Introduction

The map on the reverse side is provided as a boating guide to the Sacramento River between Woodson Bridge and Colusa State Park. The map is designed to aid boaters in planning trips on the river, featuring access and takeout points, restrooms, parks, information centers, etc.

The Sacramento River

The 377 mile long Sacramento is California's longest river. It begins near the slopes of Mt. Shasta, about 60 miles north of Redding, and flows southward until it joins the San Joaquin River before emptying into Suisun Bay, near San Francisco.

The Sacramento drains approximately 26,300 square miles of land, carrying nearly one third of the total annual runoff of all California streams. It is fed along its way to the Pacific Ocean by the McCloud, Pit, Bear, Yuba, Feather and American Rivers.

As farmers and ranchers settled the Sacramento River Valley in the mid-1800's, the river began to serve as a highway for transporting goods and people as well as supplying water for irrigation and drinking water. Today, the Sacramento River supports a variety of recreational activities including all types of boating, fishing, water-skiing, hiking, picnicking and camping. There are fishing resorts, public parks, boat ramps, and various access sites along the length of the river.

Lands along the river are owned and managed by various public and private entities. The majority of the land is private property. Please do not trespass. Get permission from the owner before using private land. Some portions of public lands are fragile riparian (river-side) forest or wildlife preserves which should not be disturbed. The courteous boater should use riverbanks specifically designated for recreational purposes.

Navigating the Sacramento River can be an enjoyable experience if you familiarize yourself with its special characteristics. Between Woodson Bridge and Colusa State Park, the channel has not been dredged and there are no nautical charts to show its water depths. The following information will provide some assistance in navigating this stretch of the river.

Sacramento River Boating Trail

In California, rivers which link scenic, natural, historic or recreational areas of statewide significance are generally considered to be boating trails. The California Legislature has declared that it is the policy of the state to increase opportunities for recreational boating on such waterways. It is the Sacramento River Trail user's responsibility to avoid damaging property and follow all state and local government rules and regulations concerning boat operation, littering, and responsible behavior.

River Hints

Accurately piloting a boat in a moving river involves subtle differences in vessel-handling techniques from those practiced in lake boating. Be aware of and compensate for swift main currents,deep channels within the wide riverbed, sand bars, and blind turns.

Because river boating can involve remote areas, swift water, and uncharted navigational hazards, it is recommended that you boat as a team of at least three boats. If one boat has a problem, the others can assist or go for additional help. Learn and practice safe river-boating techniques, and take pride in being a good river pilot.

Boat Traffic

Numerous powerboaters and non-powerboaters will be sharing the river with you. The most common boats used on this part of the river are fishing boats, canoes, rafts and other inflatable craft. To prevent traffic conflicts, canoes and rafts should stay together and leave a safe passing channel. The wakes created by powerboats can be quite large. To reduce the likelihood of capsizing, smaller craft should enter wakes gently and at an angle to the waves.

Know The Flow

(916) 653-9647

High flows on the Sacramento River can be dangerous. Do not overestimate your skill or underestimate the power of the river. Knowing the rate of flow on the day of your trip is one way to determine if the river is boatable for your level of experience. The Department of Water Resources updates daily its recording of the current rates of water flow for the Sacramento and other rivers throughout the state. Call (916) 653-9647 before venturing out. Phone numbers of ramp sites are listed on the reverse.

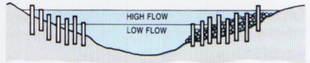
Boating Hazards

Few official aids to navigation exist on this portion of the Sacramento. Because water levels fluctuate both seasonally and daily, the visibility of hazards in the water can vary. Some sandbars change position as the current disturbs the river's sandy bottom; others are relatively stationary. As you learn to "read the river," you will see that the ripples on the water's surface, and its color, can give you some indication about depth, currents and hazards. A typical "snag warning" may be a bottle tied to the limb of a submerged cottonwood by a conscientious boater. Snags and sandbars usually are not marked, so be alert.

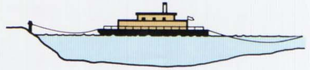
Along the entire length of the river there are natural and man-made underwater obstructions. Those described below are emphasized because they are responsible for a large number of boating accidents on the river.

DEBRIS — During the winter and spring when the water level is high and the current strong, much debris is carried down the river. This debris may lodge against docks, piles and bridges, or float in midstream. Large drifting trees and timbers can become grounded in shallow areas, and when submerged, are difficult to see. Such obstructions are particularly prevalent above Colusa. Debris may also be encountered midstream during the summer when the water level is low and there is no wind to hold it close to shore. Boaters are advised to keep a proper lookout and reduce speed to minimize the risk of hitting floating or partially submeged debris.

