

6.0 RECREATION RESOURCES

6.1 OVERVIEW

This section contains an analysis of the location and types of recreation resources contained within Tehama County.

LEGAL BASIS AND REQUIREMENTS

Government Code Section 65560(b) mandates the inclusion of an Open Space Element within the General Plan, which shall, among other analyses, contain an analysis of open space for “outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas...particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, rivers and streams, and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open-space reservations...”

Although a Recreation Element is not a mandatory element required by state law, the amount of public lands in Tehama County and the extent of recreational resources are important components within the County and are therefore documented in this section.

6.2 PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Research for this portion of the report was compiled through agency contacts, the review of existing documents, including Tehama County's 1983 General Plan and the Tehama County 1977 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Internet resources.

6.3 EXISTING SETTING

Tehama County is rich in recreational resources and lands. Hiking, fishing and boating opportunities abound, as well as the opportunity for more passive recreation. The Tehama County valleys and mountains have diverse and unique scenic resources including rivers, lakes, wetlands, large expanses of grassland, spectacular forests and high mountains. The Sacramento River provides numerous recreational opportunities to residents and visitors of Tehama County. California State University, in association with other agencies, has created The Sacramento River Recreational and Public Access Guide. Within Tehama County access is provided by a number of public agencies along the extent of the river.

Included in this inventory are USDA Forest Service (USDAFS) lands, National Park Service lands (under the US Department of the Interior), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) properties, California State Parks facilities and areas, US Army Corps of Engineers lakes and parks, and County regional parks – each of which are illustrated in **Figure 6-1** and described in more detail below.

UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE NATIONAL FORESTS

Three National Forests manage lands within Tehama County: Mendocino, Lassen and the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Many recreation resources occur on these public lands, most of which are found at higher elevations throughout the county. Recreation resources are discussed for each of the three forests in the county.

Mendocino National Forest

The Mendocino National Forest straddles the eastern spur of the Coastal Mountain Range in northwestern California, covering 894,399 acres that span portions of seven counties: Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lake, Mendocino, Tehama, and Trinity. The Mendocino National Forest extends

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from the Yolla Bolly Mountains in the north (just west of the City of Red Bluff), to Clear Lake in the south. This includes 137,787 acres of designated wilderness and over 40 campgrounds, with a total of 514 recreation sites. Elevations range from about 1,000 feet to over 8,000 feet, providing a variety of vegetation and wildlife.

The Mendocino National Forest offers an array of recreation opportunities to the visitor, including fishing in lakes and streams, camping, picnicking, boating, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, hang-gliding, a large off-road vehicle trail system, winter snow play, hunting, wilderness experiences and mountain biking. The Mendocino National Forest is divided into three ranger districts: Grindstone (formerly Corning and Stonyford), Covelo, and Upper Lake.

The Mendocino National Forest Red Bluff Recreation Area encompasses 488 acres of diversified habitat adjacent to the Sacramento River, two miles south of Red Bluff. The Recreation Area includes the Sacramento River Discovery Center, Lake Red Bluff, two campgrounds, boat launches, a salmon viewing area, interpretive opportunities and a unique birding experience.

Lassen National Forest

The Lassen National Forest lies at the southern extent of the Cascade Mountain Range and the northern extent of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range in northern California. The National Forest covers 1,200,000 acres that span portions of seven counties: Lassen, Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Plumas, Siskiyou and Modoc. This includes 77,881 acres of designated wilderness and over 40 campgrounds. A variety of vegetation and wildlife is provided with elevations that range from about 500 feet to over 8,000 feet.

Three wilderness areas are located in the Lassen National Forest including the Ishi, Caribou and Thousand Lakes Wilderness. The Ishi Wilderness lies within Tehama County. Approximately 20 miles east of Red Bluff, the Ishi Wilderness encompasses approximately 41,000 acres of low-elevation wilderness. In addition to providing for hiking, camping, fishing and swimming, this wilderness area provides an extensive array of wildlife habitat and wildlife viewing.

Lassen National Forest has an abundance of recreational opportunities to the visitor. Activities include fishing, camping, picnicking, boating, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, a large off-road vehicle trail system, winter snow sports, hunting, wilderness experiences, rock climbing and mountain biking. The Lassen National Forest is divided into three ranger districts: Hat Creek, Almanor and Eagle Lake.

