

Centennial Dam project could affect 3 Sierra rivers

By Sage Sauerbrey, Moonshine Ink

Two of Truckee/North Lake Tahoe's nearest west slope Sierra watersheds are on track for a profound change in the coming years, with the planned construction of a 275-foot dam about 45 miles down the road from Donner Summit.

The Centennial Dam project is an effort by the Nevada Irrigation District to create more water storage and combat climate change, and would dam the last 6 miles of publicly accessible, free flowing water on the Bear River.

The dam's environmental and cultural aftereffects would not only be felt on the Bear River – where it would inundate 25 homes; many important cultural sites for the local Nisenan tribe; a popular campground; and habitat for more than 100 rare, threatened, and declining plant and wildlife species – but also on the South and Middle Forks of the Yuba, which currently lose up to 80 percent of their total volume to diversion canals that bring water into the Bear River watershed.

Read the whole story