

Parks Forward Staff Note: The purpose of this paper is to provide a general survey of park-related public, private, and nonprofit partnerships from around the country. It was not designed to be an inventory, analysis, or evaluation of California State Parks partnerships, and should not be viewed as such.

California State Parks in the 21st Century: A System of Public, Private, and Non-Profit Partnerships - A Model for the Nation

Prepared for the California Parks Forward Commission

by

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“Our parks and preserves are not mere picnicking places. They are rich storehouses of memories and reveries. They are guides and counsels to the weary and faltering in spirit. They are bearers of wonderful tales to him who will listen; a solace to the aged and an inspiration to the young.” Colonel Richard Lieber

Abstract

In 1921, when Colonel Richard Lieber, founder of the Indiana state parks, and Steven T. Mather, first Director of the National Park Service (NPS), convened the first National Conference on State Parks, California had one state park, and 29 States had none. In 2013, the 258 units of the California State Park System includes 87 state parks, 63 state beaches, 51 state historic parks, 33 state recreation areas, 16 state natural reserves, and 8 state vehicular recreation areas. Such system growth, in any State, requires periodic re-evaluation of administrative structure, policy and regulation, composition, funding, and day-to-day operating practices. Today, given the combination of increasing popularity and demand for public parks and open spaces, coupled with shrinking state (and federal) budgets and workforces, it would be difficult for any state park agency to operate as a monolithic, direct service provider – rather, they likely will need an extensive network of partnerships.

In the 21st century, partnerships will be critical for federal, state, and local park systems to conserve fundamental resources and meet demand for services. Such partnerships can be with other parks systems, with non-profit organizations through cooperative agreements, with for-profit companies under contracts, and with private lessees.

The idea clung to by many park agency professionals, that the economy will recover so that agencies can once again expect flush budgets and expanding work forces, seems unlikely in the near term, and less beneficial than in the past. Partnerships provide an opportunity to create mutual benefits, enabling both parties to better achieve their goals, often with lower costs. While there may be concerns or obstacles to partnerships with

park agencies, it is worth every effort to address these, given the benefits that partnerships can bring. The effective and ample use of partnerships can help expand park systems, build constituencies, increase access and services, and secure increases in budgets from disparate private and public sources.

This paper is based on lessons learned around the USA by park agencies that have developed significant experience with a wide variety of partnerships, and suggests possible applications of these lessons by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR). Some of the best partnership models already exist in California, though they are not widely emulated at present and the potential for more is there.

Overview

Park partnerships should not be engaged in simply because agencies have too little funding or too few staff; park partnerships are a better way:

- to engage the public and deepen commitments to parks and public open spaces;
- to build awareness and constituencies for parks that are engaged and active;
- to expand programming capabilities and engage diverse publics with new experiences;
- to increase efficiency and enlarge the scope of park services to the public;
- to enable longer term research and science to improve park resources management;
- to diversify budgets.

Partnerships for state park agencies have taken many forms over the past century in many parts of the USA. However, these partnerships generally fall into three categories - with other park or adjacent public land managers; with non-profit organizations that share mission goals; and with for-profit companies that provide visitor services. A fourth category, less utilized but very viable, is leasing of public historic buildings within state park boundaries for private purposes, while fully maintaining, with non-agency funds, the historic structure as a visual component of the cultural landscape of the park.

Overlapping, adjacent, and thematically linked parks of varying public agency jurisdictions - local, state, regional, and federal - have sought efficiencies of operation and cost reduction by collaboration. Much more can be done in this field in California, primed by some good existing examples, including most notably *Redwood National & State Parks* on the north coast. In addition to organizing park partners by regional location, park agencies can organize and collaborate with partner organizations by functional affinity, or by types of involvement.

Non-profit organizations as park partners come in many forms:

- "Cooperating associations" support education programming and fundamental research in parks;
- youth conservation and service corps carry out many needed park maintenance projects less expensively than agencies can do either themselves or with private contractors, and in some instances, actually operate parks;

- various types of park “friends” groups, “funds,” and “foundations” have effectively raised private funds and recruited interns and volunteers to support park projects and programs;
- various national, state, and local service, recreation user, fraternal, and even religious organizations will provide volunteers for a wide variety of park projects, often sustainably and repeatedly over many years;
- other partners may best serve park agency goals through advocacy and media engagement.

From the for-profit sector throughout the last century, in many national and state parks, private guides and outfitters have led visitors for a fee into memorable experiences. Likewise, lodging and food services, supervised beach activities, gifts, camp supplies, and souvenir sales have been provided to visitors by private concessioners, both small “mom and pop” businesses and large national hospitality companies, in some cases preceding actual public park establishment (and sometimes inducing park establishment). These “concessioners” generally provide a vital piece of visitor services for parks, as well as dependable revenue for those park agencies that are allowed to keep such park-generated revenues.

Historic leasing, such as the Hazlett Warehouse/Argonaut Hotel adaptive lease within Golden Gate National Recreation Area, has also played a vital role in preservation of historic buildings (which relieves pressure on park maintenance budgets), especially when their key park-related purpose is simply to preserve the historic facade and/or cultural scene. Many more opportunities are available for use of this tool in California state parks.

Inter-Agency Partnerships

Federal-State Park Partnerships

In 1994, CDPR and the National Park Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Cooperative Management of the Redwood National & State Parks. The first-of-its-kind central tenet of the MOU states that *“NPS and CDPR mutually agree to commit the respective resources, staff, equipment and facilities assigned to the Parks to the common protection of all resources contained within the Parks, as well as for the appropriate enjoyment and appreciation of the same by the public, without regard to governmental ownership.”* (see Case Study)

Given the importance of agency culture and esprit, it was essential that the MOU insisted that *“Both NPS and CDPR shall work with the Parks to provide flexibility and latitude in policy and direction to promote cooperative operations and efficiencies in the best interests of the Parks.”* Twenty years later, this innovative inter-agency agreement remains (almost alone) as an exemplary example of effective interagency collaboration.

Even more broadly, in 1995 the Secretary of the California Resources Agency suggested to the Secretary of the Interior adoption of this new model for cooperation and shared responsibilities for America's most popular public assets, national and state parks. Coining the phrase "a national system of parks" rather than the more recent posture of US Interior Secretaries focused only on "the national park system" (referring only to the federal parks).

In 2002, the Secretary of the Interior announced an initiative called "Cooperative Conservation" that was intended to extend and expand inter-governmental cooperation in public lands management, and to expand opportunities for non-profit and for-profit agency partners to engage more extensively in various aspects of federal, state, local and private land management with shared responsibilities, greater budgetary efficiencies, enhanced natural and cultural resource conservation, and greater public access and recreational use being the overarching goals.

In 2009, another Secretary of the Interior announced the America's Great Outdoors initiative, with cooperative management of "large landscapes" as a key element, again intended to cross agency lines, break down impediments to interagency co-management, and to promote more extensive use of public-private partnerships to more efficiently achieve agency goals.

In each of these instances in both Democrat and Republican Administrations, park agencies (more so than other agencies) at all levels - city, county, regional, state, and national - stepped up and spoke out in favor of greater collaboration, partnership and shared management. Alas, little has happened at the federal-state level to date, beyond isolated examples, that can be termed implementation of these innovative ideas. Yet, shrinking budgets and public workforces at all levels of government are increasing the demand for such modern public-private partnerships. A big push from California to develop more of these inter-governmental partnerships, as is often the case for California innovations, could lead the way for other state, local, and federal park agencies to adopt this approach across the country.

One compelling possibility is an integrated continuum of local, state and national parks, called a "national system of parks," that can best be achieved through interagency regional park and recreation planning, an approach first recommended in the Report to Congress of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission in 1962. All of the public land recreation and park agencies within a given region, defined as the area within the visitation range of the predominant user public, would do their planning together. Such regional park and recreation planning, with federal, state and local agencies equally involved, would have at least two essential goals:

- To assure that there are sufficient places recreational activities, but without the need to provide every activity in every place by every agency.

- Assuring that a seamless national system of parks does not mean that everything is the same in every park, but that redundancy is avoided, efficiency is achieved, and responsibility is shared, especially to minimize the need for new facility construction.

What can be achieved through interagency regional recreation planning, and the ensuing shared operations, is not just greater efficiency of operations and maintenance, though that is very important, but a way to reduce, if not eliminate recreational conflicts. Because park agencies can plan together where, when and how to provide a place for every appropriate recreational activity, they can also assure that they do not have to provide for every activity in every place. Just as importantly, these agencies can educate the public together about what is appropriate where, and assure the recreation users that there is a place for everything within the region. (see Case Study)

The too-common perception that local parks deal only with recreation centers and playgrounds; that state parks deal with golf, boating and other active recreation; and that national parks are about preservation of scenery and ecosystems, has led to the mistaken belief that these agencies have nothing in common and no reason to collaborate.

