

Regional Parks Department  
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County of Sacramento

**Divisions**  
Administration  
Golf  
Leisure Services  
Maintenance  
Rangers  
Therapeutic Recreation Services

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## **River Bend Area Plan Map Amendment ARPP Analysis** **Camp Fire Day Camp**

### **Introduction:**

The American River Parkway Plan provides specific requirements prior to developing or improving certain facilities within the American River Parkway. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved the Camp Fire Day Camp Master Plan on July 26, 2011. The purpose of this Area Plan Map Amendment is to include the approved Master Plan Facilities on the River Bend Area Plan Map in order to remain consistent with the policies of the American River Parkway Plan.

### **Project Description:**

On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2008 the County of Sacramento purchased the Camp Fire Day Camp (CFDC) from the Camp Fire USA Sacramento Sierra Council. Consisting of approximately 10 acres the CFDC is located in the River Bend Area of the American River Parkway. The American River Parkway Plan identifies the 10 acre site as a Limited Recreation Land Use Area and all improvements must be consistent with that designation. As a condition of the property purchase agreement that County agreed to specific restrictions, provisions and covenants including;

- a. County covenants that the property will be solely used to provide organized, natural outdoor experiences for youth and families of the greater Sacramento region, including environmental education, camping, recreation and adult supervised social activities. The definition of youth includes those persons between birth and 23 years of age.
- b. County covenants that Camp Fire youth and families will have free access to the property for up to 20 days per calendar year for Camp Fire sectioned and organized outdoor programs by providing proof of membership and following agreed-upon registration procedures.
- c. County covenants that County of Sacramento department of Regional Parks will establish a priority registration process for environmental education organizations to schedule youth programs.
- d. County covenants the property will be maintained in a primarily natural state. Any development of the property will be to improve access for youth and families of the natural environmental experience and may include such things as restroom facilities, pavilions and outdoor classrooms, and shade structures consistent with the land use designation of the American River Parkway Plan.
- e. County covenants the property will be known as "Camp Fire Day Camp Area."

On July 26, 2011 the Board of Supervisors approved the Camp Fire Day Camp Master Plan and adopted a Negative Declaration (Control No. 2009-70118) with associated mitigation monitoring and reporting requirements. In order to be consistent with the policies of the American River Parkway Plan, prior to construction of the new facilities contemplated in the approved Master Plan an Area Map Amendment for the River Bend Area Plan is required.

### **American River Parkway Plan**

The following goals and concept policies can be found in the American River Parkway Plan and provide the context for evaluation and review by the Department of Regional Parks.

### **Goals and Concept Policies of the American River Parkway Plan (Chapter 1)**

#### **Goals (Page 10)**

- To provide, protect and enhance for public use a continuous open space greenbelt along the American River extending from the Sacramento River to Folsom Dam; and
- To provide appropriate access and facilities so that present and future generations can enjoy the amenities and resources of the Parkway which enhance the enjoyment of leisure activities; and
- To preserve, protect, interpret and improve the natural, archaeological, historical and recreational resources of the Parkway, including an adequate flow of high quality water, anadromous and resident fishes, migratory and resident wildlife, and diverse natural vegetation; and
- To mitigate adverse effects of activities and facilities adjacent to the Parkway; and
- To provide public safety and protection within and adjacent to the Parkway.

#### **Concept Policies (Page 11)**

##### 1.1 Balanced Management

The American River Parkway is a unique regional asset that shall be managed to balance the goals of controlling flooding; preserving and enhancing native vegetation, native fish species, the naturalistic open space and environmental quality within the urban environment; maintaining and improving water flow and quality; providing adequate habitat connectivity and travel corridors to support migratory and resident wildlife; providing recreational opportunities; and ensuring public safety.

##### 1.2 Recreation

The Parkway shall be oriented to passive, unstructured water-enhanced recreation activities which are appropriate in a natural environment, and which are not normally provided by other County recreational facilities. To this end, development in the Parkway shall be minimal, and facilities which are primarily visitor attractions should be placed in less sensitive areas within the County Park system. Insofar as possible, development shall not occur in areas where natural ecosystems are still relatively undisturbed.

### 1.3 Resource Protection

Limitation on the use of the Parkway through design and management tools to prevent overuse of the Parkway and preserve the environmental quality, thereby ensuring the integrity of the Parkway for future users.

### 1.4 Land Use

No existing publicly owned Parkway lands shall be disposed of through sale, lease, or de facto uses adverse to the goals and policies of this Plan, in order to assure the long-term protection and integrity of the present boundaries of the Parkway.

