



Bidwell Park is near the intersection of three geologic regions: The Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east and south, the Cascade Range to the north, and the Sacramento Valley to the west. There's just as much geologic diversity underfoot, thanks to ancient volcanic activity. The deepest layer of rock, the gray sandstone of the Chico Formation, is over 65 million years old and remains mostly hidden from view except for deep within Big Chico Creek Canyon. Layered on top is the dark basalt of the Lovejoy Formation which spread over the area as quick-moving lava about 20 million years ago. Large boulders of basalt rock line and lie within Big Chico Creek from Bear Hole to Brown's Hole. The top and most visible layer of rock is the 3 million-year-old Tuscan Formation, which forms the striking cliffs of Upper Bidwell Park. Rocks in this formation are the result of mud flows (lahars) from extinct volcanoes near current-day Lassen Peak.

Bidwell Park is "divided" by Manzanita Avenue. West of Manzanita Avenue is Lower Park. From Manzanita Avenue to Horseshoe Lake is considered Middle Park. The area upstream and uphill of Horseshoe Lake is Upper Park. Middle Park includes many community parks, recreation areas, and facilities steeped in history. Upper Park is a wonderful place to spend the day with its spectacular vistas, refreshing swimming holes, and miles of trails for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians of all skill levels.

Bidwell Park is home to a variety of important and sensitive natural resources in its diverse habitats, including native plant communities and wildlife. Several special-status species occur in its diverse habitats. The Park provides nesting and foraging habitat for many species of raptors. Big Chico Creek provides spawning and rearing habitat for spring-run Chinook salmon, and is home to five resident species of native, fish, many aquatic invertebrates, and amphibians. Big Chico Creek and its tributaries also serve as an important wildlife corridor, linking the habitats of the foothills with those of the Sacramento River.

Explore Upper Bidwell Park



Horseshoe Lake

Horseshoe Lake is a popular launching point for hikers further into Upper Park. Kids and adults can fish from the ADA-accessible fishing pier and trail. 14 and over - catch and release. Under 14 - catch and keep.

Bidwell Park Municipal Golf Course

Bidwell Park Municipal Golf Course is an 18-hole, par 72 course. The tree-lined course offers beautiful views, golfing for any skill level, and the Bidwell Bar & Grill. More information at www.golfbidwellpark.com or (530) 891-8417.

Chico Community Observatory

Chico Community Observatory opens at sunset on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, weather permitting. Volunteer-led programs help open the night sky to the public. Operated by CARD. More information at chicoec.gov or (530) 895-4711.

Veterans Memorial Park

Veterans Memorial Park is at the entry to Upper & Middle Bidwell Park. There are reservable picnic areas, sports fields, and playgrounds for multiple age groups. Operated by CARD. More information at chicoec.gov or (530) 895-4711.

Sherwood Forest Disc-Golf Course

Sherwood Forest is a 9-hole disc-golf course built for beginners. The course took on a Robin Hood theme to honor the 1938 film "The Adventures of Robin Hood" that was filmed nearby. Operated by CARD. More information at chicoec.gov or (530) 895-4711.

Hooker Oak Park

Hooker Oak Park is 35-acres featuring several ballfields, a basketball court, two playgrounds, and reservable picnic areas. Former site of the historic "Hooker Oak Tree". Operated by CARD. More information at chicoec.gov or (530) 895-4711.

Horseshoe Lake Area

Accessible Trail
A short wheelchair accessible trail connects Parking Area C with Parking Area E along the south shore of Horseshoe Lake. The Chico Community Observatory and an accessible fishing pier can be reached from this trail.

Middle Park Area

Monkey Face

Monkey Face is a rock formation best seen from its west side. The view from the top oversees much of Bidwell Park as well as the Sacramento Valley. There are habitats and trail restoration activities ongoing so please stay on designated trails.

Chico Rod and Gun Club

The Chico Rod & Gun Club leases a building in Upper Park that houses an indoor pistol range. The facility hosts a variety of programs including open practice and safety classes open to the public. More information at chicogunclub.org.

Horse Arena

Horse Arena is managed by the Chico Equestrian Association which hosts a variety of equestrian events. The arena is open to the public from dawn until dusk Tuesday through Thursday. More information at chicoequestrianassociation.org.

Five Mile Recreation Area

The Five Mile Recreation Area offers visitors picnic tables, barbecues and plenty of open space, making it a popular spot for large group gatherings. Five Mile also features a calm and shallow swimming area, perfect for families with young children.

