

# Frequently Asked Questions about the partial closure of Gibson Ranch

## 1. Why has Gibson Ranch closed Mon.- Wed.?

Gibson Ranch began closing Monday thru Wednesday beginning the first of October as a compromise to closing the park entirely due to the severe budget challenges of Sacramento County as well as for the entire state of California. The crisis is far from over however. Next year's County budget and State budget look as threatening as this year's due to a number of factors including the national and worldwide recession. And even though Gibson Ranch has been partially spared a complete closure, it does not mean that it is saved from closure in the future. The county must reassess its budget every January so it is imperative that we find new ways to fund the park on a consistent basis rather than rely on the fluctuating budget from the county.

## 2. What will happen to Gibson Ranch if it closes?

The park is maintained by a department within Sacramento county called: Sacramento County Regional Parks. They make sure the grounds, facilities and equipment are well kept and maintained. If Sacramento County Regional Parks no longer has funds to keep the park open then the land could revert to County Asset Management Department. Then, holding onto the land until there are more funds to give it back to Parks & Recreation is one option. But no one can say for certain what will happen to the land if the park closes.

## 3. Is there a land developer waiting to get its hands on this park for future development?

Most frequently asked question. The answer is NO. There is no evidence to prove that correct. In fact the park is an asset for developers in the area to attract new residents to the area. Unfortunately parks are seen as a "quality" of life, and not as a necessity. Therefore parks like this one could be considered the first to close when considering severe budget cuts.

## 4. Who makes the decision of whether or not Gibson Ranch closes?

The way Sacramento County Regional Parks works is like this: Janet Baker is the Regional Parks Director. However, she can only work with the money given to her by the County Board of Supervisors. At this time we have Supervisor Dickinson of District 1 and Supervisor MacGlashan of District 4 who serve most of the people using this park but all five supervisors must ultimately make the decision. People can check out information about the county at [www.saccounty.net](http://www.saccounty.net) <<http://www.saccounty.net>>.

## 5. Who is to blame for making this decision to partially close Gibson Ranch?

None of our elected representatives from the county want to see Gibson Ranch close, even for three days a week, however they will continue the daunting task of deciding where further cuts may have to be made almost immediately and certainly by the first of 2010. In the end, all of us must shoulder the blame of neglect. This is why reacquainting community members with this treasured asset is so important.

## 6. What other parks are up for consideration?

The county owns 14,000 acres of land. Some of it is undeveloped land that runs along I-5, other parks include but are not limited to: Discovery Park, American River Parkway, and the Dry Creek Parkway, etc. Only parks that are run regionally are up for consideration. Local parks are run by each city or county and State Parks are run by the state. Basically, those regional parks

that are able to fund the cost of maintaining themselves rather than drawing money away from the county have a better chance of making it through.

## 7. How much money are we talking about here?

At this time, Sacramento County Regional Parks is given about 1.9 million dollars to work with for maintaining all of its regional parks. And even this budget amount has been slashed from over 6 million just 5 years ago. Janet Baker, the Director has been told she may need to cut her budget even further in the near future. That's an unbelievable reduction in operating funds! There are people within our community working on getting a clearer breakdown of the costs for just Gibson Ranch and examining alternative methods of funding and maintaining Gibson Ranch.

## 8. Don't my tax dollars go directly to the county?

Not necessarily, the money paid by tax payers goes to a lot of different things. Unfortunately, due to the growing number of areas within the county that have become a city in recent years (i.e. Citrus Heights, Rancho Cordova, etc.) we no longer get a percentage of funds from those areas to maintain our county parks. It might sound strange to you, but each city is not required to pay money towards county parks. So the pie we're working with to fund our park grows smaller and smaller.

## 9. How could this have happened?

The entire state of California is going through a budget crisis. The recent legislative "battles" over the state budget speaks to the gravity of the challenge with which we are now faced. Hopefully the representatives we have chosen at all levels will work hard at managing our funds in a more cohesive manner. But at this time, there's nothing the state can actually do to help us resolve the problem of whether or not to close Gibson Ranch. We have to take care of it on the county or local level.

## 10. What can I do to help... NOW?

• First attend the meeting of the Rio Linda/Elverta Parks District. One of the options being considered by the County Board of Supervisors is a partnership or a "realignment" of the responsibility for maintaining Gibson Ranch. The local Rio Linda/Elverta Park District could "save the day" by agreeing to "take over" the operation of the park, either temporarily or permanently. This decision is ultimately up to the locally-elected park board members and the local Parks Director. **Your attendance at this meeting on Wednesday, October 21st @ 6:00pm at the Community Center, 810 Oak Lane, Rio Linda is critical!!!**

• Second, write a letter to your Representatives. Supervisors **Roger Dickinson, Roberta MacGlashan, Jimmie Yee, Don Nottoli, and Susan Peters**. All letters can be individually sent to 700 H Street, Suite 2450, Sacramento, CA 95814. This way the Board of Supervisors can see how many people are in favor of supporting the Rio Linda/Elverta Parks District solution to keeping Gibson Ranch open.

**If you own a business** and would like know how you can help, please contact Keith Weber at (916) 764-6054 for some win-win promotions for Gibson Ranch.

• Keep checking for updates at [www.commerceandcommunity.com](http://www.commerceandcommunity.com). And thank you, thank you, for any and all support!!! It is vital that we keep this park open for the enjoyment of our residents and for generations to come.

**Points of Contact for Volunteers & Supporters**  
**Voice Mail: 725-5652 • Email: [keith@usaprintshops.com](mailto:keith@usaprintshops.com)**

**[www.CommerceAndCommunity.com](http://www.CommerceAndCommunity.com)**

and **[www.rlechamber.org](http://www.rlechamber.org)**