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STATE OF CALIFORNIA · DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

**State Park and Recreation Commission**  
**STATEMENTS OF POLICY**

Including policies adopted/amended/revised

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STATEMENTS OF POLICY  
STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**PREAMBLE**

The function of the California State Park and Recreation Commission and the Department of Parks and Recreation is to acquire, protect, develop, and interpret for the inspiration, use, and enjoyment of the people of the state a balanced system of areas with outstanding natural and cultural resource values and recreational opportunities. These areas shall be held in trust as irreplaceable portions of California's natural, cultural, and historic heritage.

The transfer of care, maintenance, or control of units of the State Park System shall be in agreement with Sections 5003 and 5007 of the Public Resources Code.

Public Resources Code Sections 535, 539 and 540 provide that the Commission shall study the issue of providing recreation in California and shall recommend a comprehensive recreational policy for the State. The Commission reports on and recommends to the Governor needed recreational and park facilities at the state and local level. It establishes general policies for the guidance of the Director of Parks and Recreation in the administration, protection, and development of the State Park System. In determining these policies, the Commission is cognizant of the interest of the public, the State Legislature and Administration, and the duties assigned by law and good business procedure to other departments of government.

A continuing review of park policies is essential to keep them consistent with recreational trends, public needs, and financing requirements, and to see that the aims which led to the establishment of the various units are maintained.

Recommendations from the policy committee shall be circulated for criticism and suggestions; the replies shall be reviewed by the policy committee and submitted to the Commission for adoption. It shall be the responsibility of the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, serving as the secretary of the State Park and Recreation Commission, to maintain a current compilation of policy statements and to ensure its dissemination to the Governor, members of the Legislature, the State Park and Recreation Commission, the administrator of the Resources Agency, and to any interested person, institution, or organization.

The responsibilities of the various committees shall be to gather information on their particular subject and make recommendations to the whole Commission for general policies to be adopted. All matters pertaining to Commission business (policy or decision) originating within the Department of Parks and Recreation shall first be submitted by the secretary to the appropriate committee chairman for study and thence by the committee chairman to the full Commission for final consideration and action.

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Besides the creation of general policy statements for the guidance of the Director, the Commission will make recommendations to the Department based upon the results of committee study and/or statements made by individuals appearing at Commission meetings. Since these recommendations are based upon the "public hearing" aspect of the Commission's meetings, they are entitled to much consideration by the Department, but they do not occupy the same position as policy statements, and the Director may for good reason make decisions contrary to such recommendations (Report of Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy). The lines of communication between the Commission and the departmental staff are always through the Director's office.

No State Park and Recreation Commission policy shall be construed in derogation of the legal authority of the Director of Parks and Recreation or of any employee of the Department of Parks and Recreation, nor shall they be construed to authorize or permit to anyone easement, concession, property right, or contractual right which is not otherwise provided for by law.

The facilities of the State Park System, whether operated directly by the Department of Parks and Recreation, by agreement with other jurisdictions, or by contractors, shall be open to all, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age or sexual orientation, or as otherwise provided by law.

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POLICY I.1

**2005 CALIFORNIA RECREATION POLICY**

Approved by the Commission on 9-23-05 for adoption by the Director of California State Parks

The purpose of the California Recreation Policy is to guide all of California's recreation providers in meeting the recreation needs of our citizens and visitors. The State Legislature has delegated the responsibility of preparing this policy to the California State Park and Recreation Commission. California Public Resources Code, Section 540b, directs that:

*The Commission shall formulate, in cooperation with other state agencies, interested organizations and citizens, and shall recommend to the Director (of the Department of Parks and Recreation), for adoption by him, a comprehensive recreational policy for the State of California.*

The 2005 California Recreation Policy, which appears on the following six pages, was developed by a diverse group of public and non-profit entities. The policy is intended to serve as a guide to these agencies and organizations as they work to provide Californians with the high-quality recreational opportunities they deserve and have come to expect.

# California's Recreation Policy 2005

*A bold direction for addressing the recreation needs of Californians, encompassing the entire range of recreation and park providers*



A multitude of recreational opportunities provide Californians the freedom to fully develop their innate capabilities and creatively use their energies, while enriching their lives and improving their health and sense of well-being. Well-documented research consistently shows that recreation is essential to the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of individuals, neighborhoods and our society as a whole. It is vital that all Californians be provided with an exciting array of opportunities that allow them to pursue their personal recreational interests. In recognition of this far-reaching belief, the State Legislature delegated responsibility for preparing a

Recreation Policy for the State of California to the State Park and Recreation Commission. Public Resources Code (Section 540) directs that:

*The Commission shall formulate, in cooperation with other state agencies, interested organizations and citizens, and shall recommend to the Director (of the Department of Parks and Recreation) for adoption by him/her, a comprehensive recreational policy for the State of California.*



*"There is a saying that the sins of the fathers are often visited upon their children. It is a sad fact that Californians of today are paying the price for times when not enough was done to protect our land, our air and our water. By devoting ourselves to improving California's environment now, we are ensuring that we do not leave a similar legacy."*

—Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

The 2005 California Recreation Policy is intended to be broad in scope and considers the full range of recreation activities - active, passive, indoors and out-of-doors. This timely policy considers the means by which recreational opportunities are provided—the lands, waters, facilities, programs and support functions—and it recognizes the considerable health, personal, social, economic and environmental benefits served through the many important dimensions of recreation.

This comprehensive policy is directed at recreation providers at all service levels: federal, state, and local agencies and special districts; private suppliers; and quasi-public or nonprofit organizations. It is intended that all suppliers of park facilities and recreation opportunities will be guided by California's Recreation Policy as they work to provide the high quality recreation experiences Californians have come to expect and which they deserve.



