











# > SUSTAINABLE PARKS STUDY

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Adopted June 14, 2016

Founded 1850

# **Sustainable Parks Study**

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# **CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE**

#### Introduction

Per the adopted Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan, the Yolo County Parks Division ("Parks Division") is responsible for providing a variety of parks and recreation opportunities for Yolo County residents in three general ways:

- 1. Directly providing facilities for outdoor recreation in primarily natural settings
- 2. Assisting unincorporated communities in meeting their recreational needs
- 3. Providing support for private landowner initiatives and other private entrepreneurs, as consistent with County policies and values.

The Parks Division maintains almost 2,000 acres of park and open space, divided between a total of 16 parks and boat launches.

The many benefits parks and open spaces provide to community members are easy to describe, but they are typically difficult to quantify. At the state and national level, parks and open space professionals have attempted to develop the means for placing dollar values on the contributions of open spaces to community members and local economies since at least 2001. Ultimately, they have identified three values that make parks essential services to communities:

- **Economic Value:** Parks improve the local tax base and increase property values. For example, private property values often increase the closer such land is to parks.
- Health and Environmental Benefits: Parks offer residents a place to go to get healthy and stay fit. In fact, parks and open space improve water quality, protect groundwater, prevent flooding, improve air quality, provide buffers to development, protect habitat for wildlife, and provide a place to connect with nature.
- **Social Importance:** Parks provide gathering places for families and social groups, as well as individuals of all ages and economic status, regardless of their ability to pay for access. (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010)

# Purpose

This study provides recommendations to ensure the County's parks and open spaces are both **physically** and **financially sustainable** for future generations to enjoy.

The economic downturn in 2009 brought with it a 60% reduction in General Fund allocated to the Parks Division in 2010. Since that time, the Parks Division has primarily focused on the operations and maintenance of existing County parks and did not have resources to conduct a review of the overall parks system. As a result, the County Administrator's Office undertook this comprehensive

study at the request of the Director of General Services and in support of the "Sustainable Environment" goal of the County's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

The Parks Master Plan, adopted by the Board in 2006, was slated for a 10-year update in 2016. Prior to updating the Parks Master Plan, however, the General Services Department determined the best course of action was to first await the results of this comprehensive study, including any subsequent feedback from the Board. Further information about the adopted Parks Master Plan is provided in Chapter 3, Section 2.

#### **Properties Not Included in Study**

### **Cache Creek Net Gains**

The Yolo County Natural Resources Division, through the administration of the Cache Creek Area Plan (CCAP), currently maintains 549.8 acres of open space divided between a total of eight properties. In accordance with their development agreements, however, the CCAP is set to obtain up to 1,300 additional acres of open space property ("Net Gains") in the next 25 years (see Appendix A for Net Gains Timeline). In 2017, the County will study and analyze the Net Gains properties the County will acquire in a separate "Cache Creek Parkway Feasibility Study."

#### Gibson House Museum

The General Services Department, working with CAO staff and members of the Yolo County Historical Society, are in the process of developing a long-term plan for the Gibson House, also known as the Yolo County Historical Museum.

#### **Esparto Aquatic Center (Future Park)**

The future Esparto Aquatic Center is not included in this study because it will be operated and maintained by an outside entity, such as a community service district.

#### Helvetia Oak Grove

Helvetia Oak Grove is an 11.7 acre property. Access, via an unimproved driveway, is contested and therefore the site needs to be surveyed to come to a definitive determination. This property contains no improvements, structures or developed amenities. The site includes a number of large valley oak trees, and is not currently being used as a recreation resource.

# **CHAPTER 2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This study provides recommendations to ensure the County's parks and open spaces are both **physically** and **financially sustainable** for future generations to enjoy.

The economic downturn in 2009 brought with it a 60% reduction in General Fund allocated to the Parks Division in 2010. Since that time, the Parks Division has primarily focused on the operations and maintenance of existing County parks and did not have resources to conduct a review of the overall parks system. As a result, the County Administrator's Office undertook this comprehensive study at the request of the Director of General Services and in support of the "Sustainable Environment" goal of the County's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

### **Study Scope and Critical Findings**

The study included a comprehensive fiscal analysis (including revenues and expenditures and a time study), a visitor and use survey, a peer community survey, a comprehensive Parks Inventory (Appendix D), interviews with the park's maintenance workers, and a review of existing governing documents and all applicable county code sections. The recommendations contained in Chapter 8 are based on the findings described in Chapter 7. Selected findings include:

- As the Parks Division has moved away from state and federal grant funds in 2010 it has come to rely on general funds as the largest source of revenue. General funds have comprised as much as 80% of the budget in recent years, though the total monetary contribution is lower than in prior years.
- It requires about **\$850,000 per year** (in 2012 dollars) to simply operate and maintain the County's existing park system, of which approximately \$150,000 per year is fee revenue and \$675,000 per year is General Fund.
- The Parks Division's current staffing levels allow for the routine operation of existing parks sites. The Parks Division **does not have adequate staff** at this time to develop new programs, perform research and analysis, nor apply for grants that could offset General Fund requirements for staff, or implement the recommendations within this study.
- The existing **grant obligations** held by the Parks Division require the ongoing operations of at least 12 park sites until 2030. The cost to walk away from these parks would be at least \$3.4 million dollars.
- Fees are not collected nor enforced in a uniform manner across the parks system. This is due to several factors including; the use of "iron rangers" for fee collection, lack of physical barriers for entrance and egress at parks, parks ownership and /or contracts with state and federal agencies.

- It is estimated that approximately 83% of users at the County's boat launch facilities <u>do not</u> pay the day use boat launch fee.
- An additional \$147,000 of fee revenue per year would likely be captured with the addition of automated payment machines and associated physical improvements at the four (4) parks where the County is currently authorized to collect fees. The Parks Division could increase revenue an additional \$211,000 per year if the Parks Division increases fees at Elkhorn Regional Park and Knights Landing Boat Launch to \$10 per visit.
- The Parks Division could increase revenue to \$400,000 and \$600,000 per year if the County can renegotiate contracts with the State to allow the Parks Division to charge fees at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch and the County raises fees at all eligible parks. Fee collection is currently prohibited at the Putah Creek Fishing Access sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch due to state contract limitations.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

The recommendations contained in Chapter 8 were collaboratively developed by the Parks Study Work Group with input from many sources including:

- \* The Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee,
- The Parks Study Steering Committee,
- Interviews with Parks' Maintenance workers,
- Peer community and city park department interviews; and
- The Board's Facilities Subcommittee.

Overall, the CAO's office recommends increasing **fee revenue** by a minimum of \$150,000 per year and potentially up to \$600,000 per year **by investing in one-time improvements to the fee collection structure** of the Parks Division. Some of these improvements may be funded through grants. The County should maintain General Fund revenue at the current level of \$650,000 per year until fee collection results in the ability to reduce General Fund revenue. The County should adopt a goal of reducing the General Fund contribution to \$500,000 per year by 2018 and to \$400,000 per year by 2025.

Additionally, the CAO's office is recommending a two (2) year increase of general fund contribution in the amount of \$175,000 (\$87,000 per year) to fund a **two (2) year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner** position. Most of the recommendations described in Chapter 8 do not require direct funding – they require **staff time and resources**. The Parks Division will likely be able to continue to fund the position through increased fee revenues if the recommendations are successfully implemented.

The recommendations generally fall into one of three categories:

- Long term financial stability,
- Increased park usage, and
- Efficient division performance.

#### Long Term Financial Stability

These recommendations (p. 44) are strategies designed to substantially increase the long term financial sustainability of the Parks Division. Recommendations include:

- Increased enforcement of existing fees through partnership and collaboration with the Yolo County Sheriff's Office and deployment of newer technologies such as automated fee payment machines and traffic control arms as selected park sites. Modernization of the annual parks pass sales processes and camping reservation system are also recommended.
- **Negotiations with state and federal partners** to ensure that fees can be collected at all park sites.
- A **comprehensive fee study** to determine if existing fees are adequate to recoup operations and maintenance costs and in line with regional park fees.

#### **Increased Parks Usage**

These recommendations (pg. 46) should increase the number of visitors using the County's park system by increasing awareness of the parks system as a whole and also of individual parks and recreation opportunities:

- Initiate an ongoing recreation needs and parks satisfaction survey for County
  residents that can be deployed via mail or website. Initially, the survey should be
  professionally crafted to ensure that the data and statistics derived from the results can
  be used to create performance measurement tools and metrics. Identified deficiencies
  should be prioritized and addressed as funding allows. Staff should explore partnering
  with the cities on surveying to decrease costs and identify efficiencies.
- Build **community relationships** to create pilot programs and establish on-going programming, annual events, and recreational opportunities. This should include the establishment of a "Friends of Yolo County Parks" program or similar.

• The Parks Division should create a **strong social media presence and develop promotional materials** to increase public awareness of parks and events.

#### **Improve Division Efficiency**

The following are selected strategies recommended to improve the efficiency of the Parks Division.

- **Develop alternatives** with community input to study for parks that are under-utilized, over-utilized, or orphan properties.
- Update all applicable sections of **County Code** to ensure that the Parks Division can operate in the most effective and efficient manner possible.
- Establish a robust volunteer program.
- Identify **metrics** and begin collecting necessary data to track division and park **performance**.

# **Implementation Costs**

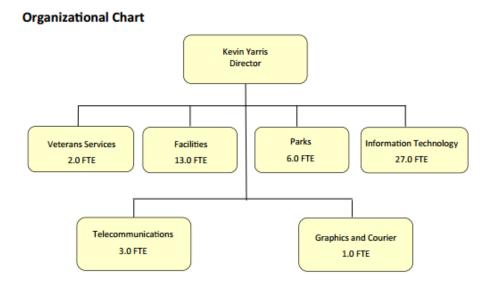
Recommended Action	Estimated Cost		
	FY 16/17	FY 17/18	FY 18/19
Maintain General Fund Contribution	\$675,500	\$675,500	\$675,500
Add 2-year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner to Parks Division staff	\$87,000	\$87,000	-
Comprehensive Fee Study	-	\$30,000	-
Install automatic payment machines and traffic control at select parks (Knights Landing and Elkhorn suggested for pilot project)	\$60,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
Recreation Needs and Parks Satisfaction survey development*	-	\$10,000	-
Helvetia Park access survey	\$20,000	-	-
Seasonal Extra-Help workers for parks maintenance (two temporary FT seasonal EE's for approximately 5 months per year)	\$30,000	\$30,000	-
Total	\$872,500	\$860,500	\$703,500

It is anticipated that the **increased revenue collected** once these recommendations are implemented will allow the Parks Division to continue to fund many of these efforts past FY 18/19 using fee revenue and reducing reliance on general funds.

# **CHAPTER 3 – BACKGROUND**

### 3.1 Parks Division: Role in the County

The Yolo County General Services Department has administered the Parks Division since FY 2012. In the past, the Parks Division was housed under Planning and Public Works (now called Department of Community Services) until FY 2006 when it operated as the stand-alone Parks and Natural Resources Department. For a brief time in FY 2011, the Parks Division resided in the County Administrator's Office before moving to its current location as part of the General Services Department.



# **General Services**

Figure 1. General Services Organizational Chart

The adopted vision statement for the Parks Division (2006) is:

- An integrated system of parks, open space areas, and linkages;
- Respectful collaboration between recreation and agriculture, between recreation and the environment, and among parties participating in providing recreational opportunities;
- Tradition and innovation that blends the old and the new, and the nearby with the remote;
- A signature identity for Yolo County that will help to promote tourism and system-wide consistency; and
- A legacy for the future that we can pass on to new generations.

In addition to the Parks Master Plan, several other documents provide guidance and direction related to parks, open space, and recreation in Yolo County: The Conservation and Open Space

Element and Agriculture Element of the 2030 General Plan, the Cache Creek Resources Management Plan, and various sections of the Yolo County Code.

# 3.2 Demographics

Yolo County covers 1,021 square miles (653,549 acres), and is divided between four cities and a large unincorporated area. The County is located in the rich agricultural regions of California's Central Valley and the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. It is directly west of Sacramento, the State Capital of California, and northeast of the Bay Area counties of Solano and Napa. The the state of the Bay Area counties of Solano and Napa. The the state of the elevation ranges from slightly below sea level near the Sacramento River around Clarksburg to 3,000 feet along the ridge of the western mountains.

Yolo County possesses three major waterways: Putah Creek, Cache Creek, and the Sacramento River. Putah Creek enters Yolo County at the base of Monticello Dam and terminates at the Putah Sinks within the Yolo Bypass, a 57,000-acre floodplain that provides both flood protection and habitat as part of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project. Between Monticello Dam and the beginning of Yolo County's southeastern panhandle, Putah Creek is the southern boundary of Yolo County. Cache Creek enters northwestern Yolo County through deep gorges in the Coast Range and then flows southeastward down the narrow Capay Valley. Near that valley's southern end, it flows through the Capay Hills in another deep gorge and then eastward across the Central Valley floor to the Yolo Bypass. The Sacramento River, the largest river in California, forms the eastern edge of Yolo County.

All three of these waterways, as well as the Yolo Bypass, provide significant habitat for native species and recreational opportunities for local residents. The Parks Division maintains three boat launches on the Sacramento River. The Parks Division maintains a campground on Cache Creek and works with a contractor to offer white water rafting and kayaking on the creek's class II-III rapids. The Parks Division also operates three fishing access sites on Putah Creek.

Yolo County is also part of the Pacific Flyway, a major migration route for waterfowl and other North American birds. The 16,770-acre Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area has been nationally recognized as a successful public-private partnership for wildlife preservation. The Wildlife Area provides habitat for thousands of resident and migratory waterfowl. Yolo County as a whole is home to many native species, including providing important habitat for a number of endangered and threatened species, such as the Giant Garter Snake and the Swainson's Hawk.

The unincorporated portion of Yolo County – the area for which the Parks Division provides park and recreation services – represents only 12 percent of the County's total population. The remaining 88 percent of Yolo residents receive the majority of their park and recreation services from one of the four cities, although they may periodically use park and recreation opportunities in the unincorporated areas as well.

# **Population Distribution**

Table 1. Total Population by City	
Jurisdiction	Population
City of Davis	66,656
City of West Sacramento	50,836
City of Winters	6,979
City of Woodland	57,223
Unincorporated County	24,687
Total Population	206,381

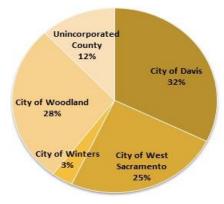


Figure 2. Percent of Population by City

# Age Distribution

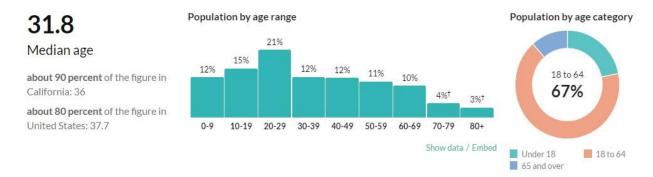


Figure 3. Yolo County Age Distribution [Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014)]

# 3.3 Status of Parks Governing Documents and Previous Reports

#### Yolo County 2030 General Plan

The Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan sets two goals for park acreage:

- A requirement of **5 acres** of turn-key neighborhood parks (community parks) for every **1,000 people** within each unincorporated community, proximate to residential neighborhoods.
- A threshold of **20 acres** of resource parks (regional and open space parks) per **1,000 people** within the total County population (both city and unincorporated).

Table 2. Yolo County Park Acreage Goals

Park Type	Goal	Actual
Neighborhood/Community	5 acres/1,000 residents	0.182 acres/1,000 residents
Regional/Open Space	20 acres/1,000 residents	9.237 acres/1,000 residents

Note: Based on the acreage of the regional and open space parks in the Parks Division (1,906.38 acres) and the total Yolo County population (206,381), Yolo County measures at **9.237 acres** for every 1,000 people. In narrowing the measure to just the unincorporated population of the County (24,687) but using the same acreage (1,906.38), Yolo County measures at **77.222** acres for every 1,000 unincorporated persons.

Other General Plan policies that pertain to parks include:

- Policy AG 1.5 strongly discourages the conversion of agricultural lands or open space for other uses unless certain findings can be made.
- Policy CO-1.2 encourages the development of a connected system of recreational trails to link communities and parks throughout the County.
- Policy CO-1.3 encourages a network of regional parks and open space corridors that highlight unique resources and recreational opportunities for a variety of users.
- Policy CO-1.5 seeks to establish future resource parks close to population centers, where feasible.
- Policy CO-1.22 urges the County to work with concessionaires and lessees to provide recreational amenities that do not conflict with other park uses or general public access.
- Policy CO-1.24 allows for specified areas of resource parks to be preserved, enhanced and/or restored as mitigation sites for public agencies only, consistent with the requirements of appropriate regulatory and funding agencies, provided that adequate compensation, including funding for operations and maintenance of the mitigation, is provided.

#### Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan (2006)

The Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan was adopted in 2006 and focuses on balancing multiple competing demands, including protecting the integrity and viability of its agricultural lands, preserving sensitive habitats and wildlife, and yet also adapting to urban growth pressures and its demand for increased recreational lands and uses. An existing advisory committee, the Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee (PRWAC) became the advisory and stakeholder group for the plan process. Plan outreach included outreach public workshops and then subsequent issues-based meetings with select stakeholder groups, such as the agricultural community.

At the time of the Plan's development (2004-2005) increasing pressure on urban expansion highlighted the need for defined recreational areas and open space. As a steward of public lands, the County was (and still often is) faced with the challenge of balancing often-competing user needs. The Plan provides adopted management directives to direct staff and inform the public on a clear vision for the planning, development, and management of County parks. The Plan emphasizes the expansion of the County parks system and the development of additional recreation opportunities by utilizing partnerships with willing landowners and mutually beneficial agreements.

The adopted guiding principles are:

- Parks and open space areas are vital to the County residents' quality of life.
- County parks serve the public.
- Parklands are intended for all ages and groups.
- The County promotes and protects public health, safety & welfare.
- The County supports public access to public lands.
- County parks strive to adhere to the "good neighbor" policy.
- County parks and recreation contribute to the vitality of local economies.
- County parks help conserve valuable resources.
- Public participation is essential.
- Partnering with other agencies, landowners, and groups.

Goals established by the Parks Master Plan include:

- A high-quality County-wide park system that meets local recreation demands.
- Parks, open space, and recreation near population centers and in more remote areas.
- Increase in net parkland and open space available.
- Increase in the range & availability of outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Increased, resource-based tourism.

The economic downturn and subsequent reduction of General Fund to the Parks Division starting in 2010 precluded the full-scale implementation of the projects and improvements identified in the Parks Master Plan. During this same time period, the state and federal government significantly reduced funding for parks, recreation, and open space. The Parks Division has since focused mainly on the day-to-day maintenance of existing parks. Some existing grants had to be returned to the state as there was not sufficient staff to implement them, nor was there sufficient funding for the ongoing maintenance obligations.

The PRWAC has created a status chart of all of the goals and objectives in the Parks Master Plan and updates it periodically. The most recent version of the PRWAC tracking chart, last updated in October 2015, is provided as Appendix B.

# **County Code**

Many sections of Yolo County Code govern the operations and use of County parks. Staff reviewed the following sections of Yolo County Code to ensure that the code was up to date and provided relevant guidance. Title 9 of the Yolo County Code provides governance and regulations for County parks and certain recreation activities.

Table 3. Applicable County Code Sections

Table 3. Applicable County Code Sections         Code Section				
Title 2, Section 2-2.14.01, Article 14 Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee	Establishes and governance of PRWAC			
Title 3, Section 3-14County Facilities Authorization and Fee	Provides a portion of development fees for additional County facilities, including parks			
Title 6, Section 13Camping within the Unincorporated County	Prohibits camping and campfires except within authorized campgrounds			
Title 8, Section 8.1806 Subdivisions	Requires subdivisions of a certain size, as determined by the Planning Commission, to provide access to, and areas for, parks			
Title 8, Chapter 2 Zoning Ordinance	Establishes the Parks and Recreation zoning designation (P-R) and determines where parks and recreation uses are allowable.			
Title 9, Chapter 3 <i>Park Regulations</i>	Defines park facilities, provides rules for use of parks, activities requiring permits, and establishes park use fees and enforcement			

Section 9-3, Article 8 pertains to the enforcement of parks use fees. The code states that only the Director, or a Parks and Grounds Worker III/IV, may issue citations at County parks. It should be noted that the classification "Parks and Grounds Worker" is no longer used by the County. It is recommended that Title 9, particularly Chapter 3 "Park Regulations", be updated to allow for reasonable enforcement of the parks use fees.

# "Innovative Parks Management" Study (2012)

This study was prepared for the County by five graduate students of the Public Policy and Administration program at Sacramento State in 2012 and is provided as Appendix C. The students were tasked with creating and recommending innovative management options for the Parks Division "working towards a financially stable organization that preserves parks, promotes public values, and focuses on increasing responsible usership."

Five (5) criteria were utilized in the process:

- Efficiency
- Public Value
- Collaboration
- Sustainability
- Implementation Feasibility

The study recommended seven (7) options that fall into four broader (4) categories:

#### Community Relations

- Strengthen and expand relationships with local non-profits\*\*
- Increase responsible usership\*\*

#### <u>Marketing</u>

• Start "Support Your Parks" fundraising campaign\*\*

#### Information Systems

Create a "social network" presence\*\*

#### Fiscal Management

- Improve maintenance efficiency
- Increase grant funding
- Share services with rural communities

Ultimately, the study recommended the Parks Division focus on the recommendations denoted with "\*\*" after them. Due to lack of staffing, none of these recommendations were fully developed or implemented by the Parks Division.

# **CHAPTER 4 – PARKS INVENTORY**

#### 4.1 Regional Context

Yolo County serves as a gateway to many open space and recreational opportunities that are owned and operated by the state or federal government including, but not limited to, the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument (331,000 acres), Knoxville State Recreation Area (18,000 acres), Cache Creek Natural Area (17,000 acres), Putah Creek Wildlife Area (673 acres), Fremont Weir Wildlife Area (1,500 acres), Sacramento Bypass Wildlife Area (360 acres), and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (16,770 acres).

# 4.2 Available Parks and Open Space within the County (Locally Maintained)

	Population	No. of Parks	Park Acreage	Open Space Acreage	Aquatics
Yolo County (Unincorporated)	24,687	16	4.5	2,555	1*
Davis	66,656	34	485	587	4
West Sacramento	50,836	35	149	-	1
Winters	6,979	5	54	-	1
Woodland	57,223	25	160	-	1
Total		115 parks	853 acres	3,142 acres	7 complete pools
*in progress					

Table 4. Available Parks and Open Space by City

In general, the difference between parks and open space is that parks have landscaping improvements such as grass and trees, and recreational equipment for play and/or sports fields. Open space lands are likely to be unimproved and vacant of structures of any kind.

# 4.3 Yolo County Parks System

For system management purposes, it is useful to understand the various types of parks that exist within a single system, as well as the recreation opportunities available.

#### **Recreational Opportunities**

The Yolo County parks system has several significant recreational opportunities, including boating, camping and hiking. The system also allows for other recreational opportunities, including water

access (for swimming, rafting and fishing), barbeques and picnicking, walking trails, basketball, archery, and playgrounds. A breakdown of the recreational activities offered at each park is provided on page 18.

# Types of Parks

The Yolo County parks system includes at least one park within each of the following classifications:

- **Open Space Areas:** Large areas with few improvements. They are largely retained in, or restored to, a natural condition for the purposes of visual quality, buffer areas, habitat, possible agricultural activities if compatible, and passive recreation.
- **Regional Park:** Moderately large areas with defined and developed areas for active recreation. Portions of the park may be retained in a natural condition.
- **County Park:** Medium-sized areas with multiple functions, including substantial areas for active recreation activities.
- **Gateway Parks:** Small, County-managed areas that provide access to other public lands, including lands managed by state and federal agencies. The gateway approach "leverages" the recreation value of other public lands. May also be a designated part of a larger site, such as a trailhead or boat ramp.
- **Park Resource Bank Sites:** Properties where the future use is likely to be for park or open space functions but the uses remain temporarily unspecified.
- **Community Parks:** Small in area, located in or near small communities, and used for a variety of community uses, recreational activities, gatherings, and events.

A comprehensive inventory of each park operated or maintained by the Parks Division was compiled for this study and is provided as Appendix D. The Parks Inventory contains information on each park such as date of acquisition, improvements at the park site, all grant obligations, operations and maintenance (O&M) effort/cost ranking, and revenues and expenditures.

# **County Parks Map**

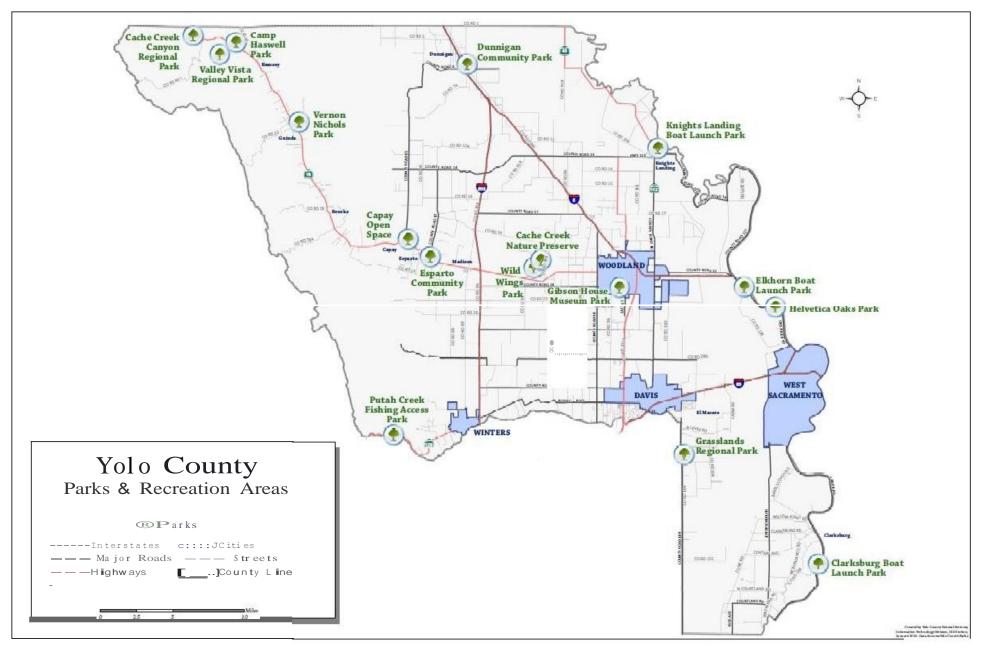


Figure 4. Map of County Parks

Park	Acres	Boating	Camping	Hiking	Other	Park Type	ADA Access	Operator
Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park (3 sites)	752 acres	-	x	х	- Creek Access - Picnic Tables	Open Space - Gateway - Regional	P, R, A	Parks Division
Camp Haswell	7.3 acres	-	-	-		Open Space - Gateway	-	Parks Division
Capay Open Space	41 acres	-	-	-	- Picnic Tables - Walking Trails - Creek Access	County Park - Open Space	P, R, A	Parks Division and Natural Resources Program
Clarksburg Boat Launch	3.95 acres	x	-	-		County Park - Open Space	Р	Parks Division
Dunnigan Community Park	0.5 acres	-	-	-	<ul> <li>Basketball Court (half)</li> <li>BBQ &amp; Picnic Tables</li> <li>Playground</li> </ul>	Community Park	P, R, A	Parks Division
Elkhorn Regional Park	49 acres	х	-	-		Regional Park	P, R, A	Parks Division
Esparto Community Park	4 acres	-	-	-		Community Park	P, R	Parks Division
Gibson House	2.27 acres	-	-	-	- Museum	Historical Site	-	Parks Division and Museum Board
Grasslands Regional Park	323 acres	-	-	-	- Archery & Flyers Club - Horseshoe Pitching	Regional Park	-	Parks Division
Helvetia Oak Grove	10.7 acres	-	-	-	- No public access	Park Resource Reserve	-	-
Knight Landing Boat Launch	3.9 acres	x	-	-		County Park - Open Space - Gateway	P, A	Parks Division
Putah Creek (5 sites)	87 acres	-	-	-	- BBQ & Picnic Tables - Fishing & Creek Access - Creek Access	County Park - Open Space - Gateway	P, R	Parks Division
Vernon A. Nichols Community Park	22 acres	-	-	-	- BBQ & Picnic Tables - Playground - Creek Access/ Beach	County Park - Open Space	-	Parks Division
Valley Vista Regional Park	587 acres	-	-	Х		Open Space - Gateway	-	-
Wild Wings Park	17.26 acres	-	-	x	- Walking trails - Benches - Creek Access	Open Space	-	Parks Division and Natural Resources Program

Table 5. Summary of Parks and Recreation Opportunities within County Parks

P = Parking

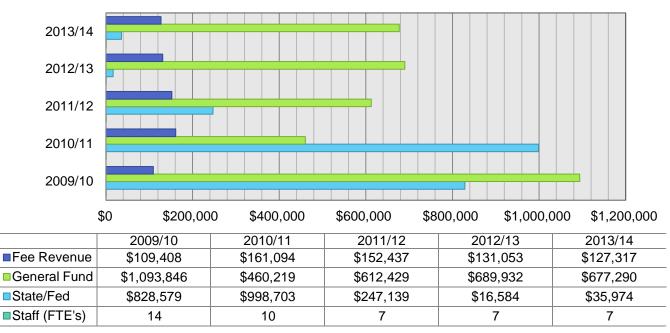
R = Restrooms

A = Park Amenities

# **CHAPTER 5 – REVENUE & FEE ANALYSIS**

#### 5.1 Parks Division Revenues: 5-Year Trends

Prior to Fiscal Year (FY) 2010/11, the (now defunct) Department of Parks and Natural Resources operated the Parks Division with the Natural Resources Division. This Department had revenues from grants, gravel mining fees, General Fund, and fees for service. Due to accounting software limitations, it is difficult to determine which revenues and expenditures were solely to operate, maintain, and improve County parks. For that reason, staff performed a 5-year fiscal analysis using FY 2009/10 through FY13/14. Fiscal years 14/15 and 15/16 are not included because impacts to fee revenues from the drought and wildfires would not provide an accurate fee revenue picture.



# Revenues by Source FY 2009/10 - 2013/14

Figure 5. Parks Division Yearly Revenues

Note: Projected state/fed revenues for FY12/13 are shown as \$893,691 in the County's Adopted Budget for FY 12/13. Those were anticipated funds from a grant award for improvements at the Knights Landing Boat Launch. That project was not implemented. As no funds were expended, there were no reimbursements.

The analysis shows that as the Parks Division has moved away from capital improvements (funded primarily by grants) and focused on operation and maintenance of existing parks. The reliance on General Fund (as a proportion of the total revenue) has increased significantly, while the amount of General Fund allocated has stayed relatively stable since FY 12/13. State and federal grants were a large proportion of the Parks Division budget until 2011.

Fee revenues for this five-year period average \$136,262. As shown in Figure 5 above, there was a significant decline in both state and federal revenues as well as General Fund contributions beginning in FY 10/11 and continuing into FY 11/12.