Bidwell Ranch

Wildwood Trail (Easy)
Flat trail through scenic Blue Oaks and Foothill Pine.
Wildwood Ave. to Five-Mile Road: 0.5mi

Blue Oak Trail (Moderate)
Provides a relatively gentle ascent to the North Rim from the Horseshoe Lake Area.
Parking Area C to North Rim Tr.: 0.5mi

Yahi Trail (East to Moderate)
Pedestrians only - no bikes or horses. Built by the Sierra Club in 1967, the Yahi Trail follows along side Big Chico Creek and provides access to several swimming holes and scenic overlooks.
Western intersection with Upper Park Road to: Parking Area E: 0.4mi
Bear Hole: 1.4mi
Salmon Hole: 2.0mi
Brown's Hole: 3.5mi
End (Upper Park Road): 4.0mi

Five Mile Recreation Area

Bidwell Ranch

Maidu Trail (Moderate)
Quick but moderately steep access to the North Rim from Parking Area E.
Parking Area E to North Rim Tr.: 0.4mi

Manzanita Trail (Moderate)
Popular trail leads to the top of the "Monkey Face" formation which has great views of the surrounding area.
Parking Area E to: Top of Monkey Face: 0.3mi
North Rim Tr.: 0.5mi

Upper Upper Trail (Moderate)
Minor trail popular with mountain bikers.
Western intersection w/ Upper Tr. to: Red Bud Trail: 0.7mi
Eastern intersection w/ Upper Tr.: 0.9mi

Upper Trail (Moderate)
Offers canyon views from underneath the bluffs of Big Chico Creek Canyon.
Parking Area E to: Red Bud Trail: 0.8mi
Live Oak Trail: 1.9mi

Upper Park Road (Easy to Moderate)
The gate to Upper Park Road is closed to vehicles at Parking Area E on Sundays and Mondays. The road is often closed to vehicles at Parking Area L based on road conditions. This route is generally open to hikers, bikers, and equestrians during all weather conditions.
Parking Area E to: Parking Area A: 1.3mi (westward)
Parking Area G: 0.7mi (eastward)
Parking Area K (Bear Hole): 1.6mi
Parking Area L (Diversion Dam): 1.8mi
Parking Area N (Salmon Hole): 2.2mi
B Trail: 3.3mi
Parking Area U (road end / creek): 4.2mi

Middle Trail (Easy to Moderate)
Connects much of the north side of Upper Bidwell Park and is part of many loop options.
Parking Area E to: Parking Area A: 0.8mi
Live Oak Trail: 1.8mi
Parking Area N (Salmon Hole): 2.2mi
B Trail: 3.3mi

Lower Trail (Easy)
Parallels Upper Park Road to the north until Parking Area J.
Parking Area E to: Parking Area J: 1.4mi

Red Bud Trail (Difficult)
Steep trail connecting the North Rim to the Middle & Upper Trail near the transmission lines.
North Rim Tr. to Middle Tr.: 0.5mi

Big Chico Creek

Big Chico Creek has a 72-square mile watershed and flows 45 miles from its origin, through Bidwell Park and Chico, to the Sacramento River. The creek is free-flowing until the Five-Mile Rec. Area where water is diverted into the Lindo Channel during high flow events. Flow changes throughout the year - with high and potentially dangerous flows in the winter and spring, and milder flows in the summer and fall. Several natural swimming holes exist that provide excellent recreational opportunities!

Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve

The Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve (BCCER) is located immediately upstream of Upper Bidwell Park. BCCER protects 7,835 acres of diverse habitat, including 4.5 miles of Big Chico Creek. Managed by CSU Chico, BCCER is partially open to the public; confirm current visiting hours before visiting at csuchico.edu/bccer.

Upper Park Road (Easy to Moderate)
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Big Chico Creek

Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve

Ten Mile House Road (Moderate)
Starting at the "Green Gate" off of Highway 32, this double-track access road is mostly shaded and is the primary starting point for adventures deep in Big Chico Creek Canyon.
Green Gate to: Guardian Trail: 0.2mi
Annie Bidwell Trail: 1.2mi

Humboldt Trail (Easy)
Part of the historic Humboldt Wagon Road built by John Bidwell in the 1860s to connect Chico to mountain communities. Can be accessed from Peregrine Point via a frontage trail.
Total length: 0.8mi

Bloody Pin Trail (Difficult)
Steep switchbacks connecting the Guardian Trail to the Annie Bidwell Trail.
Annie Bidwell Tr. to Guardian Tr.: 0.6mi

Peregrine Point Disc-Golf Course

Peregrine Point is an 18-hole advanced disc golf course with stunning views of Upper Bidwell Park, the Sacramento Valley, Sutter Buttes and Lassen Peak. Play occurs in a diverse foothill environment. The course is managed by Outdoor Recreation Advocates Inc. and is equipped with concrete tee pads and basket style targets. The course is subject to closure during wet weather to prevent erosion and protect vegetation.

