A photograph of two hikers walking away from the camera on a dirt trail. The hiker on the left is wearing a green long-sleeved shirt and a black backpack. The hiker on the right is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and a black backpack. They are walking towards a bright sunrise over a field of dry grass and shrubs. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and wispy clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare effect.

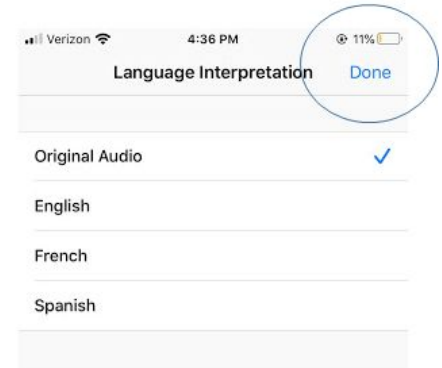
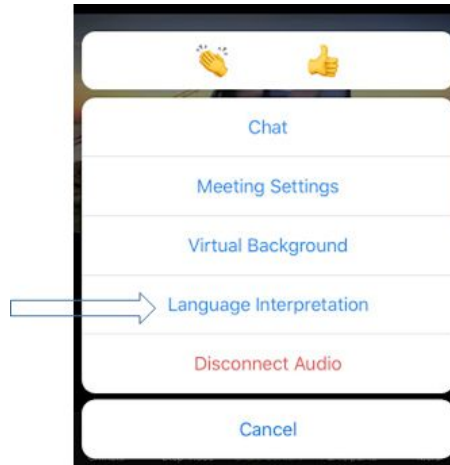
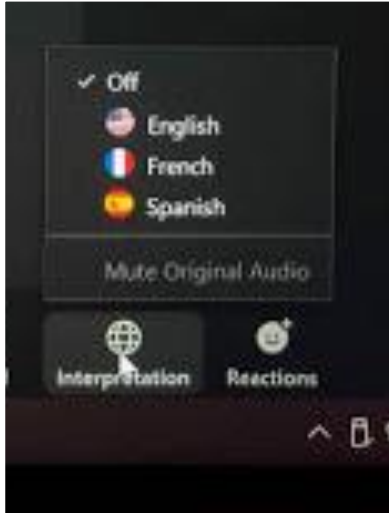
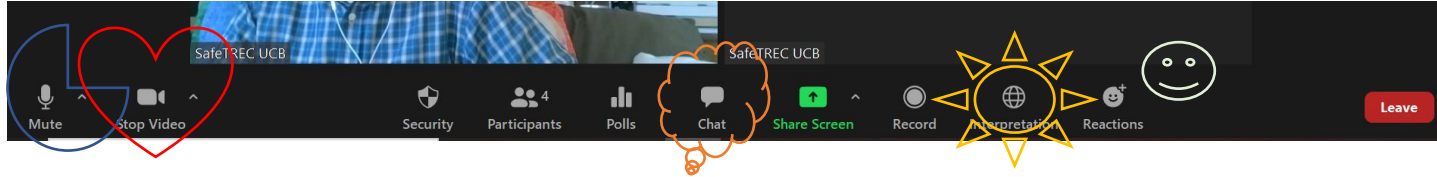
# Connecting Kern County:

## The Kern River Parkway Trail and Kern County's Active Transportation

**August 26, 2020  
10-11AM**

Source: Michelle Beck,  
The Kern River Parkway Foundation

# Housekeeping / Interpretation



# Topics Covered

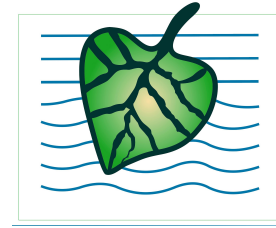
- A. Webinar Partners**
- B. History of the Region and the River**
- C. The Kern River Parkway Multi-use Path (KRP)**
  - a. Current opportunities
  - b. Future expansions to the KRP
- D. Impact on residents**

Source: Henry Barrios, The Bakersfield Californian



# A. Webinar Partners

- California Office of Traffic Safety's Focus Cities Program
- UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center
  - Garrett Fortin, Policy & Program Analyst
- California Walks
  - Caro Jaregui, Community Programs Manager
- Bike Bakersfield
  - Bob Smith, Founder, Board Member, Ward 4 City Councilman
  - Asha Chandy, Programs Manager
- Kern River Parkway Foundation
  - Craig Smith, President
- City of Bakersfield
  - Bob Smith, Ward 4 City Councilman
- Kern County Public Works
  - Alexa Kolosky, Planner
- Spanish Translation
  - Javier Arreola

