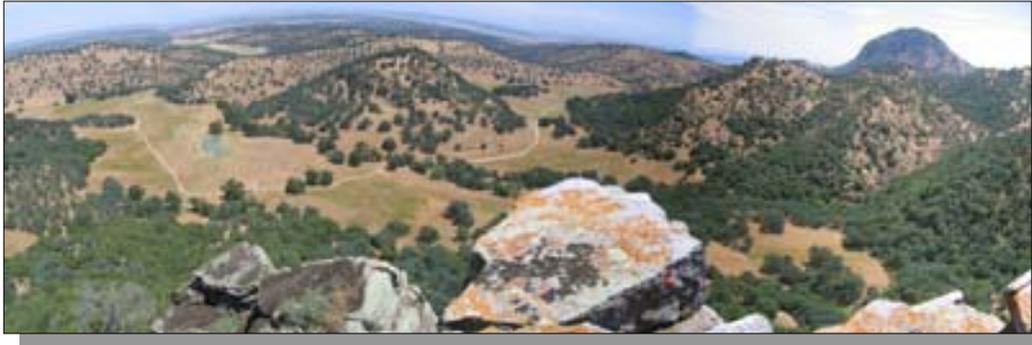


THE SUTTER BUTTES PROJECT



Classification & Naming

March 8, 2005





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The Sutter Buttes are renowned for being
the "Smallest Mountain Range in the World."



This prominent feature and surrounding property is located outside the park.

Although technically not a "mountain range", this whimsical reference has been made to these valley peaks, the remnants of volcanic activity that has been dormant for over a million years. The Buttes are in a circular configuration with a diameter of 10 miles, covering an area of about 75 square miles. South Butte, the highest peak, is 2,117 feet above sea level. North Butte is 1,863 feet and West Butte is 1,685 feet above sea level, though neither of these is located in the park.

Before modern levees and dams were built to contain the rivers, winter storms and spring run-off frequently turned the Sacramento Valley into an inland sea, making the Sutter Buttes an island refuge for Native Americans, settlers and wildlife.

The Buttes have had many names over the years. The Maidu Indians called them "Histum Yani" which translates as, "Middle Mountains of the Valley" or "Spirit Mountain," depending on the source. According to Maidu legend, after death, the spirits of their people rest in the Buttes before the journey to the afterlife.

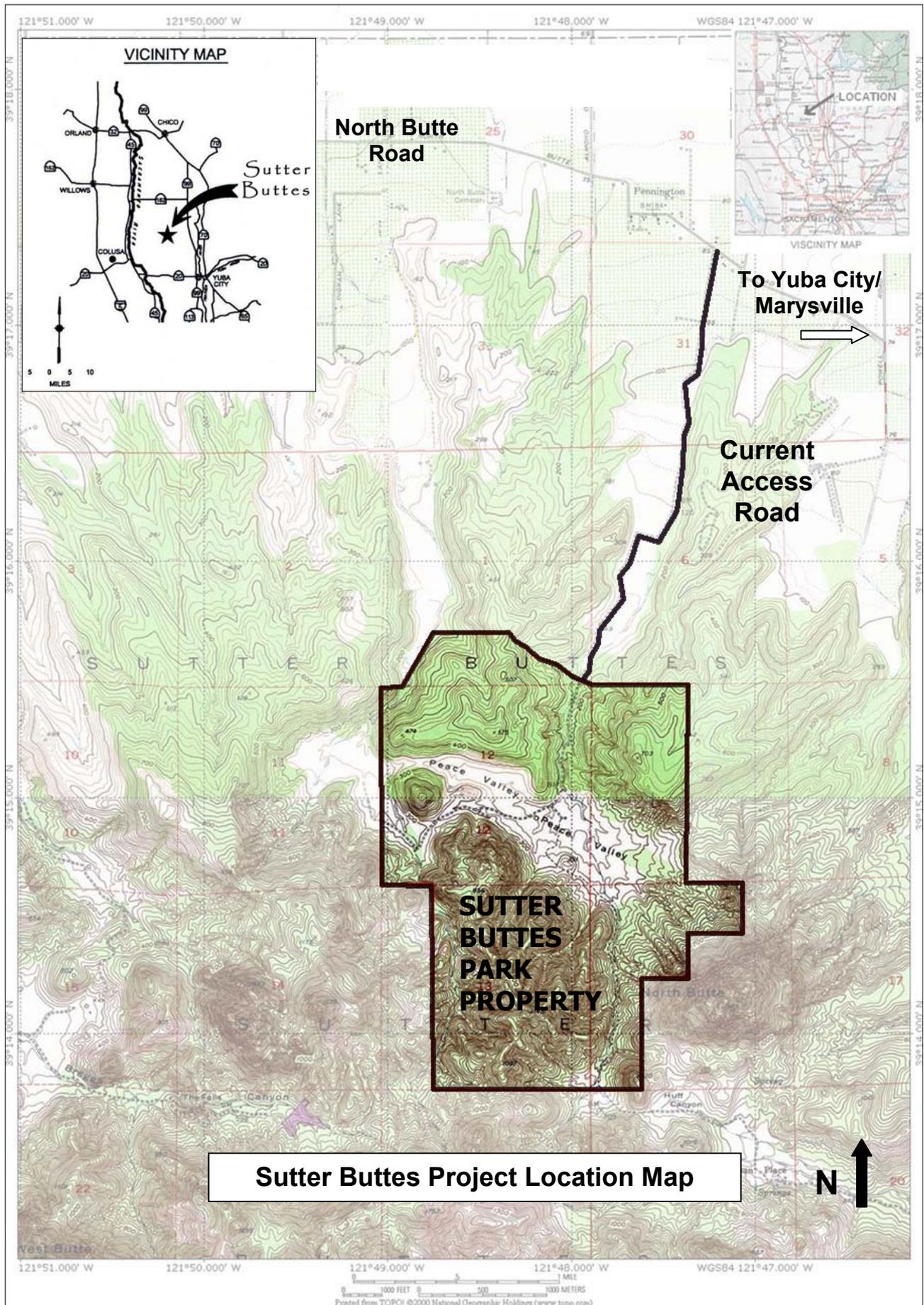
Gabriel Moraga, a Spaniard trying to locate possible mission sites, was the first European to see the Sutter Buttes, in 1806. Another Spaniard, Luis Arguello, led an expedition in 1817 to explore Northern California by water. He called the Buttes "Los Picachos," or the peaks. He also named the Feather River "El Rio de la Plumas" because he saw many feathers of wildfowl floating on the water.

Other names for the Buttes were "Marysville Buttes," "Sacramento Buttes," and "Los Tres Picos." They were finally named the "Sutter Buttes" in 1949 (description taken from the Yuba City website: <http://www.syx.com/yubacity/yccover.html>).

Until recently, all of the Sutter Buttes area was private land. In 2003, State Parks acquired 1,785 acres of the Sutter Buttes, including a section called Peace Valley.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2003, California State Parks acquired a 1,785 acre property on the north side of the Sutter Buttes which represents a unique resource within the State Park System. The first step in guiding the management of visitor activities and protection of park resources is determining the appropriate unit classification. The next step would be a major planning effort - the production of a General Plan - to determine the programs, facilities, and level of public use that is appropriate for the park.

The Department's Resources Team concluded that "**State Park**" is the appropriate classification, and recommends the name: **Sutter Buttes State Park**.

The Department also recommends that future consideration be given to possible natural and cultural preserve subclassifications within the park, during a future general planning process.

Classification Purpose

The California Public Resources Code, Section 5002.1, requires that an inventory of scenic, natural and cultural features be provided to the California State Parks and Recreation Commission when classifying a unit of the State Park System. This Resource Summary is intended to provide the Commission with the necessary information for classification as specified in Article 1.7 of the Public Resources Code. (Also, see Commission Policy II.2 located in Appendix B).

This Summary establishes resource values and provides an overview of the project area. Information contained in this document has been compiled from various reports and field investigations. This information will also be useful to assist in developing resource policies, resource management programs and as background information for land use planning, maintenance, interpretation, and operation. Additional and more detailed resource inventory information will be developed during the preparation of a future General Plan and specific management plans for the park.

Classification and Naming Process

The following describes the primary tasks for this naming and classification process:

- Identify significant resource values and opportunities in the park (Resource Summary)
- Evaluate potential unit classification(s)
- Determine appropriate unit classification(s) and name(s)

The following are expanded descriptions of these tasks, performed during this process:

Resource Summary

The resources team conducted initial research and field investigations, evaluated resource significance, and prepared a summary of the park's natural, cultural, recreational, and aesthetic resources. This resource summary serves as the inventory of features for the purpose of determining the desired level of resource protection and appropriate unit classification.

As part of the resource summary and evaluation, the planning team evaluated past and present uses and addressed public access, park development and recreational potential.

