

Parks Forward Initiative Fact Sheet

- Today, there are 280 state parks covering 1.6 million acres draw some 70 million visitors annually, returning an estimated \$6.5 billion to the California economy and supporting 56,000 California jobs. This system has been the proud result of significant and sustained investment by not only the state and its citizens, but also philanthropic contributors and conservation organizations whose combined efforts built the system we know today.
- State General Fund support for our parks has dropped by 37 percent in the past five years.
- California's State Parks System is on a path that is not financially sustainable. With that in mind, the Legislature approved the California State Parks Stewardship Act of 2012 (AB 1589) that acknowledges years of funding shortfalls and states "...it is imperative that the Legislature and the Governor ensure an adequate level of state funding for state parks is received in the future and that new revenue received from private sector donors be used to supplement, and not to supplant, existing state funding."
- To address these issues, Resources Legacy Fund (RLF) worked with the California Natural Resources Agency and the Department of Parks and Recreation to create an independent, two-year collaborative effort—the Parks Forward Initiative—to develop and implement a new vision and long-term plan for a financially sustainable State Park System that meets the needs of California's growing and changing population
- An independent panel of experts, citizens, and advocates, called the Parks Forward Commission, will conduct a wholesale assessment of our parks system and recommend substantial improvements. They will make recommendations to improve efficiency, increase accessibility and meet the needs of our growing and changing population.
- This independent process will be designed to address the financial, operational, cultural, and population challenges facing state parks to ensure the system's long-term viability, functionality, and relevance.
- The Parks Forward Initiative will be supported by significant charitable funding, public agency commitments, the nonprofit community and other stakeholders. Supported by significant charitable funding and public commitments, the Initiative will include support from the nonprofit community, other stakeholders and members of the public.
- The unpaid Parks Forward Commission will be selected by the California Secretary of Natural Resources. The Commission will be led by a Chair and Vice Chair selected by the Secretary. The Parks Forward Initiative will be coordinated by an executive director

and staff. RLF will hire and fund the executive director and staff in consultation with the Commission.

California Parks Facts At-a-Glance

Parks.....	280
Acres.....	1.5 million
Visitors.....	68+ million
Employees.....	2,400
Picnic Sites.....	7,442
Campsites.....	14,206
Miles of Coastline.....	339
Miles of Lake and River Frontage.....	646
Miles of Trails.....	4,522 (estimate)
Historic, Archaeological, and Archival Artifacts.....	4.5 million
Historic Buildings.....	1,500
Volunteers.....	26,000

###