

The Stan

I went to visit an old friend the other day
But I found they had come and put him away.
I knew they had done that
Put him in a cage like a rat
But I thought I could see him
And talk like we did in days past
The unnatural lake was dark and dim
I could not pierce the death shadow it cast
I walked the lakeshore looking for my friend
Knowing that 3 million year spirit couldn't end
And I know he is there under that lake
Paralyzed and imprisoned, unable to wake.

Bruce Raley wrote this poem about his magical rafting place – the Stanislaus river, which was changed forever by the construction of the New Melones dam in the 1970s and flooding of the river in the 1980s.