

Rivers rushing for stellar rafting season

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

The first summer tease, with temperatures in the 80s, arrived last week in the Sierra foothills. But the real treats are in the rivers that cascade down the flank of the Sierra Nevada for rafting, water sports and camping.

Memorial Day weekend is two weeks away and the rafting and camping season is a go for summer.

Earlier this month, after an analysis of the High Sierra snowpack and downstream reservoir levels, water agencies and rafting outfitters met in friendly talks to reach a near-guarantee of rafting flows through summer for many rivers on the flank of the Sierra, said Nate Rangel of Adventure Connection.

California has roughly 20 rivers on which pro outfitters run trips. Snowmelt is feeding many rivers with clear, clean flows. In many watersheds, releases from near-full reservoirs guarantee rafting flows all summer.

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