

GUIDE TO THE ANDERSON MARSH STATE HISTORIC PARK
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

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Park History

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park contains roughly 1,298 acres of natural, cultural, and historical resources. Located at the south end of Clear Lake in Lake County, the park lies adjacent to State Highway 53 between Sacramento Valley and the Pacific Coast. It is approximately 55 miles north of the city of Napa. The park is accessible by car via State Highway 53.

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park derives its name from Scottish immigrant John Still Anderson, who purchased the land now encompassing the park in 1885. However, human presence in the area dates back thousands of years. The Southeastern Pomo tribes—the Kamdot at Anderson Island, the Elem at Rattlesnake Island, and the Koi at Indian Island—together with Lake Miwok tribes, have continuously occupied the region for 8,000 to 14,000 years. Their longstanding residence in the modern-day park is evident in the artifacts uncovered at former village sites, tool-manufacturing sites, special-use sites, and burial grounds. These areas and all contents contained therein are protected by California State Parks and visitors are asked to show care and respect.

The first whites to venture into the area were hunters and trappers employed by the Hudson Bay Company in the 1820s. By 1856, the federal government had forcibly removed most of the Pomo tribes to the Mendocino Indian Reservation. Although U. S. authorities did permit the Koi to remain as a cheap labor source for incoming settlers, by the 1870s, after travelling to nearby Rattlesnake Island to participate in the Ghost Dance, the Koi returned to Indian Island to find their land stolen by white immigrants.

John Melchizedek “Mels” Grigsby established the first ranch in the present-day park’s boundaries in the 1850s. In 1871, Grigsby sold the land and parts of Siegler Creek, Anderson Flats, Lewis Ridge, and Anderson Marsh to the Clear Lake Water Works Company. In 1882, the water company transferred the land’s title to its subsidiary, the California Agricultural Improvement Association, which then planted vineyards and orchards, raised hay, and established dairies on the property. Three years later, John Still Anderson purchased 1,300 acres from the company, an area containing the modern-day park, to graze cattle and produce hay, wheat, and barley (**Figures 1 and 2**). After Anderson died in 1912, followed by his wife Sarah four years later, their surviving family retained ownership of the property until 1964. That year, the Anderson Family Trust sold the still-operational ranch to Ray Lyons who leased it to his brother-in-law, Anthony Leonardini, before selling it to the State of California in 1982. The following year, the Department of General Services transferred administrative authority over the property to California State Parks. In 1985, the State Parks Commission classified the unit a state historic park.



Figure 1. Anderson family, ca. 1890-1900. Catalog # 090-P70362

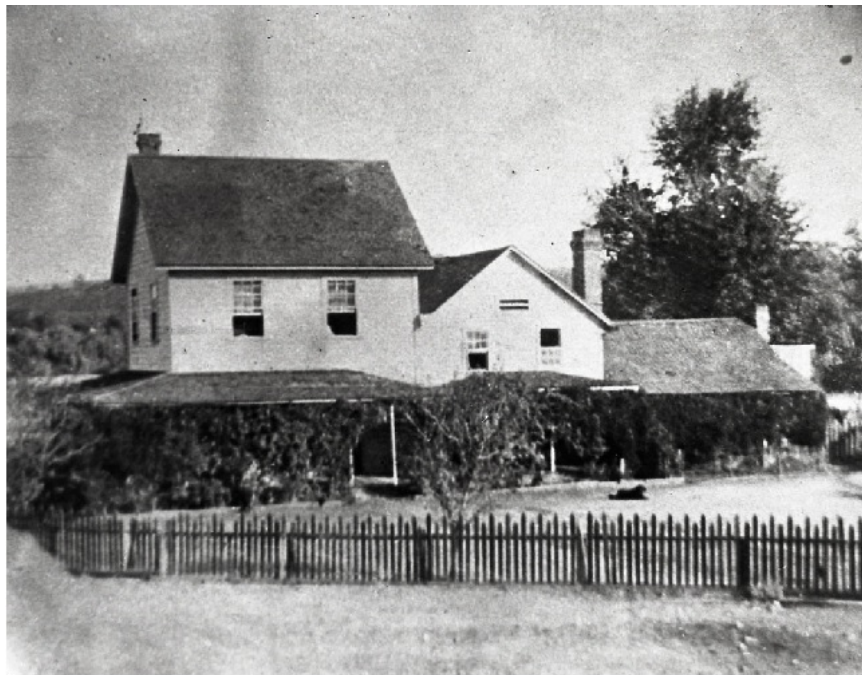


Figure 2. Anderson ranch house, ca. 1890-1900. Catalog # 090-P70361.

California State Parks, coordinating with the Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association, maintains a wealth of natural, cultural, and historical resources at the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. Also included within the park is the 540-acre internal unit, Anderson Marsh Natural Preserve, which comprises over 50 percent of the Clear Lake region's remaining wetland habitat. The park contains four different habitats—freshwater marshes, riparian woodlands, oak woodlands, and grasslands—

with each hosting its own diversity of plant and animal life, including endangered American bald eagles and one of the largest great blue heron rookeries on the lake. Also contained within the park are 24 prehistoric Koi sites at various locations as well as the historic Anderson Ranch complex (**Figure 3**). The park also includes five trails of various lengths and is available for day-use only.



Figure 3. Anderson ranch house, May 16, 2008. Catalog # 090-P59911.

Scope and Content

The Anderson Marsh State Historic Park Photographic Collection spans the years 1890-2014, with the bulk of the collection covering the years 2008 and 2014. There is a total of 150 cataloged images including 4 photographic prints, scans, and negatives, 19 35mm slides, and 127 born-digital images. Photographs originated primarily from California State Parks staff.

The collection mainly depicts the various natural and built features of the park. Imagery includes: several ground views of Clear Lake, Cache Creek, Kelsey Creek, Siegler Creek, and Anderson Marsh that include trees, rocks, hillsides, vegetation, and a few fish and bird species. There are also several ground views of nearby Lakeshore Village and the Anderson Ranch complex, which includes barns, the Anderson Ranch house—with interior shots—a shed, a privy, and the park headquarters.

The collection also includes numerous aerial and even underwater views. Aerial imagery documents Anderson Marsh, Cache Creek, Clear Lake, Mount Konocti, and Ridge Point. Underwater imagery captures fish spawning at Kelsey Creek.

While the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park Photographic Collection provides decent illustrations of the Anderson Ranch complex and all its historical resources, it fails to adequately document the park's natural and cultural resources. The collection fails to document the enormity of plant and animal life housed within the park. Furthermore, aside from a single slide documenting "Native American Days" circa 1982,

the collection does not convey the importance of the Koi or any other tribal group to the area.

Related Collection

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park Collection, California State Parks Archives.

Catalog Subject Search Terms

Aerial view
Anderson Ranch house
Cache Creek
Clear Lake
John Anderson
Lakeshore Village
Mount Konocti
Native American Days
Ridge Point
Sarah Anderson