### 1.5 Cooperation

Coordination and cooperation in Parkway planning and management is essential, especially in recognizing the many important roles of jurisdictions and agencies with regulatory responsibilities within the Parkway.

## **River Bend Park Area Plan (Pages 179 & 180)**

10.31 In order to protect the Nature Study Area, those uses established in the Protected Area should be compatible with, or directed away from, the Nature Study Area.

10.32 No more than seven acres of Developed Recreation uses may be permitted within the 10 acre Developed Recreation designation area west of Hagan Park, in the River Bend Park Area Plan Map and the General Land Use Map. Development of the remaining three acres shall be consistent with Limited Recreation designation regulations.

10.33 New picnic sites in Developed Recreation areas shall not be created by turfing land under oak trees.

10.34 A demonstration farm and native plant nursery may be developed in the Limited and Developed Recreation areas located at the eastern edge of River Bend Park.

10.35 The use of organic farming procedures is strongly encouraged in connection with the demonstration farm.

10.36 A bicycle/pedestrian trail should be constructed from the end of Chase Drive to connect with the existing Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle trail.

## **Activities and Facilities**

Access to the River Bend Park Area from Folsom Boulevard is possible via Rod Beaudry Drive. An unimproved parking facility is located near the park entrance and adjacent to the picnic areas. There is another unimproved parking facility located near the day and overnight group camping area.

River Bend Park consists of two distinct areas, the western portion, which is heavily vegetated, and the area to the east, which is presently being leased for agricultural uses. The two areas are divided by the existing bicycle trail. A variety of activities take place in the western portion of the park including picnicking, day camps and overnight group camping, fishing and equestrian use. In addition, the area is a popular take out point for rafters. Private property owned by Campfire U.S.A. is located at the northern end of the park. There is a County pump station located at the northeast end of the park adjacent to the Rancho Cordova Community Park (Hagan Park). The western portion of River Bend Park consists of Developed Recreation and Limited Recreation land use designations, three separate areas of Protected Area and a large Nature Study Area off of Rod Beaudry Drive. An equestrian staging area is located off of Rod Beaudry Drive in the Nature Study Area. Due to the popularity of the River Bend Park Area, increased use should be anticipated.

The Protected Area adjacent to the large Nature Study area is ideal for restoration and mitigation uses, offering an opportunity to recreate a native plant community and riparian habitat area. The overall arrangement of this area should provide for a system of trails to accommodate walking tours, providing an outdoor classroom for the education of students, both young and old, in biology, botany, ecology, etc. The stormwater outfall channel, which flows along the eastern edge of the Protected Area land use, should be restored to create a riparian corridor. With the appropriate design and the adherence to the procedures described in Chapter 4, Opportunities for Reducing Contaminants in Urban Runoff, it could also provide an opportunity for filtering the urban run-off before it empties into the American River. The restoration of the Protected Area would serve as a buffer between the Nature Study Area to the west and the Limited and Developed Recreation land uses to the east.

The land uses east of the bike trail consist of Developed and Limited Recreation areas. These areas have historically been leased for agricultural use. Recognizing that farms are important as open space resources that protect habitat, preserve view sheds and can serve to educate the urban public, a native plant nursery and demonstration farm (preferably using organic farming methods) would be appropriate in the 78-acre Limited Recreation land use designation area east of the outfall channel. This area has historically been used for agricultural purposes. The demonstration farm should encourage organic farming methods as much as possible to protect the habitat and waters of the American River. The purpose of the native plant nursery is to provide a supply of native plants for the Parkway, which are grown in climate and conditions equivalent to that of their final planting site. The native plant nursery and demonstration (organic) farm would provide a site for school age children and adults throughout the region to learn the techniques of plant cultivation and care, tree pruning, organic farming and other horticultural techniques. The Developed Recreation land use area on the eastern side of the River Bend Park Area Plan is an appropriate area for an interpretive/educational center and for the historic operational facilities of the nursery/farm. The outdoor educational opportunities offered through the demonstration garden, native plant nursery, riparian habitat and natural plant communities, would be brought together and enhanced through indoor classrooms located at the interpretive center.

The eastern portion of the bike trail within the River Bend Park Area Plan should be improved with a bicycle/pedestrian trail leading from the end of Chase Drive and connecting to the existing Jedediah Smith Memorial Bicycle trail.