To simplify and make the process more meaningful, the policy has been divided into five general areas:

1. Adequacy of recreation opportunities
2. Leadership in recreation management
3. Recreation's role in a healthier California
4. Preservation of natural and cultural resources
5. Accessible recreational experiences

# 1. Adequacy of recreation opportunities

*The supply of parklands, waters, open space, recreation facilities and services must be adequate to meet future and current demands, particularly in the State's most populated areas.*

It is State policy that:

An ample supply of park and recreation areas, along with their associated open space and natural areas, facilities, beaches and waterways, trails and programs should exist throughout California so all people can safely engage in near-home activities as well as opportunities to visit distant locations for extended leisure time or vacation pursuits.



*“Open space means many different things. It*

*may be a city park or playground; it may be the beauty of the open road; it may be the challenge of the trackless wilderness. Open space—handsome, meaningful, open space available for enjoyment—is not only a dimension of geography but a dimension of life. The protection of its beauty and the preservation and enhancement of its usefulness are important parts of our total conservation.”*

—George B. Hartzog, Jr., former Director of the National Park Service



Particular attention should be given to providing access to parklands and natural and developed recreation areas in and near the urban areas where most Californians live. In heavily populated areas, careful attention should be given to the acquisition and protection of natural and cultural resource lands, waters and open space. It is also important to recognize the need for critical recreational facilities in rapidly growing rural areas.

Public service providers closest to the recreation resources, and particularly

to the sources of recreation demand, shall have the primary responsibility for providing comprehensive recreation opportunities. In urban, suburban and rural areas, these essential responsibilities shall generally fall to agencies of the cities, counties and special districts. It will be the responsibility of State agencies to take the lead where resources or recreation demands are of regional or far-reaching significance.

Parklands and trails should be promoted for the broad-scale economic and non-economic benefits they provide, whether through providing opportunities for physical activity, increasing jobs, attracting tourists, supporting local communities, drawing in new businesses to park-friendly communities, providing vital concession operations or increasing property values.





## *2. Leadership in recreation management*

*Leadership, cooperation and partnership must be demonstrated at all levels to ensure quality recreation resources, opportunities, programs and services are provided.*



It is State policy that:

The State of California, through its Department of Parks and Recreation, should encourage and actively stimulate and coordinate active participation of federal, state, and local agencies, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors, in providing park and recreation lands, waters, facilities and programs.

Local public and private decision makers have an important leadership role in ensuring that a full range of stimulating, enjoyable and safe recreation experiences are available to their constituents, regardless of their skills, abilities or income levels. The State, by means of grants and technical assistance, shall creatively aid local service providers in the realization of this vision and the vital delivery of these services.

Federal, state and local decision makers and program administrators should weigh the quality of life outcomes associated with park and recreation services in equal measure with other critical community services when considering the allocation of funding and staffing resources.



California's public and private schools, colleges and universities should support their undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs for training professionals in park and recreation management. In addition, they should support efforts related to conducting research (e.g., visitor's surveys, facility inventories and activity studies) on park and recreation related subjects and encourage beneficial internship programs at public agencies and non-profit organizations with the understanding that these worthwhile programs provide the future leadership in the park and recreation movement.



Providers in the private, quasi-public and nonprofit sectors are essential partners in the provision of recreation services. They should be encouraged to develop and operate a wide range of recreation resources, and to provide a considerable range of recreation opportunities on both private lands and public lands where appropriate.

Californians should have the opportunity to, and are encouraged to, actively participate as volunteers in support of recreation facilities and programs.

### 3. Recreation's role in a healthier California

Meaningful recreation activities, facilities, programs and increased opportunities for physical activity are vital to improving the health and well-being of Californians.

It is State policy that:

Park and recreation lands, facilities and programs should be recognized as a positive force for individuals, families, communities and society, fostering extensive community pride, increasing productivity, significantly reducing crime and healthcare costs, and play a vital role in preventing significant health ailments through physical activity.

Recreation programs should be available for all Californians, particularly for children and youth, to encourage inventive play and support lifelong physical activity and emotional well-being.



Park and recreation professionals should also promote and support increased physical activity among Californians, which is critical to combating the obesity epidemic and preventing serious, chronic conditions like heart disease and diabetes. Park and recreation professionals should also actively take forward the unified and clear message that abundant parks, sports activities and recreation programs provide

youth the opportunity to be involved in positive, supervised activities, and that recreation services play a critical role in reducing truancy, teen pregnancy, gang involvement and juvenile delinquency while building self-esteem and improving school performance.

Recreation providers should evaluate the availability and adequacy of facilities and programs to serve California's growing number of seniors associated with an aging population and make necessary adjustments to serve this increasingly important population. Senior programs should actively promote healthy lifestyles, physical activity, continued learning, and community engagement, including intergenerational activities.

Park and recreation providers at all levels should seek opportunities to collaborate with other critical social service programs in such fields as education, health care, housing, juvenile justice and social welfare.

Park and recreation professionals should understand and be able to convey the importance of providing quality passive recreation opportunities that assist the user in enjoying the quiet and solitude of a passive experience.



*"In today's challenging environment (socially, environmentally, physically, and mentally), I know of no greater cost effective antidote than providing parks and recreation programs and services to the citizens of California. It is vitally important that the mission of parks and recreation be communicated and understood. Our mission is to: protect environmental resources; foster human development; strengthen safety and security; promote health and wellness; facilitate community problem solving; increase cultural unity; support economic development; and provide recreational experiences."*

— Jane Adams, Executive Director, California Park and Recreation Society





#### *4. Preservation of natural and cultural resources*

*Educating Californians about their state's invaluable resources is a critical part of ensuring these resources continue to be available for the enjoyment of current and future generations.*

It is State policy that:

A comprehensive environmental ethic should be fostered among all Californians, particularly its children and youth, to encourage wise use of the state's finite natural and cultural resources.

