Rivers

I love rivers. While most people are attracted to the water features that exist on our planet, I seem to have a special affinity for rivers. Rivers have always played an important part in the history of humans serving as the primary source of clean, fresh surface water to support survival. As we have transitioned from hunter-gatherers, settlements were established and grew into cities, primarily along rivers.

I grew up on the Mokelumne River near the Delta where the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers converge. Early experiences, which are locked into permanent memory, include river outings for picnics and fishing, drifting down the river in tubes with friends, and exploring the jungle-like wetlands in the river bottom on the Sanguinetti Ranch. Wildlife was abundant. The greatest disappointment of my early life was to find, despite the best intentions of the property owners, the wetlands were eventually cleared, dredged, and converted to houses around an artificial “lake” which periodically becomes artificial mudflats.

After leaving home, I had the wonderful opportunity to study, work, live, and explore in and around a wide array of great rivers over the past five and a half decades. They include close encounters in the United States with the Hudson, East, Potomac, Missouri, Rio Grande, Columbia, Willamette, Snake, Mississippi, and, of course, the San Joaquin. Overseas, the list continues with the Song Saigon, Song Dong Nai, Song Meong, Rio Chagres, Rio Pequeni, Rio Boqueron, Rio Urubamba, Imjin Gang, Han Gang, Naktong Gang, Tiber, Seine, Orne, Rhine, and Danube. The history of each is unique in terms of human impact. Even though some of these rivers have serious issues with water quality, water quantity, encroachment by development, loss of flood plain, or habitat protection, they all provide lessons that can help us maintain or improve river conditions in the future.

All this leads back to our San Joaquin River. A river where some opportunities have been taken, some missed, and others are still available. We must create a long-term vision for the San Joaquin River that, when executed, will be viewed as beneficial for many generations to come. This is not easy, but it helps if you love rivers.

Bart Bohn
River Parkway Trust Board President
What kind of future will we build for Olivia?

I have a young friend named Olivia, who began attending River Camp several years ago. Olivia loves the San Joaquin River. On weekends she often visits the River Center and other locations along the San Joaquin River Parkway with her mom and dad. She looks forward to the day that more land and trails will be accessible for her to explore.

To date, approximately 4,000 acres have been protected along the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and Highway 99, but only about 200 acres are open to the public on a daily basis. In order for more land to be accessible every day, funding must be available for property operation and maintenance.

What kind of future do we want to build for Olivia? Here are three potential scenarios viewed through the lens of access at Fresno River West.

Scenario 1: San Joaquin River Parkway State Park

Olivia and her mom arrive at Fresno River West and are greeted at the gate by a uniformed attendant at the entrance kiosk. They pay a small entry fee and receive a map with information about the special resources found at the site. While walking on a pedestrian trail near the river, they enjoy interpretive signs that highlight the fish, birds, reptiles, and mammals that live in the area. Along the way, they run into a uniformed Park Ranger who asks about their hike and answers questions about some animal tracks they spotted in the sand.

After a picnic near the river, Olivia and her mom return to their car for the trip home. They stop at the restroom near the parking lot and find it clean and well-maintained. They talk excitedly about the Osprey that flew overhead while they ate lunch, and the deer tracks they found on their walk along the riverbank. They agree that it was one of their best days ever, and look forward to another opportunity to visit Fresno River West.

Scenario 2: Fresno for Parks

Olivia and her dad arrive at Fresno River West and are greeted at the gate by a uniformed attendant at the entrance kiosk. They pay a small entry fee and enter the site. While parking their car they notice an empty canoe trailer in the parking lot. As they approach one of the ponds at the site, they see a group of students loading up in canoes as part of the City’s Life and Environmental Science Program.

Olivia’s dad carries an ice chest and chairs as they walk down to the river, while Olivia carries the fishing poles. In a few minutes they set up near the water’s edge, ready for a relaxing day. While her dad is more serious about angling, Olivia spends most of her time wading near the water’s edge searching for tadpoles and crayfish. Every now and then a duck glides by on the water. Olivia gets a special thrill when she spots a mallard family with 5 fuzzy ducklings.

After several hours in the sun and a few fish caught and released, Olivia and her dad pack up to head home. On the way back to the car they deposit a few items in a waste can and visit the restroom, finding it clean and well maintained. They trade stories about, “the one that got away,” and look forward to visiting Fresno River West again soon.

Scenario 3: Nonprofit Management

Olivia and her mom arrive at River West and are greeted at the gate by a young man wearing a river camp t-shirt. “I love River Camp!” Olivia exclaims as her mom pays a small entrance fee as they enter the property. After parking in the parking lot, they head out on a pedestrian trail for a stroll near the river. They see a group of volunteers conducting a river cleanup, and decide to pitch in and help for half an hour. They continue on their walk, and marvel at the hawks perched in the trees nearby.

