



City of Chico, Parks Division



Volunteer Program

"Doin our part for Chico's parks!"





Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the City of Chico, Partners, Ambassadors, Leaders and Stewards (PALS) Volunteer Program! On average, Chico PALS Volunteers contribute over 20,000 hours annually to Chico's greenways and parks. The energy and achievements that volunteers have brought since the program was formally established in 1996 to Chico's greenways and parks cannot be overstated. Along with the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC), City staff and volunteers work toward the City's mission of preserving, protecting, restoring, and enhancing Chico's parks and greenways. The volunteer program coordinates volunteer efforts directly in support of the Bidwell Park Master Management Plan, the BPPC and the Park Division's goals.

This document is designed to be a PALS beginning guide. The information here will help answer questions and provide direction. There are so many beautiful areas to visit and steward in Chico's parks and greenways. Please contact the park office at (530) 896-7800 or by email at parkinfo@chico.ca.gov if you have questions or are seeking park information.

Additional information, training, and tools will be provided to you as appropriate to your volunteer interest. You are encouraged to expand your parks knowledge. Spend a little time and get acquainted with the diverse wildlife, recreational activities, trails, and plants found in Chico's amazing parks and greenways.

The mission of the PALS Volunteer Program is to enlist the help of the local community in managing resources and expanding volunteerism in as many aspects of enhancing Chico's parks and greenways as possible. PALS volunteers connect with the community and assist with provision of information, various trail maintenance projects, litter removal, vegetation management, habitat restoration and much more!

The PALS Volunteer Program has incorporated these various tasks as part of the continuing efforts in support of the Parks Division, for the health and well-being of the parks and greenways for present and future generations.

Your commitment, time, and interest in Chico's parks and greenways is very much appreciated. Welcome to the City of Chico, PALS Volunteer Program!



Contact Information

City of Chico

Public Works, Parks Division Office

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In the event of an Emergency call:

Chico Police Department 911

PALS Volunteer Program Overview

The City of Chico, Park Division's PALS Volunteer Program is designed to encourage active public participation in the protection, restoration, and maintenance of Chico's parks and greenways. The program develops a reliable and skilled network of volunteers who participate as **Partners** (various groups) Park **Ambassadors**, Team **Leaders** and Park **Stewards**.

The Park Services Coordinator (PSC) meets regularly with the Parks and Natural Resource Manager, the Public Works Director, Bidwell Park & Playground Commission (BPPC) members, and Park Staff to discuss and prioritize park projects and the immediate needs to be addressed. Identified volunteer projects and tasks are reviewed and defined as to:

- The length of time required for a project, short term vs. long term projects.
- The skill level or knowledge needed to successfully complete the task.
- An individual's or group's needs and reasons for volunteering.
- The appropriate time of year for tasks to be undertaken or projects conducted.
- The type of tools to be used for the project.

Volunteering in the Chico's parks and greenways

While volunteering, the main thing is to enjoy the park! PALS volunteers walk, bike, run, ride horses, remove litter and weeds, relax at their favorite spots or participate in many other activities that contribute to the care of Chico's parks and greenways. The idea is to be highly visible to park visitors to encourage stewardship. PALS carefully observe activities and conditions in the park. PALS are very helpful to park staff by providing information about common questions asked by visitors, hazards, graffiti, unsafe conduct, general maintenance needs, trail conditions, interesting observations and much more.

Park visitors will sometimes ask for information about the park or will need general assistance. PALS should have a basic knowledge of the natural features, history, layout and rules of the park. If the answer to the visitors question is unknown, PALS will know the appropriate person to refer the visitor to.

Becoming a PALS Volunteer

PALS volunteer commitments and requirements can vary depending upon the specific program. In establishing procedures, policies, and guidelines for the volunteer program, the Parks Division seeks to:

- Provide a safe and high-quality volunteer program.
- Clarify the ways volunteers can help the Parks Division achieve its mission.
- Ensure that relationships between staff, volunteers, and the public are positive.

Volunteer Application, Waiver and Release

The Parks Division seeks to involve individuals whose skills, experience, and interest best match the established opportunities. To help obtain necessary information potential volunteers are asked to complete the required application. Applications and agreements are kept on file in the Human Resources Department.

All volunteers are required to sign a waiver and release form prior to working in City parks and greenways. Because the public perceives the decisions and actions of PALS volunteers as direct reflections of the Parks Division itself, potential volunteers complete the Volunteer Application indicating that he/she understands and agrees to the responsibilities, potential hazards, benefits, and other conditions of volunteering with the Parks Division.

For risk management purposes, to protect yourself and the Parks Division, the Parks Division does not permit anyone to begin volunteer work until the individual signs this document.

More information regarding risk management, liability, and safety issues are included in this guide. If at any time you have questions regarding any of the forms, please contact the park office or the human resources and risk management office.

Background Check

PALS volunteers potentially can have significant interaction with the public and children. PALS volunteers must pass a criminal background check that includes fingerprinting. This review is administered by the Chico Police Department. If a previously fingerprinted volunteer has been inactive for an extended amount of time and wishes to be reactivated in a volunteer position requiring fingerprints, the volunteer must be re-fingerprinted. In addition, volunteers who have been fingerprinted elsewhere must be fingerprinted again for the Parks Division since privacy laws prohibit organizations from sharing results. The Parks Division provides volunteers with the necessary information and location for completion of the fingerprint check and covers the cost.

Volunteer Training

Each volunteer position has its own unique task that includes specific program training and safety procedures. For volunteers who participate in regularly scheduled volunteer sessions, training is generally provided at each project event and is specific to the project of that day. PALS are encouraged to go on a “walk along” with their team leader before volunteering on their own.

Continuing education and enrichments will be offered as part of the volunteer program. Park staff encourages you to take full advantage of these opportunities to gain skills, socialize with fellow volunteers, and learn more about the valuable resources of the parks and greenways.

Conduct of PALS Volunteers

PALS volunteers must present a good appearance. PALS vests will be worn as the outermost layer of clothing while volunteering. The PALS, City of Chico ID should be visible or available while volunteering. Guns or weapons will not be worn or carried at any time. Volunteers will not wear PALS attire except while volunteering or attending a City sponsored event.

Volunteers will have a positive attitude, exemplified by polite and friendly behavior toward park visitors. A smile is always a good introduction to a park visitor.

Volunteers will display trail courtesy by yielding to other users of the trails, paths, and roads. Give plenty of room and proceed carefully when passing other trail users. These practices send a friendly message to park visitors and set a good example of responsible trail use.

Volunteers will not smoke, vape or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while volunteering.

Volunteers will follow the rules of the park, whether volunteering or not. Membership in PALS volunteer service can be terminated at any time for violation of law or park rules, inappropriate conduct, misrepresentation or action that may reflect poorly on the City of Chico.

Volunteer Hours and Reporting Requirements

Four hours of volunteer time per month are required for active membership. The hours can be completed anytime within the month and certainly more hours are welcome. Every three months, Team Leaders will check in with their team members to record hours and get updates on what the volunteer has been experiencing. It is of extreme importance for PALS to keep in touch with their Team Leaders and /or the PSC. Sickness, vacation, and job complications are legitimate reasons to miss hours or be temporarily inactive but Team Leaders or the PSC need to be notified. Longer periods of inactivity also can be accommodated if notice is given. However, a PALS volunteer who makes no such notification and does not schedule volunteer hours for three consecutive months is considered inactive. After an additional three months of inactivity, the volunteer will be dropped from the PALS membership rolls and will be notified as such. Members who become inactive are expected to return their apparel and I.D. to the Park Office.

