



San Joaquin River
Parkway and
Conservation Trust, Inc.

Sycamore Island

ANNUAL OPERATIONS REPORT: JULY 2024 – JUNE 2025

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SAN JOAQUIN RIVER PARKWAY AND CONSERVATION TRUST

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Public Access Operations

Hours of Operation

Under agreement C22100002 the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Trust) staffed the Sycamore Island Day Use Area seven days per week. The park was open for public access through Veterans Day in November 2024 and then reopened after a brief winter break on January 10, 2025. Heavy rain caused two unexpected park closures in 2025 on March 13 and 14. The site was open on all State and Federal Holidays.

Sycamore Island's hours of operation changed seasonally depending on the length of daylight.

Hours of operation were as follows:

- January, February, March, October, November, December – 6:00am to 5:30pm
- April, September – 6:00am to 7:00pm
- May, June, July, August – 6:00am to 8:30pm

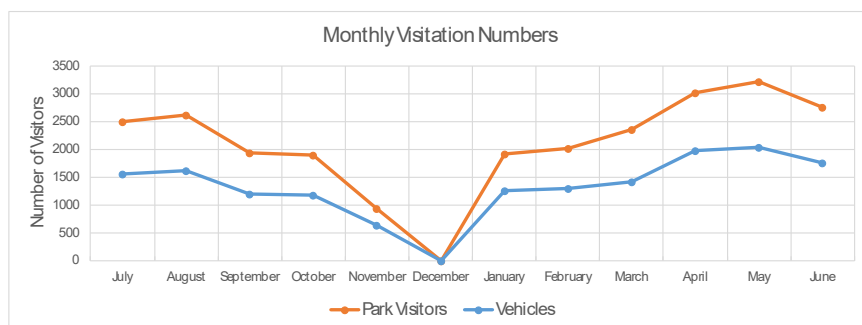
25,150 people visited Sycamore Island during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. This was a 20% increase from the previous year.

Sycamore Island Monthly Visitation - July 2024 through June 2025

A visual tally completed by Park Hosts during operating hours



Month	Park Visitors	Vehicles
July	2502	1563
August	2624	1618
September	1928	1189
October	1902	1173
November	934	629
December	0	0
January	1916	1263
February	2023	1299
March	2347	1410
April	3012	1978
May	3206	2028
June	2756	1751
Total	25150	15901



Fee Schedule

An entrance fee of \$9 per vehicle and \$5 per trailer was charged on Saturday and Sunday only. The park was free to enter on weekdays. 12-month annual passes were available for \$85. Discounted

day and annual passes were available to disabled individuals and veterans for \$6 and \$60 respectively. Vehicles entering the park during the last 1.5 hours open each day were also eligible for a discounted \$6 vehicle fee. Day and annual passes could be purchased onsite or online.

The smaller building onsite was used as a visitor information center to collect day use fees and sell concessions. It was staffed and open to the public during all operating hours. Snacks, beverages, bait, lures, and tackle were sold on-site to help offset operations costs. Bottled drinking water was sold at cost. Concessions included:

- Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks
- Pre-packaged chips, seeds, nuts, granola bars, meat sticks, cookies, and candy
- Live worms
- Frozen bait
- Trout and catfish bait
- Locally made soft plastic lures
- Jigs and other lures
- Hooks, floats, and sinkers
- Rod and reel combos
- Sunscreen and insect repellent

In addition to concessions, 1-person kayaks and 2-person canoes were available for rent during park hours for \$10 per hour or \$50 for all day. Boat rentals were limited to enclosed ponds and included paddles, life jackets, and delivery/pickup to/from the water. Visitors must be 18 years or older to rent a boat. Kids 12-years or older may ride in canoes if accompanied by an adult. Park Hosts aided with fitting life jackets and provided brief instructions on boat use upon delivery. Picnic Shelters could be reserved for \$50 per day.

The collection of day use fees and concessions sales earned \$95,164.12 during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. This represents the first full year of the new 7 day a week model with 2 paid entry days.

