

Part II – Park-Specific Assessments

This part of the report provides descriptions and inventories for each of the parks, open space areas, and other properties as they existed in 2004. For each park property, the applicable section provides: a general description, including the location and size (Attachment A is a table of use fees for County park sites); inventories of improvements and current uses and activities; a summary of the natural resources at the site; and some preliminary recommendations, including a “Big Idea,” which is a proposed main theme for that County park unit. Site plan drawings for most of the County park properties are provided in Attachment B.

The recommendations are drawn from several sources attributed by number, as follows:

- 1 Yolo County Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Committee
- 2 Public comment
- 3 Stakeholder agency or non-profit group input
- 4 County staff
- 5 Consultant team

3 Airport Park

3.1 Existing Conditions

3.1.1 *Description*

The County’s Airport Park consists of approximately 2.9 acres of open space, centrally located at the Yolo County Airport in the vicinity of the County [?] well and water storage tank on Aviation Avenue, off County Road 29.

3.1.2 *Improvements*

Other than a mix of planted native oaks and non-native trees, this site is unimproved. Management of this property is similar to much of the airport grounds, with periodic disking to remove weeds.

3.1.3 *Current Uses & Activities*

The County General Plan Open Space and Recreation Element (2002) states that Airport Park is “considered a passive open space area intended to be a day use facility for general aviators visiting the airport. Annual visitor days are estimated at less than 50.” This park property basically functions as open space in conjunction with other similar areas at the airport. No planned improvements (e.g., with Prop 12 money) for this property are known.

Nearby recreational uses at the airport include skydiving and various activities at the active Yolo Sportsmen’s Association (YSA) area. YSA leases a northeast portion of the airport grounds from the County as a recreation area for its members. The YSA area

provides rifle and pistol ranges, a specialty range, trap ranges and a skeet field, an archery range, and a children's fishing pond.

3.1.4 *Environmental Resources*

The Airport Park property provides limited environmental resource value; within the general environmental context of other similar grounds around the airport it may provide, for example, some foraging habitat for raptors.

3.2 Problems & Opportunities

This site offers few existing benefits and suggests limited future opportunities in terms of meeting County recreation needs. Airport Park is difficult to locate because signage is not provided to direct people to the site and because it is lacking public amenities that identify the site itself as a County park property. Nearby activities associated with the airport and within the Yolo Sportsmen's Association recreation area create the predominate impressions and effects in the area (including the noise from the target ranges); therefore, the potential use of this small site as a viable passive recreation area for the general public is marginal at best.

Even if the site were to be developed, it would offer minimal amenity value to the County population at large or to the nearby communities of Davis and Woodland. Other uses and activities at the airport may be expected to overshadow uses on the park site. If a County park space were to be improved and expanded it would likely receive some "spill-over" use; however, the demand for such use appears to be limited. Developed recreation would also need to be compatible with airport land use management plans and associated management policies.

