
CENTRAL VALLEY VISION

Outdoor Recreation for a Growing Population



DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



California State Parks
Planning Division
October 28, 2008

**REVIEW
COPY**
See page 1 for
more information.



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Odd Fellows: CSP Photographic Archives

Sutter's Forth SHP: CSP

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Brannan Island: CSP, 2008

Waterskiing: CSP

Locke: CSP, 2008

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Pear Label: Courtesy Delta Protection Commission

San Joaquin River Valley:

Family Picnic: CSP Photographic Archives

Angling at Turlock SRA: Park brochure

Millerton Courthouse: Park brochure

Wakeboarder: Sac Aquatic Center

Kids on the Tuolumne: Turlock Lake SRA brochure

Tulare Basin:

Tule elks: CSP Photographic Archives

Kings River: CSP 11/2006

Deer Creek (2): CSP, 2008

Tulare County Library: CSP Photographic Archives

Colonel Allensworth: CSP Interpretation and Education Division

Volunteers: Allensworth SHP brochure

Corridors:

Baroni's: Courtesy Delta Protection Commission

Cherry Orchard: CSP Photographic Archives

Farmer's Market: CSP 2004

Fresh Fruit: CSP

Sulky Rake: CSP Photographic Archives

Walnut Grove Ferry: Courtesy Delta Protection Commission

Scotty's Pears: Courtesy Delta Protection Commission

Chinese workers: Courtesy Delta Protection Commission

Threshing crew: CSP Photographic Archives

Oil wells: CSP Photographic Archives

Kern County: CSP, 2008

Festa: CSP, 2008

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Letter to Our Reviewers

October 2008

To our reviewers:

In 2003, California State Parks began work on its *Central Valley Vision* -- a strategic plan for State Parks' expansion in the Central Valley. The result was the November 2006 *Central Valley Vision* report (www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23483).

As a next step in this strategy's development, and in response to the direction from the Legislature (AB 1426), California State Parks has prepared this **Draft Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan**. The plan describes how the Department's Central Valley strategy could be carried out over the next 20 years.

The draft twenty-year plan focuses on meeting the public's recreation needs in the Central Valley. It outlines planning options to develop new and improved recreation opportunities, acquire new park lands, and build economic and volunteer partnerships for you to consider. The draft plan's recommendations are options about which we are seeking public comment, not mandates we seek to impose.

This document is for long-range planning purposes only and does not imply a land acquisition or development commitment. The maps and text indicate potential land uses and suggests ways in which the plan may be carried out. Funds to implement most of the plan's recommendations are not yet available. Many proposals, especially those that are not high priorities, may not occur for many years. If lands are to be acquired, they will be purchased only from willing sellers. Development proposals will be subject to full environmental review and regulatory approvals prior to moving forward.

We appreciate and value your feedback and comments on this *Draft Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan*.

Please submit your comments and suggestions to us at centralvalleyvision@parks.ca.gov or mail to the address below by December 15, 2008.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan Team
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Central Valley State Park Milestones

1914 Property acquired for first Central Valley State Park, Sutter's Fort SHP.

1928 Frederick Law Olmsted's plan for State Park System recommends state parks on Sacramento River from Solano to Sutter counties.

1958 Folsom Lake SRA, the most popular Central Valley State Park, opens.

1973 Governor Reagan's administration prioritizes 35 new or expanded Central Valley state parks.

1981 Clay Pit SVRA, first Central Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area, opens.

2003 Property for the State Park at Sutter Buttes acquired (the first new Central Valley State Park in 20 years).

2003 CSP Director Ruth Coleman initiates Central Valley project to enhance Central Valley state parks.

2004 CSP releases the "California State Parks and the Great Central Valley" report.

2005 CSP holds public outreach meetings in the Central Valley.

2006 CSP releases "California State Parks' Central Valley Vision" report. CSP Director Ruth Coleman initiates a detailed internal report that researches Central Valley rivers.

2007 Governor Schwarzenegger signs into law Public Resources Code, Section 509.50, Chapter 1.57, calling for the Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan.

2009 CSP will release the Central Valley Implementation Plan (this document) to legislators.

The Great Central Valley



Miller House at Folsom Lake SRA, c. 1880

Working in agricultural fields



Colonel Allensworth SHP, c. 1915



The Merced River floods George J. Hatfield SRA, 1983



A big land. It's no wonder that the Central Valley is often called the Great Central Valley. From north to south, the valley runs over 450 miles from Redding to Bakersfield. About 6 million people called the Central Valley home in 2000. The Implementation Plan study area's almost 19 million acres, bordered by the Coastal Range on the west and the Sierra Nevada on the east, comprise about 19% of California, including all or part of 25 counties.

A place of plenty. The Valley is not only vast and heavily populated, it also holds a wealth of natural and cultural resources:

- The Valley's archaeological sites, historic buildings and farm towns are places to relive history and celebrate the region's culture. Through interpretation, visitors can follow in gold miners' footsteps, ride on a steam-powered railroad, enjoy an ethnic festival or view Native American cultural treasures.
- Rivers, streams, and their associated wetlands and floodplains offer a cool respite for both humans and animals during the hot, dry summers and are a welcome stopover on the Pacific Flyway for millions of migratory birds during the wet winters. The valley's two main rivers, the Sacramento and San Joaquin, meet at an expansive delta.
- Blue oak woodlands, vernal pools and native grass prairies harbor remnants of the Valley's diverse biota, including kit fox, tule elk, songbirds such as warblers and sparrows, hawks and native wildflowers.
- Orchards, vineyards, rice and other crops cover the Central Valley in an edible landscape that supports the United States' number-one farm economy.

Outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation is as much a part of the Central Valley lifestyle as a sweet peach, a county fair or a vista of the sunset behind the Coastal Range. Drawn by low-cost, safe, family-friendly recreation, about 5 million people each year visit the Valley's 36 state parks, representing about 6% of the

A view of the Valley from the Sutter Buttes



California State Park System’s visitation. State parks in the study area include:

- Natural areas with campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails such as Caswell State Park or Bidwell-Sacramento State Park;
- Historic sites such as Shasta State Historic Park and Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park
- Recreation areas on Lake Oroville, Folsom Lake and other water bodies
- OHV areas for off-road recreation

See page 9 for a complete list of state parks in the study area.

Other recreation opportunities are available in local parks and in the almost 1.8 million acres of wildlife refuges, ecological preserves, reservoirs and other outdoor recreation lands managed by a variety of agencies, such as the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, U.S. Forest Service and others.

Parks bring many benefits. Besides providing safe family-oriented recreation to millions, state parks contribute millions of dollars in travel spending to Central Valley county economies:

- About half of visitors are from out of state or other parts of California; they often combine a State Park vacation with stays at hotels and visits to wineries, museums, specialty shops and other attractions.
- Visitors support a host of outdoor recreation businesses such as equipment shops, guides, marinas and camp stores.

State parks also make Central Valley cities desirable places to do business or call home. The Central Valley is an increasingly service- and technology-oriented economy; “livability” tops the list of criteria for such businesses. Additionally, research shows that successful communities have ample green space for recreation, natural beauty, tourism and health, and that well-planned parks and other open space are important contributors to vibrant cities and towns.

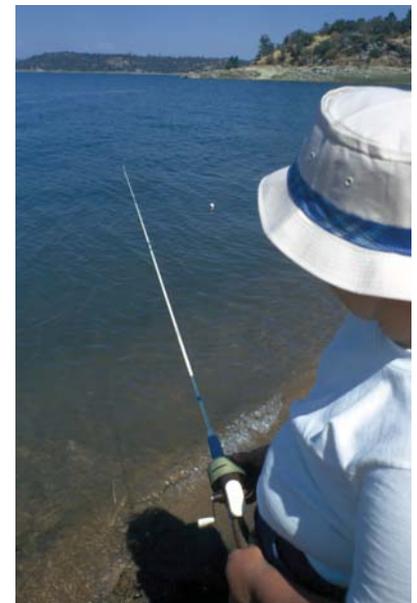
Bicycling in the Delta



Folsom Lake SRA



The San Joaquin River at Great Valley Grasslands SP



Angling at Folsom Lake SRA

Camping at Millerton Lake SRA



The Need for a Plan

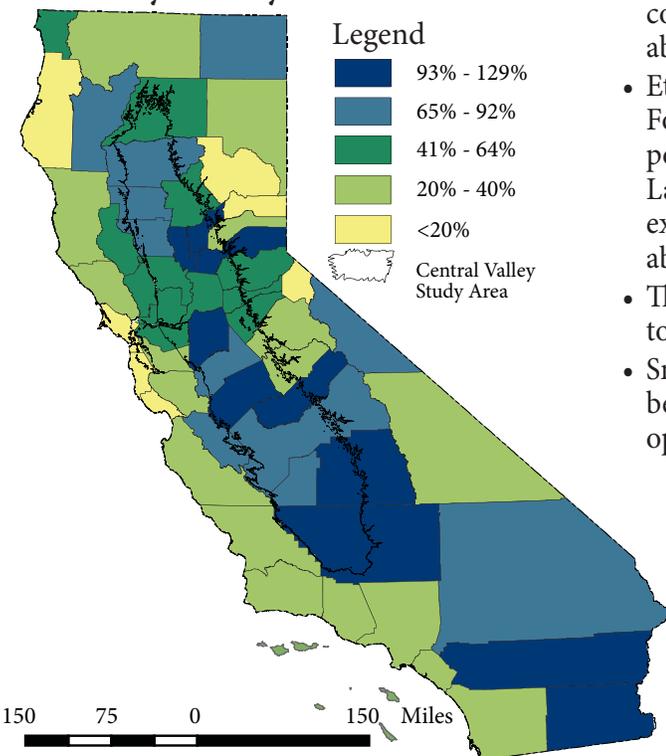
Recreation for all

Parks in the Central Valley must meet significant challenges posed by the changing demography (population growth is shown below) and recreation and health trends.

Recreation trends. In addition to responding to overall recreation trends (see page 5), amenities at Central Valley parks must be designed for a wide range of recreational preferences. For example, trends show that Latinos tend to recreate in large groups. Adding more group picnic areas and group campgrounds to state parks can help meet this need.

Health trends. Californians are increasingly sedentary, and the percentage of children who are obese continues to grow. Parks, trails and historical sites are excellent inducements to physical activity, make it interesting and enjoyable and encourage life-long fitness habits.

Projected Percent Population Growth by County 2000-2030



Central Valley parks today. Regrettably, Central Valley residents do not have the outdoor recreation opportunities that they deserve. Among key issues:

- Many Valley state parks are smaller and have fewer amenities than those in other areas of California. The San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin regions have particularly few state parks to serve their growing populations.
- The Valley lacks well-developed regional park systems such as those in some coastal counties and the Bay Area.
- The Valley study area is 19% of the area of California but contains only 4% of California’s public land. Additionally, these wildlife refuges and other agency landholdings, while large, have few recreation facilities; their purpose is mainly for wildlife habitat or dispersed recreation.
- Due to budget constraints, many government agencies struggle to maintain recreational facilities.
- Central Valley residents must travel an average of 50 minutes to reach their favorite recreation areas—up to twice as long as residents of southern California or the Bay Area.