Californians should be made aware of California's unique and important environmental, ecological, scenic, historical and educational resources and opportunities contained within parks, recreation areas, open space and resource lands.

Inspiring educational materials should be available that have consistent core messages designed to conserve, protect and respect resource values and raise individual awareness to potential concerns.



Attention should be given to the conservation of critical habitat for special status plant species and wildlife, and the restoration of important natural areas such as wildlife corridors and wetlands. The preservation of and education about cultural and historic resources such as archaeological sites, historic trails or notable buildings should receive similar noteworthy attention.

To ensure resource lands, waterways and habitat will continue to be available for future generations, consideration should be given to protecting working farms and ranch lands with important natural and cultural resources through voluntary land protection agreements.

Recreation areas should be planned and carefully managed to provide optimum recreation opportunities without damaging significant natural or cultural resources.

Management actions should strive to correct problems that have the potential to damage sensitive areas and degrade resources.





## 5. Accessibility to all Californians

All citizens have the right to enjoy California's park and recreation legacy.

It is State policy that:

Physical barriers and administrative obstacles whenever possible should be eliminated so California's park and recreation lands, waters, facilities, activities and programs are accessible to all who want to enjoy them.

Through careful planning and farsighted parkland acquisition in California's urban areas, Californians should have safe access to a park or other recreation area within walking distance of where they live.



Low income communities and communities embodying California's great diversity should be provided the same access to healthful outdoor settings, well-maintained facilities, and professionally competent programs as are enjoyed by all other Californians.

Employees of park and recreation service providers at all levels should reflect the diversity of California's people in order to better understand the needs and preferences of California's changing population.



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POLICY I.2

**INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The State Park and Recreation Commission is a public agency. As such, its meetings are public meetings, open to attendance by the people.

Adequate notice of regular and special meetings of the Commission shall be given to the public through the usual news media and/or through releases mailed to interested persons and organizations. The presence of representatives of the press, radio, television, and other news media is to be welcomed and encouraged. However, the filming or recording of Commission meetings will be permitted only by prior arrangement. Such advance requests will be submitted to the secretary of the Commission ten days prior to the meeting.

Copies of proposed general plans shall be made available to the public at appropriate unit and district offices, appropriate county park and recreation offices and board of supervisors offices, and at one or more public libraries in the vicinity of the unit.

The public shall be kept informed of the development and use of the State Park System. Information should contain not only the current operation of the existing State Park System but the planning for future facilities and services.

A continuous effort must be maintained to see that all personnel of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and in particular the field personnel who are in regular contact with the public, are well informed about the current activities of the Department and the Commission.

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POLICY I.3

**VISITOR FEES**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The Department may establish and collect entry, facility use, and program fees. In doing so, the Department shall consider the following: affordability to the public; the level of service and facilities being provided; cost of operation; the Department's practical ability to collect fees; the fees of similar facilities in the area; and the necessity to establish and meet revenue goals.

Fees may be adjusted annually. At least sixty days prior to the declaration of any fee increase, the Department shall hold a public hearing.

Overall revenue from fees should represent a return which recognizes the reasonable need to share the costs incurred by users and the value received by all people of the state from quality park units and services.

Fees may be waived or reduced for: School groups (K-12) and their escorts when used for educational purposes in accordance with Public Resources Code 5010.2; State hospital patients and their attendants in accordance with Public Resources Code 5010; minors; economically disadvantaged persons; seniors; disabled persons; when it is in the best interest of the Department to do so, such as special commemorative events, recognition of special groups, for marketing or public relations, or comparable purposes; as needed to respond to site-specific concerns such as climatic conditions, usability of resources, and existence of competing facilities in the area.

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POLICY I.4

**OPERATING CONTRACTS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The following general policy is applicable to all new, renewed, or amended operating contracts entered into by the Department or its operating agents:

1. General Statement of Policy

Recognizing the role that concessions play in assisting the Department to accomplish its diverse mission of preserving the State's most valued natural and cultural resources and providing opportunities for high-quality recreational, educational experiences, it is the Department's policy to:

Enter into contracts to provide services, products, facilities, and programs to enhance visitor use, enjoyment, safety, and convenience.

Ensure that concession developments, programs, or services are compatible with a unit's classification and general plan provisions.

Actively seek and promote concession opportunities where appropriate throughout the State Park System and at other appropriate locations outside the Park System. Resulting contracts shall not create added financial burden on the State, and shall either reduce costs and/or generate revenues that aid in developing, operating, interpreting, maintaining, and expanding the State Park System.

Encourage private-sector capital investment for the development of needed facilities in State Park units through contracts.

In executing this policy, the Department and its operating agents shall adhere to all pertinent provisions of the Public Resources Code. The Commission, in its review of the general plan for units to be operated by operating agents, shall make a determination that the unit or facility will be operated in a manner that generally meets the standard followed by the Department in its own operation of similar units. In this connection the Department shall prepare, with the advice and consent of the Commission, a standard manual dealing with on-site retail activities including such matters as merchandising, store design, display fixtures, etc. This manual will be used to establish continuity and enhance the image and quality throughout the system. As appropriate, concessionaires and cooperating associations will honor all state-wide graphic standards, licensing, and merchandising agreements entered into with corporate sponsors of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

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2. Concessions Planning

Opportunities for appropriate concession arrangements shall be considered in each phase of the Department's planning process that leads to acquiring, developing, rehabilitating, operating, or interpreting park units.