The percent of total revenue in the three revenue categories are presented below in Table 6:

Table 6. Percent of Park Division Revenue by Fund					
Fiscal Year	General Fund	Fee Revenue	Grants		
2009/10	54%	5%	41%		
2010/11	28%	10%	62%		
2011/12	69%	3%	28%		
2012/13	82%	16%	2%		
2013/14	81%	15%	4%		
2014/15	85%	10%	5%		
2011/12 - 2014/15 <i>Avera</i> ge	34%	6%	60%		
2015/16	81%	15%	4%		

The percent of total revenue in the three revenue categories are presented below

Grant funds almost always require that the park be operated for set period of time (20-30 years into the future), prohibiting the County from closing or repurposing an under-performing park for that specified period of time. The Parks Division currently has grant obligations at nine (9) County parks that require the parks to be operated and maintained until at least 2030. (See Section 5.3) Fee revenue has not exceeded \$162,000 in the last five years. Though discussed in greater detail in Section 5.4, the County is contractually prohibited by the State from collecting fees at certain parks, contributing to the low percentage of total revenue generated by fees for use.

# 5.2 Parks Division Revenues: Comparison to Other Rural Counties

Seven other rural counties were surveyed on staffing, revenue, and management practices (see Appendix E for full details). A brief summary is provided in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Summary of Par County	Staff (FTE)	Acres Managed	Revenue Source (%)	Total Budget (\$) FY 14/15		
Butte County	All park services are provided by four (4) park districts.					
Colusa County	All park s	All park services are provided by community based park districts.				
Lake County	12 FTE	1790 acres 25 parks	Gen Fund: 85% State/Fed: 5% Fees: 10%	\$3,150,221		
Napa County	All park serv	ices provided by	Napa County Parks & Op	en Space District.		
Napa County Parks & Open Space Dist.	4 FTE	4,000 acres 4 parks	Gen Fund: 32% State/Fed: 28% Fees: 20%	\$3,200,000		
San Joaquin County	53 FTE	661 acres 29 parks	Gen Fund: 39% State/Fed: 0% Fees: 41% Other: 20% (trust accounts)	\$5,118,032		
Solano County	6 FTE	1,200 acres 4 parks	Gen Fund: 9% State/Fed: 17% Fees: 40%	\$1,430,000		
Sutter County	0 FTE Maintenance by Building Service Workers on contract basis and by Sheriff Work Release program.	85 acres 3 parks	Gen Fund: 90% State/Fed: 1% Fees: 9%	\$286,408		
Yolo County	7 FTE	2,292 acres 16 parks	Gen Fund: 85% State/Fed: 5% Fees: 10%	\$1,646,034		

Table 7. Summary of Parks Divisions in other Rural Jurisdictions

#### 5.3 Fees and Taxes as Park System Revenues

#### **Parcel Tax**

Several jurisdictions, such as the City of Davis, have passed parcel taxes and special assessments to provide financial support for parks and open space. In 2000, more than 70% of Davis voters approved Measure O, a parcel tax designed to be a long-term, stable funding source to acquire and maintain open space areas. Measure O is a 30-year tax that will remain in effect until 2031, with an option to extend or re-authorize prior to that date. For a single family residence, the tax is approximately \$24 per year. Other land uses are charged different rates. The tax generates an average of \$591,000 per year. A total of \$8,871,309 has been collected as of December 2015.

According to a staff report to the Davis City Council in December 2015 Measure O provides 50% (\$160,000) of the operations and maintenance costs of running the City's parks and open space areas. The remainder is paid from general funds.

#### **Transit Oriented Tax**

The Napa County Regional Parks and Open Space District receives funding from a transit tax. The Napa Open Space District is currently funded through the Napa County's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Special Projects Fund, (just over \$800,000 this fiscal year). With that \$800,000 the District has leveraged grants of nearly \$3 for every \$1 the County provides. Those funds comprise 32% of the District's total budget.

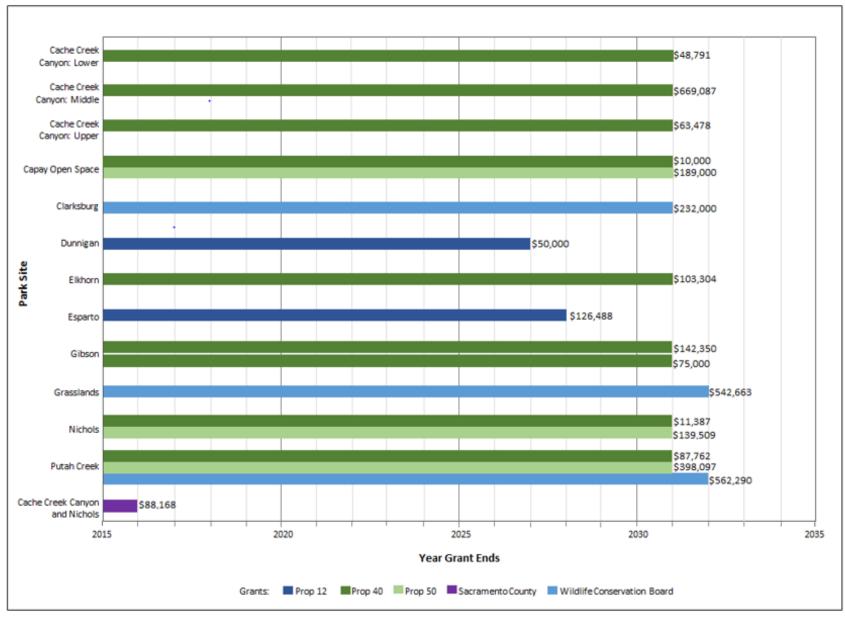
#### **Yolo County Parcel Tax Analysis**

Staff created several parcel tax scenarios for discussion purposes. Depending of the scenario, a parcel tax could replace the general fund contribution to the Parks Division, or supplement that contribution. The average general fund contribution to the Parks Division is about **\$675,500** per year (FY 11/12 - 15/16).

Scenario	Parcel Tax (per year)	Revenue (per year)
25% of General Fund contribution	\$14.55	\$169,000
50% of General Fund contribution	\$29.10	\$337,750
75% of General Fund contribution	\$43.64	\$506,625
100% of General Fund contribution	\$58.18	\$675,500

Table 8. Parcel Tax Scenarios

Further research and feasibility analysis would be required to determine the viability of a "parks and open space" parcel tax. Initial estimates, based on other Prop 218 efforts in the County, indicate that a feasibility study could cost as much as \$200,000.



#### 5.4 Grant Obligations & Operations and Maintenance

Figure 6. Yolo County Operation and Maintenance Obligations for Grant Funding through 2035.

Figure 6 on the previous page provides a visual depiction of the County's contractual obligations, through acceptance of grant funds, to operate and maintain 14 parks. While two of those obligations will end this year (2016), 12 parks will require ongoing operations and maintenance through at least 2027. The awards for those grants total over \$3,452,000.

Failure to comply with the terms of the previously awarded grants can result in a requirement for Yolo County to reimburse the grantor in full, in addition to the paying of penalties. Should the County decide to stop operating the Putah Creek park sites, for example, it may cost the County over \$1,000,000 in reimbursements to the State. Should the County find another entity that agrees to operate a park (or parks) in accordance with the terms of the grant award, however, the State may allow the transfer of that liability to the operating entity.

#### 5.5 Park Fees

Parks visitors can choose to purchase annual passes or pay a day-use fee.

### **Day Use Fees**

Of the properties that Parks Division operates and maintains, fees are charged as follows:

Park	Day Use Fee
Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park (3 sites)	\$6
Camp Haswell	-
Capay Open Space*	\$6
Clarksburg Boat Launch	-
Dunnigan Community Park	-
Elkhorn Regional Park	\$8
Esparto Community Park	-
Grasslands Regional Park	\$6
Helvetia Oak Grove**	-
Knights Landing Boat Launch	\$8
Putah Creek (5 sites)	-
Vernon A. Nichols Community Park	-
Valley Vista Regional Park	-
Wild Wings Park	-

Table 9. Yolo County Park Day Use Fees

\*Staff has stopped collecting fees at Capay Open Space Park and is researching whether fees are allowed at that park site.

\*\*Access to Helvetia Oak Grove is uncertain – see Chapter 8, Recommendations, for more information.

# **Fee Collection**

Though fees are charged, the Parks Division has insufficient resources to enforce those charges. All parks rely on "iron rangers" for collection of day use fees, which is an honor system that requires visitors to use a provided envelope to insert fees into a locked box. Parks maintenance workers then collect the fees during routine maintenance at the site. For annual passes, customers must come to the Parks Division offices in Woodland to purchase passes. Fee payment and purchases of annual passes should increase if the Parks Division begins enforcing existing fees, or moves to increase both fees and fines for non-payment, or deploys newer technologies for purchasing day and annual passes.

### **Fee Enforcement**

As noted in Chapter 3, County Code currently allows only the Parks Director and/or a "parks and groundsworker" to issue citations for non-payment of fees. Staff conducted an initial analysis into the feasibility of creating a "park ranger" classification and adding a ranger FTE to the Division. An annual salary of approximately \$65,000 may translate to as much as \$105,000 when benefits such as retirement contributions and health insurance are included.

# **Parks Ranger Position Salary**

Countv	Position Title	POST Cert (Y/N)	Min. Years Exp.	Ann. Salarv (Low)	Ann. Salarv (High)	Avq. Ann. Salary	Total Waqes ('13)
Colusa	Deputy Sheriff	Y	Not Listed	\$46,760.00	\$59,724.00	\$53,244.00	\$52,495.00
Sacramento	Park Ranger	Y	9 mo.	\$49,193.27	\$62,786.16	\$55,989.72	\$77,380.00
Santa Clara	Park Ranger I	Y	Not Listed	\$55,741.92	\$67,410.72	\$61,576.32	\$60,788.00
Ganta Glara	Park Ranger II	Y	2 yrs	\$64,660.96	\$78,197.60	\$71,429.28	\$75,781.00
	Park Ranger I	Y	1 yr	\$45,227.89	\$54,953.87	\$50,090.88	\$56,241.00
Sonoma	Park Ranger II	Y	1 yr	\$49,589.97	\$60,296.90	\$54,943.44	\$62,567.00
	Park Ranger III	Y	3 yrs	\$60,004.70	\$72,944.84	\$66,474.77	\$66,314.00

#### Table 10. Other County Park Ranger Salaries

In addition to the costs identified above, it is uncertain whether one FTE park ranger could reasonable patrol all of the parks and open space that is operated and maintained by the Parks Division. Once the County Code is updated, the Parks Division should work with the Yolo County Sheriff's Office to develop a formal agreement for patrolling parks and issuing citations for non-payment of fees. The creation of a park ranger position may be reevaluated at a later date.

# **Annual Parks Pass**

The Parks Division also offers an Annual Parks Pass. The annual pass is valid for day-use parking at any Yolo County park, except the Knights Landing Boat Launch and Elkhorn Regional Park. Annual passes are available starting in late December for the following year. Annual Parks Pass fees are shown in Table 11, but do not comprise a significant portion of the Parks Division's annual revenue (Table 12).

Annual Pass	Туре	Cost
	County Resident	\$75
	Senior Resident	\$30
Park Sites	Non-County Resident	\$85
	Disabled	Free
	County Resident	\$95
Boat Launches	Senior Resident	\$40
	Non-County	\$105
	Disabled	Free

Table 11. Annual Parks Pass by Type

#### Table 12. Annual Parks Pass Revenue by Year and Type

	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	Ann. Avg.
Boat Pass Unit Sold	134	109	92	112	111	79	106
Boat Pass Ann Revenue	\$5,380	\$4,350	\$3,704	\$4,480	\$4,4468	\$3,175	\$4,260
Day Pass Unit Sold	3	0	8	4	5	3	4
Day Pass Annual Revenue	\$160	-	\$390	\$220	\$225	\$135	\$193
Total passes sold	137	109	100	116	116	82	110
Total Annual Revenue	\$5,540	\$4,350	\$4,094	\$4,700	\$4,723	\$3,310	\$4,453

As shown above, the Parks Division sells 25 times more annual boat launch passes than annual park site passes. Yet revenues from the sales of annual parks passes comprise an average of only 3.3% of the total average revenues generated by fees in the Parks Division.

# **Annual Pass Analysis**

Currently annual passes are only available for purchase in person, during normal business hours, at the General Services Department in Woodland. The Parks Division should explore the addition of on-line sales of annual passes, as well as sales at other county facilities such as the libraries, and county buildings in West Sacramento and Davis.

# **Camping Revenues (Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park)**

The Cache Creek Middle Site provides 45 individual campsites, four large group campsites, two restroom buildings including showers, a general store, large turf areas, a playground, numerous picnic tables, a day-use parking area (parking fee required), and rural pedestrian access to Cache Creek. Cache Creek Canyon peaks reach higher than 2,200 feet in elevation (the campground is at an approximate elevation of 600 feet), leading to a beautiful setting for camping, hiking and picnicking. The fee schedule is provided in Table 13 below:

Use Type	Fee
Individual Campsites	\$25
Group Campsites	\$115 Residents \$165 Non-residents
Dog Fee	\$2
Dump Station	\$5 Non-campers
Day Use	\$6
Each Additional Car	\$6

Table 13. Cache Creek Canyon Camping Fees

Camping fees for use of the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park average about \$75,000 per year in fee revenue for the Parks Division (FY 09/10 – FY13/14). That average drops down to nearly \$70,000 per year if FY 14/15 is included in Table 14 below. The campgrounds received less use than average in FY 14/15 due to the significant drought conditions and dryness of Cache Creek. In addition, campground use further declined in 2015 due to the multiple wildfires that occurred in Lake County.

Fiscal Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	Ann. Avg.
No. of Rented Campsites	2,241	2,276	2,903	3,219	2,862	1,913	2,554
Camping Fee Revenue	\$56,953	\$56,901	\$79,301	\$86,285	\$81,516	\$55,104	\$69,477
Total Fee Revenue	\$109,408	\$161,094	\$152,437	\$131,053	\$127,317	\$79,419	\$126,788

#### Table 14. Camping Revenues by Fiscal Years

Note: Camping fee revenues include the campsite fee, firewood sales, general store revenues, and dog fees.

# **Concessions and Other Revenue Agreements**

The Parks Division currently holds two agreements with various user groups and concessionaires for activities and uses such as rafting on Cache Creek and hobby groups at Grasslands Regional Park. A third agreement is in progress. Table 15 below shows revenues received through revenue agreements from FY 09/10 to FY 14/15. Revenues were severely impacted in FY 14/15 by the on-going drought and by the multiple wildfires in the region.

Table 15. Concessions Agreement Revenue

Fiscal Year	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	Total Revenue
Revenue	\$0	\$21,321	\$32,441	\$16,461	\$20,538	\$2,695	\$93,456

Over the last two years the Parks Division has been updating older agreements to address increasing maintenance costs, as well as entering into new agreements with entities that formerly had no formal agreement with the County.

### 5.6 Cost per Park

# **Parks Division Staffing Trends**

In FY 2009/10, the Parks Division received its highest level of General Fund revenue employed 10 FTEs. In the remaining years the Division employed seven (7) FTE's.

Table 16. Parks Division Staffing from FY 10/11 to FY 14/15         Parks Division Staffing								
	FY 10-11	FY 11-12	FY 12- 13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15			
Accounting Technician	1	1	1	1	1			
Administrative Services Analyst	-	-	-	1	1			
Assistant Parks Planner	1	-	-	-	-			
Associate Parks Planner	1	1	1	1	-			
Building Craftsmechanic III	1	1	1	1	1			
Habitat Mitigation Manager*	1	-	-	-	-			
Office Support Specialist	1	-	-	-	-			
Park/Facilities Worker III	3	2	2	2	2			
Principal Parks Planner	-	-	-	-	1			
Secretary III*	1	1	1	-	-			
Supervising Parks/Grounds Worker	-	1	1	1	1			
TOTAL FTE	10	7	7	7	7			

Table 16. Parks Division Staffing from FY 10/11 to FY 14/15

\*These positions were associated with the County's HCP/NCCP efforts and were housed in the Parks Division.

# FY 15/16 Staffing

Table 17. Current Parks Division Staffing

Classifications	FY 15/16 Staffing
Administrative Services Analyst	1 FTE
Parks Maintenance Supervisor	1 FTE
Parks & Facilities Worker I	2 FTE
Parks & Facilities Worker II	1 FTE
Parks & Facilities Worker III	1 FTE
Total Staffing	6 FTE

The Parks Division currently employs a single administrative support position and a maintenance crew. The Parks Division does not currently employ a parks planner or parks manager. The former parks planner left the County in late 2014 and the position has been under-filled by a limited-term Parks & Facilities Worker position. The limited-term position will end in January 2017. As described in Chapter 4, lack of staffing within the Parks Division is the main reason the Parks Division did not fully develop or implement the recommendations contained in the 2012 CSUS "Innovative Parks Management" study.

#### **5.7 Parks Maintenance Costs**

The total cost per park numbers shown in Table 18 below are an estimate (not actual numbers) as previous Parks Division budgets were not broken down by expenditures or staff time per park. The Division did record the "direct" costs for each park (such as equipment purchased for a specific park). However, salaries, benefits and administrative services were never apportioned per park.

To apportion these costs to each park, staff conducted a time study to determine the amount of time Parks Division staff spent on each park in FY 12/13. Staff began with the "direct" costs associated with each park, and then apportioned the remaining salaries, benefits and administrative services based on the percent of time staff spent working on that park. FY 12/13 was selected as the base year for determining total costs per park because it was the most recent year without an abnormal staffing issue that would impact the total costs (such as a long-term employee leave or a vacant position).

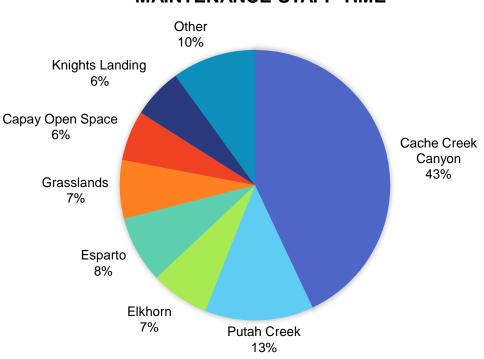
#### Table 18. Cost Per Park

Cost Per Park Breakdown (FY 12/13)								
		Salaries & Benefits			Total Cost Day Dayle		% of Parks Division	
	58	alaries & Benefits	efits Services & Supplies Total Cost F		al Cost Per Park	Staff Time	Budget	
*Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park (3 sites)	\$	279,562.28	\$	101,213.67	\$	380,775.96	43.33%	45.16%
Putah Creek Access Parks (5 sites)	\$	82,907.02	\$	17,420.91	\$	100,327.93	12.85%	11.90%
*Elkhorn Regional Park	\$	47,633.24	\$	15,696.52	\$	63,329.76	7.38%	7.51%
Esparto Community Park	\$	50,197.04	\$	10,834.81	\$	61,031.85	7.78%	7.24%
*Grasslands Regional Park	\$	41,980.06	\$	11,114.59	\$	53,094.64	6.51%	6.30%
*Capay Open Space	\$	39,894.93	\$	9,670.56	\$	49,565.49	6.18%	5.88%
*Knights Landing Boat Launch	\$	35,900.85	\$	10,675.88	\$	46,576.72	5.56%	5.52%
Clarksburg Boat Launch	\$	26,953.40	\$	7,551.82	\$	34,505.21	4.18%	4.09%
Vernon Nichols Park	\$	23,311.62	\$	6,519.70	\$	29,831.32	3.61%	3.54%
Camp Haswell Park	\$	6,310.89	\$	2,843.29	\$	9,154.18	0.98%	1.08%
Dunnigan Park Wild	\$	6,688.09	\$	2,145.34	\$	8,833.43	1.04%	1.05%
Wings Park Gibson	\$	3,542.22	\$	744.31	\$	4,286.53	0.55%	0.51%
House Helvetia Oak	\$	377.20	\$	1,488.85	\$	1,866.05	0.06%	0.22%
Grove	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	0%	0%
Valley Vista Regional Park	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	0%	0%
*Fees Charaed TOTAL	\$	645,258.83	\$	197,920.25	\$	843,179.08	100%	100%

In FY 2012/13, it cost the Parks Division nearly \$850,000 to operate and maintain the current inventory of parks.

#### Parks Maintenance Staff Time per Park

As shown in Figure 7 below, Parks maintenance staff is spending over 50% of their time at the three (3) Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park sites and the five (5) Putah Creek Access sites.



#### MAINTENANCE STAFF TIME

Figure 7. Percentage of Maintenance Staff Time per Park

## CHAPTER 6 – PARK VISITOR & USAGE STUDY

#### 6.1 Yolo County Vehicle Count Survey

To improve understanding about the use of County parks and the potential to improve fee collection, the Yolo County Roads Division of the Community Services Department installed vehicle trip counters at select parks for one weekend (Friday through Sunday) each quarter. The analysis shows the Knights Landing Boat Launch and Clarksburg Boat Launch receive the most visitors, concentrated mainly on weekends. The analysis also demonstrates that only one out of six visitors on average pays the fee to use the Knights Landing Boat Launch and Elkhorn Regional Park. Visitors currently do not pay a fee to use the Clarksburg Boat Launch as a result of a limitation in the County's contract with the State to operate this park.

The Parks Division chose the parks included in the vehicle count survey based on site logistics. To ensure the data collection was as sound as possible, only parks with defined vehicle entry and exit points were included. The Roads Division has a limited number of vehicle trip counters and could only survey four (4) to five (5) park sites at any given time. Table 19 shows the parks surveyed and dates of survey:

Park Site	<b>Q1</b> (FY 14/15)	<b>Q2</b> (FY 14/15, FY 15/16)	Q3 (FY 15/16)	<b>Q4</b> (FY 15/16)
Putah Creek #1	4/3 – 4/5/15	6/19 – 6/21/15	9/18 – 9/20/15	12/18 – 12/20/15
Putah Creek #3	4/3 – 4/5/15	6/19 – 6/21/15	9/18 – 9/20/15	12/18 – 12/20/15
Putah Creek #4	4/3 – 4/5/15	6/19 – 6/21/15	9/18 - 9/20/15	12/18 – 12/20/15
Elkhorn Boat Launch	4/3 – 4/5/15	6/26 – 6/28/15	9/25 – 9/27/15	1/8 — 1/10/16
Knights Landing Boat Launch	3/27 – 3/29/15	6/26 – 6/28/15	9/25 – 9/27/15	1/8 — 1/10/16
Clarksburg Boat Launch	3/27 – 3/29/15	6/26 – 6/28/15	9/25 – 9/27/15	1/8 — 1/10/16
Capay Open Space Park	4/3 – 4/5/15	7/10 – 7/12/15	10/2 – 10/4/15	1/15 – 1/17/16

Table 19. Dates of Vehicle Count Surveys

The raw data is provided in table format on page 30.

#### Table 20. Vehicle Trip Counts

Park Site	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	AVG Weekend	AVG Weekday	AVG Trips/ Wk	Est. Trips/Yr
Putah Creek Fishing Access #1	32	57	30	8	32	3	108	5,613
Putah Creek Fishing Access #3	56	75	43	12	47	5	158	8,221
Putah Creek Fishing Access #4	44	46	27	21	35	3	117	6,100
Elkhorn Boat Launch	45	27	44	17	33	3	113	5,879
Knights Landing Boat Launch	113	64	73	48	75	7	253	13,172
Clarksburg Boat Launch (Total)	126	92	110	106	109	11	369	19,183
Capay Open Space Park	16	23	26	14	20	2	67	3,492

Note: Trips shown for each quarter are average weekend trips per day. For example, if Q1 shows 113 trips that means that there was an <u>average</u> of 113 trips per day during the survey period.

#### Vehicle Counts Compared to Fees Collected

Table 21 shows the Parks Division could collect an estimated \$147,000 in additional fees annually by improving fee collection at Elkhorn Regional Park, Knights Landing Boat Launch, and Capay Open Space Park. The Parks Division could increase revenue to \$211,000 per year if the Parks Division increases fees at Elkhorn Regional Park and Knights Landing Boat Launch to \$10 per visit. These three parks, in addition to Grasslands Regional Park, are the only parks at which the County currently charges fees. As Table 22 shows, the Parks Division could increase revenue to between \$400,000 and \$600,000 per year if the County can renegotiate its contracts with the State to allow the Parks Division to charge fees at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch and the County raises fees at all eligible parks by \$2 per visit.

Fee collection is currently prohibited at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch due to state contract limitations. This analysis does not capture revenue from improved fee enforcement at Grasslands Regional Park because the Roads Division did not complete a vehicle count for this park. The estimates also assume the number of annual passes sold remains constant, so this revenue could change if annual pass sales increase due to online sales or other improvements.

Table 21. Estimated Tri		Ann. Est. Daily Revenue			Actual Revenues Collected						Revenue
Park Site	Est. Trips/Yr	Daily Fee	(100% Capture)	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	Avg. Revenue/Yr	Not Captured/Yr
Putah Creek Fishing Access #1	5,613	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Putah Creek Fishing Access #3	8,236	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Putah Creek Fishing Access #4	6,114	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Elkhorn Regional Park	5,893	\$8.00	\$47,144	\$10,765	\$10,277	\$8,634	\$6,359	\$5,306	\$5,497	\$7,807	(\$ 39,337)
Knights Landing Boat Launch	13,186	\$8.00	\$105,488	\$29,878	\$21,922	\$14,751	\$16,370	\$17,500	\$12,184	\$18,768	(\$ 86,720)
Clarksburg Boat Launch	19,183	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
*Capay Open Space Park	3,507	\$6.00	\$21,042	\$214.02	\$284.95	-	\$575.00	-	-	\$179	(\$ 20,863)
Total		•	\$173,674	\$40,857	\$32,485	\$23,386	\$23,304	\$22,807	\$17,681	\$26,754	(\$ 146,920)

#### Table 21. Estimated Trips vs. Collected Fees (Current Fee Ordinance)

\*Note: Staff had removed signage directing visitors to pay day use fee at Capay Open Space Park in 2011. Natural Resources and Parks staff are working to determine if fees can be legally charged at this park site.

As shown above, lack of fee enforcement leads to an average fee revenue loss of nearly \$147,000 per year in the three (3) parks studied. An estimated 84% of visitors to Elkhorn Regional Park do <u>not</u> pay the day use fee. An estimated 82% of visitors to the Knights Landing Boat Launch do <u>not</u> pay the day use fee.

		Existing	Existin	ng Fees Collected A Scenario #1	t All Parks		Fee Ordinance Upd Scenario #2	ate
Park Site	Est. Trips/Yr	Avg. Revenue/Yr	Existing Daily Fee at All Parks	Ann. Revenue (100% Capture)	Net Annual Increase	Updated Daily Fee at All Parks**	Ann. Revenue (100% Capture)	Net Annual Increase
Putah Creek Fishing Access #1	5,613	-	\$6.00	\$33,678	\$33,678	\$6.00	\$33,678	\$33,678
Putah Creek Fishing Access #3	8,236	-	\$6.00	\$49,416	\$49,416	\$6.00	\$49,416	\$49,416
Putah Creek Fishing Access #4	6,114	-	\$6.00	\$36,684	\$36,684	\$6.00	\$36,684	\$36,684
Elkhorn Boat Launch	5,893	\$7,807	\$8.00	\$47,144	\$39,337	\$10.00	\$58,930	\$51,123
Knights Landing Boat Launch	13,186	\$18,768	\$8.00	\$105,488	\$86,720	\$10.00	\$131,860	\$113,902
Clarksburg Boat Launch	19,183	-	\$8.00	\$153,464	\$153,464	\$10.00	\$191,830	\$191,830
*Capay Open Space Park	3,507	\$179	\$6.00	\$21,042	\$20,863	\$6.00	\$21,042	\$21,0421
Total		\$26,754		\$446,916.00	\$420,162.00		\$523,440.00	\$687,054.00

#### Table 22. Estimated Trips vs. Parks Fee Scenarios

\***Note**: Staff had removed signage directing visitors to pay day use fee at Capay Open Space Park in 2011. Natural Resources and Parks staff are working to determine if fees can be legally charged at this park site.

\*\*Note: The \$10 boat launch fee has not been studied and is used for discussion purposes only. The boat launch fee on the Sacramento County side of the Sacramento River is \$10.

Two reasonable scenarios were created for this exercise. Scenario #1 assumes that the Parks Division can successfully renegotiate its contractual obligations with grantor agencies and is given permission to collect day use fees in accordance with the County's <u>current</u> fee ordinance. This scenario projects an annual average fee revenue increase of \$420,000. Scenario #2 assumes that the Parks Division is given permission by the state to collect fees at all park sites <u>and</u> assumes a slight increase in the boat launch fee to be more competitive with surrounding jurisdictions. Scenario #2 projects an annual average fee revenue increase of \$687,000.

#### 6.2 Park Visitor Survey

In the information gathering and research phase of this Parks Study, it was determined the County had never completed a usage study or comprehensive visitor survey for the parks system. The Parks Division contracted with Diversity Research and Consulting Group to perform a visitor count and survey at 13 (out of 16) of the County's parks. The surveys and counts were repeated three (3) times at each of the parks: May 2015, August 2015, and January 2016. Each park was surveyed at a different time of day/day of week during each survey round. The full Usage and Visitor Study is provided as Appendix F.

When all three rounds of surveying are aggregated, a total of 196 park visitor surveys were collected via brief face to face interviews with visitors at 15 or 78.9% of the 19 parks sites (Cache Creek Canyon Regional and Putah Creek parks total 8 separate sites). Round 2 of surveys in August 2015 contributed the most surveys (53.6%), followed by Round 1 in May 2015 with 25%, and Round 3 in January 2016 contributing 21.4% of the surveys completed.

No surveys were completed nor visitors identified at four (4) of the survey sites: Putah Creek – Site 2, Dunnigan Park, Wild Wings Park, and Valley Vista Regional Park.

#### **Visitor Residence Distribution**

Of the 196 surveys completed, one (1) visitor was from out-of-state (Nottingham, IL). The remainder of the visitors lived in California and came from 52 different cities and 25 different counties. 91 of the 196 visitors surveyed were residents of Yolo County.

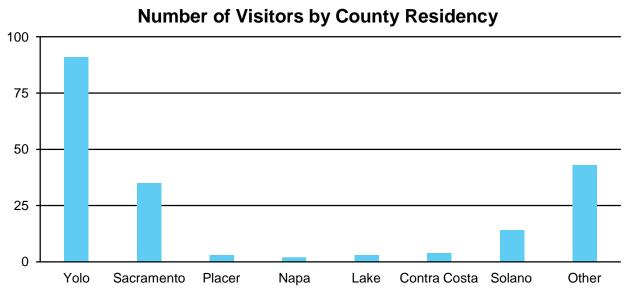


Figure 8. Number of Visitors by County Residency

## Woodland 32% Unincorporated County 37% Winters 10% West Sac Davis 8% 13%

Figure 9. Distribution of County Residents

As shown, 37% of parks visitors reside in the unincorporated County (most from Esparto), closely followed by visitors from the City of Woodland.

**County Resident Distribution** 

#### **Awareness of Parks Facilities**

An interesting statistic generated by the Usage and Visitor Study is how parks visitors became aware of the park that they were visiting. Figure 10 shows how people became aware of the various Yolo County parks they visited.

