



# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Sheryl Watson  
(916) 654-7538

Contact:

Roy Stearns  
(916) 654-7538

## More lifeguards on-the-way

### Governor's Budget Assists State Parks with Critical Services, Repairs and Replacements

SACRAMENTO – California State Parks announced today that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's 2006-07 State budget, contains \$16.4 million in significant assistance for immediate needs in state parks. At the top of the list, more seasonal lifeguards will be hired to fill the positions left vacant from lack of budget funding in previous years.

For many years, the system has been undergoing reductions in funding and services due to reduced state revenues caused by poor economic conditions. This budget allocation offsets previous reductions by restoring funding necessary for the additional lifeguards. In addition, it will fund operations in new and existing park facilities and increase the ongoing maintenance efforts statewide.

"This funding will be sent to where it can do the most good to improve visitor services," said State Parks' Director Ruth Coleman. "We are very pleased that the Governor and members of the Legislature recognized what it takes to properly care for and operate a system that gets 75-million visitors each year."

The additional \$16.4 million in the Governor's budget allocated for State Parks, was passed by the Legislature on June 27 and signed by the Governor June 30, 2006. This funding is different from deferred maintenance funding in that it will go toward daily and ongoing operating costs; whereas, deferred maintenance funding will go toward infrastructure facilities where the repair has been deferred for years.

Top priorities for the funding are within the following major categories:

- Seasonal lifeguards – In recent years, due to hard economic times and shrinking budgets, the number of lifeguards has been reduced and the schedules of days/hours worked reduced for those on duty. This will restore staffing and equipment statewide.

- Maintenance workers – In recent years, with shrinking budgets, the number of maintenance workers who handle the day-to-day, ongoing maintenance, have been reduced. This will restore positions critical to keeping park facilities clean and properly maintained for visitors on a day-to-day basis.
- Public access to new or pending acquisitions -- This funding may allow State Parks to operate the Fort Ord State Beach property and the Coast Dairies property near Santa Cruz, pending approval by the State Public Works Board.

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