In historic structure restoration or reconstruction planned for accomplishment through concession contracts, and where the subject structure(s) shall be occupied by a concession operation, the Department shall, to the extent possible, first perform necessary archeological, architectural, and/or historical authenticity studies of the proposed project prior to finalizing a contract for such work or building use.

Proposed concessions requiring significant capital investment shall be studied for overall benefit to the Department and for their economic feasibility. Such studies shall be the basis for determining project viability as well as contract term, rental payments, and other contract provisions.

3. Interpretive Contracts

The Department shall consider an interpretive contract opportunity to exist when the facility, service, product, or program contracted for shall directly relate to an interpretive theme, interpretive plan, or general plan for the unit. In such cases, the Director shall have the option to enter into a contract through an open bid process or through a sole-source contract when such contractor will have demonstrated a unique knowledge, experience, or ability associated with the interpretive subject. The interpretive concession contract shall specify the interpretive goals and objectives to be achieved by the concession.

4. Attracting Small, Minority-Owned, Women-Owned, and Disabled-Owned Business Operators

It is the policy of the Commission to cultivate and encourage small businesses, women-owned, ethnic and racial minority-owned, and disabled-owned/operated businesses as operators in the State Park System. Opportunities shall be announced and advertised in selected target media to aid in achieving this goal.

5. Concessions Competing with Outside Businesses

It is the Commission's policy to generally encourage private business to provide facilities, products or programs outside state park unit boundaries which will also serve to provide convenience services to park users. In those instances where such private conveniences are not available, concession facilities may be provided within the park.

6. Proposed Concessions and Contracts Under Operating Agreements

Proposals for future concessions which may be recommended in the concessions element of the general plan, and proposed contracts which the Department or its operating agents present to the Commission for its approval prior to bidding, negotiation, or amendment pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5080.20(a), shall be carefully reviewed by the Commission for consistency with paragraphs one through five of this policy.



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POLICY I.5

**ADVERTISING, ENDORSEMENTS, AND SPONSORSHIPS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The Commission and the Department shall actively solicit endorsements and sponsorships for parks, facilities, publications and services from businesses, individuals, and other entities. Such endorsements and sponsorships will cover all present and future costs and provide revenue to the Department. Sponsorship of special events shall entail sufficient funds to cover the costs of the events. Generally, units of the State Park System are not considered venues for advertising. However, acknowledgment of sponsorship may include display of corporate logos, products/services, or other identifying signage.

Display of corporate logos, products/services, or other identifying signage shall not degrade the natural and cultural resources of the unit or interfere with the visitors' enjoyment of the parks' aesthetic values. The Director shall have developed guidelines which prevent such degradation and interference.

No advertising or sponsorship of tobacco products or alcoholic beverages is permitted without the express approval of the Director.

The Director shall report to the Commission at regular Commission meetings on the status of existing and potential sponsorships.

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POLICY I.6

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

(Amended 9-16-98)

The California State Park and Recreation Commission, having a committed interest in the financial stability of the Department and the economic viability of proposed projects as a matter of policy, will review and offer advice to the Director on:

- Financial pro-formas for those components of General Plan amendments that provide opportunity for significant revenue generation, or require significant expenditures by the Department;
- Feasibility studies, draft concession bid packages, Request for Interest and Requests for Proposals which are of a magnitude that requires review and approval by the California State Legislature;
- Financial pro-formas or feasibility studies for major construction projects.

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POLICY I.7

**ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

(9-16-98)

The Department will encourage relationships with support organizations, foundations, cooperating and interpretive associations, and related organizations, as well as with commercial sponsors and concessionaires. The relationship of such organizations and entities to the Department shall generally be regulated by Commission policies and, where appropriate, by formal contracts.

All non-profit organizations and cooperating associations working in partnership with the Department should be encouraged to develop programs and projects to raise funds. Such programs and projects shall be approved by the Department prior to initiation. Financial records of organizations working in partnership with the Department shall be made available to the Department on an annual basis.

Further, the Department shall seek opportunities to effect productive interagency initiatives with other governmental entities. Such initiatives may include joint marketing efforts, building of information bases, and sharing of staff and resources for other projects of mutual benefit. Such initiatives should focus on those projects which foster tourism within California and a positive image of the state, and which effectively market the State Park System.

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POLICY I.8

**FUNDING MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PRIORITIES**

(9-16-98)

The Commission, recognizing that financial resources are limited, thereby preventing the Department from maintaining sites at their full potential, establishes the following priorities for discretionary fund expenditures.

In establishing funding priorities, the Department should give priority to projects which deal with:

- Public health, safety, and damage resulting from natural disasters;
- Statutory requirements;
- Meeting the needs of park visitors;
- Making available ongoing funding for support and maintenance in the future;
- Broad and multiple State objectives including projects that provide savings in State operations or avoid future State costs.

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POLICY II.1

**INTEGRITY OF STATE PARK SYSTEM LANDS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Land acquired for the use and enjoyment of the people according to the statutes governing the State Park System is classified for use and enjoyment by this and future generations as: (a) State Wilderness; (b) State Reserves; (c) State Parks; (d) State Recreation Units; (e) Historical Units; (f) Natural Preserves; (g) Cultural Preserves; (h) State Beaches; (i) State Seashores; (j) Trails; and (k) Wayside Campgrounds.

Land acquired for the State Park System shall be dedicated to public use and managed in accordance with its classification, the Public Resources Code, the Department's adopted Resource Management Directives, and as outlined in approved resource elements of general plans.

Subject to provisions of law and to general policy established by this Commission, the Director of Parks and Recreation shall, wherever possible, provide for the use of State Park System lands as classified and planned, and shall not grant nonconforming uses without the concurrence of the State Park and Recreation Commission.

