



# **Fresno County Sheriff's Office**

John Zanoni, Sheriff

**March 27, 2023**

News Release

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## **Deputies Cite Rafters for Floating on Closed San Joaquin River**

On Sunday afternoon, March 26<sup>th</sup>, deputies responded to a report of five people and a dog floating in a raft down the San Joaquin River. The group launched its raft in the town of Friant and began traveling south through the Lost Lake area. There, our crew aboard EAGLE One flew overhead and made announcements over a speaker system for the crew to exit the river. The group, who were not wearing life jackets, continued to float another mile downstream before finally making their way safely to the shore.

Deputies on patrol contacted the group and notified them that due to dangerous conditions, both the San Joaquin and Kings Rivers are closed to recreational users. Sheriff John Zanoni put this order in place on March 14<sup>th</sup> in the best interest of public safety. The rafters said they were not aware of the closure. Nevertheless, deputies issued tickets to each of the five people for violation of Penal Code 409.5(c), unauthorized entry to an area closed for emergency purposes. This infraction comes with a minimum fine of \$225.00.

As a reminder, the public is denied access to the rivers until further notice. This includes all recreational activity such as: Boating, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, floating, etc. Fishing from the banks is highly discouraged. During the closure, deputies will conduct patrol checks and monitor activity on both rivers. Deputies will strictly enforce this closure and violators will be subject to citations.