The Valley is changing. The resources of the Central Valley are taxed by the explosive growth and will be used differently in the future due to profound demographic changes. These changes are increasing the demand for outdoor recreation:

- Population is projected to nearly double in the study area counties by 2030, going from about 7.8 million in 2000 to about 14 million.
- Ethnic composition of the valley is changing dramatically. For example, in 2000, Latinos made up about 30% of the population and Anglo-Europeans about 53%. In 2030, the Latino population, projected to be about 4.6 million, will exceed the Anglo-European population, projected to be about 3 million.
- The number of Californians over 60 years of age is projected to double between 1990 and 2020.
- Small agricultural-based towns and communities are becoming urbanized, negatively impacting water supply, open space and cultural and natural resources.

A vision for the future. To respond to the Valley’s dynamic changes, to increase service and visibility to Valley residents and visitors and to enhance protection of Valley resources, California State Parks initiated its Central Valley Vision, a roadmap for the State Park System’s future in the Central Valley. A diverse group of stakeholders has been working with recreation and resource experts to make the Central Valley Vision a reality:

- **Survey data.** Recent surveys from Public Opinions and Attitudes show that recreation activities at lakes, rivers and reservoirs are very highly valued. Popular activities include swimming, angling, motor boating and non-motorized boating, sail boating, windsurfing and beach activities. Of all California regions, angling is most popular in the Valley. Based on survey trends, walking, picnicking, developed camping, swimming, sightseeing and visiting nature centers and historic sites will continue to be perennial favorites that will dominate outdoor recreation.
- **Public meetings.** In Valley cities and towns, residents said they wanted state parks that provide:
 - river access, for swimming, angling, boating and other water sports;
 - varied recreation opportunities, including group picnic areas, updated and increased camping facilities, areas for sunning and open areas for kite flying, pickup games and unstructured play;
 - trails, including multiuse trails for equestrians, walkers and bikers; water trails for rafters and boaters; and off-highway vehicle use areas;
 - resource protection, including preservation of riparian woodlands, oak and sycamore groves, native grasslands and vernal pools; and
 - interpretation of the Central Valley’s culture and history, especially related to California Indians, agriculture, water development, immigrants and the oil and gas industry.
- **Oversight Committee.** Guiding the project are agency policy leaders, community activists and State Park partners.
- **California State Parks department staff.** Experts in park and recreation planning have conducted extensive analysis, which included reviewing the condition of existing parks, studying demographic projections and recreational trends and reviewing proposed development projects, park unit General Plans and information on regional and local planning, funding and partnering efforts.

The Central Valley Vision builds on this information to meet the Valley’s needs.



San Joaquin Kit Fox

Parks and the environment

Outdoor recreation in the Central Valley is limited not only by a lack of facilities, but also by the region’s degraded environment. Poor air quality from smog or farm odors, especially during the summer, can make it unpleasant or even unhealthy for those who recreate or exercise outdoors. The decline in salmon, steelhead, and striped bass and warnings about contaminants hinder angling. Protections required to recover endangered species sometimes limit recreation in areas that are also habitat for rare animals or plants.

Climate change will further strain outdoor recreation in the Central Valley. Changes in precipitation and water use will make reservoirs less stable settings for recreation. Rising sea levels will change recreation in the Delta. Fish, wildlife and wildflowers that park visitors now enjoy will be increasingly threatened as waters warm and habitats change.

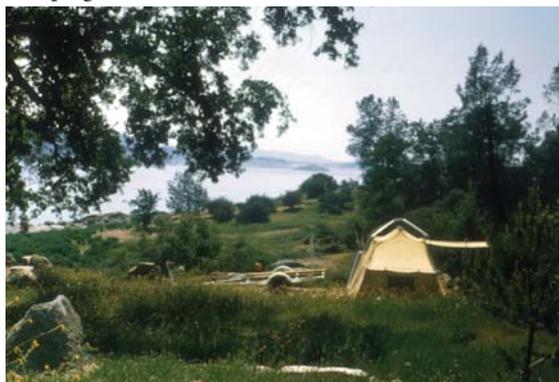
Protecting the environment in the Central Valley requires everyone’s vigilance. State Parks will do its part by building “green” facilities, restoring over 4,000 acres of wildlife and fish habitat, and planting a half million trees to help absorb climate changing gases. Park expansion will occur in areas without impaired water quality. To minimize vulnerability to changes in hydrology, new parks and facilities will be sited where upstream reservoirs ensure reliable river flows, set back from floodplains, and outside areas threatened by rising sea levels.

A Plan for the Valley



Caswell Memorial SP

Camping at Millerton Lake SRA



Horseback riding at
Paynes Creek

Initiatives. The Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan is a set of initiatives to improve outdoor recreation and to help preserve and interpret valuable natural and cultural resources in the Central Valley over the next 20 years. California’s Legislature directed California State Parks to prepare this Implementation Plan in 2007. This Plan is a catalog of potential future projects. Highest priority is placed on improving eleven state parks, with other recommendations offered for the remaining units (see page 9 map). Decisions about funding for particular initiatives will be made through annual updates to California State Parks’ Five-Year Infrastructure Plan and the State’s annual budget.

When implemented, the Central Valley Vision initiatives will enhance outdoor recreation opportunities by:

- Almost tripling the number of campsites, from 1,200 to 3,200.
- More than doubling the number of picnic sites, from almost 900 to almost 2,000 sites.
- Almost doubling the acres of state parks land in the Valley, from about 110,000 to over 200,000 acres.

These proposed lands and facilities will provide family-oriented recreation for new generations of residents. Most Central Valley state parks—both existing and the proposed parks recommended here—are located on the region’s rivers: the Sacramento, Feather, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Merced, San Joaquin and Kings. This allows initiatives to focus on the water-based recreation that Valley residents most desire.

Strategy. The Central Valley Vision Implementation Plan recommends a two-pronged approach to enhance outdoor recreation in the Valley:

1. Improve and strategically expand the 36 existing California state parks in the Central Valley study area.
 - Initiatives would improve campsites, picnic areas, trails, boat landings, marinas, and other facilities at almost two-thirds of existing Valley parks.
 - Cooperation with partners will aid CSP in creating a “base camp” strategy (explained on the next page) that enhances access to public lands. Partnerships also help maximize funding efforts and volunteer contributions.
2. Add 13 new parks to the California State Park System:
 - six new parks in the San Joaquin Valley and Tulare Basin to provide recreation for rapidly growing and underserved populations and protect special resources;
 - two new parks in the northern Sacramento River Valley near Red Bluff, to link existing Sacramento River parks to Redding recreation areas;
 - two new museums in Sacramento and two new parks

in Yolo County—four new park areas to serve the State Capital’s growing metropolitan region; and

- one new park in Solano County that will help link other conserved areas to the Delta.

Also recommended are five heritage corridors to interpret the Valley’s history and culture and boating trails to link outdoor recreation areas on rivers and waterways.

“Base camps” for recreation. Public lands in the Central Valley have many owners, including State Parks and other public agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The Implementation Plan proposes that State Parks partner with public agencies and non-profit organizations that own land near a State Park to maximize outdoor recreation opportunities. The Plan will apply this strategy wherever possible.

This strategy has many benefits, including reducing the need for land acquisition, enhancing recreation opportunities in areas where public land has multiple owners, and concentrating recreation facilities to minimize impact on natural resources.

Here is how the “base camp” strategy works:

1. Facilities such as parking, restrooms, picnic sites, boat ramps and campgrounds and information on surrounding attractions and resources are available to visitors at the State Park “base camp.”
2. From the State Park, visitors could take roadways, trails, and heritage corridors to nearby hiking, wildlife viewing, angling, hunting, boat launches, historic sites and other day entertainment.

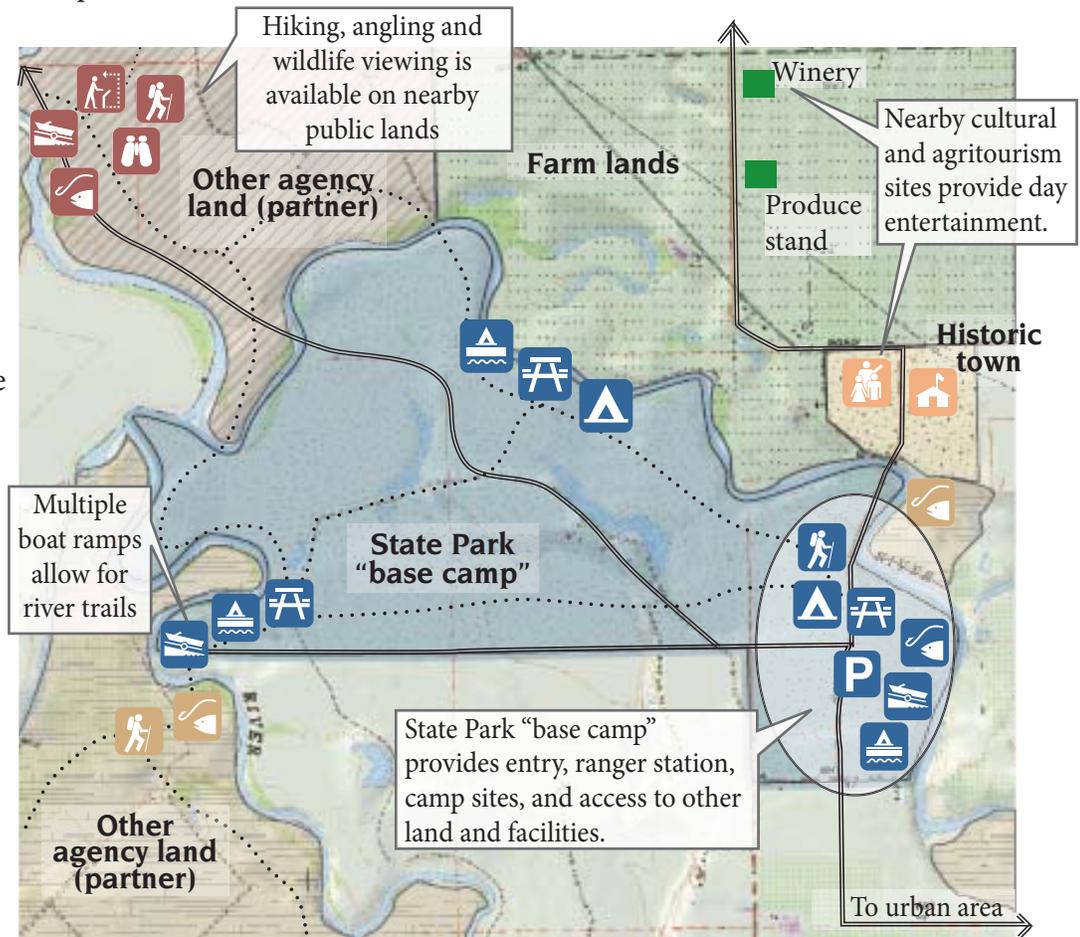
This illustration shows the base camp concept for a hypothetical area.



Hiking at San Luis Reservoir SRA

Legend

- ⋯ Trail
- Road
- Boat launch
- Boat-in camping
- Camping
- Angling
- Picnicking
- Parking
- Hiking
- Wildlife viewing
- Interpretive materials
- Museum
- Guided tours



Central Valley Regions



Turlock Lake and the Tuolumne River

Path of the Padres, San Luis Reservoir SRA



Paddling at Folsom Lake SRA



Regions. This study divides the Central Valley into 7 regions. Each California State Park has been assigned a number. Detailed initiatives for each park are shown by region on the following pages. Key criteria for high-priority projects and proposed parks include: is near an urban area, has easy access to a highway, and is near water.