3.3 Preliminary Recommendations

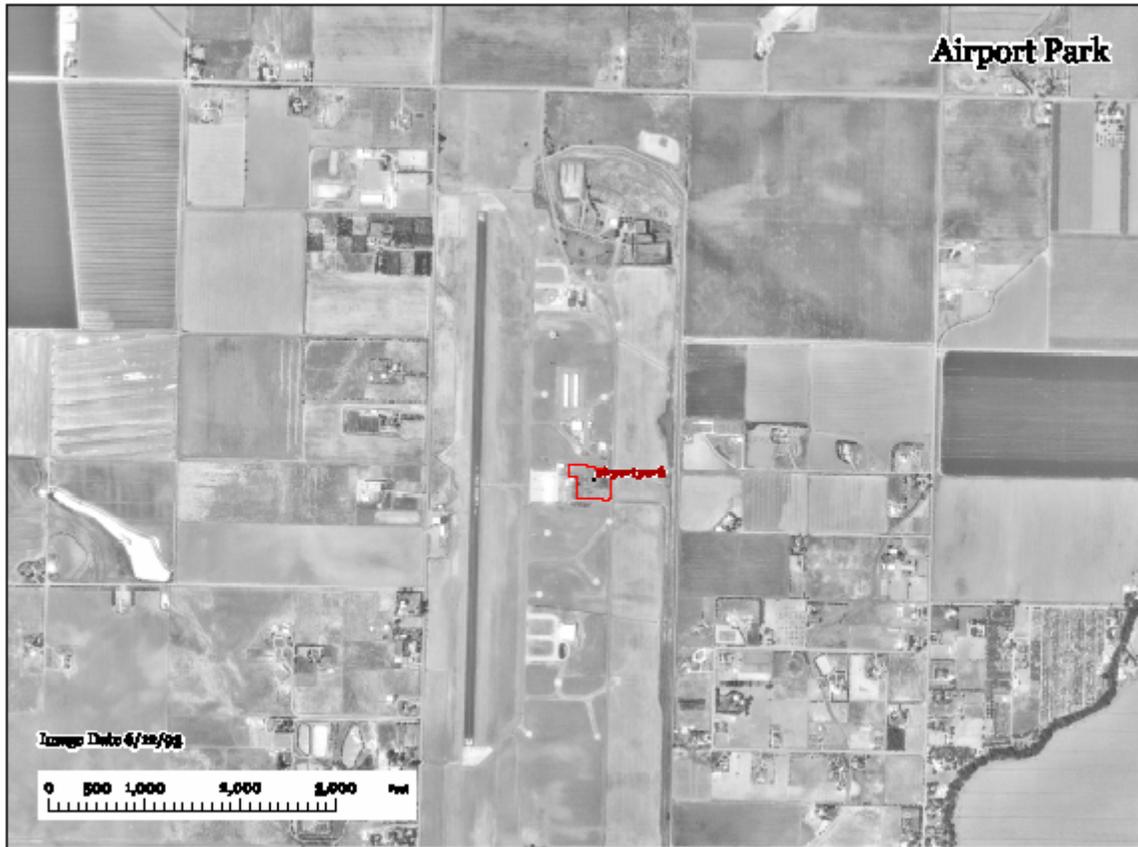
➤ *Big Idea: Let the property revert to general airport operations use – or let it go to the dogs.*

This property in its current state should be not be identified as a County "park," nor counted as contributing to the acreage dedicated to meeting the recreational needs of County residents. It currently offers virtually no active recreation value; major investments in recreation improvements at this site are not recommended.

Two alternatives are suggested in this report. In the first scenario, this property should continue to be managed as part of the airport grounds – i.e., this particular site should not be distinguished from other, similar areas within the airport grounds. For airport safety reasons, land uses, landscaping, and maintenance activities (such as topsoil disking and stormwater management improvements) that may attract birds or other wildlife should be evaluated from the standpoint of potential risk inducement with respect to its proximity to active aircraft areas.

Alternatively, this property, possibly in conjunction with other contiguous area, potentially could be used an off-leash dog park, a use that dog owners in the County might be likely to support and possibly help to develop. To establish a County-

sponsored, off-leash dog park, a modest investment in various improvements would be needed, including a four- to six-foot fence, double-gated entry, shade, water, garbage cans, “pooper scooper” stations, benches, and access for disabled persons. County maintenance would be required for such things as trash removal and grass mowing; however, dog park advocates could be solicited as volunteers to assist with upkeep and associated costs.



4 Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park

4.1 Existing Conditions

4.1.1 Description

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park is located along Highway 16 in the northwestern corner of the County approximately six miles north of Rumsey, with approximately two miles of frontage on Cache Creek. This approximately 700-acre park, acquired in 1973, is the largest County park property. Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park consists of 3 areas: Upper, Middle, and Lower Sites, plus mostly undeveloped County land on the opposite (south) side of the creek. Only about 45 to 60 acres are considered to be “developed,” leaving much of the area as general open space lands. Parks hosts are on full-time duty at the Middle Site. A day-use fee is required at all three areas (see Attachment A).

