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California's Bear River Among America's Most Endangered Rivers® of 2017

Nevada City, CA—The Bear River, located in the rural region east of Sacramento, was named one of America's Most Endangered Rivers® in the annual assessment by American Rivers.

The designation shines a national spotlight on a proposed dam that would irreparably harm the Bear River's fish and wildlife, recreation and Native American heritage.

The Nevada Irrigation District is proposing to build the 275-foot tall Centennial Dam that would flood six miles of Bear River, including the most popular recreation sites and numerous native Nisenan village sites and burial grounds.

The dam would also flood 2,200 acres of mature riparian and oak woodland, destroy habitat for many sensitive species, and pose a serious threat to vulnerable fish populations by reducing flows downstream. In addition, the project will reduce seasonal flows critical to the Feather and Sacramento rivers, the San Francisco Bay Delta and San Francisco Bay.

"The proposed Centennial Dam is a project in search of a purpose," said Allan Eberhart, a Sierra Club activist who has been deeply involved in the fight to save the river and stop the dam. "This billion-dollar dam will not provide flood protection or generate hydropower, nor will it effectively address the consequences of climate change.

"The Sierra Club applauds American River's efforts to shine a light on this destructive project," Eberhart said.

The Sierra Club is one of a number of environmental, tribal and community groups that have called on the Nevada Irrigation District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to deny the permit for Centennial Dam and consider other more cost-effective water supply alternatives.

The annual America's Most Endangered Rivers report is a list of rivers at a crossroads, where key decisions in the coming months will determine the rivers' fates. Over the years, the report has helped spur the removal of outdated dams, the protection of rivers with Wild and Scenic designations, and the prevention of harmful development and pollution

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