

# FRESNO COUNTY



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**Size:** 15,585 km<sup>2</sup> (6,017 mi<sup>2</sup>)

**Population:** 917,575 (as of 2007 US Census)

**Location:** Central Valley

**Official Website:** [www.co.fresno.ca.us/](http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/)

## CONSERVATION STORY

### **San Joaquin River Parkway Trust Preserves Beauty of Central Valley**

Since its inception in 1985, the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust has permanently protected nearly 3,500 acres of land in the San Joaquin River area. With the overarching ultimate goal of protecting 6,000 acres of land along the San Joaquin River, the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust is currently working on the largest restoration project on the Parkway to date: the Jensen River Ranch Habitat Enhancement and Public Access Project.

The Jensen River Ranch 170-acre property is located in a highly visible area north of Woodward Park in the city of Fresno. For many years, Jensen River Ranch was primarily used as a cattle-grazing site which provided public access to the San Joaquin River.

In 2006, the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust was awarded a grant with funding from Proposition 50 to restore wetlands and wildlife habitat on the site. Construction on the site which included earth contouring, irrigation infrastructure, and public access enhancements, was begun in the fall of 2006 by the Department of Water Resources.

The project is a partnership of many agencies, including the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust, the San Joaquin River Conservancy, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish and Game, the City of Fresno, and the US Bureau of Reclamation.

In spring 2007, the River Parkway Trust began habitat enhancement work, planting native plants including Western Sycamore, Blue Elderberry (home to the endangered Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle), California Wild Rose, Silver Bush Lupine, Buttonwillow, Santa Barbara Sedge, and Deer Grass. Project plans further include a multi-purpose trail, picnic facilities, and an outdoor education facility.

Jensen River Ranch is open daily and is accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians from the Lewis S. Eaton Trail through Woodward Park. Access to the San Joaquin River is currently available via the Thomas MacMichael Sr. Loop Trail, which bisects the property and forms a perimeter loop in both directions. Future construction on the site is planned for summer and fall of 2007. The River Parkway Trust will continue planting and weed removal efforts, through 2010.

To sum up the year they state, “But there are more lands to save, more trails to build, and more children to guide toward becoming good stewards of our precious natural resources. In the end, it comes down to all of us working together to create a lasting legacy for the future - one that will contribute to clean water and clean air, a healthy environment for everyone in the Fresno/Madera region.” <sup>(1)</sup>

To volunteer for a day, become a member or donate to the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, or learn more about the organization, visit <http://www.riverparkway.org/default.asp>.

#### CITATIONS

1. <http://www.riverparkway.org/default.asp>

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Center on Race, Poverty, and the Environment**

**Contact Name:** Brent Newell

**Address:** 1302 Jefferson Street, Suite 2, Delano, CA 93215

**Phone:** 661-720-9140

**Email:**

**Website URL:**

**County/Counties:** Tulare, Kern, Fresno

**Issue Focus:** air quality, global warming, land use, watershed quality, water supply

**Group Type:** volunteer, staffed

**Public Events:** (contact group)

**Volunteer Opportunities:** Internships

**Accepts Donations:** Yes

**Description:** The Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment (CRPE) work primarily with and for low-income peoples, particularly indigenous peoples, to ensure that they have a healthy environment in which to live. CRPE educates communities by informing citizens about agricultural, industrial, and other activities going on around them, and the effects these activities have on human health and quality of life. CRPE currently monitors the land usage of large dairies that have been acquiring new properties in the area, as well as attending planning meetings and commenting when necessary. CRPE has also been active in maintaining water quality near toxic dump sites, where many of the poor live, as well as working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and citizens to bring increased water quality and environmental testing to areas near oil refineries where children often play.

### **Revive the San Joaquin**

**Contact Name:** Chris Acree, executive director

**Address:** 5132 N. Palm Ave PMB 121, Fresno, CA 93704

**Phone:** 559-226-0733

**Email:** [info@revivethesanjoaquin.org](mailto:info@revivethesanjoaquin.org)

**Website:** [www.revivethesanjoaquin.org](http://www.revivethesanjoaquin.org)

**County of Activity:** San Joaquin Valley, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Tulare

**Issue Focus:** land use, water supply, watershed quality, wildlife and habitat

**Group Type:**

**Accepts Donations:** Yes

**Description:** To promote a collective stewardship that sustains the economic, environmental, and recreational benefits of a healthy San Joaquin River, including adequate flows, habitat, and native fisheries.

## **RiverTree Volunteers**

**Contact:** Chuck Kroeger

**Address:** 1509 E. Fallbrook Avenue, Fresno, CA 93720

**Phone:** 559 -974-5195

**Email:** [riverrich1509@aol.com](mailto:riverrich1509@aol.com)

**Website URL:** [www.rivertreevolunteers.org](http://www.rivertreevolunteers.org)

**County of Activity:** Fresno

**Issue Focus:** land use, water quality, wildlife and habitat

**Group Type:** land trust, educational outreach, land trust, recreation, restoration

**Public Events:** all events open to the public

**Volunteer Opportunities:** National River Clean-up Week, Rotary Interact Clean-up, Tree planting, Sunnyside Interact, and California Coastal Commission Clean-up

**Accepts Donations:** Yes

**Description:** We are a non-profit [501(c)3] group dedicated to the maintenance and appreciation of the San Joaquin River Watershed. We have no paid members, no facilities and almost no overhead costs. We are the "free spirits" of the San Joaquin River.