4.1.2 Improvements

Most development has occurred at the Middle Site, where the campground is located. The campground has 45 individual camping spaces, each of which can accommodate up to eight people and two vehicles. Each site has a fire ring, standing barbeque, and a picnic table. Three group sites for up to 30 people are also available. Associated with the campground is a swimming beach, playground area, and asphalt parking lot and onsite driveways. Drinking water at the Middle Site is provided from a well and delivered by pressurized system; there are two permanent restrooms with flush toilets and a septic system. Also located at the Middle Site is a host residence, park office, barn, corral, and pay station. Electrical power at the Middle Site is generated by an onsite solar power generating system; the system includes a 30 kW diesel generator backup.

The Upper Site is developed with a permanent restroom and parking lot. The Lower Site includes a parking area for approximately 50 cars, onsite paved and dirt roads, the low water bridge across the creek to the south side, and an access road to BLM land and rafting concessionaire use areas to the south.

4.1.3 Current Uses & Activities

Recreational uses of Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park include camping, rafting tours, swimming, picnicking, and fishing. Each of the three access points allows water-related day use for beach access, tubing, picnicking, nature study, and general natural area enjoyment.

By way of the low water bridge at the Lower Site, Cache Creek Canyon Park also provides a point of 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 and horseback riding. BLM lands include some 54,000 acres with multiple trails including the Blue Ridge Trail.

The biggest draw to this area in terms of the total number of visitors are the whitewater rafting tours offered by concessionaires under contractual agreements with the County. Under these agreements, the concessionaires are allowed to use specified areas for rafting tour-related staging, take-out, and camping at the Rafting Concession Area. Concessionaires are typically allowed to use the County's Camp Haswell park as a take-out point. The County will be re-establishing a five year contract arrangement with the rafting concessionaires. Their operations are open for business generally between the end of April through the first weekend in October, including holidays. Under the concessionaire agreements, in consideration for the use of public property, the contractors are required to pay a percentage of gross receipts to the County.

Camping is accommodated at the Middle Site and the Lower Site, although the Lower Site area is dedicated to use by customers of the concessionaires and, thus, not readily usable by the general public.

4.1.4 Environmental Resources

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park provides substantial environmental resource values. The park presents a mosaic of habitat types, partly as a consequence of past fires in the area.

The terraces near Cache Creek and the lower hillslopes near the Creek provide extensive areas of foothill woodland, an important habitat type for wildlife. "Foothill woodland" is a descriptive name for habitats dominated by a mixture of blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), foothill pine (*Pinus sabiniana*), and a variety of other woody species in a habitat matrix that includes trees and shrubs above an annual grassland ground cover. Other important species in this habitat type may include valley oak (*Q. lobata*) in valley bottoms, interior live oak (*Q. wislizenii*) on moister slopes and near streams, California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and (variably) other species that occur in plant series with which the foothill woodland intergrades. The ground cover in foothill woodlands is typically annual grassland that is dominated by naturalized Eurasian annuals.

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park provides a relatively intact foothill riparian corridor, dominated by sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*), Pacific willow (*S. lucida* ssp. *lasiandra*), Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), and other woody species, located near the stream margin but also occupying low terraces near the creek (although this has been affected by high-density recreational uses near the existing campground and picnic areas). This riparian corridor, together with Cache Creek itself, forms an important biological linkage between the Central Valley and the upper Cache Creek watershed in the interior Coast Range.

The park also has areas of mixed chaparral habitat at higher elevations, dominated in a patchy fashion by chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), white-leaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida*), toyon, and leather oak (*Quercus durata*), with a variety of other species also present. The overall habitat mixture in the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park demonstrates a mosaic pattern characteristic of fire-prone landscapes.

