

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 23, 2008

CONTACT: Roy Stearns
(916) 654-7538
Added contact at end

State Parks Develops “Sister Park” Relationship with Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve in Mongolia

State Park Commission Passes Resolution of Support

The California State Park and Recreation Commission has voted to pass a Resolution of Support for a sister park relationship with Mongolia.

Meeting in Fort Bragg on May 16, the Commission voted unanimously to support a cooperative relationship between Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve in Dalanjargalan Soum of the Dornogovi Province of Mongolia.

The Resolution acts as an official recognition by the Commission of the Sister Park relationship between California State Parks, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve in Dalanjargalan Soum. The Resolution states that the Commission supports continuing efforts to provide opportunities and programs between the two parks.

“We are in the position of being one of the pre-eminent park management organizations in the world,” said State Park Commission chairwoman Caryl Hart. “That makes our people uniquely qualified in management and operations skills to help show-the-way for a park system that is just beginning in Mongolia.”

“The people of Mongolia have welcomed us with open arms,” said Mark Jorgensen, superintendent of the California’s largest state park, Anza Borrego Desert State Park. “We have been guests of their government in 2006 and 2007 and it has been extremely gratifying to share our information and expertise with the dedicated park professionals who are working to establish a park in the Gobi Desert, an amazing part of our world.”

The relationship began in the spring of 2005, when the staffs of the two parks began forging a relationship, sharing expertise and subsequently signing two written agreements in recognition of the sister park relationship. The first agreement, signed in 2006, was a “Contract of Cooperation.” The second was a Phase II Cooperative Agreement signed in 2007, both documents signed by Dalanjargalan Soum Governor D. Bold and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Superintendent Mark Jorgensen. The partnership is an agreement to cooperate for the mutual benefit of both Ikh Nartiin and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Examples of the agreement include:

- Sharing of expertise to increase natural resource conservation in Ikh Nartiin Nature Reserve through mutual cooperation.
- Support of conservation efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources in Ikh Nart. Issues of illegal wild sheep poaching, taking of foxes, wolves, and wild cats for fur, and unauthorized mining, will be addressed.
- Support of coordinated efforts to provide donated equipment to Ikh Nart rangers and researchers. Ranger salary, uniforms, binoculars, boots, GPS units, used laptops, and a patrol motorcycle have been donated so far.
- Serve as subject matter experts to assist in planning and establishing of visitor service facilities and the training of staff.
- Facilitate exchange of information, education and interpretation of mutual resources.
- Sending a volunteer delegation to Ikh Nart to assist the Nature Reserve staff and the Soum government with park management practices.

The Sister Park relationship is particularly appropriate because California State Parks is perceived as a national and international leader in demonstrating the importance of the natural world and of best park management practices as essential to the protection and appreciation of our natural and cultural resources.

This agreement is non-binding and is being implemented without any costs to the State of California, being funded through various non-governmental sources, through personal and group donations. In addition, the government of Dalanjarlalan Soum provides for the transportation, communications, and working accommodations when volunteers from Anza-Borrego Desert State Park visit the reserve in Mongolia.

Mongolian gers (nomad tents) are being purchased in Mongolia this summer with donor funds. They will be imported to Anza-Borrego for use in the Park's 5th Grade Camp program, sponsored by the Anza-Borrego Foundation and Institute.

###

Additional contact:

Mark Jorgensen, Superintendent of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
(760) 767- 4933 & (760) 767 – 5311.