The success of the State's and NPS's first joint plan, the 2000 Redwood National & State Parks General Management Plan/General Plan, ought to serve as clear evidence that interagency planning not only works, but produces useful results and leads to budget efficiencies, enhanced communications with visitors, and greater resource conservation. (See Case Study)

More broadly, the most underutilized tool that is available to California and every other state for integrated regional park and recreation planning is the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The SCORP is a legal requirement of the Land & Water Conservation Act of 1965 in order for each State to qualify for its apportionment of grant funds intended to be provided through the National Park Service by this Act. Over its 50 year history the SCORP has never been used as an integrative tool. As with other precedent setting actions, California could again be the initiator of a whole new, and needed approach to SCORP.

Given the rampant under-funding of park and recreation agencies, including CDPR, these agencies must seek new and innovative ways to improve efficiency and make their limited funds stretch further. Shared facilities, staff, services, programming, operations, and maintenance activities, especially for adjacent park agencies, are a key means to greater efficiency.

There are inevitably obstacles to interagency coordination, and especially to the idea of shared management. There are legal, statutory obstacles to inter-governmental site-specific, collaborative land management, especially in moving funds and staff between

agencies at different levels of government. There is inherent resistance to letting go of sole management authority by any of the relevant agencies. It's far easier for a manager to direct his own staff to implement decisions, than it is to negotiate a shared decision.

Beyond the regional federal-state collaboration approach, there are several federal statutory programs that are designed to function across agency lines, through integrated planning and management, including the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System, the National Trail System, National Heritage Areas, Congressionally designated Affiliated Areas, and National Natural and National Historic Landmarks.

The US Congress designates rivers and streams as components of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System. To date some 12,600 miles of 203 rivers in 39 states have been designated, including 23 rivers covering nearly 2000 stream miles in California. Several of California's system components are administered in partnerships with the California Resources Agency, including the Eel, Klamath, Lower American, Smith, and Trinity. Actions should be taken to strengthen these partnerships, and to encourage greater federal cost sharing, staff, and technical assistance, especially for state parks adjacent to these and other Wild & Scenic rivers.

Under the National Trails System Act, "National Scenic" and "National Historic" components of the National Trail System are designated by Congress, but "Recreational" components are designated by the Secretary of the Interior. California includes segments of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, and the Juan Bautista De Anza, California, Pony Express, and Old Spanish National Historic Trails. There are now 1228 designated National Recreation Trails, covering some 15,000 miles in 18 states, including California. Many of these national trails abut or traverse state parks and thus offer greater opportunity for co-management, sharing of resources, and new partnerships. CDPR should seek new opportunities to partner with the appropriate federal agency wherever state parks abut or encompass units of the national trail system.

Beyond these national recreation systems, Congress has designated many "affiliated areas" across the USA for NPS to partner with, and has regularly provided partial funding and technical assistance to support their management. Generally these affiliated areas are sites determined to be nationally significant, but not federally owned or managed. Currently, there is only one of these affiliated areas in California, Port Chicago. Given that there are a number of California state parks that encompass nationally significant resources, additional designations of "affiliated areas" status could be sought as a means of justifying new federal-state partnerships.

To date, Congress has designated 49 "national heritage areas" (NHA) for which the NPS partners with state and local governments and private organizations, with virtually no direct federal management, since NHA generally include only a minority of federal

lands. According to the NPS *“National heritage areas expand on traditional approaches to resource stewardship by supporting large-scale, community centered initiatives that connect local citizens to the preservation, conservation, and planning processes. Through the facilitation of a local coordinating entity, like a private non-profit corporation or a public commission, residents of a region come together to improve regional quality of life by protecting their shared cultural and natural resources.”* NPS provides technical and financial assistance to each NHA. There are currently no NHA in California, but there could be. NHA, by definition covering large landscapes, are in some ways no different than the 12 geographic regions that CDPR already uses in describing the state park system. Designation of NHA would present the State with a recognized way to enable expanded partnering with both federal, local, and non-governmental partners. (See Case Study)

Expanded Role of the CCC

Today, CDPR is the beneficiary of the collective work of its sister state agency, the California Conservation Corps (CCC). Since its founding in 1976 the CCC has engaged some 110,000 youth in service across various regions of the State, including in state parks.

Thus, CDPR has an opportunity to greatly expand its existing partnership with its sister agency the CCC, as well as with the numerous regional and local non-profit conservation corps that already serve in California state parks - including *Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Conservation Corps North Bay, East Bay Conservation Corps, and San Francisco Conservation Corps*, that are among some 17 such partner organizations in the Golden State.

These corps have the professionalism and capacity to increase their direct role in state park operation and maintenance. Recent cost comparison studies have proven that conservation corps can carry out many types of park maintenance and construction projects at much less cost to its partner agency than doing the same work any other way, whether with a private contractor or with agency employees. (See Case Study)

Special Park Districts

While eighteen other states across the USA, some for more than a century, have legislatively established some 186 “special park districts” (SPD), California has by far the best set of them, serving a broad swath of the State’s population, as yet with very limited collaboration with CDPR. But opportunities abound to do so, and would present the State with a very workable solution to many of the financial, political, and human resource problems facing CDPR.

Most often, State legislatures authorize an SPD to serve a specific geographic region of their State. Generally, an SPD operates like a semi-independent autonomous government with narrow powers focused on parks and recreation, with taxing and bonding authority that go to their local voting constituency for approval, and the ability to

set user fees and retain all revenues to support operations and maintenance. A recent East Bay Regional Park Authority bond referendum was approved by 72% of its voters, allowing a \$500 million investment in open space for that region.

SPD are managed by Boards, either elected or appointed locally, that tend to be very responsive to local park and recreation issues and concerns, and tend to have fairly stable and predictable budgets, in contrast to what many state agencies face.

Critics of SPD usually state that they lack diversity in their types of recreation and open space offerings, but a recent national survey¹ of SPD demonstrates broad diversity - 94% of SPD offer trails, 77% offer fishing, 73% manage historic sites, and 71% provide environmental education programming.

The SPD model is one that could be utilized more expansively in California, especially for developing new regional partnerships with CDPR. SPD tend to work best when their region includes a demographic that is at least middle class in income, so that a willingness to self-impose taxes for the direct benefit of their own parks and recreation open spaces is obvious. (see Case Study)

Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations

Cooperating Associations

Since early in the 20th century, many park agencies have readily partnered with non-profits organizations, especially to provide education materials, books, maps and brochures to visitors. The ability to commission, publish, and sell education material, retain the proceeds, and use this revenue to support agency programs, outside of the public funding process and with no-year spending limitations, has been effective and attractive to public park agencies. This “cooperating association” model was not developed in the era of tight budgets, but serves as a better way to get educational material to park visitors quickly, with a minimum of planning and regulatory requirements, and thus inexpensively. Because of the financial successes of these cooperating associations, they have been able to donate millions of dollars back to their partner agency. If every California state parks does not already have a cooperating association partner, they are missing a key opportunity for essential partners.

Non-Profit Conservation Corps

In some infrequent instances when other state park agencies have been underfunded for periods of time, non-profit conservation corps have contracted with state park agencies to actually operate state parks full-time. This approach was utilized for a number of years in Vermont, with the *Vermont Conservation Corps*. However, the

¹ An exploration of park, open space, and forest preserve special districts and similar independent authorities at the sub-State level (SPD's) – as a case example. Presentation to the US General Accountability Office by William Dickinson, Consultant. November 27, 2012

standard role of conservation corps for state parks agencies all across the USA is to supplement, or augment the agency maintenance work force with crews of youth and young adults. These corps members, with proper training and adult supervision from experienced leaders, have accomplished millions of dollars of backlogged maintenance projects, at a cost to the agency of far less than doing the same work by others means, all while the youth earn a minimum wage, gain useful training and experience, and often, are earning a high school equivalent degree.

Park agency use of conservation corps was at its zenith during the Great Depression, when some 3 million young men were employed in the federal CCC. The federal CCC was disbanded during the war years, but reemerged in the 1950s and 1960s, with establishment of the non-profit *Student Conservation Association* (SCA), and the federal Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC). Federal YCC and YACC rapidly escalated the number of youth and young adults engaged in public service to over 100,000, but as a wholly federally funded program, were essentially zeroed-out of the federal budget in 1981 by then Secretary of the Interior James Watt. However, a strong cadre of state, municipal, and non-profit conservation corps were quickly established to carry on the tradition, but to date have not been able to attract funding to grow back to the 100,000 level. (see Case Study)

In 2013, there are some 150 conservation and service corps across the USA, employing about 20,000 young Americans in a wide range of service work on public lands. In 2012, the NPS engaged a contractor to prepare a cost comparison study of similar maintenance projects carried out by a conservation corps, a private contractor, or a team of agency employees. The conclusion was dramatic - a conservation corps costs 83% less than a contractor, or 65% less than an agency crew doing the same job.