Shasta Trinity National Forest

The Shasta Trinity National Forest lies at the northern extent of California and is the largest National Forest in California. Approximately 2,100,000 acres of diverse landscape stretch from the Trinity Alps to the Cascade Range, and the Yolla Bolly Wilderness to the Oregon Border.

The Shasta Trinity National Forest also has an abundance of recreational opportunities for the visitor. Activities include fishing, camping, picnicking, boating, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, winter snow sports, hunting, wilderness experiences, rock climbing, mountain biking and mountaineering. Only a small portion of this National Forest lies within Tehama County, including the Yolla Bolly Wilderness area.

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Lassen Volcanic National Park

Lassen Volcanic National Park, managed by the National Park Service, lies at the southern terminus of the Cascade Mountain Range at the crossroads of three great biological provinces: the Cascades range to the north, the Sierra Nevada mountains to the south and the Great Basin to the east. The Park preserves and protects 106,000 acres of forests, lakes, hydrothermal areas, and geologic formations. Established in 1916, Lassen National Park is an active volcanic landscape with elevations ranging from 5,000 to 10,454 feet.

Lassen National Park provides an abundance of recreational opportunities, including: 150 miles of hiking trails (including 17 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail), camping, mountaineering, rock climbing, winter snow sports, sightseeing, wildlife viewing and interpretive resources.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

A number of Bureau of Land Management lands lie along the Sacramento River within Tehama County. Foster Island, Todd Island, Iron Canyon, Bald Hill, Paynes Creek, Perry Rifle, Massacre Flat, Inks Creek and Jelly's Ferry Area provide in excess of 400 acres of public lands that can be utilized for recreational purposes. Access to many of these locations is via river only, while others are accessible via public roads. Recreation opportunities include birding, wildlife viewing, fishing, hiking and camping.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Two properties within Tehama County are designated as California State Parks. Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area and William B. Ide Adobe State Historic Park, both located along the Sacramento River, offer recreation opportunities to residents and visitors of Tehama County.

Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area consists of 142 acres of oak woodland along the Sacramento River. The park is located on South Avenue six miles east of Corning. The recreation area features camping, fishing, hiking, boating, water sports and extensive bird watching. The park is located adjacent to a 328-acre preserve of wildlife habitat that offers extensive habitat for birds including bald eagles and the yellow-billed cuckoo.

William B. Ide Adobe State Historic Park was named for William B. Ide who was named president of the short-lived California Bear Republic, which lasted 22 days. The park features an adobe memorial to Ide, and a picnic area overlooking the Sacramento River. The park offers historical points of interest, including an old adobe home, carriage shed, blacksmith shop and a small visitors center. Recreational opportunities include picnicking, hiking, fishing and historical interpretive exhibits and programs. The park is located two miles northeast of Red Bluff (off of Interstate 5) along the Sacramento River.

BLACK BUTTE LAKE/U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates the Black Butte Lake recreation area, which spans the county line of Tehama and Glenn Counties. Black Butte Lake is located on Stony Creek southwest of Corning. The 4,460-acre lake is seven miles long and has a shoreline of 40 miles. The area provides numerous recreational opportunities including camping, boating, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, a large off-road vehicle area and interpretative opportunities.

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TEHAMA COUNTY PARKS

The Tehama County Parks system is operated and maintained by the Tehama County Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks system consists of nine parks and two public access areas, all of which are maintained by County Parks and Recreation staff.

Following are brief descriptions of each County Park:

Tehama County River Park

This river park includes 14 acres of recreational area along the Sacramento River. Tehama County River Park is located 6 miles east of Corning adjacent to the Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area. Facilities and improvements include public restrooms, picnic areas, paved walkways, trails and a boat launch. The park offers fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking and boating opportunities.

Mill Creek Park and Boat Launch

Mill Creek Park offers a 51-acre regional park along the Sacramento River. This park is located just across the river from the town of Tehama on Tehama-Vina Road. Improvements and facilities include public restrooms, a boat launch, picnic areas and a field area. The park offers fishing and wildlife viewing as well as boating and field sport opportunities.

North Mill Creek Fishing Access

North Mill Creek Fishing Access offers a 3-acre river access to the Sacramento River. The facility is located just north of Los Molinos along the east side of the Sacramento River. River access consists of a gravel bar that offers manual access for boats such as kayaks and canoes as well as fishing opportunities. There is also a system of trails that provide hiking opportunities.