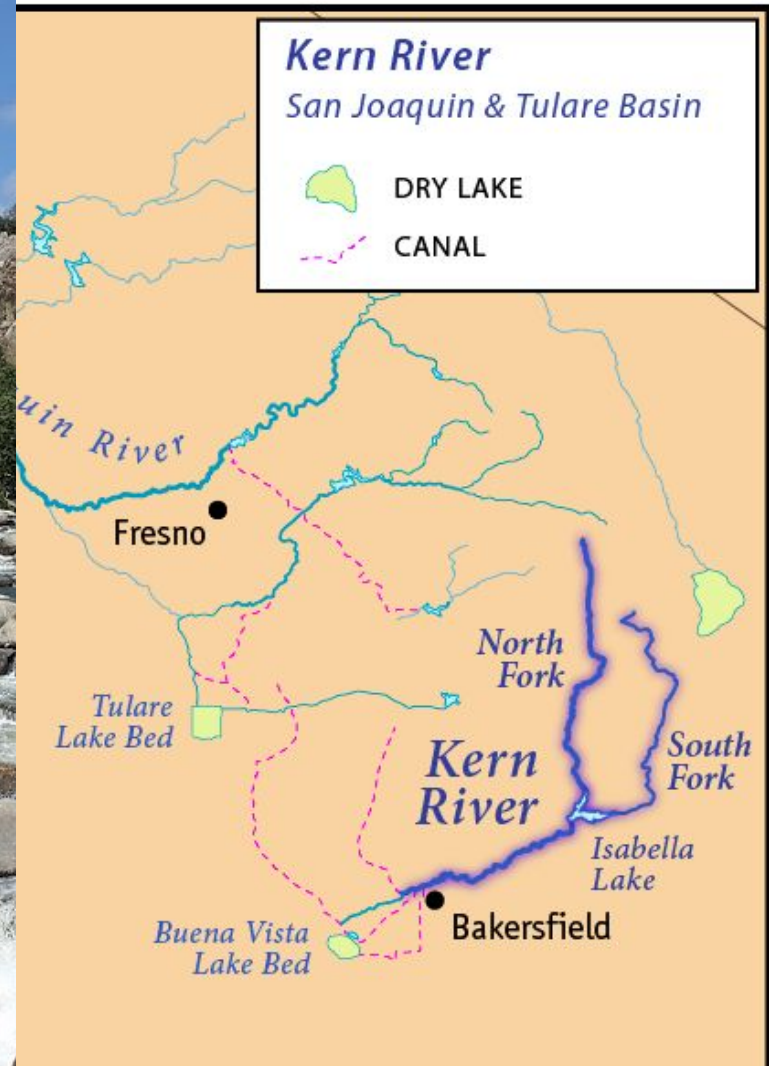




## B. History of the River

1. Environment
2. Pre-Modern History
3. Industrial/Modern History
4. The Beginning of the Trail

Source: Trip Advisor



# 1. Environment

- One of CA's largest riparian nature preserves
- Fed by downstream rapids from Lake Isabella, a 2,000-foot change in elevation
- Fauna: trout, fowl, antelope, elk, deer
- Flora: acorns, pine nuts in higher elevation, grasses and reeds around the river marshlands, combined with desert plants
  - The Bakersfield Cactus
- Obsidian arrowheads, sharpened animal bones found dating back to 500 B.C. to 600 A.D.

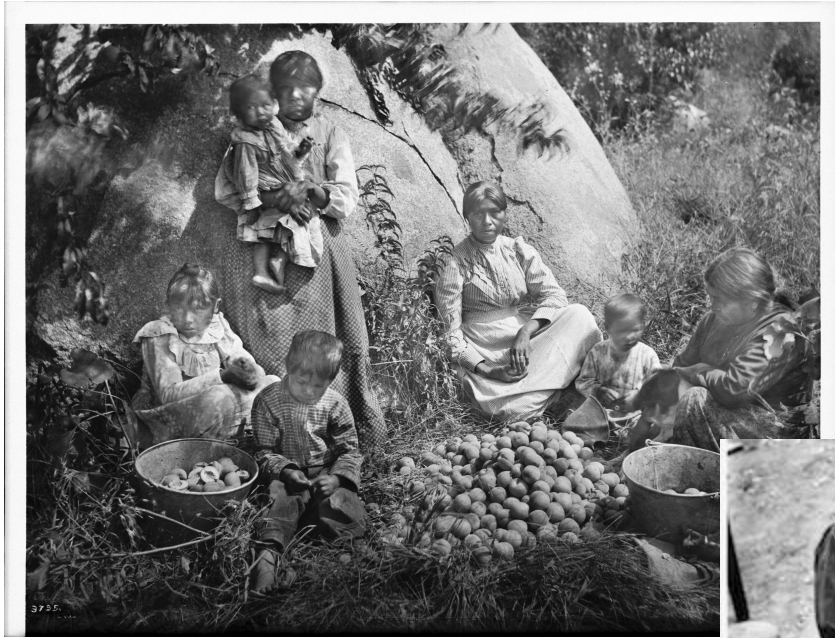


Photo Source:

Above: GreatRuns.com

Below: California Wanderland Blog, March 2020

## 2. Pre-Modern History



- Yokut or Mariposa Indians were a band of about 50 tribes
  - Subsisted on a nomadic lifestyles
  - Traded with other tribe along the entire central valley and CA coast
- Estimated to have settled the area around 1 A.D.
- Kern River Valley provided marshlands and Tule grass to build baskets, shelter, boats, even clothing

Source:

Top: Wikimedia Commons via The Kern River Parkway Foundation

Bottom: USC Library via the Panorama Vista Preserve



## 2. Pre-Modern History

- Other tribes and bands that lived in the region include:
  - Serrano People: San Bernardino Mountains and foothills
  - Tubatulabal People: South Fork of the Kern River in the foothills
  - Kawaiisu People: Tehachapi Mountains
  - Kitanemuk People; Southern San Joaquin Valley
- All these tribes traded goods and lived in small family groups throughout the region.