The bottom line for CDPR from this analysis is that greater use of conservation corps to complete needed maintenance work, whether backlog or routine cyclic maintenance projects, is an opportunity that should not be missed - either for significant cost savings, or for stretching available maintenance funds to complete many more projects, and for engaging and motivating the emerging generation as park constituents, and potentially as future employees.

Park Friends, Funds, and Foundations

Over the past half-century, non-profit organizations have grown enormously², in both numbers and sophistication. Traditionally, it was said that such non-profits, when partnered with a public park agency served three balanced purposes - fundraising, education/advocacy, and volunteerism. These park partners are variously termed “friends” groups, or (name of park) “Fund,” “Foundation,” or “Conservancy.” Such partners have been of irreplaceable benefit to the parks where they exist.

² According to Independent Sector, there were 1.1 million 501(c) 3 charitable, non-profit organizations in America in 2011

For example, the *Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy* has raised some \$300 million over 32 years for either donation to its partner agencies or direct expenditures on projects needed and approved by the agency, including some \$79 million for its Trails Forever program, and \$34 million to transform the Crissy airfield to a wetland and shoreline park and youth education complex. In addition, the Conservancy has provided over 7 million hours of volunteer service to these parks, grown over 1 million native plants, restored 100 historic buildings, engaged over 500,000 students in field programs, and much more.

Likewise, *Friends of Acadia* (National Park, ME) was formed in 1986, and in the years since has raised some \$18 million for specific park projects identified by NPS, donated funds to NPS to hire 135 seasonal staff, has 10 full-time employees itself, with an annual operating budget of \$2.8 million and an endowment of nearly \$20 million. All this for a relatively small, rural park in a low population State, although this park has long enjoyed philanthropic support from wealthy donors, who donated all of the initial land that constituted the park which today totals some 46,000 acres.

Every state park should (and can) have one of these friends, funds, foundations, or conservancy partners. In many cases, for example, these partners can more easily solicit corporate contributions than can the public agency, and can more readily expend funds without excessive procedural delays.

When the City of Baltimore greatly reduced its park agency funding, the Director led formation of a new non-profit partner foundation to support that system, as well as specific NGOs for individual parks that were charged with fully operating and maintaining them, charging fees, retaining all revenues, and reserving time and access for free community programming. Most of these NGOs have been a huge success for that City and its parks and open spaces. (see Case Study)

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy - an Operating Partner

Nationally, there are not many good examples of long-term park operating partnerships with non-profit organizations, but one that has been highly successful, and could be emulated elsewhere including by C DPR, is that of the *Appalachian Trail Conservancy* (ATC) and the National Park Service for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT). Given the 2175 mile length of the AT through 14 States, it would be impractical, if not impossible for the NPS to operate and maintain the AT. Instead, ATC and NPS entered into a renewable agreement by which ATC and its 36 Member AT Clubs are responsible for all trail maintenance, relocations, surveys, inventories, monitoring, and most education and community engagement. NPS handles law enforcement, policy and regulations, and planning and compliance. NPS makes modest payments to ATC, and ATC fundraises for the balance of its budget. Over some 45 years, it has proven to be an almost perfect relationship, with each partner focused on its strength and capability. (see Case Study)

Partnerships with For-Profit Businesses (Concessions)

Another partnership option is providing commercial visitor services through a concessioner under contract to the public agency. Lodging, including campground operations, food, gift and gasoline sales, mass transportation, trash collection and other waste management, all lend themselves to more efficient and effective operation by a private concessioner in parks at all levels. Modern concessioners can be responsive and cost-effective partners for providing quality park visitor services, and should be considered by park agencies, including CDPR, wherever such visitor services are needed, rather than such services being provided by agency employees. Concession contracts should include a fair-market-established franchise fee paid to and retained by the park agency, as well as a clear requirement that the concessioner fully maintain all facilities and structures assigned to it.

However, parks are not simply businesses that can be managed under common business practices - parks must conserve natural and cultural resources, often by holding down levels of development or recreation usage to prevent resource damages - which would be contrary to the normal business practice of revenue maximization. Most parks must provide visitors with basic education program opportunities, where a recreation business would be more likely to seek optimum entertainment programming. Most parks must operate under the uncertainty of annual funding, and with widely fluctuating political pressures, conditions uncommon to private business. Park systems generally use revenue and personnel in both high revenue generating parks and low or no revenue generating parks, and readily move funds around to balance the staffing and funding of the system as a whole. In contrast, private concessioners will seek to operate only in the most lucrative places. Thus, the best models for agency and concessioner balance is to optimize the best skills and purposes of each in equilibrium.

In recent years, Arizona has moved in another direction, and can serve as case in point for what not to do when partnering with a for-profit business. The Arizona Governor and Legislature transferred revenues generated by the state park agency to its general fund budget, and then required the agency to lease several state parks to a for profit company for all operations. The parks chosen for this transfer were heavily visited ones with high revenues, and thus were profitable for the business. When all state parks were under the state park agency, the agency was able to move revenue from highly profitable parks to ones that were less so, thus adequately funding all of its units. At present, pressure is on the agency to close “unprofitable” parks. Allowing a concession business to “cherry-pick” only the most profitable parks to operate is not a model for successful management of an entire system of state parks.

Over 60 years ago, the NPS chartered a non-profit distributing public benefit corporation, National Parks Concessions, Inc. (NPCI) and assigned it five parks under a single contract, two that were then highly profitable and three that were not, and required NPCI to subsidize the less profitable ones with excess revenue from the more profitable ones. This approach succeeded for decades in enabling good visitor service to be provided even in parks with low visitation. After the death of its long-time CEO in the 1990s, NPCI was dissolved and its contract broken into five separate ones, but this approach had been proven worthy for consideration elsewhere, including by CDPR.

In at least one California state park, Asilomar, CDPR has effectively partnered with a concessioner, ARAMARK, to operate a conference center and related lodging and food services. This state park may offer CDPR a perfect opportunity to experiment with contracting with a for-profit business for a larger role in full park operations. Having interviewed ARAMARK senior executives and reviewed its current contract terms and facility investment requirements, as well as having visited the park several times, Asilomar seems like a park that may be a strong candidate for a full-time operating partner.

Partnerships Through Leasing

A major, underutilized tool available for preservation of historic buildings and reducing agency maintenance responsibilities is leasing. Wherever historic buildings exist in state parks that are not needed for every-day use by the agency or for direct visitor services, these buildings can be leased to a private entity for compatible uses, which can include private residences, schools, businesses, or offices. Historic leasing could even include working farms where the maintenance of farmland and farm buildings contribute to the cultural landscape. For example, the historic Piper Farm at Antietam National Battlefield (MD) - the scene of dramatic fighting during this 1862 Civil War battle, has been leased to a farm family for more than 30 years, which not only conserves the cultural landscape as a farm, but operates a Bed and Breakfast business in the historic farmhouse for park visitors and regional tourists alike.

It is essential for CDPR to creatively implement ways to preserve historic buildings and cultural landscapes within its park boundaries, even when direct funding from regular agency sources is not possible, by creatively utilizing authorities to permit its non-profit, for-profit, tribal, or local government partners to restore/maintain such historic structures - even when uses of these structure do not serve a wholly public purpose. Simply providing the public with a visual experience of the building and its cultural setting is often sufficient to fulfill legal intent and policy for public purposes. The practice of having its underutilized historic structures adequately maintained by other than direct state action and funding should be fully compliant with public policy and legal intent.

CDPR should immediately undertake a comprehensive review of all of its historic buildings, and of appropriate cultural landscapes (farms, gardens, tribal sacred sites, etc.) to compile a list of such places and facilities that could be appropriately leased. Of course, any such decision should be preceded by an agency decision that the facility is not needed by the agency for administrative uses, and that the lease would assure that its future uses will be fully compatible with park purposes, and maintained at appropriate high standards for such historic structures and landscapes.

While there are insufficient examples from across the country of park agencies effectively using the leasing tool, several sites in California are among the best examples in the country for this. Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the Presidio Trust have made major strides through leasing of historic buildings (See Case Study)

Case Studies for Park Partnership Models from Across the USA

Regional Recreation Planning

The Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission's 1962 Report to the President and Congress, *Outdoor Recreation for America*, the source of so many conservation and public land outdoor recreation initiatives that have been fully implemented over the past five decades, also contained a major recommendation, for interagency regional recreation planning, that has largely been ignored ever since. This approach offers many potential benefits, and California can lead in its development.

Recreational opportunities within a two-hour drive from the core of a metropolitan area should be addressed through cooperative interagency planning, since the enormity of acquiring adequate land and developing facilities would be overly challenging for the already-too-limited resources of local park and recreation agencies, and should more appropriately be shared among local, state, and federal agencies.

For the past 15 years, park leaders have been advocating for the concept of a "national system of parks" or a "seamless system of parks and recreation spaces" involving integrated, cooperative management of local, state and federal lands and agency recreation programs. This is an idea whose time has come, finally, brought on in part by tighter budgets and increasing tension over the use of open spaces, especially close to where people live.

Regional recreation planning, and a national system of parks and open spaces, are convergent concepts and co-dependent.

