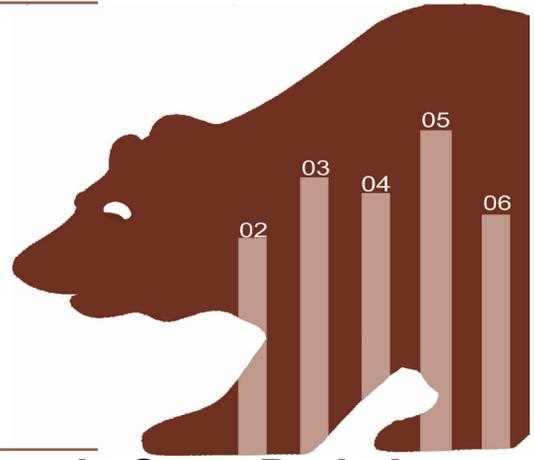


BEAR FACTS

Planning Trends and Information from California State Parks

July 2006



Recreation Trends Worth Talking About

There's a difference between trends and fads, and astute park professionals know to look for the subtle differences between the two. Six areas of broad focus will be discussed in this article:

- 1) **demographic trends and the effect on the park and recreation profession;**
- 2) **outdoor recreation activities most desired;**
- 3) **our health and how we use our leisure and work time;**
- 4) **how "convenience" is affecting our profession;**
- 5) **effect of technology on equipment and services; and**
- 6) **broad policy trends.**

1) California's explosive growth and significant population shifts: More than anything else, California's growth and shifts in demographic groups will drive the ability of our profession to deliver park and recreation services in the coming years. An understanding of trends and their implications is essential as the population increases and the rate of demographic change accelerates. According to the state Department of Finance's projections, California added 444,000 residents in 2005. The state's population is currently more than 37 million people and it's projected that California's population will exceed 50 million between 2035 and 2040. There are so many

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California State Parks' Healthy Foods Initiative

Providing for the health of the people of California is a cornerstone of the Department's mission. As the rate of obesity increases nationwide, a focus on healthy lifestyles is increasingly important for maintaining individual and community health. Maintaining a diet that is healthy for both the people and the planet is a key ingredient to maintaining a healthy life. California State Parks is poised to serve an increasingly important role in educating people about this message.

To that end, this year the Department undertook a Healthy Foods Initiative to help Californians improve their diet and their health by actively promoting healthy behaviors, and developing educational programs and materials for maintaining a healthy diet. The Department will achieve this goal primarily through the help of its concessionaires, those businesses that prepare and sell foods in our parks, and through the development of interpretive programs and materials.

Through concessionaires, the Department will set an example by providing affordable, appealing, high-quality, pure, and organic foods from California at all State Park food venues; develop and make available educational tools for maintaining a healthy diet with sustainably-grown foods; and use demonstration gardens and kitchens in State Parks to provide the public with hands on experience in growing and preparing healthy foods.

(Continued on page 2)

Healthy Foods Initiative (continued from page 1)

New concession contracts at McArthur-Burney Falls and Crystal Cove will be the first to implement new contract language to encourage provision of healthy foods including the requirements to source locally grown foods, offer a selection of healthy foods and beverages including unsweetened beverages, and to provide foods that are as pure and natural as possible without synthetic additives, pollutants, or unnecessary packaging and marketing.

For existing concessionaires, the Department is working with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and their proud partner, NextCourse, to promote healthy foods in both State and National Park concessions. NextCourse will assist concessionaires in developing health menus and sourcing locally and sustainably grown foods.

Delaware North, the concessionaire at Asilomar has already been working to increase its use of locally and sustainably grown foods in the preparation of all its meals, and can offer conference groups menu choices using primarily organic ingredients.

The next Asilomar concession contract, anticipated to commence in 2007, is likely to include additional requirements such as the development of a “demonstration kitchen” that allows park visitors to view healthy food preparation techniques and that can be used to host educational food and cooking programs.

Other opportunities the Department is pursuing include the development of organic farms in parks where farming is a historic land use and integral to the interpretation of the park. At Carmel River State Park, the first organic farm concession contract, is being finalized to grow and sell 10 acres of organic artichokes on land that was traditionally farmed.

The Department is working with Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE), to obtain a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant to conduct an analysis of other suitable locations for farm development within State Parks.

Finally, the Department has recently posted information regarding healthy camp cooking on its Web site. This information, developed by Lynda Smith Hoggan, Professor of Public Health in the Biological Sciences Department at Mount San Antonio College in Walnut, California, describes healthy food choices, camp cooking techniques, recipes, and other information to improve the quality of our visitors' camp eating experience.

