



# News Release

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## State Parks Announces New Structure to Better Serve Californians and Improve Stewardship

SACRAMENTO, *Calif.* -- The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) today announced a new organizational structure aimed at better serving Californians who enjoy the Golden State's public outdoor spaces. The structure and related transition activities and benefits are outlined in an Operational Transition Plan (Plan) that reflects extensive research and input from internal and external stakeholders.

The new organizational structure is part of a two-year transformation effort that renewed the department's commitment to improving the state parks system and the many recreational programs supported by DPR. It marks the first department-wide organizational structure change since the early 1990s.

DPR Director Lisa Ann L. Mangat said the new structure will allow the department to carry out key priorities identified in the transformation effort. The structure is designed to enhance service delivery, better support staff and key partners, provide career paths for diverse professional groups to develop as park leaders, and put program expertise closer to the public.

"Our mission is as important today as it was over 150 years ago," Mangat said. "As stewards of California's finest and most diverse collection of natural, cultural and recreational resources to be found within California, properly supporting staff and partners is of upmost importance for current and future generations."

Parks are essential to the well-being of environments, economies and people. California's state parks and the recreational programs supported by DPR are a gateway to these benefits and to the opportunities to connect with families, friends and communities. Off-highway motor vehicle recreation, boating activities, horseback riding, on- and off-road cycling, hiking, camping, rock climbing, tours, school group enrichment, and special events are just some of the activities enjoyed in 280 park units organized into 22 field districts throughout the state.



Implementation of the Operational Transition Plan will be accomplished through the execution of specific division transition plans. These transition plans will be developed over the next 12 months and implemented on a rolling basis. A rigorous process of external and internal communications, engagement and project management will guide the implementation.

In addition to the new structure, DPR is putting new practices in place that include:

- Creating career paths for diverse professional groups to develop as park leaders.
- Adding focus and support for staff that have direct contact with visitors in order to take better care of park facilities and programs that serve the public.
- Placing program expertise out into the field, closer to the parks and the public they serve.
- Increasing the focus on the network of partners who support parks across the state.
- Fostering collaboration across all programs.

“With the Transformation Process and a new organizational structure, DPR is now well positioned to excel in its core programs and to build on its proud history of preservation, education and recreation,” said California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird.

On February 6, 2015, the Parks Forward Commission (Commission) released the report [A New Vision for California State Parks](#), which included recommendations on how to improve California's state parks and the department that manages them. One of the recommendations of the Commission was to modernize the organizational structure of DPR to better support the diverse programs necessary to care for the system of parks and the various forms of recreation. Additionally, the Commission recommended that changes be made so that top leaders in the field represent a broad array of professional backgrounds and that career paths be established to support the development of this leadership team.

In 2015, the Administration established a [Transformation Team](#) (Team) to design the specific initiatives to improve state parks and the organization. Through that process, the DPR established the following key priorities:

1. Protect and enhance natural and cultural resources.
2. Develop excellent management systems.
3. Maintain high quality operations and public service.
4. Create meaningful connections and relevancy to people.

One of the signature projects for the Team and the DPR was to realign the organizational structure in a manner that best supported the work needed to carry out these priorities.

The Operational Transition Plan may be viewed online on the DPR's website at [www.parks.ca.gov/ShapingOurFuture](http://www.parks.ca.gov/ShapingOurFuture).

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