PILING — In some areas the remains of old piers extend from the river bank. Some piles are exposed and others are broken off just under the surface. Their presence is sometimes indicated on the surface by swirls or eddies.



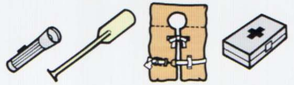
WING DAMS — A wing dam is an underwater wall of piling or rock extending from the bank into the river. Its purpose is to prevent bank erosion. They are usually visible only when the river is low. The boater can avoid wing dams by following the main channel. The presence of wing dams, like other underwater obstructions, may be indicated by ripples, eddies or swirls. Some wing dams are marked by seasonal buoys.



FERRY CABLES — Ferries operated by cables constitute a special hazard. When the ferry is under way, its two cables, one extending from each end, are pulled taut. Fatal accidents have occurred when vessels have attempted to pass over or under these cables when the ferry was in operation. When the ferry is secured at its landing, however, the cable is lowered and does not impede navigation. A cable ferry operates at Princeton, above Colusa, and others may operate elsewhere on the river.

Be Prepared

Leave word with your friends or relatives as to where you are going and when you expect to return. A Coast Guard approved flotation device must be available for each person on board a vessel, and it is strongly recommended that they be worn.

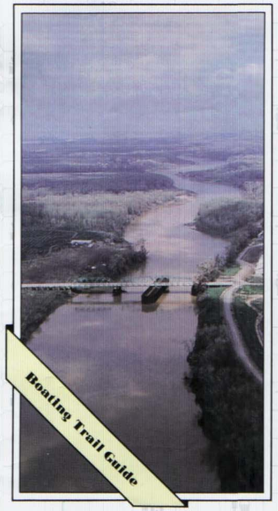


Water

Boaters should carry water, or be prepared to treat river water. Bring adequate drinking water for the length of your trip (about a gallon per person, per day). Common treatment methods for river water are: boil it for 10-20 minutes; use halizone tablets; or use a recommended filtering device.

Pitch In

Pitch in and do your part to keep the Sacramento River clean. Take waterproof trashbags with you and boat out what you boat in. Plastic debris, which is not biodegradable, and which can be harmful to wildlife, is a particular problem. Each year, thousands of birds and marine wildlife die as a result of eating plastic trash, or getting tangled up in plastic six-pack holders and fishing line. This trash can also foul boat motors and propellers. In 1988, the U.S. government passed federal laws making it illegal to dump trash in navigable waterways. Do your part to help keep our waterways clean.

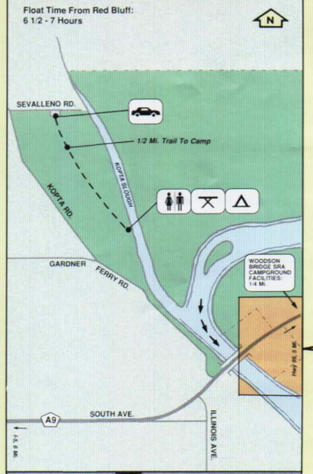


SACRAMENTO RIVER

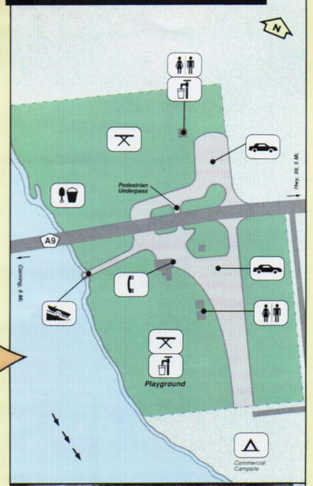
WOODSON BRIDGE TO COLUSA

Woodson Bridge
Kopta Slough Boat-in Camp
State Park: (916) 839-2112

Float Time From Red Bluff:
6 1/2 - 7 Hours



Tehama County River Park
(916) 527-4655

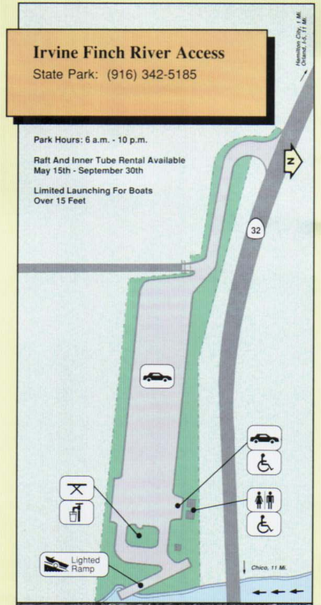


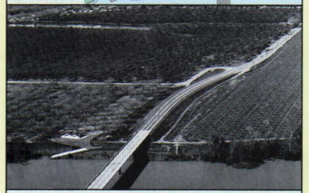
Irvine Finch River Access
State Park: (916) 342-5185

Park Hours: 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.

