



California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Buttes District
400 Glen Drive
Oroville, California 95966



california state parks

BIDWELL-SACRAMENTO RIVER STATE PARK GENERAL PLAN

BIDWELL-SACRAMENTO RIVER STATE PARK

Calendar of Events

GENERAL PLAN PROCESS AT A GLANCE

WINTER 2003	SPRING/SUMMER 2003	FALL 2003	SPRING 2004
Fieldwork PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1 (& EIR SCOPING MEETING) Tuesday, March 18, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park, Chico	Evaluate Opportunities & Constraints Develop General Plan Alternatives PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2 (date to be announced) Prepare Draft General Plan & EIR	Public Review of Draft General Plan & EIR PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3 (date to be announced)	Final General Plan & EIR Agency Approvals

WELCOME TO THE GENERAL PLAN PROCESS

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is launching a planning process to develop a General Plan for Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park. Working together with the community, this planning process will create a vision for the future of the park so it can be enhanced and enjoyed for years to come. We invite you to join us in planning the park's future!

We welcome your ideas and suggestions for improving this park and preserving its special characteristics. You can start by filling out the enclosed survey and attending the Public Planning Workshop on March 18. Public input will help us focus on priorities, desires, and concerns as we evaluate the park's recreational uses, access points, and natural resources. This General Plan will guide management and stewardship of the park for years to come. So we hope you will take some time to get involved in planning the future of this unique river-front park.

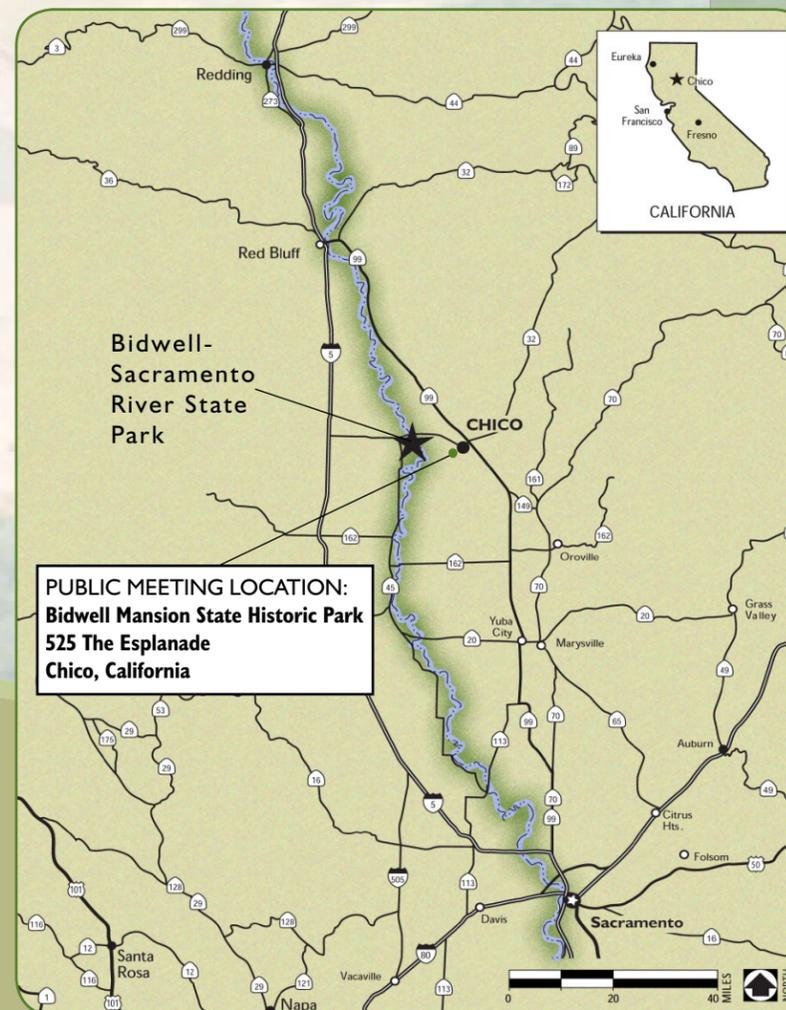
HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

The planning process offers several ways for you to contribute:

Stay Informed: Updates of this newsletter will be published to keep you informed about progress on the General Plan. If you did not receive this newsletter by mail, please call or contact us at the address on the back page and ask to be placed on our mailing list.

Fill Out the Survey: The enclosed survey is intended to give us an idea of your major issues and concerns. Topics could include favorite recreation activities, habitat protection and management, facility improvements, or education or interpretive programs. Tell us what you like, what's missing, or what could work better. If you prefer, you may fill out the survey on-line via the Web at <http://www.edaw.com/survey/takesurvey.asp?surveyid=59>. Please complete this survey by March 24, 2003.

Attend the Public Planning Workshops: We will host a series of public planning workshops for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park General Plan. The first workshop is scheduled for Thursday, March 18 at Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park in Chico. This will also serve as a "scoping meeting" for the Environmental Impact Report which will be prepared along with the General Plan. Please join us to share your ideas for improving the park!