This park presents a significant diversity of wildlife species, owing to its location within the Coast Range, as well as to its habitat diversity. Some wildlife species that

occur the Cache Creek watershed area, such as the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)¹ and tule elk (*Cervus nannodes*), are representative of a “charismatic megafauna” that attract park visitors. (The proposed Cache Creek Management Area, involving lands administered by the BLM in Lake, Napa, Colusa, and Yolo Counties, is reported by some websites to host the second largest wintering bald eagle population in California²). The environmental importance of the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, however, is derived from its large size, from the presence of oak woodland and riparian habitat types, and from the Park’s role in providing ecological linkages within the watershed and the interior Coast Range.

Existing records in the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) indicate occurrences of five elements within the 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle that includes Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park (Table II-1). It does not appear that any of these known occurrences lie within the Park; however, it is unclear that detailed ecological inventory studies have ever been conducted for the Park, and it is uncertain whether these species, or other species that are considered environmentally sensitive pursuant to state or federal law, are absent from the Park. The occurrence records indicate that there is a potential that any or all of the identified species may occur within the Park.

Table II-1. CNDDB Sensitive Species in the Glascock Mountain 7.5-minute Quad.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal/ California/ DFG/CNPS
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT/--/--/--
<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	Prairie falcon	--/--/SC/--
<i>Fritillaria pluriflora</i>	Adobe-lily	--/--/--/1B
<i>Layia septentrionalis</i>	Colusa layia	--/--/--/1B
<i>Rana boylei</i>	Foothill yellow-legged frog	--/--/SC/ --

Notes:

- FT Listed as “Threatened” under the federal Endangered Species Act
- SC Listed as a “Species of Special Concern” by the State of California
- 1B Listed by the California Native Plant Society as “Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere”

4.2 Problems & Opportunities

Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park is the crown jewel of the County park system. Of all the current County park properties, it is the one that offers the widest array of regional park amenities to the County’s residents; it is also the one with probably the overall highest values in terms of natural resources.

¹ The bald eagle is listed as “Endangered” under the California Endangered Species Act and as a “fully protected species” under Fish & Game Code § 3511, but was proposed by the USFWS for delisting under the federal ESA in July of 1999.

² See, for example, the following Internet websites: <http://pacific.fws.gov/ecoservices/envicon/pim/reports/Sacramento/CacheCreekMercury.htm>, http://www.californiawild.org/wild/Wild_Places_NCCWHWA.html, or <http://www.calwild.org/places/nwca/cache.php>.

Current use at Cache Creek Park, however, is fragmented among the three sites, as if they were separate parks. The Upper Site is relatively underutilized, and rampant with tamarisk. The Middle Site (including the campground) is the most functional area and works fairly well as a destination campground. The lower site is underused by the general public possibly due to the intensive use by the concessionaire run rafting.

An opportunity associated with this park resource is in the formalizing and enhancing of its relationship with the adjacent BLM property. This County park could be the model for the “Gateway” type facility that enables the public to have access to the extensive resources managed by BLM. Cooperative use agreements would need to be established. An additional, subsequent requirement for this Gateway concept is the creation of an all-season access to the adjacent BLM land which would necessitate the creation of a pedestrian/service bridge over the creek. Currently access to the south side is limited to low-water flow conditions.

The Cache Creek corridor is a sensitive wildlife and archaeological area. These resources are susceptible to park facility development and visitor activities. Management concerns for environmental resources within the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park arise primarily from the actual and potential effects of high-intensity recreational uses. Currently, these uses are largely confined to the vicinity of Cache Creek, with an associated level of adverse effect on the riparian environment. A second concern for this park is the presence of invasive species, salt-cedar (tamarisk) in particular, within the riparian areas of the Park.

Other problems and opportunity considerations at Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park include the following:

- Well water at the Middle Site is considered to be safe to drink but it is not the best tasting water.
- Interactions between concessionaire use and general public use is problematic, as both tend to compete for the same facilities. Use by the general public tends to be secondary to use by the concessionaires’ customers.
- The hosts’ mobile home on the site, like many of the host furnishings, is over 20 years old and not in good condition.
- Although some replacements were made in 2004, many of the tables, barbeques, and fire rings at the campground are the original furnishings installed in 1976 and their condition reflects the deferred maintenance.