Public agencies at all three levels of government in California should develop regional-scale pilot projects that each involve the cooperative planning and development of the full spectrum of recreation opportunities, and active participation of local, state and federal land managers, other recreation providers, and the public. The federal-state model for cooperation (see Redwood National & State Parks Case Study) should be expanded to include local and regional park agencies and their lands and waters in other regions of the State.

What can be achieved through regional recreation planning is not just greater efficiency of operations and maintenance, though that is very important, but a way to reduce, if not eliminate recreational conflicts, because the agencies can plan, together, where, when and how to provide a place for every appropriate recreational activity, but can also

assure that they do not have to provide for every activity in every place. Just as importantly, these agencies can educate the public together about what is appropriate where, and assure the recreation users that there is a place for every recreation activity within the region.

Up to the present, the concept of large-scale (region, state/interstate and metropolitan) park planning has been applied only in rare instances where political, financial and resource interests have converged. These few existing examples have often involved federal-state-local collaboration, including planning, land use restrictions, intergovernmental finance, and, in some cases, interagency management (or mutual agreement on management objectives).

Specific places that already demonstrate some level of inter-governmental cooperation at the regional or large landscape scale include the Pinelands National Reserve of New Jersey; the Sterling Forest at the New Jersey-New York boundary and most of the 49 National Heritage Areas.

Linear resources (trails and rivers) in particular, connect public and private sites that represent important but potentially under-utilized destinations. They usually traverse several political jurisdictions, and thus seemingly demand interagency cooperative management and coordination.

Typically, legislative designation of a specific Heritage Area does not authorize public land acquisition, but provides “bricks & mortar” funding, and some operational grants to local entities, mostly to promote tourism to the region on a unified scale. Though multiple jurisdictional in nature, the heritage areas concept is not the same as regional recreation planning. The heritage area program has been reliant on enactment of site-specific legislation, which greatly limits the scope of its applicability. It’s a good program, but no substitute for regional recreation planning.

Despite a few examples, large-scale, multi-jurisdictional planning for public recreation opportunities on a regional scale has resulted in little definitive action from national or state policymakers.

There are obstacles to interagency coordination, and especially to the idea of shared management:

- There are legal, statutory obstacles to inter-governmental site-specific, collaborative land management, especially in moving funds and staff between agencies at different levels of government.
- There is inherent resistance to letting go of sole management authority, by any one of the relevant agencies. It’s far easier for a manager to direct his own staff to implement decisions, than it is to negotiate a shared decision.

- Recreation is often still seen as an amenity, not a necessity, and thus does not enjoy the type of political support that is necessary to break out of an old model for management.
- The perception that local parks deal only with recreation centers and playgrounds; that state parks deal with golf, boating and other active recreation; and that national parks are about preservation of scenery and ecosystems, has led to the mistaken belief that these agencies have nothing in common and no reason to collaborate.

There are also timely and compelling reasons why regional recreation planning should be aggressively pursued across the spectrum of governments, across the Nation:

- It will help protect the long-term sustainability of the American landscape, balancing pressures for development, recreation, and other uses.
- There is now ample medical and other scientific evidence for the necessity of leading healthy lifestyles, including active recreation. The Surgeon General's Report on Overweight and Obesity documents our plight, and points out the benefits to human health of having close-to-home access to places for physical activity.
- Given the under-funding of park and recreation agencies, these agencies must seek new and innovative ways to improve efficiency and make their limited funds stretch further. Shared facilities, staff, services, programming, operations and maintenance activities, especially for adjacent park agencies, are a key means to greater efficiency.

One thing that regional recreation planning does not mean is that the core mission of each agency must be blurred and blended so that they all think, look, and act alike. In fact each agency should approach regional recreation planning with the intent that doing so will strengthen, not weaken, its commitment and its ability to carry out its statutory mission in the best professional manner.

The best extant example of regional recreation planning is occurring in the Las Vegas Valley (NV). Seven million acres of federal lands surrounds Clark County and the cities of Las Vegas and Henderson, with each of the four federal land management agencies managing pieces of the Valley and surrounding mountains that Congress has given special recognition to, including Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NPS), the Desert National Wildlife Refuge (FWS), the Red Rocks National Conservation Area (BLM), and the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area (USFS).

Congress enacted the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act in 1998, which authorized sale by the Bureau of Land Management of "surplus" federal lands in Clark County. In the course of identifying salable lands, BLM first worked with the County and two Cities to identify federal lands for City and County parks and open spaces, as well as transportation and utility corridors. All of the revenue generated by the sale of

surplus federal lands was retained in a dedicated account in the US Treasury, not subject to appropriation by Congress, and invested back into new land acquisition and facility development to support recreation across the various jurisdictions federal, state and local, in the Valley. To carry out this mandate, the four federal agencies, state, county and city governments formed the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) which enabled all parties to collaborate so that together they could plan allocation of the reserved federal funds to produce the most efficient shared resources management and recreation facility development, avoiding duplicate facilities, matching public demand, and planning together, especially for roads and trails that connect across agency lands.

Another site specific model is the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area (MA) an areas of 50 square miles of open waters and 34 islands and peninsulas, authorized by Congress in 1996, with a mandate that the disparate public and private partners and land owners continue to work together to jointly manage this complex holistically. Unlike Gateway (NY) and Golden Gate NRA (CA) authorization for which included substantial federal lands transferred to the NPS, Boston Harbor Islands is comprised almost entirely of non-federal land, with NPS serving a planning and coordination role, and bringing federal support funding to the partnership.

The statute establishing the park is perhaps the most explicitly directive in terms of cooperating partners ever specified in law for an NPS unit, which is to *“manage the recreation area in partnership with the private sector, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, municipalities surrounding Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays, the Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center, and Trustees for Reservations, and with historical, business cultural, civic, recreational and tourism organizations.”*

Uniquely, the BHINRA statute authorized both a commission, known as the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership, and a federal advisory committee. Thirteen Members of the Partnership, appointed by the Secretary, have direct management coordination responsibility through a jointly developed comprehensive plan. The Partnership is also provided with very broad funding authority, including *“the Partnership may seek and accept donations of funds, property or services from individuals, foundations, corporations, and other private and public entities for the purpose of carrying out this section.”* Further, the statute provides that *“the Partnership may use its fund to obtain money from any source under any program or law requiring the recipient of such money to make a contribution in order to receive such money.”* NPS owns only 245 acres of the 1500 acres of the NRA, but is fully integrated into resource management, maintenance, and public education along side its many partners.

Such co-management agreements between state and federal parkland managers demonstrate greater efficiency by avoiding duplicate facilities and visitor services, and by taking advantage of the relative strengths of each agency. Joint management of larger landscapes offers the opportunity for more ecosystem-based decision making.

Where such adjacent national and state (or even local) parks occur, this co-management approach has great potential for both improved efficiency and visitor service, and more holistic conservation management. More opportunities to pursue this approach should be sought out and implemented.

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Conservation Corps Grow in Sophistication, Professionalism, and Capability To Perform Public Service

Even today, the legacy of the Depression-era three million man strong Civilian Conservation Corps remains vivid for Americans, and the lasting presence of their good construction work in parks is evident all across the USA, including in California. Thirty-seven state park systems acquired new state parks and expanded others through the work of the original CCC. That CCC, and the resultant Recreation Demonstration Areas Program, which rehabilitated lands and waters for future recreation use and development of support facilities, prompted eight states to establish their first state parks.

For the past 4 years, conservation corps across the country have been working with the Obama Administration for the establishment of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, to be a full partnership between the existing 150 public and non-profit conservation corps and public land agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. The leadership of the California Conservation Corps, as well as several California based non-profit conservation corps, have participated actively in the formulation of this new initiative, and are poised to benefit from its 2013 launch.

Today's modern conservation corps, all across the country, have grown in skill, sophistication, and professionalism as compared to the federally-run Youth Conservation Corps and Young Adult Conservation Corps of the late 1960s and 1970s (which focused primarily on younger ages and more heavily on education than service work). None of today's corps are federally run, but operate in partnerships with public conservation agencies, primarily through cooperative agreements, that provide cost-shared funding to accomplish a wide variety of needed work on public lands, increasingly focused on reducing large backlogs of maintenance work.

One example, of many that could be provided, of a highly successful non-profit conservation corps, is the Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC). SCC, founded in 1998, provides young women and men with structured, safe and challenging service and educational opportunities through projects that promote personal growth, the development of social skills, and an ethic of natural and cultural resource stewardship.

SCC offers programs year-round throughout the Southwest from offices in Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. Most of SCC's Colorado and New Mexico-based programs operate from March – October while most of the Arizona-based programs operate from September through April, essentially determined by weather conditions. SCC operates a continuum of programs from community-based initiatives for younger teens, to

residential camping crews for high school and college aged individuals, to leadership programs for college graduates.