Unit Classification and Name

Determining the appropriate unit classification for this new park property was the primary focus of this effort. The resources team has evaluated the purpose and benefits of the different possible classifications and provides a recommendation and justification for the appropriate unit classification later in this document. Potential classifications that were considered are (but not limited to): state park and state reserve, with consideration for future natural or cultural preserve sub-classifications.

In addition to determining the unit classification, a unit name is proposed with supporting justification (see page 28).

This classification and naming process also includes opportunities for the public to provide input and make recommendations for their preference of park names and desirable classification. A stakeholder's meeting was held on March 3, 2005, with representatives from Sutter County and the Middle Mountain Foundation. At this meeting, Department staff provided information about the classification process, and explained the possibilities that were being considered by the resources team. This classification document was also posted on the Department's website and distributed to individuals and organizations having interest in the future of this park.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Sutter Buttes Property sits in the northernmost basin and hills of the ancient circular volcanic structure, northwest of the communities of Yuba City and Marysville. It covers 1785 acres of elevated hilly land and includes a long valley called Peace Valley that ranges from the northwest to southeast of the property. The property extends south of Peace Valley into more rugged interior volcanic terrain and northward onto the exterior slopes of the volcanic deposits.

DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

The Sutter Buttes majestically rise out of the Sacramento Valley flatlands as a reminder of the unpredictability of nature. The ancient volcanic remains are comprised of 75 square miles of peaks and valleys that leave even the most casual observer with a sense of awe and wonder.

Like a royal presence holding court, the stately Buttes have managed to transcend culture and time. In their protected valleys the local Indians hunted small game and gathered and processed acorns and other plants. Later, Spanish and American explorers set up camp and reported grizzly bears, antelope and elk, and the sky darkened by migrating waterfowl. Finally, American settlers introduced cattle, sheep and agriculture to the Sutter Buttes. Through all these cultural changes, the Sutter Buttes are still characterized by a degree of insularity not found elsewhere in California's great valley. Prehistoric and historic resources (besides the buildings that are now gone) have remained relatively undisturbed, and several species of small mammals, birds, and reptiles have found refuge from the impacts of westward expansion.

Proposed Declaration of Purpose

The purpose of the Sutter Buttes State Park is to preserve the unique and diverse natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources of the park, to provide opportunities for high quality recreational activities that support a healthy natural environment within the Sutter Buttes, and to make the property accessible to the public for its education and enjoyment. This would maintain an environment respectful to the Native Americans who consider the Sutter Buttes to be sacred and an integral part of their world view.

This oak and grassland environment, within an extraordinary geologic setting, nurtures peaceful solitude, glimpses of the past, and a tremendous scope for the imagination. Therefore, management of this park will be based upon the goal of preserving, instilling an appreciation for, and making available these treasured qualities and experiences for present and future generations.

RESOURCES SUMMARY

Aesthetic Resources and Spirit of Place

Aesthetic Resources

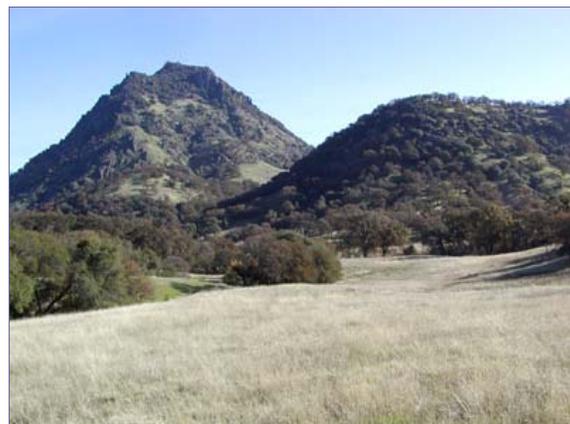
The Sutter Buttes are the remnants of an ancient volcanic complex in the middle of California's Central Valley. Its peaks are large enough to be seen from far distances and offer a visual respite from the flat expanse of the Valley floor. As such they have been a beacon in the landscape for travelers and inhabitants for thousands of years, serving as an important lookout point for native Californians as well as early pioneers and military scouts. Views from the Valley to the peaks are affected by the dominance of these volcanic features, and they give a sense of drama to nearby surroundings.

For centuries the Buttes provided a larder for surrounding native villages. Indian tribes built stone hunting blinds and ground acorns on exposed bedrock, and later, American settlers developed homesteads and planted nut trees and other crops. The remnants of these activities can still be seen in the hills and in Peace Valley. There is a small cemetery on a hilltop in Peace Valley that holds the graves of early settlers of the area.



Historic fencing from previous cattle grazing operations, along with non-historic fences, run through the property and are sometimes embedded in historic rock walls.

In spring, lush green grasses and wildflowers set the stage for the fresh sights and scents of the season. In late spring drier conditions turn the grasses a rich golden color that contrasts with evergreen vegetation in areas with springs and oaks on the hillsides. Hikers in summer can enjoy cooler temperatures in the higher elevations of the park as they observe the craggy volcanic peaks surrounding them.



From the tops of the hills within park property, and especially on a clear day, magnificent views can be had of surrounding peaks and valleys as well the Central Valley, the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Range. The ponds of the 8,400-acre Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge, to the north, reflect the sky and its various moods.



Spirit of Place

The calls of migrating birds, the sigh of a breeze in the oaks growing in protected valleys surrounded by rugged volcanic peaks, the warm feeling of bright sunlight after a long and foggy winter, and the distinctive scent of chaparral in the hills are all part of this place. The park's natural elements present varying characteristics over seasons and time, making the Sutter Buttes a landscape that offers infinite re-creational possibilities.

Due to the elevation of this unique volcanic landscape above the Central Valley, it has served over time as a winter and spring refuge for both animals and people who have had the need to escape the rising flood waters of the Sacramento Valley rivers. Within the park the hills and peaks that surround a visitor create a feeling of elevated enclosure in a unique and spectacular landscape.

The Sutter Buttes supports many acres of undeveloped native habitats that offer important refuge for wildlife. Extensive oak woodlands and annual grasslands provide nesting and foraging opportunities for a large diversity of birds, bats, and other animal species. There is a population of ringtails living within the unit, and raptor species such as turkey vulture, red-tailed hawk, and northern harrier are commonly seen hunting in, or soaring above, the property. On occasion, bald or golden eagles can be seen gracefully skimming the skies. To observe these species gives one a sense of freedom and peace in knowing that there is a place where they can endure. Their presence is an indication of the value

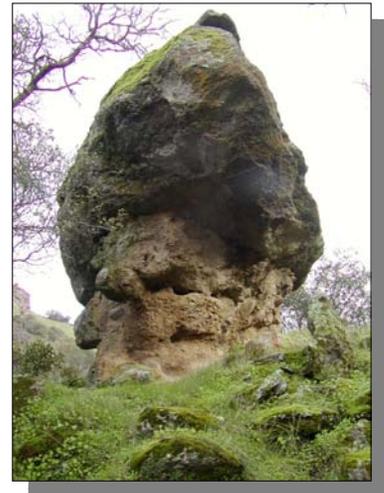


of the Sutter Buttes and the role this place plays as an important ecological island in the Central Valley.

As a result of private ownership, public access and development have been limited in the Buttes. In many areas of the park there are no modern sights or sounds to distract from a feeling of timelessness. Vegetation, fauna and geology create an environment that is alive with a sense of interwoven support for all living things. Archaeological resources have mostly escaped the negative effects of modern technology and are mute testimony to the people who lived and worked there through time. Remnants of later American settlements stand as evidence of the pioneering spirit that preceded the modern development of California.

The Sutter Buttes are so unique to their surroundings that they draw people in and have affected nearby cultures in a spiritual way. The Maidu people felt that all life began in the Buttes and that the spirits of their dead rested on their way to the afterlife in the peaks and valleys of the old volcanoes. The Maidu and other tribes also depended on sustenance collected in this landscape for their survival. The Native Americans felt that this area is a “special place to be revered, a place for spiritual and physical sustenance, not a place to live...” (Middle Mountain Foundation website).

Because of its dramatic character and unique characteristics, we have also honored this land and protected it from the detrimental effects of modern society by making it a part of the State Park System.



Natural Resources

Ecology

With peaks abruptly rising to as high as 2,117 feet from the floor of the Sacramento Valley, the Sutter Buttes resemble an island surrounded by flat lands developed primarily for agricultural purposes. The Buttes, including the DPR-owned lands, are in effect an ecological island for the many species that find shelter there. This is due in part to the soils, geology, and topography of the Buttes as well as their uniqueness and diversity in the middle of a large valley. The Buttes also offer a refuge for plant and animal species because they have been sheltered for many years from development and excessive use. The island effect is enhanced by the fact that there are few remaining bio-corridors for the movement of plant and animal species between the Buttes and the upland areas at the edges of the Sacramento Valley as a result of changes to surrounding lands. It is believed that in the past, many animals and the plants they dispersed traveled along riparian habitat corridors to and from the Buttes.

