



American River Parkway Preservation Society

*Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway
Our community's natural heart*

THE AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY LOWER REACH AREA: A CORRODED CROWN JEWEL; RESTORING THE LUSTER

A CONCEPTUAL AND POLICY PRIMER

A Public Report from the American River Parkway Preservation Society: September 25, 2005

Our Vision

We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.

Our Mission

**Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway,
Our Community's Natural Heart**

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Executive Summary

Background

The adjacent communities of the Lower Reach of the American River Parkway have been asking the Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space, County of Sacramento (County Parks) and Parkway advocacy organizations for help with the problems associated with illegal camping by the homeless for years, with virtually no response.

Planning for the formation of the American River Parkway Preservation Society (ARPPS) began in 2002 by a group aware of the growing problems facing the Parkway and in September of 2003 ARPPS was incorporated as a 501 c (3) nonprofit corporation.

ARPPS, understanding that the degradation of the Lower Reach affects the entire Parkway, addressed the issue in its founding guiding principles.

The Problem

The American River Parkway has long suffered from:

- ineffective management,
- lack of dedicated funding,
- degradation of natural resources, and,
- erosion of public safety.

The Strategy

The Lower Reach, representing the most visible evidence of these problems on the Parkway, is the focus of our report.

Our first guiding principle is: “Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it’s a necessity.”

Will Rogers, the President of the Trust for Public Lands said:

“The emergence of America as an urban nation was anticipated by Fredrick Law Olmstead and other 19th century park visionaries, who gave us New York’s Central Park, San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park, and similar grand parks in cities across the nation. They were gardeners and designers—but also preachers for the power of parks, fired from within by the understanding that they were shaping the quality of American Lives for generations to come.

In the view of these park visionaries, parks were not “amenities.” They were necessities, providing recreation, inspiration, and essential respite from the city’s blare and bustle. And the visionaries were particularly concerned that parks be available to all of a city’s residents—especially those who did not have the resources to escape to the countryside.” *Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space: Parks for People (2003)* Will Rogers, President, Trust for Public Lands.

The optimal strategy for our Parkway to be managed in this spirit is:

The Solution

- Management by a nonprofit 501 c (3) organization, the American River Parkway Conservancy, whose sole mission would be preserving, protecting, and strengthening the Parkway.

This will create management of singular purpose and the dedication public necessity demands, with the primary responsibility being public safety.

Public Safety Strategy

Though homelessness is presented as the issue underlying illegal camping and that perception will be addressed, the primary issue for the community suffering the effects of illegal camping is public safety.

- Greatly enlarge ranger patrols, use horse mounted patrols, and establish a public crime reporting website.
- Institute a safety with compassion program to address the chronic homeless and service resistant illegal campers in the Lower Reach.

Introduction

The story of the American River Parkway is the story of Sacramento, built on faith and dreams. Faith that human beings had the vision and tenacity to build a city in a floodplain, and that the river nurturing their hopes and dreams would be embraced by a natural sanctuary for all yet to come.

It is difficult to see the broad and corrosive sweep of the tragedy of the Parkway when it is so fully upon us. The visionary dreamers who first dreamt the Parkway in the early 20th century—now long passed from us—would be horrified to see what we have wrought. The visionary Parkway founders—still largely among us, perhaps do see it, but only with the kind of great difficulty and deep sorrow that often renders one unable to speak.

The current Parkway leadership and the policy-makers relying on their guidance are operating an organizational model of governance, funding, and access that is ineffective, leading to large-scale public safety issues, a multi-year shortage of basic funding, management breakdown, and lack of a forward thinking vision; which combined to cause the threatened closure of the Parkway in 2004.

Part of that ineffectiveness can be attributed to the structural constraints of public bureaucracies, as outlined by Wilson (1989):

The key constraints are three in number. To a much greater extent than is true of private bureaucracies [or nonprofit organizations], government agencies (1) cannot lawfully retain and devote to the private benefit of their members the earnings of the organization, (2) cannot allocate the factors of production in accordance with the preferences of the organization's

administrators, and (3) must serve goals not of the organization's own choosing. As a result, government management tends to be driven by the *constraints* on the organization, not the *tasks* of the organization." (p.115)

Parkway leadership argues that the constraints of funding and politics determine their action, while the community needs action to be determined by the mission-driven tasks of the organization. This is a scenario possible with mission-driven nonprofit governance, but seemingly impossible with the currently constrained public management.

The tragedy that has happened here and the compounding of it through the long-term denial of Parkway leadership regarding the situation in the Lower Reach, has largely been a misguided effort to maintain an illusion of what was once a reality

The illusion is that the American River Parkway is the crown jewel of Sacramento.

The reality is that a large part of it is crime infested, filthy, and unsafe.

In the minds of current Parkway leadership, largely concentrated upriver of the three areas included in the Lower Reach, (Discovery Park, Woodlake Reach, and Cal Expo) the Parkway is the 'crown jewel' of the region.

To the people who live in the Lower Reach, others who have to venture into it, and many in the local media, it is common knowledge that the crown jewel is seriously corroded.

It has become corroded by wide-spread illegal camping, related habitat destruction and crimes including murder, rape and assault; that the managing entity of the Parkway, Department of Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space, County of Sacramento (County Parks) seems unable to stop.

ARPPS was founded to educate and help shape public dialogue concerning the dire situation of the Parkway.

Our first guiding principle is “Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it’s a necessity.”

Parkway management operating on that principle would ensure the Parkway’s survival, and it certainly deserves saving, more than most of us know.

We all know how beautiful it is, and how much everyone upriver of the Lower Reach enjoys the Parkway experience.

But did you know it is also:

- an economic engine that “generates an estimated \$259,034,030 in annual economic activity in the local economy.” Dangermond (2000)
- or that Lake Natoma was rated “Best All Round Rowing Facility in North America”, by **Rowing News**, in its April 6, 2003 issue, noting; “As an all-around facility, Lake Natoma may be the closest North America comes to a Bled or Lucerne.”
- or that “The parkway gets a million more visitors than does Yosemite National Park.” *Parkway in Peril*, **Sacramento Bee Editorial**, January 2, 2004.

Pretty heady stuff, pretty great Parkway.

Sacramento is the heart of a maturing region and the Parkway is our natural heart. We have major league sports, a vibrant business community, new cities are emerging, we are the most diverse city in the country, open space abounds, and we enjoy a terrific way of life.

However, our county government is struggling, and it appears the Parkway stewardship by County Parks, even at the minimal level now being provided, may not survive for many more years.

We offer this report to provide information to our members, the community, and public leadership, to help make good decisions about the Lower Reach, and ultimately, the entire Parkway.

We start with a timeline with the first several pages focusing on the 18th and 19th century. Beginning on page 16 of the report, the focus shifts to Parkway planning in the 20th and 21st century and the issues come into a sharper focus for our following narrative.

So, we will begin at the beginning and lay the groundwork, through history and public events, of what has become the tragedy of the corrosion of our crown jewel.



PARKWAY HISTORICAL AND EVENT TIMELINE

- 2500 BC** First evidence of human habitation in village sites along the American River.
- Pre 1800** Native Americans are the only occupants of the American River area. The area around the confluence with the Sacramento is a continuous forest, extending for miles on each side of the rivers with many villages.

According to Hayes (2005);

Forty archaeological sites have been recorded on the banks of the American River from its mouth to the junction of the middle and south forks, now inundated by Folsom Dam. These sites vary from large villages to bedrock mortar sites (grinding holes in the natural bedrock). The dominant village was Pujune, which extended from a few miles south of the mouth of the American to above the mouth of the Feather River. Others were Kadema and Yusumne near modern Watt Avenue.

