



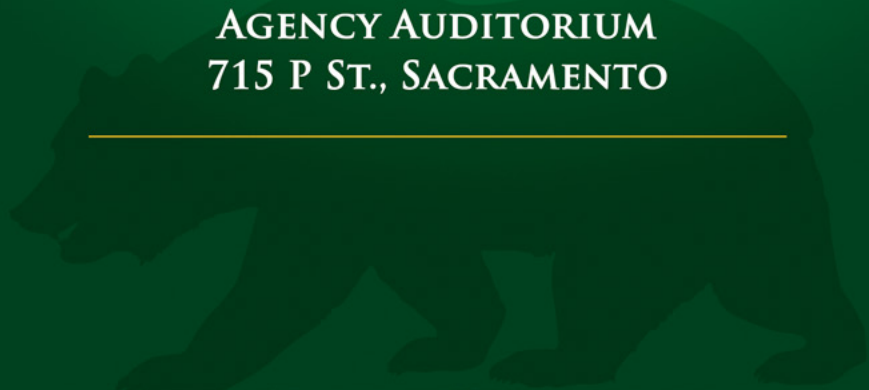
# 22ND ANNUAL DIRECTOR'S RECOGNITION AWARDS CEREMONY

ARMANDO QUINTERO  
CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS DIRECTOR

---

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025  
10 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.  
CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES  
AGENCY AUDITORIUM  
715 P ST., SACRAMENTO

---



# ANNUAL RECOGNITION AWARDS



## CLIMATE ADAPTATION AWARD

*Recognizes those who have taken remarkable steps in preparing for and protecting against the adverse and imminent consequences of climate change, including wildfires, flooding, erosion, air pollution and droughts, as well as threats to park habitats, ecosystems and people.*

### **Calaveras Big Trees State Park South Grove Project Team** Central Valley District

Theresa Acosta	Eric Newquist
Antheney Alegre	Lillie Oravetz
Brandon Burrell	Richard Rappaport
Andrew Collum	Greg Rasmussen
Lee Eal	Heather Reith
Prestin Gelhaus	Amber Sprock
Danny Harthum	James Suero
Ben Jacobs	Nathanial Wigington
Joshua Litzner	Christopher Yingling
Joel Memmer	

## COMPASS AWARD

*Recognizes remarkable long-term visioning, innovative thinking and mentorship that fosters talent and provides support to staff at all levels.*

**Lori Turner**  
District Facilities Management Program

## EQUITY AND DIVERSITY AWARD

*Recognizes those who have made an exceptional contribution to ensuring all Californians have access to the outdoors and cultural sites and who have significantly contributed to the department's values of equity and inclusion.*

**Genomé Rodriguez**  
Sierra District

## INNOVATION AWARD

*Recognizes those who have demonstrated the remarkable ability to complete tasks and projects or address park problems through creative and innovative means.*

### **ServiceNow Team**

<b>Human Resources / Information Technology</b>	
Michael Bunt	Eric Allison
Rose Healy	Jesus Almeida
Andy Liang	Henry Nguyen
Caroline Yoshimoto	Chris Zulaica

## INSPIRATION AWARD

*Recognizes those who have achieved a major public objective while emphasizing community involvement.*

### **Inaugural Dos Rios Staff** Central Valley District

Alex Espinoza	Ali Manzo	Chrissy Sullivan
Jorden Greenhalgh	Colin Miller	Josh Thompson
Paige Haller	Jason Moore	Caitlin Torres
Gerald Heberling	Julian Morin	Julian Vega
Melissa Jones	Sammie Sisneros	Kathlee Yates

---

---

## LEADERSHIP AND VISION AWARD

*Recognizes staff with the ability to motivate and inspire others to positive action and who have demonstrated a long-term commitment to the ideals and values of the department.*

**Kevin Pearce**  
Oceano Dunes District

---

## PARTNERSHIP AWARD

*Recognizes partners who have demonstrated a high level of commitment over a substantial period of time toward accomplishing the mission of the department.*

**River Partners**  
—  
**Tuolumne River Trust**  
—  
**The Lyons Family**

---

---

---

## PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY AWARD

*Recognizes employees who have demonstrated a high degree of honesty, integrity, and idealism in the face of adverse pressure.*

**Judy Russo**  
Capital District

---

---

## RESILIENCE AWARD

*Honors an individual or team who tirelessly and valiantly rose to enormous challenges during an emergency response situation and/or recovery effort.*

**Post Fire Response Team**  
**Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area**  
Great Basin District / Ocotillo Wells District / Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