On many projects Corps members work, learn and commonly camp in teams with up to six crew members and 2 crew leaders. Crew-based projects include forest fuels reduction, erosion control, tree planting, trail building, fencing, exotic plant removal, historic preservation maintenance, and urban park facility maintenance. Corps members earn a living allowance while learning valuable work and life skills. SCC's strengths lie not only in its service project accomplishments, but also in its ability to provide a viable work force to the region while offering exceptional educational and engaging opportunities to participants.

In 2012, SCC recruited 700 young corps members, hired 88 staff, provided agencies with 369,141 hours of service, which included work on 692 miles of rivers and streams, among many other types of projects. SCC raised 24% of its budget through gifts and grants, with the balance as fee-for-service work paid through public agency project agreements with 16 agencies of local governments, 9 state agencies (including both CO and AZ State Parks), 6 federal agencies and 1 Indian Tribe. In addition, SCC worked with over 40 other NGOs in support of its projects, including use of their volunteers to augment work, and gained public attention for the accomplishments of the youth. Being co-enrolled in the AmeriCorps program, the corps members also earned nearly \$1 million in individual education grant awards.

CDPR could significantly expand its partnership with CCC, as well as with appropriately located local non-profit corps, which will save money, build new constituents' support and loyalty, and orient and educate the next generation of potential employees. At present, CDPR has a fully integrated relationship with CCC, with something over \$25 million in project work committed by the agency and completed by CCC in recent years, at a net savings to the agency of at least 50% of the cost of doing the same projects by other means. However, this level of engagement is only a modest percentage of the CDPR maintenance budget. Beyond maintenance, CCC would have the capacity to do far more resource management, fuels reduction, habitat improvement, and exotics removal work than it is asked to do at present.

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Baltimore Parks & Recreation

Beginning in 1984, the City of Baltimore (MD) Parks and Recreation Department realized that the City was no longer willing to allocate sufficient funds either to fully operate existing parks and recreation facilities, or to build new ones. In order to effectively respond to this fiscal challenge, the Director established an official NGO partner, Parks & People Foundation (PPF), that was singularly focused on city parks and facilities. An initial grant of \$25,000 from the Department turned into \$91 million in donated funds over 30 years. In 2012, half of the PPF \$5 million annual budget went to motivating youth to visit, use, and support parks, and another quarter to service projects, park and stream maintenance, and tree planting.

In addition, independent NGOs were established for major component parks, golf and swimming centers in particular, with Members carefully chosen to represent both the community around the park or facility, its likely user base, and businesses that would serve visitors. The unique financial arrangement between the agency and these NGOs was that no funds, fees, or payments from the NGO operating partner were required to be paid to the agency or the City. All generated revenue was to be plowed back into park facility operations and maintenance. Fees charged to facility users were set based on market analysis. The agency received only an allocation of time and space within the park or facility that it could program for and offer free to the parks' neighborhood constituencies through a voucher system and scheduling of programs and activities to be conducted by agency staff. The agency calculated the cost of each visit, based on the NGO operating and maintenance budget, and successfully sought corporate "sponsors" donations to the NGO to cover all of these costs of the "public" non-paying usage.

Further, each of the city's 53 recreation centers has its own "friends" group in the community. When new capital investment in facilities was needed, the City, agency, and/or state bonds and federal LWCF grants were used, with any difference made up through "conditional purchase agreements" between the agency and the NGO partner.

A major component for success was a comprehensive re-training program for agency employees in partnership management and collaboration, reflecting a shift away from agency direct service. Replacing agency-driven command and control with a true partnership approach was the key to successful implementation of this new approach.

While this innovative approach may not be viable on a state-wide basis, it could be successful on a state park-by-state park basis, or for an assemblage of adjacent parks. It could also be applied to co-located federal, state, and local parks with a single NGO serving the major O&M functions for any participating public agency. Some aspects of this type of public-private and inter-governmental collaboration may be seen in the growing relationship among NPS, CDPH and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

for the several parks in that region of southern California. It is the combined presence and active engagement of both federal and state park agencies, and an over-arching NGO that has established new and creative opportunities for greater efficiencies, and more timely responses to both immediate and long-term issues when they arise.

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Mountain-to-Sound-Greenway (WA)

The Mountain to Sound Greenway is an iconic 1.5 million-acre landscape from Seattle that follows the Interstate 90 corridor across the Cascade Mountains to Central Washington. This Greenway, established by both governmental and private entities, seeks to conserve a healthy and sustainable relationship between land and people by balancing built and natural environments – a landscape providing places for nature and wildlife, for outdoor recreation and education, and for working forests and local agricultural production, while embracing vibrant urban areas with strong economies. This diverse landscape is being supported by a broad cross-section of society, working together as an effective coalition to preserve this heritage for future generations.

Natural areas are being protected, piece by piece, while new development is being appropriately scaled and sited. Of the 1.5 million acres of land in the Greenway, over 900,000 acres are held by local, state and federal agencies in trust for the public good. Since 1990, the Greenway coalition has invested over \$275,000,000 preserving over 240,000 acres by purchase or exchange and an additional 100,000 acres by conservation easement. Greenway representatives approach willing sellers, find funding and secure public land management by the appropriate agency.

For twenty years, the Mountain to Sound Greenway Trust, a broad-based public private coalition, has bound public agencies, major corporations, citizen advocacy groups, outdoor recreation users, and the forest industry together for a common purpose. Today, the Greenway Trust encompasses a 60-member Board of Directors, a 30-member Advisory Council, a 100-member Technical Advisory Committee, a 15-member staff, and a community of hundreds of citizens and dozens of interest groups. Along the way direct service agencies have learned to let go of their command and control approach, and to manage diverse processes and a multitude of partners, and have found it to be a better, more successful way than could have been achieved otherwise.

It is the larger vision of the Greenway Trust that has desirable applicability for CDPR - getting all of the interested and affected citizens, organizations, businesses, agency professionals, and elected officials to coalesce around a common vision for a universally agreed upon large landscape that has distinctive characteristics worthy of protection and compatible uses, likely including numerous state, municipal, and/or county parks, as well as federal sites. With this broad agreement on the vision for the region secured, it is much easier to build public support, balance public and private funding, and secure effective operating partnerships, volunteers, and additional protections for public open spaces, cultural landscapes, and recreation facilities.

California Coastal Highway 101 is an important, historic corridor linking many local, state, and federal lands, and could be a framework for interagency collaboration for the future.

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Pinelands National Reserve (NJ)

The Pinelands National Reserve (PNR) was authorized by Congress in 1978 as an affiliated area of the NPS. The PNR is the only “National Reserve” in the nation, encompassing some 1.1 million acres covering portions of seven counties and all or parts of 56 municipalities (22% of New Jersey's land area). When Congress enacted the authorizing legislation for PNR it was to be a model for additional such large landscapes across the country, they said, after time to evaluate the effectiveness of the model at PNR. The Pinelands National Reserve was the first attempt at the federal level to protect a vast area outside the jurisdiction of the National Park Service through a state-federal partnership in regional land use planning. To date, no other such “national reserve” has been established, though PNR has proven to be extraordinarily successful.

PNR is the largest open space on the Mid-Atlantic seaboard between Richmond and Boston and is underlain by aquifers containing 17 trillion gallons of some of the purest water remaining to the people of this major population region. In 1979, New Jersey formed this partnership with the federal government through the NPS to preserve, protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of this special place. In 1983 the area was designated a U.S. Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and in 1988 it was recognized as a International Biosphere Reserve.

A state appointed Commission prepares and periodically updates a Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), which, when approved by NPS, is implemented in part with federal funds appropriated by Congress for that purpose. In particular, NPS has provided funding over 20 years for a science and economic monitoring research program to produce usable knowledge to inform management decisions in PNR. The Pinelands Commission applies the CMP by reviewing all development applications in 936,000 acres of the National Reserve. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection implements the CMP in most of the balance of the Pinelands National Reserve through coastal zone management rules. New development here is controlled – and limited – by the nation’s most innovative regional land use plan. The CMP is designed to preserve the pristine conditions found within the core of the Pinelands while accommodating increased human use and a regulated amount of growth.

Today, public lands comprise nearly 570,000 acres within the PNR boundary and include parks, forests, and wildlife management areas. The historic villages of Batsto and Double Trouble are visitor attractions administered by the Division of Parks and Forests of the Department of Environmental Protection. Federal properties cover some 87,000 acres including three military installations and the Forsythe and Cape May National Wildlife Refuges. The CMP has designated 125,000 acres for regional growth, 125,000 acres for rural development, 70,000 acres for agricultural production, and

50,000 acres for towns and villages. All uses of private lands are governed under the CMP, while PNR lands are home to some 700,000 residents.

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National Heritage Areas

The NPS defines “national heritage areas” (NHA) as *places designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography*. At present, Congress has designated 49 national heritage areas in 31 states, though none are in California. Each NHA is established by an Act of Congress, is provided with an annual appropriation for a period of 5-10 years, and is managed by a commission or locally appointed board.