Check out www.parks.ca.gov/campingtips for more information. 

Employee Health Survey: 66% Walk for Daily Exercise

Currently, California is experiencing a public health crisis addressed recently during the Governor's Summit on Health, Nutrition and Obesity. Two significant trends have emerged in recent years as the leading causes of this health crisis:

1. Americans have become less physically active. (Recommended levels of physical activity are 30 minutes per day of physical activity for health and 60 - 90 minutes per day for weight loss.)
2. Excessive weight and its associated health risks like Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, arthritis-related disabilities and depression have dramatically increased in all genders, age groups and race/ethnic groups.

California State Parks, as a leader in outdoor recreation, is partnering with other state departments to help reverse these trends. To establish a baseline of data to measure our health and wellness efforts, State Parks' employees were asked to take a few minutes to complete a voluntary, anonymous health survey.

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Employee Health Survey (continued from page 2)

The Department offered the online health survey to its employees in early 2006. Approximately 47 percent of the employees participated in the online health survey. Gender was about equally represented between female (50%) and male (45%). More than half of the participants (54%) indicated an 'intermediate' fitness level. Interestingly, more than 22 percent of the males indicated they were at the 'advanced' fitness level, while a similar number of men (almost 19%) indicated they were at a 'beginner' fitness level. Conversely, about 8 percent of the women indicated they were at the 'advanced' fitness level and more than 41 percent at the 'beginner' fitness level.

A majority of respondents (66%) fell between the ages of 41 to 60 years. This age group is significant because almost 30 percent of these employees will likely retire within the next decade.

Only 26 percent were between the ages of 21-40. Four percent were 61 years or older—validating the age at which many State Parks' employees retire.

About 67 percent working in the field and about 31 percent working at headquarters responded to the health survey. In relation to their work environment, 49 percent felt they were 'sedentary' at work while 40 percent felt they had an 'active' level of job related physical activity. State Park Rangers and Supervising State Park Rangers, were the largest respondent base and accounted for approximately 17 percent of all responses.

A majority (86%) of staff felt they were in good, very good or excellent health. Yet in relation to their weight, 40 percent of the respondents felt they had 'a few pounds extra' or described their weight as 'heavy set'. Still, employees validate their overall health with 95 percent stating they only call in to work sick due to personal illness one or less days per month, while less than one percent (.5%) call in sick to work four or more days per month.

Some measure of this positive health and wellness news is attributed to almost 92 percent saying "no" to smoking.

Walking is the preferred choice of daily activity with more than 66 percent participating at some level for at least 30 minutes a day. Almost 34 percent said they hike daily and almost 20 percent jog or run; about 29 percent go to a fitness club and 25 percent go bicycling.

State Parks' Take a Hike – City Walks Sacramento program hosts monthly walks from the SW corner of the Capitol grounds at 10th and N Streets , at 12:00 noon to 1: P.M. every third Tuesday in July, August, September and October in Sacramento.

The walking program routes include:

- Aug. 1:** Crocker Museum, 1.7 miles
- Aug. 15:** Southside Park, 2.2 miles
- Sept. 19:** Towe Auto Museum, 2.7 miles
- Oct. 17:** Sutter's Fort, 3.1 miles

Find your map and brochure at www.parks.ca.gov/takeahike

The 2006 Employee Health and Wellness Survey is the first of its kind and will serve as a benchmark for future surveys. In January of 2007 the second phase of this project will be completed. With this second dataset, a more comprehensive comparative analysis can be conducted. Future surveys will further define health and physical activity trends within California State Parks employee ranks. 



Public Policy Institute of California Survey: Coastal Issues Matter in '06 Election



An overwhelming number of likely voters in California (87%) say candidates' positions on the environment and coast will be important in the 2006 gubernatorial elections, according to a survey on California's environment released in February by the Public Policy Institute of California. This includes majorities in all major political parties (Democrats 92%, independents 89%, Republicans 80%), although fewer Republicans (30%) than Democrats (57%) or independents (50%) say this is very important.

"Californians treasure the ocean and the state's beaches," says statewide survey director Mark Baldassare. "These attitudes run deep and wide across political parties, coastal and inland areas, and in the growing Latino population – to ignore them could be politically perilous."

"How might this appreciation of the coast translate into decisions at the 2006 ballot box?" asks Baldassare.

