

Junior Parkway Ranger



Activity Book



Become a Junior Parkway Ranger!

Use this booklet to learn about the American River Parkway.
To earn your badge and certificate, complete the steps below.

Name: _____ Age: _____



Complete at least 10 activities in this booklet.

Challenge yourself to go above and beyond by completing the whole booklet!



Help keep our park clean.

Safely collect any litter you find. Ask an adult to help you put it in a trash can.



Return your completed book.

Bring your book to the American River Parkway Foundation office to receive your official badge.



Share your knowledge!

It is important to teach your family and friends what you learn to help conserve the American River Parkway.

Remember: there are risks in wild areas. Protecting the park and staying safe are the most important things you can do while visiting!

Get Ready to Adventure

The best adventures begin with preparation.

☐ **Is everyone ready to have a safe and fun adventure?**

- Walk on the left side of the paved path, bicycle on the right
- Stay on designated trail
- Pack out what you bring in

☐ **Use the map on the next page to answer the following:**

- River access closest to your house: _____
- New spot you have never been: _____

☐ **How did you get to the Parkway today?**

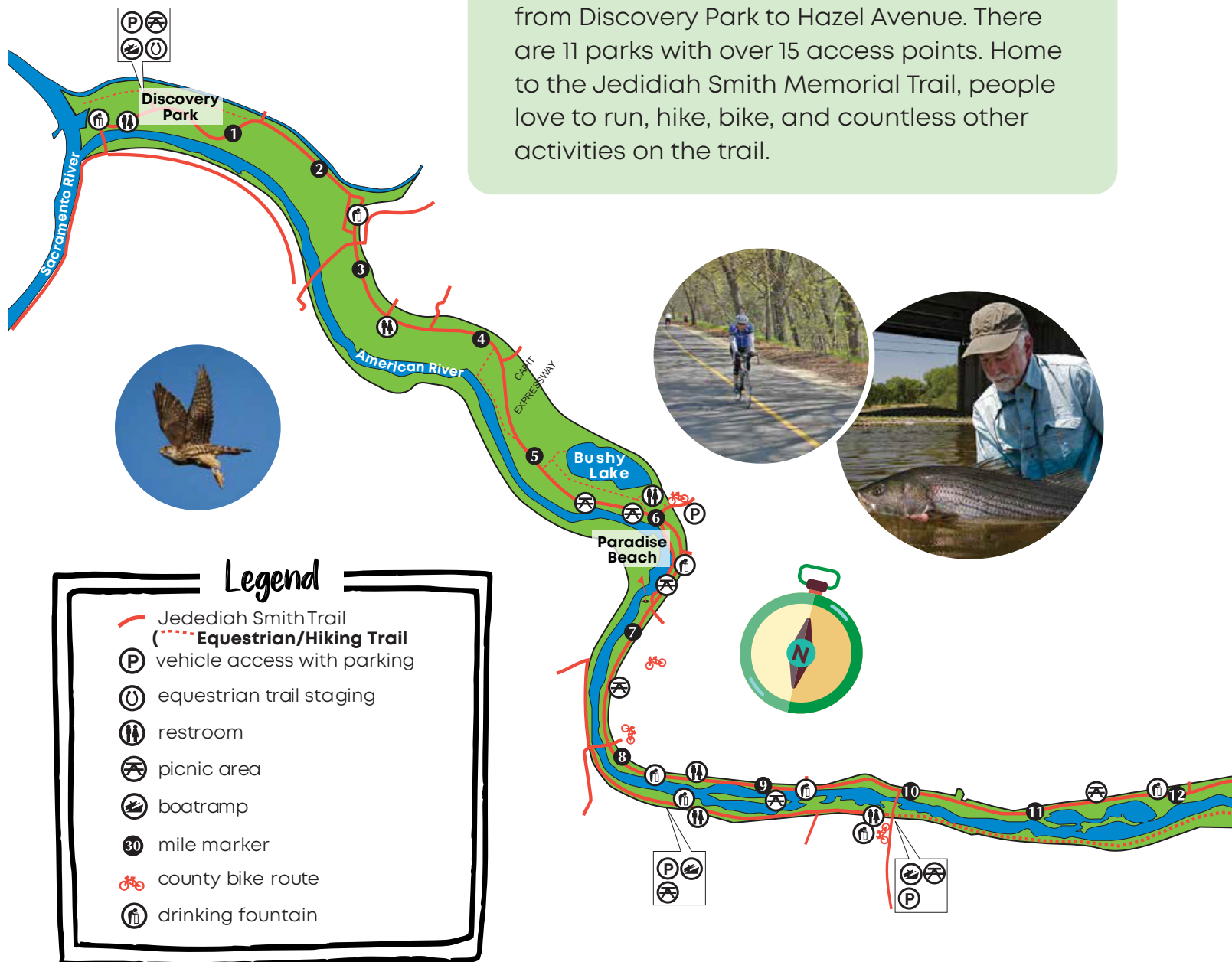
Did you use a car, walk, bike, or other? _____