NHA offer an alternative approach to land stewardship, in which there is limited public ownership of lands, but a new level of public engagement supporting large-scale community engagement that encourages local decisions to manage, protect, and interpret their distinctive landscape in a more holistic manner, while using that landscape to promote tourism and compatible economic development within the NHA.

Many NHA include national park or state park system units within their outer boundary. For example the Salem Maritime and Saugus Iron Works NHS are within the boundary of the Essex NHA; the Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA (JTHG) extends along an historic road route through PA, MD, WV and VA that includes 18 national and state parks, 9 homes of US Presidents, 100s of Civil War battlefields, numerous historic towns and villages, and many individual historic sites. The Partnership for JTHG is comprised of over 350 other organizations that are active in promoting and protecting the rich history of the corridor. Each partner in an NHA continues to play out its own distinctive role, but coalesce around larger issues and projects that can benefit the region as a whole, or at least multiple components of the NHA.

It has been the presence of these NHA in their own regions that has elevated the level of public support, as well as political interest in these important places. As a result, municipal, county, state, and federal government agencies, and their respective legislative bodies have enabled or fostered management and protection of these places, and this has, in turn, enabled the local, regional, and national public to gain in awareness, appreciation, and support for these places. The mere fact of designation has drawn additional public and private resources to these NHA.

For example, the Essex National Heritage Area in Massachusetts is a 550-square-mile cultural landscape of dramatic coastline and quaint seaports, high-style federal architecture, and 19th-century industrial mills that commemorates 400 years of maritime history and tradition, reflecting the region’s seafaring past.

The new level of regional engagement of numerous partners in the heritage area has enabled Salem Maritime National Historic Site, which is 9 acres in size, to play a far more prominent role in the region by harnessing the power of volunteers and professionals to take on preservation challenges and interpretation opportunities.

As a tangible result of this new level of community commitment, the Essex National Heritage Area, Salem Maritime National Historical Site, and local partners have built a visitor center in downtown Salem that orients tourists and residents to the region's history and a multitude of tourism destinations, with funding from multiple sources, not just the NPS annual appropriation.

Another approach for a national heritage area is represented by the Cane River NHA in Louisiana. Here, there was little recognition of the rich, diverse heritage of the area where American Indian, French, Spanish, and African cultures merged over three centuries to create a culturally vibrant Creole society with intimate ties to the landscape. An early 1990s NPS study of the region recommended an unusual approach to preserving this nationally significant landscape: simultaneously designating two small historic plantations as a national park system unit and the much larger cultural landscape around them as a NHA. Establishment of the national park and National Heritage Area catalyzed the founding of the Creole Heritage Center, which reconnects Creole communities across the nation to the land, their past, and one another. Today, visitors to the NHA can participate in first-person historical interpretation of this special place, visit numerous privately conserved historic villages, paddle the rivers, and experience diversity at its origin.

Of course, there is no requirement that an NHA include a unit of the national park system within it, but including a public park agency with a compatible mission has a stabilizing effect on the whole NHA and its communities, providing an initial focus, early professional leadership, and often, seed money for the other members of the partnership to begin operation. Some NHA achieve this effect with state and local public parks within their boundaries.

Designation of one or more regional NHA in California by the US Congress would have the intended effect of bringing to bear new local, state, and federal resources not only to state parks that are included within NHA boundaries, but to complementary and adjacent sites, and would aid in further protecting state park resources. One of the best benefits of NHA designation borne out over the nearly 30 year history of such designations is that the designation leads to greater visibility for diverse resources, which in turn brings greater public consensus for continued protection with public access and use, which in turn often leads to creative new sources of funding for NHA projects and programs. California state parks need a broader constituency that recognizes the diverse values and benefits of these parks, and inclusion of them in NHA is one possible way to get that result.

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Special Park Districts

Special park districts (SPD), 186 of which exist in at least 13 states, have a distinct advantage over other types of park agencies in that they are set up as if they were independent, limited service governments; SPD almost always have tax powers within a given geography of population that they serve with their facilities and parks. SPD already exist in many regions of California, including East Bay, Chico, Coachella Valley, Hayward, El Dorado Hills, Greater Vallejo, Hesperia, Livermore, Marin County, Mendocino Coast, Monterey Peninsula, Mid-Peninsula, Pleasant Hills, Pleasant Valley, Rancho Simi, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Truckee, Baldwin Hills, Tahoe, San Diego, San Gabriel, San Joaquin, and more.

Such regional park and open space special districts and their operating agency are typically established by the board of supervisors of one or more cities and/or counties on petition. SPD are often subject to approval by public referendum, and generally include either an appointed or elected board. The special district may levy taxes and issue bonds with voter approval.

While there has been a tendency to view SPD as mostly urban, and state parks as being in more remote and/or undisturbed locations, and thus having little in common, the fact is that both SPD and state parks throughout the country often are similar in location, function, facilities, resources, and visitor constituencies, with clearly overlapping goals, operating management skills, and related professional expertise.

Another type of SPD is represented by the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District (OH), established in 1945. MetroParks is a combined city/county system, the largest in Ohio with 27,000 acres of public lands. Some 70% of MetroParks annual budget of \$29 Million is derived from a 10-year local property tax levy approved in 2009 by the local park users, while 11% is from state and federal grants, and another 10% is from local governments. MetroParks operates 17 natural area parks, golf courses, seasonal festivals, and hundreds of educational programs, together serving over 7.5 million visitors in 2012. The ability of MetroParks to dependably secure 70% of its operating and capital budget from its own user base gives this type of self-financing a significant advantage over agencies, like CDPR, that must compete annually for virtually their entire budget.

In another dramatic model, the elected regional government for the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, MetroOregon, has acquired nearly 15,000 acres of natural lands over the past 20 years at a cost of some \$168 million, much of it needing restoration and all of it needing facilities and maintenance management. MetroOregon serves more than 1.5 million residents in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties and the 25 cities in the Portland, Oregon region. The land purchases have been made possible by

two voter-approved bond referenda in 1995 and 2006. In addition, nearly one quarter of the bond funds have been passed through Metro to local governments so that they can purchase lands closer to their communities. For virtually every park, MetroOregon has one or more local community partners/agencies to manage specific parks.

MetroOregon is a founding member of an expansive coalition of partners known as the Intertwine Alliance, which recently welcomed its 100th partner. The Intertwine functions as a public-private partnership to advance public urban green spaces with a broad coalition of businesses, public agencies, and non-profit organizations, including KEEN Footwear, Kaiser Permanente, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, MetroOregon, Audubon Society of Portland, Friends of Trees, and over a dozen city agencies. The Alliance helps to brand a region seeking talent and economic advantage; reduce personal healthcare costs, public utility and transportation costs; improve water quality and biodiversity; and support park partners in building capacity.

The legacy of the late William Penn Mott, as the only person to head a special park district (East Bay Regional Park Authority), a state park system (California), and the National Park Service, ought to be used by CDPR as incentive for much closer collaboration among the three types of agencies in California.

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Historic Leasing

Leasing presents an opportunity for the state to continue to retain ownership of historic, but unutilized, buildings, while having maintenance and even improvements funded by another entity, thus reducing agency budget costs for preservation maintenance.

Park agencies across the country normally plan for the use of any building within park boundaries for park management and operations purposes or for visitor uses, such as agency-run interpretive facilities or as concession-run visitor services. However, many parks include more structures than are needed for these purposes. When that situation occurs, the leasing tool should be considered. In all such cases, any proposed use of a leased building should be assured to be compatible with park purposes, but with that caveat, the full range of potential uses should be considered, including non-profit offices, residential, and business occupancy.

When these under-utilized buildings are historic structures, which should be preserved as a part of the agency mission, a top priority of any possible lease should be that they can and will be rehabilitated or maintained by the lessee, at no cost to the park agency. For non-historic buildings, a top priority should be to consider compatibility with the park and whether the building should be removed, and secondarily for revenue returned to the park agency based on a fair market value assessment of the leased building if it is to be retained.

For example, at Gateway National Recreation Area's (NY) historic airport, Floyd Bennett Field, several historic aircraft hangers must be preserved. NPS has utilized one for a visitor museum and workshop for its collection of historic aircraft, but has leased another hanger for adaptive reuse as an indoor sports complex, requiring the lessee to restore and maintain the historic facade of the hanger to maintain the integrity of the historic landscape, while a hockey rink, basketball courts, workout rooms and class spaces fill the interior. The lease rate was reduced proportionate to the investment by the lessee in historic restoration and maintenance.

At Valley Forge National Historic Park (PA), which commemorates the winter encampment of the American Revolutionary Army in 1778, the NPS has leased a 19th century farm house, which must be preserved but is not contemporary with the American Revolution, for use as a Montessori School.

Within the CDPR, a set of principles and clarifying policies should be adopted that serve to optimize leasing opportunities:

1. Establish in policy that historic leasing is a potentially useful end and public benefit, in itself, because it assures preservation of the historic property, by means other than the CDPR budget.

