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# Strategic Action Plan

## “Brilliance in the Basics”

### 2013-2014

Message from the Director • Vision • Core Values • Mission • Goals



California Department of Parks and Recreation  
March 2013

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Purpose

The past few months have been challenging to California State Parks, but they have been a catalyst for positive change. The crises we are going through do not define us, but they will help us move forward. Let me assure you that moving forward is not a rhetorical statement, but an opportunity and a responsibility for all of us. As I enter my first full year as the 19<sup>th</sup> Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, I introduce you to our Department's Strategic Action Plan. This plan will help set the direction for our actions over the next two years, while we develop a long-term plan for stewarding California's park system in and through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Over the next year we will lay the foundation for the long-term vision and plan that will ensure a vibrant and sustainable State Park System. Working with State Park employees, the Natural Resources Agency, and the public, and with guidance from the Legislature, we will create a public process, directed by an independent task force comprised of members known for their intellect, integrity, experience, and commitment to the common good. This planning process will result in a broadly supported, innovative, fiscally sound long-term plan we will implement immediately. This process will enable us to explore new and better means of carrying out our mission and stewarding the resources in our charge.

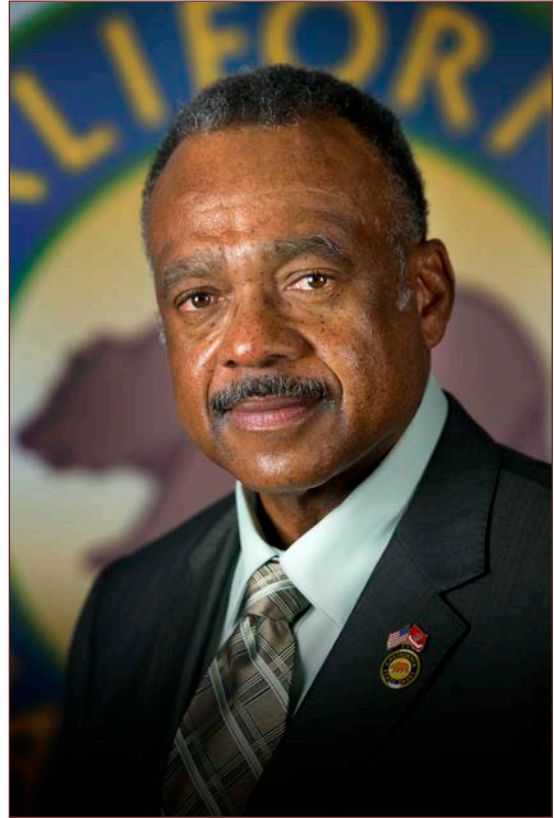
Right now, California State Parks has all the pieces, expertise, passion and commitment to be the best. My goal is to connect those pieces, so that together, we can become a more sophisticated entity from the inside out. How do we do that? In simple terms, we get back to the basics and our mission. We move away from the 20<sup>th</sup>-century construct and mentality that has inherently hindered our Department. We also set goals and strategies to grow, improve, inspire, connect, and make California State Parks the example to follow, not just in the nation, but the world.

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## Goals

In this Strategic Action Plan, I have identified broad goals and objectives that capture an array of actions to get us on the right track. From this plan, it is imperative for our units to work in tandem to identify specific tasks and tactics to be achieved within this year. Thus, this also could be considered a work plan that needs fleshing out. Our goals are to:

1. Restore public trust and accountability
2. Protect and preserve resources and facilities in the existing State Park System
3. Maintain the cleanest park facilities and restrooms in the country
4. Connect people to California's State Park System
5. Build the foundation for a sustainable future.



