

CHAPTER 10 AREA PLANS

~~The area plans of the Lower American River Parkway Plan are intended to provide a comprehensive description of the individual areas of the Parkway. The plans are of a greater level of detail than the general land use map. The location, and natural and man-made features of each area are described in the area plans. In addition, activities, facilities, opportunities and constraints are listed to further provide an indication of the existing and future composition of each area. The area plans include specific guidelines that indicate what facilities are permitted for a given area. Unless facilities or improvements are specifically designated on the area plan map, they may not be constructed or installed. Therefore, the area plans must be reviewed when a physical change is proposed in the Parkway, to determine the appropriateness of the change. Chapter 11 (Implementation) includes a detailed discussion of area plan development.~~

The area plans of the American River Parkway Plan are intended to provide a comprehensive description of the individual areas of the Parkway. The area plans contain a description of current and/or proposed future activities, location of natural and man-made features, facilities, opportunities and constraints that are more detailed than the general land use map.

Area plans are intended to serve as a guide to implement a vision for the area of the Parkway. In particular, area specific policies are used to indicate what facilities, activities and uses may be permitted or encouraged for a given area. Unless facilities are specifically designated on the area plan map, they may not be constructed or installed, and require an amendment to the area plan approved by the County Board of Supervisors. Therefore, the area plans must be reviewed when a physical change is proposed in the Parkway, to determine the appropriateness of the change. Chapter 11 (Implementation) includes a detailed discussion of the approval process for amending an area plan. In short, it is the intent of this Plan that area plan maps, text and area plan specific policies may be modified locally as long as they remain consistent with the land use designations on the General Land Use Map, Parkway-wide policies and associated text describing the intent of those policies.

AREA PLAN POLICIES

- 9.1 Area plans shall be reviewed by the County Recreation and Parks Commission when a physical change is proposed in the Parkway, to determine the appropriateness of the change.
- 9.2 Facilities ~~or improvements~~ shall not be constructed or installed unless specifically designated on the Area Plan Map.
- 9.3 Adoption or modification of an Area Plan or any of its components shall be determined to be consistent with the County General Plan, provided that it is consistent with the goals, **Parkway-wide policies, and General Land Use Map categories of this Plan, and approved by the County Board of Supervisors.**

Policy numbering continues here from IAP policies and is renumbered here to match with Chapter 10.

PARADISE BEACH

10.22 Permanent structures and any other physical changes that would attract groups of users should not be introduced to the area.

Location and Description:

The Paradise Beach area is on the south side of the river, between the 1-80 bridge and the “H” Street bridge. The Ca]. Expo floodplain area is across the river to the north, and the River Park residential area is to the south, across the levee. The area is dominated by a large sandy beach which has been created by the sharp bend in the river. Vegetation is a mixture of riparian, grassland, and shrub grassland communities, interspersed with sparsely vegetated sand. This area contains many elderberry bushes and provides excellent habitat for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle - Large cottonwoods dominate the northernmost tip of the area.

Activities and Facilities

Paradise Beach is a popular area for fishing, wading, sunbathing, I volleyball, and similar beach activities. A network of informal trails interconnects popular sunbathing spots in the area. A narrow channel cut through the easternmost tip of the beach area has been used on occasion as a slalom course for kayakers. There are no permanent structures in the area. Trash cans and portable restrooms are placed at strategic locations. ~~and two portable volleyball poles have been placed on the beach to provide for that use and to discourage the use of trash cans as pole supports.~~

Access to Paradise Beach is limited. The entire area is served by one parking lot which is located at Glenn Hall Park, a City-operated park abutting the Parkway. The parking lot, which has about seventy stalls, serves the beach area, a public swimming pool, two tennis courts, and two softball fields, as well as some general use turf areas. Neighborhood complaints have prompted on-street parking restrictions for several blocks around the park. Beach users funnel through a single access point and fan out to the various use areas.

Unfortunately, there are no simple solutions to the access situation. Past attempts to enlarge the parking lot have met with strong opposition from the users of Glenn Hall Park. The only other available space for additional parking is within the Parkway itself. This location has likewise with opposition because it would introduce a visual intrusion and potential pollution source into the Parkway, and is contrary to the Parkway policy of limiting parking in the floodplain.

Due to the limited access, annual flooding, and unstable sandy soil, Paradise Beach should remain an informal recreation area. Permanent structures and any other physical changes that would attract groups of users should not be introduced to the area. Acceptable activities include fishing, kayaking, wading, sunbathing, hiking, volleyball, and related beach activities.

CAMPUS COMMONS AREA

9.7.1 ~~A suitable ramp should be constructed uniting the H Street bridge and the Parkway bicycle trail. These improvements should be coordinated with improvements to the Sacramento City bicycle route along Fair Oaks Boulevard and "H" Street.~~

Comment [11]: Complete

Location and Description

The Campus Commons area includes the area on the north side of the river between Howe Avenue and the extension of Ethan Way and the area on the south side of the river between the "H" Street Bridge and the Howe Avenue Bridge. This section of the river flows generally in a northward direction.

The downstream section of the north side of the river is abundant by dense riparian vegetation. This area contains a section of the bicycle trail which is one of the most attractive in the Parkway.

The middle section of the north side of the river is composed primarily of the Campus Commons golf course.

The upstream section of the north side of the river has abundant riparian vegetation along the river's edge, but most of this area is sparsely vegetated grassland. The Guy West pedestrian bridge crosses this section. When the Regional Sanitation trunk line was installed, the natural habitat of the area was disrupted. Sycamores have been planted to mitigate the damage with some success; but, unfortunately, some exotic non-natives have also established themselves. The area has been designated as a Native Plant Restoration Area.

The south side of the river is adjacent to the California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) campus. The dominant feature in this section is Alumni Grove, which is maintained by the CSUS Alumni Association. It provides a spot for meeting and quiet study.

Activities and Facilities

The Campus Commons Area has relatively little development, aside from the golf course. This private golf course is on a twenty-year lease with the County, which expires in ~~2012+1992, and has a 20 year extension.~~ The golf course is a nonconforming use in the Parkway. The area contains trails which are popular for walking, jogging and bicycling. There are two alignments of the bicycle trail in the downstream section. The lower route winds through the trees and bushes, with occasional views of the river, but is subject to annual flooding. The other alignment of the trail is at the base of the levee. This section is on higher ground and remains usable year-round. An equestrian trail is parallel to this higher trail. In the middle section, the bicycle and equestrian trail occupy a narrow strip between the golf course and the base of the levee. In the upstream area, the bicycle trail is located along the boundary between the riparian and grassland communities. An unpaved trail runs along the base of the levee.

~~An exercise par course has been installed near the Guy West bridge, and a few picnic tables are located along the bicycle trail. An information kiosk is located at the Guy West bridge.~~ **A few picnic tables and an information kiosk are located along the bike trail near the Guy West Bridge.** The northernmost section, with its heavy vegetation, is popular for nature study, bird watching, and as a bank fishing access.