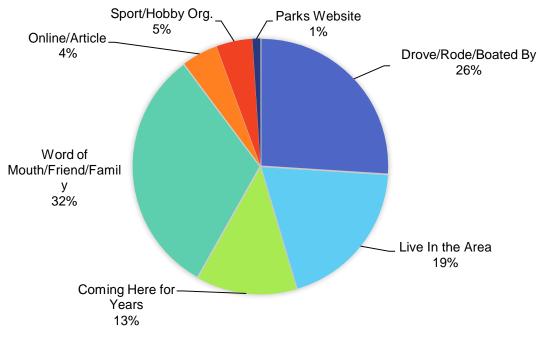


Figure 10. Distribution of Park Awareness

As detailed in Figure 10, 19% of visitors reported that they live in the area, 13% reported that they've been coming to the same park for years, and 58% report that they either passed by the park (via vehicle, bike, or boat) or heard about it by word of mouth. Only two (2) visitors – about 1% - reported using the County's website to find information on County parks.

#### Parks Usage

As shown below in Table 23, the most frequently used parks are the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, the boat launches, and Esparto Community Park.

Park Visitors						
Park	Use/Day	Percent of Visitors				
Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park	10	17.5%				
Elkhorn Regional Park	10	17.5%				
Esparto Community Park	7	12.3%				
Knights Landing Day Use Area	7	12.3%				
Clarksburg River Access Facility	7	12.3%				
Putah Creek Access Parks (5 sites)	6	10.5%				
Grasslands Regional Park	4	7%				
Camp Haswell Park	3	5.3%				
Dunnigan Park	2	3.5%				
Vernon Nichols Park	1	1.8%				
Capay Open Space	0	0%				
Wild Wings Park	0	0%				
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	0%				

Table 23. Park Visitors

This data tracks with the self-reporting survey data (discussed further on page 42 below) that indicates that:

- 10% of those surveyed reported that they were at the park to camp (Cache Creek Canyon)
- 30% of visitors reported they were using the park to fish or boat (boat launches, parks that provide access to waterways, etc.)

The study (Appendix F, page 33) points out that the greatest usage of parks occurs during the summer months. It also points out that the parks that reported the most first-time visitors were Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park and the Putah Creek access parks.

<b>T</b> / / <b>A</b> /	- · · ·	<b></b>	
Table 24.	Park Usag	e & Maintenan	ce Effort

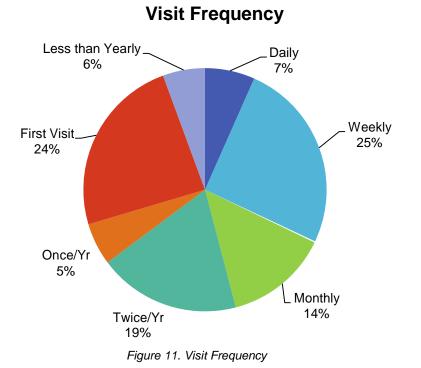
Park Usage with Maintenance Effort					
Park	% of Time/Cost	Percent of Visitors			
Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park	43.33%	17.5%			
Elkhorn Regional Park	12.85%	17.5%			
Esparto Community Park	7.78%	12.3%			
Knights Landing Day Use Area	7.38%	12.3%			
Clarksburg River Access Facility	6.18%	12.3%			
Putah Creek Access Parks (5 sites)	6.51%	10.5%			
Grasslands Regional Park	5.56%	7%			
Camp Haswell Park	4.18%	5.3%			
Dunnigan Park	3.61%	3.5%			
Vernon Nichols Park	1.04%	1.8%			
Capay Open Space	0.98%	0%			
Wild Wings Park	0.55%	0%			
Valley Vista Regional Park	0.00%	0%			

As shown in Table 24 above, the time study conducted on the timecards of parks maintenance workers is right in line with the frequency of each parks use (See Section 6.2, Table 23). This suggests that the maintenance workers are operating with efficiency and spend the most time at the parks that receive the most use, and spend the least time at the parks which receive the least use.

The Parks Use Study notes (Appendix F, page 33) that more than 75% of visitors reported that they were satisfied or vary satisfied with the appearance and upkeep of the park they were visiting. Further, more than 90% of visitors reported that the park met or exceeded their expectations and they would recommend the park to their friends and family.

#### **Frequency of Parks Visits**

Of the visitors that completed surveys (196 people), 24% were first time visitors to that particular park, and 76% were returning visitors. Most (15 out of 47) first-time visitors were surveyed at Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park (with the campgrounds), followed by the Putah Creek Access parks (13 of 47). Figure 11 below shows the breakdown of visit frequency based on visitor survey responses.

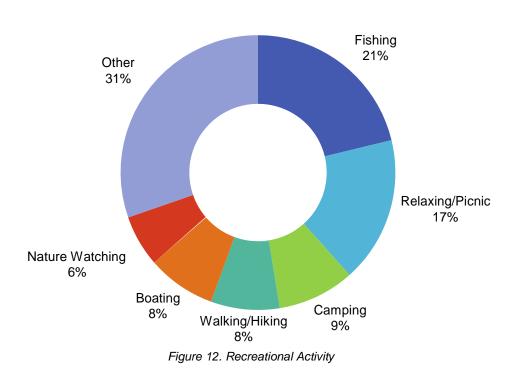


Nearly one-quarter of the visitors are first-time park users and approximately 46% of visitors report that they use the park at which they were surveyed at least monthly. 25% of visitors report using that particular park at least weekly. However, this is roughly equivalent to those that report using the park

less than twice per year.

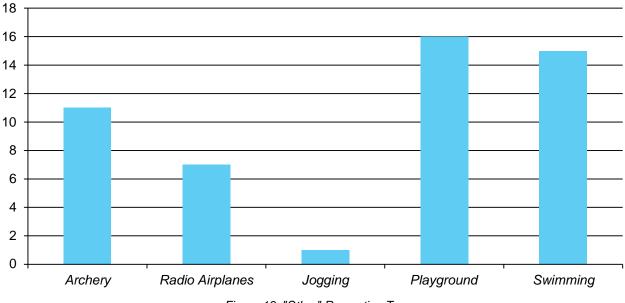
#### **Recreational Activities Observed/Reported**

The surveyors used two survey techniques: a self-reporting survey and an observational survey, which was accomplished by working in teams of two. One surveyor was responsible for interviewing park patrons while the other reported observations of park visitors and activities. The surveyors' results are summarized in the Figure 12 below.

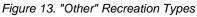


**Recreational Activity** 

The "other" category includes numerous activities such as archery, biking, jogging/running, playground, radio airplane flying, and swimming. When charted, the "other" activity code looks like this:



### "Other" Recreation Types



As described in the Parks Inventory section, several of the "other" recreational activities are only available at certain parks. For example, archery and flying radio controlled airplanes are only available at Grasslands Regional Park. Swimming is only available at the parks that provide access to water (i.e. parks that provide access to Putah or Cache Creeks or the Sacramento River).

#### Visitor Satisfaction with Park Upkeep and Appearance

In addition to gathering data regarding the parks usage and visitor activities, a series of questions were asked relative to the visitors' level of satisfaction as it pertains to the parks upkeep and appearance, the restroom facilities (Porta-Potty), the availability of parking spaces, and to what extent the park met their expectation. Visitors' levels of satisfaction were measured on a Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Dissatisfied" and 5 being "Very Satisfied".

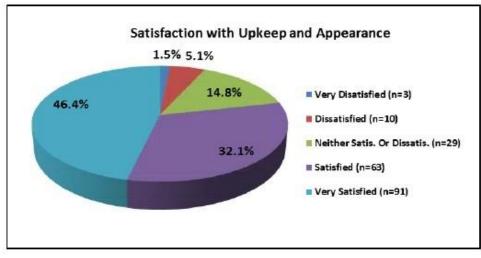
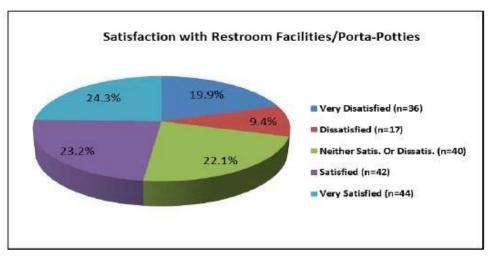


Figure 14. Visitor Satisfaction with Upkeep and Appearance

Over 75% of those surveyed report being either satisfied or very satisfied with the upkeep and appearance of the park. Roughly 6% of visitors reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the park's appearance and upkeep. The park in which most visitors reported being dissatisfied was Esparto Community Park, primarily because of the condition of the park equipment and the play structure.



#### **Restroom Facility Satisfaction**

Figure 15. Restroom Facility Satisfaction

Less than one-half (47%) of visitors reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the park's restroom facilities. Nearly 30% of visitors reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the restroom facilities. Once again, visitors were most dissatisfied with the restrooms at Esparto Park.

## **CHAPTER 7 – FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS**

- It requires about \$850,000 per year (in 2012 dollars) to simply operate and maintain the County's existing park system, of which approximately \$150,000 per year is fee revenue and \$675,000 per year is General Fund.
- It is estimated that approximately 83% of users at the County's boat launch facilities <u>do not</u> pay the day use/boat launch fee.
- An additional \$147,000 of fee revenue per year would likely be captured with the addition of automated payment machines and associated physical improvements at the four (4) parks where the County is currently authorized to collect fees. The Parks Division could increase revenue an additional \$211,000 per year if the Parks Division increases fees at Elkhorn Regional Park and Knights Landing Boat Launch to \$10 per visit.
- The Parks Division could increase revenue to \$400,000 and \$600,000 per year if the County can renegotiate contracts with the State to allow the Parks Division to charge fees at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch and the County raises fees at all eligible parks. Fee collection is currently prohibited at the Putah Creek Fishing Access sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch due to state contract limitations.
- The Parks Division's current staffing levels allow for the routine operation of existing parks sites. The Parks Division does not have adequate staff at this time to develop new programs, perform research and analysis, nor apply for grants that could offset General Fund requirements for staff, or implement the recommendations within this study.
- The existing grant obligations held by the Parks Division require the ongoing operations of at least 12 park sites until 2030. The cost to walk away from these parks would be at least \$3.4 million dollars. Grant obligations may be transferred, with approval, to another operating entity to fulfill the terms of the grant agreement.
- Fee payment and purchases of annual passes should increase if the Parks Division begins enforcing existing fees, or moves to increase both fees and fines for non-payment, or deploys newer technologies for purchasing day and annual passes.
  - Day use fees are not charged or collected uniformly across the County's parks system. (Section 5.4) This is due several factors, including:
    - o State ownership and/or terms of grant awards,
    - o "Iron rangers" depend on the honor system, and
    - Lack of enforcement.
  - Fees are generally collected via "iron rangers" which do not accept electronic payment. Improved fee collection technology is likely to increase revenue.

- Annual Park passes comprise less than 4% of the parks annual revenues and cannot be purchased online nor outside of regular business hours, therefore making them difficult to buy.
- The campgrounds at Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park are routinely in high demand. Fee revenues from the campgrounds comprise an average of 55% of the total fee revenues generated.
- The Parks Division is currently working to update leases and concessionaires agreement to bring them in line with maintenance costs (or increase public value) and protect the County from any liability.
- According to a survey of 196 visitors in 2015 and 2016, visitors to the County's parks system come from across California and nearly half of all parks users surveyed resided within Yolo County. Of those visitors from Yolo County, about one-third came from the City of Woodland and nearly 40% resided in unincorporated Yolo County (Section 5.6). Other information captured, based on a limited one-time survey with a small number of respondents included:
  - Less than 1% of visitors surveyed had used the Parks Division website to locate the park that they were visiting.
  - Nearly 40% of all observed and reported recreational activities are water-based recreation uses (boating, swimming, kayaking, fishing, etc.).
  - The time study conducted on the time cards of the parks maintenance workers shows that their maintenance work and time spent at parks is in direct proportion to the amount of use that a park receives.
  - More than 75% of visitors reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the appearance and upkeep of the park. More than 90% of visitors reported that the park met or exceeded their expectations and that they would recommend the park to someone else.
  - The highest level of reported dissatisfaction was at Esparto Community Park, primarily because of the condition of the pay equipment and play structures. This park is one of the most heavily used County parks with roughly 13% of all visitors.
  - About 30% of park visitors report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the park restroom facilities.

## **CHAPTER 8 – RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents specific goals and recommendations that are designed to ensure the long-term fiscal and physical sustainability of the County's parks system.

#### 8.1 General Recommendations

Overall, the CAO's office recommends increasing fee revenue by a minimum of \$150,000 per year and potentially up to \$600,000 per year by investing in one-time improvements to the fee collection structure of the Parks Division. Some of these improvements may be funded through grants. The County should maintain General Fund revenue at the current level of \$650,000 per year until fee collection results in the ability to reduce General Fund revenue. The County should adopt a goal of reducing the General Fund contribution to \$500,000 per year by 2018 and to \$400,000 per year by 2025.

Additionally, the CAO's office is recommending a two (2) year increase of general fund contribution in the amount of \$175,000 (\$87,000 per year) to fund a two (2) year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner position. Most of the recommendations described below do not require direct funding – they require staff time and resources. The Parks Division will likely be able to continue to fund the position through increased fee revenues if the recommendations are successfully implemented.

#### 8.2 Specific Recommendations

These more specific recommendations generally fall under one (1) of three (3) goals:

- Long term financial stability,
- Increased park usage, and
- Efficient division performance.

The individual recommendations are further divided into two (2) categories:

- Short term recommendations are those that can be reasonably accomplished in the next three (3) years and/or provide the basis for determining the best course of action in the long-term.
- Long term recommendations are intended to be accomplished and adaptively managed past the year 2020.

#### Long Term Financial Stability

The recommendations found in the section identify actions that the Board of Supervisors may adopt to enforce current fees, update the parks fee schedule, and amend or initiate contractual agreements.

Fees and Revenue Collection							
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)						
<ul> <li>Work with Yolo County Sheriff's Office to include routine patrols of County parks and issue citations for non-payment of fees.</li> <li>Install automatic payment machines and traffic control arms at selected park sites to ensure compliance with park fees. Parks recommended for initial physical improvements include Knights Landing Boat Launch, Grasslands Regional Park, and Elkhorn Regional Park.</li> <li>Allow online sales of annual parks passes and increase number and geographical distribution of locations where they are physically available for purchase.</li> <li>Conduct a comprehensive fee study for parks. Ensure that study includes adequate revenues for O&amp;M as well as deferred maintenance and CIP projects for existing parks.</li> <li>Implement, with Board approval, updated fee schedule.</li> <li>Explore agreements for habitat conservation in exchange for endowment/O&amp;M funding, including with the Yolo Habitat Conservancy.</li> <li>Explore pilot programs where fees may be charged (like guided tours, events, environmental education, etc.).</li> <li>Identify partnership opportunities to reduce maintenance costs (for example, Adopt-A-Park or "Friends of", Boy Scouts, and fundraising/donation models).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Conduct time study of sheriff patrols and review fine revenues to determine whether a Park Ranger position is warranted.</li> <li>Evaluate effectiveness of automated payment stations and traffic control arms. If effective at collecting fee revenue consider expanding to other parks.</li> <li>Continue regular vehicle counts.</li> <li>Conduct fee study once at least every 10 years.</li> <li>Implement measures to increase the number of visitors.</li> <li>If appropriate, market parks for mitigation/conservation agreements.</li> <li>Implement successful pilot programs as regular programming.</li> <li>Utilize community relationships to implement parks improvements through volunteer/non-profit work.</li> <li>Encourage the creation of "Friends of County Parks" non-profit organizations that can raise revenue directly from the community for parks improvements and apply for grants for which local governments are not eligible</li> </ul>						

Grants and	I Contracts
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)
• Request permission from state agencies (and others, if necessary) to collect fees at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch, since the Parks Division is prohibited from collecting fees at these parks due to contractual obligations.	<ul> <li>Develop a multi-year funding strategy for seeking grant funding and allocate matching funds in annual budgets.</li> </ul>
• Establish criteria for seeking future grant funds. Grant funded improvements should focus on improving amenities (particularly restrooms and ADA access) at the parks that receive the most use and minimize additional O&M costs.	
<ul> <li>Ensure that any future grant award or O&amp;M agreement does not preclude charging reasonable fees for use.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Institute policy of disclosing full O&amp;M obligation (including term of required operation and average maintenance cost) with any request to Board to request or receive grant funds.</li> </ul>	
• Review and update all lessee and concessionaire agreements to ensure that all agreements provide for legal protection and revenue sharing agreement (or equivalent public benefit).	

#### **Increased Parks Usage**

Increase Visitors to County Parks						
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)					
<ul> <li>Explore pilot programs with community partners (like guided tours, events, farmers' markets, festivals, educational programming, etc.).</li> <li>Establish relationships with community partners to establish ongoing annual events/improvements.</li> <li>Initiate recreation needs and parks satisfaction survey for County residents (mailer and/or web survey).</li> <li>Identify deficiencies in park amenities/access (like permanent restroom facilities, changing tables, hand washing stations, fish cleaning stations, etc.) and compile cost estimate(s) for improvement.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to expand camping opportunities within the County.</li> <li>Contract with licensed surveyor to definitively determine where access easement to Helvetia Park is located.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Implement successful pilot programs.</li> <li>Work with schools/community partners to offer seasonal educational camps.</li> <li>Conduct recreational needs/satisfaction survey every five (5) years.</li> <li>Implement amenity improvements as funding allows.</li> </ul>					

Increase Awareness of County Parks System							
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)						
<ul> <li>Develop strong social media presence.</li> <li>Develop promotional materials.</li> <li>Distribute direct mailer to all county residents with map of County parks and amenities/experiences available at each.</li> <li>Update/overhaul website – allow sales of annual parks passes via website.</li> <li>Work with organizations like the Yolo County Visitor's Bureau to expand awareness of recreational opportunities at County Parks.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Maintain strong social media presence.</li> <li>Raise awareness through contests and campaigns (for example, annual photography/art contest).</li> <li>Work with media to profile parks/events.</li> <li>Increase presence at events to distribute promotional materials and otherwise increase awareness about County park recreational opportunities.</li> </ul>						

#### **Increased Division Performance**

Staffing and G	Drganization
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)
<ul> <li>Fill planner position within Parks Division at Assistant/Associate Parks Planner.</li> <li>Fund two (2) Limited term/Extra Help maintenance seasonal workers (for summer).</li> <li>Establish robust volunteer program.</li> <li>Assess and improve availability and performance of online tools such as online camping reservation system, interactive maps, and downloadable hiking routes.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Assess appropriate staffing and examine whether Parks &amp; Resources should be merged and what department Parks should be housed under. If necessary,</li> <li>Implement parks merger/reorganization (if warranted), <u>Or</u></li> <li>Initiate feasibility study for county-wide or regional parks district.</li> </ul>

Assets and Liabilities				
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)			
<ul> <li>Develop alternatives, with community input, to study for parks that are under-utilized (Dunnigan), over-utilized (Esparto), or orphan properties (Helvetia Grove).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Implement reuse/surplus/transfer of park properties (as necessary).</li> </ul>			

Improve Operations and	Maintenance Efficiency
Short Term Actions (2016-2019)	Long Term Actions (2020 forward)
• Update Title 9 of the Yolo County Code to ensure that county code allows for the reasonable enforcement of parks use fees.	<ul> <li>Review and update, as necessary, county code pertaining to the governance and use of county parks at least once every five years.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Identify metrics and begin collecting necessary data to track division and park performance.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Routinely report to PRWAC and Board (annual basis) on performance metrics of parks system and parks division through an</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Work with maintenance crew to establish most efficient route/scheduling for park maintenance; identify and schedule all repetitive ongoing maintenance on a 12</li> </ul>	annual report or "report card"; include recommendations for further improvement if necessary.
month basis.	<ul> <li>Track division and park performance metrics.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Identify parks with repetitive vandalism/property damage and work with YSO to develop measures to prevent future damages.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Implement methods (like gates, cameras, self-locking restrooms, etc.) to prevent repetitive vandalism/property damage.</li> </ul>

#### 8.3 Anticipated Implementation Costs

Recommended Action	Estimated Cost			
	FY 16/17	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	
Maintain General Fund Contribution	\$675,500	\$675,500	\$675,500	
Add 2-year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner to Parks Division staff	\$87,000	\$87,000	-	
Comprehensive Fee Study	-	\$30,000	-	
Install automatic payment machines and traffic control at select parks (Knights Landing and Elkhorn suggested for pilot project)	\$60,000	\$28,000	\$28,000	
Recreation Needs and Parks Satisfaction survey development*	-	\$10,000	-	
Helvetia Park access survey	\$20,000	-	-	
Seasonal Extra-Help workers for parks maintenance (two temporary FT seasonal EE's for approximately 5 months per year)	\$30,000	\$30,000	-	
Total	\$872,500	\$860,500	\$703,500	

\*It is recommended that the Parks Division coordinate with the Parks Departments within the cities to identify opportunities for cost-sharing or shared services.

It is anticipated that the increased revenue collected once these recommendations are implemented will allow the Parks Division to continue to fund many of these efforts using fee revenue and not relying on general funds.

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Net Gains Timeline & Map, 2016
Appendix B	Status of Parks Master Plan, PRWAC, 2015
Appendix C	"Innovative Parks Management" Study, CSUS, 2012
Appendix D	Yolo County Parks Inventory, 2016
Appendix E	Peer Community Parks System Research, 2016
Appendix F	Parks Visitor and Usage Study, Diversity Research, 2016
Appendix G	June 14, 2016 Staff Report and Minute Order

	CACHE CREEK AREA PLAN Estimated Timeline for Net Gain Items			
YEAR <sup>1,2</sup>	ITEM	PERMIT		
1997	Creation of habitat (±15 ac)/recharge (±15 ac) facility at Rodgers property	Teichert Woodland		
1997	Creation of ±4.75-acre VELB habitat	Teichert Woodland		
1998	Creation of storm water detention facility for Esparto/Madison (\$425,000 value)	Syar		
2004	Dedication of 41-acre Capay Open Space Park (COSP) including parking lot picnic area, trails, historic barn, and trail head (includes \$10,000 cash towards improvements)	Granite Capay		
2004	Dedication of 30-acre Rodgers property	Teichert Woodland		
2004	Restoration of: ±20 acres of in-channel habitat (Orrick) north of Phase 3; ±8 acres of in-channel habitat (Synder East) north of Phase 5; and ±7 acres of in-channel habitat (Snyder West) north of Phase 6	Cemex		
2011	Esparto and Capay operations restricted to sales tax "place of sale"	Granite Esparto		
2012	Operation restricted to sales tax "place of sale"	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
2014	Dedication of ±115-acre Woodland "Reiff" property	Granite Esparto		
2015	Dedication of ±98 acres of reclaimed lake <sup>3</sup> and habitat (Muller) including additional land of unknown size extending to creek centerline and 40 foot unlimited public access easement to CR 94B	Teichert Woodland		
2015	Dedication of 20-foot restricted use Muller Trail easement (±2.2 acres)	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
2015	Donation of \$20,000 for trails/access near Nature Preserve (\$5000 may go to Preserve endowment fund)	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
2015	Dedication of ±121-acre trail and trail corridor	Granite Esparto		
2017	Dedication of ±89 acres of reclaimed lake and habitat	Granite Capay		
2019 (-2028)	Access restrictions on 20-foot Muller Trail easement lifted. Access restrictions and reduction to 20-feet applied to original 40-foot access easement	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
<b>2019</b> (-2028)	Restoration to habitat of 53 acres previously mined on Schwarzgruber site	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
<b>2019</b> (-2028)	Donation of Muller conveyor bridge	Teichert Schwarzgruber		
2020	Dedication of ±64 acres of reclaimed lake and habitat (Storz) including additional land of unknown size extending to creek centerline, and access easement to CR 94B	Teichert Woodland		
2020	Donation of Coors/Storz conveyor <sup>4</sup> bridge per 9/27/05 Agreement 05-231A which allowed relocation of conveyor through Nature Preserve	Teichert Woodland <sup>4</sup>		
2021	Donation of Stephens barn materials for trail head feature	Granite Capay		
2024	Dedication of ±54 acres of additional reclaimed lake and habitat	Granite Capay		

2027	Restoration of ±8 acres of bank swallow habitat on Reiff property	Teichert Esparto
2028	Dedication of ±64 acres of additional reclaimed lake and habitat	Granite Capay
2028	Restoration of ±34 acres of riparian and woodland	Granite Capay
2031	Restoration of ±7 acres of native riparian habitat	Syar
2031	Dedication of $\pm 202$ acres of reclaimed lake and habitat, $\pm 15$ acres of landscaped berm, $\pm 10$ acres of restored oak woodland, additional land of unknown size extending to creek centerline, and access easement from creek and CR 20X to lake	Syar
2032	Dedication of ±88 acres of reclaimed lake and habitat (Reiff) including additional land of unknown size extending to creek centerline, and access easement to a public roadway	Teichert Esparto
2036	Dedication of ±147 acres of reclaimed lake (two) and habitat (Snyder East and West), including additional land of unknown size extending to creek centerline and access easement from Hwy 16 to lake	Cemex
2040	Creation of 9-acre recharge facility	Granite Capay
2046	Dedication of ±201 acre lake and reclaimed habitat	Granite Esparto

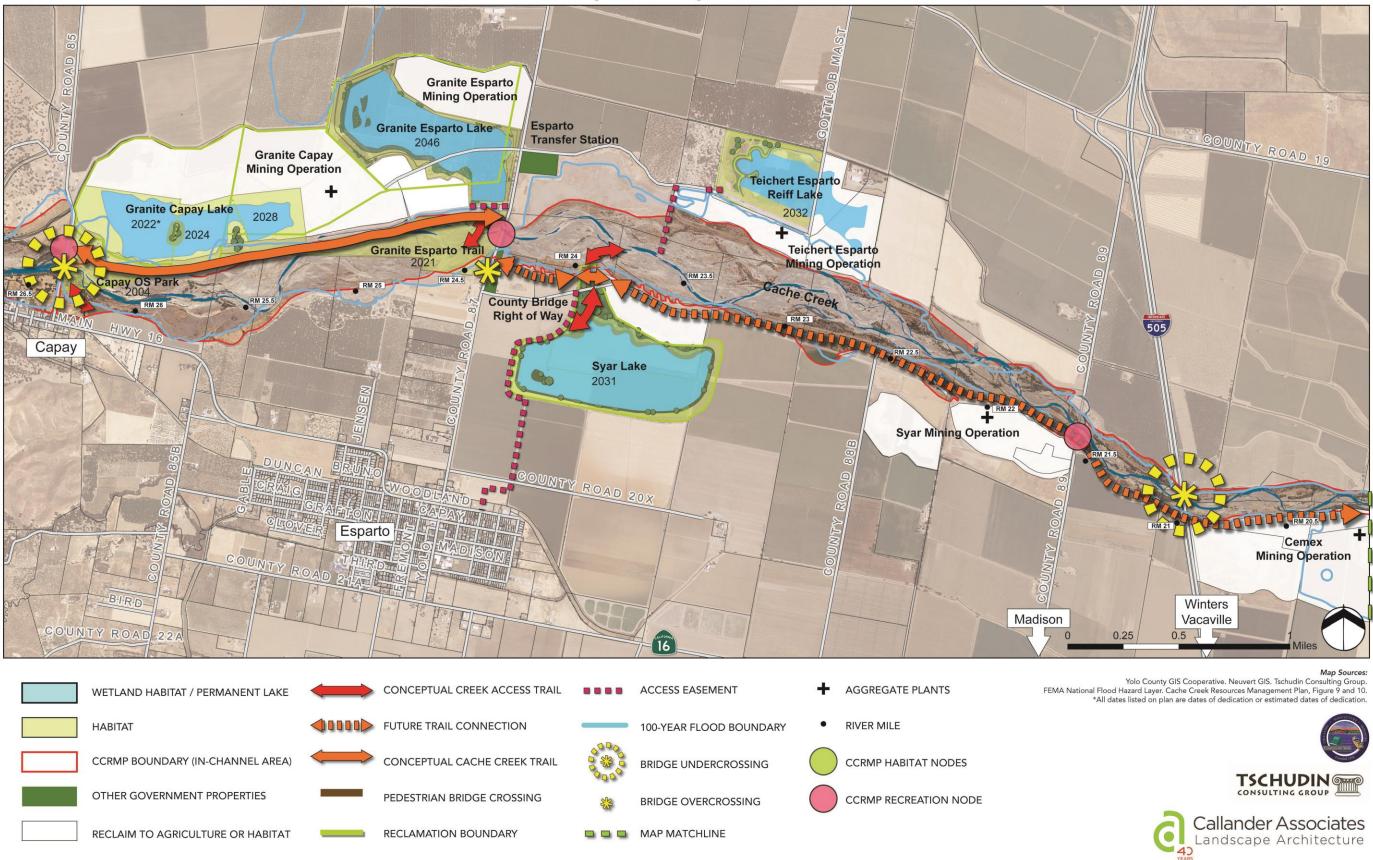
Source: TSCHUDIN CONSULTING GROUP, September 6, 2013. Notes: 1) Post-2013 dates are actuals. All other dates are estimates. 2) Estimates assume maximum production however at this time all mines are under-producing and have been for several years due to economic conditions. In addition two mines are idle (Teichert Esparto and Syar). 3) Approved reclamation to lake is proving on-site to be unlikely. Expect application to amend reclamation to seasonal wetland and habitat. 4) Agreed to outside of DA but relevant to program and TW approval.

