

2006–2007

**Annual Report to the Governor on
the California State Park System**
California State Park and Recreation Commission



Commission Actions



Above: Bear Harbor, Sinkyone Wilderness State Park

It is the Mission of California State Parks to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. The Park and Recreation Commission aids the department in this mission by approving general plans for units of the State Park System, classifying units of the system, and establishing general policies to guide the department director in the administration, protection and development of the system.

This report covers the actions of the Commission during the 2006/07 fiscal year, specifically July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

Commission Hearings and Workshops

In 2006/07, the Commission held hearings in the following locations: Garberville, Borrego Springs, and Sebastopol. During these hearings the Commission approved two general plans and two park unit classifications.

Sinkyone Wilderness State Park: Located in Humboldt County, this park's rugged wilderness is known as the "Lost Coast." The General Plan defines access to the park and designates areas as State Wilderness, assuring it will be preserved from development as well as available for visitors to enjoy in its natural state.

Sonoma Coast State Beach: 17 miles of beach, rocky bluffs and headlands and 3,400 acres of inland property comprise Sonoma Coast State Beach. The approved General Plan provides balanced access to the park for the public and the neighboring land owners. The re-classification of the State Beach to Sonoma Coast State Park

provides the highest level of protection afforded park property under state law.

Cowell Ranch/John Marsh Home: in recognition of the historical value of the John Marsh Home and the extensive cultural resources on the surrounding Cowell Ranch property, the Commission classified the unit as a State Historic Park. The park will be named when the general plan is completed and approved by the Commission.

The Commission convened a hearing on February 8, 2007, in Borrego Springs to provide the Commission with information about the "Sunrise Powerlink" project proposed route through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Construction of the Powerlink through State Wilderness areas of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park would require land be removed from wilderness designation, an action that is unprecedented. The Commission toured portions of the Powerlink route, heard presentations by San Diego Gas & Electric and the Public Utilities Commission,



and extensive public testimony on the project. The testimony received during the meeting was conveyed to the Public Utilities Commission. The State Park Commission may be called upon to take action related to the Sunrise Powerlink if the final route for the project is within Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

The Commission also held an informational workshop in Murphys on the topics of naming principles for park units, partnerships within and outside California State Parks, development opportunities and concessions. The Commission took no official actions at the workshop.

California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger issued a proclamation in July 2007 recognizing the California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (COBR). Recognizing that California's State Parks provide ideal locations for children to enjoy these opportunities, the State Park Commission unanimously approved a resolution in August 2007 supporting the COBR. Created by the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism, the COBR states that by their 14th year,

Every child should have the opportunity to:

1. Discover California's Past
2. Splash in the water
3. Play in a safe place
4. Camp under the stars
5. Explore nature

6. Learn to swim
7. Play on a team
8. Follow a trail
9. Catch a fish
10. Celebrate their heritage

New Opportunities

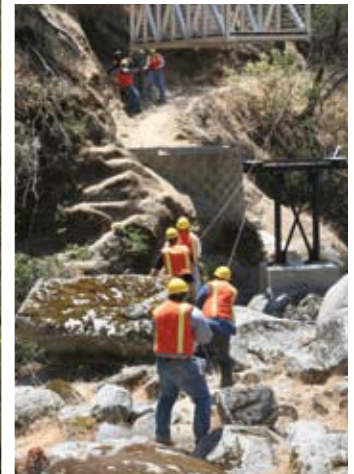
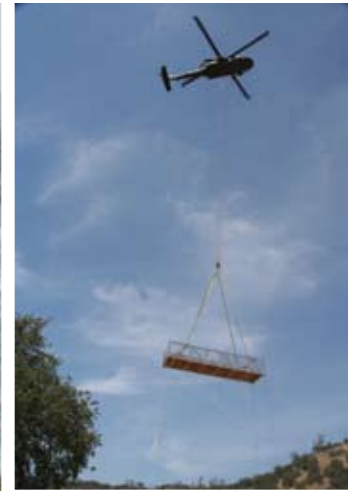
- Los Angeles State Historic Park opened for interim use on September 23, 2006. Commissioner Paul Junger Witt served as chair of the design review committee responsible for recommending a design firm to State Park Director Coleman. Hargreaves Associates of San Francisco won the competition.
- Eastshore State Park opened in October 2006. This urban interface offers public access and day use facilities with views of the Bay Bridge, San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Angel Island, Mount Tamalpais and the Oakland Hills. Development of park facilities was paid for by California State Parks and East Bay Regional Park District and included restoration of wetlands, coastal scrub and upland habitats.
- Rio de Los Angeles State Park offers a unique partnership of the City of Los Angeles and California State Parks. Visitors can watch community sport teams practice, enjoy the children's play area and walk the nature path that enlivens the former brown-field.



