



“Discover your Watershed” tours set for summer of 2009 **Regional partnership invites public on outings**

Area residents have a unique opportunity this summer to experience the wonderful world of water and learn more about how our water resources connect the environment, economy, and people—from the high Sierra to the western end of El Dorado County.

“June tours will focus on the lower reaches of our watershed around the El Dorado Hills and Shingle Springs areas,” said Melissa Marquez, a member of the AmeriCorps national service program who is working as a watershed assistant at El Dorado Irrigation District (District) this year. “In July, we’ll move to the middle watershed in the Apple Hill and Pollock Pines areas and in August to the upper watershed from Sly Park Recreation Area to Silver Lake. At each level of the watershed, we will discuss location-specific issues affecting our water supply and water quality, with watershed connectivity as the common thread.” (See the tour map on next page.)

The lower watershed tour will focus on wastewater treatment and the production of recycled water at the Deer Creek wastewater treatment plant, urban and storm-water runoff and water conservation at the Serrano community park and trails, and land conservation and endemic species at the Magnolia Ranch trailhead just past Coloma. On the middle watershed tour, participants will discuss rafting and recreation at Chili Bar, agricultural issues at Madroña Vineyards, and restoration and fire prevention at Sly Park. Issues for the upper watershed include recreation management, water supply and storage at Silver Lake, hydropower at Caples Lake, and forest management practices and water quality at higher elevations on Eldorado National Forest.

All tours are scheduled for Saturdays, with the lower watershed tours on June 13 and 27 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Participants will meet at the Shingle Springs Safeway on 3380 Coach Lane. The middle watershed tours, on July 11 and 25, will convene at EID headquarters, 2890 Mosquito Road in Placerville. These tours will also run from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The upper watershed tours, on August 8 and 22, begin at Sly Park Recreation Area and last from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tours will leave all meeting locations promptly at 8:30 a.m.

There is no charge for the tours. Each will include short walking excursions and easy hikes, so organizers ask participants to bring good-quality walking shoes, a hat, bottled water, snacks, and a sack lunch.

The tours are sponsored and will be led by a partnership that includes El Dorado Irrigation District, Apple Hill growers, El Dorado County, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District, American River Conservancy, Sierra Pacific Industries, U.S. Forest Service, and Pine Hill Preserve. The tours were developed as a component of the South Fork American River Watershed Plan—created by stakeholders and agencies throughout this watershed—as one way to offer meaningful learning experiences to local communities.

Reservations are required because space is limited. For more information and to reserve a place on the tours, call Melissa Marquez at 530-642-4130, or send an e-mail to mmarquez@eid.org.