The actions needed to accomplish these goals will inspire confidence among our partners and the public that the people's natural, cultural and financial resources are expertly managed. To that end, it is each and every State Parks employee and volunteer's responsibility to read and understand this Strategic Action Plan. Leaders at every level will issue implementing directives. However, all employees have a responsibility to fully support and aggressively implement the intent of this plan. We are all partners in this Brilliance in the Basics plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony L. Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Major General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (retired)**  
**Director, California Department of Parks and Recreation**

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## VISION

California State Parks will strive for a future in which Californians are healthier in mind, body and spirit through discovering, enjoying and learning about California's extraordinary parklands and diverse heritages. California State Parks makes these treasured natural and cultural resources and wide-ranging recreational opportunities available to all. Californians protect and expand this State Parks legacy for future generations.

## CORE VALUES

### **INTEGRITY**

We will serve the public in an honest, ethical, and forthright manner by keeping our promises and adhering to the letter and spirit of the law.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPECT**

We respect the intrinsic values of both the natural and cultural environment, and believe that their preservation is essential to our health and to the definition of the California identity.

### **CULTURAL DIVERSITY / ACCESSIBILITY**

In addition to biological diversity, we believe that cultural diversity is one of California's most valuable resources. We recognize that a diverse workforce enables us to better communicate with all peoples. We believe in the right of all Californians, including persons with disabilities, to have access to California State Parks.

### **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION**

We believe that our system of service delivery can always be improved, and we will work at effecting that improvement. We conduct business efficiently and economically.

### **EMPLOYEE INVESTMENT AND INVOLVEMENT**

We respect each employee as a full organizational partner and participant in the delivery systems of our mission. We believe that each employee should have the power to act when situations arise, should be trained to treat everyone with respect and dignity, and should have ongoing learning opportunities. We value employee creativity, and acknowledge that creativity means taking

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risks and learning from mistakes. We are members of cohesive teams working toward the achievement of the Department's mission.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

We believe our organization shares the goals of other public, private and nonprofit organizations. Through collaboration, we can ensure appropriate use of resources, maximize fund development, and provide needed public services.

**COMMUNICATION**

We are more effective when information flows freely, teamwork is encouraged, and employee contributions are recognized. We must communicate effectively if we are to carry out our mission and achieve what we have envisioned.

**LEADERSHIP**

We believe that in order to fully succeed in our mission and to achieve our vision, we must provide leadership to the public we serve.

**SAFETY**

We are committed to ensuring a safe, healthy work environment and an accident-free visitor experience. This commitment reflects the right that employees have to a safe environment.

**MISSION**

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the State's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

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# GOALS

## Goal 1: Restore public trust and accountability

### Objective 1.1: Improve availability of information

#### Strategies

- 1.1.1.** Implement a transparent performance-measurement system to gauge the Department's progress in achieving our goals.
- 1.1.2.** Implement an integrated communication strategy targeting different audiences and stakeholders with messages tailored for each.
- 1.1.3.** Work with Administration, Legislature, advocates and stakeholders of California State Parks to enhance support, create awareness of ongoing issues, and build understanding of the need for cooperative efforts in addressing issues or implementing action items.

### Objective 1.2: Identify and implement efficiencies and best practices

#### Strategies

- 1.2.1.** Implement and properly track recommendations of audits by Department of Finance, Bureau of State Audits, and State Controller's Office.
- 1.2.2.** Evaluate existing department policies, processes and procedures and identify comprehensive improvements.
- 1.2.3.** Integrate the Department's grant-application and -management systems.
- 1.2.4.** Implement a service-based examination of the Department's programs and services to determine operating costs at the park unit level and implement a consistent, repeatable process for tracking those costs.
- 1.2.5.** Implement information-technology project governance and reporting processes to ensure projects are properly funded and aligned with the strategic plan.

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## **Goal 2: Protect and preserve resources and facilities in the existing State Park System**

### **Objective 2.1: Repair, upgrade or replace critical infrastructure**

#### **Strategies**

- 2.1.1.** Develop and implement an annual facility-maintenance plan to protect the condition of our assets and our ability to serve the public.
- 2.1.2.** Develop a multi-year deferred maintenance plan that prioritizes by yearly increments deferred maintenance needs designed to eliminate the pervasive backlog.
- 2.1.3.** Provide the Administration, including the Department of Finance, each legislator and the State Park and Recreation Commission with an itemized list of specific local deferred maintenance needs.