The volcanic origin of the Buttes has resulted in the creation of numerous caves and pockets in the craggy peaks. These caves and pockets create micro-habitats with the potential to support unique or endemic plant species and offer shelter to wildlife species, such as the western rattlesnake that is common on the property.

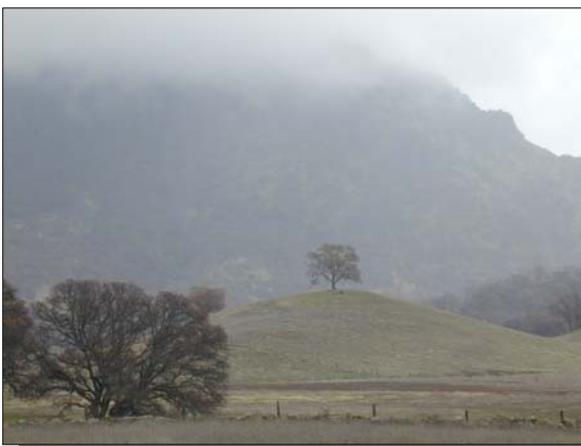
Intermittent streams and springs on the property offer an invaluable source of water for all wildlife in the area and habitat for amphibian and fish species. The several springs on the property, though highly disturbed in the past by humans and livestock, are important, particularly during the dry summer months, as a source of year-round water and the riparian habitat that occurs near these water sources offer critical refuge for wildlife.

Plant Life

The Sutter Buttes Project area supports oak woodland and savannah, grassland, shrubland, and riparian habitats. There are four types of oak woodland that occur within the boundaries of the project area. They are blue oak woodland, valley oak woodland, interior oak woodland, and a mixed oak woodland type where two or more species of oak are important components.

Blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) is the most common tree in the unit and blue oak woodlands and savannahs dominate the landscape, particularly on south-facing slopes (DPR, 2004). The understory in blue oak woodlands and savannahs consists predominantly of non-native annual grasses and forbs.

The interior live oak (*Quercus wislezinii* var. *wislezinii*) woodlands are dominated by interior live oak mixed with blue oak in the canopy and an understory of poison-oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), common manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *manzanita*), and holly-leaved redberry (*Rhamnus ilicifolia*). There are a few small patches of interior live oak woodland in the project area, typically on the higher north-facing slopes (DPR, 2004).



Valley oak woodlands occur infrequently within the project area. There are a few stands located in Peace Valley along the valley bottom where valley oaks are the sole or dominant tree in the canopy. Sometimes blue oaks or interior live oaks may also occur in the canopy and occasional shrubs in the understory. Vines such as California grape (*Vitis californica*) are common (CSU Chico, 2004).

Mixed oak woodlands are composed of a mix of oak species that occur as co-dominants in the canopy, including blue oak, interior live oak, and valley oak. California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) may also occur in the canopy (CSU Chico, 2004). The

mixed oak woodlands are common and scattered throughout the hilly regions of the project area.

Oracle oaks (*Quercus x morehus*) also occur on the property. Oracle oaks are an uncommon oak believed to be a hybrid between black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and interior live oak. While there are numerous interior live oaks, only a single black oak tree is known to occur within the boundaries of the project area.

Grasslands occupy flatter areas such as terraces and the valley bottom, and dominate the area within Peace Valley. Because of heavy grazing pressure over many years, the grasslands are composed primarily of non-native annual grass species and forbs. Typical species observed are brome grass (*Bromus* spp.), wild oats (*Avena* spp.), foxtail (*Hordeum* spp.), storksbill (*Erodium* spp.), quaking grass (*Briza minor*), silver hairgrass (*Aira caryophyllea*), small fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), and Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*). Native perennial grass species occur in remnant pockets of the grassland area and as a small component of the non-native annual grassland. The more common native perennial grass species include purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*) and onion grass (*Melica* spp.) (DPR, 2004).



Three distinct shrub-dominated vegetation types occur in just a few pockets within the drier, upland parts of the project area. One type is dominated by the common manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *manzanita*) which is oftentimes the only shrub in the canopy. It can also occur with interior live oak or other shrub species. The manzanita type is uncommon in the project area and only two locations appear on the vegetation map for the area (CSU Chico, 2004).

The mixed shrub vegetation type is composed of several shrub species that are important components and can include hoary coffeeberry (*Rhamnus tomentella* ssp. *tomentella*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), holly-leaved redberry, toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and/or poison oak. Vines that can occur in this type include virgin's bower (*Clematis lasiantha*), California wild grape, and/or California pipevine (*Aristolochia californica*) (CSU Chico, 2004).

There is also riparian habitat that occurs in the project area, most of it composed of a mixture of willow species in shrub form that occur along stream edges. The following willows can be found: arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), Goodding's willow (*Salix gooddingii*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), and sandbar willow (*Salix sessilifolia*). In addition, scattered cottonwoods (*Populus fremontii* ssp. *fremontii*) can be found in the lower grassland areas, such as in Peace Valley, along drainages where soil conditions are moist (CSU Chico, 2004).

Overall, the dominant vegetation types in the project area are blue oak woodland, mixed oak woodland (i.e., composed of mostly blue oak and interior live oak), non-native annual grassland, and mixed willow riparian. There are no sensitive plant communities or plant species known to occur on the site. However, suitable habitat for several sensitive plant species does occur in the Sutter Buttes Project area. Surveys for these species are necessary to determine their presence or absence in the unit. Although not a sensitive plant species itself, the blue elderberry (which occurs on the property) is host plant to the Federally Threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*). Surveys of the elderberry shrubs on the site are necessary to determine whether or not they support occurrences of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

Animal Life

The habitats within the project area support a rich diversity of animal life as evidenced, in part, by the number of avian species using the site. A two-day survey of the site by DPR ecologists in April 2004 identified 62 bird species using the project area. Several of these are considered sensitive species, such as Lawrence's goldfinch (*Carduelis lawrencei*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), Pacific slope flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), and all species of nesting raptors.

Common birds of the grasslands include species such as western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), and European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) also occur in the grasslands.

Common bird species of the oak woodlands include American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*), oat titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), and California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*). Nuttall's woodpecker (*Picoides nuttallii*) and western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*) also occur in the oak woodlands, but are not as commonly observed.

Raptors observed within the project area include sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Several of these species may be nesting within the project area.



Ringtail

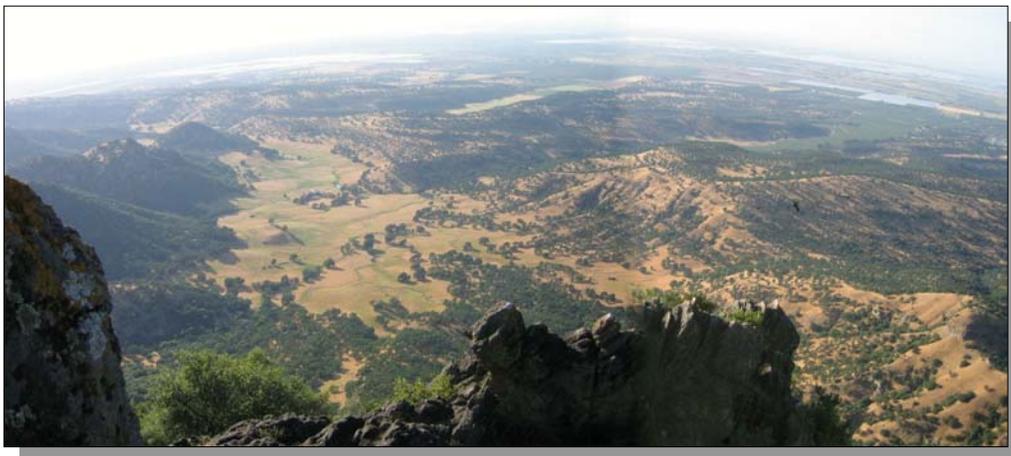
Several mammal species have been observed within the project area. They include deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), ringtails (*Bassariscus astutus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), black-tail jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), and the feral pig (*Sus scrofa*). There is moderate feral pig activity at the site. This non-native species of wildlife digs for the roots of plants and, in the process, is very destructive to the landscape. Land disturbance

caused by feral pig activity invites non-native plant species to establish and further degrade habitats.

Several species of bats are known to occur in Peace Valley in the vicinity of existing structures. These species include greater western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*), Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), western pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus hesperus*), western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*), and the hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) (DPR, 2004). Western mastiff bat, Yuma myotis, and western red bat are all considered to be sensitive wildlife species. There is abundant habitat in the unit to support amphibian, reptile, and fish species. The most common reptiles in the project area are western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), sagebrush lizard (*Sceloporus graciosus*), western rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis helleri*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*). The intermittent streams and drainages that occur within the Sutter Buttes Project area are known to sustain populations of both amphibian and fish species. Of the amphibian species, only two are known to occur on the site. They are the bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*), a non-native species that is known to prey on the larvae of native amphibian species, and the Pacific chorus frog (*Pseudacris regilla*, formerly known as Pacific tree frog, *Hyla regilla*) (DPR 2004).