4.3 Preliminary Recommendations

➤ *Big idea: Cache Creek Regional Park is the premier Gateway to outdoor recreation in Yolo County.*

Recommendations for Cache Creek Regional Park include:

- Investigate design strategies for creating all-season access across the creek for pedestrians, equestrians, mountain bikes, and service vehicles. Consider

relocating a County bridge structure removed from other locations as part of other improvement projects. Identify funding opportunities to support such a development and implement (1, 2, 5).

- Further develop and strengthen the partnership with BLM regarding mutual management and public access objectives to formalize the Gateway relationship (1, 5).
- Limit the size of rafting parties. Find appropriate locations for the concession groups so that they do not overrun the parking facilities and adjacent areas intended for the general public. Clarify relationship with concessionaires and better define the limits for levels of use and the extent and character of the physical improvements they may carry out. (1, 2, 4, 5).
- Delineate an area specifically for general public use at the lower site.
- Provide a new residence for use by the caretakers (4). The structure should be more architecturally compatible with the general vicinity (5).
- Continue replacing old campground furnishings (4).
- Make campground infrastructure improvements a higher priority, including a revamped water supply system, and upgraded campsite furnishings (4).
- Escalate the campaign to eradicate invasive and exotic vegetation along this reach of Cache Creek and enlist the assistance of non-profit, California Conservation Corps, or other organizations to help with the removal of tamarisk and arundo (5).



Trailhead signs invite hikers to explore other public land, through the “Gateway” of Cache Creek Regional Park.

5 Camp Haswell Park

5.1 Existing Conditions

5.1.1 Description

Camp Haswell is located approximately 2 miles north of the town of Rumsey along State Highway 16, adjacent to Cache Creek. This 6.5-acre site, formerly used as a Boy Scouts camping area, was acquired by the County in 1996. There is no host at this site; use fees are not charged.

5.1.2 Improvements

Located at Camp Haswell are the remains of a stone cabin, formerly associated with the Scout Camp, which is the visual focus of the site from the highway and other locations. With the exception of the old stone cabin and the paved entrance road, the site is essentially unimproved. The parking areas are unpaved.

5.1.3 Current Uses & Activities

Camp Haswell is heavily used by rafters as a parking and take-out site for raft trips. Currently, rafting use and associated concessionaire customer parking predominate at this site. It is also used on an incidental level for picnicking, swimming and wading, and fishing. Overnight camping is prohibited.

5.1.4 Environmental Resources

Camp Haswell Park provides habitat values similar to those available in the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park and the Otis Open Space Park, with which this park unit is closely associated geographically. The small size of this unit limits the overall intrinsic environmental value of the park, and vegetation has been removed and degraded from high visitor use. The park occupies a broad river terrace between Cache Creek and Highway 16, most of which has been converted from natural habitat into a parking area. The residual terrace habitat is open foothill woodland that has manzanita, toyon, and other chaparral species intermixed with blue oak, interior live oak, and foothill pine.

The principal habitat value in the Camp Haswell Park is associated with the valley foothill riparian habitat corridor located near Cache Creek and on low terraces near the creek. Important species in this habitat type include sandbar willow, button bush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), Pacific willow, white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), Fremont cottonwood, and elderberry. The riparian habitat in the Camp Haswell Park contributes to the linear habitat feature that forms an important ecological linkage feature in the Yolo County landscape.

Camp Haswell Park is located within the Glascock Mountain 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle, and shares the identified sensitive species identified in Table II-1 above. As for the Cache Creek Canyon Regional Park, none of the existing occurrence records in the CNDDDB are identified as having been obtained within Camp Haswell Park, but

the occurrences also indicate that one or more of the species may occur within the Park.