Summary of Open Space and Habitat Dedications: 30 ac (TW) 41 ac (GC) 115 ac (GE) 98 ac (TW) 0.9 ac (TW) (easement) 2.2 ac (TS) (easement) 121 ac (GE) 89 ac (GC) -0.45 ac (TS) (easement) 64+ ac (TW) 54 ac (GC) 64 ac (GC) 227+ ac (Syar) 88+ ac (TE) 147+ ac (Cemex) 201 ac (GE) 1341.7+ acres

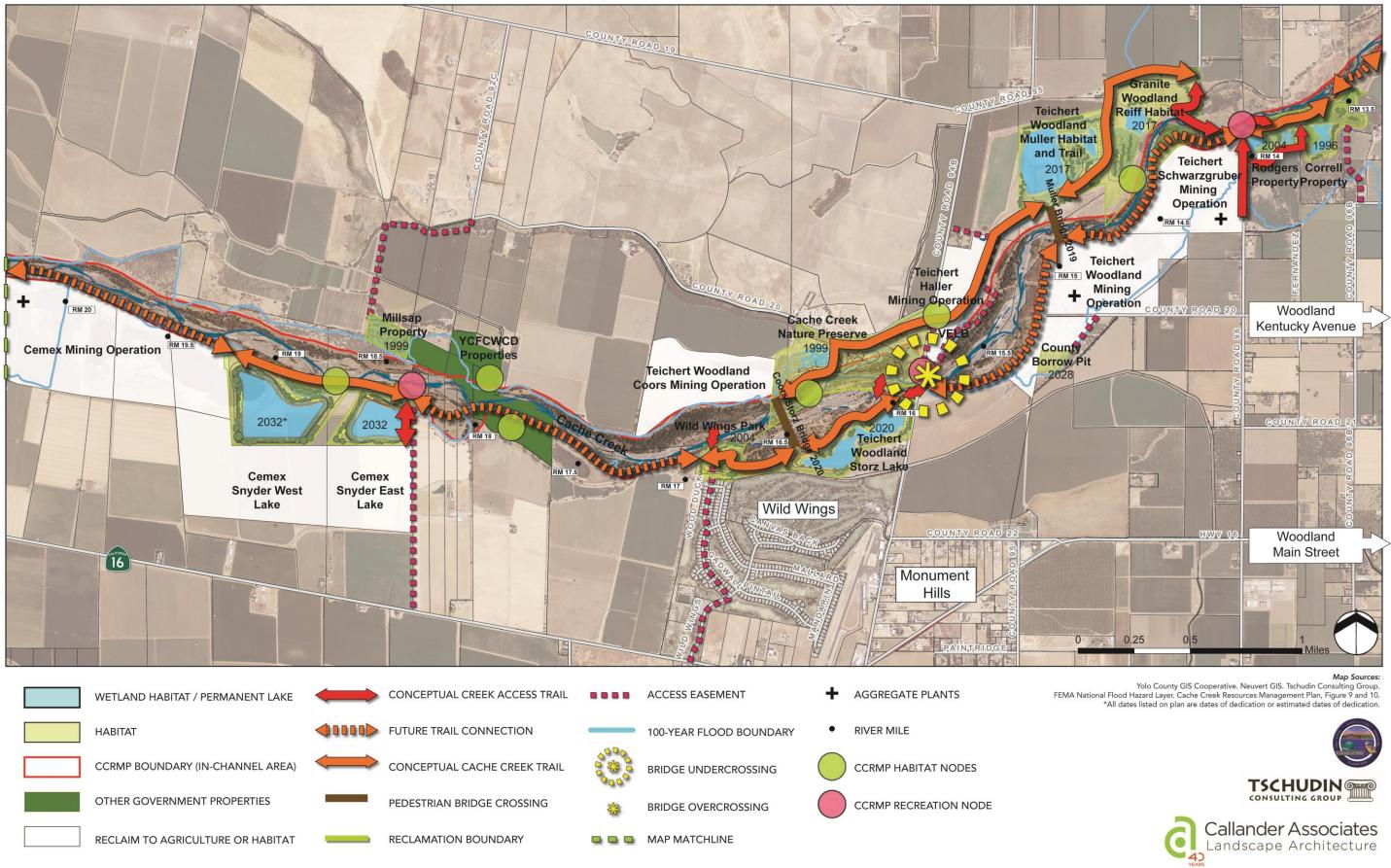
Summary of Habitat Creation/Restoration on Private Land: 15 ac (TW) 4.75 ac (TW) 35 ac (Cemex) 53 ac (TS) 8 ac (TE) 34 ac (GC) <u>7 ac (Syar)</u> 1576.8 acres Summary of Other Net Gain Items

15 ac recharge facility (TW) \$425,000 credit to drainage facility (Syar) \$10,000 for trailhead imps (GC) GE,GC,TW,TS restricted to sales tax place of sale \$20,000 for trails/access near Nature Preserve (TS) Muller conveyor bridge (TS) Coors/Storz conveyor bridge (TW) Historic barn materials for trailhead feature (GC) 9 ac recharge facility (GC)

# CACHE CREEK PARKWAY PLAN (WEST)



# CACHE CREEK PARKWAY PLAN (EAST)



Parks Master Plan Upd				
arks Master Plan				
ark	Action	Partners	Action Type	Timeline
ieneral	Development proposals within parks should be restricted to protect resources			
	Promote use of parks via a strong web presence			
	Install camp hosts at each park			
	Promote river access and river frontage parks			
	Develop a system of water trails within the County			
Cache Canyon				
	This master plan promotes the continuation of Cache Creek Regional Park as the County's "Number One" park unit.		None	Done
	The County should provide general improvements to facilities and infrastructure for all three Cache Creek sites.	BLM, State Parks, Concessionaire, Rafting Companies	Implementation	
	The County should continue to oversee concessionaire rafting activities; the oversight should include ensuring that the operators manage improvements consistent with County and general public needs, especially where joint use occurs.		Administrative	Ongoing
	Replace the Road 40 bridge to allow for use of the public lands beyond, including trailheads and the campground at Buck Island.			
	Develop camping opportunities at the lower parks site, including work with the BLM to develop camping across the creek near the stone barn.	BLM		
	Consider access improvement across Cache Creek. Conduct further study to determine the best location and feasibility of a light-duty, all-season bridge for pedestrians, mountain bikers, and equestrians.	BLM, DFW	Administrative	
	Consider relocating concessionaire uses from the sensitive streamside portions of the Lower Site; relocation should be followed by restoration work, including invasive, non-native vegetation removal.	Rafting Concessions	Implementation	Done
	Design and develop trails linking the three Cache Creek Park sites together.	BLM, Tuleyome, DFW	Implementation	
	Invasive non-native vegetation should be removed throughout all three sites.	BLM, DFW, Yolo RCD, Cache Creek Conservancy	Implementation	Ongoing
	Work with Caltrans on additional on-highway signage advertising the park	caltrans		Ongoing
	Signage improvements are needed throughout this park unit, including trail and interpretive signs.	Tuleyome, DFW, BLM	Implementation	Ongoing

Parks Master Plan Update	e - Actions			
Camp Haswell/ Valley Vista				
	A site plan should be developed for this tandem park unit through a public process that defines an appropriate mix of uses.		Administrative	
	Consider developing a trailhead in conjunction with the Camp Haswell site or adjacent to Highway 16 on the Otis Ranch property side.	BLM, DFW, Tuleyome	Implementation	
	Valley Vista Regional Park should be kept primarily in its natural condition; however, with volunteer support and cooperation from interested organizations, a trail system should be developed.	BLM, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Rumsey Improvement Association	Implementation	ongoing
	Provide a trail link through the "panhandle" to the adjoining BLM land and the Blue Ridge Trail (all located on public lands).	BLM, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Rumsey Improvement Association	Implementation	In progress
	Provide benches along trails at scenic vista points.	Boy Scouts, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Rumsey Improvement Association	Implementation	Picnic table installed
	Trailhead facilities should include a trail map, directional signage, and public safety and environmental interpretive information.	Boy Scouts, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Rumsey Improvement Association	Implementation	
	Provide trash receptacles and chemical toilet facilities at the trailhead. Signs should be located at trailheads to direct users to nearest restroom facilities.		Implementation	
	The County should manage the Camp Haswell area for multiple uses, and clearly distinguish areas that are intended for public versus concessionaire parking.		Administrative	
	Assess the old stone cabin structure (structural integrity and potential historical significance) and, if feasible, renovate the structure for possible uses, including as an information kiosk.	Rumsey Improvement Association	Implementation	
	Consider establishing a caretaker/park host for this site.		Implementation	
	Consider recruiting a support group such as a "Friends of Yolo Parks" organization for care of the kiosk facility.		Administrative	
	Emphasize improvements in day-use functions for the Camp Haswell area.		Implementation	
	Develop an entrance sign for the parks that lets visitors know they are entering the regional park system.		Implementation	
Capay Open Space Park				
	Manage this site as the first of a string of recreation nodes along Cache Creek, as a part of the Cache Creek Resources Management Plan.		Administrative	Done

Parks Master Plan Upda	te - Actions			
·	Support enhancement of the site's day use functions and ecological values, as prescribed in the adopted master plan.		Administrative	Done
	Consider acquisition of high-value adjacent lands (including those identified in the plan), if available.	Cache Creek Conservancy, DFW, Gravel companies	Implementation	
	Install sign on Highway 16 to alert travelers to the park location.	Yolo County, Caltrans	Implementation	
Clarksburg				
	Establish a patrolling park host through a Friends of Yolo Parks-type organization.		Administrative	
	Gates to restrict nighttime use should be installed.		Implementation	
	With the above security measures in place, essential public services should be upgraded, including potable water supply and permanent restrooms.		Implementation	
Dunnigan Park				
	Develop a long-term operations and maintenance (O&M) arrangement, which could include transferring some or all O&M responsibilities to a local entity.		Administrative	
Elkhorn				
	Develop appropriate and compatible multiple uses with emphasis on opportunities for experiencing "nearby nature" environment.		Administrative	
	Continue to operate and maintain the boat ramp function.	Concession	Implementation	
	Consider a sensitively designed and sited interpretive trail for wildlife viewing. Evaluate seasonal sensitivities and manage public access as needed, with respect to wildlife disturbance thresholds (i.e.,trail closures during nesting periods).	DFW	Implementation	
	Develop education-related improvements that could include an interpretive kiosk, signage, birdviewing platforms or blinds, and possibly docent-led tours. Through such outreach, encourage an ethic of appreciation for this rich natural habitat.	DFW, Yolo Audubon	Implementation	
	Enhance picnicking and day-use components.	Boy Scouts, Yolo Railroad	Implementation	
	Seek support from non-profit organizations for the conceptual planning and interpretive content of a non-intrusive nature trail.		Administrative	
	Consider this site as a candidate for an environmental education program to be managed by an appropriate school, academic, or non-profit organization.		Administrative	

	A Class I bicycle trail could be constructed to the east of the railroad track for partial or the	Public Works, Caltrans, West	Implementation	
	full extent of the property, if other linkages are made to this site.	Sacramento	Implementation	
sparto park				
	Continue and enhance the park's community-building functions.		None	
	Maintain the park's tree canopy for natural shade; consider compatible shade structures.		Administrative	
	Consider building a permanent restroom facility.		Administrative	Done
	Events such as the Farmers Market and the Almond Festival should be accommodated to the extent possible.		Administrative	
	Event accommodations should not exceed park and infrastructure capacities (e.g., consider traffic and pedestrian needs and potential effects on adjacent properties and uses).		Administrative	
	Special event activities should be coordinated through the guidance of a local citizen committee and the County Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee.		Administrative	
	Solicit a local "friends of" type organization as a means for guiding ongoing operations and maintenance and future improvements.		Administrative	
	For the longer term, consider the development of an operations and maintenance (O&M) arrangement that transfers O&M responsibilities to a local entity, such as a special district.		Administrative	
	Develop plan for new Esparto park, recently funded by Prop 218.		Administrative	Done
Grasslands Park				
	The County, stakeholders, lessees, user groups, and the public should continue to participate in implementation of the Grasslands Park Master Plan.		Administrative	
	Incorporate a monitoring component for tracking habitat conditions related to sensitive species such as the burrowing owls and vernal pools.		Administrative	Ongoing
	Continue to pursue the acquisition of the adjacent federal land.		Administrative	Ongoing

Parks Master Plan Upda				
	Work with the County on directing revenue from the solar farm into park maintenance	PRWAC	Administrative	
lelvetia Oak grove				
	Verify and establish onsite property boundaries and the ingress-egress easement.		Administrative	
	Conduct habitat enhancement, including invasive weed removal.	Yolo RCD	Implementation	
	Develop minimal site improvements and furnishings to establish a venue for supervised group activities by reservation, including overnight camping and picnics.	Boy Scouts, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, West Sacramento	Implementation	
	Establish a group event reservation system, in partnership with interested non-profit or quasi- public organizations.		Administrative	
	Continue to work with the City of West Sacramento, as may be appropriate under the amended passthrough agreement.		Administrative	
Knights Landing Boat				
	Management of this facility should be expanded to serve a wider range of users, including non-motorized boats.	Concession	None	
	Consider developing a permanent restroom facility with running water.	DFW, Department of Boating and Waterways	Implementation	
	An onsite park host facility should be provided near the parking area entry.		Implementation	Facility in place
	Consider developing improved picnic and shore-fishing facilities for day use.	DFW, Department of Boating and Waterways	Implementation	
	Consider constructing a fish-cleaning station as an amenity for fishermen and to improve the appearance and cleanliness of the water edge.	DFW, Department of Boating and Waterways	Implementation	
	Investigate possible expansion of usable area at Knight's Landing Park to provide additional public uses such as picnicking and day use.	DFW, Department of Boating and Waterways	Implementation	
	Consider and implement, if feasible, planting additional native tree species, to increase the tree canopy in and around the parking lot.	DFW, Yolo Audubon, Yolo RCD, CNPS, Yolo Basin Foundation, Knights Landing CSD	Implementation	
	Adjacent areas with significant habitat value should be retained in natural conditions.		Administrative	
	A gateway trailhead could be located in the parking area for a potential nature trail located on the adjoining state lands for wildlife-viewing and nature appreciation.		Implementation	

	Develop a water trail from the Knights Landing boat launch to Elkhorn park.	PRWAC, Department of Boating	Implementation	
	bevelop a water trainfrom the knights Landing boat launch to Likholm park.	and Waterways, DFW	Implementation	
tah Creek Access Parks				
	Consider an entire revamping of the access and parking infrastructure. Conduct studies to determine a course of action, including possible removal of portions of some existing paved areas.		Implementation	Done
	Develop the Blue Ridge Trail connection to the ridge north of Monticello Dam, on the existing undeveloped BLM public trail easement	BLM, Tuleyome, PRWAC, BOR, SCWA	Implementation	
	In consultation with Caltrans, address highway right-of-way parking and coordinate a solution to on-highway parking.		Administrative	
	Ensure the preservation of the key areas of "wild" riparian habitat in an undisturbed condition, with controlled public access.		Administrative	
	Coordinate safety signage along creek and 128 corridor	Caltrans, DFW	Administrative	
	Develop amenities at this site that enhance the day-use experiences, including picnic tables and supporting infrastructure.		Implementation	Done
	Create and furnish cultural and environmental interpretation components including interpretive trails and signage.		Implementation	Done
	In conjunction with resource agencies, non-profit groups, and other interested parties, participate in efforts to improve and protect fish habitat.	LPCCC, Putah Creek Trout, Putah Creek Council, Solano County Parks, Solano County Water Agency, BOR, DFW	Implementation	Ongoing
	Invasive non-native vegetation should be removed. Restoration projects along the creek corridor should be implemented.	Putah Creek Wild Trout, Putah Creek Council, Solano County Parks, Solano County Water Agency, BOR, DFW, Solano RCD	Implementation	Ongoing
	Cooperatively and in consultation with Native American representatives, protect and enhance areas supporting plants used for cultural purposes.	Yocha De He	Implementation	
	Support and participate in planning the "Dam-to-Dam" trail corridor concept proposed by non-profit groups.		Administrative	
	Consider developing overnight camping facilities located in the vicinity of Sites 4 and 5. (All of the principal intensive use areas should be screened to the extent possible from views from the highway).	Solano County Parks	Implementation	

#### Status of Parks Master Plan Implementation

Parks Master Plan Update	e - Actions			
	Consider seasonal closures for wildlife sensitivity and flood management.		Administrative	
	Consider expanding trail hiking opportunities, subject to careful planning to minimize		Administrative	
	potentially adverse environmental effects.		Administrative	
	Generally, consider the north side of the creek for active public access and use, and the south		Administrative	
	side to be dedicated as habitat and conservation.			
	These sites collectively would benefit from coordination with Solano County, consistent with		Administrative	
	and expanding upon the existing agreements between Yolo and Solano Counties.			
	Expanded roles for this partnership could include resource monitoring and ranger patrols of		Administrative	
	access sites.			
Nichols Park				
	Relocate the park host area to a less conspicuous location and screen it with vegetation.	DFW, Guinda Grange	Implementation	
	Establish tree canopy coverage for the primary day use areas. If appropriate, work with a	Guinda Grange	Implementation	
	commercial tree grower to implement a grove landscape, consistent with Yolo County's			
	agricultural tradition.			
	Establish a stronger connection between upland areas and Cache Creek for both recreation		Implementation	
	benefit and interpretative values.			
	Provide interpretive information regarding the flood events and fluvial processes that caused		Implementation	
	such dramatic changes in the landscapes, as well as the emergent riparian vegetation			
	response to these changes.			
	Consider interpreting other agricultural and natural values with the establishment of a	Guinda Grange	Implementation	
	demonstration garden.			
	Improve physical access to the creek and include provisions for ADA compliance.		Implementation	
	Develop parking area and permanent restrooms		Implementation	
	Develop Rumsey to Nichols Park water trail on Cache Creek		Implementation	
Estar Dark 10				
Future Park and Open				
Space Areas				
	Work with other Covernment partners		Administrative	
	Work with other Government partners		Auministrative	
	Develop Appropriate Gateway Units		Implementation	
	Control of the second of the s			

Parks Master Plan Update	- Actions			
	Work with Private Landowners		Administrative	
	Work with NGO partners		Administrative	
	Bring a State Park to Yolo County		Implementation	
	Determine final use of Helvetia park		Implementation	
	Consider Open Space Areas for Ecological Conservation		Implementation	
	Consider and OHV Park		Implementation	
General Plan Conservation And Open				
from the map				
	Trail linking Cache Creek Access Sites	Cache Creek Conservancy, DFW, Gravel companies	Implementation	
	Expanded Regional park at Cache Creek	BLM, DFW, Equestrian group	Implementation	
	Capay Valley Bicycle Trail	Caltrans	Implementation	
	Gateway Park in the Western Foothills	BLM, DFW, Yolo NCCP, California Audubon, Tuleyome, Trust for Public Lands	Implementation	
	Blue Ridge Trail extension to Putah Creek	BLM, DFW, Tuleyome, Trust for Public Lands, Napa Parks and Open Space District	Implementation	
	Trail Linking Putah Creek Access Sites	Solano County Parks, DFW, BLM, Solano Land Trust	Implementation	
	Trail Linkages along Putah Creek betweeen existing access sites in Winters and Davis	DFW, UC Davis, City of Winters, City of Davis, Solano Water Agency, Solano County	Implementation	
	Gateway Park to yolo Bypass	DFW, Yolo Basin Foundation, Trust for Public Lands	Implementation	
	Trail Linkages along Sacramento River between Knight's Landing and Clarksburg	West Sacramento, DFW	Implementation	
	Gateway park in Delta Region	DFW	Implementation	
	New California Indian Heritage Center in West Sacramento	West Sacramento, Yocha De He	Implementation	
	Expanded Sacramento River Access and Trail Linkage	City of Sacramento, Sacramento County, West Sacramento	Implementation	

Parks Master Plan Update				
	New Community Park in Esparto		Implementation	
	Additional parks and Trail Linkages along Cache Creek Corridor	Gravel Companies, Cache Creek Conservancy, DFW	Implementation	
	New Community Park in Knights Landing		Implementation	
	New Community Park in Dunnigan		Implementation	
	Dunnigan Hills Area Park	State Parks, DFW	Implementation	
eneral Plan onservation And Open				
olicies				
	Expand and enhance an integrated network of open space to support recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, habitat, water management, aesthetics, and other beneficial uses.	DFW, BLM, Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Solano County, Sacramento County, California Audubon, Trust for Public Lands	Implementation	
	Develop a connected system of recreational trails to link communities and parks throughout the county.		Implementation	
	Create a network of regional parks and open space corridors that highlight unique resources and recreational opportunities for a variety of users		Implementation	
	Provision of an appropriate level of public facilities and infrastructure shall be a priority for all County park facilities.		Implementation	
	Establish future resource parks close to population centers, where feasible		Administrative	
	Develop "gateways" or trailheads that provide access for the public to County, State, and Federal lands. Where located on private land, gateways shall be developed working with willing landowners.	BLM, DFW, Tuleyome, Trust for Public Lands, Napa Parks and Open Space District	Implementation	
	Support efforts by willing landowners and non-profit groups to provide new opportunities for outdoor recreation.		Administrative	
	Encourage responsible stewardship of private lands. Promote increased opportunities for public access to waterways and other natural areas.		Administrative	
	Promote the conservation of environmental resources in new and existing park and open space facilities		Administrative	
	The target threshold for resource parks (regional and open space parks) shall be 20 acres per 1,000 total County population (both unincorporated and incorporated). Larger ratios may be appropriate in Specific Plan areas to accommodate important natural features and/or safety areas		Administrative	

Coordinate the development of recreation areas and public open space with regional trail	Administrative	
planning		
Create opportunities for ecotourism	Administrative	
Within the Delta Primary Zone, ensure compatibility of permitted land use activities with applicable, natural open space policies of the Land Use and Resource Management Plan of the Delta Protection Commission.	Administrative	
Support the preservation of open space consistent with this General Plan, via acquisition of fee title or easement interest by land trusts, government agencies, and conservancies from willing landowners	Administrative	
 Coordinate open space acquisition with habitat acquisition that occurs pursuant to the Yolo Natural Heritage Program	Administrative	
Out-of-county mitigation easements in Yolo County for the loss of open space, agriculture, or habitat in other jurisdictions, and flood easements in Yolo County are not acceptable unless the project meets all of the following criteria: Prior notification to Yolo County; Consistency with the goals and policies of the Yolo County General Plan, particularly as related to planned growth, infrastructure, and agricultural districts; Secured water rights and infrastructure to economically maintain the proposed mitigation use; Requirements that existing agricultural operations continue to befarmed for commercial gain; Prohibitions on residential use; Mandatory wildlife-friendly strategies and practices; Compensation to Yolo County for all lost direct and indirect revenue;and Accommodation of recreational uses, such as hunting, fishing, bird-watching, hiking, etc. Where proposed easements meet the above criteria, no further approval is needed. Where one or more criteria are not met, discretionary approval is required.	Administrative	Done
Work with the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Partnership, the Bureau of Land Management, Napa County, California Department of Fish and Game, and other landowners on a voluntary basis to complete the Blue Ridge Trail through voluntary acquisitions.	Administrative	
Support the development of a new State Park in Yolo County, with emphasis on expanding opportunities for family camping and waterrelated recreation, protecting new lands, and incorporating an agricultural heritage park.	Administrative	
Support development of a new off-highway vehicle (OHV) park at an appropriate location	Administrative	
Emphasize the use of native grasses, shrubs and trees as the primary focus of restoration within resource parks and other open spaces.	Administrative	

	Update - Actions			_
	Work with concessionaires and lessees to provide recreational amenities that do not conflict with other park uses or general public access		Administrative	
	Increase public access and recreational uses along waterways wherever feasible, particularly Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, the Yolo Bypass, and the Sacramento River.		Implementation	
	Allow for specified areas of resource parks to be preserved, enhanced and/or restored as mitigation sites for public agencies only, consistent with the requirements of appropriate regulatory and funding agencies, provided that adequate compensation, including funding for operations and maintenance of the mitigation, is provided.		Administrative	
	Support development of the new California Indian Heritage Center in the City of West Sacramento.		Administrative	
	Support improved access for bank fishing		Administrative	
	Support the relocation of the California Governor's mansion to Yolo County.		Administrative	
	Balance the needs of agriculture with recreation, flood management, and habitat, within the Yolo Bypass		Administrative	
	Require clustering and creative site planning in new development areas to preserve and enhance areas of contiguous open space to the extent feasible.		Administrative	
ctions				
	Update the Parks Master Plan as necessary to implement the goals, policies, and actions of relevant portions of the Conservation and Open Space Element.	PRWAC	Administrative	
	Establish permanent areas of agriculture and open space between cities and unincorporated towns to ensure the continued distinctiveness of each community		Administrative	
	Seek to acquire voluntary easements to ensure connectivity with the conservation areas established through the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Partnership		Implementation	
	Pursuant to the Cache Creek Area Plan, develop a recreation plan forthe Cache Creek Parkway including a range of public activities and uses.		Administrative	Underway
	Clearly define boundaries between public open space and private agricultural lands through mapping, signage, fencing, and/or other appropriate means to discourage trespassing		Administrative	

Parks Master Plan Update	- Actions			
	Connect the future Bay Delta Trail system, the future trail system in the lower Yolo Bypass, and the future Cache Creek Parkway system, and link those trails to the American River Bikeway system in Sacramento County		Implementation	
	Prioritize the construction of multi-use trails that provide links between already established trails and bicycle routes		Administrative	
	Amend the Grasslands Park Master Plan to incorporate the McClellan/Davis Telecommunications Site, including the establishment of an endowment and ongoing monitoring of endangered species.		Administrative	Update in future
	Pursue State grant funds to restore areas of the County impacted by illegal OHV activity, to protect areas from unauthorized use through enforcement, and to redirect users to an OHV park		Administrative	
	Pursue a countywide tax and/or bond assessment so that all residents contribute fairly to the planning, acquisition, operation, and maintenance of resource parks.		Administrative	
	Provide recreational uses that are river or creek dependent in locations directly on Cache Creek, Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River. Examples include fishing, canoeing, boating, and nature observation. With the exception of boat launches and docks, more active uses, such as parking, restrooms, and picnic areas, shall be located in areas away from the river and sensitive riparian habitat		Implementation	
	Cluster recreational improvements at various locations along Cache Creek, Lower Putah Creek, and the Sacramento River, to reduce habitat disturbance and provide efficient and cost-effective management by the County		Administrative	
	Design access to resource parks, whether by road or by trail, to go through a controlled entry point wherever feasible.		Administrative	
	Implement the Elkhorn Specific Plan to establish a resource park and public access to the Helvetia oak grove, create public access along the waterway north of County Road 22, and integrate management of both sites with the nearby Elkhorn Regional Park		Administrative	
	Combine parks and trails with open space and wildlife conservation areas where appropriate		Administrative	
	Enhance parking and access at existing resource parks, including the Putah Creek fishing access, Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, and Valley Vista Park. Encourage the use of alternative transportation by providing bike racks, bus stops, and other appropriate facilities.	Caltrans	Implementation	

arks Master Pla	n Update - Actions			
	In order to strengthen an appreciation of natural resource values, local place, and identity, include educational programs, materials, and signs in resource parks that address water, geology, plants, animals, events, and people	Tuleyome, Esparto RISE, Woodland Youth Coalition, Collins West Sac Teen Center	Implementation	
	Establish a program for camp hosts/docents at all resource parks, where feasible		Administrative	
	Allow public agencies to establish, protect and/or enhance habitat for mitigation purposes within specific areas of resource parks, consistent with the requirements of appropriate regulatory agencies, where an endowment is created to fund the monitoring and maintenance of the habitat. Allow non-profit organizations to manage such areas, where appropriate.		Administrative	
	Develop and implement a system of open space corridors and trails that connects each community and city by integrating waterways, scenic areas, significant habitat areas, County parks, and other special resource areas	Cities of Woodland, Davis, Winters, and West Sacramento	Implementation	
	Create "Friends of Yolo Parks" and "Adopt-A-Park" programs and encourage participation by non-profit organizations.	Tuleyome, Sierra Club, Yolo Audubon	Administrative	
	Maintain reasonable fee structures for the use of County parks and recreation facilities by resident and non-resident patrons		Administrative	
	Partner with the private sector and non-government organizations to provide services and/or maintain all or components of park facilities, wherever practical		Administrative	
	Develop a special area plan to govern land use management within the Yolo Bypass		Administrative	Ongoing. Yolo County staff working on this

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Prepared for Patrick Blacklock, Yolo County CAO By George Bravo, Katie Cardenas, Derrick Fesler, Kevin Navarro, & Ryan Ong of the Public Policy and Administration Masters Program at Sacramento State

Presented on May 8, 2012

# **Executive Summary**

We were tasked with creating and recommending innovative management options for the Yolo County Parks Maintenance and Planning Division (Parks Division) working towards a financially stable organization that preserves the parks, promotes public values, and focuses on increasing responsible usership. We approached this task by evaluating the economic status of the Parks Division, reviewing relevant literature, examining the main principles of the Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan (Parks Mater Plan), and conceptualizing possible options based on observations with relevant parties in Yolo County, available research, and best practice methods.

From the Parks Master Plan, we have developed four criteria that we believe are the most relevant-*Efficiency, Public Value, Collaboration,* and *Sustainability*- with an additional criterion of our own *Implementation Feasibility* that we believe is necessary to include in advancing the future of the Parks Division. From our discussion with the Parks Division, we have found that closing the parks is not feasible due to grant obligations, which would make the closure more expensive than if the Parks Division remained open. As a result, we have generated seven possible options that fall under four broad categories, which focus on enabling the Parks Division to remain financially solvent to continue preserving county parks and promoting public values. The following are the options discussed:

### **Community Relations**

# Strengthen and Expand Relationships with Local Non-Profits Increase Responsible Usership

### Marketing

Start "Support Your Parks" Fundraising Campaign

### **Information Systems**

Create a Social Network Presence

### **Fiscal Management**

Improve Maintenance Efficiency Increase Grant Funding Share Services with Rural Communities

Of the possible options, we recommend, that the Parks Division strengthen and expand relationships with local non-profits, focus on increasing responsible usership, start a "Support Your Parks" fundraising campaign, and create a social network presence. We believe that these recommendations would best serve as a viable plan for the future of the Parks Division as they best advance the criteria.

# Fiscal and Staffing Challenges of the Parks Division

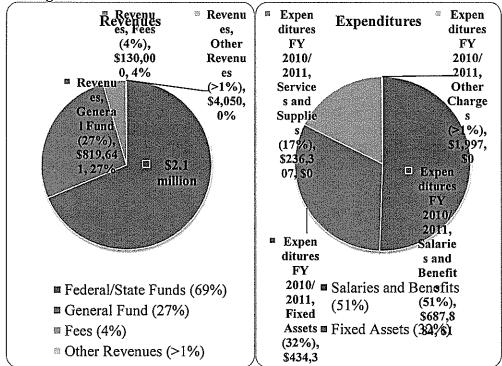
The Yolo County Parks and Resources Department was experiencing staffing and financial reductions during these challenging economic times as seen in Table 1. As a result, the department was merged with the County Administrator's Office in fiscal year 2010-11, and modified its mission of creating sustainable public space to only providing standard services for visitors. Due to these changes it was renamed the Yolo County Parks Maintenance and Planning Division. With these modifications, the Parks Division struggles to maintain its standard level of services with reduced funding and staff. The goal of this report is to present viable options that the Parks Division can implement, working towards a financially stable organization that preserves the parks, promotes community values, and focuses on increasing responsible usership.

Areas Changed	FY 2007/2008 FY 2011/2012		% Change
Status	Standalone Department (Parks and Resources)	Division of CAO (Parks Maintenance and Planning)	
Staffing	17	<b>7</b>	-59%
Budget	\$5.2M	\$1.9M	-63%
Area of Responsibility	1823 acres	2292 acres	+26%

Table 1- Changes in the Parks Division from FY 2007/08 to FY 2011/12

# **Financial Challenges**

Due to funding reductions, the Parks Division relies heavily on federal and state discretionary grants to make capital improvements and maintain current services as seen in Chart 1. The discretionary grants awarded to the Parks Division include provisions that require the parks that receive funding to remain open to the public for up to twenty years. Failure to comply with the terms of the grant can result in reimbursing the grantor, which may also include penalty fees (Santos and Liddicoet, 2012). Through an internal study conducted by the Parks Division, they concluded that closing the parks is not financially feasible because of the requirement to repay the grants and incurred penalties.



### Chart 1- Budget for Yolo Parks Division FY 2010/ 2011

### **Staffing Challenges**

The staff reduction has limited the Parks Division's ability to seek additional funding and operational assistance. The Parks Division strategically applies for grants that do not require considerable time or personnel commitments; however, this limits its ability to pursue additional funding (Santos and Liddicoet, 2012). Additionally, the Parks Division's ability to generate partnerships or expand current ones is limited because such partnerships require coordination and oversight that the Parks Division cannot adequately provide due to limited staff. However, some organizations have expressed interest in building or expanding partnerships if it is feasible for the Parks Division.

