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**China Rivers Project Selects Upper Yangtze Descent to Commence the *Tibet Rivers Year* Series**

**Big Sky, Montana – May 27, 2009** – China Rivers Project announced today that the descent of the Upper Yangtze River expedition, scheduled for September 1-17, 2009, has been selected as the inaugural descent in the Tibet Rivers Year series.

The Upper Yangtze expedition will kick off a year-long river awareness campaign, Tibet Rivers Year, which includes major expeditions on multiple sections of the Salween, Reting Tsangpo, Yellow and Upper Yangtze.

Expeditions will bring key Tibetan, Chinese, and American scholars, conservationists, river enthusiasts, and entrepreneurs together to discuss solutions to development issues on the Tibetan Plateau, as nearly every major river in China originates from this region – from the Salween and Mekong to the Yarlung Tsangpo, Yangtze and Yellow.

The canyons carved by these rivers have been found to be some of the most biologically and culturally diverse places on the planet, yet are under threat from climate change, mining, diversions and large hydroelectric development.

In addition to research and discussion, Tibet Rivers Year will incorporate training and outreach components to help set the stage for many future generations of Tibetans, Chinese and Americans to appreciate, understand and enjoy river heritage on the Tibetan Plateau together.

China Rivers Project was founded by Travis Winn and Kristen McDonald in 2007 as a project of Earth Island Institute, a non-profit environmental organization established in 1982 by veteran environmentalist David Brower with the mission to develop and support projects that counteract threats to the biological and cultural diversity that sustain the environment.

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The mission of China Rivers Project is to protect China's river heritage for people and wildlife and to foster river-based recreation in China. For more information, visit [www.chinariversproject.org](http://www.chinariversproject.org).

The Descent of the Upper Yangtze expedition includes 15 team members from across the United States and China. Many participants were also members of the successful expedition that made the First Descent of the Salween River in 2007. Led by Travis Winn and Eric Ladd, the Upper Yangtze Descent will follow through remote Tibet from Qumalai to Yushu. The trip is being conducted to bring awareness to this river and its significance within the Tibetan Plateau and greater China; to introduce a mix of U.S. and Chinese citizens to the river, which few people have ever done; and to experience the raw adventure of a big, remote river. For more information, visit [www.yangtzedescent.com](http://www.yangtzedescent.com).

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