In 2003, some 75,000 Indian artifacts and 45 parcels of human remains dating back more than 4,500 years were unearthed during a Sacramento City hall expansion project. The artifacts were believed to have been from a sand dune village. Among them were fish weights, fish hooks and odd

stones about two inches in diameter, and shaped like crescent moons. Archeologists believe they may have been mounted on arrow shafts and used as a weapon to stun ducks.” (p. 7)

Dillinger (1991) describes the many villages along the American River:

1. *Pujune*. Pujune was known as the dominant village for the Nisenan on the east side of the Sacramento River from a few miles south of the American to above the mouth of the Feather River.

2. *Momol*. Only slight mention of Momal is made in any of the historic or ethnographic records. It is described as being on the south bank of the American River opposite Pujune.

3. *Yamanepu*. This village was on the north bank of the American River on a knoll near Pujune.

4. *Sekumne*. As Pujune controlled the mouth of the American River and portions of the Sacramento, Sekumne or Sek was a village of major influence along the interior of the American River drainage....The only location described for Sekumne was on the north bank of the American River “upstream at the new highway bridge,” presumably where Highway 160 crosses the American River.

5. *Kadema*. Kadema was a major village first occupied during Phase I of the protohistoric period [A.D. 1500-1769] , but later abandoned and still alter reoccupied during the American

Period [A.D 1850-1900] Kadema was the birthplace of Blind Tom Cleanso, Kroeber's chief informant for Valley Nisenan ethnography. Kroeber cites the location of Kadema as seven or eight miles up the American River. The site [...is] on what is now American River Drive. Kadema is one of two sites of the Valley Nisenan on the American River known to have had a Kum, or dance-house.

Information pertaining to the following villages is very sketchy:

6. *Kisky*. Also known as Kiskey, this is one of four sites named by Sutter in his papers (Pujune, Sekumne, and Yusumne are the other three) The location is very general, being between Kadema and Hasapeh.

7. *Hasapeh*. Information available for this village is also fragmentary, being cited only by Merriam in his notes.

8. *Yamankodo, Utcup, Ekwo, Yukuli, Anape, and Ciba*. These villages follow the path of the American River in sequential order with Yamankodo the closest to the mouth of the American. Anape is cited as being near Fair Oaks, 16 miles from the city of Sacramento.

9. *Ysumne*. Bennyhoff locates this village on the south bank of the American River prior to 1843, and six miles east of New Helvetia after 1843.

10. *Natoma, Kickie, Yolimhu, Polomul, Yodok, and Pitchiku*. These are traditional sites in the foothill Nisenan area between

the valley and the hills. Yolimhu is said to have been slightly south of Folsom, and Pitchiku is the easternmost site of the area covered in this book. Here a Kum or dance-house is also said to have been located.” (pgs. 19-21)

1808 The Moraga expedition, which got up the American River to just below Auburn, is described by Holden (1988);

[O]ne October morning in 1808 when Spanish sea captain Gabriel Moraga, 39, trekking up the big river [then called the Buenaventura] in a horseback expedition, was struck by the lovely scene. Canopies of oaks and cottonwoods, many festooned with grapevines, overhung both sides of the blue current... the Spaniards ...drank in the beauty around them. *‘Es como el sagrado Sacramento!’* ...This is like the Holy Sacrament! So the river [Sacramento] got its [new] name ...” (p. 9)

1827 Naming of the American River begins, from Hayes (2005);

Jedediah Strong Smith, the fur trader and explorer who was the first American trapper to reach the central valley, reached the American River in April 1827 before making the first recorded crossing of the Sierra Nevada. During his two trips to the American he explored the same areas of the riparian forest that is today’s American River Parkway and bicycle trail that bears his name.

Smith wrote of his meeting with the Indians on his return to the American the following year. He gave them gifts as a

gesture of goodwill but they became frightened and fled. Others surrounded some of his men....[and] “in commemoration of the singular wildness of these Indians and the novel occurrence that made it appear so forcibly, I named the River on which it happened, **Wild River.**” (p. 10) (highlighting added)

1833 Malaria epidemic decimates Native American population in area, as noted by Hayes (2005): “The epidemics are estimated to have caused a 75 percent reduction in the native population of the Central Valley, leaving some 20,000 persons dead in 1833.” (p.10)

1833 Captain John Cooper, according to Hayes (2005): “petitioned Jose Figueroa, Mexican Governor of California, for a tract of land along the American. In his petition...Cooper identified the American as the “**Rio Ojotska**” which is the phonetic spelling of the Russian word for “hunter”. (p.17) (highlighting added)

1834 End of mission period with unforeseen consequences, noted by Starr (1973):

However, when the padres lost their hold on California, that is, when missions were disestablished and plundered in 1834, visitors noted an immediate deterioration in social conditions. “The old monastic order is destroyed,” wrote Abel du Petit-Thouars of his visit in 1837, “and nothing seems yet to have replaced it, except anarchy.” Visitors noted crumbling buildings, neglected vineyards and orchards, scattered herds, bewildered Indians, and dispirited padres. The decay of California, Sir George Simpson complained, had not even the

charm of antiquity to recommend it; for, from establishment to secularization, the mission era had not exceeded the span of a human lifetime.” (p. 7)

- 1837** The American river was given its permanent name, according to Hayes (2005):”...by Governor Alvarado who called it the “**Rio do los Americanos**” because the area was frequented by “trappers of revolutionary proclivities.” (p.17) (highlighting added)
- 1839** John Sutter establishes his fort near the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers.
- 1844** John C. Fremont’s expedition into California, the Central valley and the American River.
- 1846** The Bear Flag Revolt.
- 1847** United States conquers California.
- 1848** Gold discovered at Coloma on the American River.

An event of international proportion that while clearly tragic for many, was an epic time, as Brands (2002) has noted:

Yet for all its sordid side, the new American dream [the wealth the gold rush created] was an enormously creative force. It unleashed the energies of the American people, and of the many millions of foreigners who, drawn by this compelling dream, chose to become Americans. (It also unleashed the energies of those who stayed in other countries—or in some

important cases, returned to other countries from America—and emulated the Argonauts of California.) It raised the American standard of living beyond anything ever achieved so broadly. It afforded the most basic freedom—freedom from want—to more people than had ever enjoyed such release. And it gave unprecedented meaning to that really revolutionary idea of Thomas Jefferson: that humans have a right to the pursuit of happiness. (p. 443-444)

A personal story: Several years ago while visiting Coloma, where gold was discovered in 1948, State Parks Ranger Sugarman related a story which resonated with me, and has always put the discovery of gold into the context I think it fully deserves.

He was guiding a group of Japanese tourists around the park, and while talking to them, a small group broke off and went to the specific site, on the American River South Fork, where gold was first taken out by James Marshall. They stood there for awhile, quietly talking among themselves, and then, while standing there, bowed very formally towards the river. Later, he asked them why they were bowing, and they told him that they were honoring, “the place where America found her power.” *David H. Lukenbill, Founding President, ARPPS.*

1850 California becomes a state and the American River becomes sovereign land under the Public Trust Doctrine.

1849-1909 Hydraulic mining in the American River, while drawing great wealth from the river, caused great environmental damage still being dealt with, as noted by Starr (1973): “Nature here reminds one,” wrote Bayard Taylor regarding the mining regions, “of a princess, fallen

into the hands of robbers, who cut off her fingers for the sake of the jewels she wears.” (p. 174)

1915 Parkway planning efforts begin, as noted by Dangermond (2000);

The American River Parkway was first envisioned by [Sacramento] city planners in 1915 who proposed an extensive parkway along the river. Later, in 1929 after the passage of the first state park bond act, Fredrick Law Olmstead, Jr. visited Sacramento and urged cooperative efforts towards this end among the many agencies with jurisdiction over the river area. In 1947 he updated his concept for the parkway by emphasizing the development of recreational facilities including picnic sites, and docks for pleasure craft along the river course.” (p. 1)

