



FRIENDS OF THE EEL RIVER

Working for the recovery of our Wild & Scenic River, its fisheries and communities.

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Friends of the Eel River Celebrates Most Endangered River Listing for California's Eel River

We are thrilled that the Eel River has been selected by American Rivers as one of *America's Most Endangered Rivers* ®! The list of ten features river at a crossroads with real opportunity in the coming year to address serious threats. In the Eel River, two dams owned by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) block access to hundreds of miles of cold water habitat for threatened salmon and steelhead.

While the dam owners are currently preparing to surrender their license and decommission the project, the process could take years. That's time that imperiled populations of salmon, steelhead, and the Eel River's iconic pacific lamprey, simply don't have to spare. This is why Friends of the Eel River and our allies are pressing decision-makers for expedited dam removal. Over the years we've put a spotlight on the many dam safety concerns at the 100-year-old Scott Dam, we've examined the ways in which operations at Cape Horn Dam harms threatened species, and we've built a solid case for removing both dams to protect human safety and restore ecological balance.

Of course there are *many* opportunities in the Eel watershed to restore habitat, improve water quality, and protect key populations of threatened and endangered species. But the single most important action we can take to advance recovery of the Wild and Scenic Eel River is to remove PG&E's two Potter Valley Project dams

"The Eel is a river of opportunity. How we seize the conservation opportunities at hand, and address the threats posed by dams, diversions, sediment pollution, and more, can have implications beyond our watershed," said Alicia Hamann, Executive Director for Friends of the Eel River. "As the climate crisis puts pressure on the continued survival of salmon and steelhead, it's imperative that we restore access to cold water sources, like the 288 miles of steelhead habitat locked up behind Scott dam, that will help them survive the coming decades."

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About Friends of the Eel River

A grassroots environmental nonprofit established in 1994, Friends of the Eel River (FOER) works for the recovery of the Wild and Scenic Eel River, its fisheries, and communities. The organization has grown from its

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grassroots origins and is now a highly effective advocacy group leading the charge for Eel River dam removal. Restoring the Eel to a free-flowing river (the longest in the state of California) is the reason FOER was formed nearly 30 years ago, we're ready to help the river realize its full potential.

Some noteworthy recent accomplishments include a 2017 victory at the California Supreme Court which established important CEQA precedent; a legal settlement in 2019 which secured restoration funding for high priority tributaries impacted by cannabis cultivation; a 2022 Endangered listing for Northern California summer steelhead under the California Endangered Species Act; and in 2022 a successful fight preventing attempts to revitalize a defunct railroad through the Eel River canyon to transport coal products to Humboldt Bay.

FOER is also a founding member of the *Free the Eel* coalition. Learn more at eelriver.org.