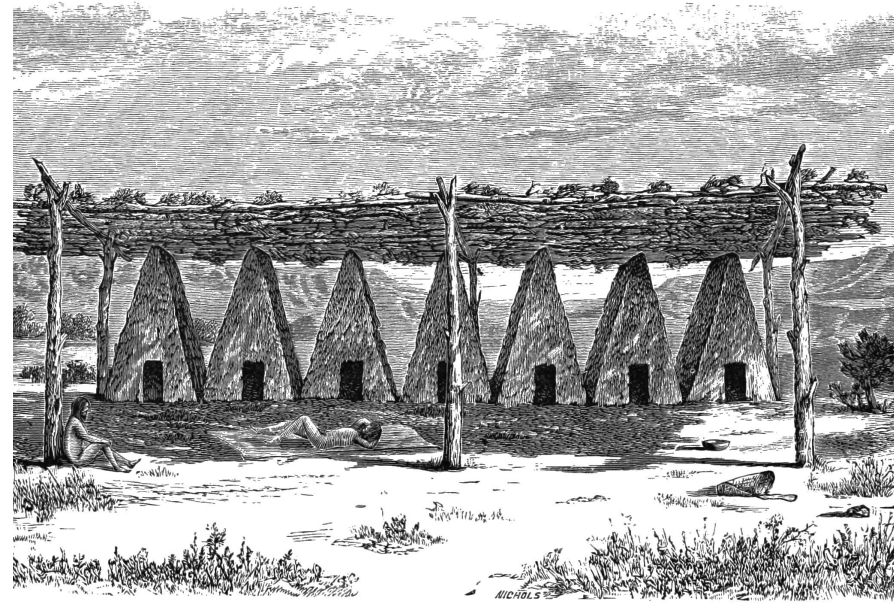


Photo Sources:

Above: Wikimedia Commons via The Kern River Parkway Foundation

Below: Dan Ocampo via The Bakersfield Californian

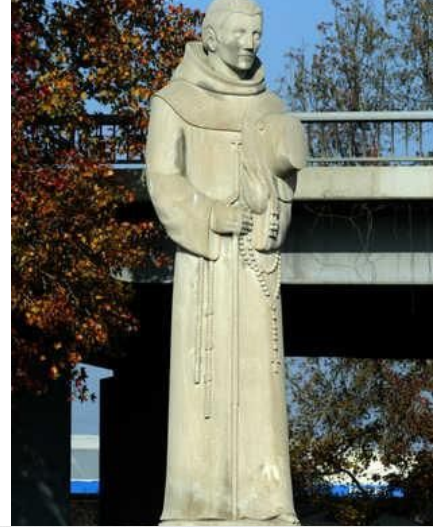
# 3. Modern History

- 1776: Under the Spanish Crown, Father Garces is recorded to “discover” an Tejon settlement the Kern River, naming it Rio de San Felipe
- 1850: California becomes a US state, and opens treaty negotiations with native tribes in the San Joaquin Valley
- 1882: through the Mexican/Spanish Land Grant agreements, most of Kern County becomes a part of the state of Mexico
  - Four of these grants form the Tejon Ranch conservancy area today

Photos

Above: Father Garces by Felix Adamo of the Bakersfield Californian

Below: Flooded Kern River at Rio Bravo Ranch courtesy of the Kern River Parkway Foundation



# 3. Modern History

- 1853: Gordon's Ferry establishes a passage across the river
- 1853: First sheep raised at Tejon Ranch
- 1863: Colonel Thomas Baker arrives, planting alfalfa on Kern Island the marshes, allowing passing ranchers to graze their cattle in Baker's Field, also the year of Keyesville
- 1870: Kern County Land Company established by J.B. Haggin begins construction of canals to divert water (*Lux v. Haggin*)
- May 1871: the Kern Island Canal begins construction to divert water for farming and grazing
  - Led to the development of the major ag industries we have today

Photo Sources:

Top: Kern River and Kern Island Canal by Carleton Watkins, circa 1888. Courtesy of the Bakersfield Californian and the Kern County Museum

Middle: Kern Island Carrier Canal via The Panorama Vista Preserve

Bottom: Gordon's Ferry via The Panorama Vista Preserve





# 3. Modern History

- 1880: the “water wars” between farmers and ranchers begins (*Lux v. Haggin*)
- 1898: arrival of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (Santa Fe Railroad)
- 1899: Discovery of the Kern River Oilfield
- 1900: Electricity arrives to Bakersfield
- 1905: Construction on the Kern River Canyon Highway (Hwy 178 today)
- 1915: the Ridge Route connecting Castaic to Tejon is finished, soon bypassed by the 99 freeway

Photo Sources:

Top: 19th and Chester, The Kern County Museum via The Bakersfield California

Bottom: North Chester, Michael J. Semas Collection via Pinterest



### 3. Industrial/Modern History

- 1929: Kern River Park (now Hart Park)
- 1948-1953: Lake Isabella Dam construction
- 1956: Bakersfield College moves to the Panorama Bluffs overlooking the Kern River oil fields
  - soon to be the Panorama Vista Preserve
- 1968: California State College Bakersfield opens
- 1974: Buena Vista Aquatic Recreation Area established
  - Class I coming soon!