Development in the Alumni Grove includes a concrete pad, barbecues, lights, and turf under the trees. The City of Sacramento water intake and pumping station is located immediately upstream from Alumni Grove. **An access ramp has been constructed onto H Street from the levee trail.**

~~Existing facilities appear to be adequate. The "H" Street Bridge presents a particular difficulty~~

~~for pedestrians and especially bicyclists. This bridge is used by cyclists for entering and exiting from the Parkway without a convenient connection between the bicycle trail and the bicycle route on the bridge. Cyclists have resorted to unsafe methods of transfer between the two routes. A suitable ramp should be constructed uniting the bridge and the bicycle trail. These improvements should be coordinated with improvements to the City of Sacramento bicycle route along Fair Oaks Boulevard and "J" Street.~~

HOWE AVENUE

Location and Description

The Howe Avenue area is located on both the north and south sides of the river, between the Howe Avenue Bridge on the west and the northern extension of Occidental Drive on the east.

Activities and Facilities

The downstream section on the south side of the river is fully developed with a fee collection kiosk, information kiosk, drinking fountains and restrooms facilities. Paved parking is provided for automobiles, **vehicles with trailers** and motorcycles, ~~with an additional unpaved parking area that can accommodate horse trailers.~~ Vehicular access to the Howe Avenue area is at the Howe Avenue Bridge, from La Riviera Drive * The Howe Avenue access area provides both a car top and trailered boat launching ramp. Use of the launching ramp is **highly dependent** upon water level.

Except for the developed area at the south side of the Howe Avenue Bridge, this area is relatively undeveloped. Three trails cross the north side of the river with scattered picnic tables near the water. The south side of the river is heavily vegetated, and is traversed by bicycle and equestrian trails.

There is little that should be done to increase the physical development of the Howe Avenue area. The downstream end is already developed to its best use, and the upstream portion is too narrow and far away from the parking lot for intensive development. Any further development in the Howe Avenue area should be limited to the addition of picnic tables and trash cans near the bridge.

WATT AVENUE

Location and Description

The Watt Avenue access area is that portion of the Parkway which immediately surrounds the Watt Avenue bridge on both the north and south banks.

Activities and Facilities

The development on the north side of the river **includes** three trails (bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian), with access to the Parkway for bicycles and pedestrians **and a restroom building and interpretive kiosk.**

The southern side of the river is a heavily used developed recreation area. There are restroom facilities, a cartop **and trailered** boat launching site, and paved parking for automobiles. The site

is one of the more popular on the river. It is utilized as both a put-in and take-out point for rafting. The riffles at this location on the river make this area popular for fishing.

SARA PARK AREA

The SARA Park Area is located between the Watt Avenue area and the Arden Bar Area, including portions of the Parkway on both the north and south sides of the river. The western boundary is a line drawn between, and including, the Manlove drainage sump on the south and the American River pumping plant drainage s on the north side of the river. The eastern boundary is at the abandoned State Route 143 right-of-way. The SARA Park Area includes several subareas: SARA Park, Gristmill Access area and Rio Americano.

10.23 The SARA Park site shall not be further developed.

10.24 The Rio Americano wetland/lagoon area should remain undeveloped and protected.

10.25 Any development or use of the Rio Americano area shall be consistent with the intent to reestablish the Oak-grassland biotic community.

SARA Park Site

Location and Description

The original SARA Park site, located along the south side of the river, downstream from the Mayhew drain is named after the Save the American River Association, which was instrumental in the establishment of the American River Parkway. This area is characterized by dense riparian growth and numerous small beaches.

Activities and Facilities

Public access and off-Parkway vehicle parking are available at Waterton Way, Rogue River Drive, and Rio Bravo Circle. A pedestrian and equestrian trail run the length of SARA Park, connecting Howe Avenue with the Gristmill Access Area. The area shall not be further developed.

Gristmill

Location and Description

Gristmill dominates the upstream portion of the south side of the SARA Park Area. The area is named for the John Sutter gristmill thought to have been built at the site, although the precise location of the original gristmill has not been determined. The Gristmill Access Area occupies the abandoned State Route 143 right-of-way, with access by way of Mira Del Rio Drive.

Activities and Facilities

The Gristmill Access area is primarily used by hikers, anglers, rafters, and boaters. A cobblestone bar, which is accessible by vehicle, protrudes into the river. This area provides a convenient takeout for rafters, as well as a good car top launching area for fishing boats. The site is also used by equestrians. An equestrian trail begins at Howe Avenue and terminates a short distance upstream from Gristmill, making the area a popular rest stop. Hikers enjoy the varied terrain and vegetation, as well as the many isolated waterfront areas in the vicinity. Current development of the site is limited to trash cans, portable restrooms and an informal unpaved parking area.

The Gristmill Access Area is appropriate for some limited development to accommodate recreational use. However, due to the sensitivity of an oak grove and its associated wildlife, the area is not appropriate for large scale activities. A primitive picnic area comprised of scattered family picnic tables could be installed between the parking lot and the oak grove, but barbecue facilities shall not be installed except in open areas where fire hazard is minimal. Turf and other landscaping which requires irrigation shall not be installed within any areas vegetated by oak trees. Drinking fountains and permanent restroom facilities may be installed near the parking area.

Rio Americano Area

Location and Description

The Rio Americano area includes the portion of the SARA Park area that is north of the river. The northern boundary is adjacent to predominantly single family residential neighborhoods and Rio Americano High School.

The Rio Americano Area is characterized by two distinctly different vegetative groups. The northerly portion is predominantly grassland. It is through this area that the bicycle trail is constructed. The southerly portions of the river bank are dense in riparian vegetation. An equestrian trail winds its way through this area. A string of islands mark historic channels of the river. These islands create a habitat for many land animals, as well as protected lagoon and wetland areas for waterfowl. This wetland/lagoon area should remain undeveloped and protected.

Activities and Facilities

There is no public vehicular access to the Rio Americano area. Four designated bicycle access points provide ingress and egress for nearby residents. Occasional rest stops with picnic tables and trash cans are located along the river near the trails. Otherwise, the area is undeveloped.

The potential for future development in the Rio Americano Area is limited. Although it is within the Developed Recreation land use category, the area is constrained by a lack of vehicular access, proximity to residences, sensitive riparian habitat, and a limited availability of large areas of land that would be suitable for developed recreation. In light of these constraints, the most logical location for developed recreation would be the large grassland field, upstream from Rio Americano High School. Vehicular access could be obtained by way of the Harrington access, but any development of recreational facilities must be sensitive to potential disturbance to nearby residences. Furthermore, this area is identified as an "Oak Grassland Restoration area", indicating the desire to reestablish the Oak-grassland biotic community. Any development or use of this area must be consistent with this intent.

ARDEN BAR AREA

The Arden Bar Area is located approximately midway in the length of the Parkway, on the north side of the river. It is bordered on the south and east by the river, on the southwest by the Rio Americano portion of the SPA Park area, on the west by a levee and residential property, and on the north by private riverfront residences. The Northeast Sanitation plant occupies a large portion of the western boundary, and the ~~Jedediah Smith~~ **Harold Richey Memorial Bicycle Trail Bridge** connects the eastern end of the area with Goethe Park across the river. Two popular recreation areas comprise the Arden Bar Area, Harrington Access Area occupies the downstream portion and the William B. Pond Recreation Area occupies the upstream portion of Arden Bar.