Latinos are more likely than whites (60% to 44%) to say the environmental positions of gubernatorial candidates are very important to them. There is unusual partisan harmony on every environmental policy question asked in the survey except offshore oil drilling.

Across political parties, support is high for reducing ocean and beach pollution, even if it means paying higher taxes (Democrats 80%, independents 73%, Republicans 68%). Large majorities in all parties favor policies that protect the state's coastal environment. Source: Public Policy Institute of California survey is available at www.ppic.org 

Proposition 84: Parks Bond on November Ballot

Proposition 84 is the \$5.4 billion resources bond placed on the November 7, 2006 General Election ballot by initiative from a coalition of 11 environmental groups and land trusts. The Trust for Public Land, Nature Conservancy, California Audubon Society, Save-the-Redwoods League, Peninsula Open Space Trust and Big Sur Land Trust, among others, turned in 632,000 signatures this year to the Secretary of State to qualify for the November ballot.

"The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006" would make funds available according to the following schedule:

\$1.525 billion for safe drinking water and water quality projects;

\$800 million for flood control;

\$65 million for statewide water planning and design;

\$928 million for the protection of rivers, lakes, and streams;

\$450 million for forest and wildlife conservation;

\$540 million for the protection of beaches, bays, and coastal waters;

\$500 million for the parks and nature education facilities;

\$580 million for sustainable communities and climate change reduction projects;

Total: \$5.388 billion.

Source: Secretary of State: www.ss.ca.gov & Legislative Analyst's Office: www.lao.ca.gov 



California's Population Grew by 444,000 Residents

California's population grew in 2005 by 444,000 residents - a 1.2-percent growth rate - to total nearly 37.2 million people as of January 1, 2006, according to population estimates released by the state Department of Finance in May 2006.

Investing in California's Future

On May 5, 2006, the California Legislature approved an historic infrastructure package (Strategic Growth Plan) that is a landmark accomplishment. The following four general obligation bonds: education, housing, levee repair/flood control and transportation will be on the November 2006 ballot.

Education: \$10.4 billion bond to fund K-12 and higher education.

Housing: \$2.85 billion bond providing home ownership, rental, and permanent housing opportunities, including **\$200 million for urban, suburban, and rural parks**. Grants will be applied specifically to park creation and development and brownfield cleanup.

Levee Repair/Flood Control: \$4.09 billion bond to repair and maintain levees, improve flood control systems in the Central Valley and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (40-50% of Los Angeles' drinking water comes from the Delta), flood protection for Folsom Dam, American River, and streams, among other projects. San Diego (San Luis Rey River/Sweetwater River) and Orange County (Santa Ana River) would also receive funding.

Transportation: \$19.9 billion bond to fund repairs, reduce congestion, improve bridge safety, expand public transit and improve port security.

More information can be found at: www.strategicgrowthplan.com 

The city of Lincoln in Placer County experienced the state's fastest growth rate at 22.6 percent. Lincoln gained 2,927 housing units primarily from new construction, and now has a total population of 33,589.

Bakersfield in Kern County passed 300,000 in population, giving California 11 cities that exceed 300,000 in population.

California's largest city—Los Angeles - had the largest numeric increase of 41,357. Los Angeles added 12,680 housing units and has a total population of 3,976,071.

The state's ten most populated counties are: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, Santa Clara, Alameda, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Fresno.

Yuba, Riverside, and Imperial counties each grew by three percent or more during 2005. Kern, Placer, Madera, Colusa, Sutter, Merced, Tulare, and San Bernardino counties had growth rates above two percent.

Statewide county population projection pyramids and their accompanying compilation data tables are available through the California State Parks' Planning Division, Barry Trute at btrute@parks.ca.gov.

Related population estimates reports and demographic information are available through the Department of Finance: www.dof.ca.gov 

Which Park and Why?

- 1). As of FY 2004/05, which of California State Parks' twenty-three districts managed the smallest amount of total unit acreage; and within that district which unit was the largest in acres?
- 2). Which unit within the California State Park System saw the most visitors in FY 2004/05? How about the highest visitation at a paid day use unit?
- 3). Which unit within the California State Park system had the highest revenue in FY2004/05?
- 4). As of Fiscal Year 2004/2005, what were the top three units within the California State Park system that provided the most individual camp sites?
- 5). Which unit within the California State Park System had the most miles of non-motorized trails in FY 2004/05?
- 6). As of FY 2004/05, of the 278 basic classified units and major unclassified properties, which is the most average sized unit (both State Parks and other owned) within the California State Parks System?