1950 “The state of California purchased 1,000 acres for the Cal Expo site and the city of Sacramento began acquiring parklands along the American River.” (ibid. pg. 1)

1955 Folsom and Nimbus Dams are completed.

1959 Sacramento County Department of Parks and Recreation created and a master plan for the Parkway is adopted.

1962 The first American River Parkway Plan is adopted by Sacramento County.

- 1981** The Lower American River, from Nimbus Dam to the confluence with the Sacramento River, is designated a federal wild and scenic river.
- 1985** The California State Legislature passes the Urban American River Parkway Preservation Act, (California Public Resources Code Section 5840-5843)
- 1985** Sacramento County Planning and Community Development Department's American River Parkway Plan (1985) was adopted by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and described the Parkway concept:

THE PARKWAY CONCEPT

The Parkway Concept can be summarized as follows: The American River Parkway is a unique regional facility which shall be managed to balance the goals of, a) preserving naturalistic open space and protecting environmental quality within the urban environment, and b) contributing to the provision of recreational opportunity in the Sacramento area. Components of the Parkway concept include:

1. On-going management of the Parkway's natural resources.
2. Accommodation of the demand for passive, unstructured, river oriented recreational pursuits in a natural environment which are not normally provided by other County recreational facilities, in a manner which minimizes the impact on the environment.

3. Limitation on the use of the parkway to prevent overuse and preserve environmental quality thereby ensuring the availability of the Parkway for future users.
4. Coordination and cooperation in the Parkway planning and management efforts.
5. Balance of the preservation of naturalistic open space and habitat within the urban area with the provision of active recreational facilities to serve the recreational needs of the community.

The Parkway concept components collectively provide the foundation for the Parkway Plan and are further reflected in the goals, policies, and text of the Plan. The Parkway concept still holds true today and as a result, provides the basis for the planning efforts for the American River Parkway. (pp. 1-1 to 1-2)

The American River Parkway Plan also included clear instructions for its review and updating;

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The preparation of this Parkway Plan started in February, 1984. A working committee composed of representatives from various interest groups concerned with the Parkway was appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The plan was developed over a period of approximately one year. The

committee focused its attention on identifying and resolving issues which have occurred since the last Parkway Plan update in 1976. The Plan consists of goals and policies, specific area plans, and an implementation section. The action plan specifies measures to implement the plan and is adopted as part of the Parkway Plan. **The Parkway Plan shall be reviewed approximately every five years, or earlier if it is determined to be necessary to reflect changing conditions.** The action plan shall be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Recreation and Parks Commission, due to its specific and dynamic nature. (p. 1-3) (highlighting added)

2000 The American River Parkway Financial Needs Study by Dangermond, (2000) was completed which defined the threats:

New Threats to the Parkway

While the threat of development has been overcome, [before the current Parkway mansion visual intrusion threat emerged] new threats confront the parkway today. They include: a significant reduction in maintenance funding which has resulted in the accumulation of a large backlog in deferred maintenance and needed repairs to facilities, a significant reduction in law enforcement presence in the parkway, the spread of exotic plant growth overtaking native plants, and the invasion of areas of the parkway by homeless persons which has created a sense of lack of safety. As a result there has been a progressive degeneration in both the natural and the developed resources of the Parkway during the past two decades along with a dip in attendance in 1997-1998 as a

result of price resistance to increased user fees. The deferred maintenance backlog is \$6.6 million and approximately \$1.8 million is needed annually to bring parkway maintenance and operations up to a level that is consistent with the average expenditure of those agencies surveyed in the benchmark analysis. It has become evident that failure to properly maintain and operate a valuable natural resource like the American River Parkway, **allowing the habitat and infrastructure to degrade and fall into disrepair, can destroy a dream as easily as the commercial development of the property.** (p. 2) (highlighting added)

2002 The River Corridor Management Plan for the Lower American River was completed by the Lower American River Task Force (2002) with its purpose defined as:

The purpose of the River Corridor Management Plan (RCMP) is to institute a cooperative approach to managing and enhancing the lower American River (LAR) corridor's aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, flood-control systems, and recreation values within the framework of the 1985 American River Parkway Plan (Parkway Plan). The RCMP has been developed through a voluntary consensus-based process. Its endorsement by the agencies responsible for managing natural resources, land use, recreation, water supply, and flood control along the LAR, as well as by associated stakeholders who have shared in the development of the RCMP, reflects their shared understanding of the best way to manage the river. At the same time, the RCMP is not a legally binding document, and inclusion of a project in the RCMP

action plan is not intended to imply that the project has been formally approved by agencies with jurisdiction over that project.

Implementation of the RCMP is expected to:

- Improve and increase aquatic and terrestrial habitats and improve ecological functions in a manner that will contribute to the health of the targeted species found in the LAR,
- Preserve the flood-carrying capacity and ensure the long-term reliability of existing and planned flood-control improvements, and
- Preserve and enhance the LAR's wild and scenic recreation value. (p.1)

Two of their recommendations relating to our report's focus are:

- *Increase the number of County Park Ranger patrols and City "Problem Oriented Police" efforts to achieve a "best practice" operational standard and to target illegal camping in the Parkway.* These policing activities should continue to be supported by a variety of local government services including public health, human services, and trash removal.
- *Eliminate illegal camping in the Parkway by supporting the City-County Board on Homelessness'*

efforts to connect Parkway campers with appropriate community resources and health services to address their needs and by strengthening ongoing communications between the City-County Board on Homelessness' public safety subcommittee and the LAR Task Force. (ibid. p. 59)

However, when you read the Sacramento City-County Board report (2002) you see that the City County Board on Homelessness (CCBH) has no current plan for the illegal campers, stating as one of their strategies;

Develop a philosophy and plan for dealing with the 'service resistant' individuals who choose to live and sleep on the streets, in doorways and **along the river**, etc., because they cannot or will not access services. This particular segment of the homeless population is the most difficult to treat, and significantly affects businesses, neighborhoods and the community, and contributes in a large part to the public's perception of homelessness. A new program focus shall be initiated within the first year of implementation to develop a philosophy and plan for dealing with the service resistant homeless population in Sacramento. (p. 7) (highlighting added)

The CCBH obviously understands the problem, but there is no current plan to address illegal camping, though there is talk of a housing first plan to be released in the winter of 2005. If so, one hopes it has the potential of meeting the 85% benchmark of success set by Pathways to Housing profiled on pages 29-30 of this report.

2003 The long overdue Parkway Plan Update, though thirteen years late, (The first update of the 1985 Plan should have been done in 1990) did finally begin and is expected to be completed in 2006.

2003 In September 2003 the American River Parkway Preservation Society was founded as a 501 c (3) nonprofit public benefit corporation, and in its first community letter of September 26, 2003, outlined the critical issues and defined clear guiding principles.



Illegal Camping in the Lower Reach

For many years, the community of North Sacramento has been unable to use their natural heritage safely. For many years, they have complained loudly and persistently. For many years, they have been consistently ignored.

A leading advocate for the Lower Reach and the 2004 recipient of our Parkway Advocate Award is Robert J. Slobe, who noted in an e-mail, that the American River Parkway began in the Lower Reach:

Our company [North Sacramento Land Company] owned 440 acres of the American River Parkway in the North Sacramento area from 1910 to 1986. We supported the effort to form the Parkway and embraced the principles of permanent protection along the River. Its very dedication took place on our property. We provided no-fee access across our land (approximately 10% of the Parkway trail) from 1965 on. Unfortunately, from the day the County of Sacramento took control of the property, it turned into a cesspool of camping, dumping, crime and destruction of habitat on an unprecedented scale. Despite protests from our company AND the impoverished community of North Sacramento, the County did virtually nothing to stop this disaster of international proportions and it continues to this day. It is filthy, unsafe and unusable.” (July 26, 2004)

A recent interview by Wiley (2005), with founding County Park’s Chief, William Pond, acknowledged “Father of the Parkway”, who also noted the Parkway’s beginning in the Lower Reach:

“Discovery Park was the anchor for the parkway, first with 40 acres owned by the Corey family and then a similar piece owned by the Tiscornia family at the river's mouth.

