

PRESS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Divisions of Boating and Waterways, Historic Preservation and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation

For Immediate Release

April 17, 2020

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State Parks Reminds Californians to Not Congregate at Parks and Compromise Physical Distancing

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. – California State Parks reminds all Californians to exercise in their local neighborhoods, walk to parks, and postpone road trips to parks and beaches. More than ever, staying home is critical to the safety of individuals, families, communities and all who take care of parks during this COVID-19 pandemic.

As the days start warming up, more people will venture in the outdoors to exercise or simply seek respite from the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, during these trying times, many state parks and beaches have experienced visitation surges that make it impossible for the public to implement a safe, physical distance of 6 feet from others.

Vehicular Access at ALL 280 state parks and beaches is temporarily closed – meaning there are no parking facilities and parking on roadways is prohibited. Although some are open to local residents -- provided that they walk or bike into these public outdoor spaces and maintain proper physical distance from others -- congregating for long periods of time is not allowed. Additionally, if there are too many people at a park, beach or trail that does not allow for the required physical distancing, visitors are being asked to leave. The farther people stay away from each other, the faster this pandemic will end.

In Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties, all state parks and beaches are closed to vehicular access. Some parks are temporarily closed to all public access, including walk-ins.

Santa Cruz and San Mateo county parks fully closed to all public access at this time include the following:

Santa Cruz County *(Effective April 16 – May 3; Longer if deemed necessary)*

- Castle Rock State Park (SP)
- Big Basin Redwoods SP
- Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park

San Mateo County (Effective April 16 – May 3; Longer if deemed necessary)

- Bean Hollow State Beach (SB)
- Butano SP
- Portola Redwoods SP
- San Gregorio SB

Safety measures implemented (to date)

To date, State Parks has worked closely with local county and public health officials and implemented safety measures as appropriate. Some park units have temporarily fully closed, meaning all vehicular access, trails and restrooms within these parks are closed. It also has closed vehicular access at all parks statewide, including for off-highway vehicles and recreational boats; closed all campgrounds, museums and visitor centers; and cancelled all events. The closure list is available online at parks.ca.gov/FlattenTheCurve. This list is dynamic and will be updated with new information as it become available.

Continuous monitoring

As California continues to issue guidance on preparing and protecting Californians from COVID-19, State Parks is monitoring the situation closely and is following guidance provided by the [Governor's Office](#) via the [California Department of Public Health](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#).

The department is also working closely with local county and public health officials, and assessing park operations on a daily basis to provide access to healthy outdoor options while emphasizing the need for safe, physical distancing. State Parks understands that local agencies each have unique operational considerations and strategies. As such, the department is partnering with locals to align park operations and help the public understand and comply with directives from local public health authorities.

State Parks has developed a one-stop resource center – www.parks.ca.gov/FlattenTheCurve - to find park safety and closure information. Please check this webpage regularly, as it will be updated with new information as it becomes available.

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Subscribe to California State Parks News online at www.parks.ca.gov/news or click [here](#).

California State Parks and the recreational programs supported by its divisions of Boating and Waterways, Historic Preservation and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation provide the opportunity for families, friends, and communities to connect. Off-highway motor vehicle recreation, boating activities, horseback riding, cycling, hiking, camping, rock climbing, tours, hikes, school group enrichment, and special events are just some of the activities enjoyed in 280 park units organized into 21 field districts throughout the state. Learn more at www.parks.ca.gov.

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