



AUBURN STATE RECREATION AREA

November 2015



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE IS UNDERWAY!

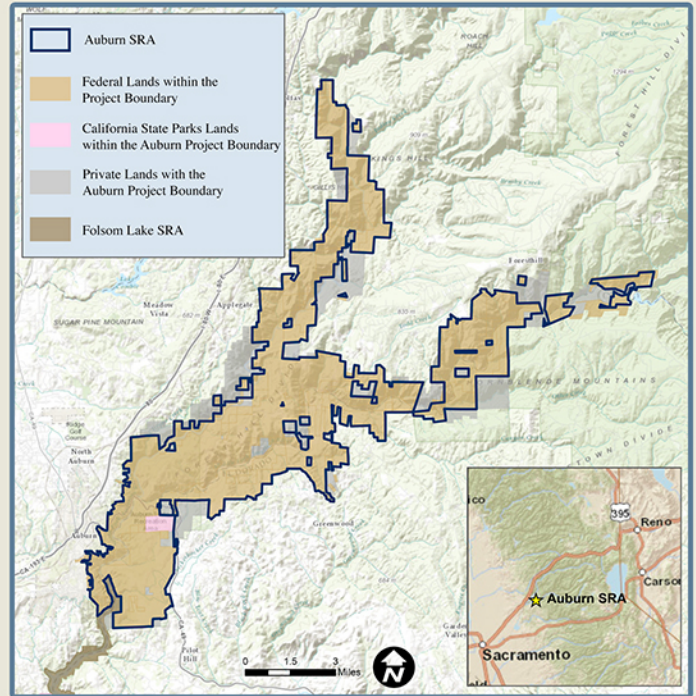
California State Parks and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation are collaborating to plan for the future of the Auburn State Recreation Area (SRA). Initiated in 2006, and later temporarily suspended awaiting a revised management agreement between State Parks and Reclamation, the planning process for Auburn SRA has resumed.

State Parks and Reclamation are preparing a joint General Plan/Resource Management Plan (GP/RMP) to meet both agencies' needs. The GP/RMP will define a long-term purpose and vision for Auburn SRA. It will also outline broad goals and guidelines for use, facility development, and operation of Auburn SRA. It will provide the basis for preparing future, focused management plans, specific project proposals, and other initiatives that implement the GP/RMP goals.

The GP/RMP will provide goals and guidelines for the protection of important natural and cultural resources in the SRA. It will guide approaches for the management of sensitive resource areas and balance their protection with recreation activities that occur in the SRA. An Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) will be prepared in tandem with the planning document to evaluate and help minimize the environmental effects of the GP/RMP.



State Parks' mission 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.



WHAT IS AUBURN SRA?

The Auburn SRA consists of lands set aside by the Federal government for the construction of Auburn Dam and Reservoir. Auburn SRA has been managed by State Parks through an agreement with Reclamation since 1977. The Auburn SRA includes over 33,000 acres of lands along over forty miles of river canyon on the North and Middle Forks of the American River. Auburn SRA is located south of Interstate 80 in both Placer and El Dorado counties.

Recreation uses include hiking, river access, boating, fishing, camping, mountain biking, gold panning, swimming, picnicking, rock climbing, horseback riding, and off-highway vehicle riding. Whitewater recreation is also very popular on both forks of the river with Class II, III, IV, and V rapids.

The mission of the **Bureau of Reclamation** is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.



HISTORY OF AUBURN SRA

In 1965, Congress authorized construction of the Auburn Dam and Reservoir. Lands were acquired to provide for the needs of water supply, hydropower generation, outdoor recreation, and fish and wildlife enhancement. After Reclamation acquired the dam and reservoir lands, State Parks entered into an agreement to manage the land as a State Recreation Area. In 1979, the first general plan was created to direct SRA management, assuming Auburn Dam would be completed.

About the time the 1979 plan was completed, construction of the Auburn Dam was halted because of complications, including seismic and cost concerns. With the indefinite delay in dam construction, Reclamation and State Parks prepared an Interim RMP in 1992 that provided guidance for SRA management with the assumption that the river canyons would eventually be inundated by a reservoir. A new GP/RMP is necessary to replace the Interim RMP and provide a long-term and comprehensive framework for the management of the existing river and canyons in Auburn SRA. It is still possible that Congress could authorize dam and reservoir construction in the future. If so, State Parks and Reclamation would amend the GP/RMP to reflect a long-term plan that includes the dam and reservoir.

There have been other major changes in the 23 years since the Interim RMP was prepared that necessitate preparation of a new plan. Population in the area around Auburn SRA and recreation use of the SRA have increased. In 1992, there were approximately 250,000 visitors to Auburn SRA; today, nearly 1 million people visit Auburn SRA each year. Other changes include the closure of the Auburn Dam Diversion Tunnel, restoration of the de-watered section of river, and the development of interim management guidelines for the Mammoth Bar OHV area. The new GP/RMP will address these and many other changes which have occurred in the area.