Volunteer Calendar

The PSC posts volunteer events regularly on the City of Chico website, park volunteer calendar. Always check the calendar prior to the work event to make sure that it has not been canceled due to weather; location has not been changed, etc. Website link can be found here <https://chico.ca.us/post/volunteer-calendar>

Track it Forward

Look for an email invitation from the PSC to join Track it Forward. This program really helps with communications and reporting! Track it Forward can be accessed from a desktop or app on android or iPhone or on the volunteer calendar webpage.

Description of Volunteer Positions

Partners – The City of Chico works closely with several partner organizations who have an ongoing park work relationship. Partners work under the guidance of the PSC and the Parks and Natural Resources Manager. Park Partners are responsible ensuring volunteer sign-in sheets are completed and submitted after each event.

Partners include; Friends of Comanche Creek Greenway, Chico Velo-Trailworks, Friends of Bidwell Park, Butte Environmental Council, the Mechoopa Indian Tribe, CA Native Plant Society- Lassen Chapter, The Stream Team, Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE) and many others.

Ambassadors – All PALS are park ambassadors. PALS can count their favorite park activities as volunteer hours if the volunteer is wearing PALS attire. Walking, biking, running, horse riding, relaxing at a favorite spot or participating in many other activities that contribute to the care of Chico's parks and greenways all count. The idea is to be highly visible to park visitors to encourage stewardship and foster a safe environment. PALS carefully observe activities and conditions in the park. PALS are very helpful to park staff by providing information about common questions asked by visitors, hazards, graffiti, unsafe conduct, general maintenance needs, trail conditions, interesting observations and much more.

Leaders – Leaders receive additional or specialized training to perform various tasks. Leaders may help facilitate volunteer weekly sessions, special group projects or large volunteer events. Leaders contact their team members quarterly to record hours and get updates on what their team members have been experiencing.

Stewards – This program is a perfect way for those who enjoy casual volunteerism. Only 4 hours a month are required. Stewards generally engage in litter and weed removal.

Chairperson - Acts as liaison between PALS and Park Division staff. Duties include presiding at advisory committee meetings, formulating agendas for meetings, and participating in the annual PALS training committee. Length of office is one year, unless re-elected.

Vice Chairperson - Assists chairperson, presides at advisory committee meetings in the absence of the chairperson. Length of office is one year, unless re-elected or promoted to chairperson. Vice chairperson becomes chairperson after one year unless the membership votes for the chairperson to stay another year.

PALS Newsletter Editor - Assist the PSC in publishing the PALS newsletter. The newsletter is produced using the Constant Contact program and highlights park events and activities, park photos, meeting news, information from the park rangers and more.

General Park Volunteers - Individual or groups of volunteers who drop in that tend to prefer to focus on a certain project types or locations or who may be one-timers that are fulfilling a professional obligation, or school or service requirement. General park volunteers check in with the PSC, partner organization, or volunteer leader to sign in before any volunteer activity is performed.

Risk Management and Accident Reporting

Risk management evaluates safety risks involved in work and volunteer tasks. Park staff work together to minimize any potential risks to the volunteers. Before volunteers begin their service, leaders or supervisors are responsible for informing volunteers about safe work practices. Volunteers are required to follow safety guidelines and adhere to City policies. Any injury to the volunteer or losses to any third party that involve a volunteer must be reported immediately and processed in accordance with City policies. If an accident occurs during a volunteer session, the Team Leader must fill out an accident report immediately with the Park Services Coordinator or the Park Ranger on duty. This report will be forwarded to the City's Risk Manager and may be used for insurance purposes.

Volunteer Protection Act of 1997: Public Law 105-19

A short summary of the US Senate Bill S 543 that became law on June 18, 1997: Exempts a volunteer of a nonprofit organization or governmental entity from liability for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of such organization or entity if: 1) the volunteer was acting within the scope of his/her responsibilities at the time; 2) the volunteer was properly licensed or otherwise authorized for the activities or practice in the State in which the harm occurred; 3) the harm was not caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed; and 4) the harm was not caused by the volunteer operating a motor vehicle...or other vehicle for which the State required the operator or owner to possess an operator's license or maintain insurance...

Prohibits the award of punitive damages against a volunteer unless the claimant establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the harm was proximately caused by an action of such volunteer which constitutes willful or criminal misconduct or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed...

If a volunteer believes that knowledge of the complete law is necessary before becoming active, he/she should contact his/her US Senator or Congressional Representative for a copy.

Worksite Safety and Other Tips

Survey your worksite. Keep an eye out for potential hazards such as poison oak, yellow jackets/bees, hanging tree limbs, sharp objects and others.

Learn to identify poison oak at all times of the year. Look around your worksite and be sure to point it out to others.

Wear gloves when removing invasive plants. Some plants have sharp thorns (yellow star thistle, Himalayan blackberry) and others can cause a skin rash (English/Algerian ivy, yellow star thistle, American pokeweed and stinging nettle).

Wear gloves when picking up trash. Use trash grabbers picking up material when practical. Use extra caution when picking up items, like bedding and clothing. Hypodermic needles always should be placed in a sharps container for proper disposal.

Always wear closed-toe shoes, even when working in the creek.

Carry tools with sharp edge down and facing away from you. Keep at least 3' distance between you and others when carrying and using tools.

If you lay a tool down on the ground, turn the sharp edge down and put the tool in a place where someone won't trip or fall over it.

Minor volunteers (under 18 years of age) are not allowed to use axes, Pulaski, mattocks or hand-saws.

If you can't identify the plant you're planning to remove, ask your supervisor to identify it before taking it out. When in doubt, leave it be. Take time to learn native plants. The PSC can provide a variety of identification tools.

Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus - (Information is excerpted from the brochure *West Nile Virus*, published by Santa Clara County Vector Control and *Fight the Bite*, published by the California Dept. of Pesticide Regulation.)

West Nile Virus- What is it?

West Nile Virus is a mosquito-borne virus, carried in the female mosquito. Though fairly new to the United States (first detected in 1999 in New York City), West Nile Virus has been found for several years in Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Who is affected by West Nile?

Humans and animals, including birds may be affected. The majority of infected people and animals have mild or no symptoms.

What are the symptoms of West Nile Virus infection?

Most people who are infected with the West Nile Virus will not experience any type of illness. Mild symptoms include fever, headache and body aches, and occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body and swollen lymph glands. Symptoms of mild illness will generally last a few days. Severe symptoms of West Nile encephalitis or meningitis include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis. Symptoms of severe illness may last several weeks, although neurological effects may be permanent. It is estimated that 1 in 150 persons infected with the West Nile Virus will develop a more severe form of the illness.

How is it spread?

West Nile Virus is normally spread to humans, animals, and birds through the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito first acquires the infection by feeding on a bird already infected with the virus.

West Nile Virus. Birds can be reservoir hosts, meaning the virus can survive in the bird's blood system and be transmitted through mosquito bites to humans and other mammals. Mosquitoes that bite infected humans cannot spread the infection to other humans or animals. Though rare, West Nile Virus has been transmitted through blood transfusions, organ donations, and breast milk.

Protect Yourself

The best way to avoid mosquito bites and any possible resulting infections or allergies is to avoid being bitten. Mosquitoes are most active at dawn, sunset, and early evening. Because their larvae can grow in any sort of standing water (from a mud puddle to a large pond), mosquitoes can survive in practically every environment. Here are some steps you can take to protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when you are outdoors.
- Place mosquito netting over strollers when you are outdoors with babies.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) or picaridin (KBR 3023) for the longest protection against mosquitoes. Read the label on the repellent, and use all products according to the manufacturer's directions for use.
- Consider staying indoors during peak mosquito-biting times.