### Formulating Viable Options through Evidence and Assumptions

The Division of Parks Maintenance and Planning lost 59% of its staffing and 69 percent of its budget since fiscal year 2007-08. However, its maintenance and operational responsibilities have increased from 1823 acres to 2292 acres. The Parks Division struggles to provide a standard level of service for its visitors and cannot adequately engage stakeholders due to financial and staffing limitations. The required day-to-day duties and responsibilities for staff make it difficult to coordinate and foster critical partnerships with the Parks Division and its stakeholders to improve the services and quality of the parks. Our recommendations account for the Parks Division's financial and staffing constraints and put forth viable options that the County should consider. Due to limited time and resources, the formulated analysis and options identified in this report are preliminary. Further research must be conducted to offer an expansive analysis of the options presented.

# Criteria from the Parks Master Plan

Here we outline the criteria that we selected to assess the options below. Our selected criteria are derived from the Yolo County Parks and Open Space Master Plan, with the exception of implementation feasibility. The original language from the Master Plan is in parenthesis. We chose criteria from the Master Plan that we believe are most relevant to the Parks Division today. Implementation feasibility is a necessary criterion to include in advancing any future plan for the Parks Division. They are listed below:

### Efficiency (Best use of financial resources on a system-wide basis)

Does the option minimize costs? This criterion will measure if processes are improved to save time and/or money.

### Public Value (County parks serve the public)

Does the option promote public values? Specifically, this criterion identifies if the option creates public worth, such as encouraging stewardship, increasing park accessibility, preserving open space, improving the quality of the parks and/or its services, and reflecting residents' values of the parks.

# **Collaboration** (*Productive relationships with other park and recreation providers, with positive access results as experienced by the public*)

Does the option result in increased productive relationships? Specifically, this criterion identifies whether the option will lead to additional productive relationships with the Parks Division in expanding or improving services and/or improving the quality of the parks.

### Sustainability (A legacy for the future)

Does the option provide a self-sustaining solution? This criterion considers if the option promotes the capacity for future generations to enjoy the parks at their current or at a better state of quality.

### **Implementation Feasibility**

How realistic is the execution of this option? This criterion will take into consideration, the administrative, legal, economic, and political constraints of the Parks Division and utilize those constraints to estimate the feasibility of implementing the option.

# **Options for Innovative Parks Management**

To develop our options, we evaluated a literature review of current and best practices, reviewed several reports on how other local park divisions have dealt with funding and staffing decreases, and interviewed the Parks Division's staff and external stakeholders on its operations and maintenance practices. Russell (2005) from the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at the University of Indiana, stated that successful parks departments focus on effective management, improving services, the community and their values, the people and their needs, and the importance of protecting natural resources. This can be accomplished through attention to fiscal management, public, and community relations, sophistication of sales and marketing, and mastery of information systems.

Based on what we found, we developed seven options that address the goal of creating a financially stable Parks Division that preserves parks, promotes community values, and focuses on increasing responsible usership.

## **Community Relations**

Strengthen and Expand Relationships with Local Non-Profits Increase Responsible Usership

### Marketing

Start "Support Your Parks" Fundraising Campaign

### **Information Systems**

Create a Social Network Presence

### **Fiscal Management**

Improve Maintenance Efficiency Increase Grant Funding Share Services with Rural Communities

# **Community Relations**

### Strengthen and Expand Relationships with Local Non-Profits

This option recommends building and strengthening community partnerships with non-profit groups, with a focus on expanding financial, educational, awareness, and recreational services and programs for the Parks Division.

This option recognizes that the Parks Division faces administrative and funding constraints. Forging new and strengthening existing partnerships allow the non-profits to assist the Parks Division in raising revenues, providing educational or awareness programs, and supporting the parks recreationally, while promoting parks values and responsible user ship.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
<ul> <li>Decrease costs</li> <li>by allowing non- profits to provide programs</li> <li>Costs related to oversight</li> </ul>	- Increases community ownership, involvement, education, awareness value	- Collaboration among the county and non-profit groups	-Promotes sustainable usership -Promotes programs and services that preserve the parks	- Administrative constraints

### Evidence

In our interviews with local non-profit groups (Appendix A) and our interview with the Parks Division, both expressed interest in further developing partnerships. However, non-profit groups are restricted financially and some expressed concerns in maintaining a volunteer base. In addition, the Parks Division expressed concerns related to collaboration and oversight, especially maintenance related services or programs.

### Analysis

Building and strengthening community partnerships may alleviate some of the Parks Division's administrative and funding constraints. The partnerships may provide additional services to the Parks Division that would enable staff to spend time providing other services. Moreover, such partnerships might increase the usership base and thus funding for the Parks Division. Non-profit partnerships could promote the parks through educational, awareness, and recreational events. Examples of such events include concerts, picnic days, hiking clubs, Earth Day, park awareness, and recreational events. We recommend focusing on promotional partnerships over maintenance partnerships, as they would usually require less oversight from the Parks Division.

PROS	CONS
-May increase financial stability	-Some programs may require oversight from
-May increase promotion and support for parks	the Parks Division, which may not be feasible
-Foster a sense of community and connection	with its limited staff
to the parks	-Forging such partnerships may require
-Through educational and awareness programs,	extensive time and effort
community values and responsible usership	-Non-profits may be unwilling to forge such
may be cultivated	partnerships

### Increase Responsible Usership

This option recommends increasing responsible park usership in relation to paying fees through the implementation of intrinsic or extrinsic incentives by the Parks Division, a non-profit organization, or a local community.

This option recognizes that the county estimates only fifty percent of park users pay fees, which means that the county could potentially double their fee revenue from \$115,000 to \$230,000 a year. Therefore, this option addresses adding public value and moving towards responsible, sustainable park usership, with the intention of increasing fee revenue.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
- Increase fee	- Promotes	- Possible	- Generates	- Limited
revenue	responsible	collaboration with	sustainable,	administrative
	usership	non-profit groups	responsible, usership	constraints

### Evidence

To increase responsible usership, first we reviewed the literature on intrinsic and extrinsic incentives related to public goods. An intrinsic incentive relies on deeply held social beliefs or a want for self-satisfaction that motivates individuals to contribute to public goods (Reeson & Tisdell, 2008). In contrast, extrinsic incentives involve tangible rewards, and are usually more effective than intrinsic incentives. We supplemented these findings with a recent report by the Legislative Analyst's Office (2012), which recommended an action plan for the California State Parks system by creating an extrinsic motivation for individual parks with a percentage of the fees they collect allocated to projects they have chosen. The districts are also given authority to use experimental fee collection programs to try to raise revenue.

### Analysis

The Parks Division should consider employing both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives to motivate people towards responsible usership. Intrinsic incentives would convey to the public the importance of responsible usership and the services that could be provided. An extrinsic incentive would give more authority to communities to enforce and educate others about park fees. If fee revenue did increase, then communities would be awarded with a percentage of the fee increases for a project.

PROS	CONS
eriya Aliya kuwa bibibi kuta kuta kuta kuta kuta kuta kuta kuta	-Intrinsic incentives have an uncertain impact because they rely on individuals
- This option is inexpensive to implement,	- Limitations to extrinsic incentives include:
especially in the event that it was headed by a	the fact that some parks do not generate
non-profit	revenue, some parks have low attendance, and
	the Parks Division may not want to forfeit
	funding

# Marketing

### Start "Support Your Parks" Fundraising Campaign

This option recommends starting a fundraising campaign that offers users and supporters the option to donate money to the county parks. In return for becoming a parks supporter, these individuals would get a bumper sticker, t-shirt, and/or other incentives that would help promote the Parks Division.

This option recognizes that in the current economic and political climate, it is not feasible to raise daily fees, camping fees, or to propose a community tax measure. Therefore, this voluntary donation may increase revenue for the Parks Division, allow supporters to donate directly to the Parks Division, promote park values, and have low implementation costs.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
	- Allows parks		- Financially self-	a a paga tarih kara
- Potential	supporters to	- Collaboration	sustaining because	
revenue increases	donate to the	among the county,	of low costs, but an	- Limited
- Low	Parks Division	non-profit groups,	unreliable source of	administrative
implementation	-Promotes parks	and individuals to	revenue	constraints
costs	- Increased	collect donations	- Promotes park	
	services		values	

### Evidence

This option is flexible, in that there could be many implementation strategies. We believe that by combining fundraising revenue and park promotion, this option will increase revenue, awareness, and support for the Parks Division. Our brief search showed that other counties use a variety of fundraising strategies, including general promotion, legacy donations (Tobin & Stookey, 2011), and establishing foundations (Hartman, 2008). In addition, Santa Clara County (2010) demonstrated the ability of counties to develop effective marketing strategies, such as promoting the use of their parks through partnerships with local organizations and social media outlets.

### Analysis

Because it is difficult for the Parks Division to raise revenue, we believe that creating an avenue for individual donations by park supporters and users is the most viable option at this time for increasing funding. In addition, there are opportunities for the Parks Division to advertise by offering donors a token of gratitude. Finally, the Parks Division could consider allowing legacy donations or establishing a larger parks foundation to further increase revenue.

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	PROS	CONS
-Potential increase	in current funding	-Initiation implementation and coordination
-Increase awarene	ss and support for the Parks	
Division		-Possibility that no one chooses to donate
	a en angeler per englegen datak	<ul> <li>M. Granding, March and A. S. S. Marchar, and</li> </ul>

# **Information Systems**

### Create a Social Networking Presence

This option recommends that the Parks Division start and maintain a social networking site, like Facebook, to build community networks, which aim to increase communication related to awareness, education, and general information about the parks.

This option recognizes that social networking offers many advantages because it is cheap, accessible, and has the ability to connect an organization to many interests simultaneously. Therefore, with a Facebook page, the Parks Division could establish stronger networks, advertise community events more efficiently and to more people, and promote the parks and responsible usership.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
- Increase usership and fee revenue -Low implementation costs	<ul> <li>Cultivates sense of community</li> <li>Promotes park services, events, and information</li> </ul>	- Among the county, non- profits, the community and parks networks	- Financially self- sustaining - Promotes networking, parks services, and values	- Limited administrative constraints

### Evidence

Our examination focused on Facebook because it is free, easily accessible, and has many users. In our search, we found examples of Yolo County Departments, California Parks Departments, and State and National Parks networks on Facebook. These government agencies use Facebook to promote park education, awareness, community events, and recreational opportunities, to inform the community about seasonal updates and to champion the beauty of their parks by posting photos as seen in Appendix D. If the county does not have the resources to develop their own Facebook page, many organizations can collaborate and create a Friends of the Parks page, which serves the same purposes, but would be managed by non-profits.

### Analysis

First, because other Yolo County Departments have Facebook pages, we assume the county has established policies for starting and maintaining social networking sites. We found that Yolo County departments, local non-profit organizations, and communities are active and have a significant amount of users on Facebook, as demonstrated in Appendix C. An initial analysis determined that the Parks Division could establish a network of 73,500 linked users, understanding that even a conservative sample could yield a large network for the Parks Division.

PROS	CONS
-Inexpensive and easy to implement	-Start-up costs related to training on how to
	utilize social networking
-Would improve community networking,	-Time spent updating, monitoring, and
especially with young people, and would	maintaining social networking sites
promote education and awareness about the	-Social media venues do not guarantee an
parks	increase in usership

# **Fiscal Management**

### Improve Maintenance Efficiency

This option recommends two approaches- one prioritizes maintenance routes based on reducing transportation and staff costs and the other privatizes maintenance functions in isolated, rural areas.

This option recognizes that the maintenance staff faces considerable challenges in executing their duties and responsibilities because of budget and staff reductions while having to take on a growing parks system. Therefore, this option addresses decreasing costs, increasing services, and increasing the overall quality of parks preservation.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
<ul> <li>Decrease transportation and staff costs</li> <li>Increase time spent on other projects</li> <li>Increase services provided</li> </ul>	-Increased services - Community ownership of parks	- Collaboration among maintenance workers and the parks planner -Possibly private industries	- Long-term solution - Increase the quality of parks preservation	<ul> <li>Administrative, legal, and political constraints</li> <li>Stakeholders: employee unions and the public</li> </ul>

### Evidence

Based on a review of park audits by other county and city governments, prioritizing maintenance jobs consists of measuring the costs of the materials, transportation, and time paired with the importance of the job (Cheng, 2010; Erickson, 2005; San Francisco, 2006). The parks maintenance audits we reviewed showed that any reduction in transportation time and costs can have a large impact on the time spent completing other projects by employees and the funding available for such projects. For this reason, other parks have considered privatizing maintenance jobs in areas that are costly to serve (Erickson, 2005).

### Analysis

The distance between the Parks Division and the various parks within its jurisdiction, as seen in Appendix B, increases transportation costs and decreases the amount of time employees can spend on maintenance projects. Therefore, the Parks Division should consider improving maintenance efficiency as much as possible through the prioritization of maintenance routes. Yolo County may also want to consider privatization of maintenance functions in relation to Dunnigan Park and the Knights Landing boat launch because they are small isolated parks. The savings in transportation costs may compensate the new costs, but it depends on the amount of service these two parks currently receive.

PROS	CONS
-Possible savings in time and resources, which could lead to an increase in services	-The costs of privatizing maintenance services -Potential for negative reactions from the community and/or parks employees related to privatization

### Increase Grant Funding

This option recommends enlarging the amount of grant funding for the Parks Division.

This option recognizes that the Parks Division faces funding limitations. Thus, it addresses increasing grant funding to increase services and promote park values.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
-Increase services - Costs related to applying for and maintaining grant requirements	- Increased services - Promotes park values, goals, services, and projects	- Depends on the grant requirements	<ul> <li>Financially not self-sustaining</li> <li>Preserves the parks for future generations</li> </ul>	-Administrative constraints

### Evidence

Based on an interview with park employees, we believe that the Parks Division should use grant funding as a supplementary source of financial support. Strategically applying for grants can increase the services provided by the Parks Division and allow for the completion of specific projects. We emphasize strategically because in 2006, the Parks Division was awarded every grant they applied for and did not have enough staff to implement and maintain them. They were forced to return some of the grant money.

### Analysis

However, we recognize from the interview with the Parks Division that this option is not administratively feasible at this time due to staffing restrictions. The Parks Division has identified specific projects and criteria for grant applications, but beyond that, they cannot afford a further dedication of staff time and resources. In addition, with only three maintenance workers, grant requirements could potentially increase their workload and reduce planning flexibility. This is because grant funding is not discretionary in that the money awarded is usually dedicated to a specific service or project. Ultimately, grant funding represents an area of funding the Parks Division can still control and if grants are applied for and used strategically, they can increase services and public value.

PROS	CONS			
n an an an ann an Arrest an ann ann an Arrest an Arrest ann an Arrest an Arrest ann an Arrest ann an Arrest an	-Grant writing takes considerable amount of			
	time			
expand, improve, and/or maintain the services	-Staff constraints related to implementation of			
it currently provides				
	-Limited staff to pursue grant writing			
	-Grant funding is not discretionary			

### Share Services with Rural Communities

This option recommends reaching out to rural communities where there is interest for sharing services with the Parks Division.

This option recognizes that the Parks Division faces administrative constraints in their maintenance operations as they currently only employ three maintenance workers. Therefore, this option addresses decreasing transportation, staff, and maintenance costs while increasing community ownership and collaboration between rural communities and the Parks Division.

Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
-Decrease transportation, staff, and maintenance costs	<ul> <li>Increases</li> <li>community</li> <li>ownership</li> <li>Promotes park</li> <li>values of</li> <li>stewardship</li> </ul>	- Collaboration among the county, local communities, and potentially non-profit groups	-Promotes community values and ownership that could lead to sustainable usership	- Administrative, economic, and legal constraints

### Evidence

A recent report by the Legislative Analysts' Office (LAO) (2012) and our interview with the Parks Division, informed increasing localized control of parks functions by sharing services. The LAO (2012) report recommended transferring state parks to county or city governments because localized control is usually more efficient. Similarly, the Parks Division has considered increasing local control for the Esparto and Dunnigan parks because it would save the Parks Division resources related to transportation, staff, and maintenance. It also may increase community ownership of the parks.

### Analysis

The township of Esparto and Dunnigan are already working with the Parks Division by helping with the maintenance of the parks through local government and local non-profit efforts. However, these rural communities do not currently have the resources to take full responsibility for maintenance efforts. In addition, because of the department's limited staff, this option may not be administratively feasible, as building collaboration requires a considerable amount of time and effort. Even if an expanded partnership emerged, the Parks Division may still need to provide some level of oversight and this would take time from its limited staff.

PROS	CONS
-Allows for more time and resources for staff to focus on other parks -Creates community ownership of the parks -May inspire a personal sense of connectedness to the local park.	-Community may not possess the capacity to assist with services -Requires an extensive amount of time and effort

Increase Awareness About Responsible Usership	Efficiency	Public Value		Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility	Improve Maintenance Efficiency	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility						
Strengthen and Expand Relationships with Local Non-Profits	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility	Create a Social Network Presence	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility	Share Services with Rural Communities	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility
Operation Evaluation Scorecard This scorecard quickly summarizes our	conclusions related to how well our options advance our criteria.		Advances criteria	May advance criteria	Does not advance	Start "Support York Parks" Fundraising Campaign	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility	Increase Grant Funding	Efficiency	Public Value	Collaboration	Sustainability	Implementation Feasibility

# **Recommended Options**

After reviewing each option against each criterion, our group recommends building and strengthening partnerships with local non-profits, increasing awareness about responsible usership, starting a "Support Your Parks" fundraising campaign, and create a social network presence. All options may be pursued simultaneously and do not necessarily have to be pursued in the order listed below.

### Strengthen and Expand Relationships with Local Non-profits

Building and strengthening partnerships with local non-profits encourages collaboration and public involvement and promotes park values. Through interviews, we found that non-profits expressed a desire to increase or renew their collaboration with the Parks Division. In the past, collaborations with non-profits focused on allowing volunteers to do basic maintenance functions. Going forward, we believe the Parks Division should foster collaboration around financial, educational, awareness, and recreational programs. While maintenance functions provide direct benefits to the Parks Division, there are costs related to oversight. Financial, educational, awareness, and recreational programs can be organized with little or no input from the Parks Division, and may have financial and social benefits. On the other hand, there may be financial and administrative constraints. Successful collaboration with non-profits may require extensive time and effort from employees of the Parks Division. Moreover, non-profits may have limited capabilities to partner with the Parks Division due to their own fiscal limitations.

Ultimately, we recommend this option as it will promote public value, lead to additional productive relationships, and provide a self-sustaining solution. However, we do recognize that this option may not increase efficiency or be feasible to implement. Nonetheless, we believe that this option is worthwhile to pursue as its potential long-term benefits greatly outweigh the short-term costs.

### **Increase Responsible Usership**

The Parks Division should consider designing and implementing incentives or education programs about the importance of responsible usership, park user fees, and services. This is due to the limited ability of government to increase funding through tax or fee increases, and the estimation that only half of Yolo park users pay their fees. The benefits of awareness are the potential increase in responsible usership and fee revenues. However, increasing responsible usership may be more successful if extrinsic incentives were used, which means local communities would receive a monetary reward for increasing fee revenue. This option has potential financial constraints, as certain parks do not collect fees and others do not accrue enough revenue due to low attendance rates in recent years.

Ultimately, we recommend this option as it will promote public value, is realistically executable, and will provide a self-sustaining solution. On the other hand, we do recognize that this option may not reduce costs or lead to adding productive relationships. Nonetheless, we believe the benefits of awareness and responsible usership is worthwhile to pursue as it may lead to increased revenue through usership fees and result in additional productive relationships with the Parks Division.

### Start "Support Your Parks" Fundraising Campaign

The Parks Division should consider increasing revenue by starting a 'Support Your Parks' fundraising campaign that would encourage parks supporters to donate to the Parks Division. In return, supporters would get a promotional item, which would help spread awareness about the parks. There is flexibility related to implementing this alternative as seen by our review of other counties' marketing plans. However, we did not have enough time or research to make an accurate revenue projection from a fundraising campaign. In addition, there are administrative constraints, as the staff will need to spend required time on the initiation, implementation, and coordination costs of fundraising.

Ultimately, we recommend this option, as it will reduce costs, promote public value, and is realistically executable. Conversely, we do recognize that this option may not lead to creating productive relationships and it may not be a self-sustaining solution. Nonetheless, we believe the benefits of such a program are worthwhile to pursue.

### **Create a Social Network**

Social media is a low-risk, low-cost, high reward option to increase the public value of county parks and foster collaboration. Thus, we recommend that the Parks Division begin to develop a social network in conjunction with local non-profits and community groups. The advent and proliferation of social media websites allow messages from any social media user to be immediately sent to a support group of individuals and organizations who share common interests (Shirky, 2009). Social networking could effectively facilitate communication between the Parks Division, non-profit groups, community organizations, and individuals that may lead to increased partnerships and a more efficient distribution of information related to educational, awareness, parks services, and local events.

Our best practices observations of social media websites show a large prospective list of social media followers for the Parks Division, which is demonstrated in Appendix D. Potentially, thousands of individuals can receive daily updates related to parks and parks organizations, which can be multiplied quickly when those individuals share that information with others. However, this option has limited administrative constraints. Employees of the Parks Division may need to train on how to operate and maintain social networking sites. Although a person with experience in social media may provide training, staff will still need to spend time updating, monitoring, and maintaining the social networking sites.

Ultimately, we recommend this option, as it will improve communication without additional costs, add public value, lead to additional productive relationships, is relatively easy to implement, and provides a self-sustaining solution.

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### APPENDIX A

### Non-Profit Interview Summary

Non-profit Organization(s)	Involvement or Interest Working with division	Suggestions			
Yolo Land Trust	Ensures private land remains undeveloped through a limited budget and only 1.5 employees.	Due to the small staff and budget, a partnership with this organization is not possible.			
Tuleyome	Worked with Yolo County in the past and can assist Yolo County in nearly every way possible through a solid volunteer base.	There is an opportunity to expand upon this relationship.			
Putah Creek Council	Currently working on re- vegetation projects and is open to further collaboration, but the County's lack of staffing is an impediment.	There is an opportunity to expand upon this relationship and interest in managing five access points along the Inner Reach Dam that the County oversees.			
Will Baker Native Plant Garden	Donated the land that became Nichols Park and partners with other agencies to maintain the William Baker Native Plant Garden that is adjacent to Nichols Park. Volunteers care for the garden through funding primarily from the Capay Valley Rotary Club.	There is an opportunity to expand upon this relationship.			
Esparto Community Services District	The organization has expressed interest in managing the Esparto Park, but it cannot financially maintain the parks or capable enough to offer shared services.	Efforts to conduct outreach to this organization are not a viable option now, but when it becomes financially stable, there will be an opportunity to expand upon the relationship.			
Yolo County Historical Society & The Gibson Group	Currently partners with the division to run and maintain the Gibson House Museum. Expressed concerns related to collaboration and promotion of events, and programs.	There is opportunity to expand upon this relationship with interest in networking and outreach programs.			

Key Discussion Findings with Organizations

Some organizations have expressed interest in increasing collaboration efforts and some have declined because of their own staffing or financial constraints.

It has been a challenge for organizations to work with the division due its lack of availability and coordination due to being short staffed.

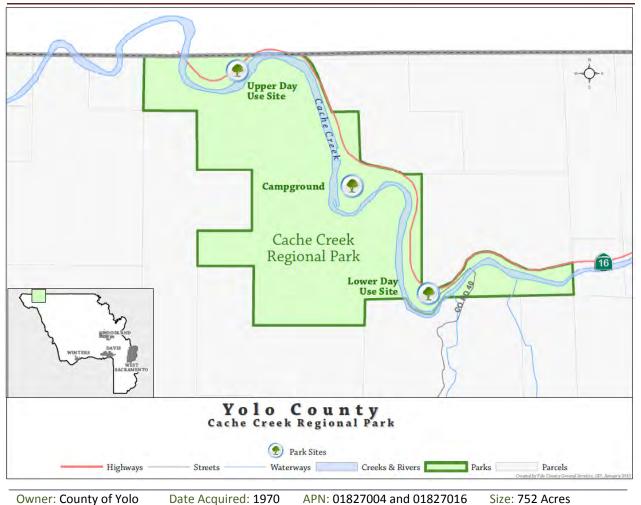
In some circumstances, funding was raised by an organization to purchase a capital expense to make improvements. However, the capital improvement took a lengthy amount of time to install due to coordination issues with the division and other organizations

A capital improvement decision by the division caused unease because it failed to collaborate with another organization about the addition.

# PARKS DIVISION INVENTORIES

The following Appendix is a compilation of information on properties owned and operated by the Parks Division of Yolo County General Service

# **Cache Creek Regional Park**



### Description

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park is situated in an attractive canyon and mountains setting with numerous recreation options spread across three sites (Upper, Middle and Lower). This park offers a wide array of regional park amenities to residents, with recreational uses including camping, rafting tours, swimming, picnicking, and fishing. Camping is accommodated at the Middle Site with a paid on-site park host year-round and an unpaid volunteer in the spring and summer

By way of the low-water bridge (accessible only during low-water flows) at the Lower Site, the park also provides access to an extensive Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public open space area to the west and south and thus serves as a "gateway" for use of trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. It is also a means of access to the Blue Ridge Trail.

### Location

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park is located at **1475 State Highway 16** in the northwestern corner of the County approximately six miles north of Rumsey.

### Maintenance and Operations: Cache Creek Regional Park

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park received a \$598,291 grant (\$58,104 at Upper Site; \$482,606 at Middle Site; \$57,581 at Lower Site) in Proposition 40 funds to install fee pay stations, build a kiosk and conduct restroom improvements. *Maintenance Term*: **2031**.

### **Time Study**

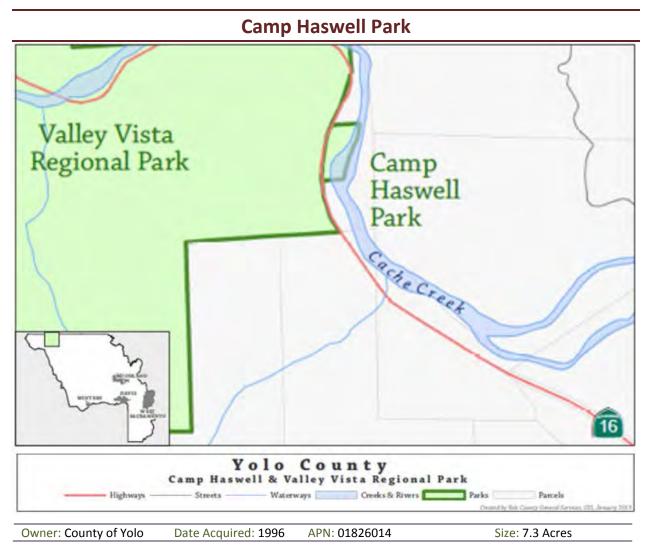
A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **43.33%** of their time on Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park. This is by far the most time intensive park in the County parks system.

### **Finances**

Cache Creek is the most expensive park in the County parks system, and uses approximately 45.16% of

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)					
Expenditures					
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$279,562.28				
Services and Supplies	\$101,213.67				
Total Expenditures	\$380,776.96				
Revenues					
Charges for Services	\$79,886				
General Fund Contribution	\$300,889.96				

the Parks Division budget annually. The park does collect some revenues through usage fees (for day use parking and camping), as well as sales at the camp store. However, charges for service only offset approximately 21% of the total annual costs of operating and maintaining the park.



### Description

Camp Haswell Park is located in the Cache Creek Canyon, where the remains of a stone cabin (formerly associated with a Boy Scout camping area) provide a visual focus for the site from the highway. With the exception of the old stone cabin and the paved entrance road, the site is essentially unimproved.

Camp Haswell can be used for picnicking, swimming, wading, and fishing.

### Location

Camp Haswell is an easily recognized location at **1999 State Highway 16** in northwest Yolo County, located in the Cache Creek Canyon, adjacent to the Blue Ridge portion of the Interior Coast Range.

### Maintenance and Operations: Camp Haswell Park

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

Camp Haswell does not have any ongoing maintenance obligations.

### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent 0.98% of their time on Camp Haswell.

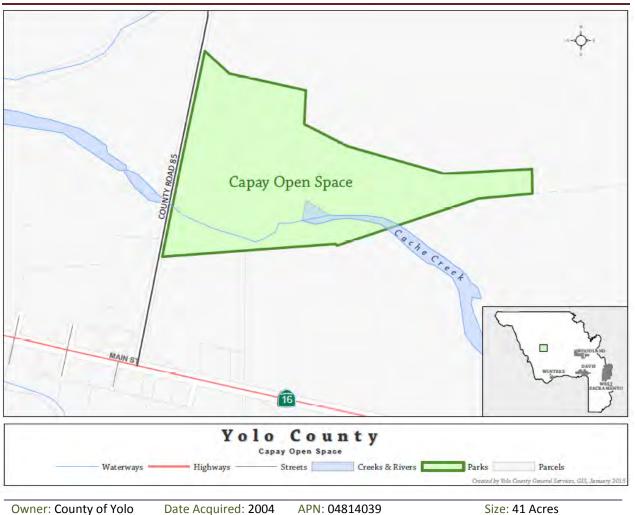
### Finances

Camp Haswell is the 10<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using only

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)					
Expenditures					
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$6,310.89				
Services and Supplies \$2,843					
Total Expenditures \$9,154.1					
Revenues					
Charges for Services	\$0				
General Fund Contribution	\$9,154.18				

approximately **1.08%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at this park, and all costs associated with operations and maintenance are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# Capay Open Space Park



### Description

Capay Open Space Park is a 41-acre park and nature area that runs along both sides of Cache Creek. This property is a part of the Cache Creek Area Plan, but is currently maintained by the Parks Division. Improvements include over two miles of walking trails, picnic tables, paved parking lots, and permanent public restrooms. The park also has an unpaid on-site park host.

### Location

The park is located north of Cache Creek on **County Road 85**.

### Maintenance and Operations: Capay Open Space Park

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park received a \$199,000 grant in Proposition 40 funds to build trails and conduct habitat restoration. *Maintenance Term*: **2031**.

### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **6.18%** of their time on Capay Open Space Park.

### Finances

Capay Open Space is the 6<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)		
Expenditures		
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$39,894.93	
Services and Supplies	\$9,670.56	
Total Expenditures	\$49,565.49	
Revenues		
Natural Resources Contribution	\$8,200	
General Fund Contribution	\$41,365.49	

approximately **5.88%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at the park, though there is a fee station on site for the collection of donations (which are rarely received). In FY 15/16, the Cache Creek Area Plan has budgeted \$30,000 for reimbursement of direct expenditures to be split between Capay Open Space and Wild Wings. All remaining costs associated with

operations and maintenance of Capay Open Space are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Clarksburg Boat Launch**



### Description

The Clarksburg Boat Launch is an intensely used boat access and river fishing facility that is operated and maintained by the County through an Operating Agreement with the State of California. The main improvements at this site are the boat ramp, adjacent asphalt parking area and portable toilets.

