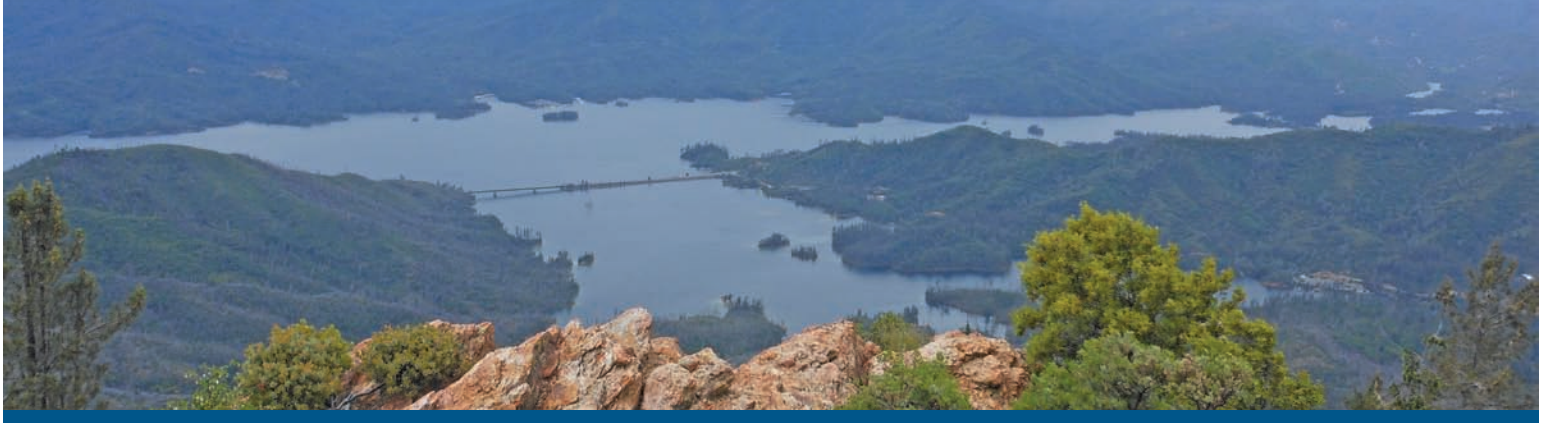


# Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

California

November 2013

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## Dear Neighbors, Friends, and Partners:

I am pleased to announce that the National Park Service (NPS) is in the process of preparing a Foundation Document for planning and management at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. I invite you to join with us in this endeavor.

A Foundation Document involves revisiting a national park unit's core mission and significance, most important resources and values, and the interpretive themes that tell the park's important stories. Although the Foundation Document is not a decision-making document and does not include actions or management strategies, it describes a shared understanding of what is most important about the park. In this capacity, the Foundation Document will reestablish the underlying guidance for future management and planning decisions for the National Park Service at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.

Because many of Whiskeytown's original NPS planning documents are dated, preparing the Foundation Document is the first step for considering the park's future planning and study needs.

Your voice is important to us. I invite you to play a role in charting the park's future by reviewing and providing comments on the draft document so that we may take your thoughts into consideration as we finalize the Foundation Document. You may submit your feedback in several ways:

1. Attend the public meeting at Redding City Hall Community Room on November 20, from 6 to 8 pm
2. Input your comments online at:  
[http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WHIS\\_Foundation](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WHIS_Foundation)
3. Fill out and mail the enclosed comment card (no postage necessary)

All comments should be submitted by December 20, 2013.

Thank you for your interest in the national treasure we call Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the park in 2015, I look forward to continuing to work with you as we plan for its future.

Sincerely,

Jim Milestone  
Superintendent



## PURPOSE

The purpose statement identifies the specific reasons for establishment of a particular park. The purpose statement for Whiskeytown National Recreation Area was drafted through a careful analysis of its enabling proclamation and legislation and the legislative history that influenced its development. The purpose statement lays the foundation for understanding what is most important about the park.

## DRAFT WHISKEYTOWN NRA PURPOSE STATEMENT

Established to fulfill the conservation and recreational purposes of the Central Valley Project in Northern California, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area provides opportunities for recreation in both a lake-based and scenic mountain setting while conserving the scientific, natural, historic, and cultural values for the enjoyment and inspiration of present and future generations.



## SIGNIFICANCE

Significance statements express why Whiskeytown National Recreation Area's resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

## DRAFT WHISKEYTOWN NRA SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

- From the peak of Shasta Bally to the Sacramento Valley floor, the wide range in elevation, location, connection to surrounding areas, and convergence of four ecological provinces support diverse ecosystems and provide habitat for protected plant and animal species, including the only known global location of Howell's alkali grass (*Puccinellia howellii*).
- Whiskeytown's environmental school, managed by the Shasta County Office of Education, is one of the longest-running outdoor environmental education centers in the national park system. Together with the park's interpretive program, research, and partnerships, the school provides outstanding opportunities for understanding and appreciating the area's natural and cultural resources.
- Whiskeytown National Recreation Area provides a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities in a scenic mountain-lake setting ranging from family boating to inspirational experiences in wild, undeveloped places.
- Whiskeytown National Recreation Area's landscape, historic sites, and remnant gold mining features provide unique opportunities within the national park system to understand the dramatic effects of the California Gold Rush.
- Whiskeytown Lake is an important component of the Central Valley Project that transformed California's growth, economy, and agriculture through the delivery of clean water. The creation of Whiskeytown National Recreation Area also helped fulfill one of the goals of the Central Valley Project—to provide recreational opportunities to the local community and visitors from afar.
- Whiskeytown protects and preserves a continuous record and remnant sites of people, including the Wintu, historic residents and a diversity of present day park visitors. Whiskeytown's landscape reflects the stories of how people have utilized the area's resources through time.

## FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

## DRAFT WHISKEYTOWN NRA FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Recreational Opportunities.** Whiskeytown National Recreation Area provides an exceptionally wide variety of experiences for a diverse group of users. This occurs on the lake, beaches, and in the backcountry, and includes boating, swimming, camping, hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, and gold panning.
- **Opportunities to Enjoy Scenic Resources and Explore Special Places.** Whiskeytown National Recreation Area provides abundant opportunities to explore special places and experience viewsheds and scenic resources—from picturesque waterfalls to views of the Trinity Alps and Mt. Lassen from the top of Shasta Bally.
- **Water Resources.** Whiskeytown National Recreation Area provides valuable, clean water for hundreds of thousands of people of California and is one of many important sources of water for the Central Valley. Whiskeytown's watersheds provide a source of fresh water to seven major creeks that lie at the confluence of Whiskeytown Lake. These watersheds support a diversity of plant and animal species, including critical habitat downstream of the dam for steelhead and spring-run Chinook salmon, both federally listed as "Threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act.





## INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from, and should reflect, park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

## DRAFT WHISKEYTOWN NRA INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- **Healthy Ecosystems.** The convergence of four geographical provinces (the Great Basin, Cascade, Klamath, and Coast Range) and the range in elevation (from the top of Shasta Bally to the Sacramento Valley foothills) have created a remarkable diversity of habitats and life in Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, and therefore provide opportunities for research so that we can better understand the natural world.
- **Water.** Water is today's gold, and as the final project of the transformative Central Valley Water Project, the clean waters of Whiskeytown Lake embody the vital roles of water in the West and throughout the world—supporting communities, agriculture, producing power, and providing recreational opportunities.
- **Human Connections to the Landscape.** The region's many historical and cultural resources stand in testimony to the rich and diverse human presence in this region spanning thousands of years, from prehistoric American Indian cultures to current day tribes as well as evidence of modern day miners, explorers, and settlers. Today's visitors value the opportunities to recreate, rejuvenate, and reconnect with nature.
- **Legacy of Learning.** Whiskeytown embraces the value and role of environmental education. From its very beginning as a forerunner in America's environmental education movement in promoting, understanding and appreciating our nation's natural resources and history, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area continues its legacy of stewardship, and playing a vital role in nurturing connections between people and their park.
- **Conservation.** The creation of Whiskeytown National Recreation Area reveals the efforts of the visionaries who elevated a planned county park to a unit of the national park system and established a treasured place.

- **High Biodiversity Supported by Natural Processes.** Whiskeytown National Recreation Area supports biologically diverse flora and fauna, including the only known global location of Howell's alkali grass (*Puccinellia howellii*). Critical to maintaining their integrity are the natural processes such as fire, and geologic and hydrologic processes that are necessary for supporting healthy ecosystems. The park's forests, including seven sections of old growth, are complex and of conservation significance. Whiskeytown is within the Klamath-Siskiyou ecoregion, an area considered a center of biodiversity, an International Union for Conservation of Nature Area of Global Botanical Significance, and a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization-proposed World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve.
- **Stories Related to Human Use of the Land.** Oral histories, historical research, and collections at Whiskeytown provide an excellent opportunity to share stories about the dramatic changes that have occurred to the landscape over time, from the discovery of gold and followed by the immigration of pioneers to California, requiring an increase in food production. Whiskeytown

Lake and Dam provide opportunities to tell the story of the Central Valley Project and how local visionaries and President John F. Kennedy made contributions to a 50-year legacy of outdoor recreational development.

- **Sites, Structures, and Archeological Resources.** Whiskeytown contains a wide range of historic sites and structures, cultural landscapes, and archeological features related to human use of the landscape over time. This includes resources related to American Indian occupation, mining features and settlement (Tower House Historic District), and components of the Central Valley Project that created the lake, such as Whiskeytown Dam. The Tower House Historic District exemplifies early European American settlement in Northern California, beginning with the gold rush.
- **Legacy of Learning.** Whiskeytown National Recreation Area has provided more than 40 years of environmental education that includes public outreach through the National Environmental and Educational Development (N.E.E.D.) Camp (currently Whiskeytown Environmental School), and a variety of interpretive activities that include cultural experiences.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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 WHISKEYTOWN NATIONAL RECREATION AREA  
 FOUNDATION DOCUMENT COMMENTS  
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Comments on the draft Foundation Document are welcome and will be accepted during the 30-day public review and comment period from November 20–December 20, 2013. There are several ways to submit comments. A public meeting will be held from 6 to 8 pm on November 20 at Redding City Hall, Community Room (777 Cypress Ave., Redding, CA, 96001). You may submit your comments electronically only on the NPS planning website ([http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WHIS\\_Foundation](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WHIS_Foundation)). To submit a comment, select “Comment on Document” from the left menu. You may also submit written comments by returning the enclosed comment card by December 20, 2013 (no postage necessary). Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment (including your personal identifying information) may be publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Approximate Timeframe	Planning Activity
Nov. 20–Dec. 20, 2013	Public input on draft Foundation Document
Winter 2014	Review and analyze public comments and finalize Foundation Document
Spring 2014 and beyond	Park uses Foundation Document to prioritize and begin future planning needs
Spring 2014 and beyond	Public input sought on future planning needs

WAYS TO COMMENT AND PROVIDE INPUT

WHAT'S NEXT?