Ticks and Lyme Disease - (Information is excerpted from the brochure Lyme Disease in California, published by the California Mosquito and Vector Control Association, Inc.)

What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is a bacterial disease transmitted to humans and animals by the bite of a western black-legged tick. Not everyone who gets bitten by a tick will contract the disease, because only about 1 to 2 % of the adult western black-legged ticks in California are infected with the bacterium that causes the disease. Evidence indicates that the bacterium is usually not transmitted to humans until the tick has fed for at least several hours.

What should I do if I am bitten by a tick?

1. Grasp the tick with a tissue or tweezers, (not with your bare hands) as close to your skin as possible. If ticks are crushed with bare fingers, exposure to the tick body fluids may lead to transmission of the disease organisms.
2. Gently pull the tick from the skin. Do not twist or "unscrew" the tick.
3. Apply an antiseptic to the bite area after removing the tick. Wash your hands
4. Save the tick for identification. The Park Division will send the tick to the local Vector Control or health department to determine if the tick is one capable of transmitting Lyme disease.
5. If the tick cannot be removed or part of it is left in the skin, consult your physician. A normal reaction to a tick bite may include a small red or brown spot where the tick was embedded, and a swollen, tender area around the embedding point. This red, swollen area does not spread, and usually disappears within 2 to 3 days.

What are the symptoms and signs of Lyme disease?

An early sign of Lyme disease may include a spreading rash, which may be accompanied by fever, aches and/or fatigue. Possible late complications of the heart and/or nervous system may occur, as well as severe arthritis.

How can I protect myself from tick bites?

1. Wear long pants and long-sleeved clothing and shoes covering the toes.
2. Wear light colored clothing so ticks can be easily seen and removed.
3. Tuck pants into socks or boots, and shirt into pants.
4. Use insect repellent on shoes, socks, pants, and shirt
5. Thoroughly check yourself, your children, and your dog for ticks during or after returning from a hike.

Where and when are ticks found?

Generally, ticks can be found on grasses and brush in that receive afternoon shade. Ticks do not like sunny, open areas. Ticks feed on deer, rabbits, lizards, mice, and other animals. Ticks do not fly, jump, or drop from trees. They climb to the tips of vegetation, typically along animal trails or paths, and wait for an animal or human host to brush against them so they can attach themselves. Lyme disease can be contracted during any season of the year. Ticks feed at various times of the year, including winter. The adult ticks are usually seen November through April. The nymphal tick (an immature stage) is usually present early spring to late summer, peaking in mid to late May. Due to the smaller size of the nymphal tick and more outdoor activity by people, chances of an infectious tick bite are increased.

Poison oak is one of the first CA native plants outdoor volunteers should learn to recognize. It grows in a variety of forms, from shrub, to vine, to ground cover. Commonly identifiable features are a triple leaf pattern, prominent veins, and shiny leaf surfaces. Coloration and growth habits vary by season and growing location (e.g. shady or sunny). In spring and summer the leaves are green, but during the fall and winter the leaves turn reddish and then fall to the ground, leaving just the stems, which are not easy to identify.

How does one contract poison oak?

You can get poison oak from contact with any part of the plant - leaves, bare stems, and even roots. The cause of the itchiness is urushiol, an oil that flows through the entire plant. You can also get poison oak from items that have come in contact with the plant.

What should I do if I come in contact with the plant?

People vary in the intensity of their allergic reactions to poison oak. Immune systems change over time; just because a person has not yet been afflicted does not mean they never will. If you come in contact with the plant, wash the affected area with cold water as soon as possible. Also wash any clothes or tools that have come in contact with it. Urushiol can remain potent on unwashed clothing for up to a year.

Rattlesnakes - The western rattlesnake is the only venomous snake native to the San Francisco Peninsula. It has a rather short body, seldom exceeding four feet. Its color varies from tan to gray, with a pattern of darker diamond shapes on its back. Other distinguishing characteristics are a thick, dull colored body, a triangular-shaped head, and rattles on the tail. This rattler is quite secretive and elusive and prefers to avoid contact with people. Typically, it will only strike if stepped on or picked up. In this area, rattlesnakes are active from about April to October, and are most commonly seen in open grasslands, chaparral, and oak woodlands.

Some hints to help you avoid a rattlesnake bite:

- Stay on designated trails and scan the ground ahead as you walk.
- If you hear a rattling or buzzing sound nearby, stop and locate the source before moving on.
- Do not reach or step into bushes or behind logs or rocks where you cannot see.
- Wear long pants and boots when hiking in rattlesnake country.

If you do encounter a rattlesnake, give it a wide berth. It will usually move away when it becomes aware of your presence, but if it is in or near your path, just walk a wide loop around it. Remember, the snake is afraid of you more than you are afraid of it.

If you are bitten by a rattlesnake

- Try to remain calm.
- If you can, wash the wound.
- Keep the injured area as still as possible, and try to keep it lower than the heart.
- Get emergency help as soon as possible. It would be best if you could be carried, but if you must walk, walk slowly.
- Do not apply ice.
- Do not cut the wound.
- Do not apply a tourniquet.
- Do not administer any anti-venom-- wait for medical assessment and treatment.

Yellow Jackets and Wasps - Wasps are among the most beneficial insects around. They help control the population level of other insects by feeding on them. There are many different types

of wasps. Some forms nest in the ground, usually in the burrow of a small mammal. Yellow jackets aggressively defend their nests, and most people are stung or bitten when they disturb a nest. If you observe yellow jackets flying in a vertical pattern, it is likely that they are flying to and from their nest. They are most active in late summer and fall. The feeding habits of yellow jackets can make them bothersome pests. Meats and sweets brought out on the trails will attract yellow jackets in large numbers. Swatting at them only makes them angry and more likely to sting or bite.

If you are stung or bitten by a yellow jacket or other wasp

- The wasp will not leave behind a stinger nor will it die after stinging.
- Wash the sting or bite site and ease the pain with ice, sting-kill, or baking soda paste.
- If you have an allergic reaction, seek medical help immediately.

Summary of Chico Parks & Greenways Regulations

Alcohol- Alcohol is not permitted in any City of Chico Park or Playground.

Bicycles- Bicycles must observe all California vehicular codes including one way streets. Riders are expected to be courteous and yield to equestrian and pedestrian traffic. Helmets must be worn always in Upper Park except when on pavement. Bicycle riding is not allowed in Caper Acres, on the pool deck or on the Yahi Trail. Safe and courteous riding is the Park standard.

Camping- No overnight camping allowed. All parks and greenways are “day use” only.

Campfires- No campfires allowed. You must have a permit to use the council campfire ring at the One Mile Recreation Area. Portable BBQ’s may only be used next to existing BBQ’s in Lower Park and at the Five Mile Recreation Areas.

Caper Acres– No entry by persons 13 years old or older unless accompanying a child under the age of 13. No bicycles allowed. No dogs allowed. Closed Mondays, except for holidays and will be closed the following Tuesday.

Dogs- Dogs may be off leash from 5:30 AM until 8:30 AM in Lower Park -- All other times **dogs must be on a leash no longer than 6 ft.** Along the north side of Upper Park Road, dogs may be "off leash" anytime. While "off leash", dogs must remain under effective voice control by the handler. Dogs are not allowed in the One-Mile swimming area, or other designated swimming holes (see map pg 18-19). Doggie bag dispensers are located at many park entrances.

Feeding Animals– No feeding of wild or domestic animals. The only exceptions are the wildfowl at Horseshoe Lake and domestic dogs by their owners.

Firearms- or other projectile weapons are prohibited.