Source: 2004/05 California State Park System Statistical Report at www.parks.ca.gov/planning

Answers: 1). *The Capital District clearly managed the fewest acres with 325.323 and of that Old Sacramento SHP was the largest unit at 293.413 acres.*

2). *Old Town San Diego SHP reported 4,578,683 visitors in FY 2004/05. Doheny SB reported 1,329,735 paid day use visitors in FY 2004/05.*

3). *Hearst San Simeon SHM produced \$9,490,775 in revenue in FY 2004/05.*

4). *Lake Oroville SRA with 1,401 individual camp sites. Oceano Dunes SVRA with 1,001 individual camp sites. Salton Sea SRA with 954 individual camp sites.*

5). *Henry W. Coe SP in FY 2004/05 reported providing 263 miles of non-motorized trails.*

6). *According to the 2004/05 Statistical Report, there were 1,504,197 acres within the California State Park System; with 278 park units, the average size of each unit would be 5,410.78 acres. Manchester SP has 5,271.97 acres and is the closest to the average with 138.81 acres short of the mean. *

ParkInfo.org

ParkInfo.org is a Web site created by a collaborative, public interest effort of nonprofit and public organizations to broaden access by people to all levels of parks and open space. The Web site's development is primarily supported by GreenInfo Network (site developer and data manager); Bay Area Open Space Council; Land Trust Council of California; Southern California Open Space Council; and the California Coastal Conservancy.

The map on the ParkInfo.org Web site shows parks data for the nine county San Francisco Bay Area. They are collecting additional data on parks, campgrounds, and trails by zip code, city/community or county for the entire state of California.

The Web site consists of the ParkInfo interface that allows searches, links and mapping, and a database of protected open-space and park lands. ParkInfo is a noncommercial site and currently does not have ongoing funding. The ParkInfo sponsors are, however, working to ensure that the site remains current and that data is updated regularly. In general, ParkInfo data is current as of early 2006. It contains all lands whose use is primarily for open space and recreation, that are owned by a public agency or nonprofit land trust, and that are fully open to the public or where use is allowed by acquiring a special permit from the owning agency or organization.

ParkInfo does not necessarily include sites such as recreation buildings or other non open-space recreation sites. It also does not include private golf courses or other privately owned open- space lands.

GreenInfo Network has developed the protected lands information through many initiatives, using existing data and creating new data when possible.

More information on the effort can be found at: www.parkinfo.org 

Natural Collaborations: Inter-Department Partnerships Can Make Agencies More Efficient

Park and recreation agencies face a complex dilemma of how to maintain current facilities and programs with an ever-shrinking budget. Through an archaic system of strict districting created during a period of government prosperity, park administrators are left with little choice but to consider cutting services. But there is a workable solution using manageable concepts such as collaboration, cooperation and solidarity. These options can provide answers to the budgetary epidemic that is infecting our park systems nationwide.

While visiting Portland in 1903, famed landscape architect and planner John Olmsted noted: "No city can be considered properly equipped without an adequate park system... parks not only add to the beauty of a city and to the pleasure of living in it, but are exceedingly important factors in developing the healthfulness, morality, intelligence and business prosperity of its residents."

As early as 1928, reports were published that suggested inter-bureau cooperation was needed to help study and plan for future management of national parks and forests.

In 1962, the Report of the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation suggested that recreation agencies at the regional level should pursue interagency cooperation. Forty years later, it is apparent that regional recreation agencies have become increasingly fragmented because of this lack of cooperation.

According to the California State Park System Statistical Report from Fiscal Year 2004/05, of the 278 units and properties managed by the Department, 30 of these parks are operated by local government agencies or by nonprofit organizations. Initially it might seem as though collaboration between state and local agencies does occur. A closer examination of one such collaboration reveals a successful merger of

assets. The California State Parks' Kings Beach SRA (State Recreation Area) is currently managed by the North Tahoe Recreation and Park District. By jointly administering the Kings Beach SRA, both the State Park System and the North Tahoe Recreation and Park District benefit. The property is owned by California State Parks and can be considered one of California's capital assets. The North Tahoe Recreation and Park District effectively controls the day-to-day operations of the property, which gives it primary control over park operations.

This system works much like the relationship between a landlord and a tenant. The landlord (California State Parks) reaps the benefits that ownership includes, but the tenant (North Tahoe Recreation and Park District) is the actual holder of the property, and therefore controls its daily operation.

