



Use of Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices in California State Parks

In conformance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), California State Parks is pleased to improve access for people with mobility disabilities by allowing the use of Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) in areas where they can be operated safely, without posing substantial risk of serious harm to natural or cultural resources, and without fundamentally altering the nature of our services, programs, or activities.

Mobility devices help people with mobility disabilities enjoy greater freedom and independence. They include devices such as manual or power-driven wheelchairs, manually-powered devices, and other-powered devices.

Wheelchairs are devices designed primarily for use by an individual with a mobility disability for the main purpose of indoor, or of both indoor and outdoor locomotion, and include manual wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, and electric scooters. Manually powered devices include mobility aids such as walkers, crutches, canes, braces, and other similar devices.

Wheelchairs and manually-powered mobility aids are permitted into all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.

What are OPDMD?

OPDMD are any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines—whether or not designed primarily for use by individuals with mobility disabilities—that is used by individuals with mobility disabilities for the purpose of locomotion, but that is not a wheelchair.

Devices used for recreational purposes, but which are not needed for the purpose of locomotion outside of recreational uses, do not meet the definition of an OPDMD.

Who may use OPDMD?

The use of OPDMD in California State Parks is restricted to people with a qualifying disability as defined by Title II of the ADA (28 CFR Part 35 § 35.108). For the purposes of OPDMD use, a qualifying disability is any physical impairment that substantially limits walking or standing.

All users of OPDMD must provide credible assurance that the mobility device is required for locomotion because of their disability. Credible assurance may be provided by presenting to park staff a valid Access Pass issued by the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Program, valid proof of assignment of any state's disabled parking placard, or other valid State-issued proof of disability assigned to the person who will be using the OPDMD.

Individuals who provide only verbal representation, not contradicted by observable fact, that the OPDMD is required because of a mobility disability will not be denied the benefit of an OPDMD. However, persons who falsely represent themselves as disabled to gain the benefits of using of an OPDMD in California state parks will be denied and may be subject to citation and penalties.

Approved Devices

In the California State Park System, the [Trails Handbook](#) describes the physical and design characteristics of state park trails, and minimum trail standards. These characteristics and standards, and federal¹ assessment factors, are the basis upon which state park professionals evaluated the suitability of devices. Devices that meet all criteria are approved for use, where approved. Where a device does not meet one or more criteria, see *OPDMD Deviation Requests*.

Factor	Criteria	Justification
Size	OPDMD shall not be wider than 36" or longer than 48".	Assessment factors (i, ii, iii, v). Larger devices affect the safe flow of pedestrian traffic, impede safe passing of other users and devices, and may encounter issues with tight turning radius. Due to the physical and design characteristics of park routes, larger devices may stray from the established route, which creates a substantial risk of serious harm to the immediate environment and natural or cultural resources.
Weight	The overall weight of the OPDMD and user(s) shall not exceed 550 pounds.	Assessment factors (i, iii, iv, v). Heavier devices affect the ability of the device to stop quickly, which creates a substantial risk of serious harm to other users. Due to the physical and design characteristics of park routes, heavier devices may affect and degrade the composition and surface of park routes, and thus pose a substantial impact to the immediate environment, natural or cultural resources, and sustainability.
Speed	OPDMD shall not be operated at speeds more than 5 miles per hour. ²	Assessment factors (i, ii, iii). Considering the physical and design characteristics of park routes, devices operated at speeds more than 5 mph may affect the safe flow of pedestrian traffic and impede the safe passing of other users and devices.
Noise	OPDMD shall not produce noise levels more than 70 decibels (dB).	Assessment factors (iv, v). Noise pollution exceeding 70 dB may be a safety risk to other users, poses substantial risk of serious harm to natural resources such as wildlife, and may fundamentally alter the nature of the experience for other users.
Emissions	OPDMD shall not exceed zero emissions during use.	Assessment factor (v). Devices with emissions reduce air quality, affecting other users and harming natural resources. Emissions producing devices create a substantial risk of serious harm to the immediate environment and natural or cultural resources due to the fire dangers of a hot engine, potential spark emissions, and the remote nature of park routes.

Approved Routes

Devices that meet the criteria are allowed on the following park routes within California state parks:

1. Class I designated trails that are designated as accessible or multiple use.
2. Exterior routes of travel designed for pedestrian use within developed public use areas.
3. Controlled access roads such as fire roads.

For assistance with determining the names and locations of approved park routes in a park unit, contact the [District Office](#) responsible for the park unit or the [Roads and Trails Program](#).

¹ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 28 CFR Part 35 § 35.137(b)(2)

² OPDMD capable of exceeding 5 mph will not be prohibited from use, but individuals observed exceeding the speed limit may be subject to citation and penalties.

OPDMD Deviation Requests

People with mobility disabilities who wish to utilize an OPDMD that does not meet one or more of the criteria, or on a park route that has not been evaluated, may submit a deviation request for accommodation. Requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All requests must include a description of the requested device and the desired routes where the device will be operated. To submit a request, contact the District Office responsible for the park unit or the [Accessibility Division](#).