The site receives a high volume of visitors, but has a history of public safety and public health issues, including vandalism, transient activity and vagrancy. The park site does have a host pad but it is currently vacant.

### Location

The park is located at **38125 County Road E9** (Old River Road) on the **Sacramento River at Mile 39.5**, on an elevated terrace surface between a levee road and the river. The site is located approximately 1.5 miles south of Clarksburg and County Road E-9.

### Maintenance and Operations: Clarksburg Boat Launch

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park received a \$196,693.70 grant from the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board to conduct boat launch improvements and build a park host pad. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.

The current operating agreement with the State continues through **2027**. The County may only terminate this agreement with consent of the State, effective on a date agreed upon by both parties.

### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **4.18%** of their time on the Clarksburg Boat Launch.

### **Finances**

The Clarksburg Boat Launch is the 8<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks),

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)	
Expenditures	
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$26,953.40
Services and Supplies	\$7,551.82
Total Expenditures	\$34,505.21
Revenues	
Charges for Services	\$0
General Fund Contribution	\$34,505.21

using approximately **4.09%** of the Parks Division budget annually. In accordance with the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board contract, fees are not collected at the park. All costs associated with operations and maintenance of the park are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Dunnigan Park**



### Description

Dunnigan Park is a ½ acre community park with improvements that include a play equipment area, a half-court basketball court, a barbeque and picnicking area, parking and portable restrooms.

### Location

This park is located on **County Road 89A near Main Street** in community of Dunnigan, across the street from the historic Union Church.

### Maintenance and Operations: Dunnigan Park

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

Dunnigan Park has no maintenance obligations.

### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **1.04%** of their time on the Dunnigan Park. Much of this attributed to the long distance maintenance workers must drive to reach the park.

### Finances

Dunnigan Park is the 11<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using only

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)		
Expenditures		
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$6,688.09	
Services and Supplies	\$2,145.34	
Total Expenditures	\$8,883.43	
Revenues		
Charges for Services	\$0	
General Fund Contribution	\$8,883.43	

**1.05%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at the park, and all costs associated with operations and maintenance of the park are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Elkhorn Boat Launch**



### Description

The Elkhorn Boat Launch is approximately 49 acres in size, of which only approximately 10 acres are developed. The park has a boat ramp, paved parking lot, picnic area with barbeques, and a permanent restroom with flushing toilets. An unpaid park host resides on-site.

Recreational opportunities at this park include fishing, boating, picnicking and bird watching. The park is also used as a stopping point for tourist excursion train rides offered by a local short-line railroad operating out of Woodland. The County is currently working with the short-line railroad operators to potentially obtain a contract to collect fees for their park use. However, the principal users of the park are recreational boaters using the launch and parking facilities.

### Location

The park is located on **Old River Road** between the levee and the Sacramento River, approximately 1.75 miles south of where I-5 crosses the Sacramento River.

### Maintenance and Operations: Elkhorn Boat Launch

### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The parks received a \$103,304 grant of Proposition 40 funds for restroom improvements. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.

### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **7.38%** of their time on the Elkhorn Boat Launch.

### Finances

Elkhorn Boat Launch is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)		
Expenditures		
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$47,633.24	
Services and Supplies	\$15,695.52	
Total Expenditures	\$63,329.76	
Revenues		
Charges for Services	\$5,306	
General Fund Contribution	\$58,023.76	

approximately **7.51%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Usage fees are collected for customers using the boat ramp, but fees offset only a small portion of the total costs of operating the park. The remaining costs are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Esparto Community Park**



#### Description

Esparto Community Park is a 1.1 acre site furnished with picnic tables and a barbeque pit, large shade trees, a turf area, play equipment and portable restrooms. The park functions as a town commons, visual center and gathering place for family and community events in the community of Esparto. The site is also the venue of the Capay Almond Festival and the Esparto Farmers Market.

#### Location

The park is located along **State Highway 16 (Yolo Avenue)** in the central business area of the unincorporated community of Esparto.

#### Maintenance and Operations: Esparto Community Park

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park received a \$126,488 grant of Proposition 12 funds. *Maintenance Term: 2028*.

#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **7.78%** of their time on the Esparto Community Park.

#### Finances

Esparto Park is the 4<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)	
Expenditures	
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$50,197.04
Services and Supplies	\$10,834.81
Total Expenditures	\$61,031.85
Revenues	
Charges for Services	\$0
General Fund Contribution	\$61,031.85

approximately **7.24%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at the park, and all costs associated with operations and maintenance of the park are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Gibson House Museum**



#### Description

The Gibson house, land and outbuildings serve as the Yolo County Historical Museum, which has been open for more than 25 years. The house and grounds are maintained to represent a typical rural home and ranch setting from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Facilities on the property include a main house (with eleven rooms), several outbuildings, a garage, a barn, a blacksmith shop and an administration building. The museum is used for educational tours and private rentals for group gatherings.

The Gibson House property is owned by the County, but maintained and operated by an independent non-profit organization.

#### Location

The museum is located on 2 1/2 acres at 512 Gibson Road in Woodland,

#### **Maintenance and Operations: Gibson House**

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The Gibson House received a \$286,889.23 grant of Proposition 40 funding to build a new barn and add electrical lighting. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.

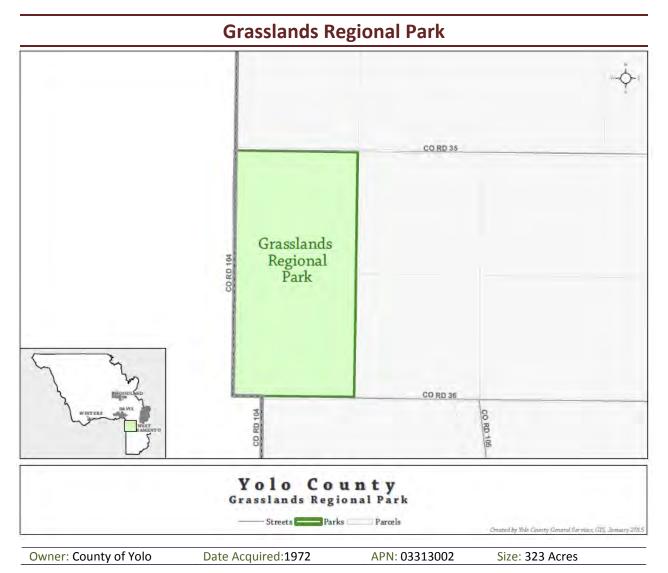
#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent only **0.06%** of their time on the Gibson House. Staff expects the percentage of staff time spent on the Gibson House to increase in 15/16, as both Parks and CAO staff work closely with the Gibson House Board to determine a sustainable future for the program.

#### **Finances**

The Gibson House is the 13<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using approximately **0.06%** of the Parks Division budget annually.

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)					
Expenditures					
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$377.20				
Services and Supplies	\$1,488.85				
Total Expenditures	\$1,866.05				
Revenues					
Charges for Services	\$0				
General Fund Contribution	\$1,866.05				



#### Description

Grasslands Regional Park is a 313 acre park, of which approximately 50 acres are developed. The County is currently working to obtain 300 acres east of the park from the federal government. The park provides a venue for a variety of specialty recreational uses including archery as well as remote-controlled model sailplane and electric glider flying.

Archery activities and model plane flying activities are conducted under an agreement between the County, the Yolo County Bowmen Archery Club and the Soaring Society. The Yolo County Horseshoeing Pitching Club uses a portion of the Archery Club's leased acres under an informal sublease.

#### Location

The park is located at **30475 County Road 104** approximately 3.5 miles south of Davis, between County Road 35 and County Road 36.

#### Maintenance and Operations: Grasslands Regional Park

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The parks received a \$456,436 grant from the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board for habitat restoration. *Maintenance Term:* **2032**.

The parks also received a \$279,975 grant from the Bureau of Reclamation for habitat restoration. *Maintenance Term:* **Completed**.

#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **6.51%** of their time on the Grassland Regional Park.

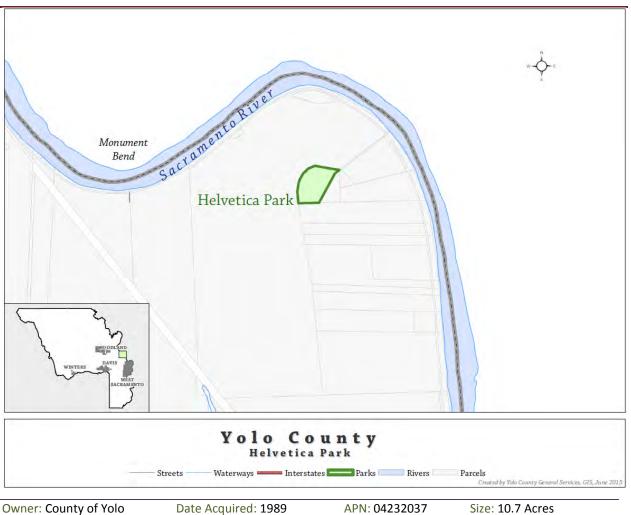
#### Finances

Grasslands Regional Park is the 5<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)				
Expenditures				
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$41,980.06			
Services and Supplies	\$11,114.59			
Total Expenditures	\$53,094.64			
Revenues				
Charges for Services	\$975			
General Fund Contribution	\$52,119.64			

approximately **6.30%** of the Parks Division budget annually. A very small amount of funding is collected through parking fees, but most costs are paid for with General Fund dollars.





#### Description

Helvetia Oak Grove is an 11.7 acre property. Access, via an unimproved driveway, is contested and therefore the site needs to be surveyed in order to come to a definitive determination. This property contains no improvements, structures or developed amenities. The site includes a number of large valley oak trees, and is not currently being used as a recreation resource.

#### Location

The site is located 2.5 miles south of Elkhorn Regional Park near the Sacramento River. The site is locked between privately owned parcels, and is currently not accessible to the public.

### Maintenance and Operations: Helvetia Oak Grove

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

Helvetia Oak Grove has no maintenance obligations.

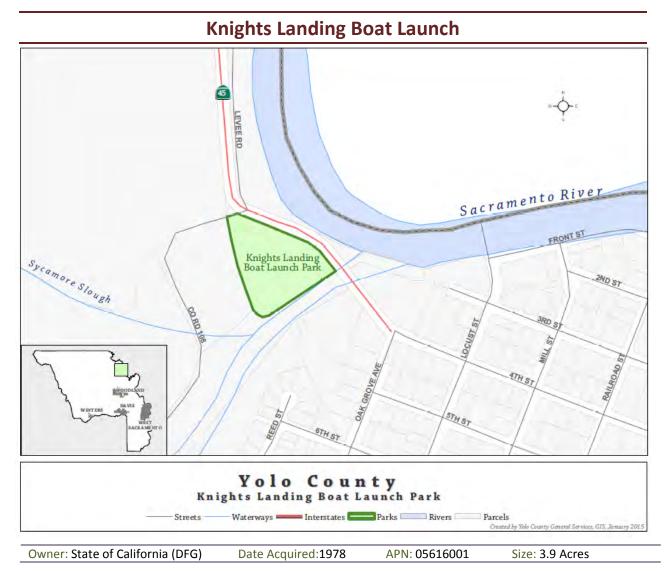
#### Time Study

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **0%** of their time on Helvetia Oak Grove.

#### Finances

Helvetia Oak Grove has no expenses associated with it, and no revenues are collected for this park.

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)	
Expenditures	
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$0
Services and Supplies	\$0
Total Expenditures	<b>\$0</b>
Revenues	
Charges for Services	\$0
General Fund Contribution	\$0



#### Description

Knights Landing Boat Launch is located on an approximately 4-acre site that provides access to the Sacramento River for boating, waterskiing and fishing. The site is operated and maintained by the County through an Operating Agreement with the State of California.

The amenities at this site are the boat ramp and adjoining parking area, which provides space for approximately 28 cars with trailers and 15 single vehicle spaces. Portable sanitary facilities are also provided and electrical and telephone services are available. The park site also has a host pad that is currently vacant.

#### Location

The site is located near the town of Knights Landing at the junction of the Sacramento River and the Sycamore Slough.

#### Maintenance and Operations: Knights Landing Boat Launch

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

There are no maintenance obligations associated with grants at the Knights Landing Boat Launch. In 2008 the Department of Boating and Waterways awarded the County a \$732,000 grant for design and construction of a new boat launch. Unfortunately, due to multiple permitting issues, the County was unable to complete the construction portion of the grant. The County did successfully complete the design aspect, and will be receiving reimbursement for that portion of the project.

However, the current operating agreement with the State continues through **2023**. The County may only terminate this agreement with consent of the State, effective on a date agreed upon by both parties.

#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **5.56%** of their time on the Knights Landing Boat Launch.

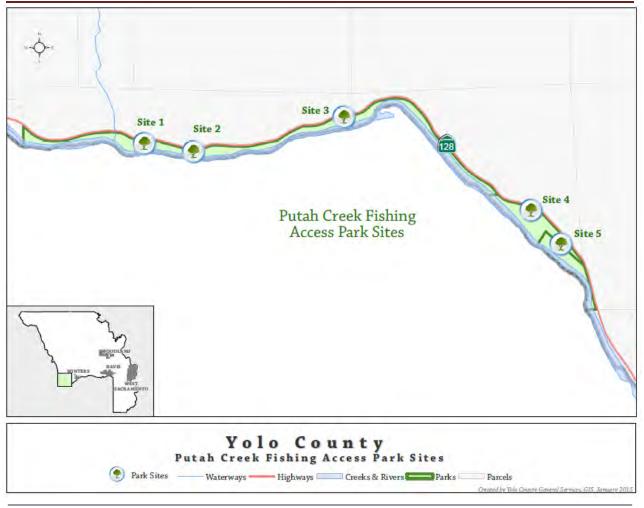
#### **Finances**

Knights Landing Boat Launch is the 7<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks),

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)				
Expenditures				
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$35,900.85			
Services and Supplies	\$10,675.88			
Total Expenditures \$46,576.72				
Revenues				
Charges for Services	\$17,501			
General Fund Contribution	\$29,075.72			

using approximately **5.52%** of the Parks Division budget annually. The site does receive some revenues through the collection of usage fees, but charges for service only offset less than half of the total annual costs of operating and maintaining the park. The remaining costs are paid for with General Fund dollars.

# **Putah Creek Fishing Access Parks**



 Owner: State of California (WCB)
 Date Acquired:1963
 Size: 87 Acres

 APN: 03030006/1010160/1010099/10102018/10182019/10104610/03008109/0300811/03008124/03008107

#### Description

The Putah Creek Fishing Access Parks is composed of five access locations, covering approximately 112 acres. The sites are operated and maintain by the County under an operating agreement with the State of California, Wildlife Conservation Board, which owns the property.

Improvements at the five sites consist of seven parking areas, and some picnic tables and barbeques. Sites 1 and 3 are equipped with portable restrooms. Fee pay stations are provided at many sites for the fee collection but fees are not collected in accordance with the operating agreement with the State. A park host site exists at Site 4, where there is also electrical power, telephone service and a rudimentary water system. However, there is no host at this time.

#### Location

The park is located at several sites on State Highway 128 (22955/23375/24400/24875) along a 3 mile stretch of Putah Creek and Highway 128, seven miles west of Winters.

#### **Maintenance and Operations: Putah Creek Fishing Access Parks**

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park has maintenance obligations related to several grants, including:

- \$488,000 grant from the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board for access improvements. *Maintenance Term: 2031*.
- \$378,188 grant of Proposition 50 funding for trails, habitat restoration and platforms. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.
- \$96,530 in Proposition 40 funding for the installation of fee pay stations, interpretive panels and access improvements. *Maintenance Term: 2031*.

Additionally, the current operating agreement with the State continues through **2032**. The County may only terminate this agreement with consent of the State, effective on a date agreed upon by both parties.

#### Time Study

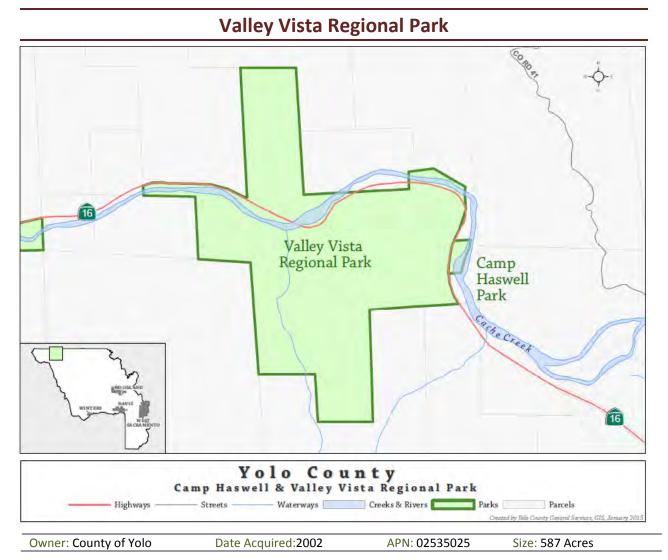
A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **12.85%** of their time on the Putah Creek Fishing Access Parks.

#### Finances

Putah Creek is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)				
Expenditures				
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$82,907.02			
Services and Supplies	\$17,420.91			
Total Expenditures	\$100,327.93			
Revenues				
Charges for Services	\$0			
General Fund Contribution	\$100,327.93			

approximately **11.90%** of the Parks Division budget annually. The County is not authorized to collect fees at Putah Creek sites per the operating agreement with the State, so all costs associated with this park are paid for with General Fund dollars.



#### Description

The Valley Vista Regional Park (formerly known as Otis Ranch) is located adjacent to the Camp Haswell site. The park links the Camp Haswell property and parking area to the Bureau of Land Management land on Blue Ridge.

Tuleyome volunteers built the Valley Vista Trail on the property, which leads from the base of the hill at the highway up to a scenic overlook. The County is currently working with the Tuleyome volunteers on potentially increasing the trails at no cost to the County.

#### Location

Valley Vista is located in the Cache Creek Canyon, across Highway 16 from Camp Haswell. Visitors can park along the Highway, or in the Camp Haswell parking lot.

### Maintenance and Operations: Valley Vista Regional Park

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

Valley Vista Regional Park has no maintenance obligations.

#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **0%** of their time on the Valley Vista Regional Park. The park is largely open space with a single trail, which is maintained by Tuleyome volunteers.

#### Finances

Valley Vista Regional Park has no expenses associated, and no revenues are collected.

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)	
Expenditures	
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$0
Services and Supplies	\$0
Total Expenditures	<b>\$0</b>
Revenues	
Charges for Services	\$0
General Fund Contribution	\$0

# **Vernon Nichols Park**



#### Description

The Vernon Nichols Park is a 21-acre park site located near the community of Guinda. Improvements at the park include picnic tables, barbeques, a field with a backstop, playground equipment and portable toilets. There is also access to a creek side beach area for activities such as wading, swimming and fishing. The park site also has two host pads that are currently vacant.

#### Location

The park is located at **17150 County Road 57** on Cache Creek off State Highway 16 on County Road 57, near the community of Guinda.

#### **Maintenance and Operations: Vernon Nichols Park**

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

The park received a \$5,497 grant of Proposition 40 funding for installing interpretive panels. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.

The park also received a \$137,929 grant of Proposition 50 funding for habitat restoration. *Maintenance Term:* **2031**.

#### **Time Study**

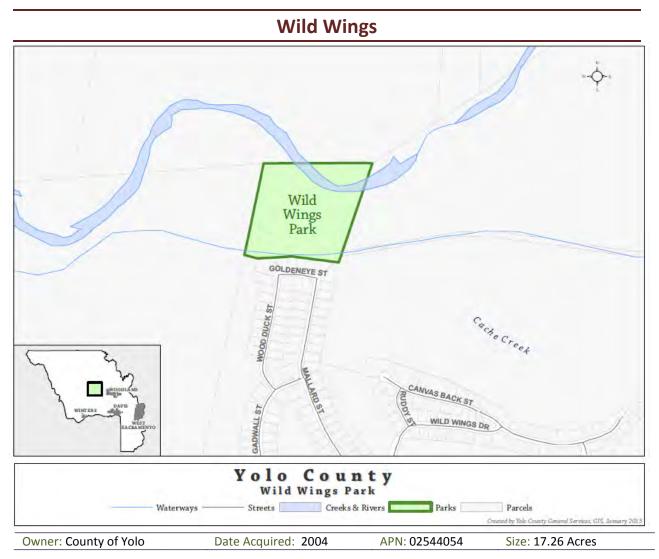
A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **3.61%** of their time on the Vernon Nichols Park.

#### Finances

Vernon Nichols is the 9<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)						
Expenditures						
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$23,311.62					
Services and Supplies	\$6,519.70					
Total Expenditures	\$29,831.32					
Revenues						
Charges for Services	\$0					
General Fund Contribution	\$29,831.32					

approximately **3.54%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at the park, and all costs associated with operations and maintenance of the park are paid for with General Fund dollars.



#### Description

Wild Wings Park is an open space park that was developed as a condition of building the Wild Wings subdivision. This property is a part of the Cache Creek Area Plan, but is currently maintained by the Parks Division. Improvements at the park include small walking trails and several educational interpretive panels. There is no restroom or water on-site.

#### Location

The park is located at the intersection of Wood Duck Street and Golden Eye Street in the Wild Wings subdivision.

#### Maintenance and Operations: Wild Wings Park

#### **Contractual Maintenance Obligations**

Wild Wings Park has no maintenance obligations.

#### **Time Study**

A time study of FY 12/13 indicates that staff spent **0.55%** of their time on the Wild Wings Park.

#### Finances

Wild Wings is the 12<sup>th</sup> most expensive park in the County parks system (of 16 parks), using

Summary of Finances (FY 12/13)					
Expenditures					
Salaries, Benefits and Administration	\$3,542.22				
Services and Supplies	\$744.31				
Total Expenditures	\$4,286.53				
Revenues					
Charges for Services	\$0				
General Fund Contribution	\$4,286.53				

e County parks system (of 16 parks), using approximately **0.51%** of the Parks Division budget annually. Fees are not collected at this site. However, in FY 15/16 the Cache Creek Area Plan has budgeted \$30,000 for reimbursement of direct expenditures to be split between Capay Open Space and Wild Wings. All remaining costs associated with operations and maintenance of Wild Wings Park will continue to be paid for with General

Fund dollars.

Peer Com	munity Comparison - Parks Management

		_	Funding			
County	Staffing	Acres	(\$)	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
Butte	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Butte County does not provide parks	Butte
County					services as these services are	LAFCo
					managed by separate park districts.	<u>Stephen</u>
					The Durham park district was	Lucas
					created in 1947. Chico and Paradise	530.538.68
					park districts were created in 1948.	19
					Feather River was created in 1952.	
					The majority of public land is owned	
Oshara					by the State.	<b>N</b> d'altra al
Colusa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The unincorporated communities of	Michael
County					Colusa County are not covered by a	Azevedo
					Parks Department. Rather each	530.458.04
					community have created a Parks	66
					and Recreation District that care for	
					parks with in the "sphere of influence	
	12 FTE	1700 00000	EV 2012	GF: 85%	for each community"	lan
Lake County	IZFIE	1790 acres	FY 2013- 14:	GF. 65% Grant: 5%	Public Services Administration serves and manages the grants and funding	<u>Jan</u> Campbell
County	Seasonal:	25 Parks	\$2,457,907	Fees: 10%	portion of the Parks Division. Lake	707.262.161
	Parks employs several	201 0110	φ2, 101,001		County is fortunate to employ a very	8
	part-time-extra help	County Parks	FY 2014-	Rent and Use fees are only charged at the	talented Parks Superintendent including	
	positions during the year.	with several	15:	Middletown pool (\$1.25/day children 12 and	his staff which manages the park	
	The extra-help positions	community or	\$3,150,221	under, \$2.00/day 13 and older) and for athletic	maintenance, capital improvements and	
	traditionally were	neighborhood		field use (\$10/90 minutes per team, per field	assists with the additional parks	
	seasonal and the	parks		and \$125/day per park for tournament). Both	planning.	
	employees worked 40			are seasonal charges.		
	hours per week.			Lake County charges Park-in-lieu fees for new	Lake County has worked with the Boy Scouts of America on several projects	
	However, due to the			parcel splits or new residential development.	as well as church organizations and	
	Affordable Health Care			This revenue is expended within the	school students who approach the	
	Insurance requirements			requirements of Quimby Fees and is utilized for	County with projects.	
	these positions adhere to			the parks within the new parcel area for park		
	new hourly work			improvements.		
	regulations. Extra help					

Peer Community Comparison - Parks Management

	employee's duties are traditional and basic landscape as well as park cleanup tasks.			Recently the County purchased Mt. Konocti. Mt. Konocti is comprised of 3 peaks. One of the peaks holds a cell tower. A portion of the cell tower revenue maintains the mountain.		
Count	y Staffing	Acres	Funding (\$)	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
Napa County Region Park ar Open Space Distric	<ul> <li>With seasonal help and</li> <li>pieces of other people</li> <li>contracted from Napa</li> <li>County, our FTE is about</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>4,000 acres</li> <li>4 parks</li> <li>2 state parks</li> <li>1 regional</li> <li>1 wilderness</li> <li>No neighborhoo d parks</li> <li>12 miles of trails</li> </ul>	FY 2013- 14: \$1.2 million FY 2014- 15: \$3.2 million	Collecting fees is not considered a problem for the district, as long as staff are located at the entry kiosk. When not staffed, a self-service iron ranger is used, which works but not as effectively. By repairing historic cabins and houses in our parks for use as short and long-term rentals and adding yurts, additional revenue has been collected for the district	The District as a special district is legally separate from the County, and has its own governing board; this narrow focus means the district can be more flexible and move faster than if it were a department within the County structure. At the same time, the District contracts with Napa County for legal, treasury, auditing, human resource and secretarial services. This is much more efficient than setting up separate capacity for these functions. The District, through its contractors (private, county, state) provides park maintenance, manage capital improvements and grants, as well as park planning. Volunteers are used often to maintain and improve parks and the Napa Valley State Parks Association also coordinates parks programs and fundraisers.	John Woodbury 707.259.593 3

Peer Community	Comparison -	Parks Management
2	1	0

County	Staffing	Acres	Funding	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
San Joaquin County	53 Seasonal park staff are responsible for park maintenance, facility rentals, fee collection and seasonal zoo exhibits.	661 acres 29 parks 9 Regional, 3 Community and 8 Neighborhood	(\$) FY 2013-14: \$5,292,259 FY 2014-15: \$5,118,032	<ul> <li>GF: 39%</li> <li>Grant: 0% - grants are sought for capital projects, which are not within the parks budget. Some small grants are obtained by the volunteer groups, but those funds stay within their budgets to help them perform their volunteer work.</li> <li>Fees: 41% - collecting park fees is a non-issue as San Joaquin County only experiences limited theft from "iron rangers".</li> <li>The remainder of parks budget comes from dedicated trust accounts (income from donated assets), concessions including a golf course and an amusement park, donations, county service areas (special property taxes) and a special assessment district. The County is seeking increased donations, especially for operation of the Zoo.</li> <li>San Joaquin County is also implementing initiatives to increase user fees, including a new campground, disc golf courses and other amenities in the parks, as well as an upgraded marketing campaign.</li> <li>Cost saving initiatives, including security to reduce theft and privatization of portions of our parks and programs are also being explored. In the near future, when the economy shows potential for passage, the County may also consider additional special assessment districts, special taxes or parcel taxes, as well as increases to existing assessments within the Proposition 218 process.</li> </ul>	The County provides park maintenance, capital projects, parks planning, fee collection, facility rentals, nature center and zoo operations. While there is no "Friends of the Park" group, there is a Zoological Society that raises funds for the Zoo and a Historical Society that raises funds for the museum. San Joaquin County has volunteers for their Zoo and Nature Center and coordinates a river cleanup above their rafting take-out park. The County also uses General Relief and Alternative Work Program participants to assist with park maintenance and there are caretakers who live in several of our regional parks and provide after-hours service in exchange for reduced or no rent. The county is currently in negotiations regarding the potential privatization of the Zoo and Sports Complex. There is currently no interest by the County to create a Regional Park District.	Ducan Jones 209.953.8800

			Funding			
County	Staffing	Acres	(\$)	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
Solano County	6 FTE 1 Parks Manager, 1 Park Ranger Supervisor, 2 Park Rangers, 2 Park Ranger Assistants Seasonal: "Park Aides" collect fees at the park office, make camping reservations, clean restrooms and campsites, pick up litter, and other general daily maintenance. We are budgeted for 9, each working no more than 999 hrs/yr.	Acres 1,200 acres 4 Parks Regional		Funding (%)GF: 9%Grant: 17%Fees: 40%There is a notable, but less-than-significant incidence of non-payment of daily parking or boat launch fees (rough estimate around 10%). We have also lost some fees due to theft at our pay tubes and machines.Cut days and hours of service slightly; obtained grants for major capital improvements; expanded our use of volunteers to lead tours/events (this service contracted through partner organizations); raised camping and boat launch fees; attempted to contract with concessionaires to provide fee-based services (only very limited success); attempted to increase fees with increased campground outreach with online marketing (Good Sam Club); increased public outreach by preparing a marketing plan, new logo and brochure; improved our website.	ManagementProvides similar services to Yolo County as wellas guided hikes via volunteer docents, who arecoordinated through contract volunteercoordinators.Solano County staff helps facilitate Coast andCreek Clean-Up events at water-based parks.The Solano Land Trust coordinates volunteerprojects at Lynch Canyon Open Space Park.Strategy has been to downsize to a sustainablestaff size that can be accommodated whilekeeping a low general fund contribution (nostrict % has been set, however), plus propertytax revenues and recreation fees. A work inprogress. Downsizing was accomplishedthrough a few layoffs in 2008 or 2009timeframe, and the rest through attritionthrough retirements/resignations.Moving to a regional parks system wasdiscussed about 10 years ago, but did notreceive adequate political support. While it isstill discussed in some circles by advocates,there is no clear, current mandate for this, andit remains a fairly controversial topic without aclear base of support or preferred funding	Contact         Dan Sykes         707.784.6765

# Peer Community Comparison - Parks Management

			Funding			
County	Staffing	Acres	(\$)	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
Sutter County	No rangers. Parks maintenance is currently handled by Building Services staff on an as needed basis. Sutter County also contracts with a park host for Live Oak Park to provide day use, camping, and boat launch services. A seasonal host is contracted when usage is high. When available the County may use individuals assigned for community service or through Work Release to provide routine maintenance.	85 acres 3 parks Community Parks	FY 2013-14: \$269,974.00 FY 2014-15: \$286,408.00	<ul> <li>GF: 90%</li> <li>Grant: 1%</li> <li>Fees: 9%</li> <li>Sutter County Boat Launch Fees: <ul> <li>Resident \$ 50.00</li> <li>Qualified Reduced Fee \$13.00</li> <li>Non- Resident \$100.00</li> <li>Qualified Reduced Fee \$25.00</li> <li>Transferable Holder \$ 2.00</li> </ul> </li> <li>Live Oak Recreation Area: <ul> <li>Annual Use Permit: \$35.00/yr</li> <li>Campground (camping): <ul> <li>General Public: \$15 per night.</li> <li>Large Groups: 51 – 64 people:</li> <li>\$125 per night, 65 plus people:</li> <li>\$2.50 per person per night</li> </ul> </li> <li>Day Use of Park \$5.00 per vehicle</li> <li>Boat Launch: <ul> <li>Resident of Sutter County \$ 50</li> <li>Non-Resident of County \$100</li> </ul> </li> </ul></li></ul>	Budget is managed by our General Services Department, and maintenance is performed by the General Services-Building Services Division. No clean up or routine volunteer group. Sutter County has worked with the Boy Scouts for Eagle Scout projects at various locations and times. These projects have resulted in the construction of shade structures, irrigations systems and tree planting.	<u>Megan Greve</u> 530.822.7410

# Peer Community Comparison - Parks Management

			Funding			
County	Staffing	Acres	(\$)	Funding (%)	Management	Contact
Yolo	7 FTE	2292 Acres	FY 2013-14:	GF: 42%	Yolo County primarily provides park maintenance,	Jen Santos
County			\$1,841,736	Grant: 2%	manages capital improvements and grants, as well as	530.666.4886
	Seasonal:	14 Parks		Federal/State: 46%	any additional parks planning.	
	Typically extra help employee	S	FY 2014-15:	Fees: 10%		
	are hired during the summer	Regional and	\$1,646,034		Yolo County does not have a "Friends of the Park" but	
	months to help improve park	Community		Yes, there have been issues of non-payment	previous research and recommendations from	
	maintenance during peak	Parks		and small cases of theft from pay machines.	Sacramento State Masters of Public Policy and	
	times. For summer 2014, the			Having a park host located at some of our	Administration students have recommended the	
	Parks Maintenance &	2 boat		regional parks has assisted us in enforcing the	County create such a group to address funding gaps,	
	Planning Department	launches		collection of fees, but there is current no	manage volunteer, and organize park activities and	
	anticipates hiring two extra			dedicated staff who monitors whether visitors	events.	
	help employees.			pay the requested fees to visit Yolo County's		
				parks.	The County has done this in the past but currently does	
					not have the staff to organize such an event. This	
					would be a great activity for a "Friends of the Park"	
					group or Community Service Area/District to	
					coordinate.	

