



# News Release

**For Immediate Release**  
January 22, 2015

**Contact:**  
Vicky Waters,  
[Vicky.Waters@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Vicky.Waters@parks.ca.gov)  
916-653-5115

## California State Parks Announces Transformation Team

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—California State Parks is announcing the establishment of the Transformation Team, which is composed of experienced parks staff and outside consultants, and is tasked with developing and leading State Parks in executing structural and sustainable reforms, as well as implementing many of the initiatives to be outlined in the upcoming Parks Forward final report.

“This is an important and historic time for State Parks, in which we have the opportunity to implement strategies that will strengthen and improve California’s state park system,” said Lisa Mangat, Acting Director, California State Parks. “The job of the Transformation Team is bold and ambitious, and I am confident we have put the right people in place to lead this charge.”

The Transformation Team is being led by Steve Szalay, who is serving as Special Advisor to the Secretary for the Natural Resources Agency, and experienced staff and outside consultants to lead the Department’s transformation efforts. The Transformation Team will be organized in a committee structure to work on a series of initiatives, as well as the recommendations of the upcoming [Parks Forward](#) report. Parks staff will be asked to participate and lend their input and expertise to this effort. The members include:

- Steve McCormick, Special Advisor, Resources Legacy Fund
- Ron Birkhead, Construction Supervisor III, Northern Service Center, Acquisition and Development
- Helen Carriker, Deputy Director, Administrative Services
- Jay Chamberlin, Chief, Natural Resources Division
- Ellen Clark, Volunteer Coordinator, Interpretation and Education
- Michaele DeBoer, State Park Superintendent II, Community Involvement Section, External Affairs Division
- Dana Jones, District Superintendent, Capital District
- Karl Knapp, Chief, Facilities Management Division



- Todd Lewis, Sector Superintendent, Orange Coast Central Sector, Orange Coast District
- Clay Phillips, District Superintendent, San Diego Coast District
- Danita Rodriguez , District Superintendent, Bay Area District
- Andy Vasquez, Administrative Officer III, Orange Coast District
- Sean Woods, Sector Superintendent, Los Angeles Sector, Angeles District
- Jared Zucker, Program Analyst, Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW)

“This is a very open and transparent effort that is focused on innovative initiatives that can yield tangible results,” said Szalay. “There is a critical need for positive changes that will greatly improve our ability to provide excellent services in a cost-effective, creative and accountable environment.”

The Transformation Team will focus on several areas, including the Department’s budget , partnerships, internal practices, revenue generation, technological innovation, and broader outreach to diverse communities, to name a few.

“The Parks Forward effort has allowed this Department to take a hard but honest look at our practices, which opened the door to ways we can improve the way we serve our visitors, and the way we do business,” added Mangat. “The Parks Forward report is the beginning of the conversation. We have a responsibility to ensure positive and meaningful changes happen that will have a lasting impact for the visitors, supporters, and staff of California State Parks.”

The Parks Forward report is due to be released at the end of January.

Subscribe to California State Parks News via e-mail at [info@parks.ca.gov](mailto:info@parks.ca.gov) or via [RSS feed](#).

**California State Parks Mission**

*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.*