5.2 Problems & Opportunities

This site is located in a highly scenic segment of the canyon, adjacent to whitewater reaches of Cache Creek. It possesses considerably more potential than its current use as a parking area would suggest. This site has been effectively “co-opted” by concessionaire-based rafting use; the site is also a good location for other paddlers who seek a gentle run down Cache Creek, taking out at Nichols Park. The County needs to formalize and better manage the concessionaire uses, determine to what extent other uses should also be considered compatible, and create a multiple-use park facility.

The site potentially offers quality creek and beach access for the general public. Picnicking and other day use could be considerably improved. The old Boy Scout stone cabin provides a visual focal point and may possess historical significance; however, in its current condition, it is in need of repair and could represent a liability.

Management concerns for the Camp Haswell Park that relate to environmental resources include the degradation or loss of habitat values in the Cache Creek riparian corridor that results from high-intensity recreational uses, particularly the presence of the parking lot and take-out point for recreational boat trips. An additional management concern for the Camp Haswell Park results from the presence of abundant salt-cedar (tamarisk) in the riparian corridor adjacent to the creek.

5.3 Preliminary Recommendations

➤ *Big idea: An Info-Center for the Northwest Yolo County Parks – in an old stone cabin.*

For Camp Haswell, the Consultant Team recommends that the County manage the park for multiple uses, reduce the dominance of the concessionaire rafting uses, and restore the old stone cabin sufficiently to allow its use as an information center for the County park system, particularly those in the Cache Creek area, possibly with some satellite administrative functions [5].

A site plan should be developed through a public process for this resource area to define the mix of desired uses that the County wishes to accommodate, including such provisions as the following:

- Benches, tables, and a barbeque could be installed at the south end of the parking lot adjacent to a rocky stream outlet under the trees; the large, rusty drainage pipe abandoned at this location should be removed (1).
- Provisions for handicap access would need to be included, particularly for creek access.
- Selected areas on the site should be replanted with native tree and other plant species. Revegetation with native species would serve both public use purposes

and enhanced habitat potentials, especially in the degraded areas currently used exclusively for parking.

The stone cabin structure should be assessed for structural viability, historical significance, defined in terms of its appropriate functions, and restored, if feasible. Assuming that it is basically sound and can be restored, the structure could serve as a visitor information center for the Yolo County park system, particularly the Cache Creek area parks in the northwest part of the county. It also suggested that such a facility could be managed by a created support group such as a “Friends of Yolo Parks” organization that could provide various recreation information, touring information, environmental education, maps, and guides (5). Shuttle buses could use this location as a station point for hikers and other visitors to the Cache Creek canyon area.

A potential opportunity exists here with the proximity of Camp Haswell to the Otis Ranch property. The County should investigate and, if feasible, develop, in conjunction with interested parties, a foot trail linking Camp Haswell and the Otis Property (1). A modest trailhead facility could be developed in conjunction with trail access to the Otis Property from this location. User and trail information could be provided at the trailhead (and the information center). The plan mentioned above could including parking for those using the Otis Property (5).



The old stone cabin at Camp Haswell should be restored, if feasible, as part of a change toward multiple use management at this scenic park site.

6 Capay Open Space Park

6.1 Existing Conditions

6.1.1 Description

Capay Open Space Park, dedicated to the County in 2004, is a 42-acre park and natural area on both sides of Cache Creek, near the community of Capay. The site is not yet open to the public. The site is being restored for wildlife habitat and developed for recreational use. A host is proposed at the site; no use fees are currently established.

6.1.2 Improvements

No improvements currently exist at the Capay Open Space Park site, other than signage, natural area restoration work, irrigation systems, and a perimeter fence. The Capay Open Space Master Plan calls for a paved entrance way and loop road with parking areas, a trail system, creek access, tree-planting and environmental restoration, interpretive elements and signage, an educational pavilion, picnic tables, restrooms, and an outdoor education area. Also proposed for construction is a 200-gpm well for water supply and a two-unit waterless vault restroom facility.

6.1.3 Current Uses & Activities

Access and current uses at the Capay Open Space Park are currently limited; however, in the future, the site will be open to the public for day use.