High-priority projects. High-priority projects include initiatives at these eleven parks (from north to south):

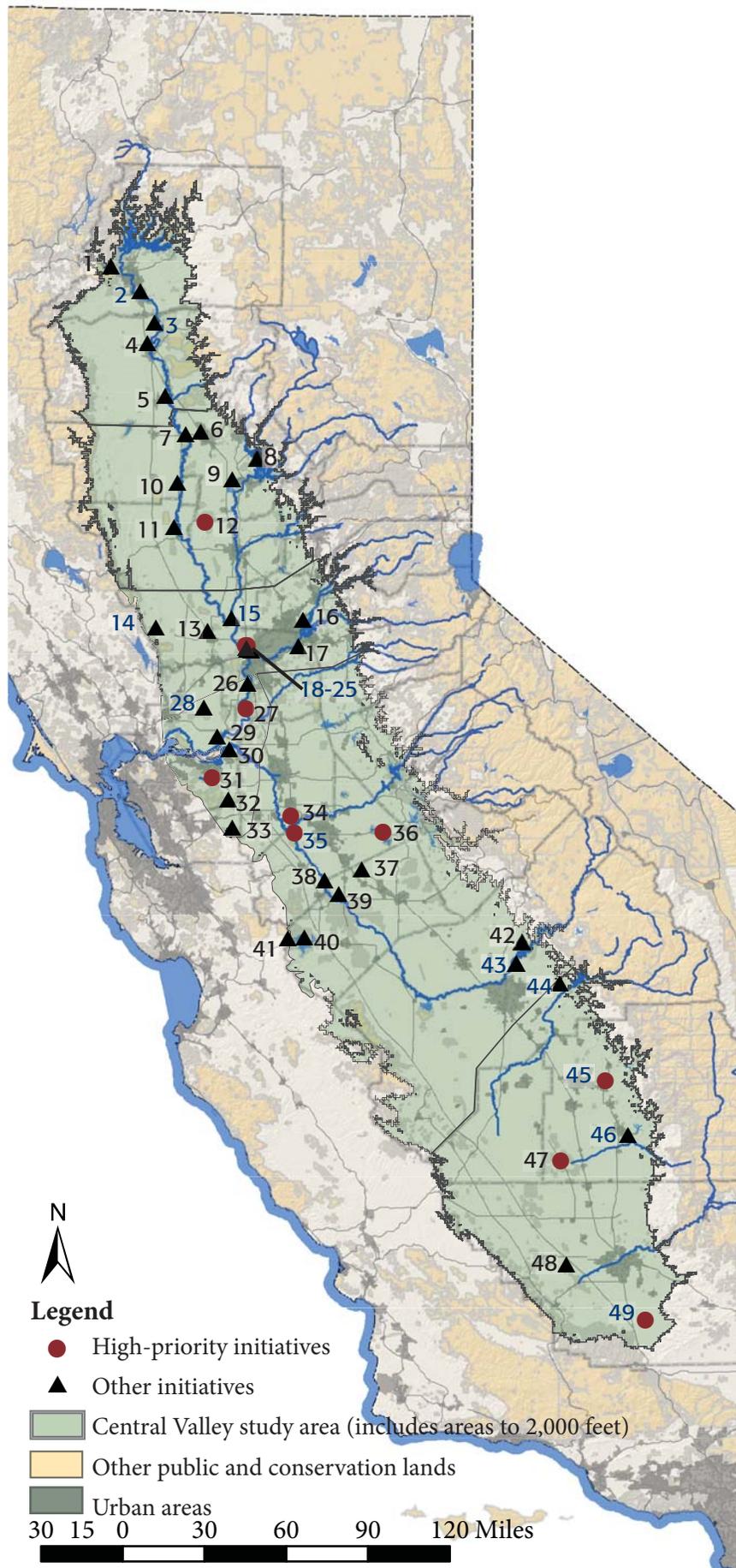
- Sutter Buttes SP
- California Indian Heritage Center
- California State Railroad Technology Museum
- Delta Meadows
- Cowell Ranch/John Marsh SHP
- Caswell Memorial SP
- Dos Rios
- Turlock Lake SRA
- Rocky Hill at Exeter
- Colonel Allensworth SHP
- Tejon Ranch

Proposed parks. The thirteen proposed new parks are (from north to south):

- Anderson-Sacramento
- Big Bend
- Blue Ridge
- Upper Elkhorn Basin
- California Indian Heritage Center
- California State Railroad Technology Museum
- Barker Slough
- Dos Rios
- San Joaquin River Parkway
- Kings River
- Rocky Hill at Exeter
- Deer Creek
- Tejon Ranch

Oaks and wildflowers at Pacheco SP





Parks by Region

Northern Sacramento River Valley

1. Shasta SHP
2. Anderson-Sacramento River (proposed)
3. Big Bend (proposed)
4. William B. Ide Adobe SHP
5. Woodson Bridge SRA

Southern Sacramento River Valley

6. Bidwell Mansion SHP
7. Bidwell-Sacramento River SP
8. Lake Oroville SRA
9. Clay Pit SVRA
10. Butte City (CSP property)
11. Colusa-Sacramento River SRA
12. SP at Sutter Buttes

Metropolitan Sacramento

13. Woodland Opera House SHP
14. Blue Ridge (proposed)
15. Upper Elkhorn Basin (proposed)
16. Folsom Lake SRA & Powerhouse SHP
17. Prairie City SVRA

Sacramento

18. CA Indian Heritage Center (proposed)
19. Railroad Technology Museum (proposed)
20. California State Railroad Museum
21. Old Sacramento SHP
22. Leland Stanford Mansion SHP
23. State Capitol Museum
24. Governor's Mansion SHP
25. Sutter's Fort SHP

Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta

26. Stone Lake (CSP property)
27. Delta Meadows & Locke Boarding House (CSP property)
28. Barker Slough (proposed)
29. Brannan Island SRA
30. Franks Tract SRA
31. Cowell Ranch/John Marsh (CSP property)
32. Bethany Reservoir SRA
33. Carnegie SVRA

San Joaquin River Valley

34. Caswell Memorial SP
35. Dos Rios (proposed)
36. Turlock Lake SRA
37. McConnell SRA
38. George J. Hatfield SRA
39. Great Valley Grasslands SP
40. San Luis Reservoir SRA
41. Pacheco SP
42. Millerton Lake SRA
43. San Joaquin River Parkway (proposed)

Tulare Basin

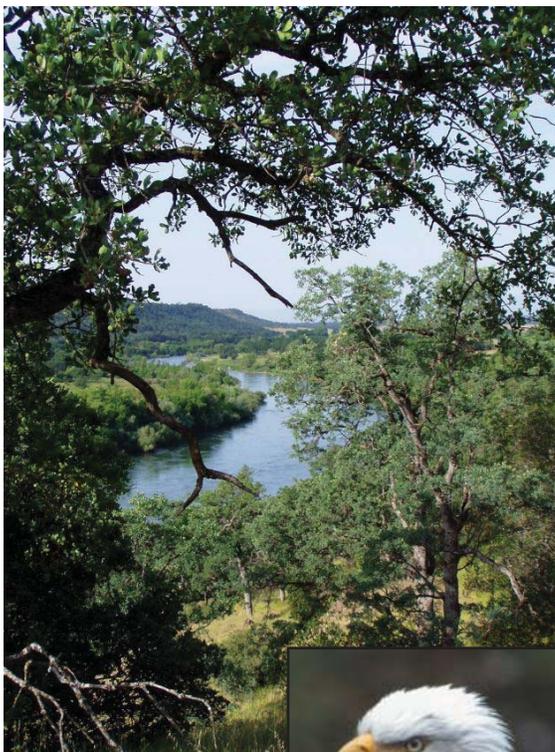
44. Kings River (proposed)
45. Rocky Hill at Exeter (proposed)
46. Deer Creek (proposed)
47. Colonel Allensworth SHP
48. Tule Elk SNR
49. Tejon Ranch (proposed)

Northern Sacramento River Valley

Shasta and Tehama Counties



Anglers on the Sacramento River



Sacramento River



Bald Eagles are attracted to the area's lush riparian and oak forests.

Regional character. Abundant wildlife, celebrated angling areas, stunning views and historic towns can all be found in this region. The Sacramento River flows past lush riparian forests, cattle ranches and orchards. Visitors are especially attracted to the region's water-based recreation opportunities and Old West history. Travel spending in 2006 for region counties totaled \$470 million, with most travelers arriving by Interstate 5.

Recreation facilities. Public land occupies over 400,000 acres, or about 20%, of the region. Facilities include Lake Shasta, the Sundial Bridge at Turtle Bay, the Sacramento River Trail and others. Local parks and marinas provide river access and other recreation facilities.

Existing state parks are:

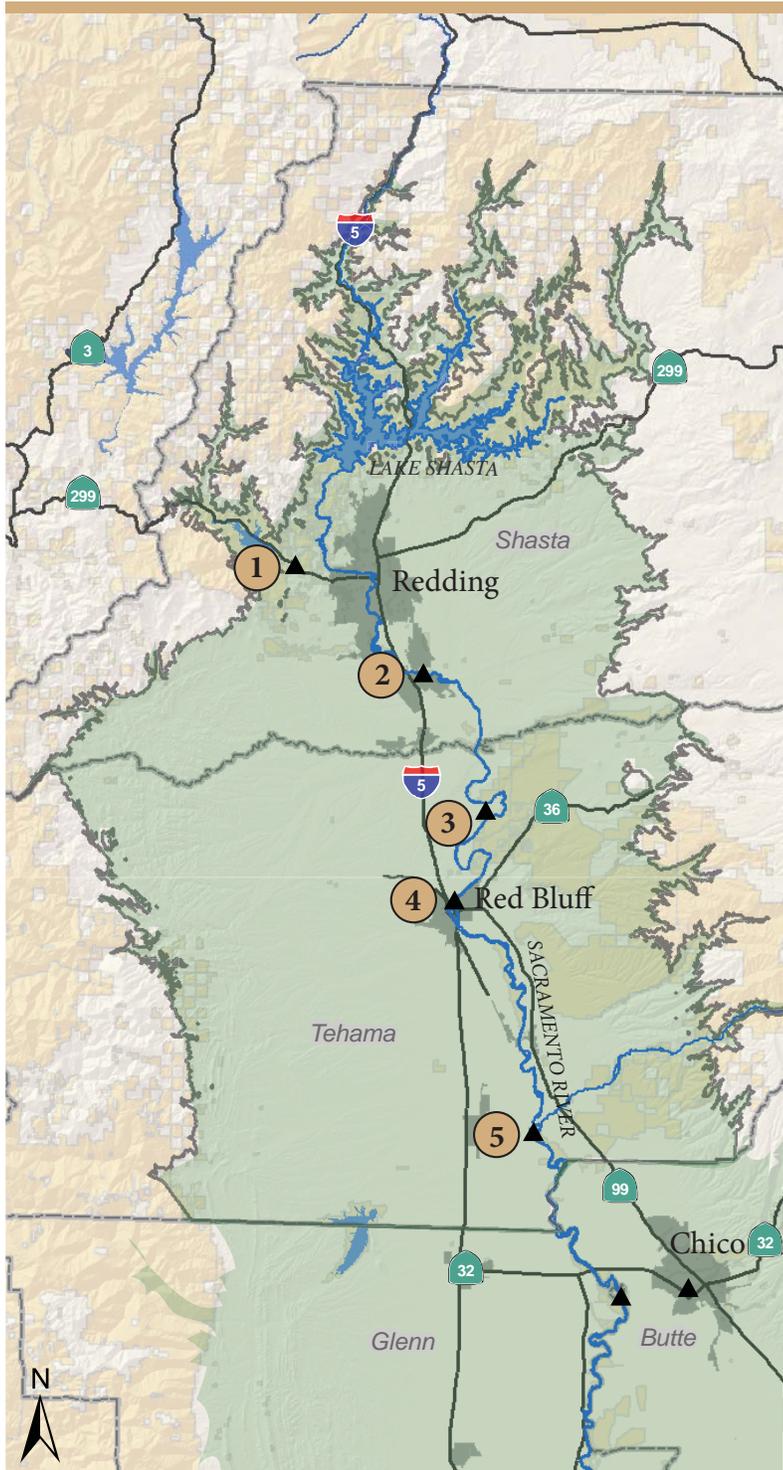
- **Shasta SHP.** Restored historic buildings and museum collection preserve a piece of the Gold Rush era's northern mining district.
- **William B. Ide Adobe SHP.** Memorializing the leader of the 1846 Bear Flag Revolt, the historic ranch setting takes visitors back to California's pioneer days.
- **Woodson Bridge SRA.** Riparian forests and oak woodlands are home to bald eagles and songbird. Visitors enjoy picnicking, camping, angling and trails.

