

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Folsom District

STANISLAUS RIVER RECREATION AREA

The Stanislaus River from Camp 9 to Parrott's Ferry in the Sierra Nevada foothills is one of the most popular whitewater rivers in the Western United States, with more than 30,000 visitor use days of recreation occurring annually on a little over nine miles of river.

As the managing agency of large areas of National Resource lands along the river, including the put-in at Camp 9 and takeout area at Parrott's Ferry, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has recreation management responsibility for much of the area. BLM does not own or have responsibility for the actual river, and the public is cautioned that use of the river for any purpose is at the user's own risk.

Camp 9, location of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Stanislaus River Powerhouse and gateway to the whitewater area, is reached by a narrow paved road which leaves the Parrott's Ferry Road one-half mile east of the town of Vallecito. The Parrott's Ferry Road runs generally north-south between California State Highway 4 and California 49 at Columbia State Historical Park.

After putting in at Camp 9, whitewater users pass through mile after mile of striking geologic formations, open meadows, rocky chutes, wildflowers and scattered timbered slopes where a variety of wildlife is found. Each rapid, riffle and pool has its own character for the visitor to experience as he journeys through the ruggedly beautiful canyon of the Stanislaus.

Whitewater rafting is an exciting adventure . . . it can also be a dangerous one for the inexperienced or ill-equipped. First-time visitors soon learn why some of the rapids areas are named as they are — Mother Rapid, Death Rock, the Devil's Staircase, Chicken Falls. Except for a steep trail out of the canyon from Duck Bar, the river itself provides the primary access to the area.

The principal use season along this 9.4-mile stretch of the Stanislaus is from mid-April to mid-October. Approximately 32,000 visitor days of recreational use occurred in 1975, about two-thirds of this involving commercial outfitters. Most of the use is on weekends, and mid-week visits are encouraged to ease congestion and provide a more pleasant river experience.

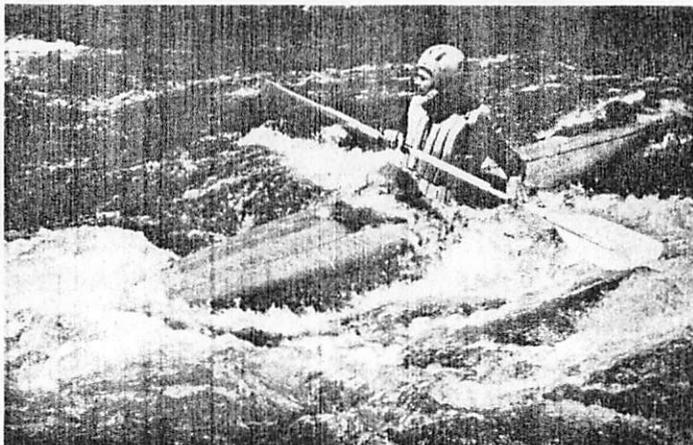
The Stanislaus River Corridor is managed by the Folsom District of the Bureau of Land Management. These National Resource Lands are managed under the concept of multiple-use to provide watershed, grazing, timber, minerals and wildlife habitat, as well as outdoor recreation. Visitors are urged to use the river area courteously to preserve its wild character — carrying out what they bring in, taking care with fire, and helping to preserve the river environment for those who will come after.

BLM manages commercial use of the river corridor lands by means of a recreation use permit. All commercial outfitters conducting operations on the Stanislaus belong to an organization called the Stanislaus River Recreation Association. The association, consisting of 20 individual outfitters, is required by the permit to provide certain facilities and services to the public. BLM river rangers monitor commercial activities, and assist all river users in obtaining a safe and enjoyable whitewater experience.

SAFETY

Travel on a whitewater river can be very dangerous. Rivers are dynamic, changing daily. Fluctuating water levels can make a river rapid that was easily negotiated one day impassable the next day.

Know your water! Most accidents occur when boatmen attempt water more demanding than their skills, knowledge and experience can justify. The following is a recommended guide to water and experience established by the American White Water Affiliation. Never overestimate your ability or underestimate the water.



CLASS I Very Easy (practiced beginner)
Waves small, regular; passages clear, sand banks, some artificial difficulties like bridge piers; riffles.

CLASS II Easy (intermediate)
Rapids of medium difficulty, with passages clear and wide; low ledges; spraydeck useful.

CLASS III Medium (experienced)
Waves numerous, high, irregular; rocks; eddies; rapids with passages that are clear though narrow, requiring expertise in maneuvering; inspection usually needed; spraydeck needed.

CLASS IV Difficult (highly skilled with several years experience with organized group)
Long rapids, waves powerful and irregular; dangerous rocks; boiling eddies; passages difficult to reconnoiter; inspection mandatory first time; powerful and precise maneuvering required; spraydeck essential.

CLASS V Very Difficult (teams of experts)
Extremely difficult, long and very violent rapids following each other almost without interruption; riverbed extremely obstructed; big drops, violent current, very steep gradient; reconnoitering essential but difficult.

