

# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Saddleback Butte State Park to Remain Open

Thanks to the recently signed state budget and tremendous public support, Saddleback Butte State Park will remain open for at least one year. The park got a temporary reprieve June 28 when the new state budget provided bridge funding until a donor agreement with the Save Saddleback Committee and the associated Poppy Reserve/Mojave Desert Interpretive Association could be signed.

When it was announced Saddleback Butte State Park was on the list of 70 parks targeted for closure due to budget shortfalls, park supporters went to work to avoid that outcome. The Save Saddleback Committee raised the funds to plug the gap in the park's operating budget providing a one-year temporary reprieve for previously planned closure due to budget reductions.

"On behalf of the Save Saddleback Committee, I want to thank the citizens who have donated and particularly the California State Parks Foundation who recently awarded us a grant which makes our funding commitment secure for the present fiscal year," said Save Saddleback Butte Committee co-chair Gretchen Winfrey. "We recognize this is only a short term reprieve and ardently continue to fundraise to promote the values inherent in this unique landscape."

On-going fundraising includes a moonlight hike on July 28 and a fundraising bicycle ride the end of September. The Committee pledges to continue outreach efforts to the community giving businesses and individuals the opportunity to sponsor the park and be recognized for their funding donation.

"I am so happy with the efforts this committee has done. This just proves what a group of citizens can accomplish when they are passionate and dedicated to their cause," said Kathy Weatherman, Superintendent of the Tehachapi District. "The Department and the community of the Antelope Valley will benefit from this supportive and hard working group."

Located east of Lancaster, Saddleback Butte State Park is 2,955 acres of diverse desert habitat dominated by the butte which towers more than 1,000 above the plain. The park

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preserves dwindling Joshua tree woodlands. It is home to the endangered Desert Tortoise, spectacular spring wildflower shows, and dozens of unique resident birds as well as a stop for migratory birds. Visitors can camp, hike ride horses in the park.

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