

Sloat to Red Bridge: Middle Fork of the Feather River

By Luke Pascucci



Rafting on Sloat to Red Bridge Photo: Luke Pascucci

History: The first use of the Middle Fork of the Feather River was for mining. The river was also in the original list of rivers listed in the Wild and Scenic Rivers act of 1968. The Middle Feather now flows into Lake Oroville. The Take-out is at Red Bridge, which was painted bright red until recent years.

Area Description: The Middle Feather starts in the mountains around Sierra Valley. It flows from there into Maybe Canyon near Portola, and then towards Sloat. After reaching Sloat the river flows gently down through class II and class III rapids until Red Bridge is reached. After Red Bridge, the Middle Feather tumbles down into remote class V gorges.

Directions:

Take-out: from Quincy, drive east on Hwy. 70 until you reach La Porte Road. Take a right on La Porte Road and follow it until you get to the first bridge. The river access is on river right and on the downstream side of the bridge.

Put-in: to access the put-in, head east on Hwy. 70, and take a right on Sloat road, 23NO8 which is one mile west of Cromberg. Follow this until you cross the Middle Feather. After crossing the bridge, take an immediate left turn into to the river access

Name: Sloat to Red Bridge on the Middle Fork of the Feather River.

Quality Rating; ****

Time Requirements: Four to eight hours, depending on flows and how the fish are biting.

Difficulty Rating: This is a class 2, 3+ section of river. It is remote and isolated once you leave the put-in.

Gear needed: your basic paddling equipment, lunch, and water.

Directions: once you are on the water, the first big rapid is the Trench. Scout on river right. The Trench is a short ledge drop that is usually run right of center. Almost Famous comes next and can be scouted from the river left side of an island. At high flows a sneak develops in the river right channel. Almost Famous is the hardest rapid on the run and is a long boulder garden with two big holes at the bottom. After Almost famous you can kick back and enjoy the rest of the scenery and fun splashy water.