

The View from the River



Why are people so drawn to small boats?

Is it the promise of independence and adventure for all ages? The unique perspective on our environment gained from getting close—really close—to nature? Is it because moving a small boat by paddle or oar improves one's fitness? Or the satisfaction of connecting with our maritime past?

People love small boats...

for any number of reasons, and hundreds of boaters are already enjoying this special relationship on the Petaluma River. Many more could enjoy it too, *if Petaluma had a Small Craft Center.*

Envision a Small Craft Center

The Petaluma Small Craft Center would provide essential support for the many small boat enthusiasts who use rowing shells, outrigger canoes, kayaks, and traditional wooden boats. In order to develop such a center, local boaters have joined together as the **Petaluma Small Craft Center Coalition**, or **PSC3**.

PSC3 is working to create a community resource where boating clubs, individual river users, and visitors can go to learn boating skills, share knowledge, and enjoy the river. We are developing plans and public support for the center, while narrowing the search to one or more suitable locations to build a boathouse.

Whether the Center will occupy a single site, or several, remains to be determined. In the meantime, we are studying other successful multi-use facilities on the West Coast to discover the best approach for our community's needs.

Our vision includes a strong educational component, with a focus on water safety, small boat handling, and the natural wonders of the river environs.

The Time for a Small Craft Center is **Now!**

Petaluma's waterfront redevelopment has revived interest in the River as a community asset. Within a few years, thousands of new residents will live near the river. However, additional river access has not been included in any of the new development—not to mention a site large enough for a Small Craft Center.

The PSC3 is working to help balance current development by providing opportunities for key recreational and educational amenities. Well-established adult and youth rowing and paddling programs are poised for further growth, and new programs are in the works. These will include sailing, small boat building and repair, boat handling and water safety, as well as other activities.

Location, Location, Location

Practical sites for a small craft center are few. Urgent action is needed now to secure one or more sites in order to meet Petaluma's long-term recreational, educational, and cultural interests.

PSC3 is looking for waterfront property located on the main channel of the Petaluma River between the Turning Basin and the Petaluma Marina. The property should have shoreline access to accommodate 150 feet of dock accessible at all tides, as well as a ramp for hand and trailer launching of small boats.

You Can Help! →



Is there a Small Craft Center in Petaluma's future?



Petaluma is a great river town that can be even better!

The addition of the Petaluma Small Craft Center will help enrich the vital mix of commercial, residential, and recreational uses. The next step is clear: we need to secure a site. **Please support our efforts** by encouraging property owners and community leaders to join PSC3 in making this vision a reality.

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For the latest news of our progress, plus links to PSC3 members' websites, please visit: starbirdcreative.com/PSC3

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Do You “Canoe?” What About “Crew?”

Do you face forward or backward — *paddle, sweep, or scull*? All these types of small craft call the Petaluma River home.

Paddling

Paddlers face forward in their boats and use single bladed paddles (canoes), or double bladed paddles (kayaks). The Hawaiian outrigger canoe can be paddled by one, two, four, or six people and has an “ama” to one side to provide stability. Six-person canoes are 45’ long and weigh approximately 400 lbs.

There are three outrigger associations in Petaluma: **Lokahi Outrigger Canoe Club**, **Ohana Wa’a Outrigger Canoe Club**, and **He’e Nalu O’ Marin**. Combined, they have about 200 members, including dozens of juniors paddlers who compete regionally and worldwide.

Kayaks you’ll see on the river include “sit-in” ocean-type kayaks, sit-on-tops, and skinny, tippy racing kayaks. The **Petaluma Paddlers** organizes informal outings through an internet newsgroup. Its 100 members can be seen on the river at various times nearly every day.



Rowing

Rowers face backward and use oars — either one in each hand (sculling) or one longer oar in both hands (sweeping). Fixed seat rowboats come in all shapes, sizes, and materials. Some even come with small sailing rigs to take advantage of the wind.

Sliding seat rowing boats use a seat on wheels that moves on tracks to harness the power of the legs. Sculling boats can be rowed by one (single), as doubles, or as quads. Sweep boats, commonly called crew boats, are pairs for two, fours, and eights. Most crew boats also have a coxswain on board to steer the boat.

The **NorthBay Rowing Club** was founded in 1984 and began the NBRC Juniors program in 1990. Combined, they have over 100 members including dozens of juniors rowers. **Sonoma State Crew** began its rowing program in 2003 and has over 80 collegiate rowers.



Other Small Craft Supporters

Several other organizations are actively promoting boating on the Petaluma River. The **Petaluma Yacht Club** works to welcome visiting boaters and yacht clubs to Petaluma and is interested in a small boat sailing program. **Friends of the Petaluma River** has organized monthly “Nautical Mass” small boat gatherings and is a key supporter of a Maritime Heritage Center. The **Petaluma Sea Scouts** encourages boating safety and instruction among young people and assists with numerous river-related projects.

Join us in making the River more accessible to everyone who loves small boats. Help PSC3 locate and build a Small Craft Center on the Petaluma riverfront.



The PSC3 consists of interested community leaders, river users, and river activists, including:
He’e Nalu Outrigger Canoe Club • Lokahi Outrigger Canoe Club • NorthBay Rowing Club • Ohana Wa’a Outrigger Canoe Club • Petaluma Paddlers • Petaluma Sea Scouts • Petaluma Yacht Club • Sonoma State University Crew • Traditional Small Craft Association • Friends of the Petaluma River
Coalition supporters have years of hands-on experience putting people on the river and serving as stewards of the River.