CLASS VI Extremely Difficult (teams of experts)
Difficulties of Class V carried to the extreme of navigability. Nearly impossible and very dangerous. For teams of experts only at favorable water levels and after close study with all precautions.

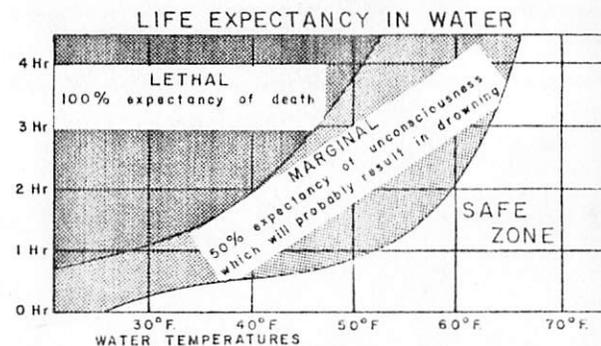
The Stanislaus River ranges from Class VI in normal spring runoff to a medium to medium Class III in usual summer flow. If you aren't sure — scout the rapid from shore. Respect the river as if your life depended on it.

PERSONAL GEAR

PFDs — personal flotation devices — are a must on the Stanislaus. All types of whitewater craft should carry a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (Type I or V) of a suitable size for each person aboard. Everyone should wear a PFD whenever on the water. Protective foot gear is always advisable and a crash helmet is recommended during high water. A bailer should be handy at all times to rid the boat of excess water.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your boat capsizes, stay on the upstream side, preferably at the end of the craft. This allows better vision to enable you to swim your boat to shore. More importantly, it prevents the possibility of being pinned against obstacles. Hold on to your boat unless you can increase your safety by abandonment. If rescue is not imminent and the water is intolerably cold or perilous rapids are near, swim with the river current to the nearest landing. If you find yourself in the water alone, float downstream feet first. This will enable you to fend off from rocks and other obstacles. Remember that water does not have to be fast to be fatal. Temperature of the Stanislaus varies from near 35 degrees during spring runoff to 55-60 degrees in late summer. The following chart shows life expectancy in water.



RIVER RULES

River travel should be a group effort. Never boat alone. Watch for hazards such as snags — fallen trees and bridge pilings — and reversals or "holes." Natural or manmade spillways may form reversals at their base possibly stopping or capsizing river craft. Never purposely enter a hole.

An unknown rapid should never be "run" without first scouting it thoroughly from the shore. Before starting a journey, boatmen should know local conditions such as currents, rapids, weather and hazards. Portage hazards if in doubt.

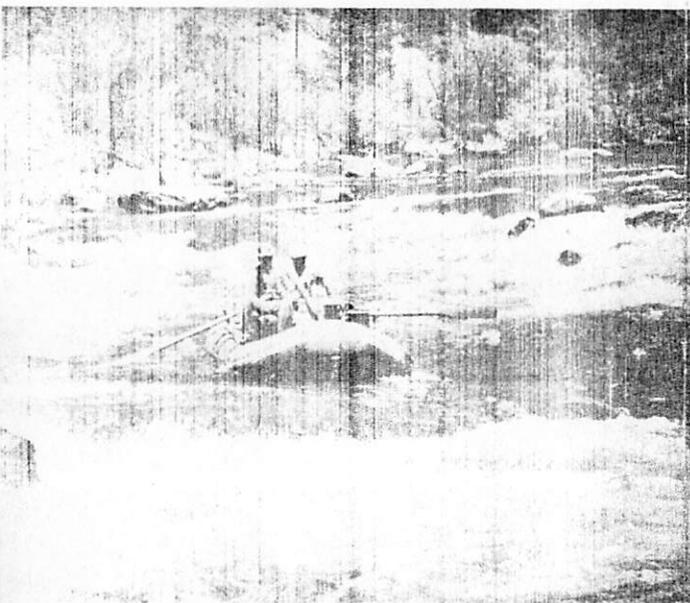
Always allow craft ahead of you to pass through a rapid before you begin your approach, so as not to create a hazardous condition if the leading craft encounters trouble and blocks the channel.

Kayaks should always yield the right-of-way to inflatable craft as the kayaks are more maneuverable.

Be certain that all gear is securely fastened within the craft and that there are no loose ropes hanging about. Never tie yourself or other passengers into the raft.

All inflatable craft should carry an easily accessible spare oar or paddle in case one is broken or lost.

Always take an air pump and patch kit on rafts.