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POLICY II.2

**CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING UNITS, FEATURES, GROVES, AND TRAILS  
OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The following procedure will be used to identify, classify, and name units of the State Park System:

1. Unit Project Name

A unit project name may be used by the Department of Parks and Recreation throughout the initial phase of site selection, planning, and acquisition of a unit to be added to the State Park System. The project name, so far as possible, will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below.

2. Classification and Naming

- a. Following the acquisition of and preparation of a resource inventory for a new unit of the State Park System, the Department will provide the secretary of the Commission with a recommendation containing the unit's permanent name and classification.
- b. The type of classification shall be governed by existing State law, principally the Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 1.7, Section 5019.53, et seq.
- c. With regard to naming, the Department's recommendation will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below and any existing State regulations.
- d. Upon receiving a recommendation for the classification and naming of a unit of the State Park System, the secretary of the Commission will select the time and place for holding a public hearing before the Commission for this specific purpose. The secretary will ensure that the hearing is properly announced in accordance with existing State regulations in order that the classification and naming as adopted by the Commission may be recorded and made a part of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

3. State Park System Unit Names

In most cases, a unit should bear the name to which it has been accustomed due to location, association, history, natural features, or general usage. Changing the name of a classified unit is strongly discouraged. A unit may be named by the Commission in honor of a person living or deceased, or a group, organization, or other entity which has rendered services of statewide significance to the State Park System.

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4. Naming of Features Within Units of the State Park System

The Director may approve the use of a name to identify a feature within a unit of the State Park System when this action is necessary or desirable for any reason, such as ease in identifying a feature for users of the system, preparation of maps, recognition of deserving individuals or groups, organizations or other entities. Names so selected may be altered or changed by the Director as conditions warrant. The approval of a map or the use of a sign identifying a feature shall constitute the Director's approval and the recording of the Director's actions.

5. Memorial Groves

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial groves within the State Park System. Sections or areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial groves for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial groves will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or one-half of the present market value of the area to be named. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the acquisition of the grove if appropriate. Memorial groves will be indicated on an official map left in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial grove will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

6. Memorial Trails

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial trails within the State Park System. Areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial trails for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial trails will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or comparable service for trail improvements. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the establishment of the trail if appropriate. Memorial trails will be indicated on an official map in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial trail will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

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POLICY II.3

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN STATE RESERVES AND STATE PRESERVES**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The protection of ecological, scientific, natural, and cultural values is of primary importance in areas identified as State Reserves and Natural and Cultural Preserves. The general plan developed for such areas shall recognize the importance of the resource and the necessity for protection. The Director may provide limitations on management and use to safeguard the identified resources.

In a Reserve or Preserve, facilities and activities shall be limited to those required to permit interpretation, public observation, understanding of the prime resources, and scientific research. They shall conform to the resource element of the unit's general plan. An interpretive program should be established whenever possible to share with the public the values of the Reserves and Preserves.

The Director may restrict general public use up to one year when research conducted by qualified persons or organizations is authorized and is essential to the attainment of long-term management goals as defined in the resource element of the general plan and will contribute to public knowledge and enjoyment through its findings. Restrictions of public access for periods longer than one year shall be established only upon approval of the Commission.

The Commission should be informed of all major scientific and educational programs conducted in Reserves or Preserves by the Department or outside agencies or individuals.



State Park and Recreation Commission  
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POLICY II.4

**PRESERVATION OF VEGETATIVE ENTITIES**

(Amended 5-4-94)

It shall be the policy of this Commission, in concert with other agencies and organizations, to acquire and preserve outstanding examples of native California species; and to acquire and perpetuate significant natural plant communities, associations, and examples of rare, endangered, endemic, or otherwise sensitive native California plants, as indicated on state and federal lists.

Whenever possible, significant vegetative entities shall be acquired in natural ecological units so that their integrity may be better perpetuated.

In order to maintain the genetic integrity and diversity of native California plants, revegetation or transplant efforts in the State Park System will be from local populations, unless shown by scientific analysis that these populations are not genetically distinct from populations being proposed for use. If local populations have been decimated, the closest, most genetically similar population(s) to that State Park System unit will be used.

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POLICY II.5

**WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT IN UNITS  
OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Programs of wildlife management involving the propagation or reduction of animal species may be carried on in the State Park System only where necessary to safeguard the health and safety of State Park System visitors, the general public, or when the preservation of native wildlife species involved is threatened. The purposes of the State Park System include protection of native wildlife in a natural status within State Park System unit boundaries; therefore, programs of wildlife management involving the introduction and propagation of missing species or the reduction of existing species population may be undertaken only after careful study of the effect of such management on the ecological stability of the area and approval of the management program by the Commission.

In order to maintain the genetic integrity and diversity of native California wildlife, animals transplanted within the State Park System will be from local populations, unless shown by scientific analysis that these populations are not genetically distinct from populations being proposed for use. If local populations have been decimated, the closest, most genetically similar populations to that State Park System unit will be used.

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POLICY II.6

**AGRICULTURAL LEASING**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Generally, grazing or agricultural leasing is considered incompatible in units of the State Park System. However, a general plan may include a grazing or agricultural activity that is found to be fundamental to enhancement of the visitor experience or resource values, such as historic interpretation or resource management.

The Director may, with the concurrence of the Commission, permit grazing or agriculture where it is for the benefit of the unit and consistent with its classification. The Director shall carefully weigh the environmental consequences of grazing or other agricultural leases on the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the unit.

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POLICY II.7

**PRIMITIVE ROADS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Primitive roads in units of the State Park System are ingress and egress routes established by the Department to make certain natural or historical features more easily available for enjoyment by park visitors.

Title 14, Division 3, of the California Code of Regulations prohibits the operation of any type of vehicle in State Wildernesses or Natural Preserves.