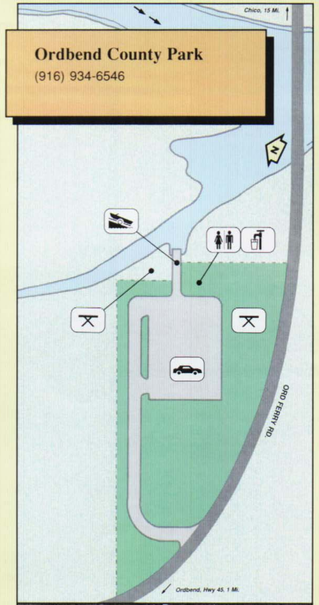
Raft And Inner Tube Rental Available
May 15th - September 30th

Limited Launching For Boats
Over 15 Feet



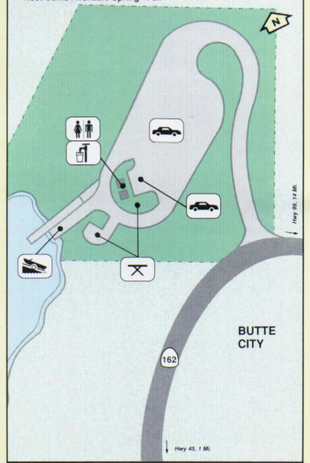


Ordbend County Park
(916) 934-6546



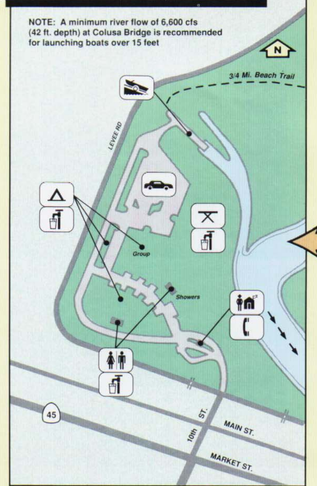
Butte City Launch Facility
County Park: (916) 934-6546

Restrooms Available Spring - Fall



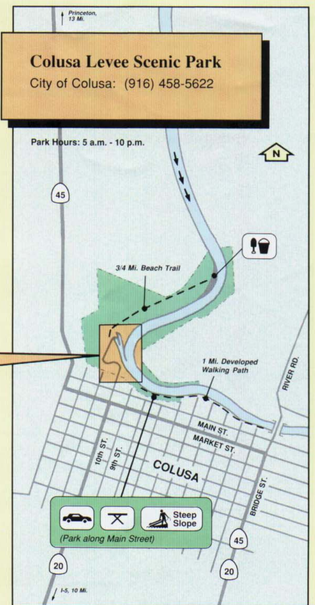
Colusa - Sacramento River State Recreation Area
(916) 458-4927

NOTE: A minimum river flow of 6,600 cfs (42 ft. depth) at Colusa Bridge is recommended for launching boats over 15 feet



