

# Record snowpack makes for wild whitewater rafting

By Brad Branan, Sacramento Bee

The Meat Grinder rapid on the South Fork of the American River looks like a cauldron of bubbling soup, its contents rising and falling, splashing and swirling along its one-third of a mile stretch.

For intrepid whitewater enthusiasts, the rapids on the American's South Fork should bring plenty of fun this summer. For the uninitiated, this season's high-river flows could bring great risk.

River use has increased in wetter years on the South Fork of the American River. In 2011, a relatively wet year that preceded five dry years, almost 80,000 people used the South Fork, according to statistics collected by El Dorado County.

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