

DISCUSSION DRAFT
Park Support Entity
February 2016

A proposal for a new support entity to provide key services to the California Department of Parks and Recreation and other park and protected land entities.

1. **Establish a new nonprofit support entity.** Create a 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit organization to provide support for organizations that manage or operate parks and other protected lands, with its first priority to the State Park System. 501(c)(3) organizations are overseen by the Internal Revenue Service, as well as by the state including the Secretary of State, Attorney General, and Franchise Tax Board.
 - **Governance**
 - 9-12 board members
 - Board members should reflect California’s demographic and geographic diversity, and include people with expertise, experience, and relationships that include:
 - the ability to contribute or raise private funds
 - expertise in business or finance, land acquisition, land management, education, partnerships, communications/marketing/technology, natural or cultural resource management and interpretation, parks, innovative finance, legal, or real estate development, outdoor recreation, and citizen engagement
 - 3-year terms, consecutive terms not to exceed three, initial staggered terms to ensure no more than one-quarter turnover in any year
 - **Mission.** Work with the California Department of Parks and Recreation and other park and protected land entities to expand park access to younger more diverse audiences, promote health and community engagement, and ensure protection of natural and cultural resources. The primary focus will be to amplify and complement the work of the Department by bringing new resources, expertise, marketing, and flexibility to assist the Department in accomplishing its mission.
2. **Create a business plan.** Create a business plan for the initial three years of operation
 - identify goals
 - work with the Department to identify priorities
 - specify measurable outcomes
 - define staffing needs, organizational structure, and initial position descriptions for key staff members
 - determine budget
 - craft funding plan to raise public and private funds
3. **Seek legislative recognition and authorization.** Authorize state appropriations to the support entity for specified purposes and provide latitude for the Department to easily work with the support entity. Consider the following:
 - Recognize the support entity and its important role in supporting California parks and protected lands.

- Identify key initial support functions including marketing, expanding outreach and access, improving health, ensuring the protection of natural and cultural resources, and engaging tribal, business, nonprofit, public agency, and philanthropic support.
- For key support functions provide “preferred status” for Department to work with support entity. Consider modifying contracting, staff sharing, etc. Give flexibility to the Department to work with the support entity through partnership agreements or other mechanisms.
- Provide the authority for the Legislature to appropriate funds directly for specified purposes, so long as the support entity maintains its federal and state tax exempt status and primary mission of supporting California parks and protected lands.