2. Clearly distinguish between historic leases and non-historic leases. For historic leases, revenue to the government should be secondary to assuring that the building is and remains in good repair according to the Secretary of Interior Standards for Maintenance of Historic Structures, which are applicable to any building listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Clearly distinguish between historic leasing and concessions contracting.
4. Once CDPR has made a determination that the agency does not need the historic building for its management or administration, then the lease should be for the longest term legally possible in order to best assure long-term preservation maintenance by the lessee, not the agency budget.
5. Any historic lease should be at least long enough so that the lessee can either obtain bank financing if needed, or take (or sell) the preservation tax credit for its investments in restoration, repair, and adaptive re-use. Generally, either of these require a minimum of a 39.5 year lease term, based on Internal Revenue Service rulings as the length of term sufficient to indicate a measure of “ownership.”
6. For historic leasing, do not require periodic rent reconsideration during the term of the lease. Doing so often results in the lessee vacating the historic building, putting responsibility for preservation maintenance back on the agency, with resultant deterioration or lack of maintenance.
7. Do not require individual property appraisals for potential historic leases, rely on comparable market studies instead. Individual property appraisals are time-consuming, costly, and generally inflexible, whereas a local area market study will provide agencies with a rational range of values within which the agency can negotiate with potential lessees.

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Redwood National, State, and Tribal Parks

The successful 1994 partnership between the NPS and CDPR for unified, seamless management of Redwood National and State Parks is unmatched today anywhere else in the USA. While that achievement is great, the problem is that it is unmatched. While there are efforts in other areas of the state to build partnerships between National and State Parks, no where else in California has the opportunity demonstrated by the success of Redwood National and State Parks been fully realized.

This success on the north coast began with a recognition that each agency had strengths and weaknesses, but that the essential resource of coastal shores and redwood groves was shared. The three state parks have relatively pristine redwood groves, albeit small ones, while NPS had responsibility for restoration of a vast, steep, eroded landscape that had been heavily logged in recent years, along with its own small virgin redwood groves. NPS concentrated much of its efforts on science-based experimental restoration practices, while the facility-rich state parks could serve traditional park visitors, newly attracted to the north coast by the national park designation.

Today, the national and state park managers have moved into the same headquarters building together; separate maintenance facilities have been merged in one location; science and resources management are done without regard to boundaries; and visitor education and interpretation are done as if it is all one resource or one agency. For the first time anywhere, the two agencies produced a joint management plan with unified compliance documents under both the National Environmental Quality Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

Also today, another potentially greater partnership opportunity is emerging, one that would add the Yurok Indian Tribe as a third equal partner. The Yurok Tribe is the largest in California, a native tribe that has resided on the north coast since time immemorial in villages both on the coast and along the Klamath River from its confluence with the Trinity River some 50 miles upstream to its mouth on the Pacific. First designated by Treaty with the US in 1851, the Yurok Reservation today extends along the river from mouth to confluence. Redwood National Park was overlain on part of the Yurok Reservation in 1968 and again in 1978. All three state parks are part of Yurok ancestral territory and today include many former village sites and burial grounds.

In 1996, both agencies signed an MOU with the Yurok Tribe for government-to-government consultation; in 2001 the Tribe and the agencies entered into an Annual (federal) Funding Agreement under the Indian Self-Governance Act; and in 2007 the two agencies and the Yurok Tribe signed a "Shared Values Statement," which calls for collaborative management across agency and reservation boundaries. At present, the

Tribe is seeking federal legislation that would recognize Redwood National, State, and Tribal Parks as the official title. The tribe is in the process of designating a tribal park on the reservation, upriver, and is seeking co-management of portions of the national park, in particular where traditional ceremonial and religious practices have occurred, where populations of elk can be re-introduced, and where tan oak groves can be re-established (a major traditional food source that was nearly eliminated by forestry practices that sought a redwood monoculture when the park lands were private).

The Yurok seeks to benefit the partnership by emphasizing projects and programs that would enhance what the two agencies already do. For example, there is no park lodge for visitor accommodation; there is no museum focused on the cultural heritage of the north coast; there is no readily available public access to the Klamath River upriver where the Tribe plans its park, which will also be open to the public offering a very different experience than the coast; and there is no trail access from the river to the high country. The Tribe is also seeking to be the host partner for reintroduction of the California condor to its historic range on the north coast.

Beyond the redwoods, there are other units of the national and state park systems in California which are co-located on traditional Native American landscapes, and tribes are ready and willing to engage in new partnerships that would enrich visitor experiences, and bring new resources to co-management of park resources.

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Appalachian Trail Conservancy

The best example of a whole-park operating agreement between the NPS and an NGO is that which exists between NPS and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). A renewable 5-year Memorandum of Understanding between these partners has been in place for nearly 30 years. The Appalachian Trail (AT) was conceived in 1921 and completed in 1937 as a continuous footpath traversing the Appalachian Mountains from Maine to Georgia.

All of the work designing and constructing the AT was done by volunteers, mostly by securing agreements with federal, state, and local public agencies and private landowners by one of the 36 local trail clubs in the 14 trail states that were formed by ATC for that purpose. As a consequence of this all-volunteer origin, many miles of the AT were initially on existing road corridors. The AT was not designated as a national scenic trail until it was authorized in 1968 by the National Trails System Act (NTSA), placing the NPS in charge of acquiring sufficient lands to move the trail off of roads and into more remote settings.

In 1984, the NPS and the ATC entered into a cooperative management agreement whereby the ATC assumes direct management responsibility for day-to-day trail maintenance and resource management, education and interpretation, while the NPS carries out law enforcement, planning, promulgation of regulations, most AT specific land acquisition, and provides management funding to ATC, which is complemented by private donations and grants.

The idea for the AT originally was for much more than a footpath through the mountains, but a complex regional approach to conserving and appropriately utilizing the natural resources of the eastern mountains to revitalize the American people and the lands on which they live and recreate; it was initially termed “a project in regional planning.”

1978 AT amendments to the NTSA included a requirement that the Secretary of Interior prepare “a comprehensive plan for the management, acquisition, development and use of the Appalachian Trail, including an acquisition or protection plan, by fiscal year, for all lands to be acquired by fee title or lesser interest along with detailed explanation of anticipated necessary cooperative agreements for any lands not to be acquired...”

Furthermore, Congress expressed its intent that the AT acquisition program be substantially completed within three fiscal years, authorized \$90 million over three years for acquisition, and required an annual acquisition progress report from the Secretary. Another amendment required that the ATC independently submit an annual report to Congress on “(A) the manner in which negotiations for the acquisition program are being conducted for every section of the Trail...(B) the attitudes of landowners with

whom negotiations have been undertaken, and (C) whether in any case larger interests in land are being acquired than are necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.”

In recent years, the NPS/ATC partnership has begun to explore means to carry out the original AT vision through a regional approach. While the narrow AT footpath is about 99% protected, there is much more to the quality of the AT experience than can be protected by this narrow corridor, including the expansive vistas, the ecological integrity and wildlife abundance, and the preservation of thousands of historic properties along the route. ATC and NPS, in cooperation with a team of university research professionals and citizen scientists, have begun to conduct a *MEGA-Transect* along the entire AT corridor, to inventory and monitor the native species, and air and water quality. Outreach and engagement of the numerous gateway “trail towns” near the AT corridor is another means to build a broader constituency for the regional approach to AT preservation. The *Trail to Every Classroom* program, another ATC/NPS collaboration, has developed teaching curricula for middle school teachers and students who can both engage with the Trail experientially, and apply field work to traditional classroom standards of learning requirements. Such constituencies are essential to the future of the AT and its surrounding region.

The NPS/ATC Partnership is by far the most extensive ever utilized by any federal land agency for day-to-day management of public lands. It could be a useful model for application in other situations, especially where an active local citizen constituency already exists.

One of the most significant AT protection actions ever taken by a trail state was accomplished in 2008 in Pennsylvania with enactment of its Act 24, amending the State’s Appalachian Trail Act of 1978 to require that every county and municipality adjacent to the AT adopt and enforce land use ordinances, zoning codes, or other measures that will preserve the “natural, scenic, historic, and cultural values of the trail and to conserve and maintain it as a public resource.” By this Act, Pennsylvania is the first of the fourteen AT States to take such comprehensive and compelling action which recognizes the importance of the AT and intends its long-term preservation through local actions. In addition, Act 24 authorizes the State’s Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Department of Community and Economic Development to provide technical support and funding for the local planning and zoning initiatives, and to monitor and report on their progress.

Invoking another statutory protection approach, several other AT states (NJ, CT) have determined the Trail itself to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, a finding that triggers the application of the protection offered under the National Historic Preservation Act. At present, ATC and NPS are seriously considering nominating the entire AT corridor to the National Register.

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Appendix 1

NATIONAL & STATE PARKS: EXISTING AND POTENTIAL COLLABORATION

Premise: Opportunities abound for improved management efficiencies, cost savings, and more holistic resource management among national and state park units in at least 36 States where they exist with shared boundaries, ecosystems, historic landscapes, or recreation resource types.