The rest of the land was held in relatively large blocks by people who favored the idea of a parkway. The owners of the North Sacramento Land Company, for instance, gave the county a moveable easement across their land while the rest of the project was assembled.” (n.p.)

What has been allowed to happen in the founding Lower Reach area of the Parkway is a tragedy of the failure of public administration haunting us still.

The Lower Reach, comprising almost one-third of the roughly 5,000 acres of the Parkway is unsafe to use because of widespread illegal camping, crime, pollution from human waste, and habitat destruction.

Most governmental Parkway related reports, including the Dangermond Group Financial Needs Study, completed in 2000; the Lower American River Task Force River Corridor Management Plan, completed in 2002; and widespread anecdotal evidence validate this sad fact, but County Parks and other Parkway advocacy organizations continue to deny it.

The denial is often obtuse as witnessed by a statement by a Sacramento County ranger during an interview by Lindelof (2005), that the crime associated with illegal camping is “[A]lmost completely restricted to what they are doing to each other.” This sentiment has been heard from Parkway leadership on many occasions as the reason citizens should not worry about venturing there.

To contrast this sentiment with traditional law enforcement is so obvious it hardly merits comment, but virtually the entire modern public safety approach relies on high visibility and effort expended in areas of high crime.

To take the position that the criminals are only attacking each other so why worry about it, is to turn over the commons to the criminals, creating a community tragedy of great proportion.

But that is exactly what has happened to the Parkway in the Lower Reach.

An article focusing on the Lower Reach appeared in the Sacramento News & Review in December of 2004 entitled; “Trail of Fears: *The American River Bike Trail is idyllic , as long as you don’t get maced, mugged or beaten with a rock.*”

One quote from that story, in addition to the title, is illustrative.

"Just around Discovery Park, you have homeless types there. Sometimes it looks like the yard at Folsom Prison," Billingsley [A bike rider interviewed for the story who has eluded two mugging attempts while riding in the Lower Reach] said. "People yell stuff at you for no apparent reason. I shouldn't have to carry a .45 to go for a bike ride."

According to the crime statistics reports from the County Parkway Ranger Unit, there were (between January 2000 – July 2005) 1,127 crime reports, 148 arrests, and 77 incident reports [virtually all incidents reports were criminal in nature] in the Lower Reach.

Sacramento public leadership has accepted the reality of large-scale illegal camping on the Parkway for years. They have also supported the development of a permanent charitable center of food, goods, and service distribution in the Richards Boulevard area that, as most observers will privately agree, acts as the magnet for the creation of the campgrounds just across the river.

Some Parkway leaders have described this illegal camping as merely another instance of ‘squatters’ trying to find a place to live, as happened during the beginning history of Sacramento. From their perspective it is just another page in the developing history of Sacramento.

This narrow perspective partially explains why you have upriver Parkway advocates, local government, and much of the media saying that illegal camping is a homeless problem rather than an illegal camping and public safety problem.

Human Service Nonprofit Work

The paradigm of constructing large concentrations of social service programs in one area, as has been done along the Parkway, is as corrosive at helping the poor and suffering transform themselves, as it is to the surrounding community.

It is equivalent to constructing a wall around those living marginal lives, separating them from the community within which they need to transform their lives.

What works is de-centralization, not more centralization. What works is teaching people how to fish, not just giving them fish.

High engagement philanthropic trends changing charitable work, is creating many common-sense approaches, one of which is looking at it from the perspective of supply and demand, as Frumkin (2002) describes it:

On a more normative level, the demand-side approach to nonprofit organizations has spawned a literature focusing on the social and political responsibilities of nonprofit organizations—defined in relation to the demands of the neediest members of society. Starting with the claim that

the tax exemption accorded these institutions conveys an obligation to help, many people have made the normative argument that nonprofit organizations should seek to assist the most disadvantaged and empower the most disenfranchised members of society. Accordingly, the success or failure of the sector can and should be judged on how well or how poorly it meets society's needs. The demand for nonprofit and voluntary action leads neatly to a set of prescribed activities, including greater advocacy work within the sector, and the empowerment and mobilization of those left out of the political process. The demand for nonprofit activity thus brings with it the expectation that these institutions will help give voice and opportunity to those who have been marginalized by the market economy and the political process.

An alternative, supply-side position argues that the sector is impelled by the resources and ideas that flow into it—resources and ideas that come from social entrepreneurs, donors and volunteers. This is a more controversial perspective because it has led to some strong claims about how nonprofit organizations should be managed and operated. Rejecting many of the preceding arguments about the needs that pull on the sector, the supply-side perspective holds that nonprofit and voluntary organizations are really all about the people with resources and commitment who fire the engine of nonprofit and voluntary action. Drawn to the sector by visions and commitments, social entrepreneurs bring forward agendas that often operate independently of immediately obvious and enduring community needs. (pp. 21-22)

From this approach, we are beginning to see charitable programs develop that see themselves part of, and often come from, the community of business, representative government, and religion, not as adversaries.

Homeless Programs That Work

The chronic homeless, those who camp along the Parkway, are described by Jensen (2005) as:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines chronic homelessness as a single adult with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. (A "disabling condition" can be a substance-use disorder, a mental illness, or a physical illness or disability.) (p. 8)

One of the most successful programs helping the chronic homeless has been Pathways to Housing in New York.

Pathways to Housing, which since 1992 has had an 85% success rate, is described by the New York State Office of Mental Health (NYMH) (2005):

Pathways offers a wide variety of intensive support services based on the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) model. Involvement with supported services is voluntary and varies in frequency and quantity, depending on the tenant's individual wants and needs.

Pathways successfully engages and houses a segment of the homeless population often described as "treatment resistant" or "not housing ready" by other programs. It concentrates on people who have been turned away from other housing programs because they refuse or are unable to participate in treatment, refuse or are unable to maintain sobriety, have histories of violence or incarceration, or have other personality or behavioral problems. (n.p.)

The Assertive Community Treatment Association (ACT) (2005) defines Assertive Community Treatment as: “[It] is a team treatment approach designed to provide comprehensive, community-based psychiatric treatment, rehabilitation, and support to persons with serious and persistent mental illness such as schizophrenia.” (n.p.)

Pathways has been created by the social entrepreneurship of its founder, who understands that seemingly intractable problems can be solved by clients discovering their ability to first help themselves and then others.

As NYMH (2005) notes: “Approximately half of the program’s staff are in recovery from either substance abuse or psychiatric disability, or were homeless themselves.” (n.p.)

After generations of huge outlays of funds for social programs which failed to transform individual behavior, we are now seeing a strong trend in the nonprofit and public sector demanding clear and measurable results. This trend is being driven by programs such as Pathways.

Venture and high engagement philanthropy, like performance-based outcomes in the public sector, seeks to increase the effectiveness of services delivered to the public in the hope of decreasing social problems. According to Morino & Shore (2004) “At the core of increased effectiveness of nonprofit organizations is funding. Yet the way we fund nonprofits often prevents them from achieving what they could do and certainly from being able to meet the latent demand for their services.” (p. 8)

The engagement aspect of high engagement philanthropy concerns the active involvement of the funders in the organization, bringing their skills, often developed in a successful corporate or entrepreneurial world, to bear on the social problems the organization is dealing with. Morino & Shore (2005) explain:

Often this engagement takes the form of strategic assistance, which can include long-term planning, board and executive recruitment, coaching, help in raising capital, assuming board roles, accessing networks, and leveraging relationships to identify additional resources and facilitate partnerships.” (p. 11)

The vitality this approach brings to human service nonprofit programs and the necessity to change from their historical adversarial role can be as helpful to the nonprofit sector as the emergence of the entrepreneurial spirit has been to government.

