



# California State Parks Quick Facts



## The Future of California State Parks

### California State Parks Camping

- The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.
- The Department actively tracks trends in outdoor recreation and leisure travel, both on a national and a statewide basis, and conducts periodic user surveys to determine the needs and interests of park visitors. The *Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California* indicated that the following recreation opportunities were important to the public:
  - Camping in developed sites
  - Trail hiking
  - Nature study
  - Visiting museums or historic sites
  - Recreational walking
  - Visiting zoos or arboretums
  - Picnicking in developed sites
  - Use of open grass or turf areas
  - Camping in primitive sites
- This information helps direct the future of California State Parks.

### Parks' Connection to Tourism

- California State Parks provide a valuable and vital resource to both U.S. residents and travelers from other countries. According to the California Division of Tourism, 73 percent of travel by U.S. residents in California was for leisure purposes (2006). These travelers enjoyed the wide variety of leisure activities available in California, many of which can be found in California State Parks. Park-related activities and the numbers of leisure travelers who reported participating in them are as follows:

Activity	California Resident Leisure Travelers (% of people - stays)	Non-California Resident Leisure Travelers (% of person - stays)
Sightseeing	21	33
Beach/ Waterfront	8	17
Parks: Nat'l, State, etc.	5	10
Visit Historic Site	4	10
Hike, Bike, etc.	5	2
Nature/ Culture: Observe and Conserve; Eco-travel (Bird/Wildlife Watching)	3	3
Camping	2	1
Hunt, Fish, etc.	2	1
Boat/Sail	2	1



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- Overseas travelers also participate in park-related activities and are an important part of the California State Parks' visitor base.

Activity	Percentage of Overseas Travelers (2007)+
Visit Historical Places	34.8%
Visit National Parks	16.0%
Touring Countryside	14.1%
Watersports/ Sunbathing	9.5%
Environ./Eco. Excursions	5.3%
Camping/Hiking	1.1%

### Travel Dollars and State Parks

- On the average, each California county earns approximately \$1.5 billion per year in direct travel expenditures by visitors (2006). While it is not possible to tie all of these funds to specific drawing points in each county, it is a fact that California State Parks are vital to the economies of many communities.

### Transportation Modes

- The majority of leisure travelers in California use private vehicles for their trips. This is good news for California State Parks. The average distance traveled one-way by California residents on leisure trips is 165 miles, bringing many state park units within driving distance of urban centers. Also important to note is that 57% of leisure travel by California residents is for day trips, and 19% is for getaway weekends. California State Parks are convenient destinations for California residents for all types of leisure travel.

### Transportation Usage by Leisure Travelers in California

Point of Origin	Auto (net)*+	RV/Campers+
U.S. Residents	49%	1%
CA Residents	90%	1%
Total Overseas	71%	2%
Australia/New Zealand	54%	5%
United Kingdom	71%	2%
Japan	66%	1%
Mexico (air travelers)	85%	0.1%

\* Includes rented and private cars, trucks and small vans

+ Cited in 2007 from the Market Profile of Overseas and Mexican Visitors to California.

*Last updated 12/09/2009.*