Regulations, Continued

Fishing- Check California Fish and Wildlife Regulations for fishing in Big Chico Creek. Big Chico Creek is catch and release only and there is no fishing at any bridge or swimming area. Horseshoe Lake: age 14 and over, catch and release; under age 14, catch and keep 2 fish.

Gate Closures-Vehicle Gates at 7 pm. Oct.-March and 9 pm. April-Sept. Upper Park gate is closed at 9 pm. Oct.-March and 11 pm April-Sept. The gate east of Horseshoe Lake is closed on Sundays and Mondays and during seasonal wet periods.

Glass- No glass containers allowed in any park or greenway.

Horses- Horses must stay on designated trails. Horses are not allowed in One-Mile and Five Mile Recreation Areas, or the Yahi Trail. Horses must cross the creek at designated crossings

Hunting- No hunting or taking eggs.

Noise- No loud or unusual noises are allowed, including: radios and head sets that can be heard over 50' away.

Park Closures- All City parks and greenways are closed from 11:00 pm until 5:00 am every day, unless visitor is directly and actively proceeding to a destination outside of the Park.

Smoking- No smoking in any park or greenway.

Swimming- While in the One-Mile swim area compliance with lifeguards is required for public safety. Lifeguards are on duty from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Do not loiter on, play, sit, dive, or jump from any bridge, dam or spillway.

Trails- Please stay on designated trails. Due to erosion issues, the trails in Upper Bidwell Park are closed to bicycles and horses during wet conditions. Additionally, the Peregrine Point disc golf course is also closed to play during wet conditions.

Vegetation- No person shall destroy, injure, cut, or take any natural condition of the landscape, including, but not limited to, flowers, shrubbery, plants, vines, trees, grass, wood, or rocks, in or from any city park or playground.

Vehicles- Vehicle use is permitted on designated roads and in established parking areas. Do not block paths or trails with vehicle. Please obey posted signs and speed limits.

Waterways- No boats, rafts, etc. on Big Chico Creek. Inner tubes are allowed. Kayaks are allowed November 1st through April 30th. No motorized boat equipment on Horseshoe Lake.

Visitors to parks and greenways are there for a good time and generally want to be responsible guest. Friendly reminders or information sometimes needs to be provided to help visitors understand the importance of taking care of our parks and greenways. If a person is unreasonable back off completely and contact rangers or police.

Whenever someone's personal safety is at risk, call the Police Department. Here are some examples: unsafe acts, vehicle accident, fighting, weapons, serious injuries, etc. Unsure? always error on the side of safety and call 911.

Remember, your own safety is most important. Do not involve yourself in a dangerous situation and complicate matters. Rest assured 99% of your meetings with park visitors will be friendly and positive.

Some Dos and Do Nots

DO

Wear proper attire and display I.D.

Follow park rules, as you are an example

Have a good attitude

Call for assistance when needed

Pick up litter

Report any unusual happenings

Carry a cell phone, pen and paper

DO NOT

Argue with those who disagree with you

Become involved in any altercations

Take the law into your own hands

Do anything that would reflect poorly on the PALS Volunteer Program or City of Chico

Give inaccurate information

PALS are encouraged to explore all program aspects. Several PALS volunteers serve in multiple positions.

As a new PALS volunteer, you will be involved with many others who have a passion for contributing to the Chico community. Your feedback and experience is important to help ensure a successful volunteer program. You are encouraged to attend monthly PALS meetings.

Many thanks for your valuable contribution and to the health and
"Doin your part for Chico's parks!"

A Brief History of Bidwell Park
Philip A. Lydon, January 1997

(Sources. Information for the statements made in this document came from the minutes of the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC). Various contracts, leases, and deeds to which the City was a party, several books, pamphlets, and articles on one or both of the Bidwells, microfilms of various newspapers published in Chico, oral interviews, and a few other sources.)

Background

John Bidwell first saw the Chico area in March 1843, by which time the place name, Chico Creek, was already in use. Under provisions of Mexican law, Arroyo Chico was granted by California Governor Maneul Michetorena to William Dickey the following year. In two separate purchases in 1849 and 1851, Bidwell acquired Rancho del Arroyo Chico, totaling more than 22,000 acres. He filed a claim for the land before the US Lands Commission in 1852, and the claim was confirmed the next year. In further legal jockeying, the claim was confirmed by the US Park Division Court for the Northern Park Division in 1855, and eventually by the US Supreme Court. The title patent was signed by President James Buchanan in 1860.

Public lands surrounding the grant were surveyed in 1853-59 following the US Act of March 3, 1853, which provided for a survey of public lands in California. This survey established the system of sections, townships, and ranges that appears on modern maps (exclusive of the Mexican land grants). But it was not until 1859 that a formal survey of the boundaries of Rancho del Arroyo Chico was made and committed to a map.

John Bidwell led a varied and eventful life, serving (among other things) as Chico Postmaster, member of the US House of Representatives, and officer in the California militia. He married Annie Ellicott Kennedy in 1868. An ardent Prohibitionist, her influence appears in the no-alcohol provisions of the various Bidwell leases and grants. Bidwell died at age 81 in 1900, followed by Annie Bidwell in 1918 at 78 years of age.

Growth of the Park

On July 10, 1905, Annie Bidwell signed a grant deed donating 1,902.88 acres to the people of Chico for a public park. She said at the time that this grant followed the desire of her late husband, expressed for some time before his death. On May 11, 1911, she signed an indenture granting a further 301.76 acres of park land mainly along the north side of Upper Park to become effective upon her death. Approximately 37 acres were added to the Park in October 1921 when the "Forestry Station" parcel (now the site of Chico Creek Nature Center and the oak grove) was purchased from the University of California by popular subscription. Another 20 acres, the "Kennedy Estate field" (now the walnut orchard on North Park Drive), were added in the 1930s or 1940s. The City added another 1,420 acres, 40 of which were US Bureau of Land Management land, on May 16, 1995.

Reversionary Rights

Annie Bidwell's grants of park land to the City contained several conditions, which, generalized and paraphrased, were: no alcohol; land must be used as a public park; preserve the trees, shrubs, and vines; no hunting; and no public picnics on Sundays. If these conditions were "broken or disregarded", title to the park land would revert to her heirs. The no-alcohol provision was standard in all the Bidwell deeds, including those for investment property. Following a court decision holding that the reversionary rights are property, they were sold in 1934 to satisfy estate debts. The Title Insurance and Guaranty Co. of San Francisco purchased all the reversionary rights, which were sold as a single package. The company was interested in the investment properties, but, almost as an afterthought, thus also acquired the reversionary rights to Bidwell Park. The company deeded the Park rights, in which it was not interested, to the City by quitclaim in 1948.

Park Roads

BPPC minutes of July 1935 note that the new road through the "Upper Area" of Bidwell Park is to be graveled by SERA, the Depression-era predecessor of the WPA (Works Projects Administration). North Park Drive, considered controversial at the time of its construction, was built in 1939. The road that now forms the main access to Upper Park was rerouted in 1955 so as to pass between the golf course and the rifle range. At that time, it was called "the alternate canyon road", and did not have an asphalt surface; the principal road access was across the Five Mile area. As part of the construction of the Five-Mile flood-control complex (1964-69) the "alternate" road became the main access route. In September 1993 the main road was rerouted near the golf course in order to allow modification of two holes of the course.

Iron Canyon

Iron Canyon is the water-carved gash through black basaltic rock east of Bear Hole. The name was used in an article in the June 1888 issue of Overland Monthly, but when the name was first applied is not known. A mass of rock debris said to have fallen about the time of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, obstructed migration of salmon and steelhead further up Big Chico

Creek. One falls in that section was 14 feet high. The State Department of Fish and Game in April 1957 offered to spend \$25,000 clearing the fish barrier if the City agreed to install a fish way at Sycamore Pool. The City agreed, and the project, which included building 10 dams, was completed in June of the following year.