10.26 The following specific measures should be taken to improve the overall use and enjoyment of William B. Pond Recreation Area and its environs:

10.26.1 The “buffer area” between the park road and the levee to the west excluding the area around the **Parkway Foundation Volunteer Center and the equestrian staging area**, shall be retained in the Protected Area land use category to provide a buffer between nearby residences and potential noisy Parkway activities.

Comment [I2]: Change equestrian area to developed ref.

10.26.2 The area north of the vehicle entrance and the ~~Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle~~ **Harold Richey Memorial Trail Bridge** shall be designated Protected Area and managed as a “buffer area” to protect nearby residences, which are not separated from the park by a levee, from noise and disruption caused by active recreational activities.

10.26.3 The eucalyptus trees along the levee shall be retained to provide visual screening for nearby residences. However, a row of screening native trees shall be planted parallel to the eucalyptus. The eucalyptus trees shall be removed once the row of native trees have matured to create their own screen. All other nonnative trees and shrubs should be phased out and an extensive native planting program initiated to speed restoration of the riparian woodland environment.

10.26.4 Public safety shall be improved by stabilizing those banks surrounding portions of the fishing pond, that are determined to be unstable.

10.26.5 Abandoned haul roads, now used for emergency access and service vehicles, shall be reduced in number and width with an approved Parkway emergency access plan to lessen visual impact in the Protected Area.

10.26.6 Plantings of native trees and shrubs in the Developed Recreation and Limited Recreation Areas shall be designed to provide protective linear greenbelt corridors for wildlife to use when crossing the areas.

10.26 ~~An interpretive program should be instituted within the William B. Pond Recreation Area. The program should include a discussion of the history of Arden Bar and its transition from a gravel quarry to a County recreation area. The two~~

~~story wooden building near the park entrance should be considered as an interpretive center.~~

Comment [13]: . Delete. The two story wooden building is gone and interpretive programs are done but they use the pond and river areas.

10.26. ~~Where native fauna will not be disturbed, central areas of the intermittent ponds and depressions between the large “Arden Pond” and the Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle Trail Bridge should be deepened in order to provide water conditions to sustain warm water fish and provide for the expansion of the underdeveloped fishing area throughout the heavily used William B. Pond Recreation Area and to provide an alternative to the extensively developed “Arden Pond”.~~^[14]

Comment [14]: Delete. The river has changed course some since the 1985 plan with much more of the river flow going along the north bank and through these pond areas

Harrington Access Area

Location and Description

The Harrington Access Area is located on the north side of the river, at the end of Harrington Way across from the Gristmill Access Area. The entrance is at the abandoned State Route 143 river crossing.

Activities and Facilities

Improvements at the Harrington Access Area include a paved parking lot, a loading area for raft or car-top boat launching, and ~~an unpaved overflow parking area that is suitable for an equestrian staging area~~ a **restroom**. Bicycle and equestrian trails are easily accessible from the parking lot. A fee collection kiosk is at the vehicular entrance.

The Harrington Access Area is increasingly popular as a take-out for rafters. River currents allow easy landing at the beach, and the parking area is relatively close to the take-out. ~~The area is also growing in popularity among equestrians, with a staging area and trails being easily accessible.~~ The area is popular for fishing as well. Informal picnicking occurs in the area, although there are no picnic facilities in the indicate vicinity. The closest picnic facilities are upstream in the William B. Pond Recreation Area. The area east of the Harrington parking lot and west of the bicycle trails is suitable for additional picnic facilities.

As usage increases at the Harrington Access Area, it will be necessary to add improvements such as drinking fountains and picnic facilities. However, the vehicular access to the area is through residential neighborhoods that could be detrimentally affected by heavy traffic. Any expansion of the facilities must consider the effect of traffic on the surrounding neighborhoods.

William B. Pond Recreation Area

Location and Description

The William B. Pond Recreation Area is located at the eastern terminus of Arden Way. The river, at this location, flows in a southerly direction. The site occupies a gravel mining quarry, abandoned in 1976, which has since been partially reclaimed for recreational use. This reclamation has created two distinctly different types of areas. The eastern portion is overgrown with riparian vegetation, and a large pond has been created from the large quarry. This pond, separated from the river by a gravel dike, supports warm-water, fish which reproduce naturally, and has been periodically stocked with trout since the early

1980's. Further north, a portion of the river flows slowly through a series of intermittent backwater ponds and depressions that provide habitat for local fauna and migratory birds. Numerous informal trails weave throughout these ponds and wetlands. This portion of the William B. Pond Recreation Area is in the Protected Area land use category.

Activities and Facilities

The western portion of the William B. Pond Recreation Area includes the Northeast Sewage Treatment Plant on the west, and a large, relatively flat area to the east which is partially developed with picnic and parking facilities.

The area north of the sewage plant is appropriate for intensive recreational development. This area has been graded, and topsoil has been imported to cover the unsightly scars from the mining operation. The County has installed a paved road, ~~two~~ **three** parking lots, a collection kiosk at the park entrance, a restroom, picnic tables, barbecues, and several drinking fountains in this area. **An expansive area of turf and trees have been planted. An equestrian staging area is located just past the entry kiosk.** ~~A two-story wooden building, a remnant from the gravel operation, stands near the kiosk.~~ **The American River Parkway Foundation has built a single story office and volunteer center on the site of the former gravel operations office at the park entrance. Plans are underway to expand the parking and add a second turf area with additional trees and picnic tables.** This western portion of the William B. Pond Recreation Area is in the Developed Recreation area and is appropriate for intensive recreational use.

The eastern boundary of the Developed Recreation Area is demarcated by the Jedediah Smith Memorial bicycle trail. The equestrian and pedestrian trails are located further to the east. These three trails converge at the northerly end of the William B. Pond Recreation Area and cross the river to Goethe Park via the ~~Jedediah Smith~~ **Harold Richey** Memorial Bicycle Trail Bridge. A fourth, paved, trail begins at the main parking lot and provides ~~handicapped~~ **access to the fishing pond for persons with disabilities.** An accessible fishing pier **for persons with disabilities** is ~~planned for installation where the trail ends at the lake. The last section of this trail, which descends to the lake, is excessively steep and includes switchbacks which may be difficult to negotiate in a wheelchair~~ **located on the northwest side of the pond and has a small covered picnic pavilion nearby.**

~~This section of the trail should be modified to moderate the slope and eliminate switchback turns. To the degree feasible, this trail should be extended further into the Protected Area and around the lake, in areas not subject to seasonal flooding. Additional handicapped parking spaces shall be designated in the parking lot as demand necessitates.~~

The area generally bounded by the bicycle trail and the equestrian trail is a designated Limited Recreation Area. This area has some varied terrain and seasonal ponds, as well as trees and shrubs which have been established subsequent to the closure of the quarry. This area serves as a transition between the Developed Recreation Area and the Protected Area. ~~In addition to the aforementioned trails, an exercise par course trail has been installed within this Limited Recreation Area. The par course consists of a meandering loop trail with designated stops which give instructions for certain exercises.~~

Comment [15]: Removed several years ago due to deterioration.