An in-depth knowledge of fish species occurring in the intermittent streams of the project area has not yet been acquired. However, Sacramento sucker (*Catostomus occidentalis*) has been identified within the unit and other species are expected to occur there as well. Surveys of the intermittent streams within the project area are needed to confirm what species are present and their numbers (DPR 2004).

In addition to the above-mentioned wildlife, the Sutter Buttes project area is expected to support an array of insect life that is yet to be documented.



View from North Butte looking Northeast into the valley.

Topography

The Sutter Buttes are a distinct landmark rising from the flat Sacramento Valley west of the town of Live Oak in Sutter County, California. The inner craggy peaks are

surrounded by lower valleys (moats) and then a ring of lower hills that slope out toward the valley floor. The highest peak, South Butte, reaches an elevation of 2,117 feet above mean sea level (msl). Called the “Smallest Mountain Range in the World”, the Sutter Buttes do not fit the definition of a mountain range (see glossary), as they are not part of a chain of mountains. They are an almost perfectly circular, isolated domal structure, approximately 10 miles in diameter, formed by volcanic intrusions into and through the overlying older sedimentary rock formations.

The current State Parks acquisition includes Peace Valley and the surrounding peaks, including a small portion of the north slope of North Butte (elevation 1,863 feet msl). The gently sloping topography of Peace Valley ranges from 250 to 300 feet msl. The valley is ringed on the south and west by peaks, both craggy and conical, rising to heights of up to 1,145 feet msl. The north and east boundaries of Peace Valley are ringed by the Ramparts, north and east sloping hills consisting mainly of blocky material blown from the volcanoes and interbedded sandy volcanic mudflow units (lahars).

Climatology

The overall climate of the Sutter Buttes is classified as Mediterranean, with cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers (Anderson, 2004). Long term temperature extremes in nearby Marysville range from 18° to 118° Fahrenheit (Lytle, 1988). No official temperatures have been recorded in the Buttes.

Because of the air circulation pattern in the Sacramento Valley, moisture-laden winter storms tend to approach the Buttes from the south. The Buttes cause a mini-rainshadow (orographic) effect, dumping rain into the interior and leaving the northwest areas drier (Anderson, 2004). Average rainfall around the Buttes is 15 inches/year, falling mainly in December through February, although the average rainfall within the Buttes may be closer to 20 inches/year (Lytle, 1988). Winter tule fog forms in the surrounding Sacramento Valley and also within the Buttes, blanketing the outer edges and inner valleys, with only the high peaks above the fog deck. And, on rare occasions, snow has blanketed the high peaks (Anderson, 2004).



Geology & Soils

Geologic History

The Sutter Buttes are a unique geologic feature located within the Sacramento Valley Geomorphic Province. In 1926 Welsh geologist Howell Williams initially mapped and described the geology of the Buttes. Over the next fifty years, he and geologist Garniss Curtis continued to refine the geology, publishing their 1977 monograph titled *The Sutter Buttes of California: A Study of Plio-Pleistocene Volcanism* (Anderson, 2004). Williams is attributed with describing the different landforms of the Buttes with fanciful names: the Castellated Core (inner peaks), the Moat (a circular ring of valleys, including Peace Valley), and the gently inclined Ramparts (outer apron of material). Today, the leading authority on the geology of the Sutter Buttes is Dr. Brian Hausback, professor of Geology at Sacramento State University.

The Sutter Buttes formed during the early Pleistocene, 1.59 million years before present (mybp), as multiple intrusions of predominately rhyolite and andesite (see Geologic Map, Appendix A). It is postulated that the northward migration of the Mendocino Triple Junction was the catalyst that caused the Buttes to form, as they are not considered to be associated with the Cascade or the Coast Range volcanoes. These volcanic intrusions initially upwarped the overlying older Miocene (Cretaceous age) and Tertiary sedimentary rocks, then broke through the surface, forming multiple domes of rhyolite, followed by andesite. The volcanic intrusions continued through the mid-Pleistocene, terminating approximately 1.36 mybp. The eruptions were not fluid lava flows, but occurred mostly as thick, viscous intrusions that pushed up like toothpaste. As the domes grew higher, material cooled, contracted, and sloughed off under the influence of gravity, forming landslides and jumbled piles of boulders, such as those below Cat Rock (Hausback, personal communication, 2005).

Explosive pyroclastic events resulted in the ring of fragmental deposits that comprise the Ramparts. The volcanic eruptions coincided with the Nebraskan glacial period (1 to 1.3 mybp), a very wet climatic period. Volcanic mudflows, or lahars, were prevalent and can be seen as ashy sandstone and mudstone interbedded with pyroclastic deposits in the Ramparts area. The Ramparts material originally covered the areas that are now called the Moat, sloping away from the central peaks. Initially, this material formed a barrier to erosion, but the continued downcutting of streams formed narrow, deep channels through the fragmental debris and eventually reached the underlying, weaker sedimentary rocks that are exposed in the Moat today (Hausback, in Anderson, 2004).

Geologic Formations of Peace Valley Area

The rocks that occur in the Peace Valley acquisition represent most of the rock types present in the Buttes. The oldest rock present is the Late Cretaceous Kione Sand, which underlies Cemetery Hill (location of Pugh family cemetery). A small outcrop (the only exposure in the Peace Valley area) at the top of the hill exhibits nearly vertical beds, attesting to the uplift and warping caused by the andesitic intrusions. The Kione Sand represents channel-filling deposits laid down in deltaic and shallow marine

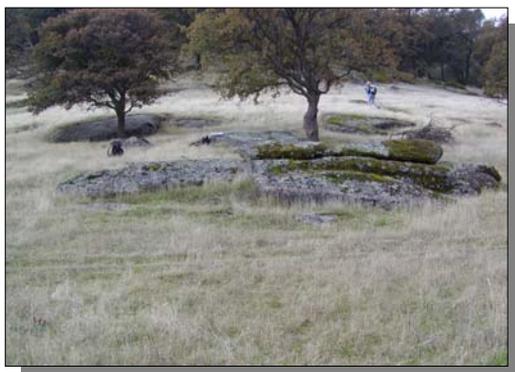
environments (Hausback, 1999). It locally contains abundant mollusk fossils (clams and oysters); a concretion containing fossil clams was found on a recent field visit. The younger Tertiary deposits consist of the Upper Eocene (~40-37 mybp) Butte Gravels and the Oligocene to Pliocene (2-37 mybp) Sutter Formation. The Butte Gravels formed in an environment of shallow seas, deltas and river mouths, and contain cobbles of quartz, chert, quartzite, greenstone, diorite, and volcanic rocks derived from the pre-Sierra Nevada mountains (Hausback, in Anderson, 2004). These rounded cobbles are evident along the roads in Peace Valley and in the stream channels.

The Sutter Formation is a tuffaceous (ashy) fine-grained sandstone and siltstone with minor gravels. It represents a terrestrial deposit of river-transported andesitic debris derived from eruptions in the Sierra Nevada, along with some Sierran bedrock material. Fossil teeth from *Dinohippus* (4-5 mybp-age horse) have been found in the Sutter Formation (Anderson, 2004). It is exposed on the east edge of Peace Valley and good outcrops occur in the channel of East Creek and the spillway of the stock pond near the old barn. A fossil bone fragment (unknown vertebrate) was recently found in Peace Valley by Sierra College geology professor Dr. Richard Hilton.

The volcanic rocks of the Castellated Core consist of a discontinuous outer ring of rhyolite and rhyodacite, with younger andesitic domes that invaded and extruded into the interior of the ring of rhyolite domes and formed the central craggy peaks. A prominent steep-side rhyolite dome is present to the west of Cemetery Hill. The rock is fine-grained, white to yellow white and contains small black crystals of biotite mica. Landslides on the steep sided dome form benches above which are near-vertical exposures of the rhyolite. This rock was quarried by the Pugh family and used to form the foundation of the old homestead.



Pugh Home foundation of rhyolite quarried from conical peak in left background. Lower, rounded hill to right is Cemetery Hill, underlain by Kione



Andesite slabs from Cat Rock landslide

The andesite that forms the inner core is a distinctive fine-grained brick red or gray rock with prominent white crystals of feldspar (phenocrysts). The large blocks that have slid from the core and are found in and around the edges of Peace Valley often contain bedrock mortars.

The outer rocks of the Ramparts, as discussed above, consist of fragmental deposits shed from the growing volcanic domes, hot pyroclastic flows, and cold mudflows (lahars). The large boulders are mainly andesitic, with some rhyolitic materials in the lower rampart deposits. The lahars are fine-grained ashy sands, silts and clays with gravel and cobble layers.

Soils

Soil type is based on parent rock type, climate, topography, biota, and time of formation. In the Sutter Buttes, there is correlation between the geologic units and the types of soils present. Four of the seven soils types present in the project area have their type location in or near the Sutter Buttes. The information here is from Anderson (2004) after Lytle (1988).