Initiatives summary. State Park initiatives would expand water access and water-based recreation in the region, including:

- Two new state parks linking Redding and Red Bluff recreation areas
- The addition of 5,200-5,800 acres of land, 140-160 campsites and 150-180 picnic sites, and restoration of about 200 acres
- Expanded hiking, biking, and equestrian trails; angling access; boating facilities; and interpretation and education opportunities
- A Sacramento River Water Trail to connect river-oriented recreation facilities.

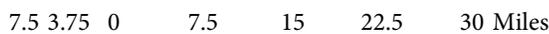
Docents and volunteers at William B. Ide Adobe SHP



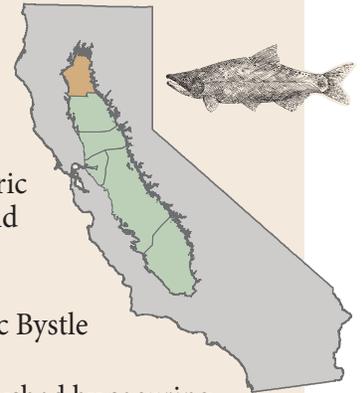


Legend

- High-priority initiatives
- ▲ Other initiatives
- Central Valley study area (includes areas to 2,000 feet)
- Other public and conservation lands
- Urban areas



Initiatives



- 1 Shasta SHP**
 - Continue historic preservation and interpretation activities.
 - Acquire historic Bystle House.
 - Protect the viewshed by securing about 165 acres from BLM.
- 2 Anderson-Sacramento River (proposed)**
 - Acquire about 225 acres of riverfront property.
 - Develop 25 campsites, 50 picnic sites, trails, angling access, boating facilities and an interpretive program.
- 3 Big Bend (proposed)**
 - Acquire about 2,000 acres of riverfront property.
 - Develop about 100 campsites, 2 group campsites, 125 picnic sites, trails, angling access, boating facilities and an interpretive program.
- 4 William B. Ide Adobe SHP**
 - Continue interpretive programs.
 - Enhance river access.
- 5 Woodson Bridge SRA**
 - Accept the 700 acre Kopta Slough property.
 - Restore about 180 acres of wildlife habitat.
 - Add a 25-person group campground and new trails, and improve accessibility and the campground center.
 - Cooperate with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Fish and Game and The Nature Conservancy to manage and interpret resources.

Sacramento River Water Trail (proposed)

- Develop a water trail along the river from Redding to Sacramento with campsites, boat ramps and day-use areas at existing parks and marinas.

Southern Sacramento River Valley

Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Sutter and Yuba Counties



Angling at Lake Oroville SRA



Sacramento River rafters



The Sutter Buttes and the Sacramento River

A Great Blue Heron and wildflower at the Sutter Buttes



Region character. Here, massive oaks and cottonwoods shade rivers and harbor songbirds that nest or migrate along waterways. The Sutter Buttes overlook marshes and rice farms where millions of waterbirds congregate each winter. The Sacramento and Feather Rivers offer boating and angling. Water development projects, key to the success of the region's agriculture, include the Sacramento River Flood Control Project and the Department of Water Resources' Lake Oroville reservoir.

Over 390,000 people lived here in 2000, primarily in Chico, Yuba City and Marysville. The population is expected to nearly double by 2030 to 734,000. Travelers, who typically use Interstate 5 or Highway 99, spent about \$488 million in region counties in 2006.

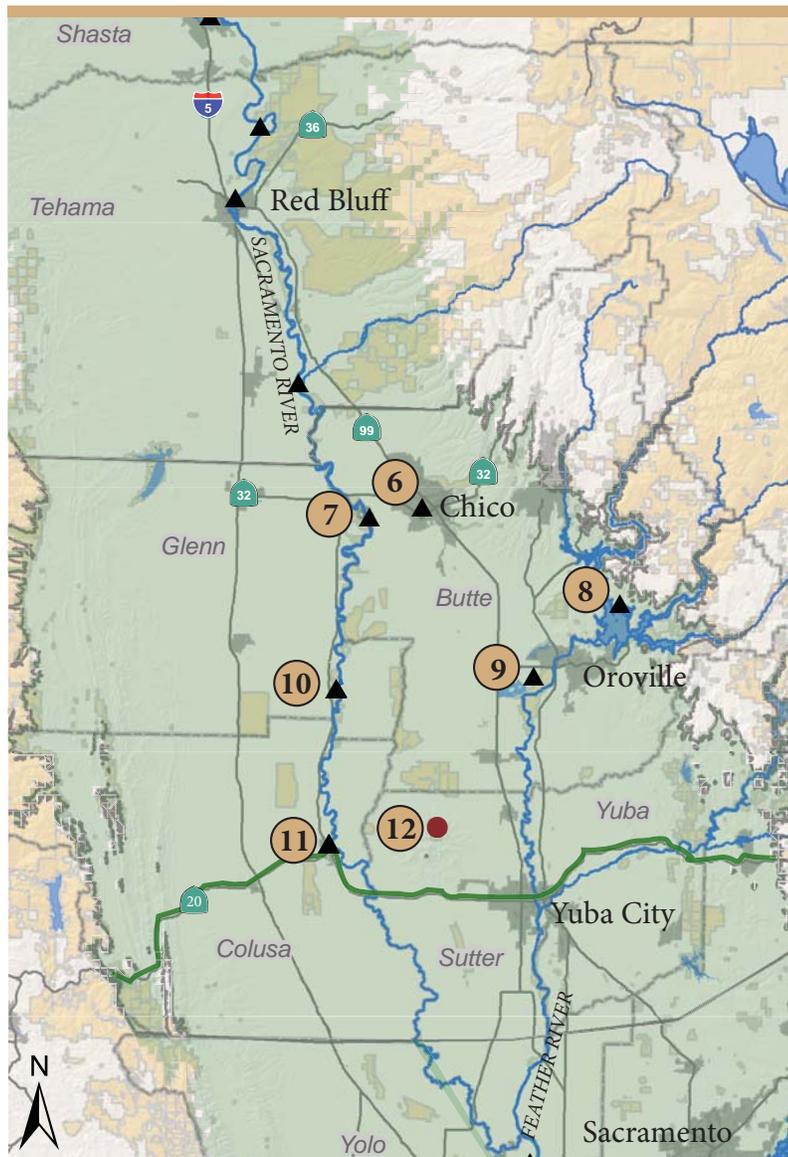
Recreation facilities. The region holds about 245,000 acres of public land, including twelve national wildlife refuges and state wildlife areas. Local parks, historic mining towns and farm centers are other regional facilities.

Existing state parks and properties are:

- **Bidwell Mansion SHP.** This Victorian mansion memorializes pioneers John and Annie Bidwell.
- **Bidwell-Sacramento River SP.** Angling and boating are popular activities; riparian forests are being restored.
- **Lake Oroville SRA.** Boating, camping, picnicking, and trails are all available at the 15,500-acre reservoir.
- **Clay Pit SVRA.** This off-highway use area is near Oroville.
- **Butte City (park property).** Access to the Sacramento River is a major feature of this 40-acre property.
- **Colusa-Sacramento SRA.** A favorite of anglers and boaters, the angling here is some of the best in California.
- **State Park at Sutter Buttes.** Scenic oak woodlands and grasslands are preserved in this new, undeveloped park.

Initiatives summary. Priorities include preserving the Sutter Buttes and improving water recreation on the Sacramento River:

- Develop 350-400 campsites and 80-100 picnic sites, protect an additional 7,800-8,300 acres and restore about 1,000 acres of wildlife habitat at state parks.
- Expanded hiking, biking and equestrian trails; angling access; boating facilities; and interpretation and education opportunities
- Develop water trails on the Sacramento and Feather Rivers so that boaters can cruise between state parks, boat landings and other recreation lands.



Legend 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 Miles

- High-priority initiatives
- ▲ Other initiatives
- Central Valley study area (includes areas to 2,000 feet)
- Other public and conservation lands
- Urban areas
- Cross California Ecological Corridor (Hwy. 20)



Bedrock mortars at the Sutter Buttes are proof of habitation in ancient times

Initiatives

- 6 Bidwell Mansion SHP**
 - Continue restoration of mansion and grounds.
 - Expand interpretive materials.
 - 7 Bidwell-Sacramento River SP**
 - Partner with DFG, WCB and USFWS to restore habitat.
 - Add about 55 campsites, a visitor center, trails, and angling access.
 - 8 Lake Oroville SRA**
 - Assist DWR in adding 75-100 campsites, 20-50 picnic sites, and expanding trails and boating facilities.
 - Partner with DWR and BLM on 5,800 acres around the lake.
 - 9 Clay Pit SVRA**
 - Add new track and day-use facilities.
 - Interpret and protect vernal pools.
 - 10 Butte City (park property)**
 - Develop primitive campsites, trails, an interpretive program, and small boating and angling facilities.
 - Provide day use access to the neighboring wildlife refuge.
 - 11 Colusa-Sacramento River SRA**
 - Acquire about 13 acres and restore about 140 acres of wildlife habitat.
 - Add about 20 campsites, 10 picnic sites and interpretive opportunities.
 - Enhance boating and angling facilities.
 - 12 State Park at Sutter Buttes**
 - Acquire about 1,000 acres.
 - Develop about 150 campsites (outside of Peace Valley), 50 picnic sites, trails, and interpretation.
- Sacramento River Water Trail (proposed)**
- Develop a water trail from Redding to Sacramento with campsites, boat ramps and day-use areas at existing parks and marinas.
- Feather River Water Trail (proposed)**
- Develop a water trail from Oroville to the Sacramento R. with boat ramps and day-use at existing parks and marinas.