A Flume, a Dam, a Ditch

The Butte Flume and Lumber Co. built a flume from Butte Meadows down Big Chico Creek in

1872-74. The flume crossed the creek several times, but, within the present boundaries of Bidwell Park, it remained on the southeast and south side of the canyon. Initially, the terminus of the flume was on high ground south of the creek 3/4 to 1 mile east of the Lindo Channel junction with Big Chico Creek. The settlement of Oakvale grew there, at its peak recording 108 votes in the 1877 election. Eventually the flume was extended farther west into Chico and the settlement faded away.

The diversion dam on Big Chico Creek, just east of Bear Hole, and its ditch were intended to deliver water to the Park reservoir (now Horseshoe Lake) for use in the municipal golf course. BPPC minutes of August 1937 note that arrangements were being made for the diversion-dam site, and that the ditch was under construction. During the following year, State approval to divert water from Big Chico Creek was obtained, but plans for the dam were still being discussed. In spring of 1940 the local National Guard unit complained about the rising water level in "the lake feeding the golf course", and the minutes note that the "conduit" leading from the creek to the golf reservoir is leaking.

Was the diversion dam built by this time? Hard to say. On January 5, 1942, the State granted an extension of time (to December 1945) for completion and use of the diversion dam.

Talk of repairing the dam appears in the minutes of 1946, and annually thereafter for some years. There was even incautious talk of "permanent" repair (1947). In 1950 a rod and gun club asked and received permission to repair the dam and ditch, but a month later abandoned the idea because the project would be too big. Sporadic discussion of the dam and ditch continued to 1957, when a water-skiing group asked permission to lay 1.5 miles of 8-inch concrete pipe in the old ditch, to bring water to the Park Lake. In January 1959, the City filed an application with the State Water Rights Board to use creek water for the reservoir, an action possibly related to the water-ski project. In 1967 the minutes note that unused concrete pipe from the project is surplus. That same year a local hiking organization received permission to build a hiking trail partly along the old ditch, which by then was probably no longer in use for carrying either water or concrete pipe.

Day Camp, Archery Range, Yahi Trail

The old day-camp and archery-range sites are situated about one-third mile east of the eastern high-power line in Upper Park. An archery target area was established by an archery club in 1946. Day Camp began when the director of the City's Recreation Department received permission to hold a five-week, summertime "day school" in conjunction with Chico State Teachers College, in the area of the archery range. The name "Camp Cha-Da-Ka" was attached to it. In 1953, another archery group asked to develop an archery range, opposite the day camp, and in 1957 they expanded it from 14 to 28 targets. In 1967 the group asked BPPC for financial aid in maintaining the range. The site gradually declined, and was not used after about the early 1970s. In January 1967, a local hiking group received permission to build a 6-mile hiking trail, beginning at Day Camp and extending to near Salmon Hole. The gasoline crunch of the early 1970s caused relocation of Day Camp to the Five-Mile area in 1973, in order to reduce travel distances by buses and other vehicles.

Rifle Range, Golf Course, Horseshoe Lake

The "rifle range" near Horseshoe Lake actually was two rifle ranges. The older one was built in 1926 for "the local military company" (July 1926 minutes). The only visible evidence of it today is the concrete-lined target pit located in a small mound just northeast of an arm of Horseshoe Lake. The firing line was located more than 400 yards to the southwest. For 6 years, the National Guard (Co. G, 184th Inf.) had an exclusive-use lease on the site. In subsequent years, the BPPC minutes reflect an increasing level of conflict over use of the range, with the National Guard wanting exclusive use and local gun groups wanting a shared-use arrangement. A skeet shooting area was established in 1936, but a permanent site, also northeast of Horseshoe Lake, was not developed until 1948. Leases to local gun clubs during the 1940s and later commonly involved both the rifle and skeet ranges. A second rifle range, for several years referred to as the "small-bore" range, was developed in 1950 just north of the gate that is used to close Upper Park during rainy weather. Sporadic use conflicts continued, and in 1958 the older, large-bore range was deactivated. The remaining rifle range was used by both military and local gun groups into the 1960s. Concrete firing stands and a metal roof were built in the 1970s. Use of the rifle range and skeet area continued to decline, however, and their last use was in the late 1980s. The wooden building next to Horseshoe Lake, used as an indoor range, was built by a local gun group over a two-year period beginning in mid-1957.

A pistol range, constructed during 1953-54 was located south of the eastern 9-hole portion of the golf course. It was built for the Chico Police Department, but was also used by various military units and law-enforcement classes from Butte Junior College. Use declined in the 1970s and was eventually discontinued.

Golf Course.

Chico's 9-hole Municipal Golf Course south of Horseshoe Lake was already established by the time first mention of it was made in the BPPC minutes (1921). A new golf-course clubhouse was built in 1925, and again in 1945 and 1952, with various repairs and modifications during the intervening years. The City turned over operation of the course to various private groups beginning in 1939. Nine more holes were constructed in an olive grove east of the old course during 1954-57. In 1993, two holes of the old course were modified, resulting in relocation of part of the road giving access to Upper Park.

Horseshoe Lake.

In BPPC minutes and newspaper articles, Horseshoe Lake usually was called the Park Lake, the Park reservoir, the golf-course reservoir, etc. "Horseshoe Lake" does not appear in the minutes until April 1961. In 1936, the WPA was considering building "a restraining dam near the golf links". Late the following year, the lake is called a "reservoir" in the BPPC minutes, implying that the WPA dam was built by then. In 1939, references appear to be a dam, reservoir, and water-supply system for the golf course. In the late 1950s, a small spillway dam was constructed to better control runoff across the golf course.

The Easter Cross

Has been at its present site for a long time. A wooden cross was cut down by vandals and replaced by a local group in 1958. Ten years later, it was replaced by a steel cross made from a surplus light standard. Also in 1958, a local group built a dirt track east of the Easter Cross, for use in soapbox-derby contests. Increased erosion resulted in closure of the track in the 1970s. **Five-Mile Area**

The first Five-Mile dam was built on Big Chico Creek around 1859, in order to supply water to Bidwell's flour mill. A sheep camp was located below the dam. and the shepherd's cabin was used as a dressing room by bathers who swam in the pool behind the dam. In 1887, John Bidwell built two roofless dressing rooms at the Five-Mile pool, which were not replaced until

1922. In 1925, the BPPC adopted the name (proposed by the Chico Art Club), "Hooker Oak Swimming Pool", for the water behind the dam. From 1964 to mid-1969, the Five-Mile area was closed to the public while the Big Chico Creek - Mud Creek flood-control project was under construction. A dam was built to replace the old structure, and picnic sites and a footbridge were built. The old road that passed into Upper Park along the north side of the present Five-Mile picnic areas was cut by excavation of a diversion channel, so a new access road into Upper Park was built north of Lindo Channel.

Hooker Oak

This famous tree was named after Sir Joseph Hooker, a renowned English botanist who examined it during a visit to the Bidwells in 1875. It was a valley oak (*Quercus lobata*) located at the north end of the parking lot that forms part of the Hooker Oak Recreation Area. Its spreading branches had reached a circumference of about 500 ft and its age was widely reported as 1100 years when approximately the eastern half fell during the Columbus-Day storm of 1962. Ring counts of the largest branch to fall suggested an age of 400 years or less. Despite efforts to preserve it, the remainder of the tree fell in a windstorm in 1977.