Along the way Olivia looks for animal tracks and tries to identify them based on the information she learned at River Camp. Her mother enjoys the fresh air and unique sights, sounds, and smells of the river environment. She finds that the daily stresses of life and work seem to melt away during time spent in a natural place.

Olivia and her mom take a seat on a rustic wooden bench to drink from their re-useable water bottles and eat a snack. As they make their way back to the car after their walk, they deposit their snack wrappers in a trash can emblazoned with the words Love our River. Olivia is grateful that there are other people in the community that love the San Joaquin as much as she does.

Conclusion

You may have noticed something about the scenarios above—they’re all pretty similar! Each includes a parking area, walking trails, clean bathrooms, well-maintained trash receptacles, and staff at the site to greet guests and ensure visitors feel safe and understand how to behave on public land. It turns out that operating a park is pretty simple—it just takes people to do the work.

Over the past few years I’ve had the opportunity to meet with a dedicated group of individuals that want to improve parks in our community. This group drafted the Fresno Clean and Safe Parks Initiative that is currently in the signature-gathering phase. If passed, this initiative will generate approximately $37.5 million per year to improve parks, arts and trails in the City of Fresno, and cost the average Fresno household just $39 per year. $750 thousand of this revenue will be dedicated to the portion of the San Joaquin River Parkway within the City of Fresno. You can learn more about the measure and sign up for updates at fresnofortparks.com.

Earlier this year, Assemblymember Dr. Joaquin Arambula introduced AB3218, which will allow State Parks to operate San Joaquin River Parkway lands through a management agreement with the San Joaquin River Conservancy. The State Assembly passed AB3218 on a 64-0 vote on May 30.

Both of these measures can be transformative for the San Joaquin River Parkway—creating revenue that will allow for the construction of new trails and opening more properties for public use. And both of them will still require community support—that’s where you come in.

The Fresno for Parks measure will only cover the portion of the Parkway within city limits—that’s about 1/3 of the Parkway reach between Friant Dam and Highway 99. The State Parks measure will likely require continued partnerships with nonprofit partners like the Trust to help operate Parkway lands.

Your support will allow the San Joaquin River Parkway to make a giant leap forward this year. So please vote, volunteer, and continue your generous contributions to the work of the River Parkway Trust. Together, we’ll build a bright future for Olivia.

Sharon Weaver
Executive Director
Conservation

The River Parkway Trust focuses its conservation efforts on open space land protection, restoring streamside forests and important wildlife habitat, and participating in public planning efforts on issues affecting the river.

15,770
Native Trees and shrubs planted at Fresno River West

500
Acorns Planted

350
Pounds of Trash Collected

70 Acres
of Invasive Plant Species Removed

4,050
Acres stewarded by the River Parkway Trust
Education

Through field trips to the river, lively classroom presentations, and week-long summer day-camps, the River Parkway Trust helps local children connect to the natural world found along the San Joaquin River.

8,746 Students
Connected to the natural world on a field trip to the San Joaquin River.

640 Education Docent Volunteer hours

726 River Buddies
Preschoolers learning about wildlife at the River Center

1,211 River Campers
River Camp Scout Island and Young Explorers Program

179 River Campers
Firebaugh

201 Scholarships
for children to attend River Camp
Recreation

The River Parkway Trust provides managed public recreation access to open space lands in the Parkway. Through guided river tours, we connect people to the rich natural resources found along the San Joaquin River. We also offer guided nature walks to Parkway properties that aren’t currently open to the public.

10,433 Sycamore Island Visitors
Open for 130 Days

111% Increase In Visitors Since 2013

157 Camp Pashayan Visitors
Open for 33 Days

214 River Tours People

205 Nature Walks People
Volunteers make a difference in the Parkway effort

Over 650 Volunteers contributed 19,523 Hours towards the River Parkway Trust’s conservation, education, and recreation programs.

We'd like to thank Fresno State University and all the student interns and volunteers that served with the River Parkway Trust in 2017.

Social Media Engagement

- 7,745 Followers: @SJRparkwaytrust
- 3,181 Followers: @SycamoreislandPark
- 419 Followers: @syrparkwaytrust
- 6,103 Email Subscribers
At the Coke Hallowell Center for River Studies (River Center) you can connect to the cultural and natural history of the river through art and educational exhibits, community programs, gardens, and links to pedestrian, bike, and equestrian trails.

18,402
River Center Visitors

6,011
Students on River Center Field Trips

1,350
River Center Rental Guests

945
Respite by the River Attendees

358
Days Open to the Public

You can rent the River Center for your special event, business meeting, or wedding. To learn more visit riverparkway.org/river-center/river-center-rentals

Parties for the Parkway
All revenue generated through Parties for the Parkway supports the effort to create and protect the San Joaquin River Parkway.