The William B. Pond Recreation Area is easily accessible to vehicles, pedestrians, and equestrians; and it can be reached from the north side of the river via Arden Way, and from the south side of the river via the ~~Jedediah Smith~~ **Harold Richey** Memorial Bicycle Trail Bridge. These advantages, as well as its central location on the Parkway, render the opportunity for the William B. Pond Recreation Area to be a focal pint of the Parkway. The area's location also contributes to its suitability as a site for an interpretive center. It also has the distinction of having an accessible fishing area **for persons with disabilities**, in a naturalistic setting, and in close proximity to parking and developed picnic facilities.

New facilities and activities should enhance the relationship between these two distinctly different recreation use areas.

SARAH COURT ACCESS

Location and Description

The Sarah Court access point is located directly across the river from Goethe Park and southwest of Ancil Hoffman Park. The Sarah Court area is 2.9 acres in size. Although Sarah Court is considered an access, it is a limited access. Because of the limited access no additional facilities are proposed for this area. **The parking lot is closed to vehicles during the summer season in response to major problems that impacted the park and surrounding neighborhood. Alcohol is prohibited at this park access.**

SAN JUAN BLUFFS

10.27 The erosion potential of these areas shall be given primary consideration whenever land use decisions concerning these areas are made. If studies performed by the County indicate that erosion potential exists, development shall be prohibited.

10.28 Irrigation, surface drainage and vegetation removal on the bluffs should be controlled.

10.29 Slopes greater than 30 percent (17 degrees) are generally considered unsuitable for structures or human activity and therefore, should be retained in their natural state.

Location and Description

The San Juan Bluffs are located on the north side of the American River, bordered by Ancil Hoffman Park on the southwest and Sacramento Bar on the east, and located across the river from Rossmoor Bar. The bluff area is 19.4 acres in size with slopes averaging 70 percent (35 degrees). The San Juan Bluffs are in the Open Space Preserve category. Land in this category must remain undeveloped.

The San Juan Bluffs are subject to erosion which is affected by the river processes, soil conditions, influences of the underlying strata, elevation, and slope. This erosion potential must be given primary consideration whenever land use decisions concerning this area are made.

As a result of the erosion potential of the San Juan Bluffs, extreme care must be taken to prohibit development from occurring on the bluffs. Irrigation practices, surface drainage and vegetation removal must be controlled. Slopes greater than 40 percent (approximately 22 degrees) are generally considered unsuitable for structures or human activity such as climbing, - and therefore, should be retained - in their natural state.

SACRAMENTO BAR AREA

10.30 The Sacramento Bar area contains natural vegetation and wildlife which should be protected from intensive intrusion.

10.31 The Nature Study Area along the western border of Sacramento

Location and Description

The Sacramento Bar Area is located on the north side of the river across from Lower Sunrise and west of Sunrise Boulevard. It is bordered on the south and west by the river and on the north by Waldorf School, Bannister Park, and a residential area. The bluffs in this area average 45%.

Activities and Facilities

The Sacramento Bar Area has two points of access to the north. Access from Fair Oaks Boulevard is possible via Bannister Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue at the eastern end of the area. Bannister Park is located along the eastern edge of Bannister Avenue with the access road to Sacramento Bar located within the boundaries of the park. Although there are parking facilities at both access points, the parking lot at the Bannister Avenue access point is not within the Parkway. Additional facilities at the Pennsylvania Avenue access area include restrooms, a picnic area, and an equestrian staging area. There is a raft launch area located near the picnic area -at the river shore and a low level bridge just east of the launch area. This bridge provides access to the tower Sunrise Recreation Area of the Parkway.

The Sacramento Bar Area has a very serene character because of the natural features present in the area. The Protected Area of Sacramento Bar extends from the Nature Study Area on the west to the Developed Recreation Area at the eastern portion of Sacramento Bar. This area contains naturally occurring vegetation and wildlife which should be protected from intensive intrusion.

The Nature Study Area along the western border of Sacramento Bar is a heavily wooded region consisting of riparian woodland and grassland vegetation. This area should be left in its natural state.

Recreational features located throughout Sacramento Bar include a hiking trail, an equestrian trail, and a bicycle trail. There is a service road that extends from approximately the middle of Sacramento Bar, encircles the Protected Area and terminates near the picnic area to the east. Development of an emergency access dirt road will have a minimal impact on the Nature Study Area. There will be a gate at the terminus of the road at the Waldorf School so that its use will be strictly limited to emergency use.

SUNRISE RECREATION AREA

The Sunrise Recreation Area is on the south side of the river extending both upstream and downstream from the Sunrise Boulevard Bridge for a total of 3 1/2 miles in length.

Lower Sunrise Area

Location and Description

The Lower Sunrise Area is located between the Rossmoor Bar Area and the Sunrise Boulevard Bridge and bordered on the landward side by Gold River, a large residential development. The area includes a state registered archaeological site, wooded areas, a grove of oaks and a landmark -cottonwood tree. There are also grasslands and a marshy area which provide varied wildlife habitat. Although the river bank drops sharply to the river, a gentle slope at the eastern end of the park provides a good raft launch site.

Activities and Facilities

Access at the western end of Lower Sunrise is via Ambassador Drive. Access at the eastern end is off of Bridge Street located on the east side of the Sunrise Bridge. This access exits west of the bridge. There is a fee collection kiosk at the entry off of Bridge Street that serves both Upper and Lower Sunrise. Parking is provided in a small lot off Ambassador and in a large paved lot at the eastern end, with an additional unpaved lot and a parking area reserved for horse trailers. There is an informational kiosk near the trails, parking lot and raft launching site.

A low level bridge for pedestrians and bicycles connects the eastern end of the Lower Sunrise Area with Sacramento Bar across the river.

Lower Sunrise is developed with restrooms and drinking fountains near both entrances. A turfed area with picnic tables near the center of this park serve individual and family groups. Additional facilities for picnickers could be provided, although the proximity of the park to residences precludes intensive development.

Upper Sunrise Area

- 10.32 More intensive development in the Upper Sunrise Area should not be considered due to the unique quality of the vegetation and the cultural resources which should remain fully protected.

Location and Description

The upstream portion of the Sunrise Recreation Area extends from the Sunrise Boulevard Bridge to Hazel Avenue, excluding the State Department of Fish- and Game Region Headquarters and the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. It is a relatively narrow strip of land, heavily wooded, and it includes plant species not found lower on the Parkway. Additionally, a state registered archaeological site can be found in this area. The river bank drops sharply in most areas with a few small beaches where the slope is gentler. The landward side of the Upper Sunrise Area backs up to a large newly developed residential area.

Activities and Facilities

Access to the Upper Sunrise Area is off of Sunrise Boulevard and Bridge Street at the western end through the same entry that serves Lower Sunrise. Access to the eastern end is near Nimbus Fish Hatchery. Parking is provided at a paved lot at the western entry. Small unpaved lots are scattered along the access road that goes east into the park and two gravel lots serve the eastern end.

Bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trails go through the area. The old Fair Oaks Bridge links the trails in the Parkway to Bridge Street in Fair Oaks.

A car-top boat launching facility is located near the western entrance; another is located further upstream.

A primitive day camp site is located midway in the park. The site includes an amphitheater ~~and picnic tables, portable restrooms, a nature trail and an orienteering trail.~~ Near the day camp are old stone walls providing evidence of early gold mining activities. The Upper Sunrise Area **has one permanent restroom near the Old Fair Oaks Bridge.** ~~Possible improvement to the area could be a replacement of portable restrooms with permanent restrooms and the provision of drinking water.~~ More intensive development should not be considered because of the unique quality of the vegetation and the cultural resources which should remain fully protected.