The area around Hooker Oak, proposed in 1904 as a site for a US Plant Introduction Station, was used for many years as a hayfield and prune orchard. In 1950, a Recreation Committee (formed in 1946) relocated a softball field at Chico High School to a spot just east of Hooker Oak. CARD developed the area in 1957. 1958 began a 25-year lease from the City to operate it as a recreation area.

Live Oak Grove

This large grove of trees is located between the Five-Mile diversion channel and the Manzanita Ave. access road into Middle Park. A local midget-car racing group built a 250-ft-long track inside the Grove in 1955. Three years later, a motorcycle group received approval to build an oval racing track at the site. It was used only intermittently and, in 1966, the permit to use the track was rescinded. Before 1964, the access road into Upper Park passed through the southern part of the grove.

Riding Arena

Beginning in 1953, local horse-riding groups approached BPPC seeking a place in the Park to build a riding arena. The present site, just west of Live Oak Grove, was selected by a riding club as early as 1958, but a temporary arena was not built for another 10 years. It fell into disuse during the 1970s, but the facilities have been rebuilt since then.

Freeway & Power Lines

Two high-voltage power lines cross Upper Park, one near the Easter Cross, and the other about a third of a mile east of the east end of the golf course. The western line was built by the US Bureau of Reclamation in 1944 and the eastern line by PG&E in 1964. Both crossed the Park, despite opposition from the BPPC, by virtue of condemnation actions. The freeway, first mentioned in BPPC minutes in 1956, was built in 1963-65. It had been opposed by formal resolution of the BPPC in 1958, and again, in response to a court action, in 1960.

Forestry Station and Kennedy Tract

(Portions of the next two paragraphs are based on tapes dictated by Janeece Webb in May 1992.)

The Forestry Station tract of land includes the present-day sites of the deer pen, Chico Creek Nature Center, and the "world of trees" grove to its west. John Bidwell, who was interested in silviculture, donated about 37 acres to the State in 1888 for use as a forestry station. The State Forestry Board began experimental plantings of exotic (non-native) trees at the Chico Forestry

Station, which eventually held many thousands of trees. In 1893, title was transferred by the State to the University of California, which continued the earlier forestry work and established the still-extant grove of Spanish Oak cork trees. The City purchased the site from the University in November 1921, with funds raised by popular subscription. In succeeding decades, it was used as a Park headquarters that included maintenance, storage, and an office and home used by the Park ranger or Park superintendent.

Just east of the present building of the Chico Creek Nature Center is a large wood barn, said to have been used for storage by John Bidwell. A small zoo was maintained near the barn from 1954 to 1958. The deer pens were already on the site, having been started some years before. The small "rock house" adjacent to the Center on its south was constructed around 1980 and used as a museum and nature center. The Chico Creek Nature Center building was erected 10 years later. Public interest in a nature trail among plantings of the old forestry station first appears in the BPPC minutes of 1963 but the "world of trees" nature trail was not established until 1976.

Approximately 20 acres at the present site of the walnut orchard along North Park Drive were owned by the Kennedys, relatives of Annie Bidwell. It became part of the Park before 1950, probably in the late 1930s or 1940s. The present-day walnut trees were planted in 1953.

One-Mile Area

The dam that backs water for the "4th Street" swimming pool was built in 1923 and 1924. The next year the BPPC agreed that the choice of a name for the 4th Street and Five-Mile pools should be left to the Chico Art Club. The Club proposed and BPPC adopted "Sycamore" and "Hooker Oak" Swimming Pools as the formal names. The Sycamore Pool fish ladder was built in 1957 as part of an agreement by the State to clear an obstruction to fish migration in Iron Canyon. Caper Acres, built by volunteers and donated materials, was developed in the 1950s.

Proposals Made That Never Happened

Most of the types of use that took place in the Park left evidence of their existence. No trace remains, however, of an impressive array of uses that were proposed but that, for one reason or another, never happened. A chronological list of some of these, taken from the BPPC minutes of 1918-1960, follows.

- 1918** An automobile campground near the Esplanade.
- 1918** A 20-acre fish hatchery.
- 1921** An aero plane field near the golf course.
- 1926** Aero plane field proposed again.
- 1932** Polo field in Upper Park.
- 1933** Winter-camp CCC building and site east of golf course.
- 1936** A stadium in Park; location not given.
- 1940** Campground for boys at upper end of Park.
- 1947** Improvements for 100-acre radar bombing site, plus 25-year lease.
- 1951** Develop unspecified area in Park for use of model-plane flying club.
- 1953** 1.6 acres for fire station in Upper Park, plus 30-yr lease.
- 1955** Asphalt batch plant on 80 x 700 ft parcel in Undo Channel north of Hooker Oak.
- 1955 (& 1956)** Automobile bridge over Big Chico Creek above Day Camp, for private access south of Park.
- 1956** New large-bore rifle range for military group, with 10-year exclusive-use lease.
- 1959** Large dam on Big Chico Creek in Upper Park.
- 1959** Six "flying circles" in lower Park, each 140 ft across, for flying model planes

Geology of Bidwell Park An Outline Summary
Philip A. Lydon January 1997

Modesto Formation

What:

Soft sand, silt, and clay. Includes gravel derived mainly from Tuscan and Red Bluff Formations. Soils of Upper Member lack a B horizon. (If present, it would be marked by a slight reddening and an increase in clay content.) Lower Member not present in Upper Park. Deposited in channels cut into the Red Bluff Formation.

When:

Late Pleistocene, approx. 26,000 to 12,000 yr ago.

Where:

Most of golf course; riding arena; Five Mile area; all of lower Bidwell Park.

Red Bluff Formation

What:

Compact, hard conglomerate. Mainly pebbles and cobbles of metamorphic and volcanic rock set in sandy red matrix. Includes layers of sand or silt. Deposited as alluvial fans formed from uplift of the Tuscan Formation east of the Chico Monocline.

When:

Pleistocene, approx. 0.5 to 1.0 Ma (mega annum. = million years).

Where:

South of Horseshoe Lake; north bank of diversion channel at Five-Mile area, near diversion weir (a few hundred feet west of footbridge); diversion channel near main entrance to Upper Park.

Chico Monocline

What:

Rock folded gently in only one direction. Probably formed because of vertical movement along a hidden fault. The fold forms a straight line along east margin of the Sacramento Valley, from Chico to near Red Bluff. A widespread system of fractures formed at the same time and from the same cause as the Monocline.

When:

Most of the fracture system (and thus the Monocline) formed by 1 Ma. (Some fractures are covered by radiometrically dated basalt, in Deer Creek.)

Where:

From Rim trail northeast of Horseshoe Lake, southwest-sloping Monocline is visible as an increase in dip (= angle of inclination) of the rock layers in the south wall of Chico Creek canyon. A few of the fractures are in the Park; they form low benches or small troughs in Lovejoy Basalt best seen on the flat area north of Salmon Hole.

Tuscan Formation

What:

Layers of volcanic-mudflow debris (= lahars) and sediment derived from the lahars: conglomerate, sandstone, and siltstone, all containing abundant particles of volcanic rock. The lahars tend to form cliffs; sediments form gentler slopes below the cliffs. Vegetation on the permeable sediment but not on the impermeable lahars gives canyon slopes a striped appearance.

When:

Late Pliocene, approx. 2.8 to 3.3 Ma.

Where:

Most of Upper Park, including the 1995 acquisition. In stream bottom at Five Mile and golf course, and in bottom of diversion channel near entrance to Upper Park; along rim trail north of Horseshoe Lake and in canyon walls in most of the rest of Upper Park.

