

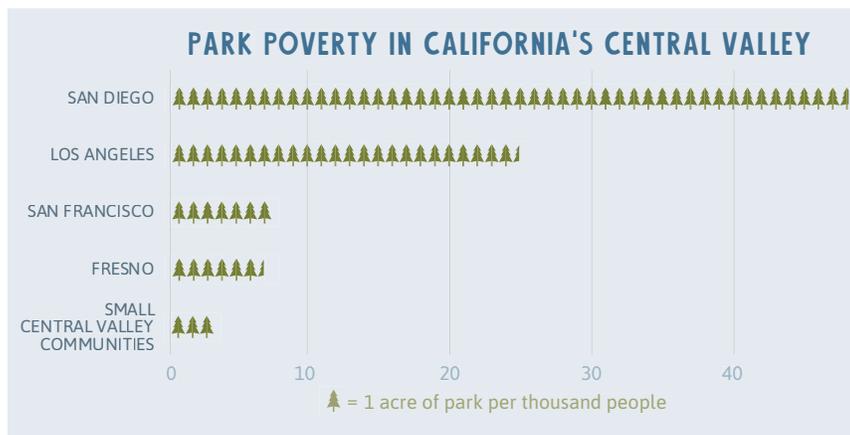


# MULTIBENEFIT FLOOD PROJECTS AND PARKS FOR CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITIES

Communities in the Central Valley have the most limited access to parks among all California communities. Many of these Central Valley communities also face significant flood risk. Fortunately, new multibenefit projects, which expand floodways to convey floodwater safely, can improve public safety while creating riverside parks and trails and opportunities for swimming, fishing, picnicking and canoeing.

## CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITIES HAVE LESS ACCESS TO PARKS THAN OTHER CA COMMUNITIES

According to a report by the California Council of Land Trusts, “Many Central Valley communities have a Latino population greater than 36%, with incomes less than \$48.7k per year, and less than 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 people.” This is far less than the parkland available to other California communities.



- Small Central Valley Communities: 333 persons per acre of park (3 acres per 1000 people.)
- Fresno: 159 persons per acre of park (6.3 acres per 1000 people.)
- San Francisco: 146 persons per acre of park (7 acres per 1000 people.)
- Los Angeles: 41 persons per acre of park (24.3 acres per 1000 people.)
- San Diego: 21 persons per acre of park (47.6 acres per 1000 people.)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fresnobee.com/opinion/readers-opinion/article150213087.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.calandtrusts.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CCLT-Consv-Horizons-FT.pdf>

## COMMUNITY LEADERS ON VALLEY PARK AND FLOOD PROJECTS:

“Fresno County has the chance to cost-effectively address its pressing need for investment in parks while also improving public safety.”

*Fresno Bee op-ed by Drs. Marcia Sablan (Firebaugh City Council) and Oscar Sablan, (Firebaugh-Las Deltas United School District Board.)*

## CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS CENTRAL VALLEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A State Parks report regarding opportunities for parks in the Central Valley concluded that “the demand for open space lands, public recreation and educational activities (in the Central Valley) is exponentially increasing as the population grows.” Unfortunately, public agencies have not been able to keep up with public demands. Publicly accessible parkways that offer multi-use trails and greenways adjacent to river corridors would be important, especially to the burgeoning populations in nearby communities. The report recommended that the state work in the Central Valley to “significantly expand recreational opportunities...particularly along river corridors.”



*Levees along the edges of cities and towns disconnect communities from their river. We assume that levees protect us, but levees can and do fail. A release of fast, deep water can quickly inundate roads and homes, a serious threat to life and property that can occur with little warning. By making room for rivers, floodwaters can spread across a wide expanse, resulting in lower flows and reducing pressures on levees.*



*In addition to more safely carrying floodwaters, expanded floodplain corridors allow cities and towns to embrace their river as a community resource. An inviting waterfront promenade built atop an accessible levee can connect a renewed city edge and urban bike networks to open park space. Picnic tables and sandy bars can act as community gathering areas with beaches and river launch points. With miles of trails winding through cool, shaded riparian forests with open views, residents and visitors can beat the summer heat, get some exercise, explore wildlife or find solace and refuge in nature.*

## PARKS PROVIDE ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Parks improve a community's quality of life and economy. Nationally, outdoor recreation generates \$887 billion in consumer spending and supports 7.6 million jobs. River-related recreation represents a large share of that total. As a sector, outdoor recreation is nearly double the size of the automobile industry.

## PARK LAND IN THE YOLO BYPASS

The Yolo Bypass, which lies between Davis on the West and Sacramento on the East, contains the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area. In addition to significantly reducing flood risk, this open space provides opportunities for fishing and hunting, wildlife viewing and tours, hiking on miles of trails and educational programs for children and adults.



## AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY

The American River Parkway is the recreational heart of Sacramento. In addition to safely carrying flood flows, this 23 mile long parkway provides abundant recreational opportunities, including fishing, hiking and biking, along with launch points for canoeing, rafting, inner tubing, swimming and wading.