Sycamore Island Monthly Revenue - July 2024 through June 2025



Month	Vehicle Fees	Disabled Vehicle Fees	Late Entry Vehicle Fees	Trailer Fees	Annual Passes	Boat Rentals	Shelter Rentals	Gross Bait & Tackle Sales	Net Bait & Tackle Sales	Gross Drink & Snack Sales	Net Drink & Snack Sales	Total
July	\$ 4,964.00	\$ 108.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 65.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 380.00		\$ 3,840.25	\$ 1,920.13	\$ 1,475.25	\$ 737.63	\$ 8,598.75
August	\$ 5,355.00	\$ 204.00	\$ 6.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 970.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 41.75	\$ 3,781.60	\$ 1,890.80	\$ 1,419.43	\$ 709.72	\$ 9,827.27
September	\$ 3,996.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 96.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 630.00	\$ 400.00	\$ -	\$ 2,881.00	\$ 1,440.50	\$ 1,122.27	\$ 561.14	\$ 7,215.64
October	\$ 3,294.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 255.00	\$ 140.00	\$ -	\$ 2,075.00	\$ 1,037.50	\$ 736.50	\$ 368.25	\$ 5,231.75
November	\$ 2,394.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 18.00	\$ -	\$ 315.00	\$ 160.00	\$ -	\$ 937.50	\$ 468.75	\$ 221.00	\$ 110.50	\$ 3,496.25
December	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,020.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,020.00
January	\$ 2,880.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 2,015.00	\$ 210.00	\$ -	\$ 1,689.58	\$ 844.79	\$ 658.75	\$ 329.38	\$ 6,383.17
February	\$ 4,122.00	\$ 102.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 1,565.00	\$ 290.00	\$ -	\$ 2,564.00	\$ 1,282.00	\$ 1,024.50	\$ 512.25	\$ 7,964.25
March	\$ 5,328.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 80.00	\$ 1,310.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,022.00	\$ 1,511.00	\$ 1,360.25	\$ 680.13	\$ 9,059.13
April	\$ 6,066.00	\$ 96.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 850.00	\$ 845.00	\$ -	\$ 4,094.25	\$ 2,047.13	\$ 2,064.50	\$ 1,032.25	\$ 11,029.38
May	\$ 7,447.70	\$ 132.00	\$ 72.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 1,335.00	\$ 440.00	\$ -	\$ 4,417.75	\$ 2,208.88	\$ 2,021.25	\$ 1,010.63	\$ 12,716.20
June	\$ 6,804.00	\$ 144.00	\$ 54.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 1,575.00	\$ 850.00	\$ -	\$ 4,488.25	\$ 2,244.13	\$ 1,812.45	\$ 906.23	\$ 12,622.35
Total	\$ 52,650.70	\$ 1,026.00	\$ 522.00	\$ 515.00	\$ 12,240.00	\$ 4,315.00	\$ 41.75	\$ 33,791.18	\$ 16,895.59	\$ 13,916.15	\$ 6,958.08	\$ 95,164.12

Staffing

Two Park Hosts employed by the Trust were onsite whenever the property was open to the public. The Park Hosts opened and closed the property each day, tracked visitation, performed minor grounds and facility maintenance, provided visitor information, and educated visitors about park rules. One Park Host was always present at the Visitor Center, while the second Park Host traversed the property for monitoring and maintenance.

Staffing Sycamore Island was vital to protecting the park's natural resources, creating a sense of community, building partnerships, and ensuring everyone could have a safe and enjoyable time at the park. At a basic level, Park Hosts provided "eyes and ears" on the property at all times. They ensured messes were quickly cleaned up, and bathrooms were kept sanitary throughout each day. They were monitors to identify and communicate maintenance needs and property issues as soon as they occurred. Park hosts were available to call law enforcement and emergency personnel and then provide directions and identifying information to the responding authorities. Having personnel onsite with intimate knowledge of the property to help emergency personnel navigate a large open space they were unfamiliar with was invaluable for achieving quick response times when incidents occurred.