Source:

Top: Hart Park via The Bakersfield Californian

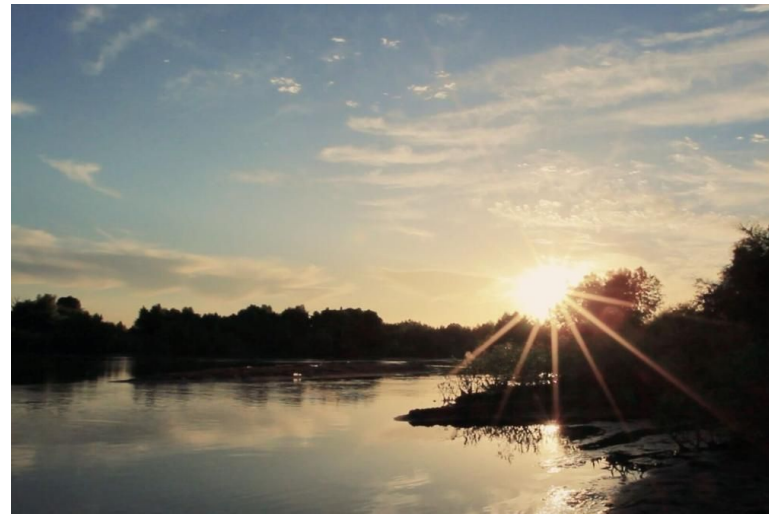
Bottom: Buena Vista Lake via Kern County Parks



# 4. The KRP

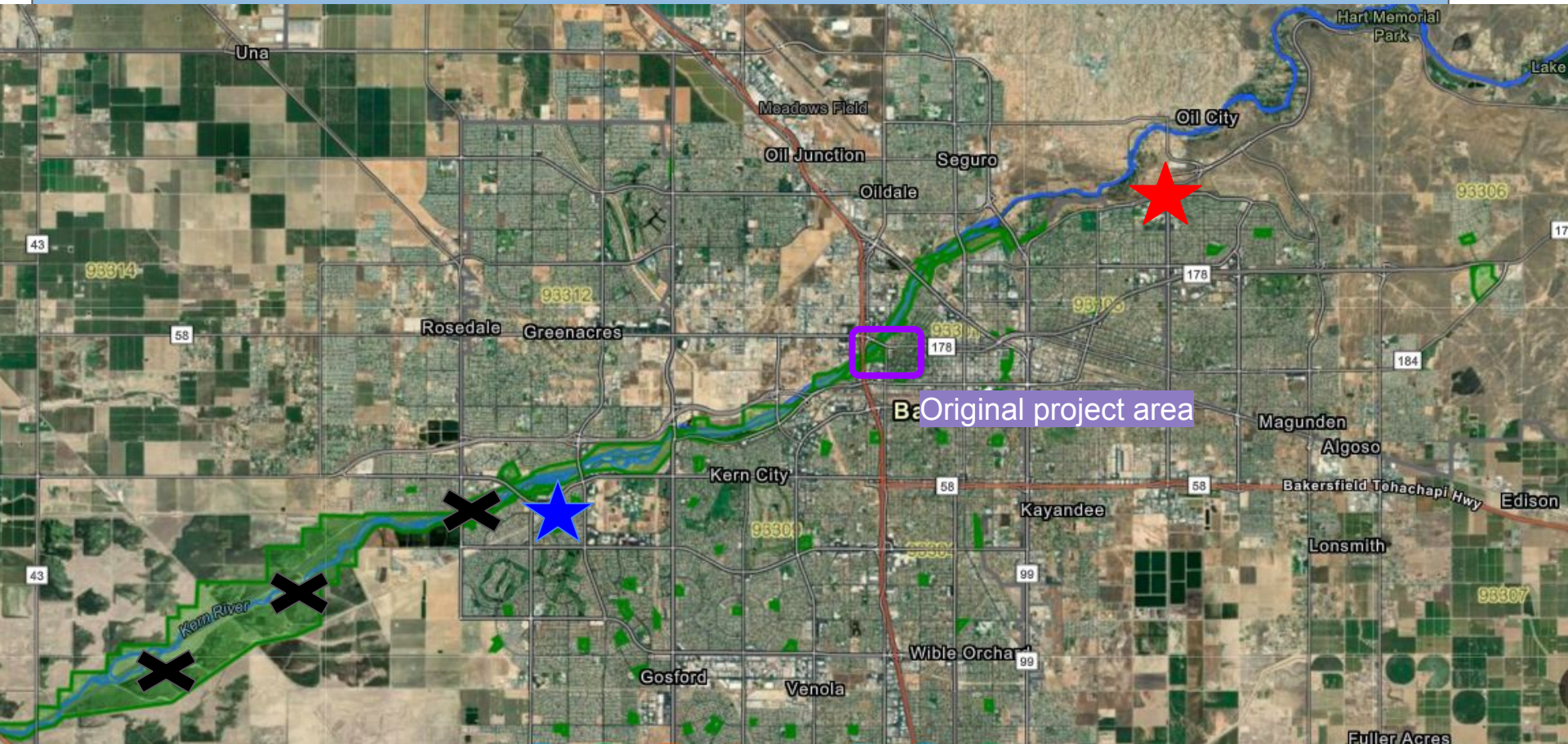
- 1974: Kern Council of Governments does a transit study near CSUB, at the request of residents who wanted to see a bike path along Stockdale Highway
- 1975: funding for the first segments of the Kern River bike path is allocated
- 1976: bike path connecting Manor Street to Beach Park is constructed

Photos Courtesy of Michelle Beck,  
The Kern River Parkway Foundation





# The Kern River Parkway Multi-use Path 1975



# The KRP Timeline

- 1976: the city purchases river rights and facilities from Texaco as part of an effort to repair weirs and canals
- 1980: adoption of the 2000 General Plan which included plans to increase access to the river
- 1983: Bill Cooper (Founder of the Kern River Parkway Foundation) kayaks from Beach Park to San Francisco
- 1984: trees along the Truxtun Extension are planted by the Kern River Parkway Committee

Photos courtesy of the Kern River Parkway Foundation

## Sunburned and blistered, Kern kayakers reach Bay

6-15-83

By RONALD CAMPBELL  
Staff Writer

RICHMOND — A voyage through California ended at a boat ramp in this Bay area city Tuesday.