☐ **Circle the items below that you will need for your adventure.**

Cross out any items you won't need, and add other things that you will need.



Where to Begin?



The American River Parkway is 23 miles long from Discovery Park to Hazel Avenue. There are 11 parks with over 15 access points. Home to the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail, people love to run, hike, bike, and countless other activities on the trail.

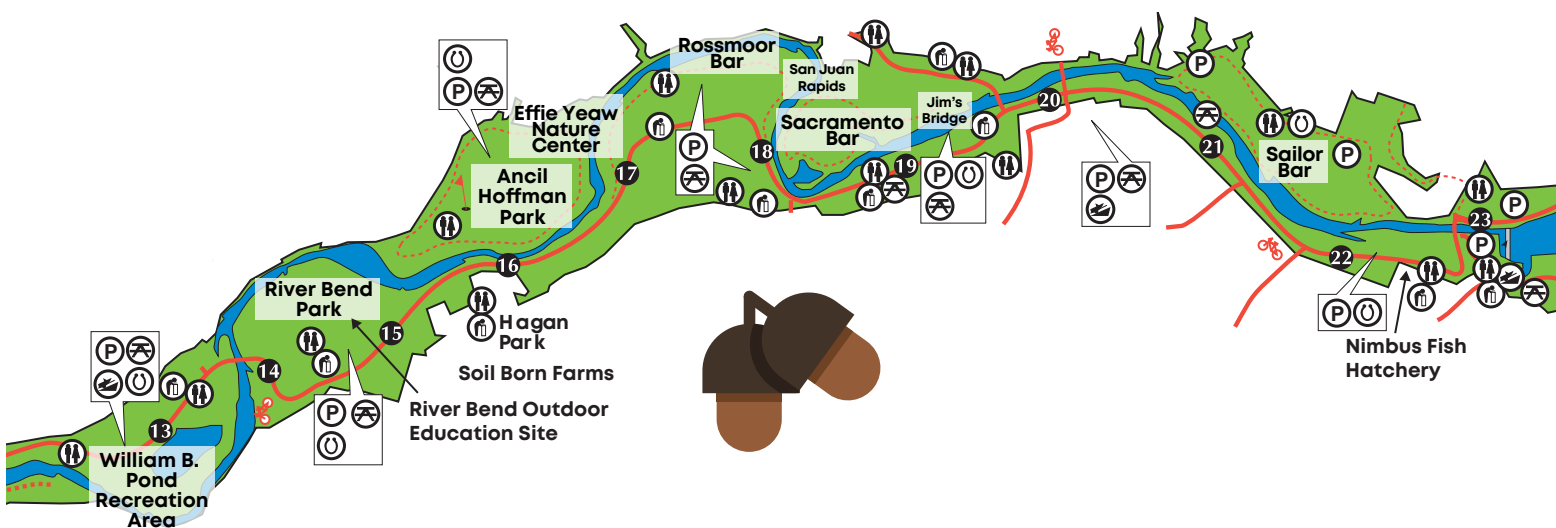
For thousands of years, melting snow and rain would flow from the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range towards Sacramento. The water was so forceful that it would flood the river banks, flowing through orchards and crop fields. In 1955, Folsom Dam was completed and changed everything. There was now a way to control the amount of water coming into Sacramento. Occasionally the lower part of the river, between Watt Avenue and Discovery Park, will still flood. **Look for changing levels in the water.**



In 1981, this section of the American river was designated a National Wild and Scenic River. This allows the river to remain free-flowing, like what you see today. Many plants and wildlife, like fish and deer, benefit greatly from this decision.

