

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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California State Parks Launches 'Park Partners' Program with Jeep® Dealers

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Parks and Recreation and its supporting non-profit organization, the California State Parks Foundation, have kicked off their 'Park Partners' program through a pilot project with the California Jeep® Dealers Association.

The Park Partners program is the first significant effort of its kind in California government and one of the first among state park systems around the country. The program marks a new era of developing a disciplined marketing effort and building strategic alliances to meet the ultimate goal of encouraging Californians to be more supportive of their California State Park system.

“State Parks has some of the most magnificent facilities in the country,” said State Parks Director Rusty Areias. “The Jeep Dealers will help us show our fellow Californians the variety of adventures that are available to them in their own state. In this time of limited revenue, State Parks is looking for innovative ways to get that message out, and the Jeep brand is affording us that opportunity.”

With visitation approaching 100 million, California State Parks is the largest attraction in the state and has seen a 31% increase in visitation this year alone. The system includes over 260 parks, historic sites, recreation areas, and off-highway vehicle parks statewide, including notable parks like Hearst Castle, Old Town San Diego, and Anza Borrego.

Under this pilot project, the Jeep Dealers are supplying the Department and the State Parks Foundation with nearly \$2.5 million in cash and in-kind marketing support to extend the Department's brand image and message of Parks' importance to Californians.

"Our association with California State Parks has never been more beneficial to Jeep Dealers. The magnificent parks of California provide for a family-oriented escape in California's own backyard," said Fred Sherwood of DaimlerChrysler. "And if Jeep Dealers can help show the way and highlight these special places, we are delighted to begin a partnership that allows us to do so for the benefit of all."

"For the first time we are considering ourselves not just an incredible park system but also as a brand that has high value. The newly established Park Partners program is a ground floor opportunity for companies that want to be associated with California State Parks," said John McMahon, Deputy Director and Chief of Marketing at the Department.

In the agreement, the Jeep Dealers will be recognized as "Proud Partner of California State Parks". Additionally, Jeep vehicles will be the "Official Vehicles" of Earth Day 2002, a one-day event hosted by the California State Parks Foundation that brings in money and volunteers to conduct a variety of restoration and improvement projects at State Parks and other sites around the state.

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