**Limited Recreation page 118**

## Description and Purpose

The Limited Recreation designation is applied to lands on which active recreation may take place without development of extensive facilities. The Limited Recreation areas generally have characteristics of topography, vegetation, and wildlife habitat which are conducive to active recreation, but which are constrained from extensive development due to size, access, adjacent residential neighborhoods, or other special circumstances. In addition, Limited Recreation areas may serve as buffers between Developed Recreation areas and more restrictive land use areas.

## Activities

The predominant intended user-group in Limited Recreation areas is the family, although individuals and small and medium groups may be attracted to these areas as well. Limited Recreation areas may be appropriate for Nature Appreciation, Trails Recreation, and Aquatic Recreation. Recreational Enjoyment is restricted to picnicking, and in certain instances, limited educational or youth group overnight use may be appropriate as well. Commercial activities, caretakers, and agriculture may be permitted.

## Facilities

Trails of all types, trail rest-stops, such as water fountains, signage and scattered picnic areas may be provided for the Parkway user in Limited Recreation areas. Primitive group camp facilities for educational or youth groups (no tables, electricity) may be appropriate in certain places. A native plant nursery may be permitted.

**Recreation Activities 7-1 page 120**

Recreation Activities Permitted in Limited Recreation: 1) Sightseeing, study and appreciation of natural features, manmade features, people or event 2) Paint and Sketching 3) Photography 4) Reading and writing for pleasure 5) Picnicking-Family unit 6) Group Picnicking 7) Day Camping 8) Overnight Camping by individuals or family groups 8) Group Overnight camping 9) Walking, Hiking and Running 10) Horseback Riding 11) Boating Access

**Recreation Facilities Table 7-2 page 121**

Facilities Permitted in Limited Recreation: 1) Drinking Fountains, 2) Portable Restrooms, 3) Permanent Restrooms, 4) Trails surfaced with dirt, rock, gravel, wood chips or other pervious materials, 5) Trails surfaced with concrete, asphalt, or other impervious materials 6) Interpretive Signs 7) Public Access Roads 8) Public Parking Lots 9) Picnic Tables, 10) Primitive Group Camps, 11) Equestrian Staging Areas.

**Non-Recreation Activities and Facilities Table 7-3 Page 122**

Non-Recreational Activities and Facilities permitted in Limited Recreation: 1) Caretakers, 2) Agricultural and Agriculture facilities 3) Public Utilities /Flood Control Facilities 4) Local Drainage 5) Habitat Restoration 6) Native Plan Nursery.

*End of American River Parkway Plan reference sections*

## **Staff Review of the Area Map Amendment**

The approved Master Plan anticipated rehabilitating old facilities, removing dilapidated infrastructure and constructing new facilities. The new facilities include a restroom/shower building, storage buildings, ADA Parking, group shelters, interpretive signs and information kiosks. The remainder of the Master Plan outlined maintenance efforts including rehabilitating or replacing the existing picnic tables, fencing, barbeque grills and other minor improvements consistent with the Limited Recreation land use designation.

### **Revised Proposed River Bend Area Plan Map Amendment American River Parkway Plan Compliance Determination**

In order for the Recreation and Park Commission to consider reviewing and approving the construction documents for the new facilities anticipated in the Master Plan, an Area Map Amendment must be processed. The proposed facilities including a restroom/shower building, picnic shelters, storage buildings and parking are all consistent with the Limited Land Use designation in the American River Parkway Plan. Updating the River Bend Area Plan Map to include existing Interpretive Area, Restroom Facility, Parking Facility icons and add a new icon for Primitive Group Camp would ensure consistency with the American River Parkway Plan requirements and the approved Campfire Day Camp Master Plan.

Primitive Group Camp Icon: Upon the initial review of the ARPAC during the September 19, 2014 meeting it was suggested by representatives from Save The American River Association that a new icon for Primitive Group Camping could be used to define the facilities and activities at the Camp Fire Day Camp. It was further discussed that certain minor elements of the Camp Fire Day Camp Master Plan could be captured with a single icon as long as they were consistent with the land use designation in which the icon was placed. Based on the discussion with the members of the ARPAC, the Department is including a recommendation to add an icon to the River Bend Area Plan Map designated as “Primitive Group Camp.”

Primitive Group Camp Icon Definition: The use of the Primitive Group Camp designation for the Camp Fire Day Camp shall be defined to include minor site improvements such as picnic tables, benches, picnic shelters (medium group size 21-40 maximum), individual campfire rings, group campfire ring and amphitheater, storage facilities, and other minor improvements consistent with the approved Camp Fire Day Camp Master Plan and the Limited Recreation land use designation in the American River Parkway Plan.