On the inner rocky peaks of andesite and rhyolite, the soil type is the Ocraig series, a shallow, gravelly coarse sandy loam that forms on steep slopes (30-75%) from residual (formed in place, not transported) volcanic rocks.

The Palls, Bohna variant, and Stohlman stony sandy loams form on the hills and ridges of the andesitic Ramparts area. The Bohna variant is a very deep, very well-drained soil that forms on colluvium (including landslides) on hills with slopes of 5-75%. The Palls and Stohlman series are often found together, with the Palls a deeper soil (gentler slopes) than the Stohlman (steeper slopes). Both form on andesitic rock and lahars, with their type localities in the Buttes. The effects of climate on soil type are illustrated at the Buttes, with Stohlman-Palls on the northeast (cooler) Ramparts, while Palls-Stohlman occurs on the drier, hotter south aspects of the Ramparts.

The sedimentary rocks of the Moat area give rise to Altamont Clay and Dibble silt loam soils. The Altamont is a deep, well-drained clay derived from fine-grained sandstone and shale that forms on gentle concave side slopes and toe slopes. Dibble silt loam is a moderately deep, well drained soil derived from coarser grained sandstone and interbedded shale on uplands and ridge tops. Both of these soils have high shrink-swell potential.

The Olashes sandy loam is a very deep well-drained soil that forms on alluvium weathered from mixed rock sources. It is found on gentle slopes to flat areas in breaks in the Ramparts (such as along the current access road to Peace Valley). It is well suited to orchards, especially the almonds that line the beginning of the access road on private land.

Hydrology

Streams in the Buttes show the radial pattern indicative of a domal structure. Within Peace Valley, the smaller tributary streams also follow the curve of the valley floor. Streams and creeks are intermittent, ceasing to flow or flowing subsurface during the hot summer months. The two unnamed main creeks that cross through Peace Valley have been informally named East Creek and West Creek (DPR, 2004). Numerous springs also provide a water source throughout the dry summer months. Ranchers have created a few stock ponds by damming creeks and spring sources, or digging pits at spring eyes. The large pond near the entrance area (near the old barn) retains water year round (DPR, 2004) and flows to East Creek.

The sub-watershed area for the Park and the headwaters is approximately 1,571 acres (2.46 square miles). DPR (2004) has assessed three reaches of East Creek and also sampled for selected water quality parameters. The assessment indicates that the stream appears to be in relatively stable condition, with a few localized areas of bank erosion and debris dams. Water quality parameters indicate that the surface water quality is generally good, with normal water chemistry levels and healthy populations of aquatic organisms.

Cultural Resources

Due to private ownership and limited access, very little research on the cultural resources in the Sutter Buttes has been conducted until recently. In 1968 – 69 Peter Jensen (1970) conducted the only known archaeological research on the prehistoric sites in Peace Valley and the surrounding area. Cultural resource specialists from the California Department of Parks and Recreation began a comprehensive study of the cultural resources in this new park acquisition with funding provided through Cultural Stewardship bond money. This study is in the preliminary phases and will not be completed until fall of 2005.

The unique physiographic nature of the Sutter Buttes has attracted diverse groups of people to the region for several thousand years and continues today. Jensen (1970) speculates that the prehistoric archaeological sites are between 1500 to 2500 years old.

The cultural landscape in the Sutter Buttes reflects a long interaction between humans and nature, a melding of natural systems and human features. Because both are dynamic, the cultural landscape changes over time. The effects of change often imprint the land, leaving a human history in the physical landscape. As a result of private ownership, public access and development have been limited in the Buttes. This isolation has provided insularity to the archaeological and historical resources – they remain much as they were one hundred years ago or more.

Natural Context

The cultural resources encountered in the new park acquisition in the Sutter Buttes are the result of human behaviors in, and adaptations to, the natural setting. Because the placement of historic and prehistoric sites on the landscape is frequently related to the immediacy of various resources, a basic understanding of the site's environment and cultural context needs to be established. The diverse physiography and limited hydrology of the Buttes dictated the land use patterns both prehistorically and historically and are reflected in the archaeological and historical record.

The flora and fauna in prehistoric times was probably similar to that in the greater northern Sacramento Valley at the time of Euro-American contact. Many of these plant and animal species were important staples in the diet of Native American groups occupying the valley region surrounding the Buttes.

The availability of surface water within the Buttes is seasonal. However there are numerous perennial springs that would have been sufficient to supply the needs of a few ranching families and small prehistoric hunting parties during the summer months. The archaeological record suggests the springs could have sustained larger prehistoric gathering groups as well.

Prehistory

Humans may have inhabited the Sacramento Valley as early as 10,000 years ago (8000 BC); however, evidence for early human use is deeply buried in the alluvial sediments of the valley which accumulated rapidly during the later Holocene epoch. Moratto (1984) estimates that up to 10 meters of sediments accumulated in the lower reaches of the Sacramento River drainage during the last 5,000 – 6, 000 years. It is generally thought that subsistence patterns of this period are associated with the exploitation of large game.

Fredrickson (1973) has defined several patterns of prehistoric settlement which are relevant to the Central Valley and the Sutter Buttes. Three of these patterns fall between the time period of 2500 B.C. and A.D. 1500. The first pattern, the Windmill (2500 B.C.-1000 B.C) is thought to be a mixed economy of game and wild plant procurement and is indicative of seasonal adaptation. The Windmill Pattern eventually changed to a more specialized economic emphasis called the Berkeley Pattern (1500 B.C. – 500 B.C.) which displays an increase in mortars and pestles and a reduction in the number of manos and metates, indicating a shift in resource use and a greater dependence on acorns. Although gathered resources became more important during this period, the presence of projectile points and atlatls imply hunting was still an important activity (Fredrickson 1973). At approximately A.D. 500, the Berkeley Pattern was superseded by the Augustine Pattern. A change in subsistence and land use is reflected in this pattern which is ethnographically documented by the people of the historic area (Maidu). This pattern is distinguished by intensive fishing, hunting, and gathering as well as a greater elaboration of ceremonial and social organization, including the development of social stratification. During this period exchange became well developed, and the use of acorns intensified.

Ethnography

Although the Sutter Buttes are considered unclaimed they were probably visited and utilized by more than one group. The Patwin and Maidu (Konkow and Nisenan) were the two most probable exploiters of the Buttes, at least during prehistoric and protohistoric times (Jensen 1970). The Sacramento River divided the northern Sacramento Valley into nearly two equal parts that ethnographically formed a natural boundary between the Patwin to the west of the river, and the Maidu to the east. Both groups are linguistically part of the Penutian language family, speakers which lived in the Central Valley. Because the Sacramento River flows several miles west of the Buttes, it is likely the Buttes fall within Maidu territory.

Euro-American contact affected both the Patwin and Maidu way of life after the discovery of gold in Coloma in 1848. With the arrival of whites, the ecological balance was upset. Formerly available food sources became extinct or scarce or otherwise unavailable.

Patwin

The River Patwin occupied the valley and were organized into social and political units described by ethnographers as tribelets (Kroeber 1962). Usually the tribelets were composed of one primary village and several satellite villages. Typically, a Patwin village was composed of four to several dozen bark dwellings, housing 20 – 150 people. The larger villages had central earthen lodges that were used for men's gatherings, sweating, initiation of shamans, and as a sleeping place for single men. Other types of structures included sweat houses and menstrual huts. These were domed brush shelters. Each village had a headman who was responsible for scheduling dances and other events, and settling disputes. This position was hereditary, dependent upon the ability of the son to perform the required duties. Resource procurement consisted of hunting and gathering and included large and small game and a wide variety of vegetal resources. These resources provided food, building, and weaving materials. Acorn was the primary dietary staple but other plant resources were also important.

Maidu (Konkow and Nisenan)

Maidu, which means "the people" lived in the Sacramento Valley and the surrounding foothills. The settlement distribution and linguistic boundaries of the Maidu indicate resource utilization from several areas. The west-east orientation of the Maidu landscape varied from the plain of the Sacramento River near sea level, to the Sierra Crest (Riddell 1978). The political and social organization of the Maidu is understood in terms of the tribelet (Kroeber 1962). The basic subsistence pattern of the Maidu was based on hunting and gathering activities with the acorn the primary focus of the diet. Seeds of all varieties were eaten and when available the nuts of several conifer species were utilized as well as berries. Most plants and animals had multiple uses serving subsistence, religious, and material needs. Villages were built on low, natural rises along streams and rivers or on gentle slopes with a southern exposure. Villages varied in size from three to seven houses to 40 to 50. The village or community group controlled a certain territory and acted as a group in decision making and ceremonies. Houses were domed shaped and covered with earth, tule mats, or grasses. Other village structures included the dance house, the acorn granary, and the sweat house. Caves are rare; however, a few occupied rock shelters have been documented.