However, the resistance to change is strong, as Trader-Leigh (2002) notes:

Major organizational changes or innovations can anticipate resistance, especially if proposed changes alter values and visions related to the existing order. Programs that satisfy one group often reduce satisfaction of other groups because the survival of one set of values and visions may be at the expense of the other. (p. 138)

Many of the human service programs, particularly many in the homelessness arena, operate from a set of values that see business, government, and religion, as the adversary, rather than institutions of the very community they need to help their clients voluntarily join as productive members.

An organization developing and operating program models for helping the chronic homeless is the Doe Fund in New York, which has spent 20 years helping the homeless find jobs and housing. Egbert (2005) describes a typical situation:

As a drug addict, Elizabeth Betts was set on fire as she slept in a hallway, and lost 25 teeth to a 2-by-4 in the face, but yesterday - eight years clean -

she flashed a bright smile as she got an apartment of her own for the first time in her life.

Betts, 46, accepted the key to her new home at a ceremony celebrating the completion of Stadium Court, a 60-unit affordable-housing complex owned and operated by the Doe Fund, a 20-year-old nonprofit that helps homeless New Yorkers find work and housing.

"I don't have to go through people's garbage cans anymore to find clothes to wear," Betts said in a tearful speech. "I can go right upstairs and look in my own closet."

Stadium Court, just north of Yankee Stadium at 1085 Gerard Ave., is made up of one- and two-bedroom townhomes constructed for the Doe Fund by Leewood Real Estate from modular housing units manufactured at a factory in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. (n.p.)

One of the most successful of the Doe Fund's programs is the Ready, Willing & Able Street Clean-Up Program, (RWA) described on their website (2005):

Ready, Willing & Able is The Doe Fund's holistic, residential, work and job skills training program which empowers, employs and supports homeless individuals in their efforts to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society. *Ready, Willing & Able* has helped over 1,100 men and women become drug-free, secure full-time employment, and obtain their own self-supported housing. The program targets the segment of the homeless population considered the hardest to serve: single, able-bodied adults, the majority of whom have histories of incarceration and substance abuse. Criteria for acceptance into the program is that the applicant be ready, willing and able, both physically and mentally, to work and maintain a drug-free lifestyle. (n.p.)

Using RWA as a model, ARPPS facilitated a community discussion to develop a similar program to clean up the Parkway.

ARPPS Homeless Job Training Project (AHJTP)

ARPPS facilitated a series of monthly meetings in 2005 with representatives from Loaves and Fishes, the North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Sacramento Employment Training Agency (SETA), Mutual Assistance Program, Downtown Partnership, Homelessness Board, and Wellsprings Women's Center, to develop a job training program for the homeless cleaning up the Parkway, based on the Ready, Willing, & Able model.

Here is the concept and the draft we came up with, which is now being considered by Councilmember Steve Cohn, and ultimately we hope, the City Council.

AHJTP Draft Concept

- A job training, job development, and business creation program involving the recent homeless, who receive training and full-time jobs cleaning up the Lower American River Parkway, encompassing the Discovery Park, Woodlake Reach and Cal Expo area, eventually expanding to the Del Paso Boulevard area of North Sacramento, the Downtown area and the Capital Station District of Sacramento.
- The first-year pilot project, focusing on the lower American River Parkway will consist of three two-person crews, working under one supervisor, using large push buckets or carts, and brooms, rakes, shovels, etc, loading refuse into a truck for hauling while separating recyclable material for redemption.

- The program will move to the Del Paso Boulevard Area in the second year (six two-person crews and two supervisors), and
- Downtown and Capital Station area in the third year (twelve two-person crews and four supervisors).

AHJTP Draft Funding Concept

- The program will seek, after the first subsidized year, paying contracts with local business and government agencies, with the eventual goal of it becoming a private enterprise owned and operated by the formerly homeless.

AHJTP Draft Program Components:

- **Administration:** Financial, taxes, payroll, insurance, contracts
- **Program:** Intake, Assessment, Career Planning, Education/Vocational
- **Employment:** Job training, supervision, work supplies, equipment (6 full time (40 hours a week M-F) jobs at \$7.50 an hour I full time supervisory job at \$10.50 an hour

AHJTP Meeting Participants:

- **David H. Lukenbill**, Founding President, (ARPPS)
- **Deborah Baron**, Executive Director, ARPPS
- **Tim Brown**, Executive Director, Loaves & Fishes
- **Franklin Burris**, President, North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce
- **Dana Christy**, Clean & Sober, Loaves & Fishes
- **Deborah Dunham**, Development Director, Wellspring Women's Center

- **Kathy Kossick**, Executive Director, (SETA)
 - **Ryan Loofbourrow**, Downtown Partnership
 - **Paula Lomazzi**, Homelessness Board
 - **Robin Purdy**, (SETA)
 - **William Walker**, Workforce Development Manager (SETA)
 - **Carolyn Washington**, Mutual Assistance Program
-

We feel that this type of job training and development approach, along with housing programs like Pathways to Housing, are the long-term strategies that will change the history of failure in helping the chronic homeless in Sacramento.

Clinging to the failed response to homelessness in Sacramento by allowing illegal campgrounds to exist in the Lower Reach, hurts the homeless and the homeless programs, degrades the environment for business and residents, and creates de facto public policy that perpetuates the failure.

Legal Response

Sacramento's legal system and local politicians have also adopted this position, as has a generally willing media. Together they've helped this policy become acceptable, even in the minds of the knowledgeable Parkway user who carefully stays away from the illegal camping areas.

Illegal campers who receive citations from the rangers in the Lower Reach are often sentenced to community service cleaning up the Parkway in Goethe Park and other upriver environs, rather than the Lower Reach, because, according to Jahn (2005) the public defender's office believes having them clean up the area they have befouled would be wrong, with one public defender saying: "It's sort of like

the fox guarding the henhouse... You're asking homeless people to, one, work for the fox and, two, to destroy the means of survival for other homeless people." (n.p)

Jewett (2005) writing about another illegal camping case:

[R]angers have warned [Michael "Gremiln"] Tinius 29 times and arrested him 14 times since 1999, for illegal camping, drinking in public or having his dog off a leash", quotes another public defender who says: " [H]e hopes to take Tinius' current illegal camping case before a jury. He said his client's plight is like that of English tenant farmers who were displaced during the Industrial Revolution. Homeless, they flooded cities where they encountered strict vagrancy laws. (n.p.)

As noted by Graswich (2004), illegal camping is also supported by some judges, with one Sacramento Superior Court justice throwing out a case brought before him on illegal camping by saying, "Will society be served by conviction of the defendant of this crime? [...] Temporary use of public property such as parks and parkways is normally expected." (n.p.)

While we certainly appreciate the judges' compassion for another human being, we don't agree they should punish other members of the community, which is what this de facto public policy does to the community residents who can't use their area of the Parkway because illegal camping and related criminal behavior have scared them away.

Compassion to one that causes punishment to another is not justice, and justice is what the public expects and should receive from judges.



Public Safety Strategy for the Lower Reach

The public safety issues along the Parkway can be examined from the perspective of two successful approaches to modern policing; **Problem-Oriented Policing** and the **Broken Windows Theory**.

