



Access to Merced River Reopened

MID Warns Community To Remain Cautious

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MERCED, CA – Merced Irrigation District announced today that public access to the Merced River is again open following an emergency closure based on dangerous conditions earlier this month.

“We are not out of the woods yet,” said General Manager John Sweigard. “Flows in the Merced River in recent days have decreased, but the water remains cold and swift. We are urging people to remain extremely cautious if they choose to recreate in or around the river.”

On July 1, MID and the Merced County Sheriff’s Department jointly announced that the river’s access east of Snelling would remain closed for 10 days. The closure followed a June 30 rescue that spanned more than 10 hours on the Merced River. The incident resulted in several rescuers themselves needing to be rescued after their boat capsized in the swift water above Snelling. The following day, several people again required rescuing by law enforcement.

MID also announced that in addition to unusual weather patterns affecting this year’s runoff, the river will increase again later this month as MID provides increased flows for biological and fish studies required as part of its relicensing of New Exchequer Dam.

“MID is reopening its public access to the river,” said Sweigard. “However, we are not necessarily encouraging people to swim or play in the water. People need to remain extremely cautious.”

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