Metropolitan Sacramento

Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo Counties



Windsurfing at Lake Natoma

Generators at Folsom Powerhouse SHP



Riding at Prairie City SVRA

Boating at Folsom Lake SRA



Region character. The Metropolitan Sacramento Area stretches from the Sierra foothills to the Coastal Range. The region is characterized by its rivers, the Sacramento and American, and its mix of city, suburbs and farms. Parkland, open space and water-based recreation are especially valuable in this rapidly growing area, home to over 2 million people. Several freeways serve the region—Interstates 5 and 80 and Highways 50 and 99. Travelers spent over \$4 billion in region counties in 2006.

Recreation facilities. Within the region’s approximately 191,000 acres of public land, many facilities are near the American and Sacramento Rivers. Public agencies cooperatively manage major recreation areas, including Folsom Lake, the American River Parkway and the Yolo Bypass.

Existing state parks are:

- **Woodland Opera House SHP.** Audiences enjoy theatrical performances and school programs at this restored theater.
 - **Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Powerhouse SHP.** Boating, swimming, camping and picnicking are top lake activities; the powerhouse looks much as it did in 1895.
 - **Prairie City SVRA.** Tracks and open areas for off-highway vehicles are main features of this popular OHV site
- (Sacramento state parks are on the next pages.)

Initiatives summary. Major initiatives include proposed new parks on the Sacramento River and Cache Creek and improvements at Folsom Lake SRA:

- Acquire 2,800-3,000 acres of land and restore 1,300-1,500 acres of wildlife habitat.
- Develop 180-210 campsites and 80-110 picnic sites.
- Develop hiking, biking and equestrian trails; angling access; boating facilities; new interpretation and education opportunities and newly acquired historic sites.
- Explore adding an excursion train originating in Old Sacramento to link downtown Woodland and the proposed Upper Elkhorn Basin park, or travelling south to Freeport.
- Develop the Sacramento River water trail so that boaters can cruise between state parks, boat landings and other recreation lands,

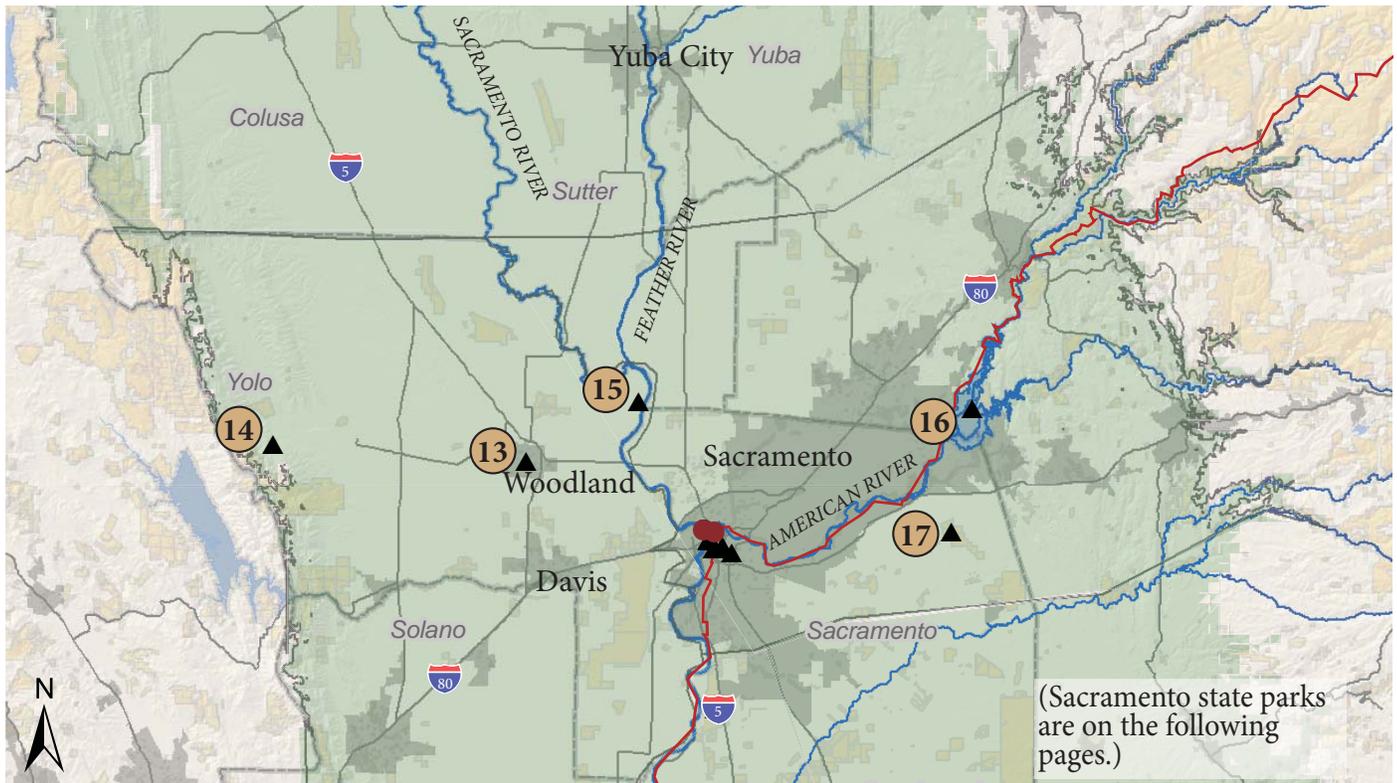
Bicycling along the Sacramento River



Initiatives

- 13 Woodland Opera House SHP**
 - Improve accessibility and continue programs.
- 14 Blue Ridge (proposed)**
 - Acquire about 1,500 acres in Capay Valley for a new State Park.
 - Develop about 50 camp sites, 50 picnic sites, boating facilities, trail opportunities and an interpretive program emphasizing African American heritage.
- 15 Upper Elkhorn Basin (proposed)**
 - Partner with local landowners along the Sacramento River to acquire about 1,500 acres.
 - Partner with the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, the Yolo Land Trust and Yolo County to provide about 75 camp sites, 75 picnic sites, trails, angling and an interpretive program.

- 16 Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Power House SHP**
 - Improve access from Folsom to Lake Natoma.
 - Restore about 180 acres of wildlife habitat.
 - Add about 80 campsites, 75 picnic sites, trails, boating facilities and interpretive opportunities.
- 17 Prairie City SVRA**
 - Add about 12 new picnic sites and expand track and interpretive opportunities.
- Sacramento River Water Trail (proposed)**
 - Develop a water trail from Redding to Sacramento with campsites, boat ramps and day-use areas at existing parks and marinas.



Legend

- High-priority initiatives
- ▲ Other initiatives
- Central Valley study area (includes areas to 2,000 feet)
- Other public and conservation lands
- Urban areas
- American Discovery Trail

Kayaking on Cache Creek

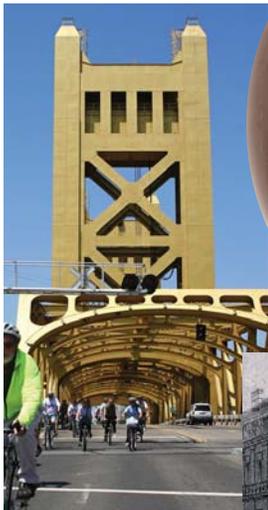


Sacramento

Sacramento and Yolo Counties



California State Railroad Museum



Bicyclists on the Tower Bridge



Stanford family



Odd Fellows Hall, Old Sacramento SHP, 1857

Living History event at Sutter's Fort SHP



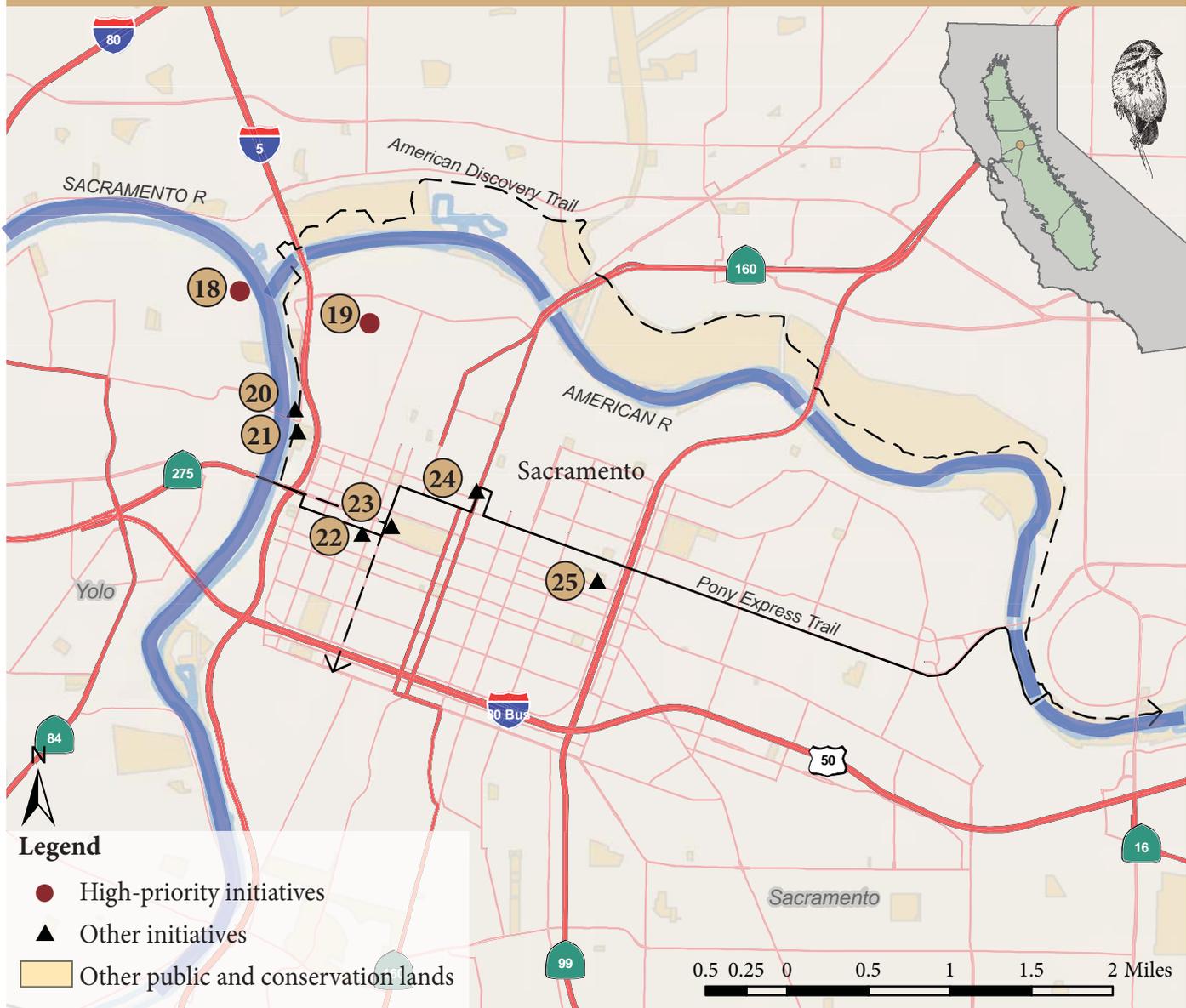
Region character. Bordered by the Sacramento and American Rivers and criss-crossed by a number of freeways (see map), the seat of California's government is alive with shopping, dining, entertainment and historical attractions. World-renowned museums celebrate the era of the Gold Rush and the Transcontinental Railroad and attract visitors from the state and beyond; travel spending in Sacramento County totaled about \$2.3 billion in 2006. The historic Union Pacific Railyards, north of downtown, is the nation's largest urban infill development.