Where vehicles are not expressly prohibited, visitors using primitive roads are authorized to do so only for the purposes for which such routes were established. Visitors shall keep their vehicles on the designated routes at all times, shall operate their vehicles so as to minimize the occurrence of both noise and dust, and shall use these primitive roads in ways that do not detract from the enjoyment of the natural or historical features by other visitors who may be in the area.

In existing units of the State Park System for which general plans have been approved prior to the adoption of this policy, proposals for primitive roads shall be submitted by the Director to the Commission for approval. New or revised general plans that are submitted to the Commission shall indicate primitive roads as recommended by the Director, and approval of such plans by the Commission shall be evidence of approval for the primitive roads included.

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POLICY III.1

**PLANNING**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Planning is one of the Department of Parks and Recreation's most important responsibilities to ensure the reservation of California's natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources.

Recreation Planning

Advanced planning shall consider, on a statewide basis, local and statewide recreation needs and competitive demands for land uses. Such planning shall be done in cooperation with appropriate agencies within federal, state, district, county and city jurisdictions. The Department of Parks and Recreation shall encourage and assist these agencies to assume their share of responsibility. The Department will develop with these agencies plans that will meet the public recreational needs with minimal gaps or overlaps in services.

Planning shall anticipate the types, qualities, and extent of need for recreation, and shall determine the potential areas, facilities, and services to meet these needs. Estimated costs for acquisition, development, and operation shall be determined, as will the land carrying capacity.

Resource Planning

Resource planning shall ensure on a statewide basis that representative and outstanding examples of California's natural and cultural resources are protected and made available for the enjoyment and inspiration of present and future California citizens and visitors. Planning shall periodically assess the resource values existing in the State Park System and further shall analyze which natural and cultural resources within the state are of the highest priority as additions to the State Park System. This planning must give special consideration to those areas that are threatened and to resource carrying capacity.

Reporting

The Director of Parks and Recreation shall periodically inform the Commission of departmental planning activities by appropriate reference in his "Director's Report". By April of each year the Director shall present to the Commission a comprehensive report reflecting the long-range objectives and the status of current plans.

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POLICY III.2

**RESERVOIR AREAS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The Legislature has specifically recognized the key importance of federal, state, and local reservoir areas in meeting California's recreational needs.

The Commission shall urge all levels of government to make reservoir areas available for recreation and, where appropriate, to provide sufficient funding for the operation and maintenance of these areas. The recreational development of these areas shall have high priority in the Department's planning process. The plans for use must also provide protection for significant scenic, natural, and cultural resources.

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POLICY III.3

**ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT**

(Amended 5-4-94)

A balanced program for the acquisition of land and development for public use is vital to the State Park System and must be maintained commensurate with the needs of the state's current and projected populations. This program should make acquired lands available to the public as soon as feasible.

Where acquisition and/or development will significantly benefit a nearby community, the Department shall seek a portion of the cost of the acquisition or development from that community and encourage volunteerism and community participation.

Where properties are purchased through the assistance of others (including land trusts and other non-profit organizations), the Department shall require a full disclosure of pertinent financial aspects associated with the proposed cooperative project, prior to making a formal funding commitment. Such disclosure shall include (but not be limited to) an estimate of anticipated profit, if any, that will be realized by the project participant(s).

The capital outlay program, regardless of funding sources, should emphasize acquisition, resource management, and recreation development. The Department will report to the Commission by April of each year its proposed capital outlay program for the next fiscal year. At the end of each fiscal year, the Department shall report to the Commission summarizing the capital outlay activities of the previous year.

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POLICY III.4

**USE OF OPPORTUNITY PURCHASE FUNDS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Opportunity purchase funds are appropriated to the Department to acquire parcels of land for the State Park System under the following conditions:

1. The land to be acquired is within the approved boundary or contiguous with the boundary of an existing unit of the State Park System.
2. Lands to be acquired are relatively low-cost additions, tax-delinquent property, right-of-way and/or other servitudes on existing State Park System lands, or other acquisitions of limited acreage.
3. Timing is critical and the property being offered to the Department may not be available for purchase long enough to be procured through the normal budgetary process.

Use of opportunity purchase funds to acquire lands at less than fair market value is encouraged. The Director shall give special consideration to use opportunity purchase funds for the purchase of property rights-of-way and of other servitudes on existing State Park System lands heretofore inactive but in danger of being activated to the detriment of the State Park System.

The Director shall inform the Commission regarding the use of funds appropriated to the Department for opportunity purchase.



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POLICY III.5

**DISPOSITION OF STATE PARK REAL PROPERTY OR ARTIFACTS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

There shall be an ongoing departmental review of State Park System lands to determine their continuing suitability for Park System purposes. Reports on holdings considered unsuited for State Park System use shall be presented yearly to the State Park and Recreation Commission.

Before real property within the State Park System is sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of by the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Director of Parks and Recreation shall inform the State Park and Recreation Commission with respect to such disposition. The Commission may advise the Director or make a recommendation to the Director with respect to any such disposition.

Generally, artifacts owned by the Department of Parks and Recreation shall not be sold, but their image or form may be duplicated for sale or licensed.

Artifacts owned by the Department that are determined to be surplus to its need, or unrelated to its mission, may be disposed of in keeping with the Department's Collections Management Policies.

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POLICY III.6

**DEVELOPMENT OF FACILITIES WITHIN STATE PARKS  
AND STATE SEASHORES**

(Amended 5-4-94)

In determining whether a public use facility proposed for a unit classified as a State Park or a State Seashore meets the statutory provision of Public Resources Code 5019.53 and 5019.62 related to "attractions in themselves", the Commission will consider the following guidelines:

The use of the facility should be consistent with the mission and values of the State Park System, and users of the proposed facility would visit the unit to experience park values and recreational opportunities.