PUBLIC MEETING LOCATION:
Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park
525 The Esplanade
Chico, California

PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

You are invited to attend the first Public Planning Workshop and EIR Scoping Meeting:

Date: Tuesday, March 18, 2003
Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park
525 The Esplanade
Chico, California

Contact Information

If you are not currently on our mailing list and would like to receive this newsletter and announcements of future workshops, or wish to send written comments, please contact us at:

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Buttes District
400 Glen Drive
Oroville, California 95966
530.538.2200
(for questions or comments about the General Plan process)

For questions about park hours, access, etc., please call 530.342.5185
Please send written comments and/or return the enclosed survey by March 24, 2003. You may call with questions or ask to join the mailing list at any time.

Visit Our Website
www.parks.ca.gov

Under "Related Links" click on "General Plans"



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Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park

JUST WHERE IS BIDWELL-SACRAMENTO RIVER STATE PARK?

Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park lies in the heart of the Sacramento Valley, flanking the banks of the Sacramento River on which it depends. Located six miles west of the City of Chico and roughly 90 miles north of Sacramento, park access is from River Road and State Highway 32.

The park is made up of four separate properties, totaling about 240 acres: 1) Big Chico Creek Riparian Area/Peterson Addition, 2) Indian Fishery/Chico Landing, 3) Pine Creek Landing, and 4) Irvine Finch River Access. Lush valley oak riparian woodland and other riparian communities characterize the environment. In addition to its natural resources, the park possesses outstanding opportunities for river-oriented recreation – from quiet nature trails, fishing, and picnicking to boating and tubing.



A rich history of the present-day park begins with the Maidu Native Americans. Early settlers used the site to construct a ferry landing to transport goods from one river bank to the other. Eventually ownership fell to John and Annie Bidwell, who were influential in the development of the Chico area. The Bidwell family deeded the property to the State of California in 1908. The park property changed ownership several times during the 1900s, and in August, 1979, the park was transferred back into the California state park system.

Resources at Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park include:

- Sacramento River and tributaries
- Native riparian habitat (e.g., valley oak woodland)
- Special-status wildlife species (e.g., giant garter snake, anadromous fish species, Swainson's hawk, Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle)

- Oxbow Lake at Indian Fishery
- Historic and prehistoric areas (e.g., Chico Landing, bridge sites, Sea Scout station, Bidwell ferry site, Native American occupation sites)
- Popular recreational areas (e.g., Irvine Finch River Access, Pine Creek Landing, Big Chico Creek gravel bar)
- Potential acquisition areas

Some topics that the General Plan process will consider include:

- Protection and long-term resource management of sensitive natural and cultural resource areas
- Property acquisition to form contiguous management tracts
- Increased recreational access, including improved water and undeveloped area access (e.g., trail development and parking areas).
- Expansion of recreational facilities (e.g., environmental education camps and primitive campgrounds)
- Management of river tubing activities during peak recreational periods
- Public safety and law enforcement
- Development of interpretive facilities, such as a visitor center and interpretive panels highlighting natural and cultural resources
- Facility location and design to avoid flooding events
- Improved inter-agency and regional coordination



WHY A GENERAL PLAN?

This General Plan will be the primary guideline for the management of Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park, establishing its purpose and goals for the future. Long-range development and management of the park will be defined by broad policy and program guidance. The plan will also provide a framework for resource stewardship, interpretation, facilities, visitor use, and services. This framework will guide day-to-day



decision-making and serve as the basis for developing more focused management plans, specific project plans, and other management actions necessary to implement the goals of the General Plan over the next 20 years.

Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park has never had a General Plan, so it is important to develop a sound plan for the park that will meet the needs of park visitors while balancing concerns for natural resource protection. The General Plan process is an opportunity to plan for the protection of the park's historical and natural resources, while exploring how to enhance its recreational use.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE EIR?

Along with the General Plan, a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The EIR will identify potential environmental effects of the General Plan's programs, policies, and actions, as well as discuss mitigation measures to reduce their environmental impacts. The EIR will have a broad level of detail because broad-scale policies and programs will be prescribed in the General Plan. It will also provide natural and cultural resource information for use in future, project-level environmental reviews, which will involve more detailed analysis of specific developments and projects.



Environmental topics that will likely be addressed in the EIR include:

- Potential conflicts between sensitive wildlife species/natural communities (e.g., giant garter snake, Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle, valley oak woodland) and facility development
- Facility development in flood-prone areas
- Conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses such as recreation facilities and conservation actions
- Potential for significant effects on historic and prehistoric resources in the park
- Erosion/water quality impacts along the Sacramento River and its tributaries
- Substantial alteration of the existing drainage pattern in the project area



WHO MANAGES THE PARK?

Responsibility for day-to-day management of Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park lies with the staff of the Northern Buttes District of the California Department of Parks and Recreation. District staff members oversee all aspects of park management, including facility development and maintenance, resource protection, and public safety. The staff is looking forward to working with the public in developing a General Plan that meets the needs of its regular users from the community, as well as visitors who come from all over the state and beyond. We look forward to meeting you!

Michael Fehling
Supervising Ranger

Joseph Akers
Park Maintenance Supervisor

Roger Calloway
District Landscape Architect

Ellen Clark
District Interpretive Specialist

Woody Elliot
District Resource Ecologist

Steve Feazel
Sector Superintendent

Rick McGaugh
Park Ranger