



News Release

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Donner Memorial State Park New Visitor Center to Open In June

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- The new [Donner Memorial State Park](#) Visitor Center will open its doors to the public on Saturday June 6, 2015 with a special ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony. The event will take place from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and visitors will enjoy free parking and free admission to the exhibits, as well as speeches by dignitaries. The dedication ceremony will take place on the 97th anniversary of the original Pioneer Memorial Dedication.

The new visitor center will replace the existing Emigrant Trail Museum, and will feature a state of the art facility with innovative and engaging programs and exhibits. Compelling new exhibits feature stories of the Emigrant Experience, the Land of the Washoe, Chinese construction of the railroad and early motoring adventures over Donner Pass. The Multipurpose Theater includes state-of-the-art audiovisual systems for presentations. An expanded information center welcomes visitors with interactive kiosks for exploring connections to other state parks. A spacious museum store provides keepsakes for visitors young and old. Improvements to the landscape include a paved walk to the Pioneer Memorial, the path taken by the Donner Party and other emigrants.

“Donner Memorial State Park is a jewel in our system, and it’s recognized worldwide for its historical value. The new visitor center will enhance our visitors’ experience, and will allow us to showcase the significance of the park in a more interactive and innovative manner,” said Lisa Mangat, Acting Director, California State Parks. “Giving our visitors an array of different experiences will help us instill a strong sense of pride for the wonderful cultural and historical resources there are at Donner Memorial State Park.”

“This project has been in the works for more than 15 years, and to see it come to completion is truly inspiring,” said Marilyn Linkem, Sierra District Superintendent, California State Parks. “We would like to thank all the people involved in this effort, including our dedicated partners, volunteers, and staff.”



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The exhibits will be finalized in the spring, prior to the opening. [Trainings for volunteers interested in working in the new visitor center will take place in April](#). The center will be open seven days a week, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The Emigrant Trail Museum building will be used for archival storage, training, office space and meeting room space.

Donner Memorial State Park is known for its Century-old Pioneer Memorial, first dedicated on June 6, 1918, as well as the locations of some of the Donner Party campsites. In addition to interactive exhibits and modern audio-visual offerings the new visitor center will also be available for special events.

The [Sierra State Parks Foundation \(SSPF\)](#) will host the Friday night Gala, and will also participate in the dedication events on Saturday June 6.

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