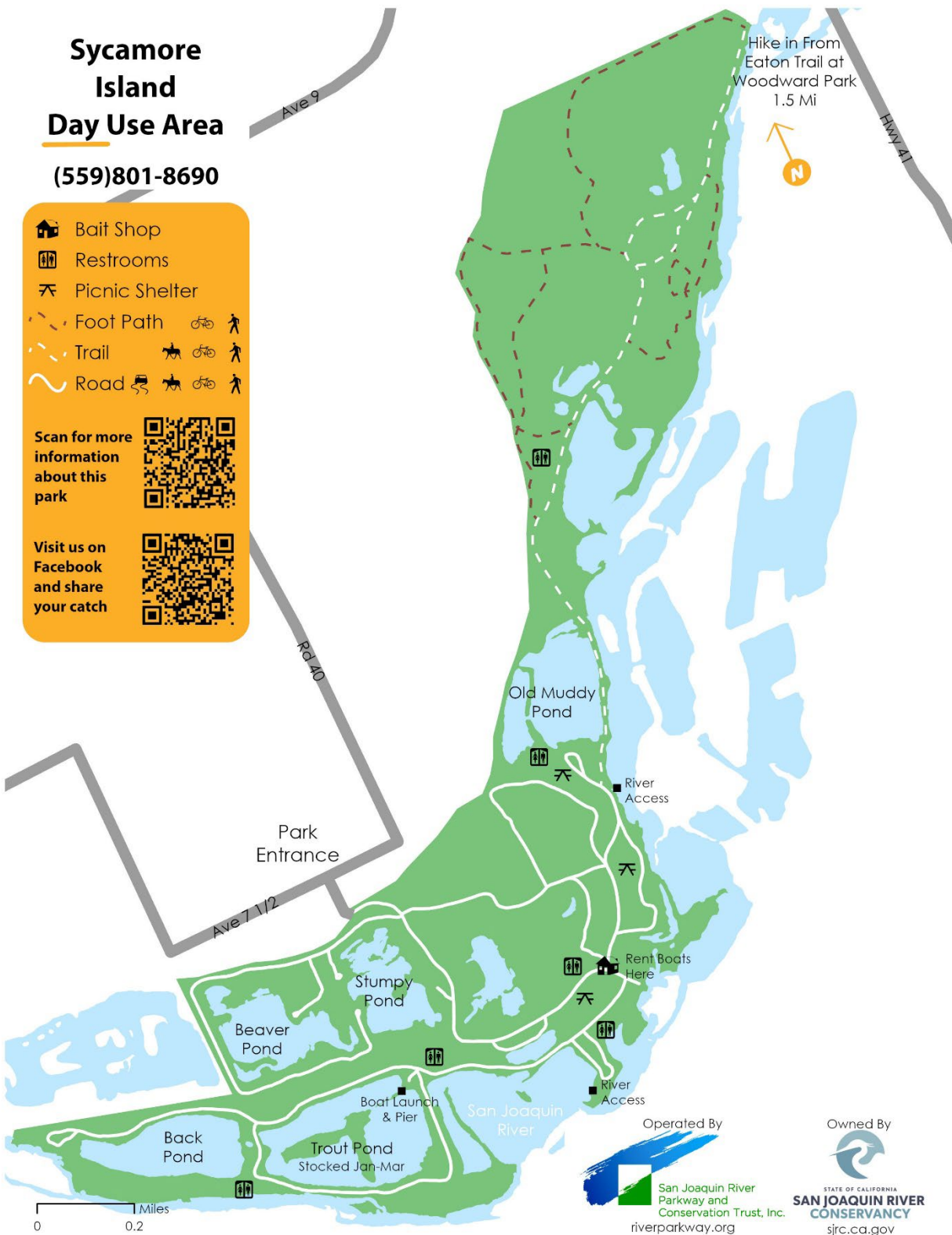
Just as importantly, Park Hosts also acted as the face of the Trust and ambassadors for the San Joaquin River Parkway. They added a personal element and actively engaged and interacted with visitors to instill confidence with their surroundings. Park Hosts answered questions and provided information on not just Sycamore Island, but opportunities throughout the San Joaquin River Parkway and help put them in touch with the appropriate organizations.

