



# News Release

**For Immediate Release**  
April 23, 2018

**Contact:**  
[Dan Falat](#)  
District Superintendent  
(805) 927-2065

## Hearst Castle Visitor Center to Install Solar Canopy in Parking Lot

*SAN SIMEON, Calif.* — California State Parks announced today a project to install a 85,000 square foot photo voltaic canopy (solar panel array) over the visitor center's parking lot below the [Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument](#). This project, which will begin on Tuesday, April 24, represents the department's commitment to protect the environment and fight climate change.

"The construction of the solar canopy coupled with last year's installation of 14 electric vehicle charging stations and the recent purchase of three electric vehicles (EV's) puts San Luis Obispo Coast District in a good position to meet Governor Brown's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said District Superintendent Dan Falat. In 2008, State Parks launched the "Cool Parks" initiative, which seeks to address climate change through mitigation, adaptation and education.

With no upfront costs to the state, the solar panel system will be connected to the PG&E grid and will reduce the park's electricity rates from 20 cents per kilowatt hour in the summer to 11 cents per kilowatt hour. The solar panels will generate over 1,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per year, enough to meet all of the projected power needs of the visitor's center, the maintenance yard, the district administrative offices, and park facilities at San Simeon Cove and Hearst Beach. California State Parks, working with the Department of General Services, has funded the equipment purchase through a 25 year power purchase and lease agreement with the contractor, Ecoplexus, Inc.

In 2015, Governor Brown issued an executive order requiring all state agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050. In 2012, Governor Brown required all state agencies to reduce grid based energy purchases 20% by 2020 and to include at least 50% zero emissions vehicles or ZEV's in new vehicle fleet purchases by 2025.

Located 42 miles northwest of San Luis Obispo and nine miles north of Cambria on scenic Highway 1, in addition to Hearst Castle, the 20 mile long [Hearst San Simeon State Park](#) is also



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home to coastal bluffs, beaches, creeks, wetlands, an elephant seal rookery, and offers pristine ocean views, hiking and camping opportunities. The park includes the Santa Rosa Creek Natural Preserve, the San Simeon Natural Preserve and the Pa-nu Cultural preserve.

Contractors will start work in the Hearst Castle Visitor Center parking lot on Tuesday, April 24, and the project is expected to be completed by June 30, 2018. Sections of the parking lot will be closed during construction and re-opened on a rolling basis. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause the public. For more information about the project, please contact District Superintendent, Dan Falat at (805) 927-2065.

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