SUNRISE BLUFFS

Location and Description

The Sunrise Bluffs are located on the north side of the American River, bordered by Sunrise Boulevard on the west and Natoma Avenue on the east. The bluff area encompasses 26.5 acres with slopes averaging 100 per cent (45 degrees) or over. Currently the Sunrise Bluffs are in the Open Space Preserve category. Land in this category must remain undeveloped.

The Sunrise Bluffs, like the San Juan Bluffs, are subject to erosion processes which are affected by the river patterns, soil conditions, influences of the underlying topography, elevation and slope. This erosion potential must be given primary consideration whenever land use decisions concerning this area are made.

As a result of the erosion potential of the Sunrise Bluffs, extreme care must be taken to prohibit development from occurring on the bluffs, overwatering, and the removal of vegetation. Slopes greater than 30 percent (17 degrees) are generally considered unsuitable for structures or human activity such as climbing, and therefore should be retained in their natural state.

Public access to the bluffs is by steep foot trail from Bridge Street (at the Old Fair Oaks Bridge) and access for persons with disabilities is available through a controlled gate at the southern end of Main Street (permission coordinated by the Fair Oaks Park District). A wrought iron fence delineates the public property. Climbing the bluff face is prohibited to protect against erosion.

SAILOR BAR AVENUE

10.33 Any development of the Sailor Bar Area should consider activities which have minimal impact on natural vegetation, wildlife, and adjacent residential properties.

Location and Description

Sailor Bar is located on the north side of the American River, between the Hazel Avenue Bridge to the east and a point upstream from the old Fair Oaks Bridge. The area is approximately 375 acres in size. Bluffs as high as 100 feet above the river provide the north boundary, while the river provides the south boundary. Ravines throughout the area cover over 115 acres and dredge tailings provide the greater part of the ground cover. Natural vegetation is found mainly along the river, on the bluffs and in the ravines. **A series of grinding holes are visible along the shoreline just west of the boat ramp.** Several parts of the area are bisected by roads. Some of these roads provide access to the river for fishing and boating and can be used for emergency access. Posts and cables have been used throughout to define roadways and prevent unlawful use by vehicles.

Illinois Avenue is the eastern vehicular entrance to Sailor Bar. ~~Located at this access point is a small house and several out buildings which provide residence for a caretaker of the area.~~ To the north of the **first parking area** is a man-made pond that provides an opportunity for warm water family fishing. Further north and west of the pond is an area commonly called 80 acres that has been designated as Nature Study Area. ~~At the present time there are two hiking trail entrances; one at Oak View Way, and the other at Emperor Drive.~~ At the present time **there are four access points for hiking and horseback riding: Curraugh Downs Drive, Emperor Drive, Oak View Drive and Kenneth Avenue.** Further west is a third entrance to the Sailor Bar Area originating at Kenneth Avenue. This entrance is used by both equestrians and pedestrians. ~~South of the entrance, near the center of Sailor Bar, is a day camp, commonly called "Camp Sabadaca." Included in this area, which is over 1/2 acre in size, are picnic tables, a fire ring, grass and trees.~~ **A day camp site is located south of the entrance, although it is infrequently used.** Near the west end of the Sailor Bar Area is an empty, unused excavation which had been intended for a lake. Near the excavation is a series of steps leading to a flag pole. These are remnants of the implementation of a plan developed prior to the County's acquisition of Sailor Bar.

Comment [sw6]: The camp as been unused since the late 1980's but could be rehabilitated if there is renewed demand. It is listed as a primitive camp site in Ch 5.

Olive Avenue is the western vehicular entrance to the area. Two surfaced parking lots are located on each side of the ~~entrance~~ access road. ~~Adjacent to the parking lot which is south of the entrance road is a large turfed picnic area, bordered by trees.~~ Foot trails **from the western parking lot lead** to the river. ~~originate from this area.~~ ~~Adjacent to the parking lot located north of the entrance road is a small utility building which provides service to the area.~~ **A public works sewage pump station is located north of the entrance road.**

The Sailor Bar area was once the site of extensive gold dredging and currently provides limited recreation opportunities for hikers, equestrians, anglers, boaters, small picnic groups and day campers.

Activities and Facilities

Existing facilities at Sailor Bar include a day camp, equestrian trails, pedestrian trails, ~~a car top boat launching area,~~ a turfed picnic area, a paved parking area, unimproved access roads to the river (including informal parking), ~~a caretaker's house with outbuildings,~~ **a paved road leading to the concrete boat ramp and vault restroom, a picnic area,** and a portable restroom facility.

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Activities which currently take place at Sailor Bar include day camping, horseback riding, running, nature study, fishing, boating, and picnicking.

Activities which are encouraged for the Sailor Bar Area include the existing activities described. The Board of Supervisors adopted a land use and development plan for the Sailor Bar Area in 1979. That plan recommends the addition of an interpretive center, equestrian staging area, corporation yard and several turfed picnic areas. These developments are recommended for location in the Developed Recreation, Limited Recreation, and Protected Areas in the southern and eastern portions of the park to ensure minimal impact on adjacent residential properties.

Due to limited resources the 1979 development plan adopted by the Board has not been implemented. Wheelchair Trails for persons with disabilities would supplement the activities currently existing and proposed at Sailor Bar. Additionally, those portions of Sailor Bar which are designated for developed recreation may be considered as potential sites for a native plant nursery.

Placer mining as well as gold dredging operations took place on Sailor Bar in the late 1800's. Since this is a major part of California history, some consideration should be given to educate the users of the Parkway about this history.

The warm water fishing pond near the Illinois Avenue entrance provides a natural quiet setting for nature study as well as fishing. This area should be considered as a potential location **to enhance access for persons with disabilities.** ~~for the provision of wheelchair and other handicapped access.~~

Natural vegetation and wildlife have returned among the tailings and any major "improvements" could reverse this process. In addition, access conditions are not very good, since the Olive Avenue vehicular access winds through an established neighborhood to the west. -Sailor Bar is bordered by developed residential areas to the east, west, and north. Any development of the Sailor Bar Area should consider activities which have minimal impact on natural vegetation, wildlife, and adjacent residential properties.

NATOMA STATE RECREATION AREA

LAKE NATOMA SUB-UNIT OF FOLSOM LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA AND FOLSOM POWERHOUSE STATE HISTORIC PARK

Comment [sw7]: The entire Lake Natoma section was provided by Jim Micheals of State Parks as part of their update of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan, which also regulates the Lake Natoma area.