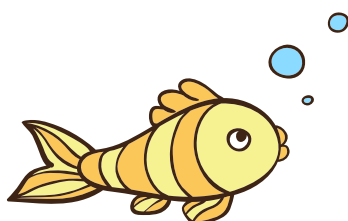
What activity do you do on the Parkway? _____

What mile is William B Pond Park? _____



How far away is Watt Avenue from William B Pond Park? _____

Think about everyone in your group. Is this distance a good hike for your group? Why?



Bonus! What park is closer to William B Pond? *Circle one.*
Sunrise Access –OR– Discovery Park

Got Gold?

In 1848, James Marshall wrote about discovering gold along the American River. This was the start of the Gold Rush in California!



Crack the code to learn more about mining!



1. Heavy is separated from lighter materials by the use of water.
13 16 15 11



2. At first, miners used a made of tin or sheet iron. They would dip it in the water to wash away the leaving just gold!
9 5 12 11 7 3 14



3. In 1855 a new type of mining was created called mining.
4 6 11 3 5 10 15 7 8
This used a “ ” like a water gun to blast away mountainsides.
1 16 12 7 14 16 3



4. The next major improvement in mining techniques was the .
11 3 2 11 13 2
This type used a large machine to beneath the riverbed.
11 7 13



5. Both types of mining were done on the lower River.
5 1 2 3 7 8 5 12
Today, you can still see the effects of mining, like at Sailor and Rossmoor Bar.

Key		
1 = M	7 = I	13 = G
2 = E	8 = C	14 = T
3 = R	9 = P	15 = L
4 = H	10 = U	16 = O
5 = A	11 = D	
6 = Y	12 = N	



Bonus! Visit different parts of the American River to see the mining impacts in person!

Native Parkway Plants

Native plants are plants that are from this area. Native plants are adapted to our hot summers and cool winters. **Cross off the native plants you have seen!**



California Poppy



Miners Lettuce



Dutchman's Pipevine



Common Fiddleneck



Yarrow



California Fuchsia



Bush Monkey Flower



Coyote Brush



Did you know? During the Gold Rush, miner's lettuce was a popular snack for miners! Its tender green disc and stems taste like the lettuce you would put in your salad or on your burger.

Animals of the Parkway

Circle the animals you find and cross them off of your list.
Be on the search for these animals as you visit the Parkway.

Which of these animals do you think would be hard to find at the Parkway?

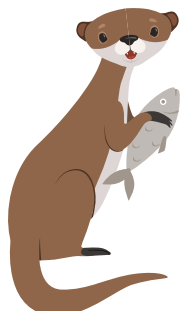
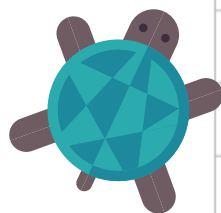


Animal List

Jackrabbit	Rattlesnake	Lizard	Crawdad
Coyote	Steelhead	Skunk	Turtle
Mule Deer	Shad	Squirrel	Skunk
Beaver	River Otter	Bobcat	



D	B	E	E	V	B	T	L	R	C	C	B	I	A
D	E	L	T	U	R	T	L	E	R	D	R	C	T
J	A	C	K	R	A	B	B	I	T	I	Y	L	T
O	R	E	B	O	B	C	A	T	U	T	C	A	Z
A	L	E	R	R	I	U	Q	S	R	H	B	R	V
C	M	R	R	I	V	E	R	O	T	T	E	R	R
O	C	R	E	E	D	E	L	U	M	A	B	B	Y
E	R	D	O	C	O	Y	O	T	E	E	B	T	S
E	A	R	A	E	K	E	L	D	A	L	R	S	K
K	W	A	D	A	O	I	R	V	K	R	T	R	I
K	D	Z	H	J	I	E	E	L	L	A	B	A	N
A	A	I	I	E	L	R	A	D	A	H	S	L	K
H	D	L	K	N	U	K	S	A	E	E	V	Q	R
U	T	S	T	E	E	L	H	E	A	D	R	C	D



Animals of the Parkway

Park Rangers gather information by carefully observing the world around them. Go outside, find a quiet place to sit, and spend 5 minutes observing your surroundings.

Record your experience below.