Bill Cooper and John Sweetser grounded their two 15-foot kayaks at Richmond Marina at 4:37 p.m., 11 days, 9 hours and 21 minutes after leaving Beach Park in Bakersfield.

"That's the record," Cooper said. "I challenge anyone to beat it."

Potential challengers may have to wait years for the next opportunity. Only two other groups have sailed from Bakersfield to San Francisco Bay in this century — and both earlier groups used motorboats.

Cooper and Sweetser, both 35, are the first to make the tortuous 450-mile journey under their own power.

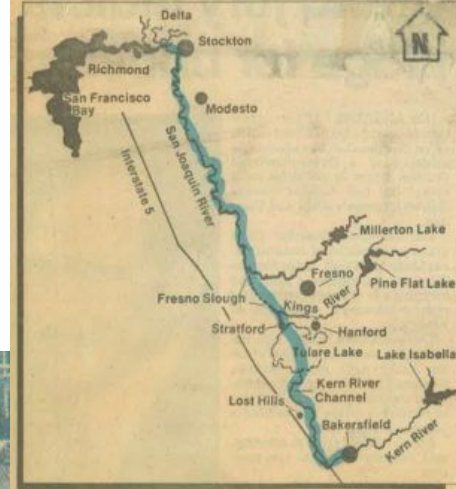
Cooper's family — wife Adriane, daughter Teneille, 7, son Matt, 6, mother and aunt — greeted the kayakers with screams and champagne.

Matt, carefully keeping his feet out of the water, leaned over the kayak to hand his father some french fries. Teneille gamely walked into the water to kiss Cooper.

The two Bakersfield men were sunburned, their lips chapped, their hands blistered. Cooper wore a 12-day growth of beard while Sweetser was incongruously clean-shaven.

Cooper's hands remained clenched as if he were still holding a double-bladed kayak paddle. His feet were mottled red with "river rot." He wore a shirt with the insignia "Bakersfield Yacht Club."

see Kayakers — page A4





# The KRP Timeline

- 1985: the Kern River is an element of the City of Bakersfield 2000 General Plan Update, and the Kern River Parkway Foundation becomes a 501(c)3.
- 1991: over 500 native trees are planted along the river banks, and the rest stop by CSUB and Finish Line is constructed
- 1993: blue-light call boxes are installed on every ½ mile segment
- 1995-1996: bike path extends from Manor Street east to Fairfax, through the Panorama Vista Preserve, to Hart Park and CALM (California Living Museum)

Photos courtesy of Henry A. Barrios, The Bakersfield Californian





# The KRP Timeline

- 1996: bike lanes are laid down on Round Mountain Road connecting to Hart Park
- 2003: the Kern River Specific Trails Plan (County of Kern Planning) is published
- 2006: the KRP Foundation plants over 6,000 trees and shrubs along the Panorama Vista Preserve
  - KRP Enos Lane, CSUB, Truxtun Lake, Yokuts Park, Beach Park, Kern County Museum, Manor Street, and Lake Ming.
- 2010: the KRP is adopted as an Element in the City of Bakersfield General Plan
- 2011: dedication of the original segment as the Uplands of the Kern River Parkway

Photo Sources:

Above: via Traillink

Bottom: Field and Dale Run via the Panorama Vista Preserve Facebook



A photograph of a paved trail, likely a park path, lined with trees. The ground is covered with fallen yellow and orange leaves, suggesting autumn. The path is wet, reflecting the light. The trees are mostly green, with some showing autumn colors. The path leads into the distance, flanked by more trees and a fence on the right side.