Bend Bridge Park Public Access

Bend Bridge Park and Public Access offer river access and picnic facilities. The park is located off of Jelly's Ferry Road North of Red Bluff. Facilities include a paved boat launch facility and picnic areas, including barbeque pits. Recreational opportunities include boating, fishing, walking and wildlife viewing.

Antelope

Antelope Park is an 8-acre neighborhood park that offers bicycling, picnicking, a children's playground, open playing fields and two tennis courts. The park is located in the community of Antelope, adjacent to Berrendos Junior High School.

Brokenshire Meadow

Brokenshire Meadow County Park consists of a picnic area along Mill Creek located in the community of Mineral. Recreational opportunities include fishing, and picnicking.

Camp Tehama

Camp Tehama is located on the 15-acre US Forest Service grounds in Mineral. Facilities include hiking trails, cooking, dining, sleeping, and washroom facilities.

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Cone Grove

Cone Grove County Park, a 24-acre county park, is located south of Red Bluff off of Highway 99 on Cone Grove Road. The park offers a large picnic area, an open sports field and children's play equipment.

Gerber

Gerber Park is located within the community of Gerber and offers children's play equipment, open sports fields, a baseball field, a 25-meter swimming pool and picnic areas.

Ridge Way

Ridgeway Park is a 22-acre recreation area located west of Red Bluff. Facilities include a recreation hall, basketball and volleyball courts, a library, kitchen facilities, dining area, children's play equipment, open sports fields, a baseball field, horse arena and a motor cross track.

Simpson-Finnell Park

Simpson-Finnell Park is located within the community of Paskenta and offers recreational opportunities for picnicking, equestrian activities, baseball, tennis and play equipment for children.

PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS

The County is also home to a number of environmental-, recreation-, and service-based groups.

The California Wilderness Coalition

The California Wilderness Coalition has identified a number of federally owned lands in Tehama County as potential wilderness lands. Potential wilderness areas identified by the California Wilderness Coalition in Tehama County are areas that lie adjacent to existing wilderness or National Park lands and include the Ishi Wilderness extension, Lassen additions, Yolla Bolly Wilderness additions, Sacramento River Conservation Area, and the Nomiaki potential wilderness in the headwaters of Thomas Creek.

Red Bluff Trails United

Red Bluff Trails United is an organization dedicated to building a safe, useful bicycling community and has been instrumental in the progress made by the City of Red Bluff to acquire funding and support for regional bike trails.

6.4 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Although a recreation element is not mandated by law to be included in a General Plan, recreation resources are to be considered in the Open Space Element of a General Plan (Government Code Section 65560). A number of issues relating to parks and recreation are clearly stated by the California State Legislature, including the California Parklands Act of 1980 and the California Recreational Trails Act.

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The California Parklands Act of 1980 (Pub. Res. Code Section 5096.141-5096.143) identifies “the public interest for the state to acquire, develop, and restore areas for recreation...and to aid local governments of the state in acquiring, developing and restoring such areas...” The California Parklands Act also identifies the necessity of local agencies to exercise vigilance to see that the parks, recreation areas and recreational facilities they now have are not lost to other uses.

The California Recreational Trails Act (Pub. Res. Code Section 5070.5) declares:

- Increase accessibility and enhance the use, enjoyment, and understanding of California's scenic, natural, historic, and cultural resources.
- Encourage hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling as important contributions to the health and welfare of the state's population.
- Provide for the use of recreational trails by physically disabled persons, the elderly, and others in need of graduated trails.
- Increase opportunities for recreational boating and use of recreational vehicles.
- Encourage the development by cities, counties, districts and private groups of recreational and interpretive trails, including heritage corridors.

EXISTING GENERAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

The existing 1983 Tehama County General Plan cites the 1977 Tehama County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a separately bound document, constituting the existing recreation element. The General Plan states the following:

... “The existing Recreation element will need to be updated to reflect future recreation demand based on the population projections made elsewhere in the revised General Plan.”

Objectives identified in the 1983 General Plan relating to recreation resources include the following:

- **NRR-1** Protection of resource lands for the continued benefit of agriculture, timber, grazing, recreation, wildlife habitat and quality of life.
- **NRR-2** Provide access to resource land areas when neither the integrity of the natural resource nor private property rights will be adversely affected.
- **HA-1** Preserve the historic and archeological resources of the County for their scientific, educational, aesthetic and recreational value.
- **SLR-1** Development of a land use pattern that can be adequately served in a cost-effective manner with schools, libraries and recreation facilities.