Date:	Time of day:	
Weather (circle one):		
Cold	Sunny	Raining
Warm	Cloud	Windy
Hot	Calm	Muggy
List 4 things you can see from this spot:		
1.	3.	
2.	4.	
Identify 2 sounds that you hear:		
1.	2.	
Do you see any birds, animals, or insects? If not, what animals do you think might live here?		
1.	3.	
2.	4.	
Draw a picture of an interesting thing you see from this spot:		

Bingo!

During your visit to the American River Parkway, you might see some things you have never seen before. Look carefully, and you may find something spectacular!

Mark off what you find with an X. Try to find as many as you can.



Mule deer



Valley Oak



American River



Cliff Swallow



Cyclist



Rock pile/tailings



Animal track



Trash can



**Red Shouldered
Hawk**



Coyote



Western redbud



Park Ranger



Sunflower



Mile Marker



Runner



**Great Blue
Heron**

American River Poetry

The American River has inspired artists of all kinds for hundreds of years. Become an artist yourself by writing a poem about your visit to the American River Parkway.

Haiku

Haiku is a traditional Japanese form of poetry. Haiku poems do not rhyme. Haiku poems follow a pattern based on syllables or beats for each line.

Example:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

**Wild flowers everywhere,
watching the river move fast,
on a sunny Sunday.**

Now you give it a try!



Mighty Oak

Oak trees like hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters which is why they love living on the Parkway. Oak trees have unique leaves and produce thousands of acorns in a lifetime.

Can you match the right leaf with the Oak tree?



Black Oak: Larger Leaves with deep lobes with sharp teeth like edges.

Oracle Oak: A cross between the big lobed Black Oak leaf and the small, sometimes serrated Live Oak leaf.

Interior Oak: Flat leaves that are thick and leathery. Young leaves are prickly and indented while old are smooth.

Valley Oak: 2-3 inches long and 1-2 inches wide, parted down the middle with matching lobes on each side

Blue Oak: Leaves are bluish-green and vary in size and shape.



Every year, trees add a new layer of wood around their trunks under the bark. You can tell how old a tree is by counting its rings. You can also learn about weather and fires by looking at the rings. Thin rings show drought, thick rings show rainy years, and black scars show fire.

1. Draw a new ring for this year's growth.
2. Next year will be very dry, making the tree grow only a small amount. Add a small ring.
3. Starting from the last ring, count in to the very first ring. How old is this tree? _____



Next time you see a stump, check its rings to see what you can find!

Observe a tree

Find a tree in the park. Now make a sketch of it below:



What are its leaves like?

What is its bark like?

Does it make sounds? Does it smell?

Can you see insects or animals living in it?

What is the proper name of your tree?



Living off the Land

Long before the Gold rush brought settlers to California, the Nisenan people of the Maidu tribe lived along the American River. The Nisenan were experts in using resources from this area to make clothing, build shelter, eat and trade with other tribes.

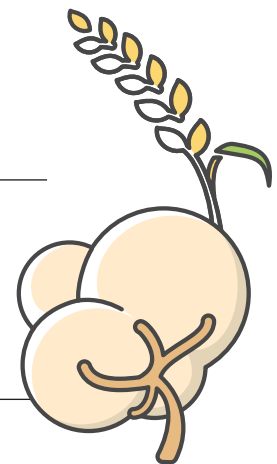
Below are a list of human needs and the native plants the Nisenan would use. Some plants even had more than one use. **Fill in what you would use today.**

Human Needs	Nisenan Use	What do you use?
Headache relief	Willow Bark	
Cakes or meal	Acorn Flour	
Boat	Tule Plant	
Baskets	Sedge Roots	
Bug Repellant	Mugwort Leaves	
Shelter	Willow and Tule	

Would it be hard to live using only what you find on the Parkway?

Can you think of other plants that can be used by humans?

Hint: Cotton is a plant that we use for clothing.



Remember: Plants should be observed but not picked.

How Does Litter Add Up?

Every year, volunteers on the Parkway collect well over 120,000 pounds of trash. That's heavier than 12 school busses combined! It often takes weeks, months, or years for trash found on the Parkway to break down or become recycled by the Earth.

With an adult's help, grab a bag and some gloves and see how the trash you find adds up to save the Earth.

