



For Immediate Release

Parks Forward Initiative Begins Public Workshops, Invites Public to Participate in Effort to Improve State Parks

Sacramento, August 28, 2013 -- The Parks Forward Initiative and the California State Park and Recreation Commission will begin a series of public workshops statewide in September to gather new ideas on how to improve efficiency, create financial sustainability, and better leverage partnerships within California State Parks.

The workshops are part of the Parks Forward Initiative, which will undertake a top-to-bottom evaluation to improve and sustain California's underfunded State Parks System. In June, California Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird and California State Parks Director Major General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (Ret.) unveiled the Initiative. Earlier this month, the 12 members of the Parks Forward Commission were announced.

The public workshops will begin in the Central Coast region of the State in September, and continue on to Northern and Southern California through mid-October. A schedule of the public workshop meetings is available at www.ParksForward.com

"These public workshops are intended to engage and interact with the public that California State Parks serve," said Ken Wiseman, Executive Director of the Parks Forward Initiative. "We encourage people to participate, so that we can hear directly from every community. State Parks are an important resource for Californians, and this effort is to ensure that everyone has a seat at the table as we search for ideas to improve the way parks serve the public."

The workshops will be streamed live for viewing on the Parks Forward website. Details on the agenda and speakers will be available soon.

Here is a list of the public workshops in September:

Santa Cruz:

- Monday, September 9, 2013 in Santa Cruz, CA
- Address: Loudon Nelson Community Center, 301 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
- Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Fresno:

- Tuesday September 10, 2013 in Fresno, CA
- Address: University Square Hotel, 4961 North Cedar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726
- Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

San Luis Obispo:

- Wednesday September 11, 2013 in San Luis Obispo, CA
- Address: City/County Library, 995 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
- Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Signed into law last year, the California State Parks Stewardship Act of 2012, or AB 1589, seeks to improve management and funding practices at the Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Parks Forward Commission is expected to present its final findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature in fall 2014.

Learn more about Parks Forward at www.ParksForward.com and by following us on Twitter at @ParksForward and liking us on Facebook at [Facebook.Com/ParksForward](https://www.facebook.com/ParksForward).

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