Caution Urged After Harmful Algal Bloom Detected in Stanislaus River

Visitors Advised to Avoid Water Contact in Remote Area

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board is urging boaters and recreational water users to exercise caution today, and until further notice, while visiting the Middle Fork of the Stanislaus River upstream of New Melones Lake due to a cyanobacteria bloom.

The impacted area of the river is within the boundaries of both Calaveras and Tuolumne counties. This cyanobacteria bloom is not occurring in New Melones Lake; it is contained within the Middle Fork of the river between the new Camp Nine Road bridge and the Parrotts Ferry Road bridge. Please visit the State Water Board Twitter page to see a map and pictures of the cyanobacteria bloom.

The recommendation to use caution is based on the potential health risks cyanobacteria poses. Children and animals – especially dogs playing in impacted areas – are especially vulnerable. The current cyanobacteria bloom appears as bright green, discolored water with suspended flecks of material near the surface (Figure 2).

As the bloom continues to grow, cyanobacteria colonies may become larger and form a film or scum on the water surface. Bloom conditions in the river can change rapidly, as the flow of surface water and wind may mix, move, or concentrate the bloom into different areas of the river.

The State Water Board and the nine Regional Water Boards (known as the Water Boards), in partnership with other programs and agencies, are actively supporting and coordinating a statewide HAB incident response with many publicly available resources. In 2018, the Water Boards received 190 voluntary reports of HABs from across the state. To learn how to stay safe around HABs, report a bloom and more, visit the CA HABs Portal: http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/

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