This review, while not exhaustive, includes state parks that are within or adjacent to the current boundary of units of the National Park System (NPS), or that encompass natural or cultural resources that overlap with or complement the natural or cultural resources of the NPS unit. In several cases, the NPS unit's enabling statute already allow state land transfers for sites within the NPS boundary, at the particular State's option. In these and others instances, state park agencies and NPS already achieve a level of collaboration, though more is possible.

In California, CDPR and NPS have already taken good advantage of their co-location and similar resource base in Redwood National and State Parks. They have also gradually begun collaboration in the San Francisco Bay region, based on an Interagency Agreement, but even after 20 years, there are still ample opportunities to do more.

Perhaps in the context of re-authorization of the Land & Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF), set to expire in 2015, CDPR and the NPS could jointly pursue new authority for federal-state park partnerships that would carry added priority for funding from LWCF to achieve shared functions, programs, staff, and facilities. Here again, California could led in an initiative that could benefit all states where state and federal parks are co-located or share a common set of resources.

Listed state parks are either within a current NPS boundary (W); contiguous/adjacent to an NPS boundary (A); or thematically linked (T)

Alabama

Gulf Island NS - Gulf State Park (SP) - A

Alaska

Denali NP - Denali SP - A

Kenai Fjords NP - Caines Head State Recreation Area (SRA), Lowell Point SRA, Driftwood Bay State Marine Park (SMP), Safety Cove SMP, Sandspit SMP, Sunny Cove SMP, Thumb Cove SMP - all A

Arizona

Montezuma Castle NM - Fort Verde State Park - A

Petrified Forest NP - Homolovi Ruins SP -A

Tumacacori NHP - Tubac Presidio SP -A

Tuzigoot NM - Dead Horse Ranch SP -A

Arkansas

Arkansas Post N. Mem. - Arkansas Post Museum -A

California

Golden Gate NRA - San Bruno Mountains SP -A, Angel Island SP - W, Mt. Tamalpais SP - A

Joshua Tree NP - Indio Hills Palms SP -A

Mojave N Pres. - Providence Mountains SRA -W

Pt. Reyes NS - Tomales Bay SP -A, Samuel P. Taylor SP -A

Redwood NP - Del Norte Coast Redwood SP - W, Prairie Creek Redwood SP - W, Humboldt Lagoon SP - A, Patrick's Point SP - A, Jedediah Smith Redwoods SP - W

Santa Monica Mountains NRA - Point Mugu SP - W, Leo Carillo SP - W, Malibu Creek SP -W

Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity NRA - Shasta State Historical Park (SHP) -A

Colorado

Dinosaur NM - Yampa River SP -A

Great Sand Dunes NP - San Luis SP -A

Florida

Big Cypress NP Res. - Fakahatchee Strand SP -W, Collier Seminole SP -A

Biscayne NP - Bill Baggs Cape SP -A, The Barnacle SP - A

Castillo de San Marcos NM - Fort Mose SP - A

Everglades NP - John Pennecamp Coral Reef SP, Ft. Zachary Taylor SHP, Windley Key Fossil Reef SP, Long Key SP, Curry Hammock SP, Bahia Hondo SP, Lignumvitae Key SP - A

Gulf Islands NS - Perdido Key SP -A, Big Lagoon SP - A

Timucuan E&H Pres. - Yellow Bluff Fort SHP - A, Ravine Gardens SP - A

Georgia

Kennesaw Mountains NHP - Picketts Mill Battlefield SHP - A

Hawaii

Haleakala NP - Kalu Forest Reserve - A, Polipoli SP - A

Hawaii Volcanoes NP - Manuka SP - A, Mauna Kea SP - A

Kalapapa NHP - Pala'au SP - A

Idaho

Hagerman Fossil Beds NM - Thousand Springs SP - A

Indiana

Indiana Dunes NL - Indiana Dunes SP - W

Lincoln Boyhood Home N Mem. - Lincoln SP - A

Maine

Acadia NP - Lamoine SP - A

Maryland

Assateague Island NS - Assateague SP - W

Massachusetts

Boston NHP - Castle Island SP (Ft. Independence) - A

Boston Harbor Islands NRA - Boston Harbor Islands - W

Cape Cod NS - Cape Cod Rail Trail, Nickerson SP - W

Michigan

Pictured Rocks NL - McLain SP - A

Sleeping Bear Dunes NL - Leelanau SP - A

Minnesota

Mississippi River NR&NRA - Fort Snelling SP - W

St. Croix NSR - William O'Brien SP, Wild River SP, St. Croix SP, Chengwatana State Forest - All A

Mississippi

Natchez Trace Pky. - Tishomingo SP, Trace SP - A

Vicksburg NMP - Grand Gulf Military State Park - T

Missouri

Harry S. Truman NHS - Harry Truman Birthplace SHP - T

Jefferson NEM - Scott Joplin House SHP - A

Ozark NSR - Roger Pryor Pioneer Backcountry - A, Montauk SP - A

Montana

Glacier NP - Whitefish SP - A, Chief Plenty Coups SP - A

Nebraska

Missouri NSR - Ponca SP - A, Lewis & Clark Lake SP - A

Niobrara NSR - Niobrara SP - A, Smith Falls SP - A

Nevada

Great Basin NP - Spring Valley SP - T

Lake Mead NRA - Valley of Fire SP - A

New Jersey

Delaware Watergap NRA - Worthington State Forest - W

New Mexico

Pecos NHP - Villanuava SP - A

New York

Fort Stanwix NM - Oriskany Battlefield SHS - T

Gateway NRA - Clay Pit Ponds SP - A, Bayswater Point SP - A, Captree SP - A, Walt Whitman Birthplace SHS - A

Fire Island NS - Robert Moses SP - A, Smith Point West County Park - A

North Carolina

Blue Ridge Pky. - Mt. Mitchell SP - A

Cape Hatteras NS - Jockey Ridge SP - W

Cape Lookout NS - Ft. Mason SP - A, Hammond Beach SP - A

Oregon

Fort Clatsop N. Mem. - Fort Stevens SHP - A, Sunset Beach SP - A

South Carolina

Kings Mountain NMP - Kings Mountain SP - A

South Dakota

Wind Cave NP - Custer SP - A

Tennessee

Great Smoky Mountains NP - Roan Mountain SP - A, Fort Loudoun SP - A

Texas

Big Bend NP - Big Bend Ranch SP - A, Fort Leaton SP - A

Big Thicket NP Res. - Caddoan Mounds SHS - A

Fort Davis NHS - Davis Mountains SP - A

Guadalupe Mountains NP - Hueco Tanks SHS - A

Lyndon B. Johnson NHP - Lyndon Johnson SP and SHS - T

Padre Island NS - Mustang Island SP - A

Palo Alto Battlefield NHS - Port Isabel Lighthouse SHS - T

Utah

Canyonlands NP - Dead Horse Point SP - A

Virginia

Appomattox Courthouse NHP - Sailor's Creek Battlefield SHP - A/T

Cumberland Gap NHP - Wilderness Road SP - A/T

Washington

Olympic NP - Bogachiel SP - A, Sequim Bay SP - A, Dosewallips SP - A

West Virginia

New River Gorge NR - Babcock SP - W, Hawks Nest SP - W, Bluestone SP - A,
Pipestem SP - A, Little Beaver SP - A

Wisconsin

Apostle Islands NL - Big Bay SP - A

Saint Croix NSR - Governor Knowles SF - A, Ocoola Bedrock Glades State Natural Area
- A

Appendix 2 Interviews Conducted

In preparation of this Report, the author interviewed the following individuals:

Dr. Glenn Haas - VP, Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals

Elizabeth Goldstein - Executive Director, California State Parks Foundation

Tom Wolfe - Washington Representative, National Association of State Park Directors

Tom St. Hilaire - former Ex. Dir., Americans for Our Heritage and Recreation

David Simon - former NM State Park Director

John Reynolds - former Deputy Director, National Park Service

Brenda Barrett - Former Pennsylvania State Park Director; former Manager of NHA program for NPS

James Pepper - first Superintendent of the Blackstone River National Heritage Area

Chris Delaporte - former State Park Director of Oklahoma, former Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Baltimore, MD, and former Director of the US Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

Walt Dabney - former Director, Texas State Parks

Carleton Montgomery - Executive Director, Pinelands Preservation Alliance (NJ)

Cleve Pinnix - former Director, Washington State Parks

Ken Travous - former Director, Arizona State Parks

Doug Wheeler - former Secretary, (CA) Resources Agency

Dan Puskar - Executive Director, Association of Partners of Public Lands

David Muraki - Executive Director, California Conservation Corps

Harry Bruell - Executive Director, Southwest Conservation Corps

William C. Dickinson - Principal, Environmental Policy Network

Chas Van Genderen - Montana State Park Director

Pat O'Brien - former Director, East Bay Regional Park Authority