

REACH OUT – LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

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Key Concerns *(more on website – scan QR code)*

❖ **Limited Evidence for Unnecessary Removal of Trees and Vegetation:**

- Trees are not a significant risk to levee stability. In fact, trees and vegetation provide self-renewing natural armoring of the banks that would be eliminated. Removing trees may make us less safe.
- Historically, levee failures were more associated with areas where riparian forests had been thinned or clear-cut.
- Inadequate environmental analysis of the removal of 200+ years old heritage oaks would constitute an “unmitigable” impact on the visual and aesthetic resources of the Parkway.

❖ **Rip-rapped riverbanks present significant negative consequences:**

- Shorelines composed of large, angular rock make access by people for swimming, fishing, birdwatching, watercraft deployment, and other uses dangerous at worst and highly unpleasant at best.
- The river’s Wild and Scenic designation is compromised by a rigid, artificial shoreline. Rip-rapped shorelines are unattractive and detract from the natural feel of the Lower American River that makes it such a special place and refuge in our area.
- Rip-rap hinders natural riverbank vegetation and tree growth. Heritage trees would be forever lost.

❖ **Erosion is minimal in USACE’s Contract 3B/4B:**

- Modern, advanced modeling predicts that water velocities are low at the levees. The older models used did not account for the protective effect of trees slowing the velocities at the edges.
- The improvements to weirs and bypasses, along with the addition of a new spillway and new operating protocols at Folsom dam allow for better management of flows, including earlier release of water when storms are forecast.

❖ **Impact on Wildlife and Critical Habitats:**

- The biodiversity of this ecosystem is complex and interconnected and is heavily used by wildlife.
- Clear-cutting and rip-rapped riverbanks pose a threat to critical habitats for various fish species, including Chinook Salmon, Central Valley Steelhead, and North American Green Sturgeon.
- Clear-cutting disrupts the nesting, mating, and feeding habits of local and migratory bird populations.
- Major loss of habitat for many important species.

❖ **Recreational Access:**

- This part of the river is heavily used by the public for walking, swimming, fishing, kayaking, bird and wildlife viewing, and general enjoyment of natural features. There are many footpaths in the forest and beaches along the shore that are extremely important to the public. The Corps has not provided any detail as to what, if any, of our mature trees, footpaths, beaches, fishing access points, and other natural features will be preserved.
- Why should we think that the Corps will do anything different than at River Park, where all of these features such as mature trees, beaches, footpaths, etc., appear to have been destroyed?

❖ **Mental Health and Vegetation:**

- Trees contribute to the creation of “green spaces,” which have been associated with improved mental health. The presence of greenery has been linked to reduced stress levels, enhanced mood, and increased feelings of well-being. The removal of trees can lead to a loss of these beneficial green environments.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that the lack of green space is one of the most important causes of childhood obesity, and the need for green places to protect children's health is becoming more recognized and apparent.

❖ **Environmental Justice:**

- The American River Parkway provides wilderness-quality natural and recreational opportunities, involving little cost or travel, for people of all income levels, ethnicities, and walks of life. Family picnics on small points and beaches are extremely popular in this area. The proposed methods would eliminate these locations that are accessible to disadvantaged populations. This environmental justice issue has not been adequately addressed in the environmental analysis.

The American River Parkway receives over 5 million visits annually and is the only Wild and Scenic River that flows through an urban area!