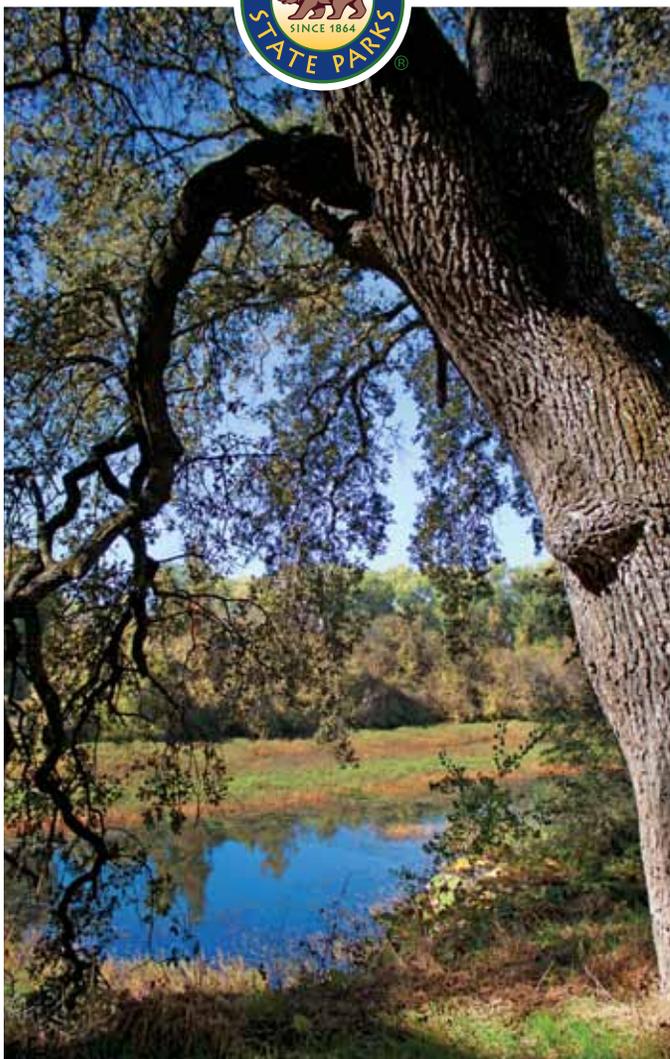


# Bidwell- Sacramento River State Park



## Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



California State Parks supports equal access. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at (530) 342-5185. This publication can be made available in alternate formats. Contact [interp@parks.ca.gov](mailto:interp@parks.ca.gov) or call (916) 654-2249.

### CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Discover the many states of California.™

### Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park

12105 River Road

Chico, CA 95926

(530) 342-5185

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*At Bidwell-Sacramento  
River State Park,  
“cruising down the river”  
on rafts or inner tubes  
is second only to fishing  
for salmon, steelhead,  
stripers and shad  
along its tree-lined,  
ever-changing banks.*



**A**bout six miles west of Chico, Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park stretches along a river whose banks are still relatively untouched by development. A classic landscape of riparian habitat, the river is lined with trees and wild vegetation.

Visitors enjoy kayaking, canoeing, tubing (floating downstream on inner tubes), fishing, picnicking, hiking and watching the abundant wildlife.

### **PARK HISTORY**

#### **Native California Indians**

The indigenous people of this area are known today as Northwestern Maidu (including Mechoopda Maidu). For about 4,500 years, they lived in a portion of the Sacramento

Valley, from west of the Sacramento River into the foothills above today's Oroville and Chico.

The oxbow lake along the river held a weir built by native people to trap fish. Today the area is called Indian Fishery.

#### **The Bidwells**

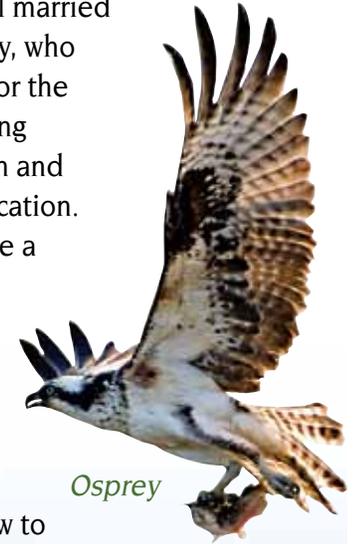
In 1849, John Bidwell acquired the Rancho del Arroyo Chico, a Mexican land grant that encompassed parts of today's park. General Bidwell employed the local Mechoopda to operate his farm, orchard and ranch. Most of the Mechoopda workers, and some from other local villages, lived on the rancho.

When local citizens threatened the Indians of Butte County with violence and removal, General Bidwell used a company of soldiers under his command to keep the Indians safe

from hostile vigilantes. Native people due to be removed by the government also sought refuge at Rancho del Arroyo Chico.