Additionally, the North Tahoe Recreation and Park District does not need to spend additional public funds to construct facilities that Kings Beach SRA would provide. For example, if the North Tahoe Recreation and Park District was interested in purchasing lake front property to provide beach access to its constituents, the district would expect to pay a minimum of \$10- to \$20 million, before any improvements were made. Add in the cost of environmental impact studies, public hearings, permits, building costs, etc., and the cost of providing a beach for the District's constituents becomes more than it can afford.

Instead, the North Tahoe Recreation and Park District partners with California State Parks that already owns a waterfront site and is able to provide beach access at a fraction of the cost. It is a win-win for both agencies.

"California park and recreation professionals have the acumen to develop effective joint arrangements," says Leslie Fritz, Director of Education for the California Park and Recreation Society. "They recognize and use qualities that produce cooperative success."

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Natural Collaborations (continued from page 7)

These winning relationships abound throughout the profession. The California Parks and Recreation Society has reported many such successful partnerships. The following are just a few of them:

- * Daly City Parks and Recreation has developed a partnership with the Mid-Peninsula Boys & Girls Club to work together in the development, installation, construction and maintenance of recreation facilities to reduce capital costs and provide additional recreation opportunities.
- * San Jose Parks and Recreation collaborated with California State University in San Jose to build and operate a new library—the first of its kind.
- * The Chico Area Recreation and Park District, California Department of Water Resources, local non-profits and California State Parks created a partnership between two districts 30 miles apart to develop a youth aquatics program (Aquatics Adventure Camp) that emphasizes water and boating safety.
- * Roseville Department of Parks and Recreation created interagency collaboration with four school districts to plan and develop adjacent school and park sites, including the Roseville Aquatics Complex. The benefits include reduced costs for land acquisition, economy of scale for construction of recreation/school joint-use facilities and overall use of facilities and expanded programs.
- * Brentwood Department of Parks and Recreation collaborated with the Brentwood Union School District and the Liberty Union High School District to build four joint-use community gymnasiums at two of its middle schools and two of its high schools. Another gym is currently under construction. At each facility, the department operates an office and storage space, and controls these facilities during non-school hours. Furthermore, the Department has recently entered into an agreement to pay half of the costs of a \$6 million theater at one of the middle schools.

The Department will obtain further office and storage space in addition to the option of renting the facility to the public. The Department has also partnered with the Liberty Union High School District to build an Olympic-sized, joint-use swim facility to be owned by the school district and operated by the city outside school hours.

Colliding Collaborations: Occasionally, government agencies do communicate and collaborate without much success. In 1970, a businessman developed a plan to build a 307-foot tower with a revolving deck near the Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania. His plan was to provide a unique view of the Gettysburg battlefield for educational purposes. The National Park Service (NPS) was vehemently opposed to the project because its officials believed the tower would destroy the aesthetic atmosphere of the park.

Initially, local government agencies were supportive because of the potential increased tax revenues. During 1970-71, the NPS had successfully acquired several properties which, since the NPS does not pay taxes, would decrease tax revenues in and around Gettysburg. Local government agencies hoped that tax revenues from the tower would offset local tax losses from NPS purchases.

By 1971, the Gettysburg Borough Council, county commissioners and many local businessmen realized that the tower would likely draw away tax revenues from other tourist attractions. This realization, along with rising public opposition to the tower, caused them to change their position.

The NPS and the local government agencies of the borough of Gettysburg found themselves agreeing with the opposition to the tower.

Unfortunately for the concurring government agencies, the tower was to be built on private land and they had no jurisdiction because of a lack of zoning restrictions.

Natural Collaborations (continued from page 8)

In May 1971, a civil suit was initiated by local homeowners but was never concluded because the Department of the Interior settled to allow the tower to be built in a more acceptable location, according to the interests of the Department. Public outcry was intense. After substantial litigation through the early 1970s, the tower opened in 1974. Initially, the collaborative effort between the NPS and the local government agencies of the borough of Gettysburg proved unsuccessful but in 2000 the NPS was able to purchase the property to remove it by exercising its power of eminent domain.

On July 3, 2000, 137 years to the day after General Pickett's ill-fated charge, the tower was destroyed. Unfortunately for the citizens of Gettysburg, their battle to remove the tower lasted 30 years. While the collaboration between the local government agencies of Gettysburg and the NPS didn't succeed at stopping the tower from being built, the relationship they created could realize future cooperative benefits.