The facility would provide for additional compatible recreational or educational opportunities accessible to all the public.

The facility will be compatible with natural and historical resources and historical periods identified in the unit's general plan and should be designed to contribute to the enjoyment of the natural and cultural resources.

The facility requires a location within the park unit to fulfill its purpose.

The facility shall have a written finding discussing its consistency with the above-mentioned guidelines.

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POLICY III.7

**CONFLICTING RECREATIONAL USE**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Where there are conflicting, though legitimate, demands for recreational use of a State Park System unit, the Department will make every effort, consistent with public safety, to provide opportunities for such uses through separation according to time or location, or through similar operational measures.

If the Commission finds that a specific recreational use is damaging to the unit's natural or cultural resource values or to the health, safety, or welfare of visitors, it shall be re-evaluated and may be restricted by the Department.

State Park and Recreation Commission  
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POLICY III.8

**UTILITIES**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Utilities shall be placed underground in units of the State Park System. Exceptions may be permitted by the Director where undergrounding is not economically feasible or where the environmental quality of the area is not harmed.

All right-of-way grants to utility companies shall require that utilities be placed underground unless, in the opinion of the Director, special conditions prevail which would make this action impractical. Rights of way or easements generally should be for a specified period of time. However, exceptions may be made by the Director where necessary upon his finding that this action would be in the best interests of the State Park System. Rights of way or easements may be granted where otherwise appropriate with the provision that the right of way or easement may be moved upon a finding of the Director that their location interferes with future development, and shall be under the terms and conditions in the best interest of the State Park System.

It shall be the objective of the Department of Parks and Recreation ultimately to achieve the undergrounding of all existing above-ground utilities.

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POLICY IV.1

**OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES IN THE STATE PARK SYSTEM**

(Amended 5-4-94)

It is the policy of this Commission that motorized vehicles must be highway licensed to be permitted on primitive roads or designated routes of travel in any units of the State Park System unless designated as an Off-Road Vehicular Recreation Area or on specific areas authorized by the general plan. Snowmobiles may be excluded from this policy by the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation at those times and places where their use is not damaging to the natural resources or disruptive to general public enjoyment.

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POLICY IV.2

**NON-MOTORIZED BIKE USE**

(Amended 5-4-94)

Preface

This policy is based on the recognition: that bicycling on unpaved roads and trails (non-motorized biking) has become a popular recreational activity; that providing areas for non-motorized biking in the State Park System is consistent with our mission to provide recreation opportunities for the general public; and, that the increasing use of mountain bikes has created a need to develop management policies to reduce the potential conflicts with other users and the impact on park resources.

Policy

This policy is intended to provide for non-motorized bike use that is consistent with the Department's responsibilities to all users and to the stewardship of park resources.

Generally, paved and unpaved\* park roads are open and trails closed to bicycles. This policy will take effect for trails after district management completes a use determination of major trails and the signing of each. Unpaved roads may be closed and trails opened upon a written determination by the district superintendent that specifically considers criteria as outlined in this policy. Trails currently approved for non-motorized bike use should be given special consideration for continued use, based on criteria below.

Specific Restrictions

1. Bicycles will be operated, especially when passing users, at a safe speed and in a responsible manner as determined by Department staff.
2. Bicycles are prohibited in areas classified as wilderness.
3. Bicycles are allowed only on paved roads in State Reserves and in Cultural or Natural Preserves.
4. As with other trail uses, off-trail or off-road (cross country) bicycle use is prohibited in all units.

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\*Unpaved park roads are defined as fire roads, dirt roads, and service roads with a width of over 60 inches.

State Park and Recreation Commission  
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Determination Criteria

1. Safety of bike user and other users:  
Width, slope, visibility, grade, length, surface of road or trail
2. Impact of trail/road use on the unit's environment:  
Wildlife, plants, cultural resources, soil condition, and aquatics
3. User Conflicts:  
Impact on recreation experience of other users
4. Volunteer participation by members of the mountain bike community in conjunction with efforts of other trail users:  
Volunteer patrols, trail/road building and maintenance, and user education
5. Purpose of the area within the unit:  
Zones (primary historic zone, open space, entrance, etc.), interpretive trails
6. Compatibility with adjoining land management of trail/road corridor
7. Demonstrated demand for activity
8. Ability to accommodate activity:  
Staffing, including volunteer patrols  
Carrying capacity
9. Seasonal conditions which might require periodic closure
10. Type of trail/road:  
Point-to-point access  
Through travel  
Loop trails

State Park and Recreation Commission  
**STATEMENTS OF POLICY**

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POLICY IV.3

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

(Amended 5-4-94)

As a corollary of its charge to administer, protect, and develop the State Park System the Department of Parks and Recreation has a responsibility for the safety of visitors and personnel. Every reasonable precaution shall be taken to reduce or eliminate existing and potential hazardous, dangerous, and defective conditions, if any, which are sources of injury to persons and property.

The Director of Parks and Recreation shall formulate and implement departmental procedures to provide for the detection and reduction of dangerous or potentially hazardous conditions. Such procedures shall also provide for a program of adequate inspection on at least an annual basis in all units of the State Park System, and more frequently in areas of heavy use.

The Director of Parks and Recreation shall furnish such procedures and cost information to members of the Commission annually, and shall thereafter advise of amendments thereto.



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POLICY IV.4

**PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING**  
(Amended 5/4/94)

The use of photographic equipment in units of the State Park System will be subject to appropriate rules and regulations. Photography for non-commercial personal purposes is to be encouraged as a means of enhancing visitor enjoyment of units in the State Park System and extending the benefits and influences of the recreational experience.