Lovejoy Basalt**What:**

Hard, black, fine-grained rock, heavily fractured. Formed from very-fluid lava flows. Individual flows 10 to 30 ft thick. Large, eroded blocks have tumbled into Big Chico Creek channel, especially east of Devils Kitchen.

When:

Miocene, 18 to 19 Ma (based on radiometric age dates from rock within Park).

Where:

The dip (inclination) of the basalt is steeper than the southwest-sloping gradient of the stream. Because of this, if we travel northeastward, the basalt layer rises faster than the stream does. Thus the upper surface of the basalt is at stream level a few hundred feet west of Bear Hole. But east of Bear Hole is at the level of the main road. East of Devils Kitchen, the basalt layer rises up the walls of the canyon, forming a line of black cliffs.

Chico Formation**What:**

Tan to light gray sandstone. Some layers soft and clayey, others hard and cemented. Deposition in marine environment resulted in trapped salt water that even today continues to come to the surface at salt licks.

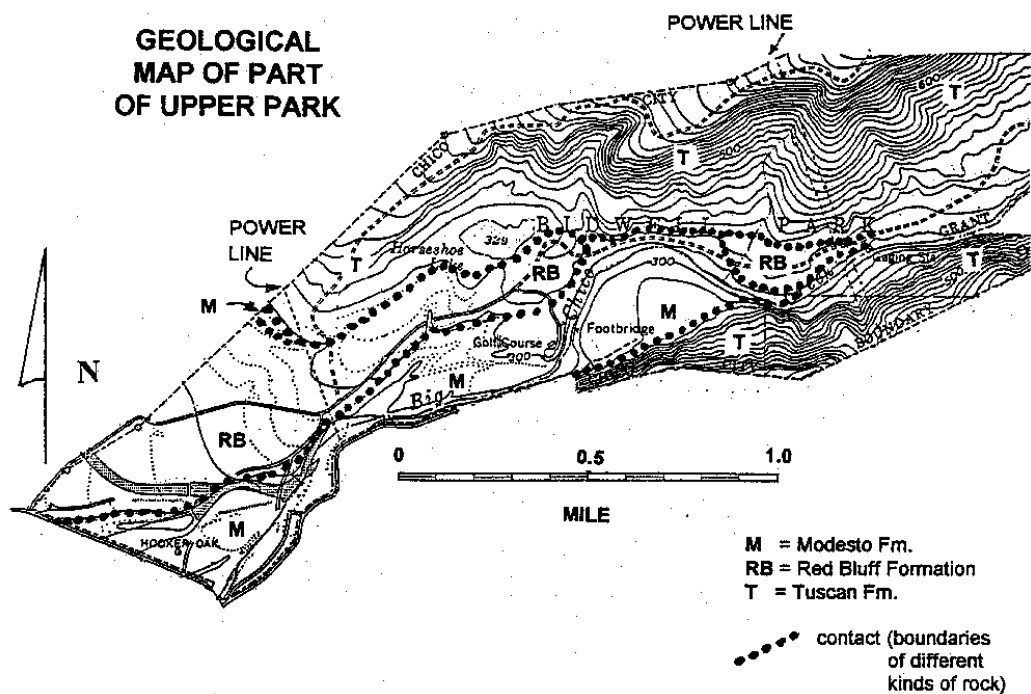
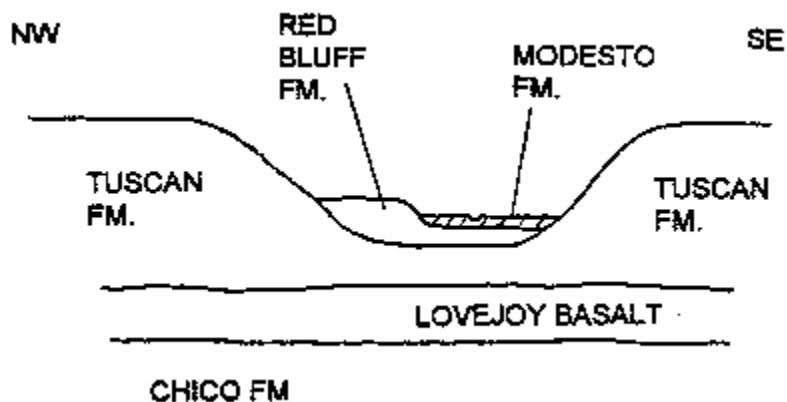
When:

Late Cretaceous. Approx. 65 to 75 Ma.

Where:

Northerly end of Park. Including the 1995 acquisition. Chico Formation is about 2000 ft thick in the canyon of Big Chico Creek, but not all of that is inside the Park.

Geological Cross Section (Schematic)



Trails of Upper Bidwell Park

- Parking
- ▨ Powerlines
- ⊙ Swimming
- ▬ Improved Roadway - Varying Types
- ▬ Minor Trails