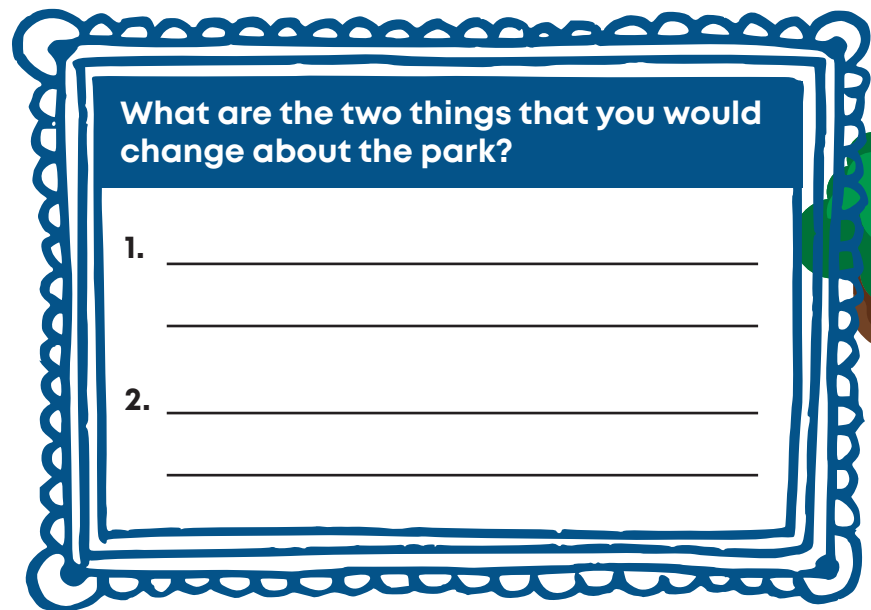
Item	How long it takes		Amount you find		Years the Earth is saved
 Orange Peel	4 weeks	X	_____	=	_____
 Newspaper	6 weeks	X	_____	=	_____
 Plastic Bag	15 years	X	_____	=	_____
 Aluminum cans	100 years	X	_____	=	_____
 Fishing line	600 years	X	_____	=	_____
 Glass Bottle	1 million years	X	_____	=	_____

Interested in other opportunities to clean the river? Check out the American River Parkway Foundation's website at www.arpf.org.

Picture the Future

The Director of the American River Parkway is a lot like a Principal. The Director works with others in the parks department to make decisions about how the Parkway is managed and what the future of the Parkway will be.

