

August 12, 2023

Contact: Kristi Winter  
Public Outreach Director  
Kings River Conservancy  
559-301-4019  
[kristidwinter@gmail.com](mailto:kristidwinter@gmail.com)

**Subject: Practicing Safety While Enjoying the Kings River.**

Dear Editor:

The Kings River Conservancy would like to recognize the conscientious work Fresno County Sheriff's Department, Kings River Conservation District, State Water Board, County of Fresno Parks Department, and Army Corps of Engineers have done in an extraordinary water year.

At the same time, the KRC, dedicated to access, conservation, education, and safety on the Kings, would like to warn the public that this high water has brought drastic changes to the river and its watercourses.

Traditional channels have shifted, exposing new obstacles. Downed trees are completely blocking access in some places. Dangerous new "strainers," heavy branches can entangle boaters and drag them under.

This is currently not a river for tubing without a paddle. Even experienced kayakers should take measured precaution. As KRC board member John Gray says, "The river has changed, so listen to what the sheriff says, leave the booze and children behind, wear a good life jacket, and have a strong paddle."

As access points re-open after a long period of anticipation, go slowly. "Go enjoy the river," Gray adds, "but use extreme caution."

“Is it too strong to call it a new river?” Gray asks. Not if you respect the river and value your life.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Lapp  
Board Member, Kings River Conservancy

The Kings River Conservancy would like to recognize the careful and conscientious work the Fresno County Sheriff’s Department, the Kings River Conservation District, the State Water Board, County of Fresno Parks Department, and Army Corps of Engineers have done in an extraordinary high water year.

At the same time, the KRC, dedicated to access, conservation, education, and, above all, safety on the Kings, would like to warn the public that this high water event has brought drastic changes to the river and its watercourses.

Many of the traditional channels have shifted, exposing new obstacles. Downed trees are completely blocking access in some places. Dangerous new “strainers,” heavy branches that can entangle a boater and drag him or her under with danger of drowning, protrude where they didn’t before.

This is currently not a river for tubing without a paddle. Even very experienced kayakers should take measured precaution. As KRC board member John Gray says, “The river has changed, so be careful, listen to what the sheriff says, leave the booze and children behind, wear a good life jacket, and have a strong paddle.”

While river access points are re-opening after a long period of anticipation, keep safety top of mind. “Go enjoy the river because it’s open again,” Gray adds, “but use extreme caution.”

The Kings River Conservancy has posted signs with general warnings and safety instructions, but there’s no way to anticipate all specific new obstacles and potential risks.

“Is it too strong to call it a new river?” Gray asks. Not if you respect the river and value your life.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Lapp  
Board member, Kings River Conservancy