Peer Community Comparison - Parks Management

# DIVERSITY RESEARCH AND CONSULTING GROUP, INC.



# YOLO COUNTY 2015-2016 PARKS SURVEY

Final Report of Survey Results

February 22, 2016

**Diversity Research and Consulting Group, Inc.** 

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Contact: Keith A. Baker, CEO

## THE RESEARCH COMPANY

Diversity Research and Consulting Group, Inc., (DRCG) is a local, minority owned and operated research and consulting firm which has been providing services to both non-profit and for-profit clients since 1985. In 1999, it was formally organized in California as a for-profit corporation.

Diversity Research and Consulting Group Inc. (DRCG) has significant experience at the local, state, and federal levels in the following areas: Surveying and Evaluation; Organizational Development; Research Design and Implementation; Community Assessment, Relations, and Integration Services; Community and Corporate Collaboration (Public-Private Partnerships); Strategic Planning; Program Development and Implementation; Grants Development and Management; and Program Enhancement Services. Importantly, Diversity Research and Consulting Group draws upon the talents of both its in-house consultants and from its network of affiliated consultants in order to create an experienced and dedicated team to better serve its diverse client base.

For specialized and technical consulting needs, we have an experience pool of experienced consultants with demonstrated proficiency. From problem definition, identification, data gathering and analysis, to recommendation and implementation, our firm offers affordable solutions and consulting services of the highest quality.

The preparation of this report was conducted under contract with Yolo County Parks Department via Contract #2015-264. It is the culmination of a parks utilization and satisfaction survey that was conducted by Diversity Research and Consulting Group, Inc. on behalf of the County. The contents of this report are reflective of information gathered via face to face interviews with park visitors and observation surveys conducted by the company surveying team. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Parks Department or that of the County.

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# **AN OVERVIEW**

# BACKGROUND

This final report presents the results from each of three scheduled rounds of the Park Visitors and On-site Observation Surveys, and an aggregate thereof, that were conducted by Diversity's surveyors during the periods of May 8<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, August 14<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 and January 8th-17th, 2016 at the 19 County managed parks. The surveys collected data regarding the parks usage and activities during the week, on weekends, and at different times during the day. Data collected included frequency of use; types of activities being engaged in by park visitors; satisfaction with the appearance and upkeep of the parks; satisfaction with parking space availability, and to what extent the park met visitors' expectations. Data was collected from a random sample of park visitors during the time of the on-site surveying activities. Survey methods included the use of both face to face interviews to collect information from persons visiting in the parks, and an observation survey that was designed to capture activities in the park, visitor locations in the park, and other information regarding parking lot usage, handicap parking availability, and license plates' state of origin during the scheduled 4-hour allotted timeframe. The collected data will be used for planning purposes and to inform the Yolo County Parks Department regarding visitors' usage, perceptions, and recommendations for updating the parks amenities.

All data collection activities conformed to standard procedures for conducting face to face and observation surveys. The sampling, survey design, and reporting methodologies are recognized and validated by major research organizations, including the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), and the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO).

## SURVEY OBJECTIVE

The parks survey's goals are to collect, analyze, and summarize data that will be used to inform the Yolo County Parks Department regarding park visitors' usage, perceptions, and recommendations for updating the parks amenities. In order to achieve the desired results, the parks survey had the following objectives:

- Capture a random sample of park visitors at 19 identified County managed parks.
- Collect limited demographic data about the park visitors.
- Collect data on vehicles that are parked in designated parking areas.
- Collect data regarding availability of handicap parking spaces at the parks.
- Capture data regarding visitors' activities within the parks.
- Collect data relative to visitors' satisfaction and expectations relative to the parks.

# SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey data collection was conducted in three phases or time periods, namely Spring (May, 2015), Summer (August, 2015), and Winter (January 2016) in the manner described in the following paragraphs. Surveying activities began on May 8<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> for the first round and were repeated for rounds two and three as outlined.

<u>Observation Survey (Quantitative)</u>: In an effort to gather information in a manner that is nonintrusive and reduce the introduction of biases into the data gathering process, the widely accepted use of a covert observation technique, i.e. blending in, was utilized. In this way, surveyors casually blend themselves into the environment while conducting the assessments. General information gathered by this method included, time of day and weather conditions. Specific information gathered include the number of visitors in the park, their location in the park, the number of cars parked in approved parking spaces, the number of cars utilizing handicap parking spaces, the types of recreation activities observed, and a notation of state on license plates in the parking area.

<u>Face to Face Survey (Qualitative)</u>: During the course of the surveyors visit to each park, older teens and/or adults were approached, explained the purpose of the survey, and ask to participate in the brief 10 question survey which augments the observation survey. Data gathered from the face to face survey include, but not limited to: Purpose of the visit; Type(s) of recreation engaged in (walking, cycling, rafting, picnicking, wildlife viewing, etc.); and the City and State of origin.

To reducing data entry errors and shortening the time between surveying and data analysis, Surface Tablets were utilized. Survey data was stored and analyzed using SPSS on a Microsoft Operating System (Windows 10) platform. Statistical analysis and tabulations were generated for each site. The tabulations included both the observation and survey variables.

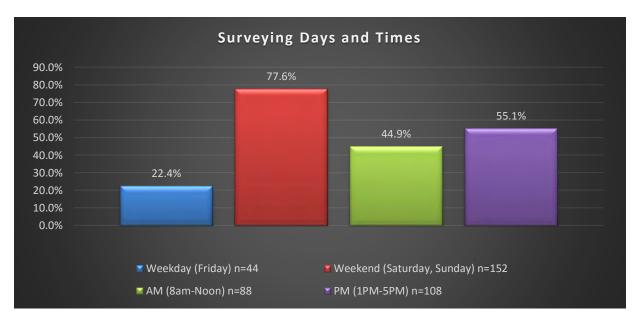
<u>Teams and Time of Day:</u> Field operations and surveying coordination were the primary responsibilities of the Survey Coordinator. She was responsible for the preparation of all scheduling activities for the surveying team, determining the placement of surveyors, and in general, coordinating activities of the surveyors. The Coordinator supervised the surveying activities at random park sites and conduct spot checks among the teams in the field to ensure that protocols, including safety, were being followed. Surveyors were recruited from a pool of local individuals, specifically from Modesto and Riverbank, CA, that are frequently contracted by Diversity Research to assist with project of this nature. As per our surveyors training protocol, each received a compulsory half day training that covers various elements of program design, research methodology, research bias, **interviewing skills (the do's and don'ts), confidentiality, personal and group safet**y, data collection, and data management. Additionally, all aspects of the surveying instruments

were discussed in detail, including, but not limited to the intent of the questions, instructions provided to the interviewer and/or respondents, and appropriate and inappropriate responses to each question. A Q&A session followed.

Teams of two surveyors were dispatched to the various parks over each of the three twoweek long surveying periods (See list of parks and Rounds schedule which are incorporated as Attachments 1 and 2). Each team spent no less than four hours within each park doing both observation and face to face surveys. Per the master schedule, each park was visited once on a weekday (Friday), once on the weekend (Saturday or Sunday), once during the AM hours (8-12 noon) and once during the afternoon hours (1-5PM).

Observation surveying were conducted by one of the two surveyors upon entry into to park and again prior to leaving. Depending on the size of the park, case in point, Middle Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, the two surveyors were initially engaged in conducting the observation survey, starting at opposite ends of the park. Upon completion of the observation assessment, that surveyor began conducting face to face interviews among individuals visiting the park.

The current database, which is limited in the number of entries, namely 196 Visitors Surveys (See sample incorporated as Attachment 3) and 44 Observation Surveys, (Attachment 4) provides a representation of park usage, repres**entation of park visitors'** satisfaction levels or expectations, and provides some preliminary insights in this regard. Graph 1 below identifies when surveys were collected.



### **Graph 1: Distribution of Surveying Days and Times**

# **KEY FINDINGS: PARK VISITORS SURVEYS**

## Distribution of Completed Park Visitors' Surveys

## Round One:

In the first round of surveying, 49 Park Visitors Surveys were collected via brief face to face interviews with visitors at 11 or 57.9% of the 19 parks. Table 1 provides the distribution of these surveys among the parks along with other relevant information.

Park Name	Completed Surveys (n=49)	Date of Surveys	Week Day/Weekend	Time of Day
Cache Creek- Lower	5	5/10/15	Weekend	AM
Cache Creek–Middle	16	5/22/15	Weekend	AM
Cache Creek Upper	0	5/10/15	Weekend	PM
Camp Haswell Park	3	5/10/15	Weekend	PM
Clarksburg River Access	2	5/8/15	Weekday	AM
Elkhorn Regional Park	0	5/8/15	Weekday	PM
Esparto Community Park	5	5/9/15	Weekend	PM
Grassland Regional Park	4	5/22/15	Weekend	PM
Knights Landing	6	5/8/15	Weekday	PM
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	2	5/21/15	Weekday	AM
Putah Creek 2	0	5/21/15	Weekday	AM
Putah Creek 3	3	5/21/15	Weekday	PM
Putah Creek 4	1	5/21/15	Weekday	PM
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	0	5/21/15	Weekday	PM
Vernon Nichols Park	2	5/9/15	Weekend	AM
Capay Open Space	0	5/9/15	Weekend	PM
Wild Wings Park	0	5/22/15	Weekend	PM
Dunnigan Park	0	6/6/15	Weekend	AM
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	5/10/15	Weekend	PM

 Table 1: Distribution of Completed Park Visitors Surveys: Round 1

Of the 49 Park Visitor surveys completed, 16 or 32.7% were completed at Cache Creek Middle (Camp), while none were completed at 8 or 42.1% of the 19 parks, namely at Upper Cache Creek, Elkhorn Regional, Putah Creek 2 and 5(Upper), Capay Open Space, Wild Wings, Dunnigan and Valley Vista Regional Park. Further, 2 of these 8 parks (25%), namely Putah Creek 2 and Dunnigan were visited during the morning hours (9am-Noon), while the remaining 5, or 62.5% were visited in the afternoon (Noon-6pm).

Thirty-five of the 49 surveys, or 71.4%, were completed by the surveying team on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday), while 14 or 28.6% were completed on a weekday (Friday). Additionally, slightly more than one half of the completed surveys (51.5%) were completed prior to noon, while 49.5% were completed in the afternoon.

## Round Two:

In the second round of surveying, 105 Park Visitor's Surveys were collected via brief face to face interviews with visitors at 10 or 52.6% of the 19 parks. Table 2 provides the distribution of these surveys among the parks along with other relevant data.

Park Name	Completed Surveys (n=105)	Date of Surveys	Week Day/Weekend	Time of Day
Cache Creek- Lower	0	8/22/15	Weekend	PM
Cache Creek–Middle	13	8/22/15	Weekend	AM
Cache Creek Upper	0	8/22/15	Weekend	AM
Camp Haswell Park	0	8/16/15	Weekend	PM
Clarksburg River Access	9	8/15/15	Weekend	AM
Elkhorn Regional Park	24	8/15/15	Weekend	AM
Esparto Community Park	17	8/14/15	Weekday	PM
Grassland Regional Park	13	8/21/15	Weekday	PM
Knights Landing	11	8/15/15	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	6	8/23/15	Weekend	AM
Putah Creek 2	0	8/23/15	Weekend	AM
Putah Creek 3	8	8/23/15	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 4	3	8/23/15	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	1	8/23/15	Weekend	PM
Vernon Nichols Park	0	8/14/15	Weekday	AM
Capay Open Space	0	8/14/15	Weekday	AM
Wild Wings Park	0	8/21/15	Weekend	AM
Dunnigan Park	0	8/29/15	Weekend	AM
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	8/16/15	Weekend	PM

 Table 2: Distribution of Completed Park Visitors Surveys: Round 2

Of the 105 Park Visitor surveys completed, 24 or 22.9% were completed at Elkhorn Regional Park, while none were completed at 9 or 47.4% of the 19 parks, namely at Upper and Lower Cache Creek, Camp Haswell, Putah Creek 2, Vernon Nichols, Capay Open Space, Wild Wings, Dunnigan and Valley Vista Regional Park. Further, 2 of these 8 parks (25%), namely Camp Haswell, and Valley Vista Reginal Park were visited in the afternoon (Noon-6pm), while the remaining 6, or 75% were visited during the morning hours (9am-Noon).

Seventy-five of the 105 surveys, or 71.4%, were completed by the surveying team on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday), while 30 or 28.6% were completed on a weekday (Friday). Additionally, slightly less than one half of the completed surveys 52 or 49.5% were completed prior to noon, while 53 or 51.5% were completed in the afternoon.

## Round Three:

In the third round of surveying, 42 Park Visitor's Surveys were collected via brief face to face interviews with visitors at 11 or 57.9% of the 19 parks. Table 3 provides the distribution of these surveys among the parks along with other relevant data.

Park Name	Completed Surveys (n=42)	Date of Surveys	Week Day/Weekend	Time of Day
Cache Creek- Lower	1	1/16/16	Weekend	PM
Cache Creek–Middle	0	1/16/16	Weekend	PM
Cache Creek Upper	1	1/16/16	Weekend	AM
Camp Haswell Park	2	1/10/16	Weekend	AM
Clarksburg River Access	15	1/09/16	Weekend	AM
Elkhorn Regional Park	0	1/09/16	Weekend	PM
Esparto Community Park	5	1/08/16	Weekday	PM
Grassland Regional Park	2	1/15/16	Weekday	PM
Knights Landing	3	1/09/16	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	4	1/17/16	Weekend	AM
Putah Creek 2	0	1/17/16	Weekend	AM
Putah Creek 3	6	1/17/16	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 4	0	1/17/16	Weekend	PM
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	1	1/17/16	Weekend	PM
Vernon Nichols Park	0	1/08/16	Weekday	AM
Capay Open Space	2	1/08/16	Weekday	AM
Wild Wings Park	0	1/15/16	Weekday	AM
Dunnigan Park	0	1/31/16	Weekend	PM
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	1/10/16	Weekend	AM

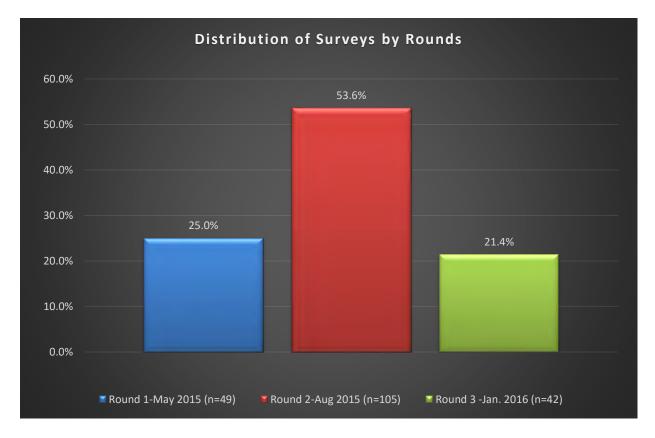
Table 3: Distribution of Completed Park Visitors Surveys: Round 3

Of the 42 Park Visitor surveys completed, 15 or 35.7% were completed at Clarksburg River Access, while none were completed at 8 or 42.1% of the 19 parks, namely at Middle Cache Creek, Elkhorn Regional, Putah Creek 2 and 5 (Upper), Vernon Nichols, Wild Wings, Dunnigan and Valley Vista Regional Park. Further, 4 of these 8 parks (50%), namely Putah Creek 2 and 4, Vernon Nichols, and Valley Vista Regional Park were visited during the morning hours (9am-Noon). The remaining 4, or 50% were visited in the afternoon (Noon-6pm).

Thirty-three of the 42 surveys, or 78.6%, were completed by the surveying team on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday), while 9 or 21.4% were completed on a weekday (Friday). Additionally, more than one half of the completed surveys, 24 or 57.1% were completed prior to noon, while 18 or 42.1% were completed in the afternoon.

### Aggregated:

When all three rounds of surveying are aggregated, a total of 196 Park Visitor's Surveys were collected via brief face to face interviews with visitors at 15 or 78.9% of the 19 parks. Graph 2 provides representation of the distribution of the surveys across the three rounds of surveying, with Round 2 in August 2015 contributing the most surveys (53.6%), followed by Round 1 in May, 2015 with 25%, and Round 3 in January, 2016 contributing 21.4% of the surveys completed.



#### Graph 2: Distribution of Completed Park Surveys by Rounds

Table 4 provides the distribution of these surveys among the parks along with other relevant data.

Parks	Completed Surveys (n=196)	Percent of Total Surveys	Surveying Periods (Week Day/Weekend)	Surveying (Times of Day)
Cache Creek- Lower	6	3.1%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Cache Creek–Middle	29	14.8%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Cache Creek Upper	1	0.5%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Camp Haswell Park	5	2.6%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Clarksburg River Access	26	13.3%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Elkhorn Regional Park	24	12.2%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Esparto Community Park	27	13.8%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Grassland Regional Park	19	9.7%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Knights Landing	20	10.2%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	12	6.1%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 2	0	0.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 3	17	8.7%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 4	4	2.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	2	1.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Vernon Nichols Park	2	1.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Capay Open Space	2	1.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Wild Wings Park	0	0.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Dunnigan Park	0	0.0%	Weekend	AM/PM
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	0.0%	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM

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Of the 196 Park Visitor surveys completed, 29 or 14.8% were completed at Cache Creek Middle (Camp), 27 or 13.8% were completed at Esparto Community Park, 26 or 13.3% at Clarksburg River Access, 24 or 12.2% at Elkhorn Regional Park, 20 or 10.2% at Knights Landing, and 19 or 9.7% were collected at Grassland Regional Park.

Conversely, none were completed at 4 or 21.1% of the 19 parks, namely at Putah Creek 2, Wild Wings, Dunnigan and Valley Vista Regional Park. Further, all parks, with the exception of Dunnigan, were visited both during the morning hours (9am-Noon), after noon hours (Noon-6pm), and on a Friday, Saturday and/or Sunday.

### **Residence of Visitors**

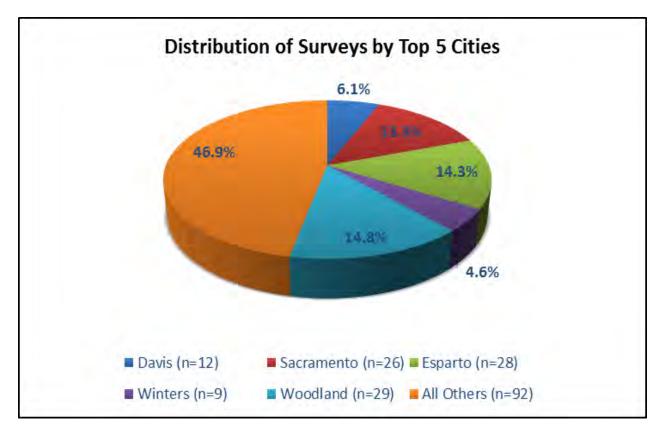
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Park visitors were asked to identify the city and state in which they live. One park visitor, representing 0.5% of the respondents, lived outside the state and reported he was from Illinois. Of the remaining 195 visitors that represented 99.5% of the respondents, 95 or 48.4% resided in Yolo County and included the identified cities in which the parks were located. Tables 5 represents the distribution of surveys across 52 cities as identified by park visitors.

Cities	(N)	(% of Surveys)		Cities	(N)	(% of Surveys)
Alamo	1	0.5%		Napa	1	0.5%
Auburn	1	0.5%		Novato	2	1.0%
Bethel Island	1	0.5%		Nottingham	1	0.5%
Brentwood	1	0.5%		Oakland	4	2.0%
Caldwell	1	0.5%		Orangeville	2	1.0%
Calistoga	1	0.5%		Paradise Cay	1	0.5%
Chico	2	1.0%		Pollock Pines	1	0.5%
Citrus Heights	1	0.5%		Redding	1	0.5%
Clear Lake	2	1.0%		Rosemont	1	0.5%
Concord	1	0.5%		Roseville	1	0.5%
Сарау	2	1.0%		Sacramento	26	13.3%
Davis	12	6.1%		San Francisco	1	0.5%
Dixon	6	3.1%		San Jose	3	1.5%
Elk Grove	5	2.6%		Santa Rosa	1	0.5%
Esparto	28	14.3%		Sonoma	1	0.5%
Fairfield	5	2.6%		Stockton	6	3.1%
Guinda	1	0.5%		Suisun	1	0.5%
Jamestown	1	0.5%		Vacaville	5	2.6%
Knights Landing	2	1.0%		Vallejo	2	1.0%
Lakeport	1	0.5%		Victorville	3	1.5%
Livermore	2	1.0%		W. Sacramento	7	3.6%
Los Angeles	1	0.5%		Wheatland	2	1.0%
Madison	1	0.5%		Willits	1	0.5%
Maxwell	2	1.0%		Willows	1	0.5%
Mill Valley	1	0.5%		Winters	9	4.6%
Modesto	1	0.5%		Woodland	29	14.8%
			]			

#### Table 5: Distribution of Completed Park Visitors Surveys by Cities of Residence

The distribution of surveys across the top five cities are represented in Graph 3 below and reflects that residents in the City of Woodland contributed the most surveys (14.8%), followed by Esparto contributing 14.3%, Sacramento contributing 13.3%. Davis contributing 6.1%, and the residents from the City of Winters contributing 4.6% of the total number of surveys.



#### **Graph 3: Distribution of Completed Park Surveys by the Top Cities**

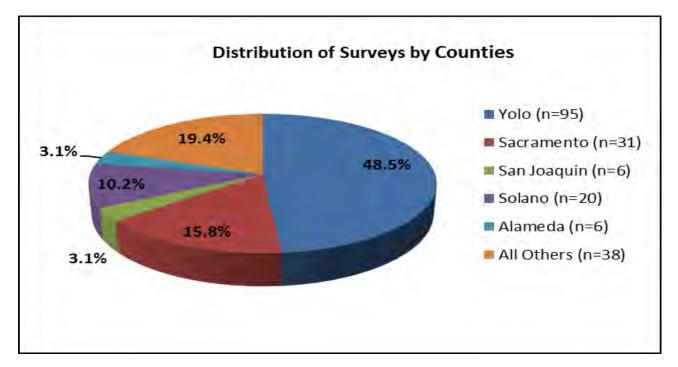
Table 6 on the following page represents the distribution of surveys across 26 counties as identified by park visitors.

Counties	(N)	(% of Surveys)		Counties	(N)	(% of Surveys)
Alameda	6	3.1%		Sacramento	31	15.8%
Butte	2	1.0%		San Bernardino	3	1.5%
Colusa	2	1.0%		San Francisco	1	0.5%
Contra Costa	3	1.5%		San Joaquin	6	3.1%
El Dorado	1	0.5%		Santa Clara	2	1.0%
Fresno	1	0.5%		Shasta	1	0.5%
Glenn	1	1.0%		Solano	20	10.2%
Lake	3	1.5%		Sonoma	2	1.0%
Leads	1	0.5%		Stanislaus	1	0.5%
Los Angeles	2	1.0%		Tuolumne	1	0.5%
Marin	4	2.0%		Yolo	95	48.5%
Mendocino	1	0.5%		Yuba	2	1.0%
Napa	2	1.0%				
Placer	2	1.0%	1			

 Table 6: Distribution of Completed Park Visitors Surveys by Counties of Residence

The distribution of surveys across the top five counties are represented in Graph 4 below and reflects that residents of Yolo County contributed the most surveys (48.5%), followed by Sacramento and Solano counties at 15.8% and 10.2% respectively.

Graph 4: Distribution of Completed Park Surveys by Counties



Within Yolo County, 29 of the 95 park visitors, or 30.5%, reported that their city of residence was Woodland, 28 (29.5%) were from Esparto, 12 (12.6%) from Davis, 9 (9.5%) from Winters, 7 (7.4%) from West Sacramento, 5 (5.3%) from Elk Grove, and 2 (2.1%) from both Capay and Knights Landing. The remaining park visitor (1.5%) was from the City of Guinda.

### How Park Visitors Became Aware of the Parks

The most frequently reported way in which the visitors became aware of the park was reported to be "Just driving by and saw it" (21.4%), followed by "I Live in the Area" (19.4%), through "A Friend" and that they've "Been coming here for years" at 12.8%. The distribution of the reported ways in which the park visitors became aware of the parks is represented in the Table 7 below.

#### Table 7: Distribution of Reported Awareness

How Visitors Became Aware	(N)	(% of Surveys)
Driving by and saw it	42	21.4%
I live in area	38	19.4%
A friend told me about it	25	12.8%
I've been coming here for years	25	12.8%
Word of Mouth	23	11.7%
From a family member	14	7.1%
Saw it Online	9	4.6%
Saw it from the river	6	3.1%
Flying Club	5	2.6%
Archery Club	4	2.0%
Riding by and saw it	3	1.5%
County's website	2	1.0%

Others ways in which park visitors indicated that they found out about the park included "Word of Mouth" (11.7%), "From a Family Member" (7.1%), "Saw it from the River" (3.15), from the "Flying Club" and "Archery Club" at 2.6% respectively, and from "Riding by" at 1.5%.

Of note is the fact that other ways in which visitors found out about the parks included "Saw It Online" (4.6%), and "Saw It on the County's website" at 3.1%).

### **Frequency of Use**

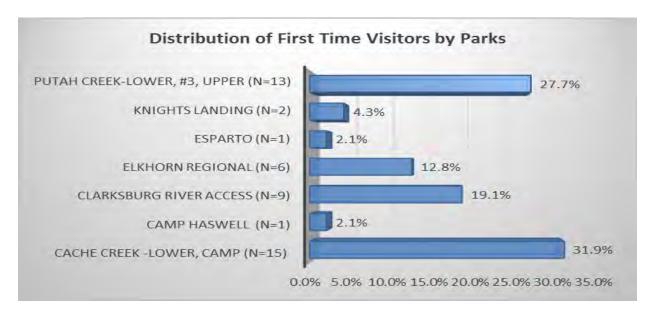
Of the 196 Park Visitors Surveys that were completed, 47 or 24.0% were done with first time visitors to that particular park. The remaining 149 surveys were conducted with visitors who have previously been to that park as represented in Graph 5 below.



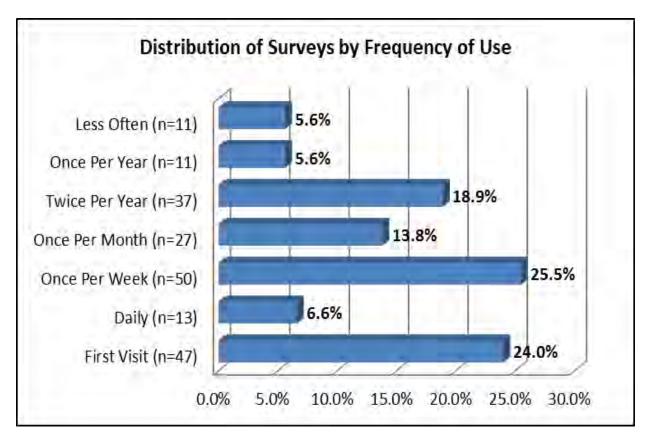
Graph 5: Distribution of First Time vs. Returning Visitors

Further analysis of first time visitors among the parks indicate that most were seen at Cache Creek (31.95), followed by Putah Creek at 27.7%, Clarksburg River Access at 19.1% and Elkhorn at 12.8%. The detailed results are presented in Graph 6 below.

#### Graph 6: Distribution of First Time Visitors by Parks



The distribution of the frequency of the parks utilization is presented in Graph 7 below.

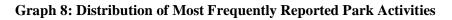


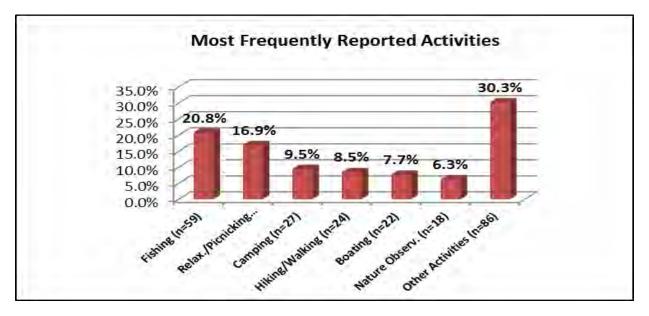
Graph 7: Distribution of Surveys by Frequency of Park Use

When asked about how frequently they utilized the parks, 6.6% of the surveyed visitors indicated that they used it "Daily". More than a quarter of the park visitors (25.5%) indicated that they utilized the park "Once per week" and 13.8% used it "Once per month". Slightly more than 30% of the park visitors indicated that they visited the park less frequently than "Twice per year", which is relatively equivalent to those who visited the park at least "Once per week".

### Most Frequently Reported Activities

The most frequent activity reported by park visitors was fishing (20.8%), followed by relaxing/picnicking (16.9%), camping (9.5%), and hiking/walking at 8.5%. The distribution of these and other frequently reported activities is represented in the Graph 8 below.





Other activities park visitors reported they engaged in included, but were not limited to kayaking, boating, archery, canoeing, playing with the kids, model airplane flying, rock climbing, and nature observing which are presented in Table 8 below.

