



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Vicky Waters
vicky.waters@parks.cs.gov
(916) 217-5714

California State Parks, Yosemite National Park to Commemorate Shared 150th Anniversary

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, Calif. – On Monday June 30, California State Parks and Yosemite National Parks will jointly commemorate their shared 150th anniversary.

In 1864, in the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation granting the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove (known as the Yosemite Grant) to the state of California to be “held for public use, resort, and recreation, and shall be inalienable for all time.” In September of that year, California Governor Frederick Lowe accepted the grant and appointed the first State Parks Commission. Galen Clark was appointed state guardian of Yosemite in May 1866, at a salary of \$500 per year, becoming the first State Parks employee. These actions represented not only the birth of California State Parks, but in essence, the birth of the national park idea, which has spread throughout the world.

“This is an exciting time for State Parks,” said Major General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (Ret.), director of California State Parks. “For 150 years, California State Parks has been a leader in the conservation and preservation of our natural and cultural resources, and our mission is to connect the people of California with their parks—whether it’s the beaches in Southern California, the redwoods in the northern part of the state, or the historic and cultural parks and museums that are part of our history and our past.”

State Parks will participate in a ceremony scheduled at 10 a.m. at the Mariposa Grove. This event commemorates the anniversary and future rehabilitation of the grove. Speakers for the event will include Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom, Congressman Tom McClintock, Congressman Jim Costa, and National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis.

State Parks and National Park Service rangers will form a mounted patrol and State Parks rangers in period uniforms and K-9 units will be on hand.

The public is invited to join a second commemoration, complete with birthday cake, at 3 p.m. in front of the Yosemite Valley visitor center.

Visitors will have a chance to explore State Parks history, parks and programs with displays and exhibits on the mall in front of the visitor center from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be displays honoring important figures and moments in State Parks along with historic photos, vehicles and artifacts. Visitors can learn about unique State Parks programs such as remote education and volunteer opportunities. Actor Miles 150th anniversary themed quilts on display and anniversary merchandise for sale.

Today, California State Parks has grown to be the largest state park system in the world, with 280 park units, more than 1.6 million acres, 14,000 campsites, and some 70 million visitors per year.

For more information on California State Parks 150th anniversary, visit <http://www.150.parks.ca.gov/>.

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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.