Location and Description

The Lake Natoma sub-unit of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) is located between Hazel Avenue and Folsom Dam upstream from the County-operated portion of the Parkway. The area encompasses approximately 500 surface acres of water and 1,600 acres of land. Most of the land immediately adjacent to Lake Natoma is federally owned land administered by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and managed by the California State Parks as part of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area through an agreement with Reclamation. In addition to the federal land, the California State Parks has acquired fee title to additional lands around Lake Natoma that are also part of Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park (SHP). Folsom Powerhouse SHP is a small unit (35 acres) located on the south side of Lake Natoma which was classified as a separate State Park unit in 1995. Both Folsom Lake SRA and the Folsom Powerhouse SHP are administered and managed by the Gold Fields District of California State Parks. The current Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan was adopted by the State of California in 1979, and is incorporated by reference into this American River Parkway Plan. California State Parks and Reclamation are currently developing a new combined General Plan/Resource Management Plan for both and Folsom Powerhouse SHP and Folsom Lake SRA, including the Lake Natoma sub-unit. The two agencies anticipate this new plan will be finalized and adopted during the winter of 2006-07. When finalized and approved, this new plan will be adopted by reference into the American River Parkway Plan. The summary of management direction provided below is derived from the direction that will be part of the new General Plan/Resource Management Plan

Purpose

Under the California Public Resources Code, State Recreation Areas are "...selected and developed to provide multiple recreational opportunities to meet other than purely local needs. The areas shall be selected for their having terrain capable of withstanding extensive human impact and for their proximity to large population centers, major routes of travel, or proven recreational resources such as manmade or natural bodies of water (PRC § 5019.59)." The Public Resources Code also states that each unit in the State Parks System must have its own Declaration of Purpose that describes the purpose of the unit, as determined by its prime resource values and opportunities, and the significance it represents to California and the State Park System (PRC § 5002.2 (b)).

The purpose of Folsom Lake State Recreation Area is:

To preserve and make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the outstanding recreational opportunities provided by Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma

on the American River system, including aquatic and upland recreational activities and facilities ranging from high-use areas in developed settings to low-use areas in primitive settings, and to provide for the protection, restoration and interpretation of natural and cultural resource values. These resource values include the oak woodlands and savanna, riparian woodlands, chaparral, vernal pool and other characteristic habitats of the foothills and plateaus surrounding these reservoirs and the rich number and diversity of pre-historic archaeological and historic gold mining and settlement sites and resources along the American River system. The reservoirs, river canyons and surrounding rolling foothills, bluffs and uplands all form an important open space and scenic resource for the region.

To accomplish this purpose, resources in the park will be managed by balancing recreational opportunities with the protection and management of its natural, cultural, and scenic resources. Diverse opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreational activities will be provided while promoting a visitor experience that benefits from and promotes stewardship of the park's natural and cultural resources.

The purpose of the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park is:

To preserve and protect for the public the educational, inspirational, and recreational benefits of the complex of historic features associated with the production of electrical energy in 1895 and the first long-distance transmission of hydropower west of the Mississippi River. The complex is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a California Historical Landmark (No. 663), is designated a National Historic Civil and Mechanical Engineering Landmark, and includes the original facility's generating equipment and transformers, forebay and penstocks, and portions of the canal and transmission lines. Other important features are the bedrock mortars and oak woodland habitat on the site.

To accomplish this purpose, resources in the park will be managed by balancing visitor use with the protection and management of cultural, natural, and scenic resources. Visitor experience will be enhanced by improved facilities and aesthetics.

Activities and Facilities

Lake Natoma is a regulating afterbay to Folsom Dam and Reservoir and fluctuates in elevation only about five feet. The 500-acre Lake is the primary attraction in the Lake Natoma sub-unit. Lake Natoma is a long, narrow and highly scenic waterway. The lake and surrounding lands support a wide variety of recreation uses including: rowing, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, fishing, sailing, picnicking, hiking, running/jogging, equestrian trail use, mountain bike trail use and paved trail use.

The primary recreation use areas and facilities include Nimbus Flat, California State University Sacramento (CSUS) Aquatic Center, and Negro Bar. The Nimbus Flat visitor area, located on the southern shore of the lake just above Nimbus Dam, includes two small beaches, landscaped picnic areas, low docks for small watercraft and restrooms. The neighboring CSUS Aquatic

Center, which is operated by Sacramento State University under agreement with State Parks, is the base for the University's rowing teams and offers a full range of public courses and programs in watercraft instruction and aquatic safety. Facilities here include an administrative building with offices and classrooms, equipment storage buildings, launch docks with mooring areas, and a small beach area. Located on the northern shore, Negro Bar includes a full range of visitor facilities including a swim beach, landscaped picnic area, group campground, boat launch ramp, canoe/kayak concession, restrooms, and an equestrian staging area.

A system of trails encircles Lake Natoma including a paved trail loop around the Lake that links to the American River Parkway below Nimbus Dam and to Folsom Lake. The Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle Trail runs from Discovery Park to Beal's Point on Folsom Lake follows along the north side of Lake Natoma. A paved trail along the south side of Lake Natoma provides a loop trail around Lake Natoma for trail users. Other unpaved trails are located within the area as well.

Secondary visitor areas on Lake Natoma include Willow Creek, Lake Overlook, and Mississippi Bar, each of which currently has limited facilities, but provides water and trail access. Located on the eastern shore, the Willow Creek area includes a small picnic area, canoe and kayak concession, informal boat launch, vault toilets, and a small parking area. On the northern shore high above Nimbus Dam is Lake Overlook. The Overlook provides sweeping views of Lake Natoma, the Sierra Foothills, and the Sacramento Valley, and includes a paved parking lot and trailhead. Mississippi Bar is a flat, river terrace along the western shoreline of the lake between Lake Overlook and Negro Bar. The area is undeveloped, but has been highly modified by past mineral extraction activities. Significant portions of the area are covered with dredge tailings left over from early gold exploration and more recent aggregate mining. The area also includes several lagoons and ponds, some of which are accessible by canoe or kayak from Lake Natoma, as well as a heron rookery. Mississippi Bar represents a significant area of opportunity for future recreation and/or preservation.

Also located on Lake Natoma is the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park (SHP). Folsom Powerhouse SHP is a separate unit in the State Parks system that is managed by the Folsom Sector. Folsom Powerhouse SHP is a premier cultural and interpretive attraction and is one of the oldest hydroelectric facilities in the world. The SHP includes the main powerhouse and associated buildings, picnic area, restrooms, and a small parking area. Currently approved and pending construction is a small 5,000 square foot visitor center to be located on the SHP property adjacent to Riley Street. Along with the development of the visitor center, improvements will be made to the existing parking lot.

Land Use

Management of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area is directed by a hierarchy of mandates, the most general of which is the mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation, which 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.*

The classifications of Folsom Lake as a State Recreation Area and the Powerhouse as a State Historic Park continue to be the most appropriate classifications for these units and consistent with the Public Resource Code and Department policies, public use and acceptability, and unit management flexibility. These classifications also best accommodate the range of recreational uses, resource protection and resource restoration proposed in the Plan.

Management Zones

The creation of management zones represents the first and most general attempt to spatially define the management scheme for Folsom Lake SRA including Lake Natoma. Thirty-four management zones have been tentatively established in the new General Plan/Resource Management plan, including twelve management zones at Lake Natoma. The management zones reflect the consideration of a number of factors, including existing and potential type and intensity of land use and visitor experience, existing and potential resource values, and the practicalities of day-to-day management and operations. The zones generally represent areas of the park that share common physical and use characteristics and should be managed as identifiable components or sub-areas.