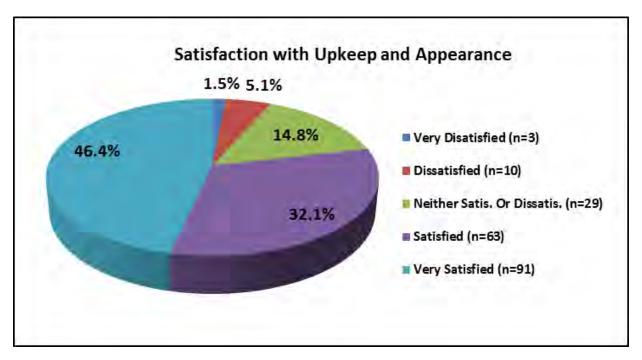
#### Table 8: Distribution of Reported Activities

Activities	(N)	(% of Surveys)	Activities	(N)	(% of Surveys)
Archery	11	3.9%	Motocycling	0	0.0%
Bike Riding	3	1.1%	Nature Observing	18	6.3%
Boating	22	7.7%	Picnicing	8	2.8%
Canoeing	2	0.8%	Rock Climbing	1	0.0%
Camping	27	9.5%	Relaxing	40	14.1%
Fishing	59	20.1%	Rafting	15	5.3%
Four Wheeling	0	0.0%	RC Flying	7	2.5%
Hiking/Walking	24	8.5%	RV'ing	0	0.0%
Horseback Riding	0	0.0%	Snowboarding	0	0.0%
Jet Skiing	0	0.0%	Skiing	9	3.2%
Jogging	1	0.4%	Swimming	15	5.3%
Kayaking	4	1.4%	Other	2	0.8%
Kids Playing	16	5.6%			

In addition to gathering data regarding the parks usage and visitors activities, a series of **questions were ask relative to the visitors' level of satisfaction as it pertains to the parks** upkeep and appearance, the restroom facilities (Porta-Potty), the availability of parking **spaces**, and to what extent the park met their expectation. Visitors' levels of satisfaction were measured on a Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Dissatisfied" and 5 being "Very Satisfied". Survey results are presented in Graph 9-11.

Generally speaking, satisfaction levels were relatively high, with mean scores of 4.2 for upkeep and appearance, 3.2 for restroom facilities/Porta-Potties, and 4.5 for the availability of parking spaces. Additional data gathered from the 196 completed visitors' surveys were analyzed further and the findings are presented on the following pages.

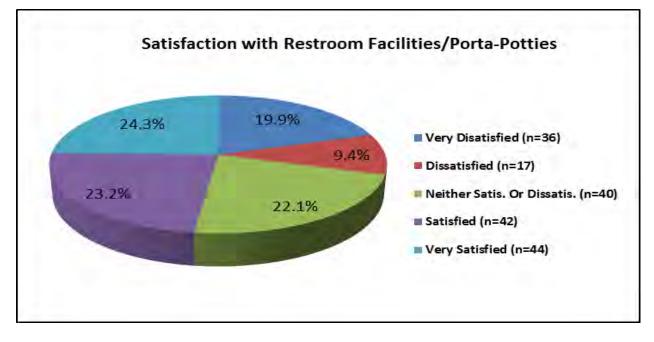
### Satisfaction with the Park's Upkeep/Appearance



Graph 9: Satisfaction with Parks Upkeep and Appearance

The vast majority (78.5%) of the visitors reported being either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the parks upkeep and appearance as compared to 6.6% who were "Dissatisfied" or "Very Dissatisfied. The park in which visitors were most dissatisfied was Esparto Community Park primarily due to the poor upkeep of park equipment and the children play structure in particular.

### Satisfaction with the Park's Restroom Facilities (Porta-Potties)



Graph 10: Satisfaction with Parks Restroom Facilities/Porta-Potties

Slightly less than one half (47.5%) of the visitors reported being either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the restroom facilities or Porta-Potties at the parks as compared to 29.3% who were "Dissatisfied" or "Very Dissatisfied. Visitors were most dissatisfied with the facilities at Esparto Community Park.

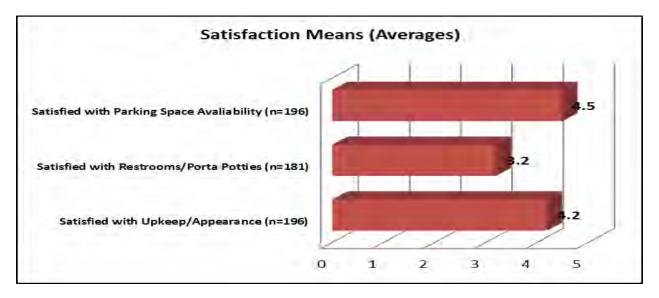
### Satisfaction with Parking Space Availability



### Graph 11: Satisfaction with Parking Space Availability

The vast majority (88.3%) of the visitors reported being either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the availability of parking spaces as compared to 4.6% who were "Dissatisfied" or "Very Dissatisfied. The means (averages) for the three satisfaction questions are presented in Graph 12 below.





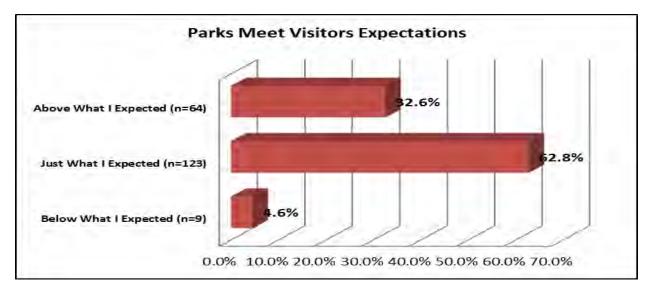
Visitors to the parks were, for the most part, quite satisfied with the appearance and upkeep of the parks, have a mean of 4.2 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest value and represents being very satisfied.

Similarly, they were quite satisfied with the availability of parking spaces at the parks. Mean score was calculated to be 4.2 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest value and represents being very satisfied.

Satisfaction with the restrooms and porta-potties, on average however, were markedly reduced, with a calculated mean (average) of 3.2 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest value and represents being very satisfied. The surveying team have acquired photograph documentation of the restrooms in numerous parks that were poorly maintained.

### **Meeting Visitors Expectations**

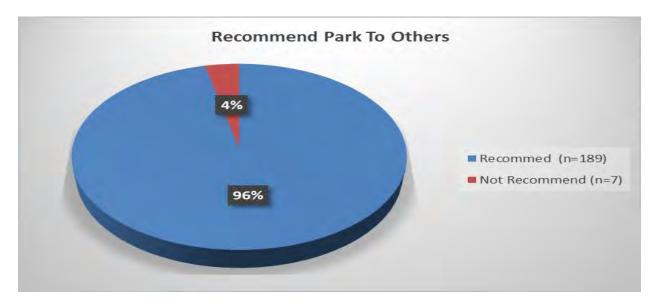




More than half (62.8%) of the 196 visitors indicated that the park was "Just What They Expected", while approximately one third (32.6%) indicated that it was "Above What They Expected". Only nine or 4.6% of the park visitors indicated that the parks were "Below What They Expected" as represented in Graph 13 above.

# **Recommend Park to Family/Friends**

### Graph 14: Recommend Park to Family/Friends



Graph 14 shows that of the 196 visitors surveyed, 189 or 96% indicated they would recommend the park to family and friends. Seven or 4% indicated they would not.

Reasons for recommending the park included the following:

- Clean and family friendly
- Convenient, well maintained Tubing and camping -
- Best local camping Nice campground
- Closest rafting to the city Convenient, clean -
- Safe, maintained, has grass Nice campsite, clean
- Nice park, scenery -
- Free boat launch
- Quiet spot and fishing
   Good place for family
   Nice park, nature
   Cood booch access
- -Sights and hiking
- Nice area, bird watching Well maintained -

- Easy access, close to river

- Great fishing spots
- Good place for flying models
- River camping area
- Good beach access

- Great for kidsQuiet, peaceful, nice
  - Clean
- Nice, river access
- Orean
   Nice, river ac
   Good hiking
  - Water, swimming
  - Only park in area
  - Nice views

  - Good raftingBBQ and picnic area
    - Great place for dogs

### **Suggested Amenities**

Finally, park visitors were asked the following question: What amenities do you think are missing from this park? Their responses have been grouped into related categories and are presented in Table 9 below.

#### Table 9: Distribution of Suggested Amenities

<b>Recommended Amenities</b>	Frequency Reported	Percent of Recommended Amenities (n=118)
Water Fountain	19	16.1%
Restroom (Better, clean)	13	11.0%
Tables, Benches	11	9.3%
Lighting	10	8.5%
Shaded area, Trees	9	7.6%
Better Signage	9	7.6%
BBQ Grills/Pits	8	6.8%
Dock (Longer, more)	8	6.8%
Ramp, Ramp Handrails	7	5.9%
Trails, Trail Signage	5	4.2%
Trash Cans	4	3.4%
Playground Equipment	3	2.5%
Camp Site, Overnight	3	2.5%
WIFI	2	1.7%
Horse-shoe pits	2	1.7%
Security	2	1.7%
Cleaning tables	2	1.7%
Shower	1	0.8%

### **KEY FINDINGS: OBSERVATION SURVEYS**

Juxtaposed to the Park Visitors Surveys, data collected via the Parks Observation Surveys provides supplementary information for analysis and is used to gain a better understanding of the parks for planning purposes and to inform the Yolo County Parks Depa**rtment regarding visitors' usage, perceptions, and recommendations for updating** the parks. During the three rounds of surveys, Observation Surveys were completed for all 19 parks. The distribution of these surveys are represented in Table 10 below. All parks, except Dunnigan Community Park, were visited both during the morning hours (9am-Noon), after noon hours (Noon-6pm), on a weekday (Friday) and on the weekend (Saturday or Sunday). Dunnigan was only visited during the afternoon hours.

Park Name	Completed Surveys (n=57)	Surveying Periods (Week Day/Weekend)	Surveying (Times of Day)
Cache Creek- Lower	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Cache Creek–Middle	4	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Cache Creek Upper	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Camp Haswell Park	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Clarksburg River Access	4	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Elkhorn Regional Park	5	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Esparto Community Park	4	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Grassland Regional Park	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Knights Landing	4	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 2	0	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 3	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 4	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Vernon Nichols Park	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Capay Open Space	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Wild Wings Park	0	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM
Dunnigan Park	1	Weekend	AM/PM
Valley Vista Regional Park	3	Weekday/Weekend	AM/PM

#### **Table 10: Distribution of Completed Observation Surveys**

During the scheduled time of surveying, there were no visitors at Putah Creek #2 or at Wild Wings. As a result, Observation Surveys were not completed.

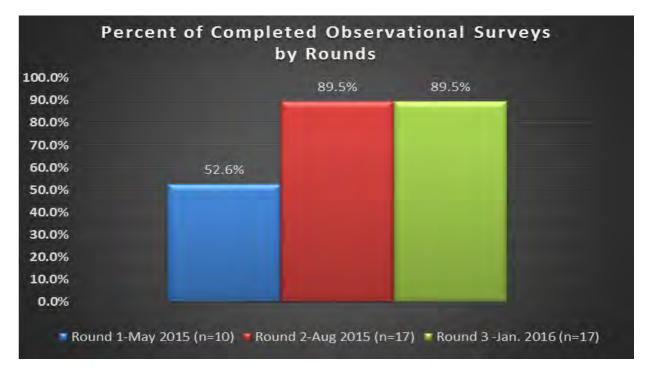
Data gathered by the Observation Surveys included weather conditions at the time of the visit to the parks, the average number of visitors at the park during the 4 hour surveying period; the average number of cars in approved parking spaces; the average number of cars with out-of-state license plates; the average number of cars parked in handicapped parking spaces; and activities observed in the park.

For the analysis, the means (averages) were determined by calculating the numbers recorded by the surveyors shortly after entry into the park, plus the numbers prior to their exiting the park, divided by two. Averages are rounded up to the next whole number. For example, averages less than 1 are reported as 1 in this report.

Unlike the Park Visitors Survey, the Observation Survey documents activities in the park that are directly observed by the team of surveyors. As such, the collected data can be used as a way to compare, not necessarily to confirm, the reported activities of park visitors.

Information presented on the following pages represents the findings from the 57 Observation Surveys. As with the data from the Park Visitors Survey, caution should be exercised relative to drawing definitive conclusions due to the limited nature of the dataset and the fact that it may not adequately represent the overall picture of parks **usage and/or visitors' perceptions and expectations**. Further sampling of park visitors using both methods, if at all possible, is recommended in order to acquire a more refined picture.

The distribution of the Observation Surveys is represented in Graph 15 below.



### Graph 15: Distribution of Observation Surveys by Rounds

During the first round of surveying, observation surveys were completed at slightly more than a half (52.6%) of the 19 parks. This was increased to 89.5% in the two subsequent rounds in August 2015, and January 2016. It is important to note that observation surveys were not completed if there were no visitors observed in the park.

### Weather Conditions

The weather condition during surveying activities in the first round (May, 2015) was sunny, with temperatures ranging from 52 to 72 degrees, which were ideal for surveying activities in the parks. During the second round (August 2015), the conditions were sunny and hot, with temperatures ranging from 60 to 97 degrees. In the third and final round of surveying (January 2016), the weather conditions were oftentimes wet, overcast, and cold, with temperatures ranging from 43 to 58 degrees.

### **Number of Visitors**

The average number of park visitors observed by the surveyors across 18 of the 19 parks was 2.9. Depending on the park, the number of visitors ranged from 0 to 1 at Cache Creek Upper for example, to 0 to 45 at Elkhorn Regional Park, with averages of 0.3 and 9.7 respectively. The ranges and averages for each park is presented in Table 11 below.

Park Name	(Min-Max)	Ave. Number of Visitors
Cache Creek- Lower	0 - 13	3.75
Cache Creek–Middle	0 - 23	5.6
Cache Creek Upper	0 - 1	0.3
Camp Haswell Park	0 - 10	2.8
Clarksburg River Access	0 - 19	6.8
Elkhorn Regional Park	0 - 45	9.7
Esparto Community Park	0 - 24	6.8
Grassland Regional Park	0 - 13	3.8
Knights Landing	0 - 17	6.8
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	0 - 7	2.5
Putah Creek 2	0	0
Putah Creek 3	0 - 5	1.8
Putah Creek 4	0 - 2	0.5
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	0 - 2	1
Vernon Nichols Park	0 - 2	0.5
Copay Open Space	0	0
Wild Wings Park	0	0
Dunnigan Park	0 - 4	2
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	0
All Parks	0 - 10	2.9

#### Table 11: Ranges and Averages: Number of Visitors by Parks

### Number of Cars in Appropriate Parking Spaces

The average number of cars in identified parking spaces across 18 of the 19 parks was 1.5. Depending on the park, the number of spaces ranged from 0 to 1 at Cache Creek Upper for example, to 0 to 26 at Elkhorn Regional Park, with averages of 0.3 and 5.2 respectively. The ranges and averages for each park is presented in Table 12 below.

Park Name	(Min-Max)	Ave. Number of Cars in Spaces
Cache Creek- Lower	0 - 6	2
Cache Creek–Middle	0 - 8	2
Cache Creek Upper	0-1	0.3
Camp Haswell Park	0	0
Clarksburg River Access	0 - 14	5
Elkhorn Regional Park	0 - 26	5.2
Esparto Community Park	0 - 9	3.2
Grassland Regional Park	0 - 13	3.8
Knights Landing	0 - 11	3.8
Putah Creek 1 ( Lower)	0 - 4	1.3
Putah Creek 2	0	0
Putah Creek 3	0 - 1	0.3
Putah Creek 4	0 - 1	0.3
Putah Creek 5 (Upper)	0 - 1	0.5
Vernon Nichols Park	0 - 1	0.3
Copay Open Space	0 - 1	0.3
Wild Wings Park	0	0
Dunnigan Park	0 - 1	0.5
Valley Vista Regional Park	0	0
All Parks	0 - 5	1.5

#### Table 12: Ranges and Averages: Number of Cars by Parks

### Number of Cars with Out of State Plates

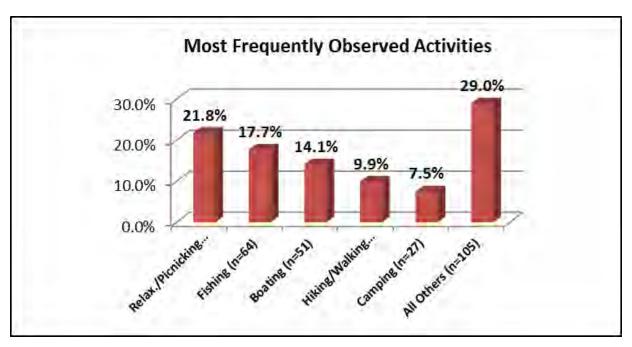
During the 228 hours of observation at the 18 park over the three rounds of surveying, only six cars were noted with out of state plates. Plates from Oklahoma and Wisconsin were observed at Putah Creek 2. A plate from Arizona was observed at Upper Cache Creek, an Illinois plate was observed at Camp Haswell, and Idaho plates were observed at Clarksburg River Access and at Knights Landing. The average number of cars with out of state plates across the 18 observed parks was 0.33.

### Number of Cars in Handicap Parking Spaces

During the 228 hours of observation at the 18 park over the three rounds of surveying, only one car with handicap plates was observed at Middle Cache Creek (Campground) in a designated handicap parking spaces.

### **Observed Activities within the Parks**

Activities observed by the team during the scheduled 4-hour surveying periods are presented in Graph 16 below. A comparative analysis of activities reported by park visitors and those observed by the surveying team are presented in Graph 16.



Graph 16: Observed Activities within the Parks

The most frequently observed activity by park visitors was relaxing/picnicking (21.8%), followed by fishing (17.7%), boating (14.1%), hiking/walking (9.9%), and camping at 7.5%.

Further analysis of the data indicate that the most frequent activities vary from one park to the next. For example, water activities such swimming, boating, and fishing were observed more frequently at parks such as Cache Creek, Putah Creek, Knights Landing, and Clarksburg. Conversely, activities such as hiking, walking, nature-observing, camping, and picnicking/relaxing were more common among the other parks such as Elkhorn, Capay Open space, and Valley Vista Regional Park. The distribution of other observed activities is represented in the Table 13 below. These other activities observed by the surveying team included, but were not limited to hiking/walking, kayaking, rafting, canoeing, and park visitors observing nature.

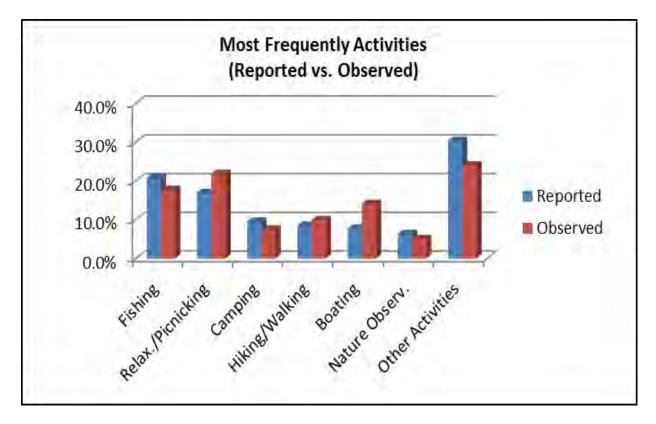
Activities	(N)	(% of Surveys)		Activities	(N)	(% of Surveys)
Archery	11	3.9%	N	lotocycling	0	0.0%
Bike Riding	3	1.1%	Ν	ature Observing	18	6.3%
Boating	22	7.7%	Pi	icnicing	8	2.8%
Canoeing	2	0.8%	R	ock Climbing	1	0.0%
Camping	27	9.5%	R	elaxing	40	14.1%
Fishing	59	20.1%	R	afting	15	5.3%
Four Wheeling	0	0.0%	R	C Flying	7	2.5%
Hiking/Walking	24	8.5%	R	V'ing	0	0.0%
Horseback Riding	0	0.0%	Si	nowboarding	0	0.0%
Jet Skiing	0	0.0%	SI	kiing (Water)	9	3.2%
Jogging	1	0.4%	SI	wimming	15	5.3%
Kayaking	4	1.4%	0	ther	2	0.8%
Kids Playing	16	5.6%				

#### Table 13: Distribution of Observed Activities

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# **Comparative Analysis of Reported and Observed Activities**

The final set of analysis examines the relationship between activities that were reported to the surveyors during the random face to face interviews in the parks with visitors verses the activities the surveyors observed. As such, the frequency of activities reported on the Park Visitors Survey was compared to those reported by the Surveyors on the Observation Survey. The result of these analysis are presented in Graph 17.



Graph 17: Comparative Analysis of Reported vs. Observed Activities

Based on the comparison of the two sets of data, the following activities were overreported by park visitors: Fishing by 3.1%; Camping by 2.0%; Nature-observing by 1.3%; and the combined category "Other Activities" by 6.3%.

Conversely, the following activities were under-reported by park visitors during the three surveying periods: Relaxing/picnicking by 4.9%; Hiking/walking by 1.4%; and Boating by 6.4%.

### EVALUATION SUMMARY:

Information presented in this report provides the bases for discussions regarding the **County's many parks, their visitors, and their utilization.** These findings should not be viewed or presented as definitive findings, but rather they should be used as informative indicators.

However, taken as a whole, these findings are suggestive of the following:

- that there is in fact a seasonal pattern to the parks utilization, whereas the greatest usage occurs in the Summer
- that park visitors resided in numerous cities (52)
- that park visitors resided in numerous California counties (26)
- that many visitors to the parks were just passing by and decided to stop
- that about a quarter of those visiting the parks were there for the first time
- that Cache and Putah Creeks had the most first time visitors
- that many visitors utilized the parks quite frequently
- that fishing was the most reported activity at the parks
- that more than three quarters of the parks visitors were very satisfied or satisfied with the upkeep and appearance of the parks
- that roughly one half of the park visitors were very satisfied or satisfied with the restroom facilities
- that roughly 90% of the park visitors were very satisfied or satisfied with parking space availability
- that roughly 95% of the park visitors indicated that the parks met or exceeded their expectations and would recommend them to their friends and families
- and, that a limited number of park visitors utilized the handicap parking spaces

Finally, as with all sampling surveys, an increase in the number of completed surveys will increase the precision and maximize its effectiveness. As such, it is recommended that additional surveying be done to supplement and strengthen these findings.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Yolo County, California

Date: June 14, 2016

To: <u>CAO</u> ✓

26.

Receive and file the Sustainable Parks Study, direct the General Services Department to finalize cost estimates to implement the study recommendations and return to the Board for consideration of the budget requests with the adopted budget for 2016-17. (No general fund impact) (Yarris/Sabatini)

Catherine Portman addressed the Board of Supervisors on this item.

Minute Order No. 16-86: Approved recommended action.

MOTION BY: Rexroad / SECONDED BY: Chamberlain AYES: Chamberlain, Villegas, Saylor, Rexroad, Provenza. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: None.



# County of Yolo

www.yolocounty.org

To: Supervisor Jim Provenza, Chair and Members of the Board of Supervisors

# Regular-General Government # 26. General Services

Meeting Date: 06/14/2016

**Budget Hearings & Board Meeting** 

Brief Title: Sustainable Parks System Study

From: Kevin Yarris, Director, General Services

Staff Contact: Elisa Sabatini, Natural Resources Analyst, County Administrator's Office, x5773

# Subject

Receive and file the Sustainable Parks Study, direct the General Services Department to finalize cost estimates to implement the study recommendations and return to the Board for consideration of the budget requests with the adopted budget for 2016-17. (No general fund impact) (Yarris/Sabatini)

# **Recommended Action**

Receive and file the Sustainable Parks Study, direct the General Services Department to finalize cost estimates to implement the study recommendations and return to the Board for consideration of the budget requests with the adopted budget for 2016-17

# Strategic Plan Goal(s)

Operational Excellence Thriving Residents Sustainable Environment

# **Reason for Recommended Action/Background**

The Sustainable Parks Study provides recommendations to ensure the County's parks and open spaces are both **physically** and **financially sustainable** for future generations to enjoy.

The economic downturn in 2009 brought with it a 60% reduction in General Fund allocated to the Parks Division in 2010. Since that time, the Parks Division primarily focused on the operations and maintenance of existing County parks and did not have resources to conduct a review of the overall parks system. As a result, the County Administrator's Office undertook this comprehensive study at the request of the Director of General Services and in support of the "Sustainable Environment" goal of the County's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

# Study Scope and Critical Findings

The study included a comprehensive fiscal analysis (including revenues and expenditures and a time study), a visitor and use survey, a peer community survey, a comprehensive Parks

Inventory (Appendix D), interviews with the park's maintenance workers, and a review of existing governing documents and all applicable county code sections. The recommendations contained in Chapter 8 are based on the findings described in Chapter 7. Selected findings include:

- As the Parks Division has moved away from state and federal grant funds in 2010 it has come to rely on general funds as the largest source of revenue. General funds have comprised as much as 80% of the budget in recent years, though the total monetary contribution is lower than in prior years.
- It requires about **\$850,000 per year** (in 2012 dollars) to simply operate and maintain the County's existing park system, of which approximately \$150,000 per year is fee revenue and \$675,000 per year is General Fund.
- The Parks Division's current staffing levels allow for the routine operation of existing parks sites. The Parks Division **does not have adequate staff** at this time to develop new programs, perform research and analysis, nor apply for grants that could offset General Fund requirements for staff, or implement the recommendations within this study.
- The existing **grant obligations** held by the Parks Division require the ongoing operations of at least 12 park sites until 2030. The cost to walk away from these parks would be at least \$3.4 million dollars.
- Fees are not collected nor enforced in a uniform manner across the parks system. This is due to several factors including; the use of "iron rangers" for fee collection, lack of physical barriers for entrance and egress at parks, parks ownership and /or contracts with state and federal agencies.
- It is estimated that approximately 83% of users at the County's boat launch facilities <u>do not</u> pay the day use boat launch fee.
- An additional \$147,000 of fee revenue per year would likely be captured with the addition
  of automated payment machines and associated physical improvements at the four (4)
  parks where the County is currently authorized to collect fees. The Parks Division could
  increase revenue an additional \$211,000 per year if the Parks Division increases fees at
  Elkhorn Regional Park and Knights Landing Boat Launch to \$10 per visit.
- The Parks Division could increase revenue to \$400,000 and \$600,000 per year if the County can renegotiate contracts with the State to allow the Parks Division to charge fees at the Putah Creek Fishing Access Sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch and the County raises fees at all eligible parks. Fee collection is currently prohibited at the Putah Creek Fishing Access sites and the Clarksburg Boat Launch due to state contract limitations.

# **Summary of Recommendations**

The recommendations contained in Chapter 8 were collaboratively developed by the Parks Study Work Group with input from many sources including:

- The Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee,
- The Parks Study Steering Committee,
- Interviews with the Parks' Maintenance workers,
- · Peer community and city park department interviews; and
- The Board's Facilities Subcommittee.

Overall, the CAO's office recommends increasing **fee revenue** by a minimum of \$150,000 per year and potentially up to \$600,000 per year **by investing in one-time improvements to the fee collection structure** of the Parks Division. Some of these improvements may be funded through grants. The County should maintain General Fund revenue at the current level of

\$650,000 per year until fee collection results in the ability to reduce General Fund revenue. The County should adopt a goal of reducing the General Fund contribution to \$500,000 per year by 2018 and to \$400,000 per year by 2025.

Additionally, the CAO's office is recommending a two (2) year increase of general fund contribution in the amount of \$175,000 (\$87,000 per year) to fund a **two (2) year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner** position. Most of the recommendations described in Chapter 8 do not require direct funding – they require **staff time and resources**. The Parks Division will likely be able to continue to fund the position through increased fee revenues if the recommendations are successfully implemented.

The recommendations generally fall into one of three categories:

- Long term financial stability,
- Increased park usage, and
- Efficient division performance.

### Long Term Financial Stability

These recommendations (p. 44) are strategies designed to substantially increase the long term financial sustainability of the Parks Division. Recommendations include:

- Increased enforcement of existing fees through partnership and collaboration with the Yolo County Sheriff's Office and deployment of newer technologies such as automated fee payment machines and traffic control arms as selected park sites. **Modernization** of the annual parks pass sales processes and camping reservation system are also recommended.
- **Negotiations with state and federal partners** to ensure that fees can be collected at all park sites.
- A **comprehensive fee study** to determine if existing fees are adequate to recoup operations and maintenance costs and in line with regional park fees.

### **Increased Parks Usage**

These recommendations (pg. 46) should increase the number of visitors using the County's park system by increasing awareness of the parks system as a whole and also of individual parks and recreation opportunities:

- Initiate an ongoing **recreation needs and parks satisfaction survey** for County residents that can be deployed via mail or website. Initially, the survey should be professionally crafted to ensure that the data and statistics derived from the results can be used to create performance measurement tools and metrics. Identified deficiencies should be prioritized and addressed as funding allows. Staff should explore partnering with the cities on surveying to decrease costs and identify efficiencies.
- Build **community relationships** to create pilot programs and establish on-going programming, annual events, and recreational opportunities. This should include the establishment of a "Friends of Yolo County Parks" program or similar.
- The Parks Division should create a **strong social media presence and develop promotional materials** to increase public awareness of parks and events.

## **Improve Division Efficiency**

The following are selected strategies recommended to improve the efficiency of the Parks Division.

- **Develop alternatives** with community input to study for parks that are under-utilized, over-utilized, or orphan properties.
- Update all applicable sections of **County Code** to ensure that the Parks Division can operate in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Establish a robust **volunteer program.**
- Identify **metrics** and begin collecting necessary data to track division and park **performance**.

Recommended Action	ŀ	Estimated Cos	t
	FY 16/17	FY 17/18	FY 18/19
Maintain General Fund Contribution	\$675,500	\$675,500	\$675,500
Add 2-year limited term Assistant/Associate Parks Planner to Parks Division staff	\$87,000	\$87,000	-
Comprehensive Fee Study	-	\$30,000	-
Install automatic payment machines and traffic control at select parks (Knights Landing and Elkhorn suggested for pilot project)	\$60,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
Recreation Needs and Parks Satisfaction survey development*	-	\$10,000	-
Helvetia Park access survey	\$20,000	-	-
Seasonal Extra-Help workers for parks maintenance (two temporary FT seasonal EE's for approximately 5 months per year)	\$30,000	\$30,000	-
Total	\$872,500	\$860,500	\$703,500

### **Implementation Costs**

# Collaborations (including Board advisory groups and external partner agencies)

Staff has collaborated with: Parks Division staff, the Parks, Recreation, Wildlife Advisory Committee; the Parks Steering Committee, peer communities, parks staff within the cities, and the Board's Facilities Subcommittee. Att. C. Appendix A - Net Gains Map

Att. D - Appendix B - Status of Parks Master Plan Implementation

Att. E. Appendix C - "Innovative Parks Management" Study

Att. F. Appendix D - Yolo County Parks Inventory

Att. G. Appendix E - Peer Community Research Chart

Att. H. Appendix F - Parks Visitor & Usage Study

### **Form Review**

#### Inbox Elisa Sabatini (Originator) Kevin Yarris Mindi Nunes Patrick Blacklock Financial Services Form Started By: Elisa Sabatini Final Approval Date: 06/07/2016

Reviewed By Elisa Sabatini Kevin Yarris Mindi Nunes Patrick Blacklock Doug Olander

#### Date

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