

News Release



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California State Parks Launches 150th Anniversary of State Parks at Grand Opening of California Statewide Museum Collections Center

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (Dec. 4, 2013) – Today, California State Parks is officially launching the 150th Anniversary of State Parks, along with the grand opening of California’s Statewide Museum Collections Center in McClellan Park, an event sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF).

“This is an exciting time for State Parks, as we will be commemorating our Sesquicentennial next year and looking ahead to the future of the system,” said Major General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (Ret.), Director of California State Parks. “For 150 years, California State Parks has been a leader in the conservation and preservation of our natural and cultural resources, and our mission is to connect the people of California with their parks—whether it’s the beaches in southern California, or the Redwoods in the northern part of the State, or the historic and cultural parks and museums that are part of our history and our past.”

In 1864, in the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation granting the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove (known as the Yosemite Grant) to the state of California to be “held for public use, resort, and recreation, and shall be inalienable for all time”. In September of that year, California Governor Frederick Lowe accepted the grant and appointed the first State Parks Commission. Galen Clark, was appointed State Guardian of Yosemite in May 1866, at a salary of \$500 per year, becoming the first State Parks employee. These actions represented not only the birth of California State Parks, but in essence, the birth of the national park idea, which has spread throughout the world.

Today, California State Parks has grown to be one of the largest state park systems in the world, with 280 park units, more than 1,600,000 acres, 14,000 campsites, and visitor attendance of some 70 million visitors per year.

State Park’s latest conservation effort is the relocation of California’s Statewide Museum Collections Center from West Sacramento to McClellan Park, in an LEED certified building that enhances climate and humidity control to ensure greater preservation capacity for over one-

million historic objects and artifacts recovered from archaeological excavations in the State Parks System.

The center will officially open to the public on January 7, 2014, and will have rotating exhibits of historic and cultural artifacts throughout the year. Tours are available by reservation only and may be arranged by e-mailing California State Parks at smcc.tours@parks.ca.gov.

“As stewards of the people’s resources, the opening of this new facility is a tremendous step forward, as historic collections of artifacts will have a longer life, and will now be open to the public,” added Jackson. “This is one of our many legacy projects for the 150th Anniversary, in which we plan to enhance the recreation and education opportunities we offer our visitors.”

As part of the 150th Anniversary, State Parks will be launching a new Park Pass Program that is targeted at serving different communities. The Park Passes will go on sale in December. For more information on the 150th Anniversary of State Parks, [visit our website](#).

California State Parks Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

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