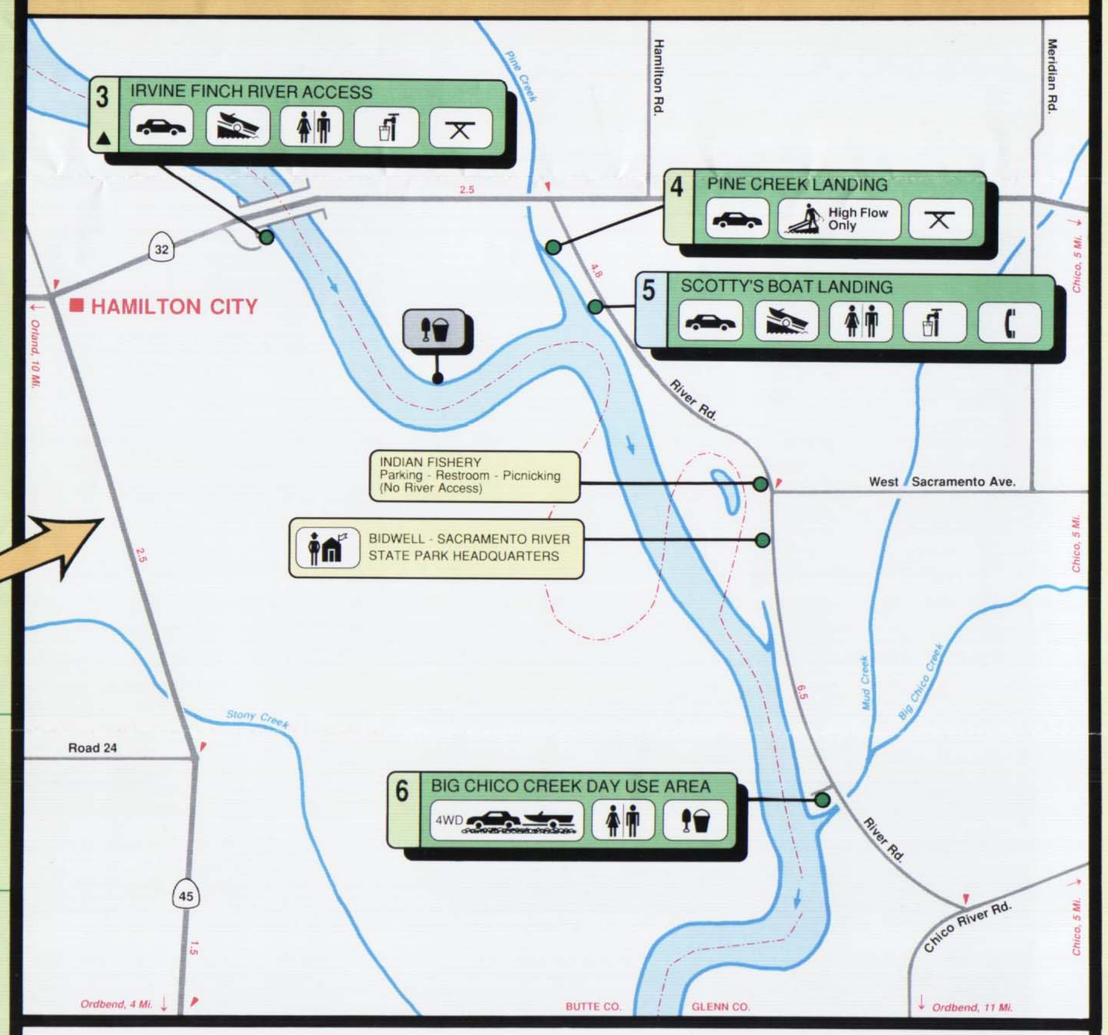
Colusa Levee Scenic Park
City of Colusa: (916) 458-5622

Park Hours: 5 a.m. - 10 p.m.



SACRAMENTO RIVER - WOODSON BRIDGE TO COLUSA

IRVINE FINCH TO BIG CHICO CREEK AREA
"Tuber's Run"



For Assistance

Signal to passing boaters, using:

- Waving of Arms
- Sound Signals
- Flares
- Flashing Lights

or call 911

The California Department of Boating and Waterways publishes free pamphlets on boating rules, safety and recreation sites. Single copies or quantities can be ordered. Contact the Department for a free publications listing and order form.

Legend

- Parking
- Gravel Parking / Launch Area
- Boat Launch
- "Car Top" Launch
- Restrooms (Flush or Primitive)
- Water
- Picnic / Day Use
- Beach
- Phone
- Ranger
- Camping
- ▲ See Reverse For Facility Map
- Interstate Highway
- State Highway
- County Road

For Information, Contact

1 Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Route 1, Box 325
Corning, CA 96021
(916) 839-2112

2 Tehama County River Park
Tehama County Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 421
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(916) 527-4655

3 4 6 Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park:
- **Irvine Finch River Access**
- **Pine Creek Landing**
- **Big Chico Creek Day Use Area**

California Department of Parks and Recreation
12105 River Road
Chico, CA 95926
(916) 342-5185

5 Scotty's Boat Landing (Commercial Facility)
(inner tube rental, restaurant and boat repair available)
12609 River Road
Chico, CA 95926
(916) 893-2020

7 8 Ordbend Park
Butte City Launch Facility
Glenn County Buildings and Grounds Department
125 South Murdock
Willows, CA 95988
(916) 934-6546

9 Princeton
Unimproved River Access

10 12 Colusa Weir Recreation Area
Colusa Levee Scenic Park
Colusa City Department of Parks and Recreation
425 Webster
P. O. Box 1063
Colusa, CA 95932
(916) 458-5622

11 Colusa - Sacramento River State Recreation Area
California Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 207
Colusa, CA 95932
(916) 458-4927

13 Ward's Boat Landing (Commercial Facility)
(restaurant, RV facilities, showers, bait and tackle available)
Butte Slough Road, 5 miles south of Colusa
P. O. Box 1274
Colusa, CA 95932
(916) 696-2673