Natural Resource Conservation Land Use Classifications identified in the 1983 General Plan include the subcategories of Recreation Resource and Park. **Table 6-1** identifies the purpose and use, criteria, and planning considerations for these Land Use Classifications.

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**TABLE 6-1
NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

SUBCATEGORY	PURPOSE AND USE	CRITERIA	PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS
Recreation Resource	To protect significant recreation opportunities for all County residents and visitors	This classification would be applied to private land adjacent to major County, State, and Federal recreation facilities.	Uses within this classification are subject to regulations mitigating their visual, noise, traffic, and other impacts on the adjacent recreation resource.
Park	Identifies sites for both present and future public parks. Uses include both active and passive forms of recreation activity.	Differing community and demographic factors will dictate park size, recreation facilities, and location.	Park scale and facilities should be compatible with the community type and surrounding land uses.

Source: 1983 Tehama County General Plan (Table NR-2)

6.5 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The ability of Tehama County to meet the leisure and recreation needs of its constituents, in both the near- and long-term, depends greatly on formation of regional districts to fund acquisition and development activities as well as to provide term maintenance. These districts can be located and defined as part of the identification of growth areas and existing facilities and infrastructure.

To guide the planning of recreation resources the County may wish to consider revision of it's 1977 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Parks and Recreation Standards.

PARK AND RECREATION STANDARDS

Park and recreation standards have been used by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) in cities, counties and states throughout the U.S. for nearly 100 years. In 1906, the NRPA issued a report outlining recreation space and facility standards to aid local governments in their recreation and open space planning. Since that time, the NRPA has spearheaded the movement and tradition of setting these area and facility standards.

As applied to public parks and recreation resources, standards provide a measurement of recreation space and facilities that should be provided for specific population numbers. They were established to help determine if an area has sufficient park area, facilities, etc. Standards are also used to establish the space and other requirements for recreation facilities in order to know what improvements a site may accommodate. Recreation area, facility and open space standards are used in the planning, design and decision-making process.

Standards are needed to: (1) encourage appropriate area, number and location of facilities, thus establishing minimum area or acres to allow for per type of park and; (2) establish a comprehensive and sound fiscal approach for an orderly acquisition and development program. Standards can be used:

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- 1) To determine areas, number and types of facilities that are needed to best serve a particular population or planning area as well as to determine where they should generally be provided.
- 2) To develop a sound, fiscal acquisition and development program.
- 3) To justify to state and local political bodies, for grants and funding purposes, the acquisition and development of parks and recreation areas and facilities and for the determination of priorities in acquisition and development.
- 4) To help measure the effectiveness of public jurisdictions in providing needed recreation areas and facilities.
- 5) To reasonably use as a forecaster, in the case of tourism, as a means to plan to bring increased revenue into the planning area.
- 6) To help attract and retain desired residents in general or specific areas.

However, standards can be misleading and meaningless if not applied appropriately. Standards and guidelines can be too idealistic or may not fit a specific planning area or population. In these cases, standards and guidelines are modified to fit the situation.

COMPARISON COUNTIES: RECREATION AND PARKS STANDARDS AND POLICIES

The policies and programs described below address regional park and open space planning, recreation programs shared with local communities, and recreation standards that may be relevant to the issues addressed in the future as part of the Tehama County General Plan Update process.

Recreation policies and standards contained in general plans from the following two counties are summarized, in part, and listed here for comparison purposes. Counties of Butte and Shasta were selected for their regional relationship to Tehama County, for relatively comparable population, or for their unique open space and water recreation resources.

Butte

Butte County identifies its primary parks and recreation program responsibility to be the conservation of large natural open spaces suited for park and recreation development. Another issue of importance is encouragement of recreation districts to develop facilities for use by all county residents and visitors. Tourism is important to the County economy as Lake Oroville and other large open space and recreation facilities attract campers, fishermen and boating enthusiasts. State, federal and private (e.g., PG&E Company) facilities contribute significantly to the County's total recreational resources.

Butte County adopted a regional parks standard that includes 10-15 acres per thousand people, with a 100-acre minimum for such facilities that is intended to serve a five-mile radius of population. The Butte County General Plan delineates both active and passive recreation activities, recommends specific recreation development areas within the County and the activities to be associated with each, and names the responsible agency. Because of the unique nature of the County's natural resources, cities, state and federal agencies, and state-regulated utilities such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company may all bear some responsibility for development and maintenance of regional parks.

