



August 14, 2012

RE: Keep state park funding in state parks

Dear President Pro Tem Steinberg and Speaker Perez:

On behalf of our organizations, and the members we represent, we are writing to urge you to appropriate the recently-identified funds in the Department of Parks and Recreation to the park and recreation purposes they were intended. It is imperative that budgetary "bait and switch" tactics not be used with these newly-identified funds.

The more than \$20 million in State Park and Recreation Fund (SPRF) revenues were from day-use admission, parking, overnight camping, boating, and other fees from park-related activities and need to remain dedicated to park purposes. It is unfortunate that these funds weren't put to critical park uses when they were available. But it would only add insult to injury for the Legislature now to put those funds elsewhere or claim to put them into state parks but simply reduce the park system's General Fund allocation at the same time.

Over the past 14 months, nonprofit organizations and individuals throughout California have come to the rescue of state parks by providing temporary reprieves from closure. These groups did so because they were repeatedly told that the state did not have funds to support park needs. The discovery of funds that could have alleviated the park closure crisis has been a tremendous blow to all of us who have donated time, energy, and money to fill the gap in order to keep state parks open.

Using the SPRF revenues for other budget purposes would be a violation of the purposes for which the funds were collected, and it would be a signal to Californians that good deeds done on behalf of state parks will not be rewarded.

The underlying structural deficiencies that have plagued our state park system and led to the 70 park closure list are unaltered by these new funds. State parks remain essential to the people of California and local communities who rely on them for local economic benefits. Dedicating these funds to state park and recreation purposes is desperately needed to help restore confidence in California's state parks and temporarily ease the strain on the state park system.

We urge members of the Legislature to appropriate this money to state parks before the legislative session ends, and to ensure that these funds will truly be dedicated to making things better for our state parks and not used in some budgetary sleight of hand that leaves our park system worse off.

Sincerely,

Traci Verardo-Torres
California State Parks Foundation

Dawn Garcia
Altacal Audubon Society

Henry Bornstein
Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association

Ralph Singer
Anza-Borrego Foundation & Institute

Carol Berman
Benicia State Parks Association

Kay Brandt
Bidwell Mansion Association

Penelope Curtis
California Heritage Treks

G. Albert Howenstein, Jr
California Historic Governor's Mansion
Foundation

Carolyn Schoff
California League of Park Associations

Jennifer M. Gates
California Preservation Foundation

Chuck Mills
California ReLeaf

Ron Iudice
California State Mining and Mineral Museum
Association

Kathy Daigle
California State Railroad Museum Foundation

John Severini
California Travel Association (CalTravel)

Mary Golden
Central Coast State Parks Association

Christina Strawbridge
Benicia City Council Member &
Owner, Christina S Fashion Destination

Patricia Jones
Citizens for East Shore Parks

Hubert "Hub" Walsh
County of Merced

Dave Hernandez
Cuyamaca Rancho State Park Interpretive
Association

Dan Silver
Endangered Habitats League

Gary Graham Hughes
EPIC -- the Environmental Protection
Information Center

Sarjan Holt
Fort Ross Conservancy

Thomas Stratton
Friends of Allensworth

Melissa Baffa
Friends of Channel Coast State Parks

Ernest Chung
Friends of China Camp State Park

Jean Watt
Friends of Harbors, Beaches & Parks

Rick Barclay
Friends of Palomar Mountain State Park

Carolyn Schoff
Friends of Pio Pico

Lorie Long
Friends4Picacho

Melissa Hippard
Greenbelt Alliance

Maite Arce
Hispanic Access Foundation

Craig Anderson
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Tom Start
Malakoff Diggins Park Association

Sue Jennings
Malibu Creek Docent Association

Carolyn Cathey
Mendocino Area Parks Association

Geoff McQuilkin
Mono Lake Committee

Brenda Holmes
Mountain Parks Foundation

Irma R. Muñoz
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Cheryl Harris
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Anthony Veerkamp
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Margaret Rhyne
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Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce

Joyce Pennell
San Mateo Coast Natural History Association

Cindy Crawford
Save McGrath State Beach

Margaret Rhyne
Save Saddleback Committee

Bill Meister
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Ralph Benson
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Maryann Maslowski
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Caleb Dardick
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Kevin Murphy
Sport Leisure Vacations

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Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Stefanie Sekich-Quinn
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Trust for Public Land

Nanci Sikes
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau

Greg Hayes
Valley of the Moon Natural History Association

Michael Hanrahan
Way Out There Press

James A. Nagle President
Yosemite Chamber of Commerce

cc: Governor Brown
Members of the California Legislature