Recreation facilities. The region's State Historical Parks and State Museums preserve and interpret the heritage of California's Capital City and illuminate the forces that have shaped Sacramento and the State. Existing state parks, trails, and attractions include:

- **Old Sacramento SHP.** This 28-acre National Historic Landmark District has 53 historic buildings, a number of which State Parks owns and operates.
- **California State Railroad Museum.** North America's most popular railroad museum houses one of the world's finest collections of historic railroad engines.
- **Sutter's Fort SHP.** Sacramento Valley's earliest European settlement is a frequent destination for school field trips.
- **State Capitol Museum.** Housing California's Legislature since 1869, the State Capitol underwent a major renovation from 1975 to 1981.
- **Governor's Mansion SHP.** This Victorian mansion was home to 13 governors from 1903 to 1967.
- **Leland Stanford Mansion SHP.** Railroad magnate and Governor Leland Stanford lived in this home, built in 1856.
- **State Indian Museum.** Exhibits and artifacts illustrate the cultures of the state's first inhabitants.
- **Pony Express National Historic Trail and the American Discovery Trail.** These State Recreational Trails follow the route of the American River's Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail.
- **Other attractions** include paddle wheeler boats that cruise the Sacramento River and Old Sacramento excursion trains.

Initiatives summary. The focus is on preserving and interpreting cultural resources:

- The proposed California Indian Heritage Center will house a museum and research center with interpretive trails on a 43-acre site at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers.
- The proposed State Railroad Technology Museum will focus on railroad technology and will be adjacent to Old Sacramento SHP and the Railyards development project.



Legend

- High-priority initiatives
- ▲ Other initiatives
- Other public and conservation lands

Initiatives

- 18 California Indian Heritage Center (proposed)**
 - Acquire 68 acres.
 - Develop museum and cultural center.
 - Develop trails and interpretive program at this new cultural center.
- 19 State Railroad Technology Museum (proposed)**
 - Acquire an acre in the Railyards development.
 - Rehabilitate boiler shop and erecting shop for museum.
 - Develop interpretive program on this historic site.
- 20 California State Railroad Museum**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- 21 Old Sacramento SHP**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- 22 Leland Stanford Mansion SHP**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- 23 State Capitol Museum**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- 24 Governor’s Mansion SHP**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- 25 Sutter’s Fort SHP**
 - Expand interpretive program.
- Pony Express National Historic Trail and American Discovery Trail**
 - Partner with the City of Sacramento to improve bicycle and pedestrian routes linking parks along these trails.

Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta

Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Solano Counties



Angling on Three Mile Slough, Brannan Island SRA



Water sports are popular in the Central Valley



Historic town of Locke

Agricultural works with thresher



Historic Walnut Grove fruit label



Region character. The Delta is the meeting place of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. Its network of waterways includes the Sacramento, San Joaquin, Cosumnes and Mokelumne Rivers and countless sloughs and backwaters that support a diverse but imperiled ecosystem. The Delta is renowned for its angling, boating, waterfowl hunting and rich cultural history. Settlers from many countries established communities along its waterways and railroad routes.

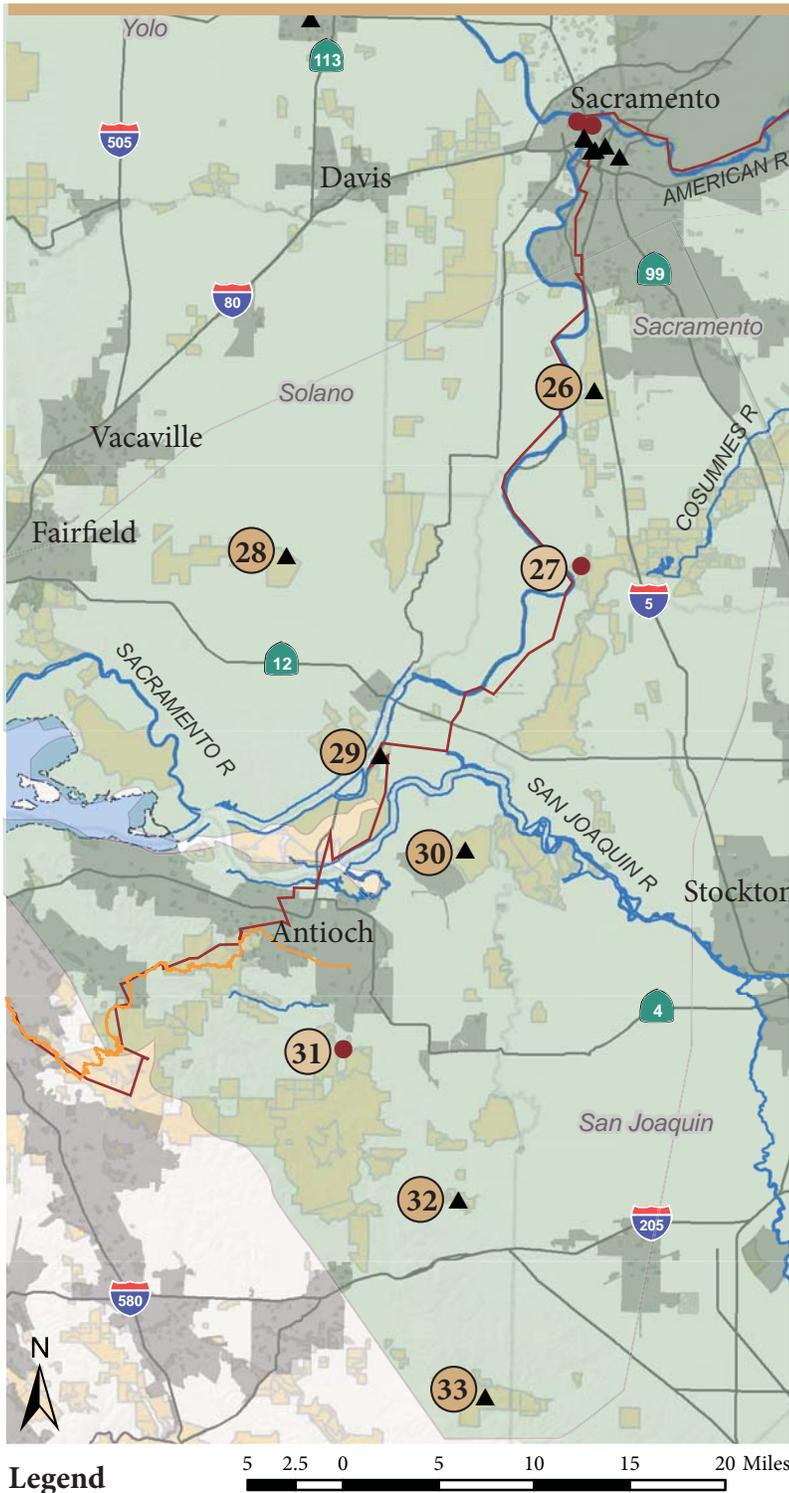
Significant change is coming to the Delta, as rising sea levels threaten some islands and engineers study water projects; some islands may be converted to habitat to restore the ecosystem. Meanwhile, over one million new residents will settle in Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties between 2000 and 2030. Travel spending in region counties was \$4.8 billion in 2006.

Recreation facilities. The Delta's 145,000 acres of public and conservation lands include the Cosumnes Preserve, two wildlife refuges, eight state wildlife areas and ecological reserves and local parks. State parks in the Delta are small, but they provide a gateway to the 1,000 miles of waterways. Existing state parks and trails are:

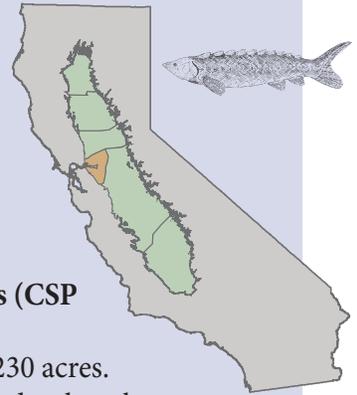
- **Stone Lake.** This property protects habitat within Stone Lake National Wildlife Refuge.
- **Delta Meadows and the Locke Boarding House.** Here visitors enjoy Delta landscapes of marshes, riparian forests and river towns.
- **Brannan Island SRA.** Swimming access, angling, a large boat launch, camping and day-use facilities and a visitor center are features of this popular recreation area.
- **Franks Tract SRA.** Popular with anglers and waterfowl hunters, this recreation area is accessible only by boat.
- **Cowell Ranch/John Marsh.** This 3,600-acre property features a historic farmstead, archaeological sites, and oak savannahs; it is not yet open to the public.
- **Bethany Reservoir SRA.** Local boaters are the main visitors at this little-known reservoir.
- **Carnegie SVRA.** Motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and four-wheel drive area.
- **American Discovery Trail, Mokelumne Coast-to-Crest Trail, and Juan Baustista de Anza National Historic Trail.** These State recreational trails connect the Delta to the Sierra's foothills and the Coastal Range.

Initiatives summary. To meet growing demand, existing units will be improved and the Delta's "sense of place" enhanced. Initiatives also complement the Governor's Delta Vision Task Force recommendations. Initiatives are:

- Develop 300-340 campsites, about 160 picnic sites and 700-750 acres of land; restore about 500 acres of wildlife habitat.



Initiatives



- 26 Stone Lake (CSP property)**
 - Continue managing as wildlife habitat.
- 27 Delta Meadows (CSP property)**
 - Acquire about 230 acres.
 - Improve access; develop about 50 campsites, 25 picnic sites, trails and angling and boating facilities.
 - Develop interpretation and education opportunities with the Locke Boarding House.
 - Partner with the Cosumnes River Preserve and the Bureau of Reclamation to expand recreation.
- 28 Barker Slough (proposed)**
 - Acquire about 500 acres.
 - Restore as wildlife habitat and develop about 10 picnic sites, trails, small boat facilities and interpretive opportunities.
- 29 Brannan Island SRA**
 - Add about 30 campsites and 12 picnic sites and expand trails, angling and boating facilities and visitor center.
 - Cooperate with Department of Water Resources and Department of Fish and Game to provide recreation at Twitchell, Sherman and Lower Sherman Islands.
- 30 Franks Tract SRA**
 - Continue existing uses and access.
- 31 Cowell Ranch/John Marsh (CSP property)**
 - Preserve historic John Marsh house.
 - Develop about 200 campsites, 55 picnic sites, trails and interpretive and educational opportunities.
- 32 Bethany Reservoir SRA**
 - Add about 50 campsites, 60 picnic sites, trails and angling and interpretive opportunities.
- 33 Carnegie SVRA**
 - Add picnic sites and interpretive opportunities.