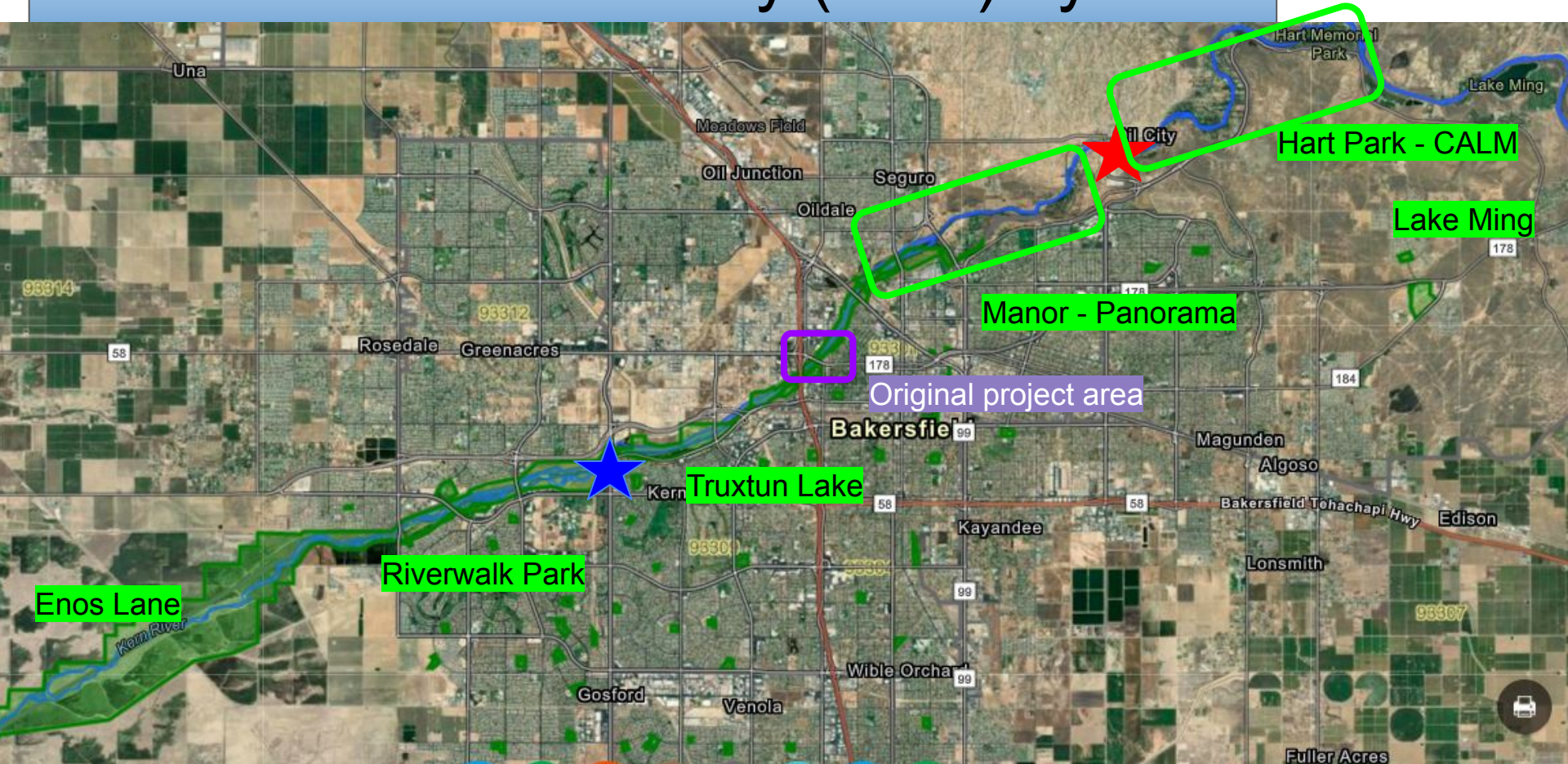
# The KRP Trails Today

- Largest municipal park in the county, spanning over 30 miles at its current state
- Covers over 6,000 acres of public parks, 170 miles of trails and waterways
- Waterways include the River and lakes like those on Truxtun and Riverwalk Park
- Currently extends East to West from Hart Park/Lake Ming, through the oil fields of the Panorama Vista Preserve, through the valley stopping currently at Enos Lane.

Courtesy of the Kern River Parkway Foundation



# The Kern River Parkway (KRP) by 2011





# The KRP Trails Quick Facts

- Includes a paved multi-use trail, including an off-road trail, and equestrian path designed for any and all non-motorized users
- E-Bikes are not considered motor vehicles as long as they go under 28 mph. Any bike that goes over 28 mph is  
*“Municipal Code 10.82.020: A. It is unlawful for any person to operate, park or locate any motor vehicle within the primary or secondary floodplains of the Kern River.”*



# The KRP Trails Quick Facts

- Bike Bakersfield's Full Moon Ride attracts hundreds of riders in peak months
- Connects to shopping centers and city and county bike lane network including to Downtown Bakersfield, the Shops at Riverwalk
- Community-centered facilities with the Spectrum Amphitheater, the skate park at Beach Park

## Photo Sources:

Top Left: Alex Horvath, the Bakersfield Californian

Top Right: Bike Bakersfield Facebook

Middle Right: Beach Park, Facebook

Bottom Right: Alex Horvath, The Bakersfield Californian





# C. The Future of the Kern River Parkway



Source: Mark Nessia, The Bakersfield Californian



# County and City Cooperation



- **Maintenance**
- **Funding expansion projects**
- **The Kern Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Coalition**

Source: Alex Horvath, The Bakersfield Californian

# C. Expansion Plans

## Lake Ming

- Beginning of the “Lake to Lake” vision
- \$0.5million project over 3 years
  - Funded through Transportation Development Act (TDA)
- Enhancing the bike and ped facilities around the Hart Park area
- Connecting the KRP trail fully around the Kern River Golf Course and Lake Ming
- Allows more residents more comfort
  - Completed paving, and access to parking
  - Seating, including a memorial for Public Works engineer, Mark Evans

Photo Sources:

Top: Casey Christie, The Bakersfield Californian

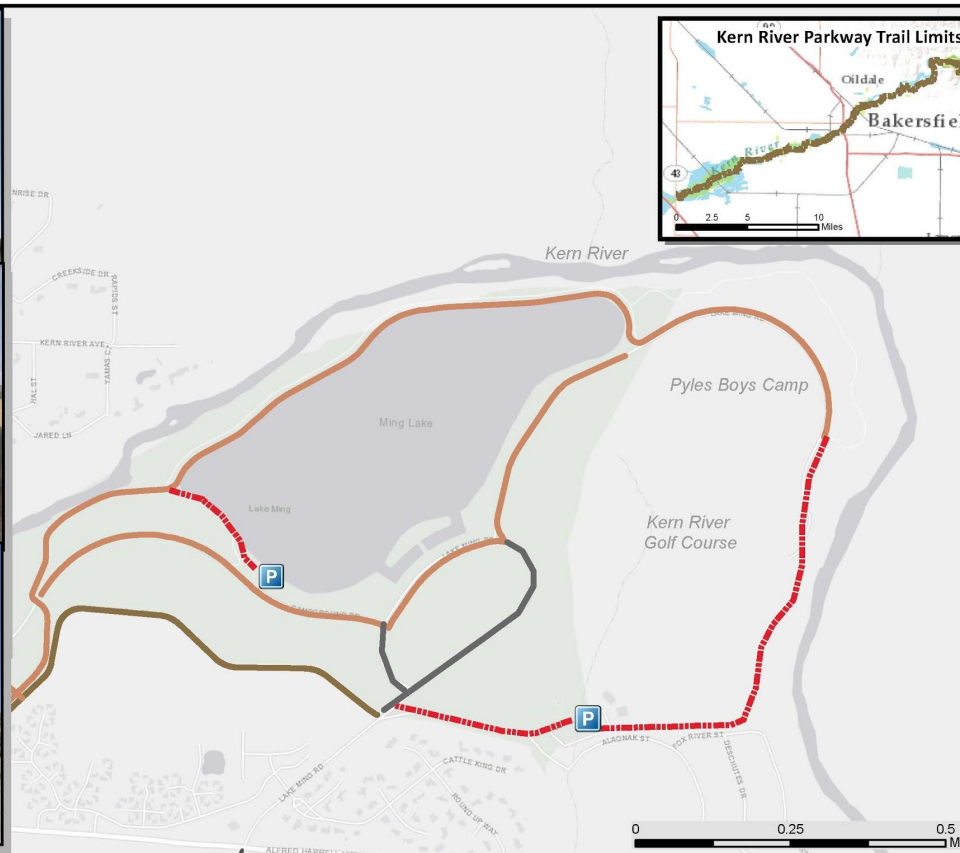
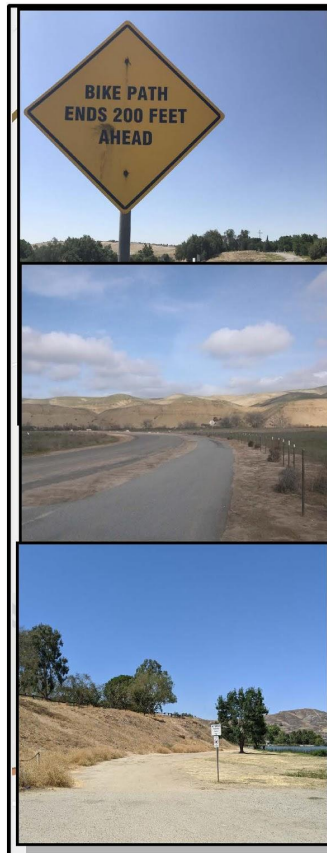
Bottom: via golfcourserankings.com







Photo Sources:  
Left top: Alex Horvath, The Bakersfield Californian  
Map and Left bottom image courtesy of Kern County  
Public Works



