do this are called Recreational Use Statutes (RUS). California's RUS is contained in California Government Code Section 846. Basically, what the law says is that the landowner does not owe, to a person(s) using his/her property for recreational purposes and without charge, a duty of care to keep the property safe for entry or use, nor a duty to give warning of a dangerous condition, use, structure, or activity on the property. In other words, a recreational user is treated in the same manner as a trespasser and thus the landowner owes them no duty of care. In general, this law grants landowners broad immunity from liability for personal injury or property damage suffered by recreational users on the owner's land. However, the law does not protect the landowner from liability for willful or wanton misconduct, and it does not protect the landowner if a fee is charged for use of the property unless they are fees from land leased to a public agency.

## **Comprehensive Management Plan Direction**

Since it is our belief that the public has legal access to those areas of the South Yuba River below the high water line, the focus of the public process should be toward recommendations for regulating activities in that area to provide for public safety and to enhance the public trust values. Examples for the South Yuba River might include prohibiting fires below the high water line to protect the adjacent private upland property or limiting camping because of sanitation issues.

June 3, 2004 – Ray Patton

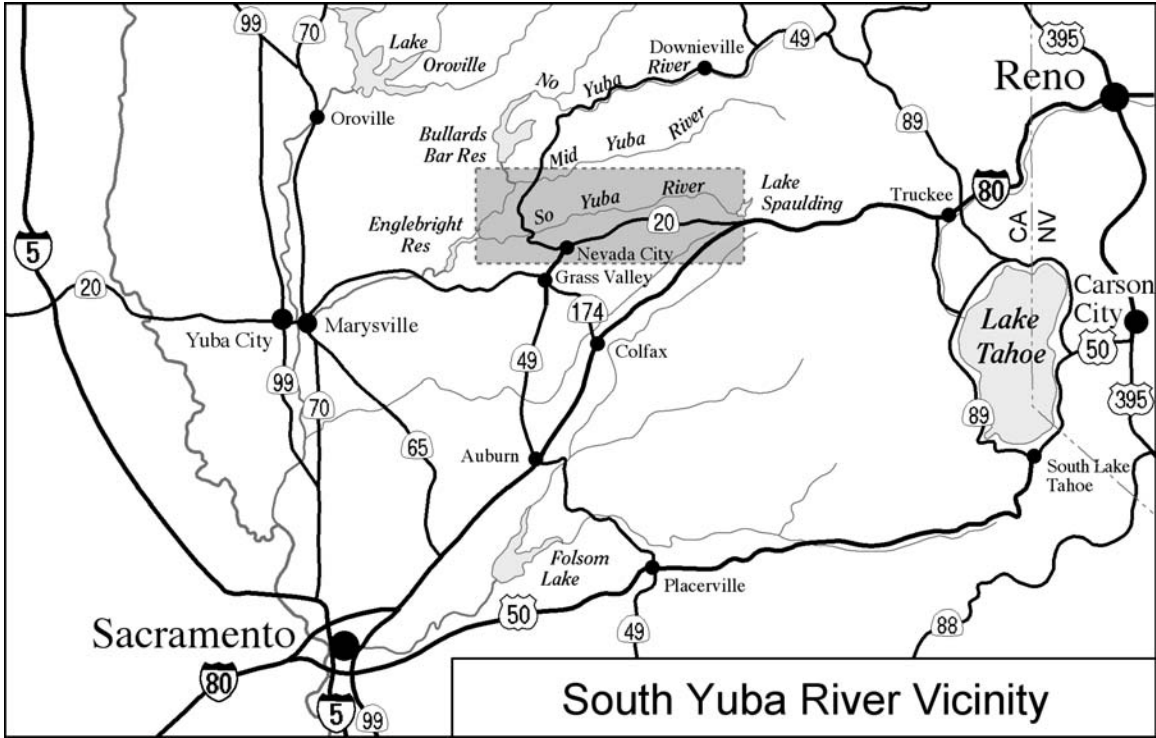


## **APPENDIX B**

### **Planning Unit Maps**



## South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan – Vicinity Map



## South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan – Planning Units Map - Overview