Social Media and Advertising

In addition to an informational web page and content posted on the Trust's website and social media platforms, a dedicated Facebook page was operated by the Trust for Sycamore Island to share park information, updates, and happenings around the park. The Sycamore Island Facebook page currently has 9.8k followers and its top post this past year had over 116k views. Followers grew by 15.4% in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The Trust holds a grant from Google for advertising within their search engine. Sycamore Island and its recreational opportunities were included in our ad campaigns covered by the grant. Ads for Sycamore Island were seen by people searching for keywords such as Sycamore Island, fishing spots, boat rentals, river access, and more. Between July 2024 and June 2025, advertisements for Sycamore Island were seen by 5,130 people and received 757 clicks for a total advertisement value of \$3,817.90.

Figure 1: Sycamore Island Park Map Available at the Visitor Center and for Download Online



Special Events, Activities, and Programs

The San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust hosted and facilitated a wide array of public events, interpretive programs, and recreational activities at Sycamore Island in the 2024-2025 fiscal year. offerings include nature walks, guided paddling trips, weekend family activities, school field trips, day camps, and more.

Special Events

- **Spring Body Fitness and Spa Trail Run – October 12, 2024**
 - Body Fitness and spa organized a 5k/10k run/walk with the Trust using a trail course within the park. Body Fitness and spa was responsible for staffing, set-up, traffic control, and cleanup. Race participants paid regular park fees in addition to their race fees.
- **San Joaquin River Running Sycamore Island Trail Run – January 19, 2025**
 - San Joaquin River Running organized a 5k/10k run/walk with the Trust using a trail course within the park. SJ River Running was responsible for staffing, set-up, and cleanup. Trust volunteers and Park Hosts led traffic control. SJ River Running made a donation based on a percentage of the race proceeds that went to help offset the parks operation costs.
- **Youth Parkway Ambassadors Open House – May 3, 2025**
 - Youth Parkway Ambassadors is a program to teach local youth leadership and outdoor skills. In addition to going on camping trips along the whole length of the San Joaquin River, cohorts go through extensive training that culminates in leading public open house events where they provide free family-oriented recreational activities, games, crafts, and lunch.

Interpretive Activities

- **River Camp Academy – July 8-12 & 15-19, 2024**

River Camp is a pre-existing program model of environmental education-based day camp programs operating along the San Joaquin River. River Camp Academy at Sycamore Island served

youth entering 1st – 6th grades from the Madera Unified School District. The daily schedule incorporated environmental education, STEM activities, and traditional camp games with opportunities for campers to practice self-expression, relationship building and communication skills.

- **MUSD 6th Grade Field Trips – February 11, 2025 through March 11, 2025**
 - Students from Madera Unified School District went on a field trip to Sycamore Island where the Trust’s programs team led them in canoeing, team building activities, and educational lessons that match their science standards.
- **MUSD 6th Grade Field Trips – April 1, 2025 through May 28, 2025**
 - Students from Madera Unified School District went on a field trip to Sycamore Island where the Trust’s programs team led them in canoeing, team building activities, and educational lessons that match their science standards.

Cultural Resources Activities

- **Fresno American Indian Health Project Canoe Tour – June 25, 2025**
 - A private canoe tour and nature walk with the Fresno American Indian Health Project for elementary and middle school youth.

Natural Resources Activities

- **Central Labor Council Volunteer Service Day – March 29, 2025**
 - Members of the Central Labor Council joined the Trust for a community volunteer day to pick up trash along the river and throughout the park.
- **River Stewards Invasive Plant Removal – June 21, 2025**
 - A public volunteer event hosted by the Trust to remove the invasive plant, Sesbania punicea from around the Old Muddy Pond.

