

State Parks Permitted Uses

California Public Resources Code 5019.53.

State parks consist of relatively spacious areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archaeological, ecological, geological, or other similar values. The purpose of state parks shall be to preserve outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, indigenous aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora, and the most significant examples of ecological regions of California, such as the Sierra Nevada, northeast volcanic, great valley, coastal strip, Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains, southwest mountains and valleys, redwoods, foothills and low coastal mountains, and desert and desert mountains.

Each state park shall be managed as a composite whole in order to restore, protect, and maintain its native environmental complexes to the extent compatible with the primary purpose for which the park was established. Improvements undertaken within state parks shall be for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values for present and future generations.

Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities including, but not limited to, camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, and horseback riding, so long as those improvements involve no major modification of lands, forests, or waters. Improvements that do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks.

State parks may be established in the terrestrial or nonmarine aquatic (lake or stream) environments of the state.

California Public Resources Code 5001-5019.5 (Selected References)

“Qualified institutions and individuals shall be encouraged to conduct nondestructive forms of scientific investigation within state park system units, upon receiving prior approval of the director.” (CPRC 5001.65)

Motor vehicle use is “confined to paved areas and other areas specifically designated and maintained for normal ingress, egress, and parking.” (CPRC 5001.8)

When land is classified as a state park unit, a general plan is written which defines, among other things, proposed land uses. (CPRC 5002.2)

Hunting is not allowed in state parks. (CPRC 5003.1)