Left: Commissioners visit the Willow Creek area of Sonoma Coast State Park

Right: Every child should have the opportunity to splash in the water, California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

Expanding Opportunities



Left: Commissioners visit the Coast Dairies property at Wilder Ranch State Park

Upper and lower right: A California National Guard helicopter lifts the final bridge sections and a maintenance crew guides them into place at Millerton Lake State Recreation Area

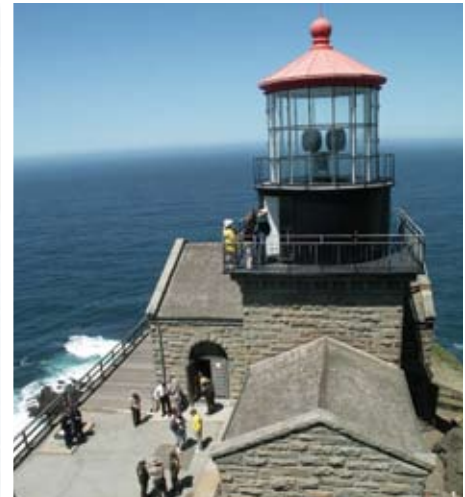
Below: New modular cabin at McArthur Burney Falls Memorial State Park

- McArthur Burney Falls Memorial State Park is the first site of the department's alternative camping program. Twenty-four modular cabins have been installed and are open for reservations. The cabins are very popular and expand the camping season into the spring and fall months.

Land Acquisitions

During the 2006/2007 fiscal year, California State Parks acquired 8,336 acres of land. These properties were acquired for \$14,800,500 comprised of Bond Funds (Propositions 12, 40 and 117), Federal Trust Funds, Off-Highway Vehicle Trust Funds and the General Fund. In addition to these expenditures, portions of the land values were donated to the department at a gift value of \$33,215,100, bringing the total value of land acquired to \$48,015,600. The following are some of the valuable properties acquired in this period:

- 307-acre addition to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Santa Cruz County. \$0.9 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and \$1.6 million gift from the Save-the-Redwoods League.
- 246 acres of the Mount Murphy property, Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, El Dorado County. \$1.2 million from Proposition 40 and a \$0.4 million gift from the American River Conservancy.
- The Point Sur Light Station was transferred from the U.S. Department of the Interior to California State Parks free of cost.
- 240 acres at Tomo-Kahni State Historic Park, Kern County. \$0.3 million, Proposition 40 funds.
- 406 acres, the Coast Dairies property adjacent to Wilder Ranch State Park, Santa Cruz County. \$6 million gift.



Development Within Existing Park Units

During the 2006/07 fiscal year, several projects were completed that help meet the needs of California State Park visitors:

- Empire Mine State Historic Park: a six-acre area of toxic mine tailings remaining from mining days was successfully capped to prevent metals from mingling with storm-water runoff.
- Millerton Lake State Recreation Area: the final bridge sections of a long-awaited recreational trail system were lifted into place by a California National Guard Blackhawk helicopter. The completed trail is the only trans-Sierra trail, linking Millerton Lake near

Fresno with Devils Postpile National Monument near Mammoth.