The management zones are further used to designate each area of the park with one of four broad land use designations: Recreation; Conservation; Preservation; and Administration. The intent of the land use designations is to reflect the varying physical, social, and management attributes throughout the park and to provide a framework for making future management decisions. The physical attributes of an area include the degree of, or proximity to, development and the degree of resource modification. The social attributes of an area include the degree of visitor presence and concentration, recreation diversity, and visitor comforts. The management attributes of an area include the degree of management presence, the degree of recreation facilities and public access, and the degree of resources present. In this way, a desirable range of recreation uses, resource values, and visitor experiences throughout the park are recognized and managed differently despite the overall classification of the park as a State Recreation Area. The general definition for each land use designation is presented below.

- **Recreation.** Areas that can accommodate more intensive recreational use in a developed and structured setting. These areas accommodate the highest levels of visitor use in the park, provide easy access to a full range of recreational and interpretive activities and facilities, and are of a sufficient size to locate the parking, utilities, and infrastructure needed to support the visitor use. The focus of resource management in these areas is to minimize or avoid additional impact to resources and to restore resource values where appropriate. The Recreation designation is further classified by intensity of use. High Intensity Recreation represents the most extensively-developed areas in the park and the major gateways for visitors, such as Nimbus Flat. Medium Intensity Recreation areas are somewhat less developed and offer fewer facilities, although these areas remain significant visitor gateways. Medium intensity recreation areas in the park include Negro Bar.
- **Conservation.** Areas whose natural and cultural resource values will be protected and restored while accommodating lower intensity recreation and interpretation that is compatible with and dependent on the resource values. These areas offer opportunities for more challenge- and adventure-based recreational activities in a more natural setting. Facilities in these areas (if provided) tend to be more primitive than in Recreation areas and direct vehicle

access may not always exist. Resource management in Conservation areas emphasizes protecting and restoring natural processes with only minor modification of non-sensitive resources permitted to accommodate additional visitor use as appropriate. Conservation areas in the park generally represent the shorelines between recreation areas on Lake Natoma.

- Preservation.** Areas with unique, fragile or important natural and cultural resource values that need to be protected and preserved. Access, management, and use of these areas are controlled to protect the resources for which the area was designated. In natural preserves, any manipulation of habitat will occur only as necessary to preserve or restore species or associations representing the basis for the Preservation designation. Limited interpretive facilities and activities may be provided as appropriate to the observation, understanding and protection of the key preserve resources. At the State Historic Park, interpretive facilities will not be located in the historic core of the park. Preservation areas include the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park.
- Administration.** Areas with facilities associated with the operation and maintenance of Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma for the purposes of flood control, water supply, and power generation, or of the park itself. Interpretive and visitor information facilities and activities may be provided as appropriate. Access to these areas is generally restricted to staff and related personnel associated with facilities operations. Resource management in Administration areas generally emphasizes the operation and maintenance of related facilities over natural processes. Administration areas in the park include Nimbus Dam and the fish hatchery. Facilities in these areas are administered by the U.S Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks).

The table below provides a summary of the land use area associated with each land use category for Lake Natoma.

Management Zone Land Use Summary – Lake Natoma

<i>Management Zone</i>	<i>Land Use Category (acres)</i>			
	<i>Recreation</i>	<i>Conservation</i>	<i>Preservation</i>	<i>Administration</i>
Lake Natoma				
1. Nimbus Flat/Shoals	119			
2. Nimbus Dam				96
3. Lake Overlook		53		
4. Mississippi Bar		684		
5. Negro Bar	143			
6. Natoma Canyon		263		
7. Folsom Powerhouse			35	
8. Natoma Shore North		263		
9. Natoma Shore South		127		
10. Alder Creek/Pond		17		
11. Lower Lake Natoma (AQ)	234*			

12. Upper Lake Natoma (AQ)		256*		
Total (acres)	496	1663	35	96

*these areas are water, figures are surface acres.

Unit-wide Management Goals and Guidelines

The new General Plan/Resource Management Plan for Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Powerhouse SHP will provide an extensive array of management direction for the full range of resources and uses within these two park units in the form of goals and guidelines which apply to both units in their entirety. This includes direction for the protection and management of natural and cultural resources, the management of recreation and facilities, interpretation and many other areas regarding visitor services and park operations. Instead of trying to summarize or replicate this extensive direction here, we refer people to the General Plan/Resource Management Plan for Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Powerhouse SHP.

Specific Area Management Goals and Guidelines

In addition to the unit-wide direction for Folsom Lake SRA and Folsom Powerhouse SHP, the new General Plan/Resource Management Plan for these units also provides area-specific direction for each management zone. Below is a summary of the management intent for each of the twelve management zones at Lake Natoma.

Lower Lake Natoma (Aquatic Zone)

This aquatic management zone represents the lower third of the Lake Natoma from Willow Creek south to Nimbus Dam. Lake Natoma is essentially a wide spot in the American River with quiet, sheltered waters in a highly scenic setting. This, combined with the 5 mph speed limit for motorized watercraft, provides the perfect setting for paddling, rowing, and fishing. Lake Natoma is considered one of the finest rowing locations in the country, due in part to the facilities available at the California State University Sacramento (CSUS) Aquatic Center. The management intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance the area as a premier rowing and paddling destination while providing a serene and scenic setting.

Upper Lake Natoma (Aquatic Zone)

This aquatic management zone represents the upper two thirds of the Lake Natoma from Willow Creek north to the Rainbow Bridge. As with the lower zone, this zone offers a sheltered and scenic location for paddling, rowing, and fishing. However, this portion of the lake is significantly less busy than the waters nearer the California State University Sacramento (CSUS) Aquatic Center to the south. The management intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance the area as a paddling and rowing destination while increasing non-motorized watercraft access in a serene and scenic setting.

Nimbus Flat/Nimbus Shoals

This zone represents the gateway to the southern end of Lake Natoma and a staging area for regional and national rowing competitions and related special events hosted by the California State University Sacramento (CSUS) Aquatic Center. It also provides pedestrian access to the American River below Nimbus Dam. The portion of the river immediately below the dam is commonly referred to as Nimbus Shoals and is popular with local fishermen. The management

intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance the recreation resources of this area and to ensure continued access to Nimbus Flat for park users during special events. Facilities and improvements in this area will continue to focus on high quality day use opportunities; picnicking, swimming, paddling, rowing, windsurfing, sailing, fishing, and trail use; while enhancing opportunities for interpretation, education, and the appreciation of scenic vistas. The new plan will provide for the hand launching of paddling/rowing watercraft on the American River at Nimbus Shoals and support modifying or developing in-stream water features that are conducive to whitewater recreation in conjunction with the removal of the existing in-stream fish diversion structure in the American River and development of a naturalized fish passage channel across Nimbus Shoals. The development of these two latter features is dependent upon Reclamation's final plans for the replacement of the existing fish diversion structure.

Nimbus Dam

This management zone includes Nimbus Dam, the waters of the American River below the dam within the park limit, and the upland area below the Hazel Avenue Bridge within the park limit. The Nimbus Fish Hatchery, which is owned and funded by Reclamation and operated by the California Department of Fish and Game, is also located in this zone. The hatchery raises trout, Steelhead and Chinook salmon. It also includes a visitor center. The management intent is to maintain the primary role of the zone for flood control, water supply, power generation and hatchery operations.