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Shasta

Shasta County identifies the multi-purpose uses of open space, and identifies recreation as a valuable and highly related use of open space. The County recognizes the need to provide better access to open space in the county and therefore better access to recreation areas. Another issue of importance is the value open spaces and recreation facilities provide to the County's tourism industry. Shasta County has recognized the opportunity to develop a system of hiking, bicycling, and equestrian trails linking the urbanized areas with open space resources. Such trails offer one means of increasing accessibility to recreation resources and trails are themselves a recreational facility.

The county also encourages the protection of open space by the Natural Resource Protection-Recreation Resource (N-R) land use designation. The Shasta County General Plan states the following objectives and policies to govern open space and recreation:

- Protection of the open space and recreation resources of Shasta County for the use and enjoyment by county residents both now and in the future.
- Provision of public access to open space and recreation resources consistent with the need to protect these resources and the rights of private property owners.
- When land within a recreation resource area is classified as timber, cropland, grazing, or mining, the N-R classification is not mapped but is expressed as a policy which overlays these other classifications.
- Parks and recreation systems planning, acquisition, development and operation should be coordinated among City, County, State and Federal governments, as well as schools and special districts, and should take advantage of opportunities for linkages between publicly owned parks and publicly owned open space lands.
- The significant river and creekside corridors of Shasta County shall be designated on the General Plan maps. Public access and public easements along the corridors of the Sacramento River (between Keswick and the Shasta-Tehama County line), Battle Creek (downstream of the Coleman Powerhouse), and other riparian corridors located in proximity to urban, town and rural centers shall be required as provided by the subdivision map.

6.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan update process affords the opportunity to evaluate the status of recreational resources and the effectiveness of the General Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The Tehama County Parks and Recreation Master Plan of 1977 (Master Plan) evaluated county recreational resources. The Master Plan sets standards for parks (neighborhood, community and regional) and for site selection of parks, addresses recreational resource needs, and states recommendations for meeting countywide recreational needs.

A countywide survey was completed for the Master Plan concerning recreational resource needs. The conclusions of the survey indicated the following needs. These needs should be reevaluated and addressed in the updated County General Plan.

- Recreation activities and facilities are desired and needed by and for all age groups.

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- A capital development budget and on-going source of revenue must be developed to provide the many recreational facilities.
- A need to develop year-round recreational activities and facilities throughout the county.
- Development, enhancement, and increase in the size of county parks.
- Walking and bicycle access to recreational areas.
- Utilization of schools by all community members for their recreational value.
- Cooperation between private, commercial, state and federal recreational resources.
- Reserve and/or develop additional active and passive recreation areas to meet present and future recreational needs.
- Improved maintenance of recreational facilities.
- Assistance and direction from the County for citizen committees that oversee development and operation of parks.

The 1977 Master Plan states a number of recommendations for meeting such goals and objectives set forth in the Plan. The following recommendations from the Master Plan should be considered in the update of the Tehama County General Plan to the extent that they are still applicable:

- Provide means for and encouragement of planned unit development for new residential tracts in the county that will provide recreation areas and facilities for residents.
- Help establish recreation service districts to provide needed recreation facilities.
- Develop recreation open space, scenic recreation and wildlife conservation zonings and appropriately apply them to protect the loss of natural resources.
- Encourage private enterprise to develop and operate recreation facilities.
- Encourage the donation of desired areas and improvements via the programs outlines.
- Identify and map all major natural recreation and wildlife resources and appropriately make plans and take steps to preserve them, including state and federal assistance.
- Riparian areas along the Sacramento River and major recreation resource waterways (i.e. Cottonwood, Deer and Mill Creeks) should be protected.
- Acquire the recommended park site in the Bowman area adjacent to Evergreen School.
- Develop a complete master plan for each county recreation facility.
- Work closely with school districts in the county to make optimum use of the schools as local, community recreation centers.
- Develop guidelines and plan review processes to help assure that new developments in the county will help to preserve and provide a natural or park-like setting throughout the county.
- Identify and provide facilities, conveniences and information for desired vacation and tourist trade.
- Identify future recreation facility needs and tentatively locate optimal lands for such facilities.

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- Maintain the individual county park committees and provide for the maximum feasible participation of citizens in recreation programs and facility planning and development.
- Develop a County Park and Recreation Commission dedicated toward meeting and representing the county's park and recreation needs.
- Work with the incorporated cities in the county to appropriately assist them in providing facilities and programs that serve non-city residents, whenever possible

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