- Hearst Castle® Visitor Center: extensive renovations to the Castle's Visitor Center were completed in a public-private partnership.
- Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park: museum exhibits have been renovated to bring new life to the story of the discovery of gold and its impact on the state's history.
- Jack London State Historic Park: Jack London's Cottage was restored to its appearance while the author was in residence.
- Henry Coe State Park: Day use facilities have been completed in the Dowdy Ranch area of the park.

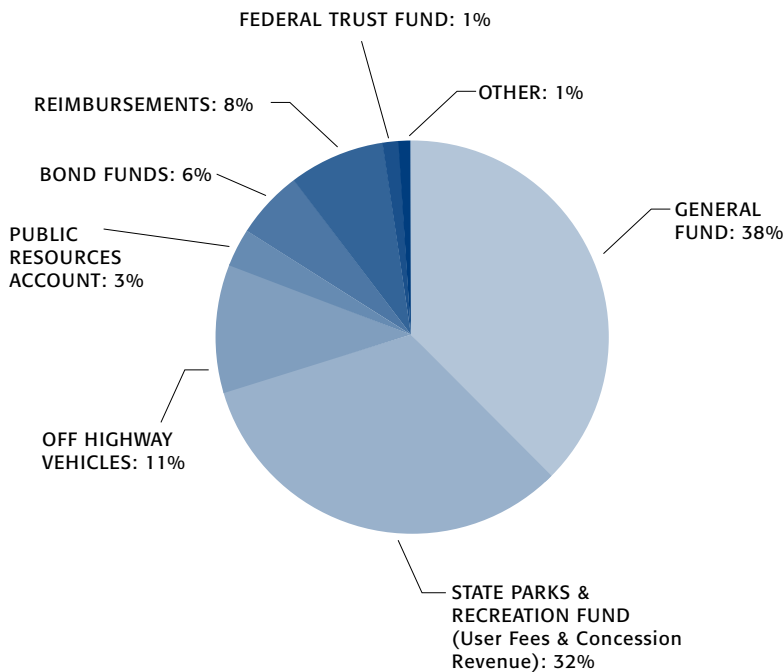
Top: Exterior and interior views of the newly restored Jack London's Cottage at Jack London State Historic Park

Left: Young kayakers enjoy an outing.

Right: Point Sur Light Station.

Issues and Concerns

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS' FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007 BUDGET



Right: Two views of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

Above: The Commission visits Font's Point

Below: Dune Evening Primrose and Sand Verbena

Demand Exceeds Supply

The demand for recreation exceeds the supply of recreational opportunities. According to Department statistics, the number of visitors to the State Park System has increased by about 28 percent in the last 10 years. Nearly 80 million people visited state parks in fiscal year 2006-2007. Seven million of those visitors camped overnight. To prevent overcrowding of popular areas, some parks must restrict the number of visitors.

Decrease in Funding

Per capita spending of operating funds per visitor has decreased over the past 20 years from an average of \$4.08 to the current average of \$3.13, a loss of 23 percent. Our concern is that this continued decline in funding has led to curtailment of park services to the public, as well as loss of effective stewardship of park lands. During this fiscal year, the \$250 million allocated in the state budget for the Deferred Maintenance Program was cut to \$90 million, limiting progress on reducing the \$1.2 billion maintenance backlog.

Non-Mission Uses

Proposed non-mission uses and potential

impacts to state park properties are a looming threat. We, as stewards of the State Park System, must act to protect these threatened lands.

- Anza-Borrego Desert State Park: San Diego Gas & Electric's (SDG&E) proposed Sunrise Powerlink transmission line route through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park directly impacts hundreds of acres of designated State Wilderness.
- Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park: Property within one mile of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park was proposed for development of two large dairy farms. It was our position that the historical integrity of the park would be compromised by the odors, flies and air and water pollution generated by these large dairies. California State Parks purchased dairy/livestock development rights to the property in perpetuity in October 2007.
- Big Lagoon State Park: The Commission supports efforts by the Big Lagoon Tribe to construct an off-reservation casino away from the environmentally sensitive tribal lands directly adjacent to Big Lagoon State Park.