The Maidu believed their environment was occupied by mysterious powers and spirits which lived in natural geographic sites such as rocky peaks, cliffs, rapids, waterfalls, mountain lakes, and in the sky. The Sutter Buttes figured prominently in the spiritual world view of the Maidu. It was a place where a deceased person would stop to prepare for the pathway into the afterlife.

In the Sacramento Valley region, when a person dies, the soul or ghost stays in or near the body for three or four days. Then it starts off, and travels everywhere the man or woman has ever been in life, tracing step by step his or her journeys throughout their whole extent, and in particular visiting every spot on which the person had spat. Besides thus traversing once more the scenes of the earthly life, the ghost is apparently supposed to act over again every deed performed in the flesh. This is done (and it would seem that it is accomplished with miraculous rapidity), the ghost sets out towards the Marysville Buttes...and here, entering a mysterious cave which is often spoken of in myths, finds a supply of spirit-food, of which it partakes, and then passes up...(the "above land"), ...from which it never returns (Dixon 1905:260).

The Maidu culture continues today.

History

Numerous prominent figures in the history of California have spent time in the Sutter Buttes. The first documented European intrusion into the Buttes was between 1808 and 1821 by Spanish explorers Gabriel Moraga and Luis Antonio Arguello. In December of 1832, fur trappers from the Hudson's Bay Company were stranded by high water in the Buttes. Their camp was in an area already well known to trappers from previous expeditions in the area (Hardee). The Mexican government granted John Sutter a tract of land "between the present site of Sutterville and a line drawn east and west through the northern edge of the Sutter Buttes, and from the Sacramento River to a line a few miles east of the Feather River" in 1841(McGowan 1961). General John C. Fremont and other individuals involved in the Bear Flag Revolt camped on the south east portion of the Sutter Buttes fearing attack by Mexican forces or their Native American allies. It was from this location that Fremont launched into his role in the Bear Flag Revolt (Thompson and West 1879). It is not known for certain if any of these individuals ventured into the land currently owned by State Parks and to date, there is no evidence in the archaeological record to support their presence.

With the decline of the gold industry, farming and ranching became the predominant economic activities in Sutter County. Not long after California became a state, Peace Valley was settled by two brothers, Cullen Lee and Dr. Lee. By 1849, the Sutter Buttes were being used as rangeland for cattle and other domesticated animals. The high land of the Buttes made it suitable for winter range above the local flooding which was common in the area during periods of rain or high water. In 1850 the 1,900 acre tract of land owned by the Culls was obtained by Aaron Pugh. Pugh owned the land until his death in 1897. It is not certain which stock was predominant during Pugh's time but the archaeological record would suggest that sheep were the primary focus. During the first half of the twentieth century, raising sheep continued to grow as the principal economic activity in the Buttes. Thomas Brady was instrumental in the economic development of Sutter County because of his association with the sheep industry. His land in the Buttes was used for raising sheep. Brady and his wife owned large tracts of land in the Sutter Buttes and elsewhere in Sutter and Butte counties. By the early twentieth-century, the

Brady family owned a significant portion of the Buttes, including the entire Pugh ranch and the H.S. Gravers property.

Archaeological Resources

The cultural significance of the Sutter Buttes can only be inferred from the evidence collected from the field inventory and the written record. The cultural resources within the boundary of this new park acquisition are unique in that they have retained much of their integrity when compared those resources in the surrounding area which have been heavily impacted or destroyed from development.

Prehistoric Resources

Prehistoric resources located in the Sutter Buttes reflect extensive land use for at least 2500 years. The prehistoric resources located in the project area are indicative of intensive food procurement and processing, and limited habitation.

The prehistoric sites located in the park can be classified as:

1. Occupation Sites equated with a “village” or “habitation”. These sites are most often located on the edge of the valley near a stable water source.

2. Temporary Camp Sites which contain no considerable refuse deposit. These may also include isolated rock features consisting of rock enclosures or rings.



3. Bedrock Milling Sites are the most commonly encountered in the Buttes and are identified by the presence of one or more bedrock mortar holes not associated with a midden deposit. These sites are most often found in association with water including developed springs and drainages.

4. Rock Shelters are most commonly formed from overhanging andesitic boulders and have evidence of human modifications consisting of artifact deposits and/or features such as bedrock mortars and small stone walls. These sites are most commonly found in the ramparts where the largest boulders are located.



5. Hunting Blinds or Game Drive Walls which consist of randomly placed stone features used to ambush or direct mammals such as deer, elk, and possibly small mammals. These features are commonly found along drainages or contour breaks in the upper reaches of the park.

Historic Sites

Historic resources in the park are most often reflective of ranching, which was the most common economic activity in the Sutter Buttes beginning in the 1850s and extending into the 1930s.

The historic sites and features located in the park can be classified as:

1. Homestead Sites which include rock features associated with former structures, stone walls, developed springs, orchards, and artifacts indicative of habitation and work related activities.



2. Standing Structures that include wooden and metal structures which have been modified through the years. These structures are indicative of work related activities associated with sheep and cattle ranching.

3. Rock Quarry where raw material was procured for the construction of the Pugh homestead.

4. Stone Walls and Fences used to define property lines and to contain livestock.

5. Roads leading into the valley, the homesteads, and procurement areas.

6. Cemetery located on the top of a knoll where former settlers who occupied the Peace Valley are buried.



Conclusion

The sites within the boundary of the park should be collectively considered a “cultural landscape”. Based on the extensive prehistoric and historic resources, it is likely the landscape would include two periods of significance, one associated with the prehistoric resources and the others with the historic. A cultural landscape is defined by the National Park Service as a:

Geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associate with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values (Birnbaum 1994:1).

It is rare to see such a unique property where the cultural resources have escaped the effects of major development, and still retain and convey the overall feeling that the past inhabitants must have experienced. It is important that the park's cultural resources be protected in their current state.

The Native American Heritage Commission states that even today the Sutter Buttes are an important part of the belief system of the Maidu people and their view on the creation of the world.

Recreation Resources

Planning Influences and Regional Recreation

The naming and classification of the Sutter Buttes property is the first step in providing access and facilities for public use on this new land acquisition. Following this step, when adequate funding becomes available, a more intensive general planning process will take place that will establish goals and guidelines for development of facilities, resource management, interpretation, and park operations followed by focused management plans and specific projects. Until then, the Department has prepared some *Interim Operational Guidelines* for the park that will guide management decisions, to allow for public use and support facilities that do not require a permanent commitment of resources at the park.

Sutter County consists of 607 square miles of mostly open lands north of Sacramento and Yolo counties, and is bounded by the Sacramento and Feather rivers on its west and east sides. It has a total population of approximately 77,000, primarily in two incorporated cities, Yuba City and Live Oak, and seven unincorporated communities. Sutter County's 1996 *General Plan* recognizes the Buttes, located on the northern edge of the county, as an important biological, cultural, visual, and agricultural resource. It proposes studying the desirability of developing long-term conservation and preservation programs for the resources and "basic property rights of the landowners" in the Buttes. The Plan recommends protection of views to the Buttes along Highway 20, and recognizes an unmet county-wide demand for organized trail systems, including foot, bicycle, and equestrian trails. It supports further development of a regional bikeway system to support both commuter and recreational bicyclists.

Yuba City/ Marysville, located at the confluence of the Feather and Yuba rivers southeast of the Buttes, is the largest metropolitan area in the vicinity. Other than these cities and a few smaller urbanized areas, the Buttes are surrounded by agricultural and protected habitat lands that extend in all directions. Sutter County's economy is primarily based on intensive agricultural production. Other than the Sutter Buttes and various wildlife refuges, and in contrast to Butte and Yuba counties on its eastern side which are substantially supported by outdoor recreation and tourism, existing outdoor recreation and public open space are relatively limited in Sutter County. However, there are an extensive variety of recreational opportunities available in the region.

The wildlife refuges surrounding the Buttes are managed by various state and federal agencies. A number of refuges offer public viewing of migratory bird populations by allowing access to developed trails in flooded areas.

The privately-owned 18-hole Southridge golf course is located on the southern foothills of the Sutter Buttes; another, Plumas Lake, is farther south near the Sutter Bypass. Hunting and fishing opportunities range from the floor of the Central Valley to the Sierras.

Lake Oroville, a large reservoir with many adjacent day- and overnight-use recreational facilities managed by State Parks, is 25 miles to the northeast in Butte County. The economy of the area near Lake Oroville is substantially supported by outdoor recreation in the region. Peak-season and off-season recreation uses support businesses serving the recreation market. Bed and breakfast inns, hotels, campgrounds, hostels, tour guide services, equipment rentals, restaurants, and gas stations all profit from outdoor recreation uses in the region.

The U.S. Forest Service makes camping and day use areas available east of Lake Oroville on thousands of acres of National Forest land and waterways. Southwest of Lake Oroville, the Clay Pit State Vehicular Recreation Area provides a riding area for OHV enthusiasts.