It is the policy of the Commission for the Department of Parks and Recreation to work cooperatively with businesses, which includes allowing the responsible use of State Park System units by commercial, still and motion picture photographers. The Commission recognizes that such use is a valuable contribution to the economy and tax base of the State of California and can be an effective marketing tool for the State Park System. When filming occurs, the Department will be encouraged to recover all direct and associated costs. Photographic activities in the State Park System shall not result in substantial or permanent alteration of landscape, damage or danger to wildlife, plant life, cultural resources or other resources, or unduly restrict use or access by the public. Filming companies that film in park units should, where appropriate, include recognition of the Department and of those units in their credits.

State Park and Recreation Commission  
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POLICY IV.5

**FACILITY, PRODUCT, OR SERVICE DONATIONS**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The Department may accept donations of facilities, products, services, programs, or money when such offers are found by the Director and the Commission to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Department. In accepting such offers, the Director may consider the appropriateness of such materials, services, or programs for use in systemwide or specific units, portions of units, or benefit by the State Park System. Whenever the need for donations is identified in advance, the Department shall solicit offers of products and services from more than one source.

Donations of tobacco or alcoholic beverage facilities, products, services, or programs shall not be accepted unless approved by the Commission.

The Department may accept goods or services in lieu of fees charged for short-term concession rentals or special events when, in the judgment of the Director, such goods and services are appropriate and are of comparable value to the unit or the Department.

Where the Department has accepted appropriate donations of commercial products, facilities, services, or programs in accordance with the criteria established in this policy, such donations may be publicly acknowledged by resolution of the Commission. When donor recognition is shown on a plaque or on donated items, it shall be in keeping with the park use and in a manner appropriate to the donation, as determined by the Department. Commercial logos shall be of size and placement approved by the Department.

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POLICY IV.6

**INTERPRETATION**

(Amended 5-4-94)

The primary interpretive policy of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to heighten and increase public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the natural, cultural, historic, and recreational values of California as represented in the State Park System; to increase public understanding and concern for people's place in their environment, and thereby provide an increased desire to protect and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of this state.

In the planning, development, and implementation of interpretive programs in the units of the State Park System, the Department of Parks and Recreation shall identify and emphasize all interpretive values and features for each unit by requiring the preparation of both an "interpretive prospectus" and an "interpretive plan."

Programs shall be developed for each unit and should be easily available to park users. For each historical unit, all features and circumstances which make the unit important will be identified, and the primary period within which human activities or events were of the greatest significance will be established. Preservation and interpretation need not be restricted to that period but will be related to it in emphasis and action.

To the widest extent practical, the Department of Parks and Recreation shall encourage the participation of volunteers in its interpretive efforts. Such participation may serve to complement the efforts of the Department's professional staff, to gain the special skills and abilities of individuals willing to share their knowledge with others, and to strengthen the relationship of individuals, groups, and the community with their State Park System.

The Department of Parks and Recreation shall assure that all personnel, including volunteers, seasonal employees, and permanent staff are oriented and appropriately trained in interpretive techniques and the significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources of their assigned park unit and the state.

**Policy IV.7**  
**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

REVISED 10-21-11

This Commission policy addresses the sale of alcoholic beverages within the State Park System; the policy gives the Director the opportunity to balance issues of public health and safety, potential economic benefit to the Department, and the possible enhancement of certain units for the public. The Commission recognizes the sale, manufacture, possession and licensing to sell such beverages is regulated by the Business and Professions Code, and by the rules and regulations of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and other state agencies. This policy in no way seeks to interfere with implementation of those statutes, applicable policies or regulations of other state agencies. In establishing this policy, it is the Commission's intent to provide general guidance to the Director for the approval of the subject sales and to describe the circumstances under which the sales of alcoholic beverages may be permitted within the State Park System.

The use of alcoholic beverages in the State Park System has presented both management and enforcement challenges for the Department, while at the same time it is recognized that the controlled opportunity to make alcoholic beverages available to the public can, under the right circumstances, broaden the appeal of concession services at certain units, serve the interests of park visitors and provide an economic benefit to the State Park System.

**Therefore it is established:**

The Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation after consultation with the Deputy Director of Park Operations regarding approval of alcohol sales and its compatibility with maintaining public safety as well as a high quality visitor experience may approve the sale of alcoholic beverages, subject to all applicable statutes and regulations, in the following circumstances:

1. The sale of beer and/or wine for consumption off-premises at grocery and camper supply concessions if such beverages are not otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park.
2. The sale of alcoholic beverages for consumption at a concession that is a bona fide public eating place, as defined in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act.
3. In recreation zones of historic units of the State Park System, commercial activities involving the sale of alcoholic beverages may be permitted if those activities are part of the history of the individual unit and the development retains or restores historical authenticity. This provision permits commercial activities such as saloons even if the precise items being sold are different from what was sold in the historic period.
4. The renewal of an existing concession contract authorizing the sale of alcoholic beverages if the conditions stated in paragraphs 1 or 2 above remain substantially unchanged.
5. The short-term sale of beer, wine and/or alcoholic beverages at special events for a period of no longer than 7 days.
6. In any circumstance not envisioned herein, the Director has the authority to approve the sale of alcoholic beverages upon making a finding that doing so is in the best interest of the State Park System. The Director shall provide a copy of the finding to the Commission.

The Director retains responsibility for the continuity of this policy. Enforcement of all pertinent regulations regarding the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages in the State Park System is the responsibility of the Deputy Director of Park Operations. The Commission supports the enforcement and resolution of all alcohol-related violations within the State Park System consistent with state law, including but not limited to alcohol violations related to the operation of water craft and motor vehicles.