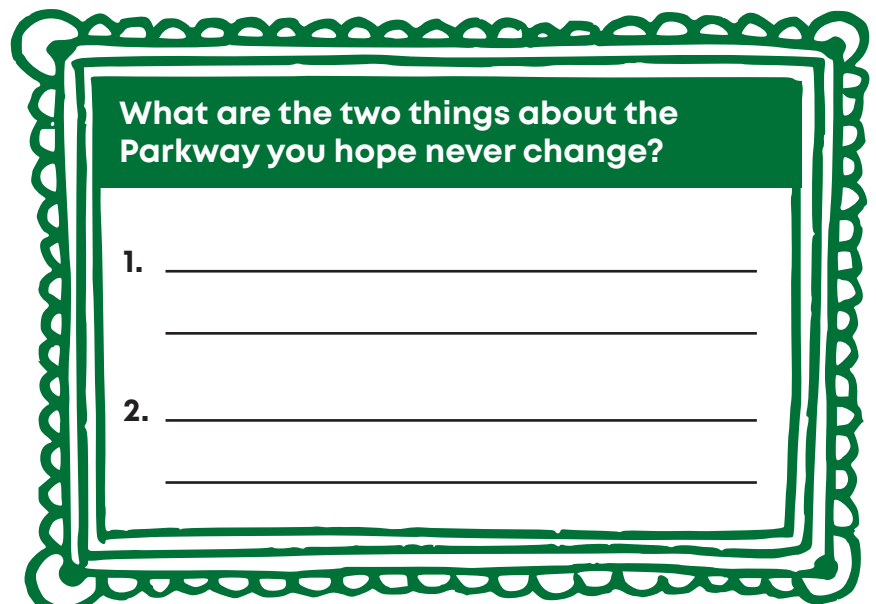
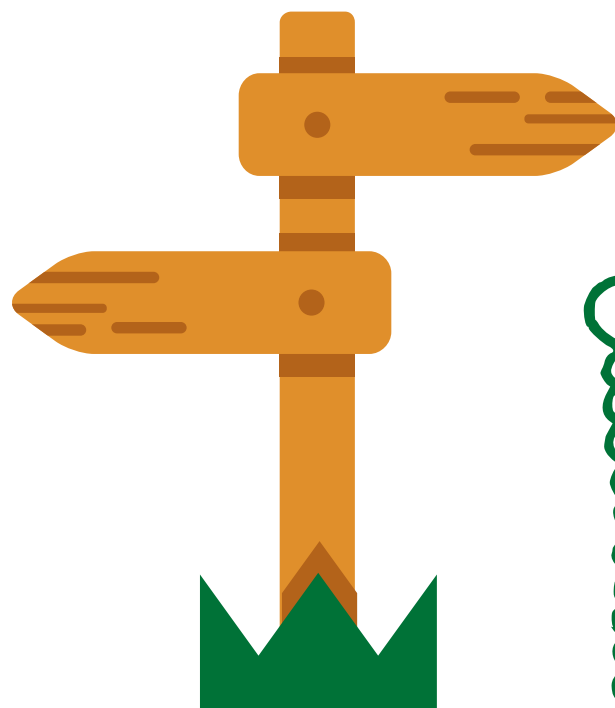
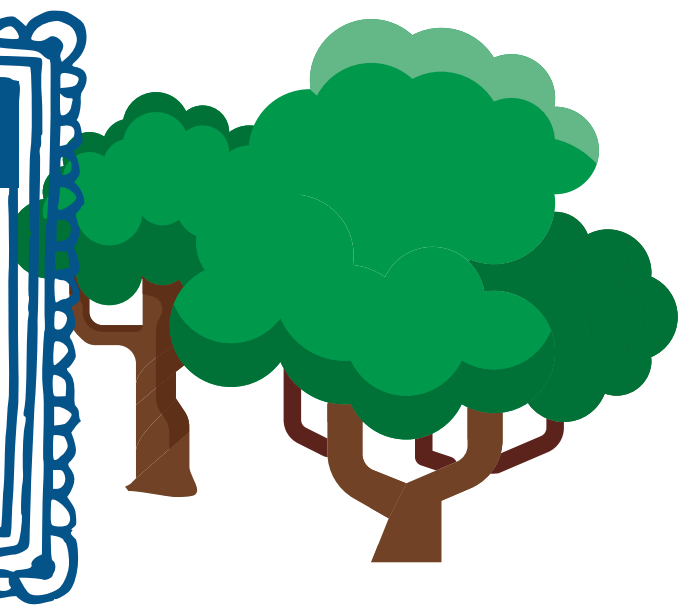
Imagine you are the director of the American River Parkway...



What are the two things that you would change about the park?

1. _____

2. _____



What are the two things about the Parkway you hope never change?

1. _____

2. _____

Speak for the Parks

We all have a say in how we should protect our parks. When we get an opportunity to talk with others about things we care about, we learn from each other and how to work together.

Use this guide to start a discussion with your family and friends.



- ☐ Work together to make a list of Parkway rules.

How do we show respect to other peoples opinions?

- ☐ The three steps below show one way to present an opinion. Use the example to practice giving your opinion.

- 1. ASSERTION:** “We should go to Sunrise Park today...”
2. REASONING: “... because you can go on both sides of the river!”
3. EVIDENCE: “Jim’s Bridge connects the north and south side of the river.”



Your opinion: _____

- ☐ Read the following questions to your group. Let everyone take turns answering

1. What did you experience here that you have never experienced before?
2. How can we protect parks and help millions of visitors enjoy them?
3. Choose three words to describe your visit here. Why would you use them?

You Did It!

- ☐ Getting your junior ranger badge is just the beginning.
Circle the actions you plan to do at home.



- ☐ Write your own Junior Parkway Ranger promise. Use the word bank for ideas.



Make us proud, Junior
Parkway Ranger!





CONGRATULATIONS

You are an official Junior Parkway Ranger at the
American River Parkway.

DATE



PARK OFFICIAL





The Jr Ranger book was produced by the
American River Parkway Foundation and developed
by Jacquelyn St John, Education Coordinator.

www.arpf.org

