

## *Wild and Scenic Protection for a Special Place*

# THE CLAVEY RIVER

While most Sierra Nevada rivers are dammed and diverted, the Clavey River flows completely free for its entire length, and it is one of the most pristine rivers in the entire Sierra Nevada. Starting in the alpine meadows,



granite-bound lakes, red fir, and lodgepole forests of the Emigrant Wilderness, the Clavey tumbles rapidly to its confluence with the Tuolumne River in its deep, oak and gray pine dominated canyon.

### *The Values of the Clavey River*

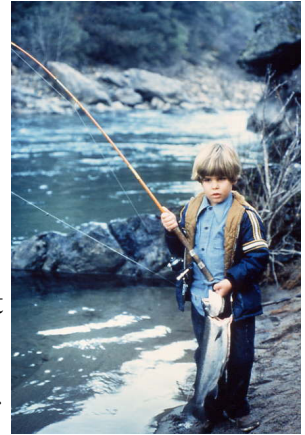
On its way, the Clavey passes through six of the seven life zones of the Sierra, providing a connecting link and safe passage for migrating wildlife such as the Yosemite deer herd. The aspen groves of Bell Meadow and thousands of acres of old-growth fir and mixed-conifer forests highlight this rich ecological corridor.

The river's remoteness, varied terrain and diversity of ecological communities support numerous plant and animal species, some rapidly declining in the rest of the Sierra Nevada, including Sierra Nevada red fox and wolverine. In addition, the fisher, marten, California spotted owl and goshawk find refuge in the old-growth forest in the Clavey's canyons, old-growth remarkable for its rarity.

The Clavey may be the only Sierra stream who's waters still contain its original array of fish, including the unique Clavey rainbow trout.



Humans have loved and used the Clavey for thousands of years. Miwoks have left us their mortar holes and petroglyphs. Today, people experience the timeless legacy of a wild river in the Clavey's remote canyon -- swimming in the deep granite pools or fishing in this state-designated Wild Trout Stream. The river offers beautiful camping spots and irresistible photographic opportunities. The highlight of a rafting trip down the Tuolumne River is exploring the confluence of the Clavey and Tuolumne, just before plunging over famous Clavey Falls.



### *The Status of the Clavey River*

Recognizing its Outstandingly Remarkable fish, wildlife, ecological, scenic, recreational and cultural values, the U.S. Forest Service has recommended that all 50 miles of the Clavey and its headwater streams be added to the nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers system. The Secretary of Agriculture forwarded the recommendation to Congress in 1998. In addition, nine tributaries, remarkable in their own right, also deserve protection because their health is critical to that of the Clavey itself.

More than 99% of the land touched by the Clavey is in federal ownership, as part of the Stanislaus National Forest. The

Forest Service recently designated the Clavey's watershed a "Critical Aquatic Reserve" and much of its drainage as "Old Forest Emphasis Areas."

(over)

## ***Support***

Designation of the Clavey as a Federal Wild and Scenic River enjoys deep and broad support, both locally and across the state.

- Local Elected Officials, including three Tuolumne County Supervisors and the City of Sonora Mayor Pro Tem.
- Dozens of Business Owners, including local restaurants and hotels, gift and antique shops, river outfitters, and construction firms, plus businesses across the state.
- Scientists, including retired United States Forest Service and California Department of Fish and Game employees, as well as geologists, biologists, medical doctors and engineers.
- Hundreds of Individuals, 650 of whom have written letters or signed petitions, including teachers, fishermen, and every-day people who value the qualities of this free-flowing, near-pristine river.



*For more information, contact the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust at 209/236-0330 or 415/292-3531. January 2002.*

## ***Scientists Support Protecting the Clavey River:***

- “Only three Sierra Nevada rivers greater than 65 km (40 miles) long flow freely without a major dam or diversion: Clavey, Middle Fork Consumnes, and South Fork Merced Rivers.” (Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project Report (SNEP), 1996, Vol. II, p. 886).
- The Clavey ranked third, of all Sierra streams, in the prestigious Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project’s (SNEP, 1996) Index of Biotic Integrity, receiving a score of 92 out of 100 behind only Mill and Deer Creeks.
- Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project scientists nominated the Clavey for special protection as an “Aquatic Diversity Management Area,” (ADMA) due to its pristine qualities and its diversity of amphibians. (SNEP, Vol. III, pp. 440-441).
- The California Fish and Game Commission added the Clavey to its list of Wild Trout Waters in 1999 to provide increased protection for its native fish populations.
- “The Clavey has remained relatively undisturbed because of its remoteness, rugged nature and its north-south geographic orientation, and thus we see the whole range of Sierran life zones still connected and still relatively pristine.” (*Stanislaus Forest Land Management Plan*, 1990).
- “Within the Clavey’s wide variety of high to low elevation vegetation types, one is truly unique: Bell Meadow, at 6,500 feet along Bell Creek, contains the largest stand of quaking aspen (110 acres) in the southern half of the Sierra Nevada.”(Ibid.).