1,284 Tickets Sold
More than 500 Individual Guests
173 Party Hosts 60 Donating Artists
2017 Financials

**Revenue**

- **Grant Income**
  - 28% $654,204
- **Contributions and Donations**
  - 20% $471,733
- **Investment Income**
  - 18% $419,249
- **Program Services**
  - 13% $313,311
- **Memberships**
  - 10% $222,486
- **Special Events**
  - 5% $113,009
- **Park Operations**
  - 3% $66,904
- **Educational Scholarships**
  - 2% $45,104
- **Other Revenue**
  - 1% $29,401

**Total** $2,335,401

**Expenses**

- **Program Expenses**
  - 78% $1,389,134
- **Management Expenses**
  - 10% $177,725
- **Fundraising Expenses**
  - 12% $222,303

**Total** $1,789,162

The financial information included in this report is from our Audited Financial Statement.

You can view the River Parkway Trust’s Audited Financial Statements at riverparkway.org/about-us/irs-form-990.
$150,000+ DONORS
Who have supported the River Parkway Trust through the years:
Frank and Truemae Caglia Family Central Valley Community Foundation
Dr. Virginia S. Eaton
Mary and Gerald Finch
George and Jackie Folsom
Roger and Terry Glassmeyer
John and Jane Hallowell
Hunisberger Foundation
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Norman and Nancy Liddell
Edward K. Martin Trust
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Alice Peters and Leon S. Peters Foundation
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The Everett Rank Sr. Family
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Joseph T. Rind
Vic and Bernie Ryzmovski
The State Family
State of California, San Joaquin River Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board
Roben Smith
United States Bureau of Reclamation
Vulcan Materials Company

2017 INDIVIDUAL DONORS
Thank you to all those individuals who supported the effort to create and protect the San Joaquin River Parkway in 2017.

$100,000+
Joseph T. Rind

$50,000+
Colin and James Hallowell

$20,000+
Paul Gilton and Joan Eaton

$10,000+
Dr. Virginia S. Eaton
Elise Moor

$5,000+
Anonymous
Joan Betrallinovic-victor
Herbert John Blossom
Burt and Sondy Bohn
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$1,000
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Susan and Newton Sedden
Walt Shubin
Carolyn and Peter Sinis
Sheila Smith

2017 AGENDA, BUSINESSES, FOUNDATIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE RIVER PARKWAY TRUST
We are proud to acknowledge the agencies, businesses, foundations, and organizations that supported the River Parkway Trust’s projects and programs in 2017.

$250,000+
United States Bureau of Reclamation
State of California, San Joaquin River Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board

$20,000+
J.P. Lamborn Co.
Leon S. Peters Foundation

$10,000+
Olmo Site
Vulcan Materials Company

$5,000+
Annenberg Foundation
Educational Employees Credit Union
Johansson Transportation Services
Stephen D. Peterson
Conservation Fund
Young’s, Committee for Pacific Gas & Electric

$2,500+
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California Oncology of the Central Valley Medical Group, Inc.
Donaghey Sales
Flint Ranch L.P.
Internal Medicine Medical Clinic
Ultra Gro Plant Food
United Security Bank
Westlands Water District

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Lil Farming
Michael Cafferan, Inc.
Mid Valley Disposal
Nomina, Wright Equipment
Mechanical Equipment Company
Realty Concepts
San Joaquin Running
Shasta Wildlife Conservation Foundation
Wells Fargo Financial Market Bank
Westside Produce
Phyllis G. and Robert G. Wright Fund

$500
Arvey-Hereman Family Foundation
B & L Mechanical, Inc.
Bertz-Rosie Strategy Design
Boman & Associates
Central Valley Community Bank
Collogt Environmental Consulting, LLC
Dowling Aaron
Ford Financial Group
Fowler Packing Company
Fresno Oral Maxillofacial Surgery and Dental Implant Center
Gary McDonald Homes
Hanna Brophy
J & J Farms
Jurd’s Fantasy Land
Kattkelan Foundation
Laskash – Kuchera Company
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Marco Abbott Inc.
Marmey
N.F. Davis Drier & Elevator, Inc.
Noble Credit Union
OK Place
Paul Halajian Architects, Inc.
Per & Sons Farms
Price Fargis & Company
Rasmussen Family Foundation
Republic Services
River View Farms
Roeder Accounting
Safilen Medical Corp.
San Joaquin River Resource Management Coalition
Solar Negotiators
W.C. Davis Farms

We value everyone that supports the creation of the San Joaquin River Parkway. If you’d like to cover an error or omission from the list, please let us know by calling the River Parkway Trust at 559-748-9480 or emailing sparkles@riverparkway.org.