



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the
Interior

Golden Gate National
Recreation Area

Building 201, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123

Point Reyes National
Seashore

1 Bear Valley Rd.
Point Reyes Station, CA 94956



California State Parks
Department

Mt. Tamalpais State Park
Samuel P Taylor State Park
Tomales Bay State Park

845 Casa Grande Road
Petaluma, CA 94954

Contacts:

Golden Gate National Recreation Area- Howard Levitt, 415 725-8589

Point Reyes National Seashore – John Dell’Osso, 415 464-5135

California State Parks – Danita Rodriguez, 707 769-5665

For Immediate Release

National Park Service and California State Parks Sign Agreements to Keep State Parks Within National Park Boundaries in Marin County Open

Tomales Bay and Samuel P. Taylor State Parks, on the list of state parks to be closed in 2012, will be kept open, though on reduced schedules, through agreements signed this week by the National Park Service (NPS) and California State Parks. Samuel P. Taylor State Park is located within the boundary of Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Tomales Bay State Park includes lands within both Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The schedule of operation for the two state parks will be determined in the next several months.

“This agreement reflects a shared commitment to the long term protection of the Marin County parklands that are collectively visited by hundreds of thousands of people each year,” said California State Parks Marin District Superintendent Danita Rodriguez.

The National Park Service and California State Parks Department have cooperated for years in the management of public lands in Marin County. These recent agreements reflect what has become an ecosystem or watershed approach to management of the parks.

“The closure of the state parks that are within our national park areas could create use pressures and unacceptable threats to our park resources,” said Frank Dean, General Superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which includes Muir Woods. “This agreement will provide for greater preservation and enhanced visitor experiences in these magnificent Marin park lands. As park managers, we owe this to current and future generations,” he added.

Tomales Bay State Park – Point Reyes National Seashore Collaboration

Beginning July 1, 2012, Point Reyes National Seashore will assume visitor and resource protection and routine maintenance operations at Tomales Bay State Park. Through this agreement, the NPS will preserve the existing State Park maintenance position and will provide additional maintenance support with existing NPS staff. The NPS will collect the regular State Park visitor use fees for the park on behalf of the State; the State will provide those funds back to the NPS to help offset the cost of operating the state park on a reduced schedule.

“Point Reyes National Seashore and Tomales Bay State Park share geography, history, ecosystem and visitors. We are committed to working with our State Park colleagues and the community to keep this vital community resource open,” said Cicely Muldoon, Superintendent at Point Reyes National Seashore.

Mt. Tamalpais State Park/Samuel P. Taylor State Park – Golden Gate National Recreation Area Collaboration

The agreement between Golden Gate National Recreation Area and California State Parks calls for extended cooperative management in the operation of Mt. Tamalpais State Park and Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Beginning January 1, 2012, the NPS will collect a \$2.00 State Park day use fee at Muir Woods, with the funds going to a special account, the Redwood Creek Watershed Collaboration Fund. This fund will be used to support operations at Mt. Tamalpais State Park, and will enable the state to continue operation of Samuel P. Taylor State Park at least 5 days per week, and also complete projects to enhance park visitor experiences and protect resources in the watershed of Redwood Creek. Annually, the state and national park partners will select the projects to be supported by the Watershed Collaboration Fund.

Redwood Creek originates in Mt. Tamalpais State Park, flows through Muir Woods National Monument, and reaches the Pacific Ocean at Muir Beach in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

“Muir Woods, Golden Gate, and Mt Tamalpais State Park are inextricably linked in the complex watershed of Redwood Creek,” Frank Dean remarked. “To reach Muir Woods, visitors have to pass through Mt Tamalpais State Park, and users of a significant number of trails in Mt. Tamalpais State Park start their hike in Muir Woods.”

Both federal and state park passes will be honored at the parks involved in the agreement, and campground reservations will continue to be available through *ReserveAmerica*.

While the agreements assure basic operations will continue at Tomales Bay and Samuel P. Taylor State Parks, it does not enable 7-day per week operation at the two state parks, nor does it provide any federal support for capital improvements or infrastructure repair at the state parks. . The agreements will maintain operations at these parks during the proposed State Fiscal Year 2012/13 closures. The state and national park partners will evaluate the effectiveness of this pilot program, and may extend it beyond June 30, 2013.

Only those state park units within national park legislated boundaries in Marin County are affected by the new agreement. Olompali State Historic Park and China Camp State Park remain on the state parks closure list at this time.

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