Jairo Avila	Joann Gonzalez	Alexandra Robertson
Justin Bahn	Jack Gorman	Martin Robles
Christopher Bartman	Arthur "AJ" Heredia	Bobby Scruggs
Brandon Beban	Christopher Hon	Nancy Shilvock
Jonathan Bechtel	Ruben Jacobo	Christy Smith
Michael Biglay	Dean Johnson	Erin Smith
Jeremy Black	Poya Kouchesfahani	John Staffel
Colin Bliese	Joseph Kurtz	Travis Thierry
John Brandt	Timothy Lao	Michael Thorpe-Martin
McKayla Butymhill	Blake Larson	Callista Turner
Carter Cameron	Damion Laughlin	Jessica Vannatta
Lance Cole	Cristina Levia	Charles Verrigni
John Cunningham	Denise Levia-Guadalupe	Connie Viola
Luis DeVera	Rocio Martinez	Luke Ware
Russ Dingman	Carlos Meza	Lori Wear
Shan Drum	Christopher Molina	Kayla Werden
Chelsea Dulaney	Rebecca Morris	Karen White
Dylan Dunn	Kevin Overduin	Louis White
Julie Farkas	Mary Pinto	Matthew Williams
Patricia Farmer	Stephen Ptomey	David Woolmore
Jason Fox	Leonard Puga	
Hope Gonzalez	Joseph Rivas	

---

## TRAILBLAZER AWARD

*Recognizes those who have introduced new ideas or methods to accomplish the mission of State Parks or pioneered new ways to introduce the public to California's outdoors.*

**Teri Pope**  
Inland Empire District

---

---

## TRIBAL PARTNERSHIP AWARD

*The Tribal Partnership Award was established in honor of former State Parks archaeologist Kate Green, to honor her for her leadership in building trust and developing partnerships with tribes. This award recognizes exceptional and outstanding dedication to fostering meaningful relationships with California Native American tribes. It honors individuals who have gone beyond their regular duties to build trust and respect, value tribal knowledge and support tribes' right of self-determination.*

**Mike Grone**

Santa Cruz District

---

## SPECIAL COMMENDATION

*Recognizes employees who have made a significant contribution by going above and beyond the norm and made a substantial impact.*

### **Bidwell Mansion Fire Investigation Team**

Northern Buttes District

Travis Gee

Todd Jones

Matthew Stalter

Michael Van Pelt

Partners

CAL FIRE

Chico Fire Department

Chico Police Department

Butte County District

Attorney's Office

University Police Department,

Chico State

---

### **Big Sur Sector State Park Peace Officers**

Monterey District

Bernadette Davis

Wyatt Jackson

Hayden Mack

Levi Pior

Brian Powell

Rachel Tuttle

---

**Brian Baer**

Communications and Marketing Division

---

---

---

---

## SPECIAL ACT / SERVICE AWARD

*Recognizes employees who have performed an extraordinary act of heroism extending far above the normal call of duty or service and who performed at great risk to their own safety in an effort to save human life and/or property.*

**Zoe Chait**

Santa Cruz District

---

**Joel Dinnauer**

Administrative Services Division (Training Section)

---

**Michael Moses**

Angeles District

---

**Elias Richter**

Santa Cruz District

---

### **Santa Cruz District Lifeguards Rescue Team**

Santa Cruz District

Miles Dickey

Dedon Prince

Riley Rhodes

Elias Richter

Cameron Weaver

---

### **Santa Cruz Wharf Collapse Response Team**

Santa Cruz District

Nic Friedly

Aidan Malmberg

Gabe McKenna

Mike McMenamy

Trevor Morgan

Jacob Murphy

Jake Taylor

---

---

# THANK YOU

Thank you to all the employees, partners and volunteers of California State Parks for your dedication and service to our mission.

Your work helps create safe, inclusive outdoor spaces that support the health and well-being of all Californians, while protecting the state's natural, cultural and historical resources for future generations.

Whether you're in the office or out in the field, your work truly makes a difference. Your resilience in facing challenges such as wildfires and other extreme weather events, as well as your ongoing commitment to making our parks more welcoming and accessible, is deeply appreciated.

We are grateful for everything you do.

A special thank you to Parks California for generously sponsoring the refreshments at the 22nd Annual Director's Recognition Awards ceremony.



---

## OUR MISSION

It is the mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation 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.

---

To view a recording of this event, please visit  
[parks.ca.gov/DirectorAwards](https://parks.ca.gov/DirectorAwards).