

Water, water, everywhere: High river flows expected through June

News | April 26, 2019



Elias Funez
efunez@theunion.com



[Show Captions](#)

The sun is out and the seasons have quickly transitioned, meaning folks will be out wanting to escape the heat at one of their favorite local swimming holes.

But those hoping to find peace and tranquility along the banks of the South Yuba River will be met with an abundance of dangerously frigid water.

“We’re telling people that it’s really not safe to swim if you’re not familiar with the area,” South Yuba River Citizen’s League Community Engagement Manager Daniel Belshe said.

Dangerously high river flows along the South Yuba are expected through June and July.

Right now, the Bureau of Land Management estimates a 167% above normal snowpack and have estimated a peak river flow for May 21.

“It’s actually higher than the average right now,” Belshe said. “So right now we’re sort of telling people to stay out of the water.”

Over 700,000 people visit the South Yuba River through the state parks river crossings at Bridgeport, Highway 49, Purdon, and Edwards Crossing each year and SYRCL is planning on ramping up its river ambassador program to help alleviate the impacts.

Now in it’s second year, the river ambassadors volunteer to help educate visitors about safe river recreation.

“We were seeing a lot more trash over the year,” Belshe said. “There was a need for more of a presence at the river. We basically want to remind you to pick up your trash, no glass at the river, be fire safe, and the dangers of water safety right now with high waters, that’s one of our biggest talking points this year.”

Despite warnings against entering the waters of the South Yuba River during high flows, Belshe and SYRCL staff still want people to get out there and enjoy the great outdoors.

“There’s still so many things to do down there,” Beshe said. That’s what I’m trying to encourage, we still want people to go down there. It’s beautiful, hitting the trails down there, the wildflowers are blooming, the water is really pretty to look at, it’s flowing really hard and sounds beautiful, but be safe.”

OUTLOOK

High temperatures topped out at 83 degrees Friday in Grass Valley, marking the beginning of a cooling trend that will bring the daily high’s down by about 10 to 15 degrees through next week.

But we’re not entirely out of the wet period yet.

A chance of light showers limited to the Sierra as well as a system that may affect the valley and foothills still looms in the extended forecast according to the National Weather Service.

To contact Elias Funez, email efunez@theunion.com, or call 530-477-4230.