6.1.4 Environmental Resources

The new Capay Open Space Park includes areas that were mined for aggregate resources and subsequently reclaimed. These areas have limited habitat value under current conditions, but the habitat values in this park will increase through time as the site's biological communities develop. The site's reclamation plan includes developing "oak savanna" conditions north of a riparian restoration element along the terrace margin in which riparian tree species have been placed. In the future this area will be improved with parking areas, trails, an education pavilion, and other amenities.

The park includes an area on the south side of Cache Creek that has existing riparian vegetation, primarily willows (*Salix* spp.) and cottonwoods (*P. fremontii*), as well as an active channel area as much as 500 feet wide that is currently only marginally vegetated gravel bars. The Cache Creek Conservancy recently treated the area to curtail the dominance of exotic salt-cedar (tamarisk)(tamarisk) and giant reed (arundo). The treated area is developing a scattered cover of young willows and cottonwoods, but remains largely unvegetated at the present time.

The plan for the Open Space Park will enhance the site's ecological values. The development of mature riparian vegetation on both sides of the stream will enhance the ecological linkage values of this park unit in the larger biogeographic context of the

Cache Creek basin. In addition, the development of riparian forest on the site will increase the habitat value of this site for riparian-associated wildlife species.

The CNDDDB occurrences for the 7.5-minute USGS quad that includes the Capay Open Space Park are identified in Table II-2. The CNDDDB records do not indicate an occurrence of these species within the park; the records do indicate that these species could occur within the park.

Table II-2. CNDDDB Sensitive Species in the Esparto 7.5-minute Quad.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal/ California/ DFG/CNPS
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	--/CT--/--
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	Valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT/--/--/--
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Bank swallow	--/CT/--/--

Notes:

- FT Federal Threatened
- CT California Threatened

6.2 Problems & Opportunities

The Capay Open Space Park plan is an example of reuse and restoration of floodplain sites impacted by gravel extraction along Cache Creek. The plan for the Open Space Park can be expected to enhance natural resources, and the integration of recreational use with environmental education uses appears to be highly appropriate.

One resources management concern for the Capay Open Space Park is the presence of invasive, exotic species, including both salt-cedar (tamarisk) and giant reed (arundo). Additional efforts will be necessary to assure that the creek channel, banks, and river bars, as well as the riparian corridor, are not dominated by these species. The Cache Creek Conservancy should be encouraged to continue to be a source of technical assistance in this function.

6.3 Preliminary Recommendations

- *Big idea: Implement the plan -- but ensure that the plan will accommodate basic day-use needs of the public. Consider expanding the resource area by acquiring high value adjacent lands*

Through the Cache Creek Resource Management Plan, Off-Channel Mining Plan, and associated ordinances, the County has established a planning framework for restoring areas impacted by aggregate mining along the Cache Creek corridor. The Capay Open Space Park plan was developed under these plans with public input. It calls for an appropriate mix of restoration and public use. The park plan should be implemented (4, 5). To enhance riparian areas, the County should partner with volunteer groups and continue to work with the Cache Creek Conservancy to remove and control

invasive species (5). A careful balance needs to be maintained to provide public use while meeting objectives for habitat restoration.

In terms of priorities the habitat restoration should occur prior to the development of extensive day use facilities. This will help with the establishment of viable habitat areas as well as providing a more attractive and inviting setting for day use activities at that future time. There are nearby lands that, if acquired, could accommodate additional habitat value and a more immediately useable area for day use activities.



This view of a gravel bar within Capay Open Space Park shows the results of exotic species removal and re-contouring. (Photo R C Roberts)

7 Clarksburg Boat Launch (Clarksburg Public Access)

7.1 Existing Conditions

7.1.1 Description

The Clarksburg Boat Launch, a State-owned site operated by Yolo County, is located on an elevated terrace surface between a levee road and the Sacramento River. The site is approximately 4 acres in size, and is located approximately 1.5 miles south of Clarksburg and County Road E-9.

