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Human Impact River Straightening Science Notebook Page

In the early 1960s, the Truckee River was straightened and deepened by the US Army Corps of Engineers in order to prevent flooding. Let's test to see the real-life effects of straightening the river. For this experiment, you are going to need the following supplies:

- A bin
- Enough soil/dirt to fill half the bin
- A bucket of water

Instructions:

1. Pour the soil/dirt into the bin.
2. Using your hand or a tool, carve something a straight line from one end to the other in the soil.
3. Make a prediction as to what you think is going to happen to the river.

Make a prediction. What do you think is going to happen to the river when you add the water?

4. Slowly pour the water into the beginning of your river until the bucket is empty of water.
5. Watch what happens to the river.

What did you notice happen?

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6. Drain the water to the best of your ability back into the bucket. This might be a two person job.
7. Flatten the soil back into the bin.
8. Now, use your hand or a tool to draw a natural curvy line from one end to the other.
9. Make a prediction as to what you think is going to happen to the river.

Make a prediction. What do you think is going to happen to the river when you add the water?

10. Slowly pour the water into the beginning of your river until the bucket is empty of water.
11. Watch what happens to the river.

What did you notice happen? What do you think about straightening the river as a form of flood control? Why?