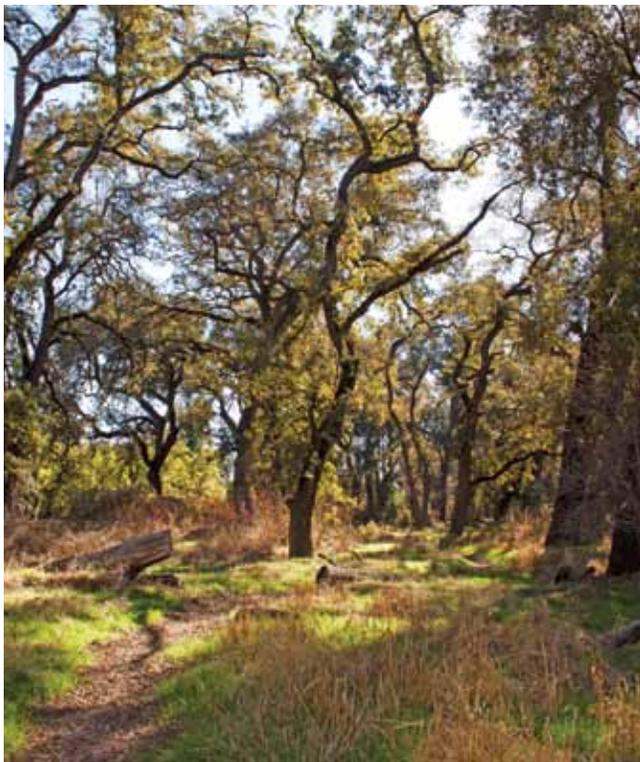
In 1868, John Bidwell married Annie Ellicott Kennedy, who became an advocate for the native people, including building them a church and encouraging their education. She eventually became a vice-president of the National Woman's Indian Association (now the National Indian Association).

John Bidwell died in 1900, leaving his widow to



*Osprey*





*Indian Fishery Nature Trail*

oversee the rancho. In 1908, Annie Bidwell deeded several small portions of land along the Sacramento River to the State to preserve the trees on its banks, to prevent the diversion of water for private purposes, and to maintain the natural beauty of the river's feeder streams.

Before her death, Mrs. Bidwell provided for the rancho's village residents by placing the land into trust for their occupation.

## NATURAL HISTORY

### Flora and Fauna

Willow and white alder stand among other native riparian trees. Button bush and wild blackberry hug the edges of the meandering

river. Gravel bars are used by foraging water birds, nesting killdeer, spotted sandpipers and lesser nighthawks. Endangered yellow-billed cuckoos, nesting eagles, ospreys and Swainson's hawks prefer Fremont's cottonwood trees and the open grassland habitats. Threatened bank swallows nest in burrows along eroded riverbanks.

Valley oak woodlands shelter owls, woodpeckers and bluebirds. Along shaded banks, juvenile salmon, beavers and river otters hide. Blue grosbeaks build nests in willow scrub. Water birds feed in the wetland areas, while sloughs and side channels provide shelter for nesting egrets and herons, as well as basking western pond turtles.

### Day Use River Access Points

Four unconnected subunits make up the park: Irvine Finch River Access, Pine Creek Landing, Indian Fishery and Big Chico Creek.

**Irvine Finch River Access**—This 5.2-acre west bank section has a boat launch, picnic tables, restrooms, and en-route camping. Fishing is good here. See [www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov) for licensing regulations.

**Pine Creek Landing**—Near the boat launch ramp on Pine Creek, 4.8 acres of riverside park have boating, picnicking, fishing and wildlife watching.

**Indian Fishery**—This 100-acre subunit has a picnic area, nature viewing, hiking trails and fishing.

**Big Chico Creek**—At Big Chico Creek, 96 acres have trails that are ideal for bank fishing, nature viewing, sunbathing and hand-carried boat launching.



*Photo courtesy of Kurt Geiger*

*Western pond turtle*

## ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Sacramento River Access at Pine Creek, part of Indian Fishery, has accessible picnic tables and barbecues, paved pathways, an accessible trail, parking and accessible vault restrooms. At Indian Fishery, the Nature Trail is constructed on compacted native soil that leads to a fishing area. The trail is accessible for ½ mile. Off River Road, the trailhead is signed, as is the accessible parking.

Accessibility is continually improving. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.



## PLEASE REMEMBER

- **WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AT ALL TIMES ON OR IN THE RIVER.**
- Alcohol consumption and glass bottles are not allowed in the park from April 1 through October 1.
- Do not tie yourself to anything; if tubes, ropes and ice chests get caught in submerged branches, they can pull you underwater and hold you down.
- Watch for and avoid anything sticking out of the water. Ripples or waves on the surface could mean submerged tree snags.
- Wear shoes; some areas of the beach may have rocks or broken glass.
- For river emergencies, call 911. Glenn and Butte County Sheriffs are responsible for patrol and rescues on the water. State Parks owns and operates only the areas that provide river access. The Park Ranger Office phone number is (530) 342-5185.
- Bring your supplies; floating downstream takes time, with few services on the river.
- Leashed dogs under the control of their owners are permitted in the park.

## NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park  
525 Esplanade, Chico 95926  
(530) 895-6144
- Colusa-Sacramento River State Park  
Levee St. & Tenth St., Colusa 95932  
(530) 458-4927
- Lake Oroville State Recreation Area  
400 Glen Drive, Oroville 95966  
(530) 538-2219



## FISHING ON THE RIVER

Both native and introduced game fish may be caught from the banks or by trolling. Lucky anglers may hook a sturgeon, salmon, steelhead or shad. The oxbow lake at Indian Fishery holds introduced crappie, largemouth and striped bass, and bluegill.



*Shad*



*Steelhead Trout*



*Salmon*



*Sturgeon*

# Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park



## Legend

- Major Road
- Paved Road
- Trail: Hike
- Accessible Trail
- Park Property
- River Miles
- Accessible Feature
- Boat Ramp
- En-route Camping
- Hand-Launch Ramp
- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Ranger Station
- Restroom