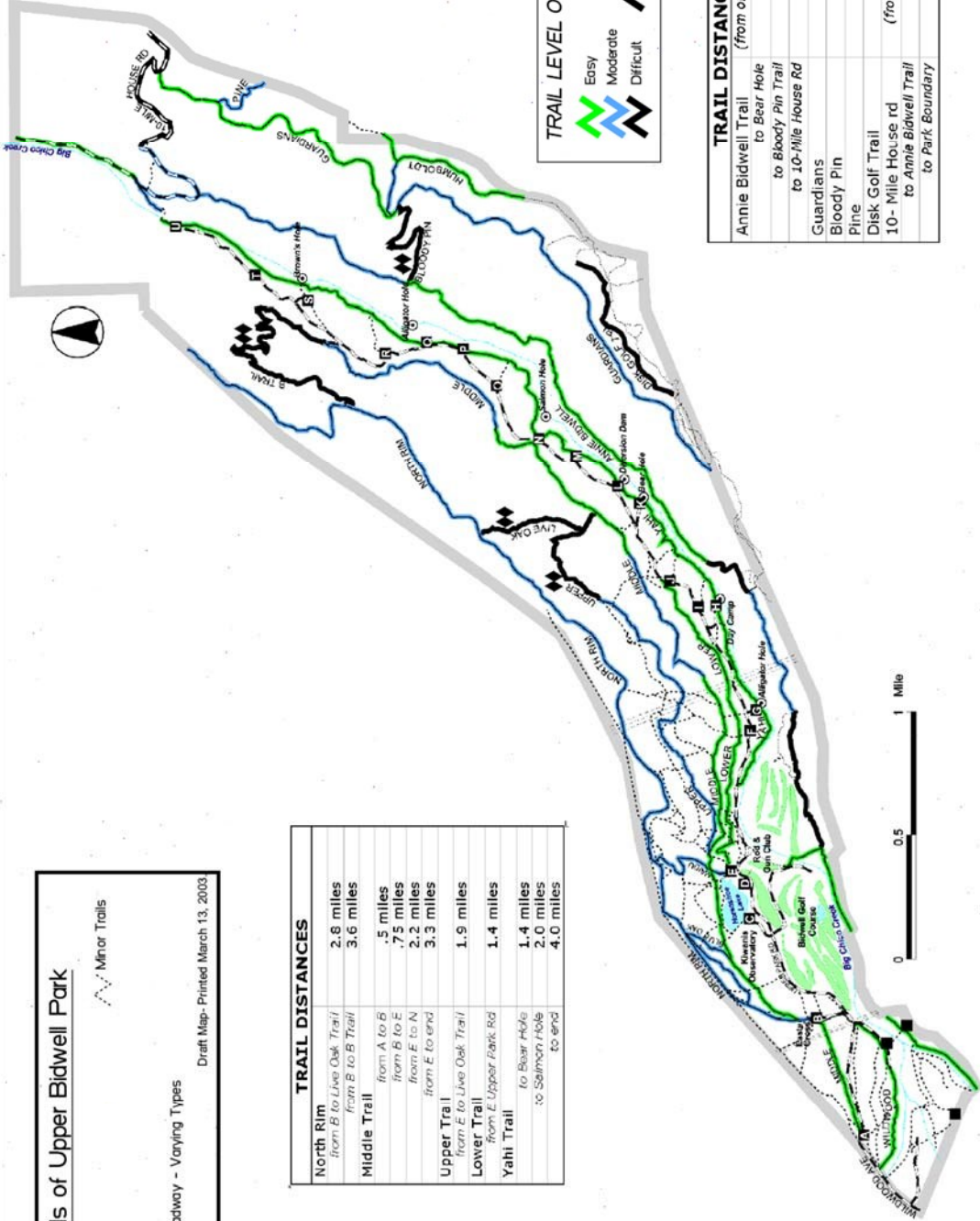
Draft Map-Printed March 13, 2003

TRAIL DISTANCES	
North Rim	
from B to Live Oak Trail	2.8 miles
from B to B Trail	3.6 miles
Middle Trail	
from A to B	.5 miles
from B to E	7.5 miles
from E to N	2.2 miles
from E to end	3.3 miles
Upper Trail	
from E to Live Oak Trail	1.9 miles
Lower Trail	
from E Upper Park Rd	1.4 miles
Yahi Trail	
to Bear Hole	1.4 miles
to Salmon Hole	2.0 miles
to end	4.0 miles

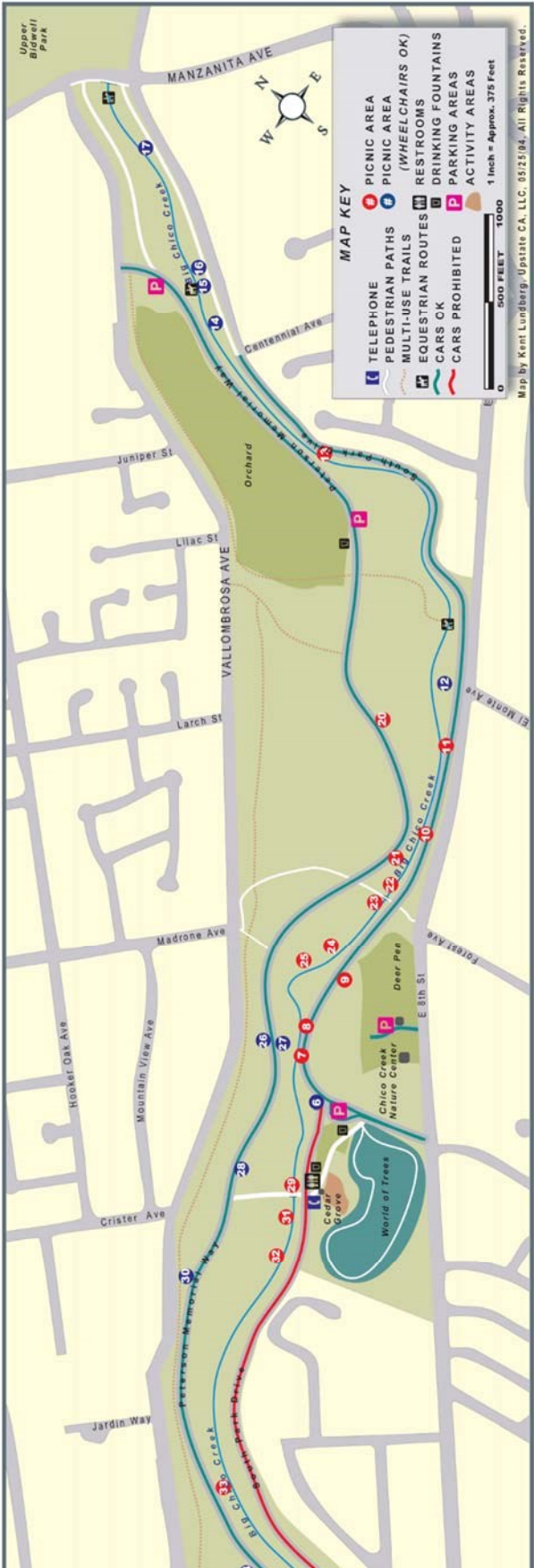
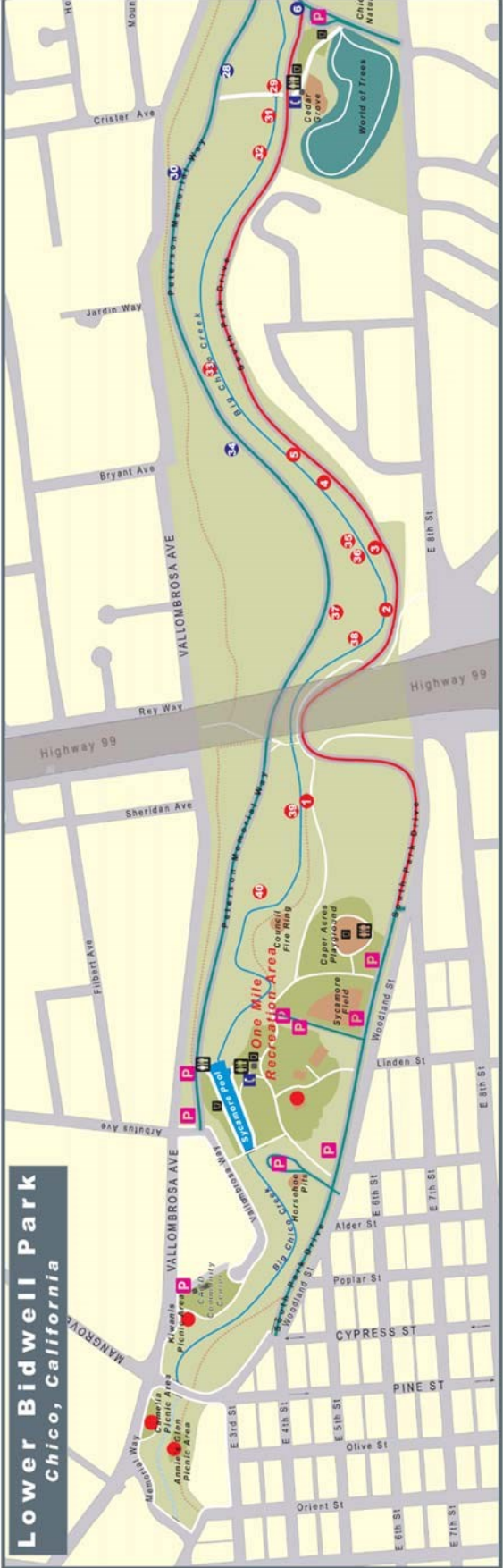
TRAIL LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

- Easy
- Moderate
- Difficult
- Most Difficult

TRAIL DISTANCES	
Annie Bidwell Trail	(from old pistol range)
to Bear Hole	2.2 miles
to Bloody Pin Trail	3.7 miles
to 10-Mile House Rd	4.7 miles
Guardians	3.4 miles
Bloody Pin	0.9 miles
Pine	0.3 miles
Disk Golf Trail	0.8 miles
10-Mile House rd	(from Highway 32)
to Annie Bidwell Trail	1.2 miles
to Park Boundary	2.0 miles



Lower Bidwell Park Chico, California



Map by Kent Lundberg - Upstate CA, LLC, 05/25/04 - All Rights Reserved.



SCALE 1" = 60'-0"