RIVER MANNERS, TRIP TIPS

- * Maintain the quiet atmosphere of the area.
- * Be especially careful with fire. Build campfires only in safe places on bare mineral soil or in provided fire pans. Always extinguish fires completely when leaving an area, and never leave a fire unattended. Report uncontrolled fires to BLM river rangers or the San Andreas office of the California Division of Forestry (209) 754-3562.
- * Leave word with a responsible person on where you are going and when you should return.
- * If you are injured, keep calm. Help is usually close at hand.
- * There should be a first aid kit and a person trained in first aid in every craft.
- * Avoid over-exertion.
- * Poison oak is common all along the Stanislaus River. Learn to identify the plant. It has shiny green or deep red leaves in threes. Avoid contact with any part of the poison oak plant.
- * Rattlesnakes are found along the river. Be careful where you step.
- * Leave a clean camp and dead fire. Never take glass into the river corridor. Carry out what you carry in. Respect the privacy of other campers.
- * Always carry waterproof trash and waste bags. Never bury anything in the corridor.
- * There is a BLM comfort station at Rose Creek for your convenience.
- * Parking and camping facilities at the Parrott's Ferry takeout are very limited. No open fires are allowed at the takeout.
- * It's less crowded in the middle of the week.

BLM needs your help to maintain the Stanislaus River corridor in as natural a condition as possible. For your own safety, report accidents or incidents to a BLM river ranger. They are there to help you.

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Folsom District
63 Natoma Street
Folsom, California 95630
(916) 985-4474**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

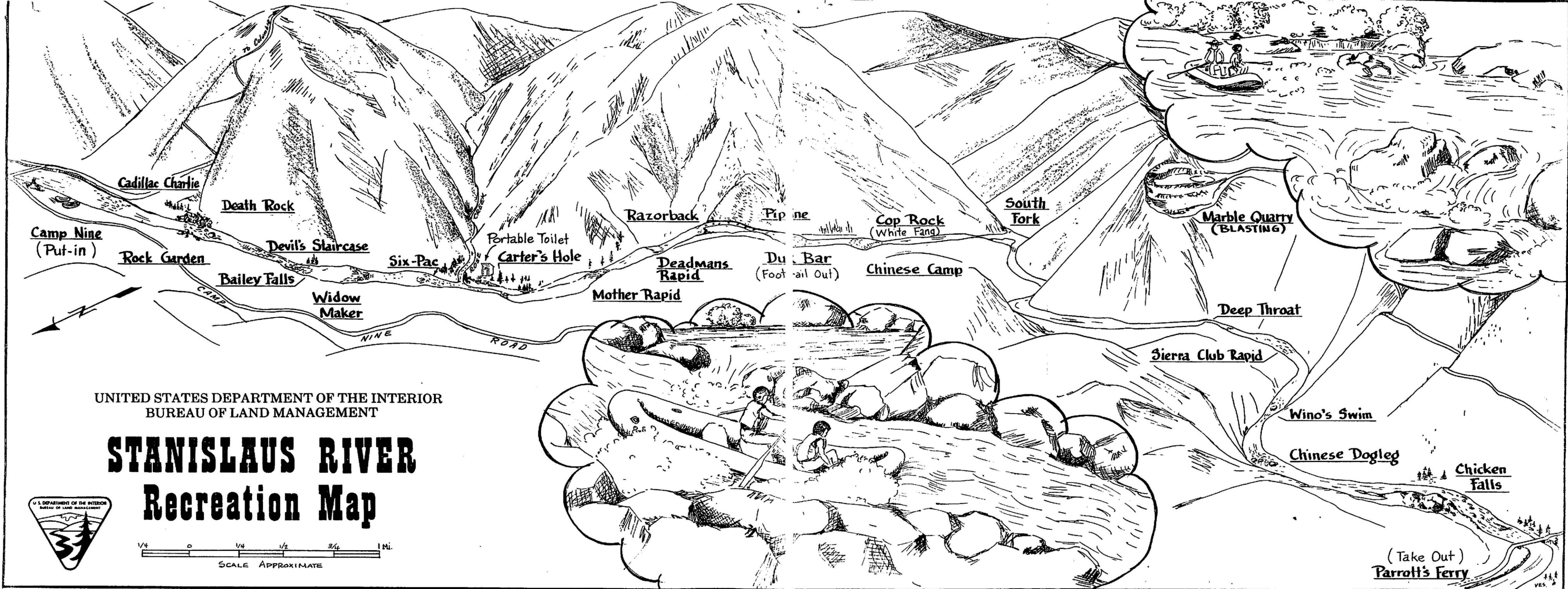
As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the multiple-use management of the 450 million acres of national resource lands, encompassing such renewable resources as timber, forage, and wildlife, and such non-renewable resources as minerals. BLM also administers the Outer Continental Shelf mineral leasing program. The Bureau surveys public lands and maintains the public land records of the United States. BLM administers some 16 million acres in California, of which about 12 million are in the California Desert.

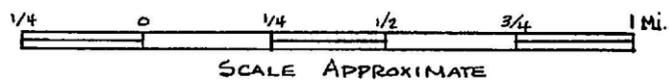


FOLSOM DISTRICT



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

STANISLAUS RIVER Recreation Map



(Take Out)
Parrott's Ferry