Guardian Trail (Easy to Moderate)
Traverses the cliffs of Big Chico Creek Canyon's South Rim.
Ten Mile House Road to: Bloody Pin Trail: 1.4mi
Annie Bidwell Trail: 4mi

Annie Bidwell Trail (Easy to Difficult)
The longest trail in Bidwell Park, the Annie Bidwell Trail traverses through a variety of landscapes on the south side of Upper Bidwell Park.
Chico Canyon/Centennial Parking Area to: J-Ford: 1.9mi
Bloody Pin Trail: 3-7
Ten Mile House Road: 4.7mi

South Rim Trail (Moderate to Difficult)
Rocky trail ascends Big Chico Creek Canyon's southern rim for big views.
Annie Bidwell Tr. to Peregrine Point parking area (1.7mi)

Bidwell Park Regulations & Advisements

Bidwell Park is full of fun and adventure! Help keep the park safe & beautiful. Please be familiar with the following important information.

Hours & Access:
Bidwell Park is open to the public from 5 AM to 11PM daily unless otherwise posted. Vehicle access varies based on season, location, and wet weather. For detailed vehicle access info and gate schedules visit www.chico.ca.us (Bidwell Park on drop-down menu) or call (530) 896-7800.

Be prepared!
Be sure to have everything you need to stay safe and comfortable including water, sun protection, and appropriate clothes & shoes. Watch for hazards! You may also encounter poison oak, ticks, rattlesnakes, large wildlife, swift water, or steep drop-offs. Avoid danger by staying on designated trails and explore with a friend.

Prohibited in Bidwell Park:

- Alcohol
- Glass
- All Smoking & Vaping
- Camping
- Campfires and BBQs outside of designated areas
- Excessive Noise
- Harming or removal of wildlife, vegetation, rocks, artifacts, etc.

Trail Safety & Etiquette:
Please stay on designated trails and roads for safety and to prevent resource damage. Tread lightly! During wet conditions, trails are closed to bicycles and horses to reduce erosion. Upper Park Road is open for bike and equestrian use during wet conditions.

Trail safety and courtesy are Bidwell Park standards. Please yield to other users as appropriate.

Bicycles must observe all California vehicular codes including one-way streets. Bicycle riding is not allowed in Capers Acres, on the Sycamore Pool deck, and on the Yahi Trail. Bike helmets must be worn at all time on unpaved roads and trails.

MotORIZED vehicles are only allowed on designated roads and in established parking areas.

Horses must cross at designated creek crossings and are not allowed in the One-Mile or Five-Mile Recreation Areas.

Dogs:
Lower Park. Dogs may be off leash from 5:30 AM until 8:30 AM and must remain under voice control. Dogs must be on leash at all other times.

Upper Park. Dogs may be off leash on the north side of Upper Park Road and must remain under voice control. Dogs must be on leash in all areas on and south of Upper Park Road.

Dogs are prohibited from harassing or harming wildlife or people.

Swimming Areas: Dogs are not allowed in Sycamore Pool, on the pool deck, or the surrounding grass area in Lower Park. Dogs are also not allowed in any other named swimming hole in Bidwell Park.

Fishing:
Fishing is subject to current CA Fish & Wildlife Code. Fishing is prohibited from any bridge over Big Chico Creek or the bank of any swimming pool or named swimming area in Bidwell Park.

Horseshoe Lake is catch & release for ages 14 and over. Under 14 is catch and keep. Persons over 14 must have a valid fishing license.

For detailed information on all City of Chico Bidwell Park regulations, contact the City of Chico Parks Department:

Phone: 530-896-7800
Road & Trail Conditions Hotline: 530-896-7899
Email: parkinfo@chico.ca.us
Website: www.chico.ca.us
Facebook: www.fb.com/cityofchicoparks

Legend:

- A U Lettered Parking Area
- P Parking Area
- Restroom
- Picnic Area
- Disc Golf Course
- Golf Course
- Water Crossing
- Gate
- Contour Lines (100ft)
- 0.5 Section Mileage
- Point of Interest
- Trail Intersection
- Water Fountain
- Trail
- Minor Road
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Bike Path
- Bridge
- Difficult Trail Section

0 ft. 1000 ft. 2000 ft.

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