## LAKE MING BIKE PATH EXTENSION

--- Eastern Extension Location



Existing Parking Lots

### Existing Kern River Parkway Bike Trail

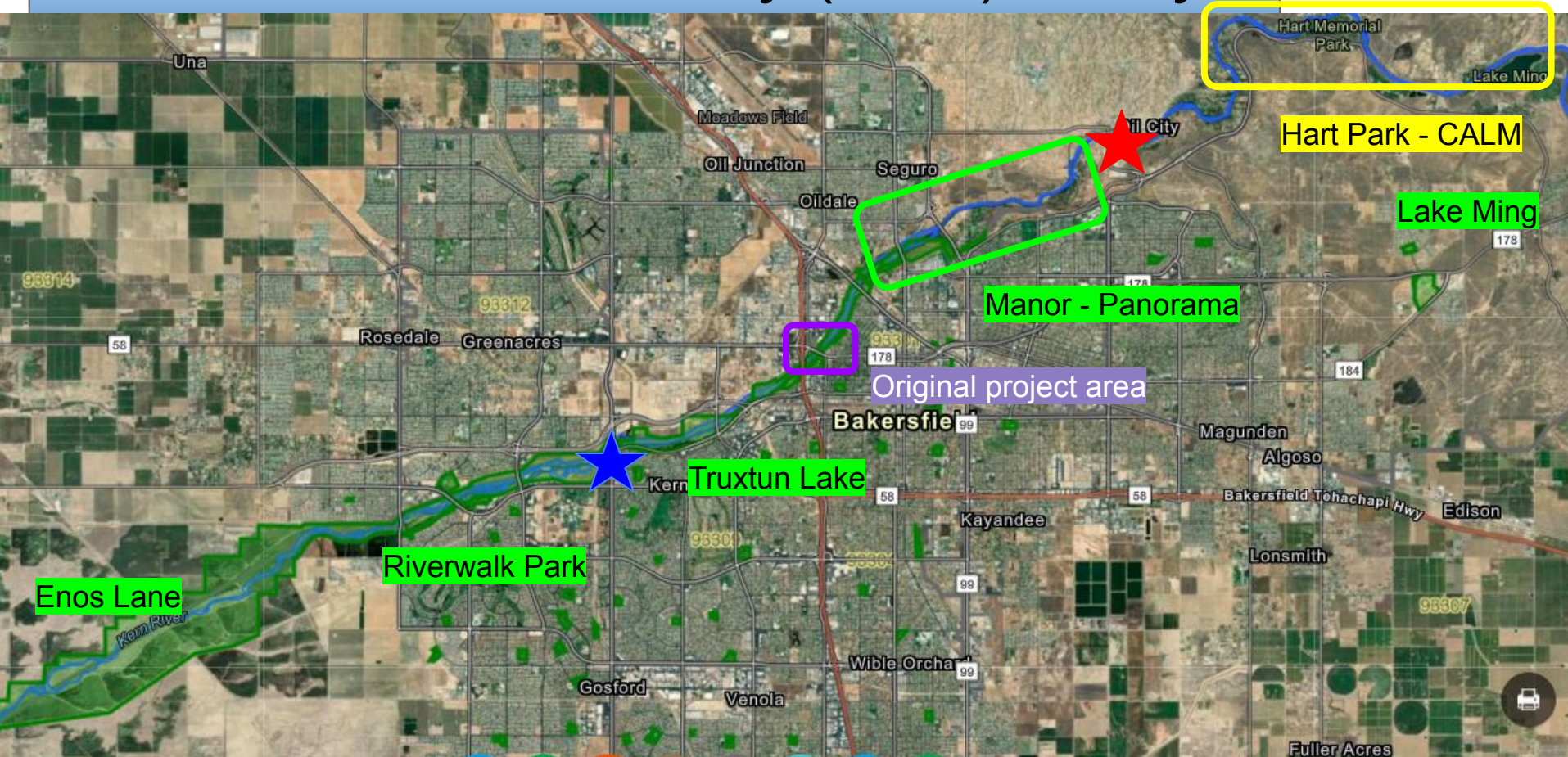
— Class 1

— Class 2

— Class 3



# The Kern River Parkway (KRP) Today



# C. Expansion Plans

## Buena Vista Lake

- 7 miles of Class I Bike Path
- Construction starts in September 2020
- completion by mid 2021
- Connects to KRP at Enos Lane/Hwy 43 to the Buena Vista Aquatic Recreational Area
- Campsite, fishing, boating
- Enhanced bike facilities like parking, bike lanes, water access
- \$3.8 million allocated from Active Transportation Program (ATP)

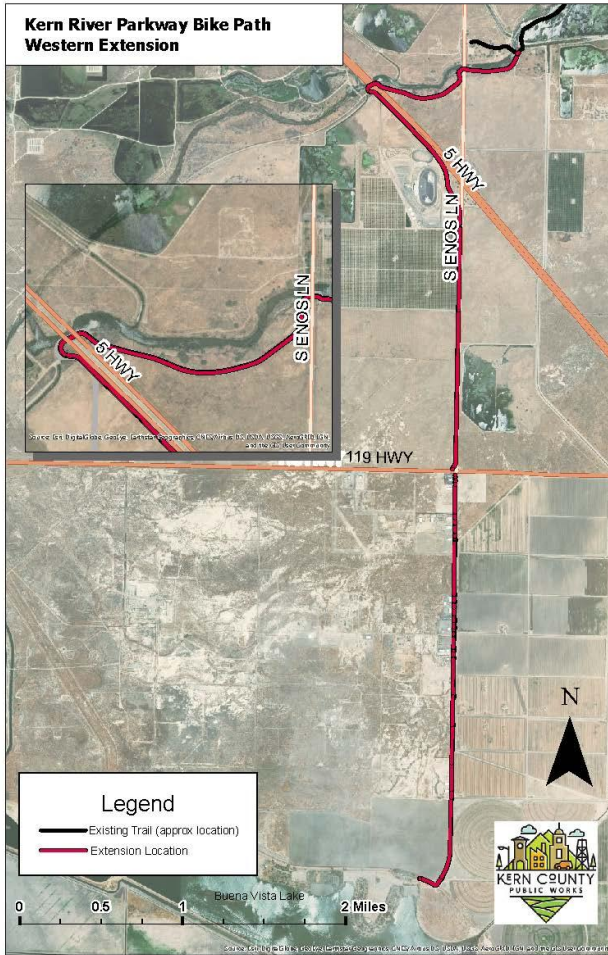
Photo Sources:

Top: Tripadvisor

Bottom: californiasbestcamping.com







**Buena Vista Recreational Area extension detail**



# KRP Trail: Impact Comments



"I've always believed the quality-of-life amenities in Bakersfield are underappreciated to a large extent.

This is on of the best multi-use bike paths in California, and i've ridden them all up and down the state."

- Bob Smith, Ward 4 City Councilman,  
Founder of Bike Bakersfield, Daily Commuter

Video courtesy of The City of Bakersfield Youtube

# KRP Trail: Impact Comments and Questions?



Source:

Left: Bill Cooper and Rich O'Neil courtesy of The Kern River Parkway Foundation

Right: Mentality, via the Bakersfield Californian



# Join us at our second webinar!

September 15, 2020 from 3-4PM

Topic:

## Expanding the Bike Network in Kern County

Panelists:

Bob Smith, City Councilman

Andrae Gonzales, City Councilman

Registration link:

<https://berkeley.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlsc-qhgzgqH9OdhTIG8ntoBaJRfkEMssz2>

Design photo courtesy of the City of Bakersfield



FRIANT-KERN MULTI-USE PATH  
BAKERSFIELD, CA

FRIANT-KERN CANAL AT WESTSIDE PARKWAY - PROPOSED

04.08.18

PROJ. 16001

CATER DESIGN GROUP

B2