5 2.5 0 5 10 15 20 Miles

Legend

- High-priority initiatives
- ▲ Other initiatives
- Central Valley study area (includes areas to 2,000 feet)
- Other public and conservation lands
- Urban areas
- American Discovery Trail
- Mokelumne Coast to Crest Trail

San Joaquin River Valley

Calaveras, Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties

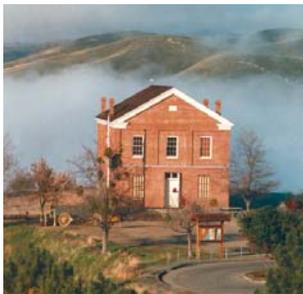


Family picnic at a State Park

Millerton historic courthouse



Angling at Turlock Lake SRA



Wakeboarding at a reservoir

Children playing in the Tuolumne River, Turlock Lake SRA



Region character. Orchards, vineyards and dairies dot the landscape of this productive region. The over 2 million residents of region counties rely on local rivers and reservoirs for low-cost recreation. Population is expected to double by 2030, which increases pressure on region parks and open space. Highways 99 and 152 and Interstate 5 bring travelers, who in 2006 spent over \$3 billion in region counties.

Recreation facilities. Reservoirs, three national wildlife refuges and eight Fish and Game wildlife areas and ecological reserves contribute to the 624,000 acres of public land in the region. Local partners are organizing greenways along the Tuolumne and San Joaquin Rivers. Existing state parks are:

- **Caswell Memorial SP.** The Stanislaus River meanders near park day-use facilities and campgrounds at one of California’s finest examples of a mature oak riparian forest.
- **Turlock Lake SRA.** Attracting visitors with its location between the Tuolumne River and Turlock, this park offers 26 miles of shoreline.
- **Hatfield SRA.** Popular activities at one of Merced County’s best riparian habitats include swimming, angling in the Merced River and picnicking.
- **McConnell SRA.** Angling, picnicking and camping on the Merced River are favorite recreational activities here.
- **Great Valley Grasslands SP.** An intact example of native grasslands, this park contributes to California’s largest contiguous block of wetlands.
- **Millerton Lake SRA.** With over 40 miles of shoreline, this reservoir offers swimming, angling, boating and camping. The San Joaquin River Trail leaves from Millerton Lake for the High Sierra.
- **San Luis Reservoir SRA.** With its location near Interstate 5, this is one of the state’s most visible and diverse recreation areas. The reservoir holds water for the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project.
- **Pacheco SP.** Scenic vistas, golden eagles, and 28 miles of trails for horseback riding, hiking, and mountain biking characterize this park.

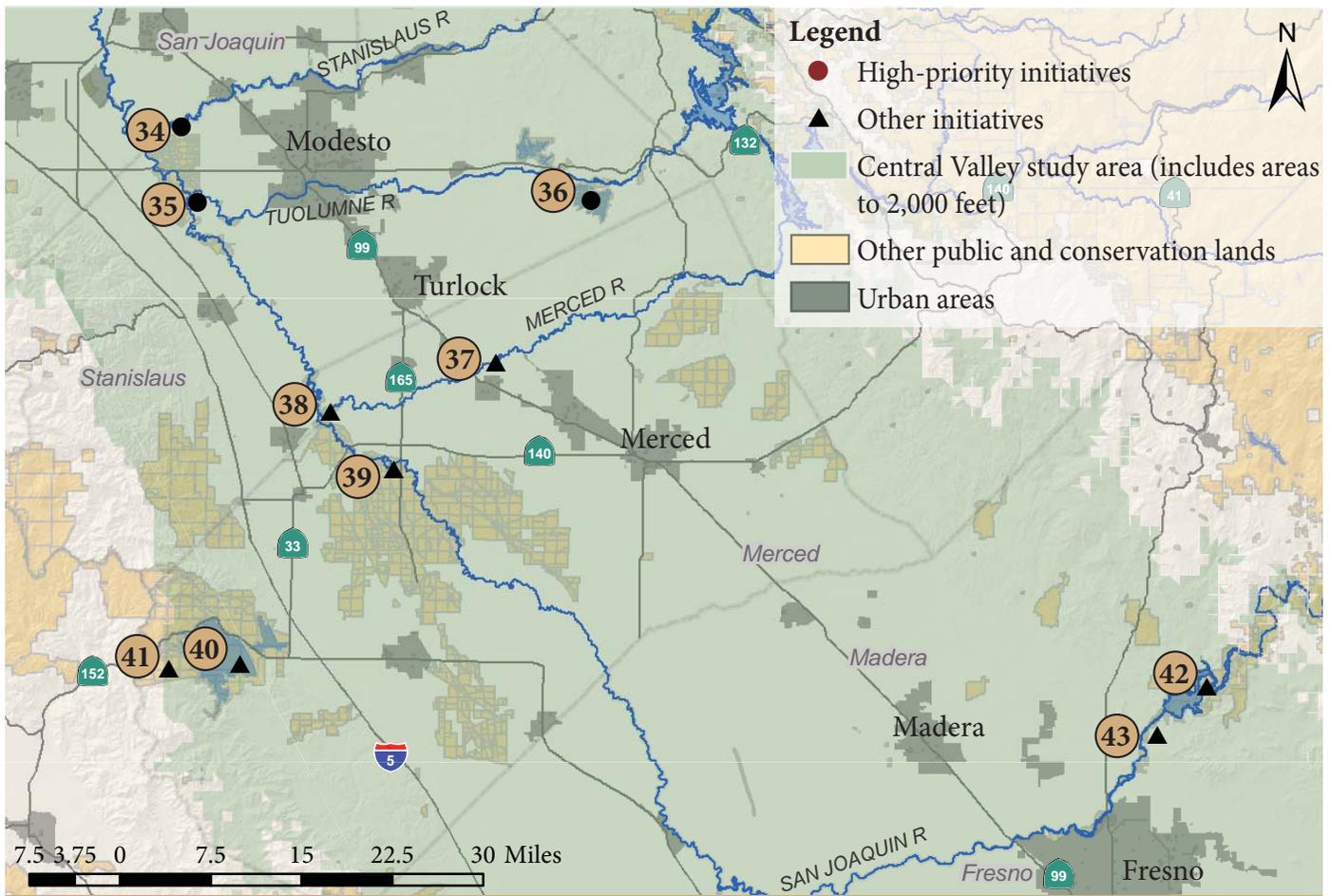
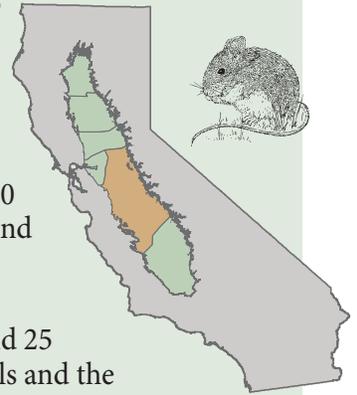
Initiatives summary. The focus is on recreation opportunities on the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, San Joaquin and Merced Rivers:

- Dos Rios would be a 1600-acre park at the confluence of the San Joaquin and Tuolumne Rivers, and would provide a recreation area near Modesto.
- State Parks will cooperate in planning for restoration of the San Joaquin River and create a new unit to address recreation and natural resource protection opportunities.

Initiatives

- 34 Caswell Memorial SP**
 - Acquire about 200 acres and restore about 100 acres of wildlife habitat.
 - Add about 65 new campsites, 30 new picnic sites, trails and an interpretive program.
- 35 Dos Rios (proposed)**
 - Acquire about 1,600 acres and restore 500 acres of wildlife habitat to create a new State Park.
 - Develop about 100 campsites, 100 picnic sites, trails, angling, boating facilities and an interpretive program.
- 36 Turlock Lake SRA**
 - Acquire about 1,650 acres to expand access to the Tuolumne River.
 - Add about 150 campsites, 60 picnic sites, trails, angling facilities and an interpretive program.
- 37 McConnell SRA**
 - Acquire about 200 acres.
 - Add about 50 campsites, 30 picnic sites, trails and an interpretive program.
- 38 George J. Hatfield SRA**
 - Continue day use.

- 39 Great Valley Grassland SP**
 - Cooperate with others in San Joaquin River restoration.
 - 40 San Luis Reservoir SRA**
 - Add about 300 campsites, 10 picnic sites, trails, angling and boating facilities.
 - 41 Pacheco SP**
 - Add about 90 campsites and 25 picnic sites and expand trails and the interpretive program.
 - 42 Millerton Lake SRA**
 - Add about 75 campsites and expand trails and boating facilities.
 - 43 San Joaquin River Parkway (proposed)**
 - Accept about 1,250 acres of existing public land in new park.
 - Develop 25 picnic sites, trails, boating facilities, and interpretive program.
- River Trails (proposed)**
- Develop river trails on Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Merced and San Joaquin Rivers to link existing parks and boat landings.



Tulare Basin

Fresno, Kern, Kings and Tulare Counties



Tule Elk at Tule Elk SNR



Kings River



Deer Creek



Tulare County Library at Colonel Allensworth SHP and historic photo of the Colonel