Keeping a Distance: Another partnership possibility could be in the initial planning of properties. If facilities with similar program offerings are built far enough apart in relation to the communities they serve, it would cut down on overlap. German geographer Walter Christaller's central place theory supposes that recreation facilities should maintain predictable distances from each other based on the needs of the consumer.

Central place theory is based on the comparison of threshold (or the minimum market area that can support goods or service) and range (or the maximum area that people are willing to travel to use the goods or service). If the theory is drawn out, these facilities would spread out with equally concentric circles emanating from the point of origin or central place. Concentric circles from neighboring facilities would only come in contact at equally hierarchical points.

Eventually the model develops the appearance of a nested hexagon (honeycomb) with the center of each honeycomb representing a recreation center. Aggressive planning and cooperation by neighboring recreation agencies could develop and evolve under this model. Ultimately, without cooperation and collaboration, recreation agencies would come into competition with each other. This is the situation that many recreation agencies find themselves in today.

According to central place theory, competition between spatially equal entities will result in one becoming more dominant and eventually replacing the recessive entity. If the rationale is mutually beneficial, recreation agencies could choose to move facilities to a more appropriate location. For example, two recreation agencies might have similar facilities in need of updating. Neighboring park and recreation districts operate their individual pools. They were both built around the early 1950s, long before compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act was an issue. The population of the communities has increased through the years and now both facilities are inadequate and becoming run down. In a cooperative effort, both park and recreation districts combine their resources and build a communal state-of-the-art aquatics center.

In 1903, John Olmsted epitomized the concept that "parks were the antidote to the deadening effects of urbanization [and that] cities should build parks not just singly, but as comprehensive and connected systems."

What Olmsted understood in 1903, recreation administrators are still grappling with today. Park systems should be interconnected. The fact that political boundaries shape the management of facilities and allocate how tax revenue is spent seems to get lost on those that should have the biggest voice—the people. 

Recreation Trends (continued from page 1)

A full 80 percent of Californians live in coastal communities, but the Central Valley and Southern California's Inland Empire are the fastest growing regions. And as we know, along with an increase in population comes an increase in demand for services.

"The baby boom is producing more than a baby a minute... population growth increases demand for housing, parks, water, transportation, schools and other forms of public infrastructure." - Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee.

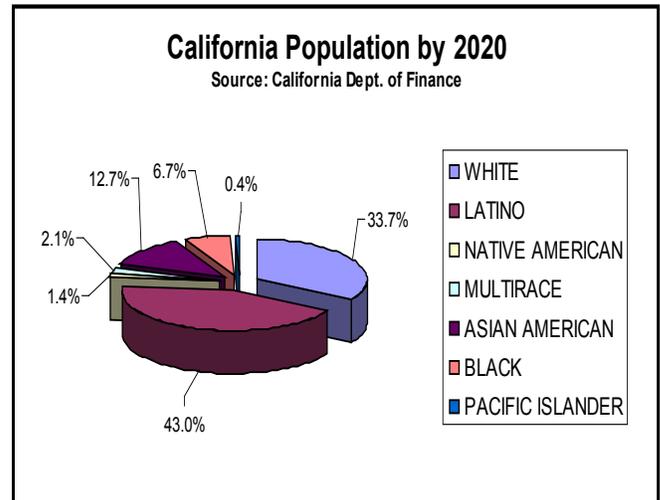
By 2010, one in five Californians will be more than 60 years old. In fact, the older population will double by 2020 and, as more are aging, more time is used to pursue recreation activities. From 2030 to 2040, baby boomers will be reaching the age of 85. Every institution has been influenced by baby boomers; parks and recreation will be no different.

In addition to growing older, the state's population is also growing younger – in large part because of immigration. Three quarters of the K-12 students live in large California counties – Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego, as well as the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento.

Almost 40 percent of households include children under the age of 18 and they are much more ethnically and culturally diverse and more technologically advanced and demanding of park and recreation services, programs and opportunities than ever before. Many want riskier outdoor recreation opportunities like trail boarding, mountain biking, BMX (bicycle motocross) courses and off-roading with vehicles.

More than one third of all Asian Americans and nearly one third of all Hispanic-Americans live in California. By 2030 the Hispanic population will rise to 43 percent and Spanish has the potential to be spoken in nearly half of California households. In fact, Hispanics are projected to increase by 58 percent between 2000 and 2020.

During this same period, there will be 55 percent more Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, 29 percent more Native Americans, and 20 percent more African Americans.