### **Objective 2.2: Evaluate the condition of significant natural and cultural resources and document critical action required to enhance, maintain and protect them.**

#### **Strategies**

- 2.2.1** Develop and implement annual cultural and natural resources ongoing maintenance plans.
- 2.2.2** Develop a multi-year resource-stewardship plan identifying needed restoration work.
- 2.2.3** Reestablish departmental Statewide California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Coordinator and District Accessibility Coordinator positions.

### **Objective 2.3: Make sustainable acquisition decisions**

#### **Strategies**

- 2.3.1.** Produce a prioritized list of land acquisition, land trade, and management agreement needs by district and review and update it every four years.
- 2.3.2.** Develop criteria for adding new park units that includes means for funding additional cost of operations.
- 2.3.3.** Complete in-holding and adjacent property acquisitions where feasible and affordable.

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## **Goal 3: Maintain the cleanest park facilities and restrooms in the country**

### **Strategies**

- 3.1.1.** Evaluate existing infrastructure to serve visitor needs and current maintenance efforts.
- 3.1.2.** Develop and approve Department-wide “Cleanest Restrooms in the Country” guidelines, and assess resources and staff needs.

## **Goal 4: Connect people to California’s State Park System**

### **Strategies**

- 4.1.1.** Develop and implement a plan to promote and celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of California State Parks.
- 4.1.2.** Work with diverse community organizations to increase support and raise awareness of California’s cultural treasures, natural resources and unique recreational opportunities.
- 4.1.3.** Develop a long-term promotional plan that identifies features and benefits of each park, and translates into several languages to reach diverse communities.
- 4.1.4.** Develop an integrated interpretation and education plan to create links between visitors and park values.

## **Goal 5: Build the foundation for a sustainable future**

### **Objective 5.1: Foster excellence in our workforce while developing future leaders**

#### **Strategies**

- 5.1.1.** Work collaboratively to develop and implement career-path, leadership-development and succession-planning opportunities for all park classifications.
- 5.1.2.** Partner with UC Merced to develop a California State Parks Institute to provide collaborative learning opportunities for California State Park Managers and Park Partners working in the parks.
- 5.1.3.** Develop consistent professional development standards and prerequisites for leaders at various levels.
- 5.1.4.** Provide clear information to staff about professional development and advancement opportunities.



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- 5.1.5.** Provide on-the-job and temporary work assignment opportunities that enhance staff development.

**Objective 5.2: Create a State Parks System that balances public funding and innovative revenue generation models to meet visitors' present and future needs. We will move forward with our initial revenue generation plan while using an independent task force to help us develop a long-term sustainable program.**

**Strategies**

- 5.2.1.** Identify and implement additional innovations that increase mission-consistent revenue to include:
- district-level revenue targets and incentives
  - variable fee schedules, including hourly pricing pilots
  - funding for seasonal employees that immediately generate revenue
  - access to investment capital for future revenue-generating services
  - campground improvements and new overnight options
  - upgrades to special event facilities
  - repurposing underutilized structures to allow for new services
  - deployment of new technology for fee collection equipment and systems
- 5.2.2.** Convene multidisciplinary task force to conduct an independent assessment and make recommendations on vision, future management, planning, and funding proposals to assure long-term sustainability of the State Park System.
- 5.2.3.** Develop a five-year, Department-wide business plan to guide efforts to efficiently generate revenue, and to be used in the annual budget implementation plan process.
- 5.2.4.** Explore renewable and/or alternative energy options that would meet park needs and reduce long-term energy costs.
- 5.2.5.** Fully implement AB 1478 by securing donor and operating agreements, and explore long-term partnerships.
- 5.2.6.** Effectively market and expand awareness of and support for California State Parks.
- 5.2.7.** Renegotiate, as appropriate, leases and agreements to maximize revenue potential.



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