

News Release



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Distinguished California State Parks Employees Honored

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—California State Parks Director Major General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (Ret.), honored State Parks staff selected for annual Director’s Recognition Awards at a ceremony held in Sacramento.

“These individuals represent the very best of State Parks, and show the diversity of our system, as well as their commitment and service, which is inspiring to everyone that works in this Department,” said Director Jackson.

The individual recipients and teams who distinguished themselves through their extraordinary achievements in State Parks during 2013 are as follows (home county):

Olmsted Award – Leadership and Vision

- **Don Schmidt**, (Nevada County) Supervisory Ranger, Sierra Gold Sector, Sierra District, has 25 years with the Department resulting in numerous positive achievements advancing the State Parks mission. The former school teacher worked with thousands of school children as a ranger educating them about the environment.

Hill Award – Inspiration

- **Jessica Murany**, (San Diego County), Ranger, Palomar Mountain State Park, Colorado Desert District, worked with the local community of Palomar Mountain to ensure the park’s future and helped to make the park a place of vitality, organizing festivals and more.

Drury Award – Professional Integrity

- **Suzanne Goode**, (Los Angeles County), Senior Environmental Scientist, Angeles District, led the complex Malibu Lagoon Ecosystem Restoration project developing partnerships, overcoming setbacks and guiding the project to a success after a 13-year journey.

Mott Award – Innovation

- **Ron Birkhead**,(Sacramento County) Construction Supervisor III, Acquisition & Development Division, Northern Service Center, created a unique software tool for tracking and managing construction projects in the State Park system.

Dewitt Award – Partnership

- **Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks**, (San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties), Bonny Hawley, Executive Director. with more than 400 volunteers, the Friends have been instrumental in sustaining the legacy of Santa Cruz area parks and beaches.

Dewitt Award – Partnership

- **Save Mount Diablo**, (Contra Costa County), Ron Brown, Executive Director, the group restored the Eye of Diablo beacon. The beacon is lit each year on December 7th when World War II veterans and Pearl Harbor attack survivors gather on top of Mount Diablo to memorialize Pearl Harbor Day.

Ingenuity Award

- **David Carman**, (Santa Cruz County), Maintenance Mechanic, Pajaro Coast Sector, Santa Cruz District, was instrumental in the restoration of the sewer system at the New Brighton State Beach campground.

Special Commendations:

- **Kenney Glaspie**, (Sacramento and Imperial counties), Park Maintenance Chief, Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area, acted as Interim District Maintenance Chief and proved to be an excellent role model who inspired enthusiasm among staff during a re-organization of the Ocotillo Wells management team.

- **Andrea Sinkler-Kim**, (Monterey County), Park Maintenance Chief, Asilomar Sector, Monterey District, spear-headed a project to install temporary roofs on three cabins to preserve these resources that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places at Gilroy Hot Springs.
- **Stephen Barber**, (Fresno and Madera counties), Supervising Ranger, Millerton Lake State Recreation Area, Central Valley District, worked diligently to have a section of Highway 1 near San Gregorio SB formally dedicated to Ranger Patricia Scully, who was killed in the line of duty on this roadway in 1976 by a drunk driver.

Special Act/Special Service:

- **Mark Cleavenger**, (Los Angeles County), Lifeguard, Malibu SB, Angeles District, extracted a man from a burning vehicle near Thousand Oaks in Southern California seconds before the vehicle exploded.
- **Greg Hall**, Ranger, Big Lagoon SP, North Coast Redwoods District, helped rescue three victims out of crashing ocean swells.
- **Dick DeBoer**, Supervising Lifeguard; **Bill Solylo**, Ranger; **Ryan Coats**, **Eric De Jong**, **Jackie Miranda**, and **Brian Olivo**, Seasonal lifeguards; (Riverside County), Lake Perris SRA, Inland Empire District, this team worked together to rescue a young girl with a life-threatening head injury from a boating accident.
- **Bob Peek**, (Riverside County), Ranger, Mt. San Jacinto SP, Inland Empire District, seeing his neighbor's home furiously on fire in the early morning hours, Peek ran into the house and extracted his neighbor to safety.
- **Jeff Wadkins**, (San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties), Lifeguard, San Mateo Coast Sector, Santa Cruz District, leaped into a narrow channel at Moss Landing SB and rescued a man from near drowning in an angry sea.

Begun in 1995, the Directors Recognition Awards Program recognizes exceptional and outstanding accomplishments that model behaviors that further the mission, goals, and core values of California State Parks. Recognition categories include leadership and vision, inspiration, integrity, and innovation. All employees—regardless of classification, level, time base, or pay status—are eligible for recognition. In some categories, volunteers and partner organizations may also be honored. If appropriate, more than one award may be granted in each category. Recipients are nominated by peers, nominations are reviewed by a committee of State Park employees and recommendations made to the Director for concurrence.

The program is sponsored by California State Parks Rangers Association and California State Parks foundation.

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. For more information, visit www.parks.ca.gov.