

# Standish- Hickey

## State Recreation Area



### 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 **(707) 925-6482**. If you need this publication in an alternate format, contact [interp@parks.ca.gov](mailto:interp@parks.ca.gov).

#### CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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For information, call (800) 777-0369

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### Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area

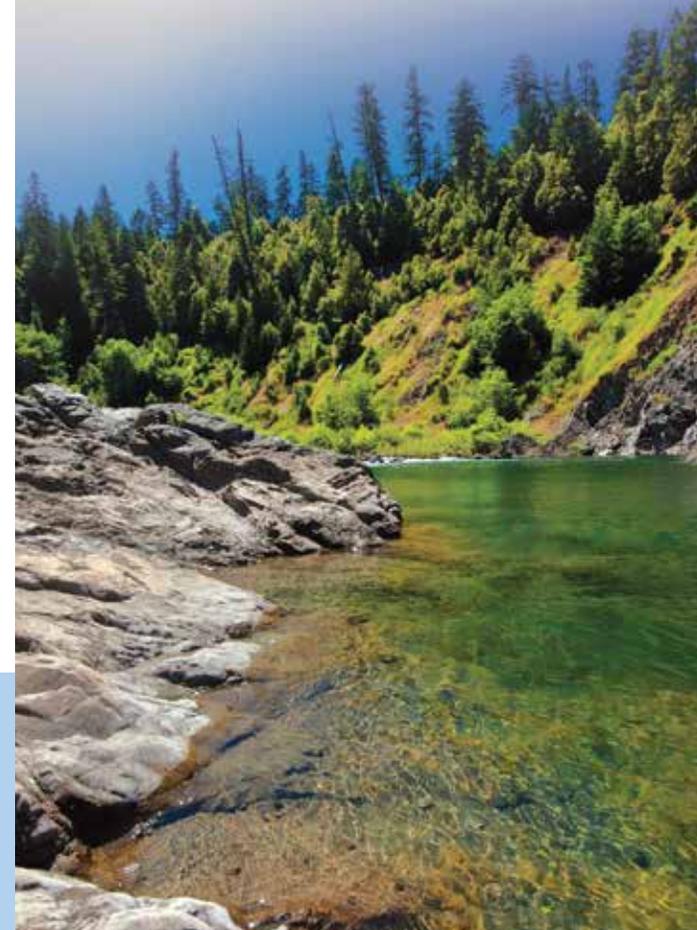
69350 U.S. Hwy. 101, Box #2

Leggett, CA 95455

(707) 925-6482

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*The South Fork  
of the Eel River  
shimmers against the  
backdrop of a majestic  
redwood forest.*



## Gateway to the tall trees country, Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area

offers camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, and swimming on the South Fork of the Eel River —part of the third-largest river system in California. Nearly ten miles of trails weave through steep canyon bluffs, second-growth forests, and pockets of old-growth redwood and Douglas-fir. The fast-moving river—with its rapids, holes of varying depths, calm shallow areas, and cobblestone bed—is especially popular with both swimmers and anglers.

Park visitors enjoy warm summer temperatures, varying between 70 and 100 degrees. Winter temperatures range from 20 to 75 degrees. Heavy coastal rainfall averages 70 inches per year.

### PARK HISTORY

#### Native People

The first known inhabitants of this region, the Sinkyone people, sustained themselves by hunting, fishing, and food gathering in the ancient redwoods. These Athabaskan-speaking people were expert hunters who used trained dogs to drive game to be caught. Sinkyone men and women both made intricate, useful baskets.

Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area began as a 40-acre campground donated to the state in 1922 by the Hickey family. The donation honored Edward Ritter Hickey, a local lumberman's son who died while caring for victims of the influenza epidemic of 1918.



*Edward Ritter Hickey*

In the late 1950s, descendants of Captain Miles Standish, a Pilgrim who landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620, donated more than 500 acres. The Save the Redwoods League has made subsequent additions through the years, bringing the park's current size to more than 1,000 acres.

Much of the land was clear-cut and then burned in a disastrous fire in 1947. The park is regaining its former beauty.

### NATURAL HISTORY

#### Wildlife

The Eel River is named for its abundant Pacific lamprey. Black-tailed deer, gray foxes, black bears, mountain lions, and river otters thrive in the park. Eagles, owls, and hawks soar the skies, hunting small game. Visitors may see blue heron, osprey, belted kingfishers, scrub and Steller's jays, and acorn woodpeckers.

#### Plants

The tallest redwood, the Miles Standish Tree, at 225 feet tall and 13 feet in diameter, is easy to spot from a distance. Estimated to be more than 1,200 years old, the Miles Standish Tree bears scars from efforts to chop it down and the effects of the 1947 fire.