Local recreation providers such as the Yuba City Parks and Recreation Department and the Feather River Recreation & Park District in Butte County operate recreational facilities and activities for residents of nearby cities. Day use facilities along the Feather River and youth and adult classes as well as sports and other programs are regularly offered. People can attend concerts, track and field meets, rodeos, jet boat marathons, harvest fairs, parades, and various ethnic activities, among many others. There are various places of interest to visit, such as Beale Museum at Beale Air Force Base and the Bok Kai Temple in Marysville.

A small portion of outdoor recreation in the region occurs on private and non-profit-owned lands, including private campgrounds such as those that have been developed in the low-flow channel area of the Feather River, northeast of the Buttes. In addition, there are outdoor recreation guides and outfitters, and lands owned by various non-profit organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America.

On the west side of the Sutter Buttes, near Colusa, the Colusa Sacramento River State Recreation Area offers camping and day use facilities along the river. Colusa County is similar to Sutter County in that its economy is primarily based on agriculture; it also provides wildlife habitat in several major National Wildlife Refuges west and northwest of the Sutter Buttes.

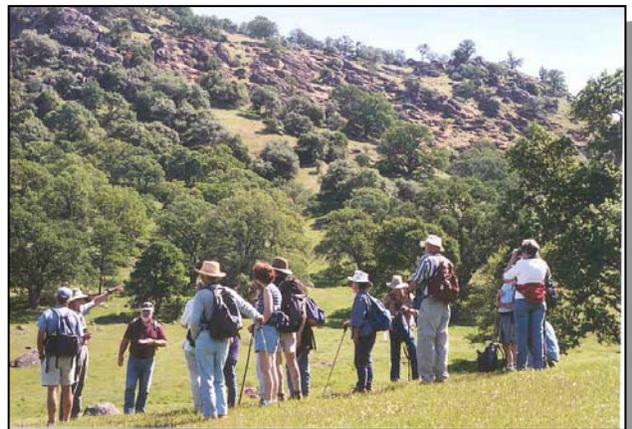
Recreational Uses and Public Access

In 2003 the Department initiated a study to determine the State Park System's future role in the Central Valley. Through public input and a planning effort, general guidelines

for future land acquisition and recreational facility development projects in the Valley have been proposed. These recommendations include the acquisition of park land that would serve growing communities and protect increasingly rare and important natural resources and the Valley's cultural history. The Sutter Buttes property represents these resource values and potential for high-quality recreational experiences.

With major metropolitan areas such as Sacramento within sight of its peaks, the Sutter Buttes offer an inviting respite from city life and a recreational setting unique in California. The ancient volcano presents exceptional opportunities for passive recreational activities such as hiking, nature study, picnicking, environmental camping, horseback riding, bicycling, photography, sketching and painting, star gazing, and relaxation.

Past and current recreational uses of this land include guided hikes by the Middle Mountain Foundation (MMF), a local nonprofit organization working with the Department and others to provide opportunities to access and enjoy the Sutter Buttes. Through contractual agreements with private and public landowners, MMF has created learning opportunities through guided public hikes and school class outings. Guided six-hour hikes can traverse the gentle terrain of lower meadows or attain the summits of surrounding peaks.



Guided interpretive hikes on designated trails to sensitive cultural or natural resources within the park can lessen the potential for damage to these resources. Interpretive signs explaining the landscape's long and varied geologic, natural, prehistoric and historic resources would provide the public with a greater understanding and enjoyment of their experiences in the park.

There is an unpaved road through Peace Valley that could bring hikers into the heart of the park, with views of the surrounding hills and peaks and access to various nearby cultural and natural resources. Horses and bicycles could use the road, and with advance notice, visitors with limited mobility may be able to drive portions of the road. New trails, including disabled access trails, could provide visitors expanded access to the park, especially to higher points that can offer sweeping views. These trails should be directed away from sensitive natural and cultural resources to minimize potential damage to these resources. In summer, the area's high wildfire potential may restrict recreational uses.

Visitors' vehicles are currently not allowed into the interior of the park without prior authorization. Public access to the park would be from the north side through private property on a road easement. This current situation is not ideal, since: a) adjacent

property owners have concerns with the potential traffic increases; and b) increased traffic may overburdened the roads that were originally built for local farm traffic. Alternative public access routes into the park will need further investigation.

Bird watching is a historically important activity in the area. The Buttes are part of the great Pacific Flyway bird migration route and offer bird sightings to those interested in their seasonal migrations. The California Department of Fish and Game provides habitat for millions of migrating birds at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge north of the park property, offering park visitors further opportunity for bird study. The proximity of the refuge also creates potential for the formation of linked biological systems that could provide increased bird and other animal populations and potential sightings in the park.



Day hikes bring many pleasures – stopping for lunch and enjoying the view

Ecological, cultural, and aesthetic resource concerns will pose certain limitations on the future development of park facilities. The potential and feasibility of appropriate park facilities will be determined as part of a future general planning process.



The old barn in Peace Valley tells a story of early ranching in the Buttes

PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION

Discussion and Analysis

Appropriate classifications for this unit were identified and an analysis was undertaken to determine the most suitable classification. Two primary classifications, State Park and State Reserve, were identified during this process. Appropriate subclassifications were investigated and analyzed. Classification categories are described in Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 1.7, Sections 5019.50- 5019.80 of the California Public Resources Code, as follows:

State Park

Public Resources Code definition - State parks consist of relatively spacious areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archaeological, ecological, geological, or other similar values. The purpose of state parks shall be to preserve outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, indigenous aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora, and the most significant examples of ecological regions of California, such as the Sierra Nevada, northeast volcanic, great valley, coastal strip, Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains, southwest mountains and valleys, redwoods, foothills and low coastal mountains, and desert and desert mountains.

Each state park shall be managed as a composite whole in order to restore, protect, and maintain its native environmental complexes to the extent compatible with the primary purpose for which the park was established.

Improvements undertaken within state parks shall be for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values for present and future generations. Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities including, but not limited to, camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding, so long as those improvements involve no major modification of lands, forests, or waters. Improvements that do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks.

State Reserve

Public Resources Code definition - State reserves consist of areas embracing outstanding natural or scenic characteristics or areas

containing outstanding cultural resources of statewide significance. State reserve units may be established in the terrestrial or nonmarine aquatic (lake or stream) environments of the state and shall be further classified as one of the following types: (a) State natural reserves, consisting of areas selected and managed for the purpose of preserving their native ecological associations, unique faunal or floral characteristics, geological features, and scenic qualities in a condition of undisturbed integrity. Resource manipulation shall be restricted to the minimum required to negate the deleterious influence of man. Improvements undertaken shall be for the purpose of making the areas available, on a day use basis, for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of their natural features. Living and nonliving resources contained within state natural reserves shall not be disturbed or removed for other than scientific or management purposes. (b) State cultural reserves, consisting of areas selected and managed for the purpose of preserving and protecting the integrity of places that contain historic or prehistoric structures, villages, or settlements, archaeological features, ruins, artifacts, inscriptions made by humans, burial grounds, landscapes, hunting or gathering sites, or similar evidence of past human lives or cultures. These areas may also be places of spiritual significance to California Native Americans. Within state cultural reserves, the highest level of resource protection shall be sought. Improvements may be undertaken for the purpose of providing public access, enjoyment, and education, and for cultural resource protection. Improvements made for the purpose of cultural resource protection shall take into account the possible need for access to the site for ceremonial or spiritual purposes. Living and nonliving resources contained within state cultural reserves may be used for ceremonial or spiritual purposes, consistent with other laws, and if the use is not harmful to threatened or endangered species or to the cultural resources intended for protection by this designation. Management actions shall be consistent with the preservation of cultural resources and with federal and state laws.

State Park classification provides maximum resource protection while providing flexibility for appropriate visitor facility development that may include trails, parking, day use, and overnight facilities.

A State Reserve classification provides maximum resource protection, but visitor use is limited to day use. This classification requires that the unit be designated as either a "State Natural Reserve" or "State Cultural Reserve." Available resource information indicates that there are significant cultural as well as natural resources.

The Public Resources Code also allows for areas within a classified unit of the State Park System to be subclassified as a Natural or Cultural Preserve. The management intent for these subclassifications is to provide for further preservation and protection of the significant natural and cultural resources. In preserves, visitor services and improvements are secondary to resource protection, and overnight use is nonexistent. Areas identified for subclassification require that an approved boundary be defined for Park and Recreation Commission approval. Typically, subclassifications are undertaken during the preparation of a general plan, when more in depth analysis is undertaken along with the collection of more detailed resource information than is typical during the preparation of a classification document.

