



Cartography by Jessica Siegel

### Occidental Road Near the Intersection with Sanford Rd, Santa Rosa

Property owned by County of Sonoma. Trail maintained by Regional Parks Department.

You can paddle either north or south from this spot. If headed south, you will need to put in your kayak or canoe south of the Ludwigia patch that clogs the channel. If headed north, follow the path at the base of the road west to the channel. **How to Get There:** There is a small gravel parking lot (6-8 cars max) on the south side of Occidental Road, east of the Laguna Bridge. **Access:** Depending on water levels, you may be able to put-in right at the parking lot or you may need to walk your boat a short distance to the water's edge.

### Santa Rosa Creek at Willowside Road, Santa Rosa

Property owned by City of Santa Rosa.

If water levels are high enough, you can kayak west on Santa Rosa Creek to the confluence with the Laguna, then turn south and follow the Laguna. **How to Get There:** The entrance to the trail is on Willowside Road, 0.5 miles south of Guerneville Road and 0.5 miles north of Hall Road. Park on the wide shoulders along Willowside Road near the trail **Access:** Follow the Santa Rosa Creek Trail on the south-east side of the bridge at Willowside Road and Santa Rosa Creek.

### Laguna Confluence with the Russian River in Forestville (not shown on map)

The Laguna joins the Russian River at Mirabel RV Park and Campground, 8400 River Road, Forestville. There is an easy put-in area just behind the campground office. Mirabel Park rents kayaks and canoes, or you can bring your own. There is a small fee to park and launch your own boat. Check in at the office. From there you can go quite a ways upstream; you'll be heading east then eventually south. This is an area not often visited by boaters and offers a different experience from the open, floodplain areas of the Laguna. The waterways are smaller, with a heavy riparian canopy and steep banks on either side. Conditions may vary widely, depending on water levels.

## Paddling in the Laguna

Kayaking and canoeing in the Laguna is most desirable (and sometimes only possible) during the winter months. The Laguna is a shallow floodplain environment and there needs to be enough water under the boat to allow navigation and to avoid dense, tangled mats of the invasive aquatic plant, *Ludwigia*. The best conditions are usually within one to two weeks after heavy rainfall.

## Wildlife Habitat

The Laguna's 22-mile channel extends from Cotati to its confluence with the Russian River at Forestville, but the Laguna is far more than its main channel. It is a unique ecological system comprised of a mosaic of creeks, open water, perennial marshes, seasonal wetlands, riparian forests, oak woodlands and grasslands. The Laguna is an important stopover for thousands of birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway and is home to a wide variety of life: more than 200 species of birds ranging from bald eagles to hummingbirds, steelhead, salamanders, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mink, badger, and river otter.

## CAUTIONS

Waterfowl hunting is allowed in the Laguna each winter from mid-October to the end of January. Care is warranted. Use common sense; if you hear shots from an area, stay clear of that area. Please check the California Department of Fish and Wildlife website for exact hunting season dates. ([www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting))

When water levels are high you may notice that you are kayaking over fences and you may see "No Trespassing" signs. The Laguna is a waterway of the United States. Therefore, as long as you are on the water, you are not trespassing.

There are unforeseen hazards in the area. Please paddle with a buddy and always wear a personal flotation device.

## The Laguna de Santa Rosa is a Wetland of International Importance

The largest tributary of the Russian River, the Laguna drains a 254-square-mile watershed. The Laguna and the surrounding Santa Rosa Plain Wetland Complex are of particular international importance because of the rare and endangered plant and animal species found here, the extensive biodiversity of our region, and our unique vernal pool environments. We live in a special place – one recognized not just locally, but internationally.

Since 1971, wetlands all over the world have been designated by the Ramsar Convention to highlight the importance of wetlands and the ecosystem services they provide. The Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetland Complex was the 30th site in the nation to receive this unique distinction.

## The Laguna de Santa Rosa Watershed

In addition to the habitat it provides for wildlife, the Laguna is used for agricultural, recreational and educational purposes. It serves as a natural holding basin during our wet season and as an overflow area for the Russian River during floods, slowing and capturing floodwaters and easing their impact on lower Russian River communities. As the receiving water of a watershed where most of the county's human population lives, it is a landscape feature of critical importance to Sonoma County's water quality, flood control, and biodiversity.

The Laguna Foundation works to restore and conserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa and to inspire public appreciation for Sonoma County's Wetland of International Importance.



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# Paddling the Laguna de Santa Rosa