Among the second-growth redwoods, Douglas-fir, oaks, laurel, big-leaf maple, alder, madrones, buckeye, and yew compete for sunlight. Lower-elevation growth includes huckleberry, manzanita, and coyote brush.

### Human Effects on the Park

Heavy annual rainfall, combined with the loss of top soil during years of excessive logging, has caused severe erosion. The steep bluffs on the east bank of the South Fork of the Eel River continually erode into the river.

Climate change also poses a threat to the park's plants and animals. Loss of coastal fog and increasing temperatures endanger the coast redwood habitat.



*The Miles Standish Tree*

## RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Trails**—The park's varied trails offer hikers scenic redwood and river views.

- **Taber Nature Trail**—An easy 1.7-mile, self-guided loop with a 360-degree view of the forested skyline
- **Big Tree Trail**—Moderate 2-mile loop with views of the Eel River
- **Mill Creek Loop Trail**—Strenuous 6-mile loop with a view of Big Tree Meadow

**Day Use**—Picnic tables and parking are available for day-use visitors.



*Accessible Taber Nature Trail loop*

**Swimming**—The South Fork of the Eel River, located at the base of rocky outcrops, creates pools nearly 20 feet deep with sandy bottoms. These pools are popular, sunny places to linger on hot summer days. Visitors will find placid water ideal for relaxation.

**Fishing**—In fall and winter, salmon and steelhead swim upriver at the park on their way to spawn. All anglers aged 16 and over must carry a valid California fishing license. Visit [www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov) for regulations.

**Camping**—Hickey and Rock Creek Campgrounds are open seasonally. One campsite is set aside for bicyclists and hikers arriving on foot. The campfire center is the site of popular summer interpretive programs. For camping reservations and more information, call (800) 444-7275 or visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

## ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

All park campgrounds have some accessible sites. The Taber Nature Trail is a 1.7-mile accessible loop. For accessibility updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

## PLEASE REMEMBER

- No diving or jumping into the river. Stay away from steep and dangerous bluffs.
- No lifeguards are on duty; children should be supervised at all times.
- All park features are protected by law and must not be disturbed.
- Contact with poison oak (even when dormant) can cause a severe rash.
- Bicycles and motor bikes are not allowed on park trails.
- Hunting and loaded firearms are prohibited.
- Store all food and scented items in closed containers in bear-resistant lockers.
- Dogs must be on a leash no more than six feet long and must be confined to a tent or vehicle at night. Except for service animals, pets are not allowed on trails.



*Poison Oak*

## NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Smithe Redwoods State Natural Reserve  
Hwy. 101, 4 miles north of Leggett 95585  
(707) 247-3318
- Benbow State Recreation Area  
5 miles north of Standish-Hickey on Benbow Drive, off Hwy. 101, Garberville 95542  
(707) 923-3238
- Richardson Grove State Park, 1600 Hwy. 101, #8, Garberville 95542 (707) 247-3318

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization:

Mendocino Area Parks Association

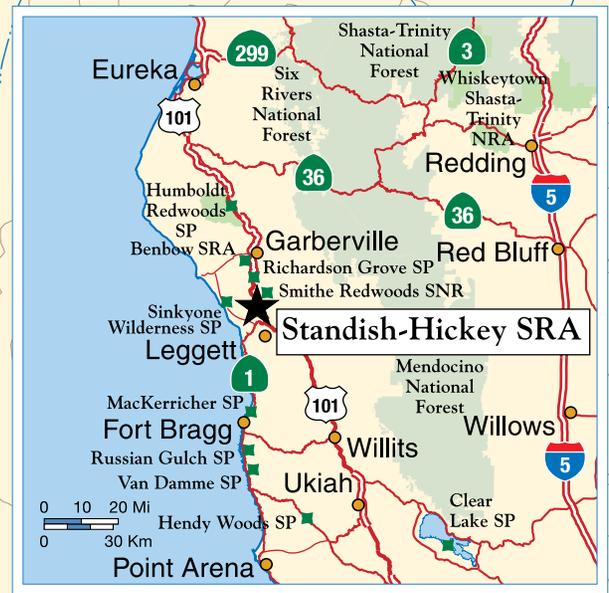
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# Standish - Hickey State Recreation Area

## Legend

-  Paved Road
-  Unpaved Road
-  Trail
-  Accessible Trail
-  Accessible Feature
-  Bridge
-  Campground
-  Hike/Bike Campground
-  Campfire Center
-  Parking
-  Picnic Area
-  Restrooms
-  Showers
-  Swimming
-  Waterfall



## STANDISH-HICKEY STATE RECREATION AREA