WHAT ARE GENERAL PLANS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS?

State Parks and Reclamation intend to create a combined Auburn SRA GP/RMP that meets the planning needs of both agencies. This effort will also include an EIR/EIS that will evaluate the environmental effects of the GP/RMP.

A General Plan (GP) is State Parks' primary management document for a park unit. It provides programmatic, long-term direction through a framework of broad goals and guidelines for natural and cultural resource stewardship, recreation use and management, interpretation, public safety, and other program areas.

The GP includes both park-wide and area-specific direction. A GP does not, however, define the specific methodologies, timelines, or project designs to implement the goals and guidelines. This more detailed planning would occur in subsequent management plans and project-specific plans.

A Resource Management Plan (RMP) is the planning document that guides Reclamation's management decisions, activities, and actions affecting the resources under its jurisdiction. The RMP establishes goals and objectives for the management area, identifies desired future conditions, defines land uses, and provides direction that seeks to balance recreation uses and facilities with the protection of natural and cultural resources.

This planning process will develop a single, joint document that fulfills both of these similar purposes.





KEY ISSUES FOR SRA PLANNING

State Parks and Reclamation invite and encourage your input about key issues to be studied and addressed during the planning process.

What planning issues do you think are important to study? Please read “Ways to Get Involved” for information on how to provide your input.

Natural and Cultural Resources: The GP/RMP will include goals and guidelines for the protection of wildlife, fisheries, sensitive habitats, Native American sites, and historic resources. What natural and cultural resources do you value the most? What resources and areas would you suggest should have the highest priority for protection?

Recreation Opportunities: The management and enjoyment of Auburn SRA’s many recreation opportunities will be an important topic in the GP/RMP. What recreation experiences do you value the most in this park? What, if anything, is missing in regional outdoor recreation opportunities? How can recreation opportunities be improved?

Operations and Facilities: The maintenance and operation of existing roads, parking, campgrounds, utilities, and other facilities will be addressed in the GP/RMP. The GP/RMP will also determine whether upgraded or additional facilities are appropriate. What facility changes, improvements, or additions would you like, or not like, to see?

LEARNING ABOUT THE SRA

Developing a GP/RMP begins with a thorough investigation of the park to understand the existing natural and cultural resources and the recreation uses of the area. By the time the investigation is complete, planners, scientists, and resource specialists will have compiled information about the natural, cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources of the area, including archaeological and historical resources, native vegetation and wildlife, special-status species, invasive species, geologic features, and hydrology.

This study also includes an assessment of the existing recreation demands, activities, trends, and use patterns within the SRA. Recreation uses and opportunities within Auburn SRA are evaluated in the contexts of their local, regional, and state values.

This resource and recreation information will be used in the development of a long-term vision, the exploration of GP/RMP alternatives, and the selection of a preferred plan concept for the Auburn SRA.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

There are several easy ways for you to participate:

Get on the mailing list: Throughout the planning and environmental review process, we will email updates and newsletters informing you of ongoing work, alternatives being considered in the GP/RMP, and plan progress. If you did not receive this newsletter by email, please email a note to plan.general@parks.ca.gov and ask to be added to the mailing list.

Visit our website: Information about the planning process is available online at: www.parks.ca.gov/PlanASRA.

Attend the public workshops: We will host three public workshops during the development of the GP/RMP. The purpose of the first public workshop is to seek input on planning issues and information to help us prepare the GP/RMP. The date, time, and place are:

Thursday, November 12, 2015
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Skyridge Elementary School
800 Perkins Way
Auburn, CA 95603

During this workshop, we will seek public input to help us capture important planning issues and prepare plan alternatives to bring back to the second workshop. An introductory presentation will be given at 6:10 p.m. followed by an open house with information stations. Staff will be present to discuss your ideas, concerns, and suggestions for the SRA. At future workshops, we will conduct environmental scoping, review conceptual planning alternatives, and present the preferred alternative plan.

Our schedule shows approximate dates of future input opportunities.

PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

November 12, 2015, 6 - 8 pm

1st Public Workshop

Skyridge Elementary School
800 Perkins Way, Auburn, CA

Learn about the plan and let us know what is important to you.

Spring 2016

2nd Public Workshop (Scoping)

Provide input on plan alternatives.

Fall 2016

3rd Public Workshop

Provide your feedback on the proposed plan.

Spring 2017

Public Review Period

Provide comments on the draft environmental review document.

Send us your comments:

- Download a comment form at www.parks.ca.gov/PlanASRA.
- Mail us a letter (see address below).
- Send an email to plan.general@parks.ca.gov.

AUBURN STATE RECREATION AREA

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