Problem-Oriented Policing is described by Cordner & Biebel (2005):

Simply put, problem-oriented policing posits that police should focus more attention on *problems*, as opposed to *incidents*. Problems are defined either as collections of incidents related in some way (if they occur at the same location) [along the Parkway for instance] or as underlying conditions that give rise to incidents, crimes, disorder, and other substantive community issues that people expect the police to handle. By focusing more on problems than on incidents, police can address causes rather than mere symptoms and consequently have a greater impact. [...] It emphasizes that police pursue large and critically important societal goals—controlling crime, protecting people, reducing fear, and maintaining order.” (p. 156)

Broken Windows Theory was first described by James Q. Wilson and co-author George Kelling in a 1982 article in the Atlantic Monthly magazine. In a 1997 interview by Colloff, Wilson describes how it evolved:

George Kelling, the co-author, was asked to evaluate an experiment in New Jersey involving the assignment of foot patrol officers to inner city neighborhoods. The police did not think that foot patrols were having an effect on crime, although the citizens were quite enthusiastic about it. What

Kelling found in his research was that the foot patrol officers did not in fact reduce crime, but they did make neighbors feel more comfortable as a community. This led me to wonder whether the national concern about crime rates was not ignoring an equally important concern about how neighbors felt about issues of neighborhood safety.

When I looked into it, I discovered that the neighborhoods that people were most fearful of were not necessarily the most crime-prone neighborhoods. They were neighborhoods where crime was displayed-where teenage boys hung out on street corners or where prostitutes walked. Citizens were concerned about keeping order as much as having safety.

If the rangers who are responsible for patrolling the Parkway, all with law enforcement training, followed basic police procedure, they would be concentrating their resources in the Lower Reach rather than upriver, but virtually all anecdotal evidence indicates upriver is where they are.

Lower Reach Public Safety Policy Concepts

Our third guiding principle is: “Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, social and environmental justice call upon us to help the poor and distressed person, and the poor and distressed community.”

In accordance with that principle we would suggest the following policies:

1) Enlarge and expand ranger patrols, with a major focus on the highest crime area, adopt a model being used in Houston for horse ranger patrols, and create a citizen hot-line and website.

a) Parkway Horse Rangers: Modeled after a program used at the Houston International Airport written about by Perlman (2005) where “[E]questrians who are granted permission to ride the 25 miles of trails in the area in exchange for helping airport security by keeping an eye out for suspicious activity.” (p.76)

b) Public Safety Hotline and Website with Follow Up Responses:

A place where the public can call and/or email the location of illegal camping sites and other illegal activities and there is a follow-up response to the report.

The ongoing statistics from the ranger crime reports should be placed here as well as recent report of crime and descriptions of suspected criminals.

Right now there are several members of the public from the Lower Reach who call in locations of campgrounds and crimes, but the follow up is sporadic and not publicly accessible. Something as simple and cheap as a Parkway Public Safety Website would be a start.

The point is to allow the community to help, as they have shown a willingness to do so.

2) Safety with Compassion Program.

a) One of the few programs that has actually seemed to work at stopping the chronic homeless from camping illegally in public parks and getting them into community treatment programs, has been the Matrix program in San Francisco, described by Gaskin (1994):

San Francisco’s septuagenarian columnist Herb Caen has likened it to a sixteenth-century English law that required public flogging of vagrants; the ACLU has condemned it as a violation of the basic constitutional rights to freedom of travel and association; members

of the clergy have denounced it as a cold and uncaring attempt to sweep a desperate problem away. Yet ordinary citizens seem to like it. Last August Mayor Frank Jordan instituted the Matrix Program, a sort of tough-love approach to the growing problems caused by the homeless in San Francisco. The professionally indignant have been nipping at his heels ever since.

Walking down Market Street or up Powell Street, tourists and local citizens used to run a gauntlet of panhandlers, drunkards, drug addicts, and the mentally ill, who would line the sidewalks requesting (or demanding) money. Petty and serious street crimes were becoming commonplace in areas that were supposed to attract tourists. Union Square, surrounded by upscale stores in the heart of downtown, was increasingly avoided by anyone who didn't want to run the risk of being panhandled into penury. Every downtown park was becoming the property of the indigent as they set up tents and makeshift shelters.

Amid growing complaints by city businesses, tourist groups, and members of the general public, Mayor Jordan started the Matrix Program, which offers the homeless a chance to obtain shelter and services but also treats them as adults, asking them to take responsibility for their own lives. The program's many opponents are upset because it reasserts the public's right to safe streets and a decent quality of life by actively enforcing public-nuisance laws.

Even with all of the controversy it generated, most observers agree that the program cleaned up the streets and helped many of the chronic homeless who would not seek help on their own.

The program model calls for entering illegal camping areas, led by local homeless service providers backed up by police, and move campers, even those resisting, into public services.

As many programs have found, being resistant to help does not always equate to not taking help when it is offered vigorously.

Vigorous help is exactly what is needed in the Lower Reach to allow the homeless illegally camping there begin to reclaim their lives, and the citizens of the community begin to reclaim their Parkway.



Community Failure & Community Vision

Community Failure

Though the initial administrative planning for the Parkway was public-centric and visionary, it ultimately became very narrow and bureaucracy-centric.

Initially, by working closely with the community through grassroots nonprofit organizations and using methods of community organizing then available, the local government agencies responsible for establishing the Parkway did an admirable job of creating our natural treasure, corroded though it may now be.

However, there was one serious oversight.

William Pond, 87, first County Parks Director, as noted by Wiley (2005); “said he still watches the parkway like a proud parent, but he wishes he’d had the foresight to see that a permanent funding source was created as the parkway was created.”
(n.p.)

The lack of a dedicated funding stream has hurt the Parkway immeasurably, and placed it in the unenviable position of having to compete for funding annually with more pressing issues like public safety and other basic human services.

The failure of having a dedicated funding stream for the Parkway became most acute after the passage of Proposition 13 and was commented on by Dangermond (2000):

During the past two decades there has been a redistribution of resources and responsibilities between the State of California and California Counties that has left counties with more responsibility for local services and inadequate state funding to provide those services. Unless this condition is addressed in the future, Sacramento County will have great difficulty shouldering the entire burden of rehabilitating and caring for this major resource of national and state significance. It is hoped that this report will provide the initial needs assessment and range of potential solutions necessary to enable the dialogue that has begun to continue. Remedies to Parkway funding needs should be negotiated by management and policy makers of the agencies with primary interests in the American River Parkway. Solutions need to be found that will insure the future environmental preservation and appropriate recreational use of the Parkway as a vital asset to the growing Sacramento Metropolitan Area.

(p. ix)

Unfortunately the Dangermond Report did not have that impact and management continued to fail to provide for the Parkway.

Understanding failure and making a decision to analyze and learn from it is extremely hard work, as noted by Edmonson & Cannon (2005):

It hardly needs to be said that organizations cannot learn from failures if people do not discuss and analyze them. Yet this remains an important insight. The learning that is potentially available may not be realized unless thoughtful analysis and discussion of failure occurs.” (para. 1)

This ‘important insight’ was lost when current management decided to not follow the five-year review and update process for the 1985 Parkway Plan, which would have allowed them the luxury of identifying and planning for the emerging

problems before they became failed policies, the purpose of review and update. Edmonson & Cannon continue:

“People tend to be more comfortable attending to evidence that enables them to believe what they want to believe, denying responsibility for failures, and attributing the problem to others or to "the system." We would prefer to move on to something more pleasant. Rigorous analysis of failure requires that people, at least temporarily, put aside these tendencies to explore unpleasant truths and take personal responsibility.” (para. 6)

What Parkway leadership has wanted to believe, and what we have all wanted to believe, is that the Parkway is the region’s crown jewel when many people knew better. Again, Edmonson & Cannon:

[C]onducting an analysis of a failure requires a spirit of inquiry and openness, patience, and a tolerance for ambiguity. However, most managers admire and are rewarded for decisiveness, efficiency, and action rather than for deep reflection and painstaking analysis.” (para. 4)

This is the importance of adhering to the five-year review and update schedule, as the initial planning strategy was designed to counter the managerial tendency for “decisiveness, efficiency, and action rather than for deep reflection and painstaking analysis.”