Docents at Colonel Allensworth SHP



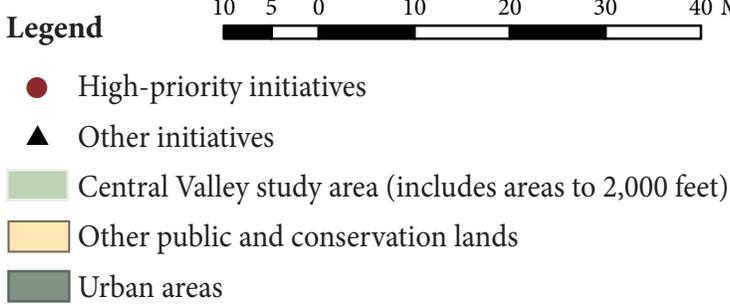
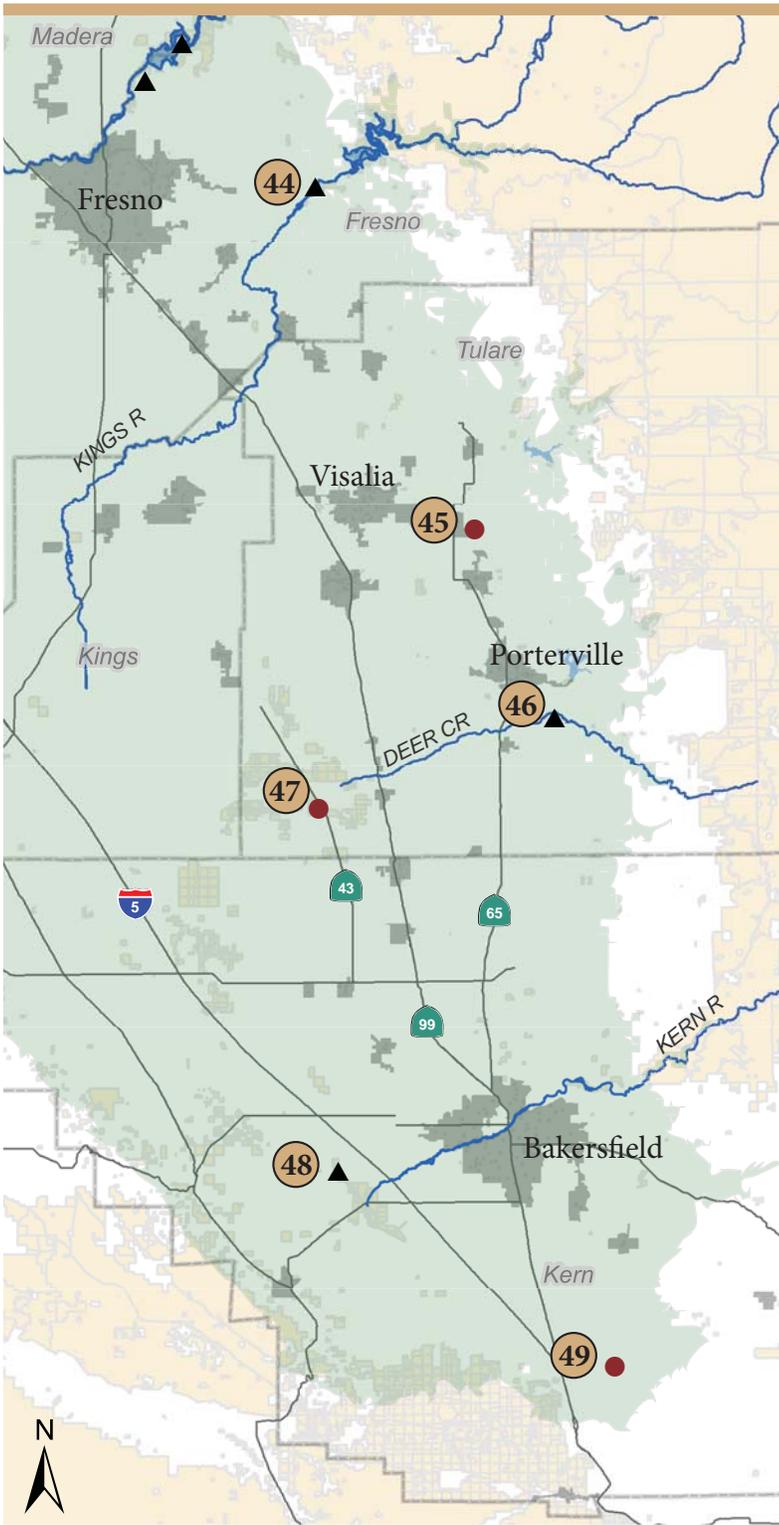
Region character. In ancient times, the Tulare Basin was a system of wetlands teeming with wildlife and grasslands browsed by herds of Tule Elk. Native Californians thrived and consecrated their sacred places. European settlers created a complex water management system to support farms and towns; concurrently, fortunes were made and lost searching for oil. Today's prosperity is directly tied to water and oil development. The population will nearly double to over 4.3 million by 2030. Even though many travelers simply pass through on Interstate 5 or Highway 99, the four region counties brought in about \$2.7 billion in travel dollars in 2006.

Recreation facilities. Two wildlife refuges, five state ecological reserves and local parks are among the region's nearly 211,000 acres of outdoor recreation land. Existing state parks are:

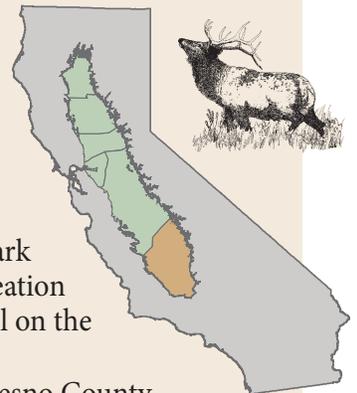
- **Colonel Allensworth SHP** is the site of the first African-American governed town in California. It offers historic structures, a visitor center and programs, picnic areas, and a small campground.
- **Tule Elk SNR** protects its petite elk at the site of the first endangered species recovery effort in the nation. It offers wildlife viewing, a visitor center and picnic areas.

Initiatives summary. State Park initiatives will protect outstanding natural areas and historic sites and provide recreation facilities that the Tulare Basin lacks:

- Develop three new proposed parks—Exeter Rocky Hill, a Native American rock art site; Tejon Ranch, a 60,000 acre park south of Bakersfield; and Kings River, near Fresno.
- Develop 90-120 campsites and about 150 picnic sites and restore about 300 acres of habitat.
- Develop hiking, biking and equestrian trails; angling access; boating facilities; new interpretation and education opportunities; and protect historic sites.



Initiatives



44 Kings River (proposed)

- Create a new park to provide recreation and a water trail on the Kings River.
- Partner with Fresno County Parks, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and Kings River Conservancy to acquire 500 acres on Kings River.

45 Rocky Hill at Exeter (proposed)

- Acquire about 2,300 acres to create a new park that celebrates Native American culture.
- Develop accessible trails and viewing platforms to view the rock art.
- Develop a visitor center and museum, 50 picnic sites, self-guided interpretive trails and a vista point.

46 Deer Creek (proposed)

- Acquire a new park of about 1,000 acres.
- Develop about 25 picnic sites and trails.

47 Colonel Allensworth SHP

- Replace visitor center and expand interpretive programs at this historic site.
- Cooperate with regional conservation initiatives.

48 Tule Elk SNR

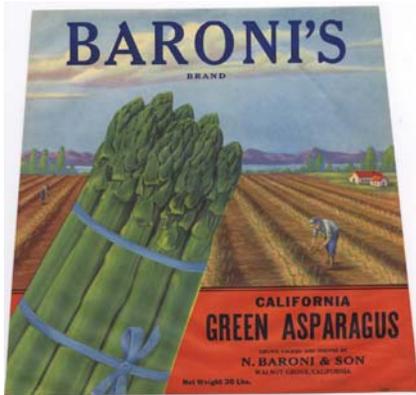
- Acquire about 420 acres and restore about 300 acres of wildlife habitat.
- Add about 10 picnic sites, 10 campsites, angling access and interpretive opportunities.

49 Tejon Ranch (proposed)

- Cooperate with partners to acquire 60,000 acres to establish a new park at the south end of the Central Valley.
- Develop about 75 campsites, 40 picnic sites, trails and interpretive program.
- Develop an equestrian center and dude-ranch concession.

Central Valley Heritage Corridors

Historic vegetable label



Vision. The Central Valley enjoys an abundance of heritage resources, ranging from historic communities such as Locke, to Delta boating excursions, “u-pick” fruit stands and historic farm trails. As part of the state’s storied past, these resources help California earn its position as the top U.S. destination for cultural and heritage tourism.

The California State Parks Director can enhance the status of these prized heritage resources by designating “heritage corridors” under the California Recreational Trails Act. Potential benefits of this status include:

- increased support and cooperation among public agencies for resource preservation, especially if National Heritage Area status is a possibility,
- improved amenities for visitors, such as maps, brochures, multi-lingual programs and kiosks, and
- an expansion in rural tourism.

Laws help preserve heritage lands. Heritage corridors are part of the California Recreational Trails System; CSP assists organizations that support the heritage corridors and provides guides for nearby state parks. The law states that a **heritage corridor** is “a regional, state, or nationwide alignment of historical, natural, or conservation education significance, with roads, state and other parks, greenways, or parallel recreational trails, intended to have guidebooks, signs, and other features.” For details, see California Public Resources Code 5070-5077.8 at www.leginfo.ca.gov. (Select “California Law,” then “Public Resources Code.”)

A **national heritage area** is “a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.” Learn more at www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas.

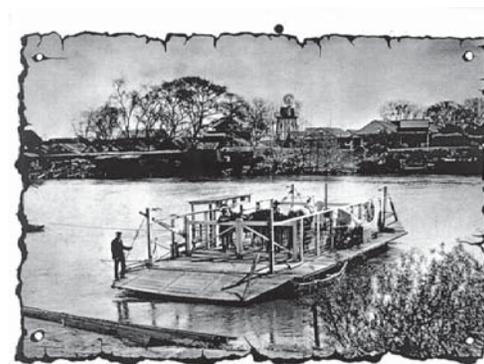


Sacramento Valley cherry orchard, c.1900



Historic farm equipment poster

Farmers’ markets and fruit stands offer fresh produce throughout the Valley



Historic Walnut Grove ferry

Initiatives. California State Parks recommends establishing five Central Valley heritage corridors to help visitors enjoy these valuable resources. A few highlights of each heritage-corridor candidate are described here.

The California Delta Heritage Corridor would link historic Delta towns, recreation sites, nature areas and farm stands.

Highlights: Historic communities such as Rio Vista and Locke; recreation areas such as Big Break; wildlife and fish habitats such as Woodbridge Ecological Reserve; agritourism attractions such as “U-pick” fruit orchards and festivals; trails such as parts of the American Discovery Trail; and Delta excursion boats.

The Cross-California Ecological Corridor (already a heritage corridor) links natural areas and other examples of California ecosystems. **Highlights:** Rivers and their riparian habitats; marshes and wildlife-friendly rice farms; public recreation land such as Sutter National Refuge; public recreation land such as South Yuba River State Park; and wildlife areas.

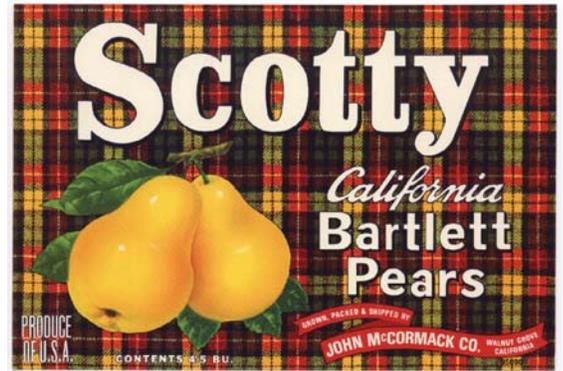
The Black Gold Heritage Corridor would connect sites associated with oil development in Kern and Kings counties. **Highlights:** Important oil fields such as Elk Hills; Bakersfield refineries; museums such as the Kern County Museum; and events such as “Bakersfield sound” performances at Buck Owens’ Crystal Palace.

The Central Valley Farm Trails Heritage Corridor would link Highway 99 and Interstate 5 to local farm trails and other agricultural sites. **Highlights:** Local farm trails and “u-pick” farms; agritourism sites; historic farms, ranches and farm communities such as Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park; farm history museums; farm labor history sites; water facilities such as reservoirs; and state and county rodeos and *charreadas*, cook-offs and festivals.

Echoes of Our Ancestors Corridor. The Great Central Valley has been home to many diverse cultural groups, beginning with California Indians. This heritage corridor take aspects of the history of California’s rich ethnic diversity and links them together.



Celebrating Portuguese culture with a festa



Historic Delta fruit label



Chinese agricultural workers in the Delta



Agricultural threshing crew, 1904



Oil wells, 1956

Kern County town



CENTRAL VALLEY VISION DRAFT

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Outdoor Recreation for a Growing Population

An ambitious strategy set forth by the Department to meet the public's recreation needs through a renewed effort to build economic and volunteer partnerships, acquire new park lands, implement park developments and upgrade facilities.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

Contact us at:

centralvalleyvision@parks.ca.gov

or at (916) 653-9901



California State Parks
Planning Division
October 28, 2008