Recreation Programs

- **Big Valley High School Anglers Club Sycamore Island Trip – August 24, 2024**

- The Big Valley High School Anglers Club held a club fishing trip at Sycamore Island's Trout Pond.
- **Adventure Risk Challenge Teambuilding Days – September 14 & 15, 2024**
 - Adventure Risk Challenge partnered with the Trust to provide high school students from Firebaugh and Dos Palos with leadership and teambuilding activities, nature walks, and kayaking excursions at Sycamore Island over two days.
- **Outdoor Afro Sycamore Island Adventure – September 14, 2024**
 - Outdoor Afro members joined the Trust's fishing guides for an introduction to Sycamore Island, fishing, and canoeing.
- **Family Scavenger Hunt – October 5, 2024**
 - A fun and light weekend family activity at the park organized by the Trust's Programs Team and led by Park Hosts while on duty.
- **Guided Nature Walk – October 25, 2024**
 - A public nature walk guided by Trust staff where attendees heard talks about the natural environment at Sycamore Island and issues affecting the San Joaquin River.
- **New Year's Birding Walk – January 1, 2025**
 - A public birding trip guided by a Trust volunteer and Audubon member to bring in the new year at Sycamore Island.
- **Kaiser Permanente Bald Eagle Walk – January 11, 2025**
 - A private nature walk organized with Kaiser Permanente and led by a Trust volunteer and Audubon member to observe the park's resident bald eagles.
- **Bald Eagle Canoe Tour – February 22, 2025**
 - A guided calm water canoe tour led by the Trust to observe the park's resident bald eagles.
- **Bald Eagle Canoe Tour – March 22, 2025**
 - A guided calm water canoe tour led by the Trust to observe the park's resident bald eagles.
- **Roosevelt High School Fishing Trip – March 31, 2025**
 - The Roosevelt High School Bass Club and teachers led the school's special ed classes on a fishing trip to Sycamore Island to learn to fish and go on a nature walk. The Trust's Climate Action Corps Fellow provided an additional stream science activity.
- **Valley Children's Adaptive Sports Mini Camp – May 24, 2025**
 - In Partnership with Valley Children's Hospital's Adaptive Sports program, this single-day camp provided inclusive outdoor recreation for youth of all abilities. Campers enjoyed canoeing, fishing, nature art, and a wildlife presentation.

Completed Repairs and Maintenance Projects

The following repairs and maintenance projects as proposed by the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust and as approved by the San Joaquin River Conservancy were carried out during the 2024-2025 operating year. Items that improve public and/or staff safety were prioritized.

- **Vegetation Management for ladder fuel reduction**
 - Created and maintain defensible space around park facilities by removing low and fallen limbs along with other brush within 100-ft of the bait shop and storage building.
 - Removed ladder fuels from around the park (*see Figure 7 for work locations*). Brush was hauled offsite in roll-off bins.
- **Development of a written property management plan**
 - Completed research toward the production of the property management plan. A draft management plan is still in progress.
- **Signage**
 - Inventoried existing park signs and identified needs.
 - created and installed new signage throughout the park (*see Figure 7 for location of new signage*).
- **Replace electrical components**
 - No major work to report on for this maintenance item.
 - Replaced faulty fuse and repaired and electrical outlet in the visitor center.
- **Facility Maintenance**
 - No major work to report on for this maintenance item.
 - Researched and met with prospective contractors.
- **Fish stocking**
 - Stocked 880 largemouth bass (9-12”) and 7,600 (fingerling) red eared sunfish among the Stumpy and Beaver Ponds.
- **Grade and stabilize road**
 - No major work to report on this maintenance item.
 - Continued communication on the strategy and methods for repairing the parks road system.
 - Scraped all roads to smooth bumps and potholes.

Figure 2: CCC crews preparing for the day's work behind their stack of bucked eucalyptus logs.



Figure 3: CCC crews loading built-up eucalyptus brush into bin.



Figure 4: Largemouth Bass, Large sunfish, and juvenile sunfish stocked in Stumpy and Beaver Ponds.



Figure 5: New entrance signage.



Figure 6: Scraped Entrance Road.



Figure 7: Location of Major Maintenance Items Completed.