Strategic planning is the over-arching guide, developed through deep reflection and painstaking analysis that allows public administrators to manage in the public’s best interest. If administrators do not follow an agreed upon and well-thought out strategy, the public’s interest is not being served.

Another important decision public leadership makes is resource allocation and Parkway leadership made a decision not to expend resources on the Woodlake

Reach, the center portion of the Lower Reach, because the area had not been acquired by the County by the time the 1985 plan had been completed.

Because of the lack of follow-through with the five-year update process, the denial of resources to the Reach became the administrative norm, as decision after decision failed to rectify the original failure.

Community Vision

The initial and most important solution to consider is establishing a nonprofit conservancy to manage the Parkway.

This is an approach already being used successfully in other areas, as well as locally, for managing major parks and open space.

An American River Parkway Conservancy would be a public nonprofit 501 c (3) organization whose sole purpose would be to manage the Parkway and ensure its resources are preserved, protected, and strengthened for the enjoyment and use of the entire community.

The land would remain in public ownership, local governments would dedicate a set annual amount to it, preferably through a Joint Powers Authority, but much of the funding would come from the fundraising done by the conservancy.

A successful model is Central Park Conservancy which has brought Central Park back from long-term deterioration under circumstances similar to those being faced by our Parkway.

This option certainly deserves more study as it is better than:

- Maintaining the status quo, which we have rejected; as there is no indication current management is capable of learning from their past failure and making necessary changes. We understand the major difficulty inherent in having a public agency manage a resource during a time of uncertain funding is the method of ranking what gets funded. County Parks has to balance the Parkway among several other competing funding needs within their agency budget. The County Board of Supervisors has to balance County Park's budget against many other competing agency budget requests. To help them go through this process during times when they have to make cuts, they rely on a ranking process that puts necessities, like public safety, on top. On this basis the Parkway is close to the bottom of the funding list.
- Management by a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), an option which we see as necessary for the short term, to keep the Parkway in a 'treading water' mode, while consideration of having the JPA contract on a long-term basis with a nonprofit conservancy for daily management, is explored.

We feel that an independent nonprofit organization, established exclusively to manage and look out for the Parkway would not have to make the type of lose-lose choices the Parkway is currently burdened with. Their mission would be to preserve, protect, and strengthen the Parkway for optimal public use and enjoyment, period.

Seeking different governance structures is a matter of looking for a more appropriate vehicle to accomplish something the community wants, a safe, well-managed and well-funded Parkway.

A 501 c (3) public benefit nonprofit Parkway conservancy organization could do that and the local organizational resources available to help this come into being are substantial.

There are existing local conservancies that could be involved in helping birth an American River Parkway Conservancy. They have raised millions of dollars and are currently managing thousands of acres of open space. Great expertise is also available within the Parkway related nonprofit organizations, County Park's staff, public Parkway-related boards, commissions, and task forces, as well as other interested stakeholders and community leadership, to create the depth of regional support and excitement for this solution to make it a reality.

Community Resource Concepts

ARPPS and the North Sacramento community have been strong supporters of the Indian Heritage Center, which has recently been approved by California State Parks for the site in the Lower Reach chosen by the Heritage Center Task Force, and will continue to support the implementation of it.

However, there are others resources that would help restore the Lower Reach.

Among the many community resources that could be created in the Lower Reach are:

- **A Lower Reach Nature Center:**

As much good as the Indian Heritage Center will do for the Lower Reach, there is a strong need for a local community oriented nature center, modeled after the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, serving the Lower Reach community as Effie Yeaw serves the upriver community.

The organized support that will develop around the Lower Reach Nature Center will act as the organized support for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA), does for the upriver community; as a focal point for volunteers and donations to support the nature center and the Parkway.

- **Expanded Picnic Areas**

As the Lower Reach Nature Center will enhance the legitimate use that will help drive out the illegitimate use, expanding picnic areas will bring the community, particularly the low-income community which is a large part of the Lower Reach adjacent community, into a closer relationship with the Parkway.

- **Pedestrian and Biking Bridges into Downtown**

This would open up one of the area's most beautiful areas to the major tourist hotels, and add to the transportation options for the adjacent communities on both sides of the river.

- **Golf Course**

With the existing Campus Commons golf course by California State University, and the Ancil Hoffman golf course in Carmichael, the Lower Reach could support a golf course which would draw from downtown and the Lower Reach community.

- **Concert Area**

There were serious discussions awhile ago with a major concert promoter from the Bay Area to bring concerts to the Lower Reach, and it is a great venue to continue discussing, as well as an excellent social enterprise for Parkway funding.

Community Usage Concepts

Our fifth guiding principle is: “Regarding new Parkway usages, inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.”

In accordance with this principle, here are some usages that should be considered:

- **Off-Lease Dog Walking Area**

Many open space areas are able to accommodate off-leash dog walking and it is something that should be given serious consideration in the Lower Reach, particularly if proper, certified training is required of off-leash permit holders. It is a use being accommodated in other areas.

- **Mountain Bike Area**

Local mountain biking groups have proposed developing and maintaining trails at their own expense in the Lower Reach and it is a proposal that should be given serious consideration. It is also a use being accommodated in other areas.

- **Expanded Equestrian Usage**

This is already being considered and as long as the Lower Reach community is involved in the planning, as they should be in all suggested usage planning in their community, this concept should continue to be developed.

Considering the anecdotal evidence from riders who have ventured into the Lower Reach, it would be an expanded use that would be eagerly utilized once the public safety issue is resolved.



Conclusion

There are other arguments for preservation of the Parkway in addition to the environmental. There are the arguments of history, of the spirituality enfolding our beginnings, and the role of Sacramento on the world stage.

Joel Kotkin, in his recent book, *The City: A Global History*, suggests there are three factors of great cities, sacredness of open space; security and projection of power; and the stimulation of commerce.

Sacramento lies within the embrace of two major rivers and is the state capital of one of the largest economies in the world. The promise implicit in those could lay claim to the dreams of many for great city status.

The Parkway and the river running through it, is at the center of one of the greatest human dramas in history, the California Gold Rush.

The sacredness attached to the Parkway and the river flowing in its heart has roots reaching back thousands of years.

The tremendous stimulation to commercial value by a true understanding the deepest value of our rivers awaits future leadership.

Many agree that the Lower Reach is one of the most beautiful in the Parkway and reclaiming it for all of us will truly begin to refurbish our crown jewel to the deeply lustrous status so richly deserved.

ATTACHMENT A

ARPPS STRATEGY:

Vision/Mission/Issues/Principles/Goals/Objectives

Our Vision

We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.

Our Mission

*Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway,
Our Community's Natural Heart.*

Critical Issues

1) Continuing depletion of public funding to provide vital ongoing maintenance, facility repair, law enforcement presence, invasive plant management, and fully restore a sense of safety for those using our priceless public resource.

Our Approach: This is not a new problem, nor is it going to go away any time soon. Years of deferred maintenance have deeply damaged the Parkway, and without the development of alternative funding and management structures, it will continue to deteriorate. We will work with

nonprofit organizations, universities, businesses, neighborhood associations, government entities, and churches to develop alternatives to maintain and preserve the Parkway.

2) Continuing pressure on the river, whether through flooding, illegal sewage discharge, or taking water for new development, hurts the salmon and other aquatic life.

