

California State Parks Strategic Initiatives

- A. Promoting Health
- B. Achieving Sustainability
- C. Embracing Diversity
- D. Making Connections
- E. “Cool Parks” (Addressing Climate Change)

I. Strategic Themes

A. Promoting Health: this theme derives directly from our Mission and Vision; it is based on a broad definition of “health” which includes physical, mental, social and ecological dimensions. Associated key elements include (but are not limited to):

1. Healthy Employees—We provide a work environment that promotes increased health, safety and well-being for all employees. That environment includes opportunities for professional development and personal growth.
2. Healthy Visitors—We provide a safe setting for our visitors to improve their physical health and mental well-being through recreation and participation in environments and opportunities that promote inspiration, discovery and learning. We promote healthy foods and active living. This includes healthy kids, and promotes opportunities to get children outside and active through unstructured and structured activities.
3. Healthy Communities—We promote a healthier society by creating and strengthening the connections of community, families, and friends with each other and with their natural and cultural heritages. We promote common values by ensuring that all communities—particularly underserved urban communities—have the opportunity to experience outdoor recreation. We support communities’ economic health by supporting local tourism and by reaching out to small businesses.
4. Healthy Environment—We preserve, manage and maintain outstanding examples of California’s ecosystems. We minimize our impacts on the environment by reducing our energy consumption and our waste production and by supporting recycling efforts.

B. Achieving Sustainability: Our Mission is timeless. To achieve it we must pursue policies and practices that we can sustain long into the future. We must consider the effects on the Seventh Generation in all that we do. Sustainability is particularly critical in several key areas, including:

1. Resource Management—We must manage our natural and cultural resources in order to ensure their long-term protection and viability.
2. Facilities—Our facilities and systems must be designed to be easy to maintain with low energy and water consumption and minimal waste.
3. Social and Political Relations—We must develop and maintain long-term, positive relations with our visitors and with the public at large in order to ensure their support for protecting and managing our parks into the future. This must include efforts to better identify ourselves to the public (branding) and to better understand and meet the public’s recreation needs.
4. Inspiring the next generation We must build our next generation of support by instilling in children the need to protect and preserve our natural areas.

5. Fiscal Resources—We must seek additional, stable sources of funding in order to protect our parks from an expected long-term decline in General Fund support.

C. Embracing Diversity: Diversity, in all its variations, is one of California's most valuable assets. The integral role of California State Parks in shaping the future of California depends on broad based support and involvement reflecting the variety of ages, ethnicities, lifestyles and interests of a hugely diverse population.

1. Our Employees: A diverse workforce increases understanding and appreciation among all employees, enables us to better understand the needs of our ever-changing population, and also creates a more welcoming feeling for our visitors
2. Our Visitors: We must provide services, facilities and programs that meet the needs of a diverse pool of current and potential visitors to ensure that visitors understand and value the role of California State Parks. This includes opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to experience our parks
3. Our Communities: We must develop and strengthen partnerships, relationships, and collaborations within diverse populations and communities.
4. Cultural Resources: We must manage and protect a diverse spectrum of cultural resources that reflect the cultures of California.

D. Making Connections:

1. Our employees: State Park employees represent a wealth of knowledge, creativity and compassion. Ideas and input should be shared and opportunities provided to work as a team.
2. Professional: State Parks should strengthen connections with other public, private and nonprofit agencies and organizations that share common missions and/or can further strengthen the State Parks mission.
3. Communities: State Parks should develop connections with a wide variety of communities in California to leverage knowledge, resources and understanding. State Parks should work with community groups to reach and involve youth.
4. Our Environment: Connecting ecosystems and wildlife habitats is critical to sustainable resource management.

E. "*Cool Parks*"—Addressing Climate Change: Climate change threatens all that we value and protect in the world. Addressing it will be *the* defining challenge for this and several subsequent generations of Parks leaders. We must respond in each of the following areas:

1. Getting Our House In Order—In State Parks we must reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) through energy conservation, innovative design and other creative approaches. We must maximize the carbon-sequestering potential of our forests and other habitats when consistent with our mission.
2. Adaptation—We must modify our resource management, acquisition and restoration policies and practices to help ensure that the species and habitats we protect can successfully adapt to the effects of climate change.
3. Interpretation— We must teach our visitors, including children, about the impacts of climate change on parks and inspire them to adapt to climate change by making positive lifestyle changes. Our parks should become models of climate-change best practices showcasing what is at risk and what can be done about it.