Implications to Population: Lands, programs, services and facilities will have to be expanded to accommodate the future influx of park and recreation users. Lands not acquired now may be unavailable or too costly in the future. With such a diverse group of constituents, greater emphasis will need to be placed on programs that attract a variety of people. Ways to educate and encourage these diverse groups and newcomers to become users of and advocates for parks and recreation will have to be developed. Understanding the most likely direction of change may enable providers to position their services and respond more quickly to market demands.

2) Changing recreation patterns: The trend toward securing blocks of time – long weekends, as well as vacations – for leisure activities will continue, however Californians are recreating less now than five years ago. People are frequently tethered to their work via wireless e-mail with personal digital assistants (PDA), BlackBerry, Palm GPS Navigator smartphone, cell phones and laptops.

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Recreation Trends (continued from page 10)

Favorite recreation activities and their implications: Even less popular activities with stable or declining participation rates will grow. For example, activities that are not growing in participation rates, like tennis, will increase because there are simply so many more Californians. Traditional activities (hiking, picnicking, soccer, bike riding, etc.) will remain popular and will continue to expand. Yet, as more users want to participate in a variety of activities, more user conflicts will occur. The combined pressure from both the traditional forms of recreation use (trails, water-based, camping, picnicking, etc.) and the newer activities continually gaining in popularity such as geocaching (outdoor treasure-hunting with Global Positioning Systems 'GPS' devices); orienteering (race with map/compass); and bouldering (climbing without rope/limited height) are creating conflicts between user groups, special interests and park facility managers.

Surveys show the following have the highest participation rates:

Most Popular

1. walking
2. driving for pleasure
3. visiting historic sites/museums
4. outdoor/cultural events
5. beach activities
6. visiting nature museums
7. picnicking
8. wildlife viewing
9. hiking
10. using turf-ed areas

Most Preferred

1. camping in developed sites
2. hiking
3. walking
4. wildlife viewing
5. bicycling (paved)
6. horseback riding
7. freshwater fishing
8. outdoor cultural/events
9. visiting nature museums
10. picnicking

3) Emphasis on Health and Wellness:

Health and wellness issues have become hot topics because of the increasing number of unfit Californians and the economic and health care drain. The obesity epidemic is costing California over \$2 billion a year in medical care, lost productivity and workers' compensation. An astounding one in every four of our children is overweight. Parks and recreation programs are excellent inducements to physical activity and help to encourage lifelong fitness habits. While more recreation alternatives than ever before are available for today's youth, many are sedentary. Access to outdoor recreation must be available, modeled and encouraged for these youth to reap the health-related benefits associated with recreation. Participating in recreation activities has been shown to help our youth improve their education, lead healthy lives, and deter them from high-risk behaviors.

Threats to our well-being: In California, 26 percent of the population do not regularly engage in exercise or recreation and 26 percent of California's youth are considered overweight. Everybody – all groups and cultures regardless of age, race or ethnicity, gender, disability, nationality or occupation, have increased their weight during the past decade. Overweight kids have an increased chance of becoming overweight adults.

4) The effects of convenience: Americans are working longer hours today than ever before. We are increasingly a nation of overworked, overscheduled, overstressed and overwhelmed employees with wireless handheld PDAs. More and more people are connected to their offices 24/7 by e-mail, mobile phone, text messaging, Wi-Fi laptops and GPS. How are these longer work hours affecting our ability to provide quality park facilities, recreation programs and services? The need for convenience is largely affecting nearly everything we do – anything to save time.

(Continued on page 12)

Recreation Trends (continued from page 11)

5). Technology and its effect on the park and recreation profession: The technological changes that created new activities such as geocaching, mountain-boarding, slack-lining, and new uses for RVs, boating and off-road vehicles are creating new demands for lands, facilities, programs and services. All-terrain equipment, navigational aids such as GPS units and customized digital mapping software have altered navigation and mapping forever while creating new markets for GPS recreation applications. As recreation manufacturers use new lightweight, durable metals such as titanium and alloys, and improved synthetic fabrics, athletic shoes, clothing, tents, rackets, bikes, skateboards, skis and backpacks are now lighter and stronger. This new equipment for outdoor recreation can be costly to consumers and service providers, while park and recreation facility managers are increasingly finding that the demand for specific new recreation activities can conflict with existing uses such as multiuse trails creating issues around visitor safety, noise, conflicts and environmental disturbances.