Our Approach: People want to live in Northern California, so it is not surprising that development continues at record levels. Each new city in our area brings new pressure for growth, more opportunity for sewage accidents, and more potential harm to the salmon.

We will approach government, at all levels, to seek concrete solutions, and encourage them to increase their commitment to improving river water quality and preserving the Parkway.

3) Continuing habitat devastation, fires, and pollution from widespread illegal camping by the homeless, primarily in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway.

Our Approach: The dignity of the human person, including the poor and distressed, must be respected, but the dignity of the poor and distressed community must also be respected. We will collaborate with homeless advocacy organizations, local government entities, businesses, churches, universities, and neighborhood associations to seek grant funding to build more nature centers on the Parkway, and provide Parkway maintenance jobs to the homeless.

4) Continuing development pressure to build large homes along the Parkway edges, intruding on the view space, and encroaching into the commons.

Our Approach: Given the stunning beauty of the Parkway, it is no wonder people want to build along its edges, even though their homes may visually intrude on the commons, destroying the sense of being embraced by nature that is the essential Parkway experience. We will work to ensure that the American River Parkway Plan Update, currently in process, will include restrictions against visually intrusive construction that are clear and irrevocable.

5) Continuing exclusion of responsible usage by new Parkway user groups is contrary to the spirit upon which public ownership of a natural resource is predicated.

Our Approach: The Parkway belongs to all of us. It is a community resource. The new Parkway Plan Update should contain no absolute restrictions on user activity, rather a process of study and decision-making. Along with off-leash dog walking, mountain biking, full access for the disabled, inline skating, and a greatly expanded network of picnic and sitting places, there are a variety of new usages that should be under consideration to become part of the Parkway experience.

Guiding Principles, Goals, & Objectives

(1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.

a) Build a critical mass of public support for creating the American River Parkway National Heritage Area with local management, endowed funding, and folding the five guiding principles of the Society into management's mission.

- **Society Leadership and Membership:** Through a continual campaign of informational mailings, public presentations, meetings, fund development, and ongoing community marketing, we will work to build a Society leadership team representative of the community, and a stable membership base of at least 5,000.

b) Work to ensure a long-term funding goal of building a permanent financial endowment for perpetual Parkway funding support.

- Work to ensure the creation of the American River Parkway as the *Rivers of Red Gold* National Heritage Area, a program of the National Parks Service, but locally managed by a nonprofit conservancy.
- National Heritage status, while allowing Parkway land ownership to remain as is, and allowing for a local conservancy to manage the Parkway, would ensure a federal funding stream long enough to develop endowment funding, and provide additional benefits that national stature endows upon a natural resource.

c) Work to ensure an existing nonprofit conservancy assumes management of the Parkway, recruiting executive leadership with academic and experiential credentials in nonprofit administration and fund development, and embrace social

enterprise fund raising strategies proven successful in other parks.

- A local management conservancy can build a fund development strategy of committed local leadership and social entrepreneurship, through targeted capacity building of Parkway organizations and related social enterprise ventures compatible with the conservancy mission.

d) Educate the relevant communities: business, religious, educational, public, nonprofit, and government, of the value of the strategy and ask for their help in implementing it.

- **Business Community:** Working with chambers of commerce within the Parkway community, we will work to establish a Parkway task force in each chamber, whose charge is to understand the national heritage value of the river and Parkway, as well as the contribution of a safe and accessible Parkway to the economic vitality of the region. Too few people know that the Parkway is an economic engine that “generates an estimated \$259,034,030 in annual economic activity in the local economy.” (2000 figures) We will also work to involve local business in the development and maintenance of additional Parkway nature centers, encouraging a local community building and co-creation process that will enhance responsible usage of the Parkway.
- **Religious Community:** We will work with the interfaith pastoral leadership of the region’s religious communities to help create a pastoral letter on the value of the American River Parkway to our community and the nation, by embracing all ethnic and cultural groups whose history helped build our Parkway heritage and our spiritual and reflective life. As one model for this we would look to, *The Columbia River Watershed:*

Caring for Creation and the Common Good, an International Pastoral Letter, by the Catholic Bishops in the United States and Canada.

- **Educational Community:** The educational community will be encouraged to become involved in academic research enriching the National Heritage Area status and the importance of the Parkway to our region. As a National Heritage Area, the Parkway can become a major ground of environmental, biological, natural resource, park and greenway management research that will help grow the capability of the community to preserve this national resource.
- **Public Community:** Public forums will be encouraged to clarify the problems facing the Parkway, the advantages of creating a National Heritage Area under local management with endowed funding, and the strategy of implementation. The public, as the major supporter and user of the Parkway, needs continual information about the great treasure we have in our midst, and the increasing importance of preserving its natural and created beauty for future generations.
- **Nonprofit Organizations:** Nonprofit organizations working to preserve regional history, and Parkway organizations, will be encouraged to join together to help create a National Heritage Area. We will provide capacity building resources about social enterprise concepts, strategic planning, fund development, board development, communications & marketing, the benefits of collaborative management, and how to become more closely aligned to the ongoing community needs and issues throughout the entire Parkway.
- **Government:** Working with public leadership, we need to establish the case for creating the American River Parkway National Heritage Area,

managed by a local non profit conservancy. Public leaders can help develop long-term funding for the Parkway, by working with community leadership to develop and build the capacity of conservancy management. Public officials will be encouraged to bring their leadership to the planning process and support the designating of the American River Parkway as a National Heritage Area.

(2) What's good for the salmon is good for the river.

- Work to ensure the availability of whatever amount of water is needed to ensure optimal flow and temperature for the salmon.
- To provide optimal water temperature and water flow for the salmon, it is necessary to increase the water storage capacity of the American River Watershed, providing cooling waters and increasing or decreasing flow when needed. While the suggested increase of the water storage capacity of Folsom Dam will benefit the salmon, the community should be prepared to further increase water storage capacity, if needed. The increased pressure on the river, (primarily population-driven), will eventually destroy the river's capacity to provide the salmon the optimal conditions they need.

(3) Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, social and environmental justice call upon us to help the poor and distressed person, and the poor and distressed community.

- Work to ensure all stakeholders realize public safety and compassion for the homeless, illegally camping in the Parkway in North Sacramento,

should be equal responsibilities addressed by Parkway management, homeless advocacy organizations, and local government.

- The public safety issue must be of equal concern to helping the homeless. Rapes, murders, beatings, assaults, and robberies occur regularly in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, and many in the North Sacramento community are justifiably fearful about venturing into it. As a community, we can never give up on the vision that public compassion and public safety are compatible concepts.

(4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.

- Work to ensure visual intrusion by new development is absolutely prohibited forever, with no mitigation.
- Private property owners are not to be faulted for wanting to build large homes or commercial buildings along the Parkway, as it offers some of the most beautiful development sites in our area. However, none of us wants to see the Parkway become Malibuized. Confusion about the building regulations, as now exists, encourages that type of development. National Heritage Area status and the accompanying elevation in oversight will begin to offer the type of protection from visual intrusion caused by new development that current, virtually unregulated, Parkway development is now threatening.

(5) Regarding new Parkway usages, inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

- Work to ensure local public ownership and local conservancy management operate under the guiding principle that the Parkway belongs to all of the people, who have an inalienable right to recreate within the commons.
- Work to ensure there are designated seats on the Parkway conservancy management board of directors for organized recreational and sports users, as well as other organized stakeholders.
- As a locally managed National Heritage Area, the management position regarding use of the Parkway will become more inclusive. We will encourage a local conservancy management structure that incorporates all stakeholders and brings organized, responsible users to the decision making process by creating designated seats on the conservancy board of directors. We all want to encourage responsible usage of the Parkway, as legitimate usage is the best antidote to illegitimate usage.

(6) Review & update our strategic plan every five years.



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