

News Release



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Contacts: **Steven Ptomey**, State Park Interpreter
(661) 849-4012
sptomey@parks.ca.gov
Stephen Bylin, Mojave Sector Superintendent
(661) 248-2327
sbylin@parks.ca.gov

Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park is the first state park to host a Passport in Time archaeological project in the nation

On Monday, Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park will host the first Passport in Time (PIT) project by a non-federal entity in the nation.

Passport in Time, is a nation-wide program administered by the USDA Forest Service, which matches volunteers with an interest in archaeology with U.S. Forest Service projects. The volunteers are trained, and supervised by professional archaeologists and help complete projects that would otherwise go unfinished. Recently, the managers of the national PIT program opened their program and database of volunteers to non-Forest Service agencies.

The Chief Interpreter at Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park (a former Forest Service archaeologist) saw an opportunity to reach a new body of volunteers and accomplish the first archaeological survey of the entire park at no cost to the state. The PIT program's enrollment fee was funded by the "Friends of Allensworth," the park's cooperating association.

Volunteers who range from students to retired couples, from places as diverse as Australia, North Carolina, Nevada, Oregon, and local Porterville College are donating 40 to 80 hours each. This will save State Parks an estimated \$25,000 to \$35,000 to complete a needed project for the upcoming revision of the park's general plan. The program begins Monday, June 15 with the volunteers receiving an orientation of the park and training on how to conduct an archaeological survey, what to look for and how to record historic ruins. The volunteers will also get the chance to talk with State Parks Director Ruth Coleman via video conference, as she welcomes the first PIT program volunteers. The video system at Allensworth has been used to bring the Parks interpretive program to youths in the inner cities of California who could not otherwise visit the park in person.

The town of Allensworth was founded in 1908 by Col. Allen Allensworth and several other men, and represents the only all black township in California that was founded, financed, built, populated and governed by African Americans. It is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. Learn more by contacting those above.

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