## **San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (River Parkway Trust)**

**Contact:** Dave Koehler

**Address:** 1550 E Shaw Ave Ste 114 Fresno, CA 93710

**Phone:** 559-248-8480

**Email:** [dkoehler@riverparkway.org](mailto:dkoehler@riverparkway.org)

**Website URL:** [www.riverparkway.org](http://www.riverparkway.org)

**Counties of Activity:** Fresno, Madera

**Issue Focus:** land use, water quality, water supply

**Public Events:** River Camp, the Nature of Art Camp, It's for the Birds: Birdhouse Contest, Respite by the River: Readings by Central Valley Authors, River Buddies, Holiday Cheer at the River Center, Rotating Natural Science, Cultural Traditions, and Fine Art Exhibits, guided nature walks, guided canoe trips

**Volunteer Opportunities:** River Docent, River Steward, Special Events, River Center Docent, River Center Gardening Angels, River Center Maintenance, and office/clerical

**Accepts Donations:** yes

**Description:** The San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (River Parkway Trust) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 1988. In addition to creating and protecting a 22-mile Parkway along the San Joaquin River - from Friant Dam to Highway

99 - the River Parkway Trust provides community education, recreation and conservation programs to approximately 50,000 people a year.

Educational outreach efforts include field trips to the river, classroom presentations, and specialized workshops and field trips for educators. The education program takes over 15,000 children into contact with the river and its resources annually. Recreational opportunities include guided canoe trips, nature walks, and public river access via Parkway properties.

Conservation and restoration efforts include monthly workdays on Parkway properties, conservation easements, invasive species removal, and trail projects. In 2006 the Trust began work on its largest restoration project to date at Jensen River Ranch. With the help of volunteers, the Trust is planting more than 6,000 native plants on the site. The Trust also supports the San Joaquin River restoration effort, which will restore water flows and Chinook salmon to the river below Friant Dam.

### **Sierra and Foothill Citizen's Alliance**

**Contact Name:** Gary Temple, President

**Address:** PO Box 405, Prather, CA 93651

**Phone:** n/a

**Email:** [mtntop@netptc.net](mailto:mtntop@netptc.net)

**Website URL:** [www.sierrafoothillwater.org](http://www.sierrafoothillwater.org)

**County/Counties:** Fresno

**Issue Focus:** land use, water supply, watershed quality

**Group Type:** volunteer

**Public Events:** We have hosted several public seminars on water issues and appear regularly at county planning meetings to address the water impacts of specific developments.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** yes

**Accepts Donations:** yes

**Description:** The Sierra and Foothill Citizen's Alliance (SAFCA) was formed by residents of several Fresno County foothill and mountain communities after many wells began going dry because of increased withdrawals by new developments. SAFCA has worked to educate members of the community about water issues and has formed relationships with regional and local planners and decision-makers to ensure that water sustainability is given adequate consideration.

### **Sierra Club – Tehipite Chapter**

**Contact Name:** Gerald D. Vinnard

**Address:** P.O. Box 5396, Fresno, CA 93755-5396

**Phone:** (559)431-5780

**Email:** [gvinnard@cvip.net](mailto:gvinnard@cvip.net)

**Website URL:** <http://tehipite.sierraclub.org>

**County/Counties:** Fresno, Madera

**Issue Focus:** all

**Group Type:** advocacy, litigation, recreational, restoration, outreach

**Public Events:** general meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, Annual Banquet

**Volunteer Opportunities:** outings leadership, lobbying, event planning, watershed restoration

**Accepts Donations:** yes

**Description:** The mission of the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club is to provide outings for its members and the general public, to educate and inform its members and the general public about environmental issues, and to influence and persuade public leaders to preserve and protect the environment.

### **Sierra Foothill Conservancy**

**Contact Name:** Jeannette D. Tuitele-Lewis, Community Relations Director

**Address:** P.O. Box 529 Prather, CA 93651

**Phone:** (559) 855-3473

**Email:** [jeannette.tuitele@sierrafoothill.org](mailto:jeannette.tuitele@sierrafoothill.org)

**Website URL:** [www.sierrafoothill.org](http://www.sierrafoothill.org)

**County/Counties:** Fresno, Madera, and Mariposa

**Issue Focus:** botanical, land use, wildlife and habitat

**Public Events:** guided hikes, classes, special events

**Volunteer Opportunities:** preserve maintenance, conservation education, outreach

**Accepts Donations:** yes

**Description:** The Sierra Foothill Conservancy's mission is to protect the region's ecological health and cultural heritage by conserving land, water and working ranches. Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) works to protect these resources and ensure that present and future generations will continue to enjoy and experience the grasslands, foothills, and forests between Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks.

SFC is a non-profit land trust founded in 1996. To date the SFC has protected nearly 15,000 acres of foothill and forest lands. SFC's focuses on conserving properties with rare species or critical habitat and connecting them with our preserves, easement lands, and National Forest. We conserve land throughout Fresno, Madera, and Mariposa Counties through voluntary land owner agreements (conservation easements) and purchasing properties for nature preserves. SFC is committed to promoting a sense of

place for foothill and Central Valley residents through education and community enrichment.

## **PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND AGENCIES**

### **Fresno County Board of Supervisors**

**Mailing Address:** 2281 Tulare Street, #301, Hall of Records, Fresno, CA 93721-2198

**Phone:** (559) 253-9180

**Website:** <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/0110a/default.asp>

### **Senate Representative – 14<sup>th</sup> District:**

**Counties Represented:** Mariposa, Madera, San Joaquin, Fresno, Tuolumne and Stanislaus

**Website:** <http://republican.sen.ca.gov/web/14/>

### **Assembly Representative – 31<sup>th</sup> District**

**Counties Represented:** Fresno

**Website:** <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a31/>