Increased Concession Services

Concessions provide much needed services to park visitors, including food, beverages, equipment rental, lodging and supplies; and they increase revenue for State Parks. Revenue from concessions in fiscal year 2006/07 exceeded \$11.3 million, an increase of 8% over the previous year.

The Commission determined the following concessions are compatible with the classification and general plans of the subject park units, and meet with Commission policy:

- California Citrus State Historic Park: Wealthy Growers Mansion, to contain a variety of visitor services such as a restaurant, lodging, sales, event and meeting space.
- Old Town San Diego State Historic Park: A specialty retail concession for the Mexican period of the park; and a bed & breakfast inn including dining and accommodations.
- Lake Valley State Recreation Area: Continuation of the golf course, food service, equipment sales, winter recreational facility and services provided by a concessionaire.
- Angel Island State Park: Alcohol may be served as part of catered events at authorized locations in the park.

Healthy Choices

As part of the department's Healthy Foods Initiative, State Park concessions are encouraged to offer affordable, appealing, high-quality, organic locally grown foods and unsweetened beverages to park visitors. Investigations are being made into growing heritage varieties of fruits and vegetables on state park land that was historically in agriculture. Concession agreements for agricultural heritage crops would include in-

terpretation of the varieties and processes used and sale of the products to the public.

Partnerships

We are delighted to welcome Travelocity and the Oakland Raiders to the State Parks "Proud Partners" program. Our new partners are contributing to the parks through direct sponsorships and online promotions on their respective Web sites. Financial support and resources from "Proud Partners" help fund visitor enhancement projects and promote California State Parks programs.

The first edition of "California State Park Partners" recognizes the many partners that generously help State Parks with donations of time, labor, energy and crucial fund raising. Our many partners do everything from clean our parks to drive our trains and raise millions of dollars to support the system. These exceptional friends are a necessary part of the successful operation of the State Park System.

Bond Funding

The passage of Proposition 84, the "Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006" provided a much needed source of funding for acquisition and development projects throughout California State Parks. Projected uses for these funds include:

- Rehabilitation, improvement and expansion of campgrounds, trails, day use and other park serving facilities.
- Build, rehabilitate and improve museums and visitor centers.
- Major natural resource protection projects.
- Expansion of the state park system to reflect the growing population and shifting population centers and needs of the state.

Left: Concession-operated golf course at Lake Valley State Recreation Area

Middle: A National Park Service Historical Landscape Architect examines apples from the historic orchard at Jack London State Historic Park

Right: California Shock/Trauma Air Rescue (CALSTAR), one of many State Park Partners, provides air ambulance service throughout the state



California State Park and Recreation Commission, 2006–07. Back: Chair Bobby Shriver. Front, l to r: Paul Junger Witt, Gail Kautz, Caryl Hart, Jack Baylis, Sophia Scherman, Acquanetta Warren and Vice Chair Clint Eastwood. Not pictured: Joseph Cotchett

Public Resources Code Section 535 Annual Report to the Governor

The commission shall report annually to the Governor, through the director, on existing and operating recreational facilities, programs and activities of the state park system, and on the needs of the state and local subdivisions thereof for recreational facilities, programs, and activities, and shall make recommendations for programs and activities to meet future needs of the state for parks and recreation.

California State Park and Recreation Commission, 2006–07

Bobby Shriver, Chair
Clint Eastwood, Vice Chair
Jack Baylis
Joseph Cotchett
Caryl Hart
Gail Kautz
Sophia Scherman
Acquanetta Warren
Paul Junger Witt

Sources:

California State Park and Recreation Commission, Minutes of Hearings, 2006–2007 Fiscal Year
California State Park System Statistical Report, 2006/07 Fiscal Year, December 2007