Natural Preserve (subclassification)

Public Resources Code definition - Natural preserves consist of distinct nonmarine areas of outstanding natural or scientific significance established within the boundaries of other state park system units. The purpose of natural preserves shall be to preserve such features as rare or endangered plant and animal species and their supporting ecosystems, representative examples of plant or animal communities existing in California prior to the impact of civilization, geological features illustrative of geological processes, significant fossil occurrences or geological features of cultural or economic interest, or topographic features illustrative of representative or unique biogeographical patterns. Areas set aside as natural preserves shall be of sufficient size to allow, where possible, the natural dynamics of ecological interaction to continue without interference, and to provide, in all cases, a practicable management unit. Habitat manipulation shall be permitted only in those areas found by scientific analysis to require manipulation to preserve the species or associations that constitute the basis for the establishment of the natural preserve.

Cultural Preserve (subclassification)

Public Resources Code definition - Cultural preserves consist of distinct nonmarine areas of outstanding cultural interest established within the boundaries of other state park system units for the purpose of protecting such features as sites, buildings, or zones which represent significant places or events in the flow of human experience in California. Areas set aside as cultural preserves shall be large enough to provide for the effective protection of the prime cultural resources from potentially damaging influences, and to permit the effective management and interpretation of the resources. Within cultural preserves, complete integrity of the cultural resources shall be sought, and no structures or improvements that conflict with that integrity shall be permitted.

Recommendations

It is the recommendation of the Department, based on the inventory of natural and cultural resources presented in this document, that the Sutter Buttes project area be classified as a State Park.

Natural and cultural preserves are subclassifications that should be considered during a future general planning process. Where warranted, these preserve designations would provide a higher level of resource management and protection for selected areas of the park.

PROPOSED PARK NAME

Alternative Names Considered

Maidu Indians called the Buttes "Histum Yani" which has various translations, including "Middle Mountains of the Valley" and "Spirit Mountain." A Spanish explorer, Luis Arguello, called the Buttes "Los Picachos" or the peaks. More recent names have included "Marysville Buttes", "Sacramento Buttes", and "Los Tres Picos." The most recent and commonly used name for the range is "Sutter Buttes." The place name of the park property is known locally as Peace Valley.

There have been other names suggested for the park, one of which is "Peace Valley Reserve – Sutter Buttes."

Recommended Park Name

The Department is recommending the name "**Sutter Buttes State Park**" for this new unit of the State Park System, for these reasons:

- The public is already familiar with the location of the area known as "the Sutter Buttes."
- The name "Sutter Buttes" refers to historic events that occurred in the area, and is currently the most commonly used reference to the mountain.
- Including "Peace Valley" as part of the park name would not encompass the extensive areas around Peace Valley that are also part of the park property.

Alternative names that have been suggested for the park may be appropriate for future sub-classifications within the park unit.

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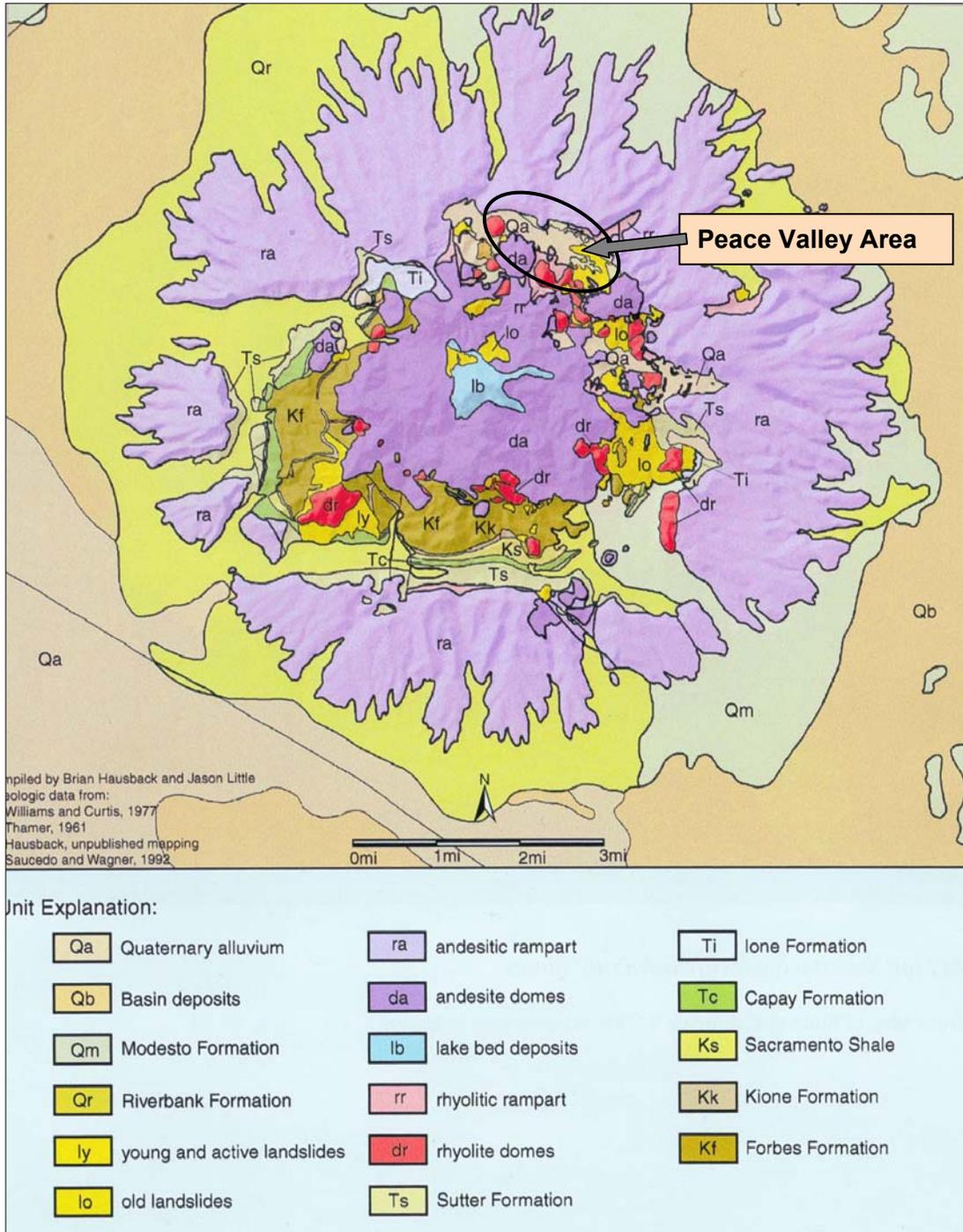
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APPENDIX A GEOLOGIC MAP OF SUTTER BUTTES



Source: Anderson, 2004.

APPENDIX B
State Park and Recreation Commission
STATEMENTS OF POLICY

POLICY II.2

**CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING UNITS, FEATURES, GROVES, AND TRAILS
OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM**
(Amended 5-4-94)

The following procedure will be used to identify, classify, and name units of the State Park System:

1. Unit Project Name

A unit project name may be used by the Department of Parks and Recreation throughout the initial phase of site selection, planning, and acquisition of a unit to be added to the State Park System. The project name, so far as possible, will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below.

2. Classification and Naming

- a. Following the acquisition of and preparation of a resource inventory for a new unit of the State Park System, the Department will provide the secretary of the Commission with a recommendation containing the unit's permanent name and classification.
- b. The type of classification shall be governed by existing State law, principally the Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 1.7, Section 5019.53, et seq.
- c. With regard to naming, the Department's recommendation will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below and any existing State regulations.
- d. Upon receiving a recommendation for the classification and naming of a unit of the State Park System, the secretary of the Commission will select the time and place for holding a public hearing before the Commission for this specific purpose. The secretary will ensure that the hearing is properly announced in accordance with existing State regulations in order that the classification and naming as adopted by the Commission may be recorded and made a part of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

3. State Park System Unit Names

In most cases, a unit should bear the name to which it has been accustomed due to location, association, history, natural features, or general usage. Changing the name of a classified unit is strongly discouraged. A unit may be named by the Commission in honor of a person living or deceased, or a group, organization, or other entity which has rendered services of statewide significance to the State Park System.

4. Naming of Features Within Units of the State Park System

The Director may approve the use of a name to identify a feature within a unit of the State Park

System when this action is necessary or desirable for any reason, such as ease in identifying a feature for users of the system, preparation of maps, recognition of deserving individuals or groups, organizations or other entities. Names so selected may be altered or changed by the Director as conditions warrant. The approval of a map or the use of a sign identifying a feature shall constitute the Director's approval and the recording of the Director's actions.

5. Memorial Groves

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial groves within the State Park System. Sections or areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial groves for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial groves will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or one-half of the present market value of the area to be named. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the acquisition of the grove if appropriate. Memorial groves will be indicated on an official map left in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial grove will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

6. Memorial Trails

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial trails within the State Park System. Areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial trails for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial trails will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or comparable service for trail improvements. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the establishment of the trail if appropriate. Memorial trails will be indicated on an official map in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial trail will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

**THE SUTTER BUTTES PROJECT
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