



May 23, 2012

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: OPPOSE Cuts to State Park System

Dear Governor Brown,

As concerned California business leaders, we are writing to express our opposition to the closure of up to 70 state parks as proposed in your FY12-13 budget. Our chambers of commerce and business associations collectively represent more than ten thousand businesses throughout the state, many of which depend on tourism that is driven by California's state parks. If state parks are shut down, the impacts will be felt by businesses up and down the state.



The current budget proposal continues down the path towards park closures by eliminating \$22 million for the Department of Parks and Recreation from the General Fund. This marks the first time in the history of California's state park system—spanning both World Wars and the Great Depression—that parks will be closed for budgetary reasons.



Closing parks is bad for business in California. The economic impact of closing state parks will go far beyond a simple \$22 million “savings” for the state's General Fund. California's state park system alone generates an estimated \$6.4 billion in economic activity within the state annually. Spending by park visitors **supports an estimated 56,000 jobs**, including both public and private sector jobs, across the state. Local economies in many areas of the state rely on state park visitors to generate the economic activity that keeps businesses alive. Hotels, locally-owned bed and breakfast establishments, restaurants, and many more businesses that rely on parks for visitation and economic activity will be devastated by state park closures.



In these tough economic times, closing state parks will only cause further strain on small businesses and local economies. We urge you to seek creative solutions that provide that provide adequate revenue to keep our state parks open, safe and accessible to all Californians.


Sincerely,

Lynn Mohrfeld
President and CEO
California Hotel and Lodging Association
California Association of Bed and Breakfast Inns

Bob Roberts
President and CEO
California Ski Industry Association






Joe D'Alessandro
President and CEO
San Francisco Travel Association



Debra De Graw
Chief Executive Officer
Mendocino Coast Chamber & Visitor Center
Mendocino County Film Office





Scott White
President and CEO
Palm Springs Desert Resort Communities CVA


Steve Van Dorn
President and CEO
Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce and
Convention-Visitors Bureau




Leigh Nixon, ACE
President and CEO
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce


Wes Rhea
Executive Director
Stockton Convention & Visitors Bureau





Maggie Ivy
Executive Vice President and CEO
Santa Cruz County Conference & Visitors Council



Wendy Peterson
Executive Director
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau




Alice Sullivan
President and CEO
Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce


Charise Hale McHugh, ACE
President and CEO
Half Moon Bay Coastside Chamber of Commerce




Laurel Brent-Bumb, ACE
Chief Executive Officer
El Dorado County Chamber
El Dorado County Joint Chambers Commission


Carol Chaplin
Executive Director
Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority



Joyce Donaldson
President and CEO
Indio Chamber of Commerce

Patrick Ellis
President and CEO
Murrieta Chamber of Commerce



Dee Way
Executive Director
Garberville Redway Area Chamber of Commerce

Scott Schneider
President and CEO
Visit Mendocino County, Inc.