Lake Overlook

Located between Nimbus Dam and Mississippi Bar at the southern end of Lake Natoma, this zone is relatively unknown to all but local users – this despite the fact that its steep oak-studded ridges and canyons are such a visually dominant part of landscape here. Lake Overlook offers arguably the park's most dramatic and high quality panorama across Lake Natoma and the Sierra Foothills to the north and the Sacramento Valley and Mt. Diablo to the south. A paved parking area is the only facility currently provided. Comprehensive site planning and design are needed to enhance the recreation and interpretive opportunities of the area and take advantage of the extraordinary visual setting.

Mississippi Bar

Mississippi Bar is a large flat river terrace along the western shore of the Lake Natoma between Lake Overlook and Negro Bar. The area includes a rich variety of the habitat types, including interior live oak woodland, blue oak woodland and savanna, grassland, and riparian woodland. However, the majority of Mississippi Bar has also been previously disturbed by activities associated with early gold exploration and more recent aggregate mining. The primary physical features that dominate this landscape include dredge tailings—piles of cobblestones several stories high—and several lagoons and ponds that were created in an attempt to restore the area when mining activity ceased. Some of these lagoons and ponds are accessible by canoe or kayak from Lake Natoma. The limited recreation facilities that do exist at Mississippi Bar include Shadow Glen Stables (an equestrian concessionaire), a trailhead at Sunset and Main Avenues, the paved bike path and various unpaved trails.

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The management intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance the natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the area and expand opportunities for interpretation and education. Facilities and improvements in this area will focus on low-impact day use opportunities—picnicking, paddling, fishing, and trail use—and interpretation and education. Mississippi Bar has tremendous potential for ecological enhancement by recreating a system of riparian wetlands that emulates historical riverine floodplain systems.

Negro Bar

This management zone provides a transition along the western shore of Lake Natoma from the more natural, undeveloped Mississippi Bar to the more developed and urban park-like Negro Bar. The zone includes the Negro Bar day-use area—the primary gateway to the northern end of Lake Natoma—as well as the Lake Natoma Bluffs that rise 300 feet above the shoreline. The management intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance recreation resources while exploring opportunities to restore certain areas to a more natural condition. Facilities and improvements in this area will continue to focus on high quality day use opportunities—picnicking, swimming, paddling, fishing, and trail use—while expanding opportunities for interpretation and education.

Natoma Canyon

The Natoma Canyon management zone links Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma and extends from Folsom Dam downstream along the American River Canyon to the Rainbow Bridge in Folsom. While the eastern boundary of the zone abuts the Folsom State Prison lands and includes little more than the steep walls of the canyon, the western boundary extends to include a broader upland area. The paved bike trail that connects the lakes is the only existing recreation facility in the zone. Also located in this area is the old Powerhouse Canal which extends from the original dam site downstream to the Folsom Powerhouse. The management intent for this zone is to maintain and enhance the natural scenic character of the area, improve trail connectivity, and expand opportunities for interpretation and education.

Folsom Powerhouse SHP

Located on the eastern shore of Lake Natoma adjacent to the historic district of Folsom, this management zone includes the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park (SHP). The State Historic Park is a separate unit in the State Parks system for which long term planning and management is addressed in this General Plan. Folsom Powerhouse is an important historic resource. Not only is it listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but also it is listed as a California Historical Landmark, National Historic Landmark, National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, and National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark.

The “period of significance” of the Powerhouse is from 1895 to 1900 when it was the first commercial power-generating facility west of the Mississippi and for which it achieved importance as an historic site. The “historic period” of the Powerhouse is from 1895 to 1952 and defines the limit of historic activities on the site. The interpretive period for the Folsom Powerhouse SHP is from pre-history (bedrock mortars on site) to 1952 (when the Powerhouse terminated operation) with an emphasis on the pioneering aspects of 1895 power plant in the production and transmission of electricity. For the purposes of reconstruction and restoration, the Folsom Powerhouse period has been identified as 1920 to 1952 with an emphasis on the 1920s era.

Significant improvements are already planned for this day use facility, including improvements to the parking area and a new visitor center to be located at the Powerhouse entrance. The management intent for this zone is to preserve, protect, and interpret the Powerhouse site and grounds.

Natoma Shore North

The Natoma Shore North management zone stretches along the eastern shore of Lake Natoma from the Powerhouse south to Willow Creek. The Lake Natoma paved bike path, dirt multi-use trails, and the trailhead access at Parkshore Drive, are the only facilities in the zone. The shoreline areas of the zone include heavy riparian vegetation while the upland areas consist largely of interior live oak woodland. The management intent for this zone is to maintain its role as a natural and scenic link for trail users between the northern and southern ends of Lake Natoma.

Natoma Shore South

Also located along the eastern shore of Lake Natoma, the Natoma Shore South management zone lies between the Natoma Shore North and Nimbus Flat zones. As with Natoma Shore North, this management zone is primarily natural, dominated by blue oak woodland and grassland. A small area of riparian habitat is concentrated around Willow Creek. Recreation facilities in this management zone are minimal and include the Willow Creek day use area (small picnic area, restrooms, and informal boat ramp) and Lake Natoma paved bike trail and dirt multi-use trails. Consistent with the previous General Plan for the park, this Plan reserves the 28-acre Museum Flat grassland area for potential use as a proposed California Indian Heritage Center (CIHC). The management intent for this zone is to maintain its role as a natural and scenic link for trail users between the northern and southern ends of Lake Natoma, enhancing the recreation resources of the area, and providing the potential for an interpretive facility of statewide importance.

Role of the Lake Natoma Unit in Meeting Recreational Demand

The American River, including waters impounded by its dams, provides a broad spectrum of recreational opportunity, ranging from passive use of natural areas to water skiing, boat racing, and automobile camping. Each recreational unit of the river plays a unique role in providing this opportunity. The challenge in administering these recreational units is to develop the character of each area so that it retains an identity of its own, and yet compliments the larger recreational composite. If planned correctly, the separate recreational units of the American River will provide this broad spectrum of recreational opportunity with a minimum of gaps and overlaps. Different users of the respective facilities will naturally tend to migrate among the recreational units to some extent, and may even do so unwittingly. However, by separating incompatible recreational uses, and by delegating administrative responsibilities of those separate units to the appropriate public agencies, the inherent conflicts between these uses can be minimized or eliminated. To the casual user of the Parkway, there is little apparent difference between the Natoma State Recreation Area and the County-operated American River Parkway, largely because of the similar natural amenities in the two areas, and because the State of California and the County of Sacramento have similar policies for protecting these amenities. There is, however, at least one significant difference in their respective operational approaches. The State

Comment [sw8]: This is current Parkway text

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facilities are intended to meet the recreational needs of the larger State population, and thus tend to be oriented more to the traveling public than are the County-operated facilities, which serve the needs of the regional population of the Sacramento area. For example, the Lake Natoma Unit of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area includes a family-unit automobile campground at Negro Bar. These facilities are not permitted in the County-operated portion of the Parkway.

In order to facilitate coordination in the planning and management of the American River Parkway, it should be the responsibility of the respective State and County agencies to inform each other of any large scale public or private improvement proposals, requests for entitlement of use, plans for large scale events, or proposed policy changes which would affect the Parkway.