This site, like Knights Landing Boat Launch and Putah Creek Access Sites, is operated and maintained by the County under an Operating Agreement with the State of California, through the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Conservation Board. The County has operated and maintained the Clarksburg Boat Launch site under agreement with the State since 1958. There is currently no park host at this site, and no use fees are currently charged.

7.1.2 Improvements

The main improvements at this site are the boat ramp and the adjacent asphalt parking area, which were upgraded in 2002 through Wildlife Conservation funds. Portable toilets are provided onsite. There is no electrical power, phone, or water.

7.1.3 Current Uses & Activities

The boat ramp serves as an access to the Sacramento River for boating, water skiing, and fishing. Overnight camping is prohibited. The park property is also used by people fishing from the shore.

7.1.4 Environmental Resources

As noted above, the site is located on an elevated terrace surface between a levee road and the Sacramento River. The levee slope and the terrace surface provide only limited habitat value, owing to two circumstances: (a) the structure of the existing valley foothill riparian habitat at this site has been reduced and simplified to a narrow longitudinal corridor, often just one tree wide, near the water's edge for most of the site, which limits the value that this habitat area might otherwise provide; and (b) human uses including recreational activities have disturbed the site and reduced the habitat value.

The "single-tree-row" riparian corridor has many of the same tree species that occur at Elkhorn Regional Park (see below), including Fremont cottonwood, black walnut (*Juglans hindsii*), Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), and Goodding willow (*Salix gooddingii*), although this site lacks the depth of the ecological values found at the Elkhorn Regional Park site.

Existing CNDDDB records for the USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle that includes this park are listed in Table II-3. There are numerous Swainson's hawk occurrences records in

this region, and it is rather probable that Swainson’s hawks will be found in this park on occasion; a few of the larger cottonwood trees could provide nest sites, except that the degree of human disturbance at this site is quite high. The occurrence record for western yellow-billed cuckoo is very old, and likely reflects habitat conditions near the Clarksburg Boat Launch that no longer occur; this species is highly unlikely to occur in the riparian habitats that are present in the region today.

Table II-3. CNDDDB Sensitive Species in the Clarksburg 7.5-minute Quad.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal/ California/ DFG/CNPS
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson’s hawk	--/CT--/--
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	Western yellow-billed cuckoo	FC/CE/--/--

CE California Endangered
 CT California Threatened
 FC Federal Special Concern

7.2 Problems & Opportunities

The Clarksburg Boat Launch facility has a history of public safety and public health problems, including vandalism, transient activity, and vagrancy. Recently, new portable toilets were stolen soon after they were installed, and newly planted trees were damaged before they could become established. The site is marred by evidence of littering and illegal refuse disposal.

This site is an intensively used boat access facility, and to some extent, habitat values have been subordinated to public use benefits. The site could provide higher habitat values if suitable portions were restored to riparian habitat conditions. Siltation in the river has constrained use of the boat ramp, limiting the size of the boats launched.

Nevertheless, like other County park properties, it receives considerable use and has considerable potential. It is in a good location to receive much use from the eastern County population areas. An improved ethic of stewardship is needed at this site.

7.3 Preliminary Recommendations

➤ *Big idea: “Clarksburg-on-the-Sacramento”– a safe and pleasant destination for riverfront recreation and relaxation.*

This location on the Sacramento River should be a pleasant public park, providing multiple uses. The boat launch should be retained; however, other areas of the site should be enhanced for picnicking and day use. Preliminary recommendations also include the following:

- Additional adjacent areas should be acquired if possible to expand the park areas, particularly for potential habitat restoration. (5)
- Return the name to “Clarksburg Public Access” to increase the emphasis on all responsible, valid public uses, not only boat launching (5).

- For improved public safety and to help encourage better stewardship, consider employing a park host who would live offsite but regularly patrol the area, interact with public, and conduct routine maintenance (5).
- Restore riparian habitat in areas away from the boat launch (5).



Fishing – both from boats as well as from shore – is a popular activity at the Clarksburg Boat Launch facility.