6) Policy Trends: According to the Public Opinions and Attitudes Survey of 2002, Californians continue to enjoy their parks and feel generally pleased with their conditions. However, many Californians don't think of some recreation areas as parks, such as beaches and historic buildings. In addition, even though they are happy with park and recreation facilities, people are generally unwilling to pay higher fees for services and facilities through higher taxes. However, when they are confronted with the reality of closing parks, they have demonstrated support. When State Parks raised fees this past year, comments by the public in news articles have been generally favorable. Public policy must encourage active and coordinated participation by all park and recreation providers to meet state-wide needs. Space-intensive activities such as golf will become more expensive and overcrowded at prime times. Space scarcities for facilities such as trails, soccer and

ballfields, play equipment areas and community centers will become more acute, especially in prime environments such as urban parks. The urban space crunch will be intensified with more smart growth, multiple-unit housing, and the shrinking of the private residential yard. Determined to address the imbalances in open space, communities are working together in partnerships to strengthen relevant urban connections. For example, California State Parks is working with the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks to provide recreational opportunities at Rio de Los Angeles State Park.

Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature allocated \$250 million to California State Parks in the 2006-07 State Budget for critical infrastructure repairs. The deferred maintenance backlog is no longer at a potential critical stage, it is a crisis. Fewer maintenance staff ultimately means fewer land acquisitions resulting in an even stronger demand for services and facilities. The 2006-07 State Budget also contains \$16.4 million in significant assistance for immediate needs in State Parks.

Parks and recreation, although largely accepted as integral to the 'quality of life' continues to lack top-of-the-mind status – especially with policy leaders that determine funding outcomes. It is essential to be proactive in linking the growing concern regarding health and wellness issues with the positive role that parks and recreation can play in renewing the body, mind and spirit by implementing new policies to create an environment that encourages the health and fitness of Californians. And finally, as many park profession baby boomers plan for their well-earned retirement, agencies face an incredible brain and skill drain. Historic knowledge of an agency's in and outs, understanding of process or why something was done the way it was – is escaping us. It is critical to bring mid-level managers into inner circles for cross training and reference. For more information see the Park & Recreation Technical Services Web page at: www.parks.ca.gov/parts 



Bear Facts

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Bear Facts is published three times a year by the California State Parks Planning Division on a wide range of park and recreation trends, research, surveys, studies, and policy issues.

Prescription Trails Pilot Program We need your help!

California State Parks' Statewide Trails Office is looking for information to assist in the creation of a statewide comprehensive Internet database of walking/hiking opportunities in publicly managed lands throughout the state. This database would be available online and searchable by zip-code. This "Prescription Trails" database will provide the state with a resource to help combat our growing health problems. By accessing this database, health care professionals would be able to prescribe physical activity to their patients. California State Parks is currently initiating a pilot program encompassing Sacramento County. If successful, California State Parks would like to see a statewide database implemented. We are looking for information on any trails, tracks, and parks with trails on any public land within Sacramento County. If you have any electronic data (i.e. maps, special files, attributes, etc.) please email Nicole Franckowiak at nfranckowiak@parks.ca.gov.

Phone: (916) 651-0386 or write to: California State Parks, Statewide Trails Office, 1416 Ninth Street, Room 108, Sacramento, CA 95814, attention: Nicole Franckowiak.

Thanks! 

New Report: Future Parks for Central Valley Released

California State Parks' Director Ruth Coleman released the "California State Parks' Central Valley Vision" report on May 24, 2006 with Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman; Assembly member Lois Wolk; Great Valley Center President, Carol Whiteside; Yolo County Supervisor Helen Thompson; Sacramento Valley Conservancy Executive Director, Aimee Rutledge; and Sacramento State Aquatics Center Director, Brian Dular. The announcement was held at Sacramento State Aquatics Center in Gold River to highlight increased river access, boat ramps, water trails, and water recreation. For the past two years, State Parks has held town-hall style meetings across the State, from Redding to Bakersfield, asking Valley residents for recommendations on future parks, recreation, historical and cultural sites.

Download a copy of the Central Valley report at www.parks.ca.gov/centralvalley 

New Report: The Gift of Time Effective Volunteer Program Management for Local Park & Recreation Agencies

The California State Parks' Planning Division recently released "The Gift of Time: Effective Volunteer Program Management for Local Park and Recreation Agencies" in March 2006. Written especially for local agencies with direct overlap with other park and recreation service providers, the guidebook assists providers with expanding their customer services, especially during times of budgetary constraint, through the effective use of volunteers and volunteer programs. The recommendations offered in this guidebook are drawn from nationally recognized professionals and local volunteer managers to help agencies establish a successful volunteer program. Download a copy of this publication at www.parks.ca.gov/planning 