

Have Your Meeting in a California State Park

Looking for a place to have an office retreat or large family get-together? Look no further than California State Parks. In a beautiful natural setting, you can have your meeting and enjoy the variety that state parks have to offer. Whether you are looking for woodlands, beach, river, desert or mountain terrain, you'll find the place for your meeting in a California State Park.

Here are some ideas:

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Fort Tejon State Historic Park, 70 miles northwest of Los Angeles off Highway I-5, has a group campsite that can accommodate up to 50 people and 35 vehicles. The site is available year round and reservations can be made by calling ReserveAmerica toll-free at (800) 444-7275.

Tapia Park, park of **Malibu Creek State Park**, four miles south of Highway 101 on Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road in Calabasas, has facilities for day-use meetings. There are 20 tables and barbecue grills and the area can host hundreds of people in the open space. Parking is available for 85 cars. Groups need to set up early in the morning of their event as there is no way to rope-off picnic areas in advance. For more information, email request to MalibuEvents@parks.ca.gov.

Danielson campground is in the middle of backcountry at **Point Mugu State Park**, 15 miles south of Oxnard on Highway One, offers facilities for a get together. For reservations, email request to MalibuEvents@parks.ca.gov. The campground can be reached on foot, bike or horse. Those wishing to drive in must be escorted by park staff, usually one trip in and one trip out.

Mount San Jacinto State Park, in Palm Springs, has the Culver Nichols Conference Room, perfect for meetings. AT 8,516 feet above the desert floor, the site offers views of the mountains and trees. The conference room is located just outside the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway's Mountain Station. The room has a maximum seating of 24. Located on another level is the Francis Crocker Banquet Room, which can seat up to 136 people. The room also features spectacular vistas. Lunch and dinner can be catered. For more information, contact the Tramway's Group Sales Department at (760) 325-1449 or by e-mail groupsales@pstramway.com for reservations.

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, east of San Diego via Highways 78 and 79, hosts retreats that including astronomy, archeology and environmentally-oriented programs. Meetings at the park have included sales and executive board meetings, team-building, and golf and tennis incentives. La Casa del Zorro Desert Resort, near the park, has been home base for the meetings. The resort features a 100-seat amphitheater as well as 7,600 square feet of meeting space, including the Zorro Conference Center. The resort has a new deck with a special climate control system that can be used for meetings as well. The 2,900 square foot conference center is designed to host groups of six to 55. It has a general session room and four breakout rooms and a reception lobby and business center. For more information, contact the resort at (800) 824-1884 or visit the website at www.lacasadeltorro.com The park webpage can be found at www.parks.ca.gov

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove is nestled along the shoreline of California's famed Monterey Peninsula. Designed by acclaimed architect Julia Morgan, the conference center harmonizes with its natural surroundings and has played host to thousands of visitors since its

founding in 1913. Rich with history, scenic beauty and serenity, Asilomar is the ideal location for group meetings, corporate retreats, weddings, family reunions and vacation getaways. The staff will custom design an itinerary to meet conference needs for guest rooms, meeting space, food and beverage, transportation, audio-visual services, ranger walks, campfire talks, dances, sporting tournaments and group recreational outings. For more information, call (831) 642-4222 or visit the website at www.visitasilomar.com

The **Marconi Conference Center**, on Highway 1, two miles south of Marshall, is on wooded hills overlooking scenic Tomales Bay in Marin County. The center preserves the historic site while the historic buildings await restoration. Most rooms have stunning views; all are smoke-free, with private baths and study desks. The lounge area provides games, books and film libraries, snacks and beverages for evening relaxation. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served buffet style. Some of the center's meeting spaces have bay views; others are in a peaceful forest setting. State of the art audio/visual and modern capabilities are available, and meeting facilities can be configured for casual or auditorium-type seating. Break-out rooms are within each meeting pavilion. The center's mailing address is Marconi Conference Center, P.O. Box 789, Marshall, CA 94940, phone (415) 663-9020.

On the San Mateo Coast, Point Montara at **Montara State Beach** (eight miles north of Half Moon Bay on Highway One) and **Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park** (seven miles south of Pescadero) have hostels operating where, especially during winter months, small companies could have retreats. For more information, visit the hostel website at www.hiusa.org/hostels Also, adjacent to **Año Nuevo State Reserve** (27 miles south of Half Moon Bay on Highway One), the Costanoa Resort can host retreats and meetings. For more information, visit the website at www.costanoa.com

The Big Sur Lodge at **Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park** (26 miles south of Carmel on Highway One) is an excellent place for retreats with lodging, a

conference room and restaurant. Groups can arrange to use the park's campfire and group picnic areas. The lodge phone number is (831) 667-3100 and website at www.bigsurlodge.com Group campsites are available from mid-June through October and reservations are required through Reserve America either by their toll-free phone number (800) 444-7279 or on-line at www.parks.ca.gov The sites allow up to 35 people per site and are walk in only (about 1/4 mile from the parking area).

Calaveras Big Trees (four miles north east of Arnold on Highway Four) features historic Jack Knight Hall, which hold up to 150 people. The adjacent campground could be used by participants who want to overnight in the park. Group picnic facilities behind the hall can provide a place to cook outdoors. The park phone number is (209) 795-2334.

California State Railroad Museum and Old Sacramento (in Old Sacramento) have facilities available for rental, including the museum's Roundhouse, Sierra Scene, Museum Theater, Stanford Gallery, 1849 Scene, Pony Express Park, Sacramento Southern Railroad Charters, Dinner Train and El Dorado. For more information call (916) 445-2560. The website is www.csrmf.org

Governor's Mansion State Historic Park (at the corner of 16th and H Streets in Sacramento) has rental facilities both inside (the Main Hallway, East Hallway and East Living Room) and outside the mansion (driveway, carriage house and pool area.) For more information call (916) 445-2560.

Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (located on L Street between 26th and 28th Street in Sacramento) has rental facilities at the park's inside yard, distillery, and outside the fort walls. For more information call (916) 445-2560.

Columbia State Historic Park (three miles north of Sonora off Highway 49) has limited meeting hall space in some of the buildings for small groups (up to 75 people) and the City & Fallon hotels provide overnight accommodations.

There are restaurants in the town and all do catering. The park phone number is (209) 532-0150.

The department's **Santa Cruz District** (which includes state parks in Santa Cruz and San Mateo Counties) has over 80 different venues for special events in the Santa Cruz area. Locations include beaches with facilities that can accommodate 100 to 250 participants, secluded stretches of sand that can handle no more than 10 or 20 people, mountain meadows with picnic ramadas for 80, old growth redwood amphitheaters seating 300, and riparian corridor picnic spots that can support 300 people with ease. Some locations have good parking areas and some have no parking at all. Not all of the Santa Cruz District's parks and beaches have approved special event areas. Only one special event is allowed on any day in any park in any sector and there are no buildings or completely enclosed structures; all venues are open-space. For more information, contact Craig S. Holden. Special Events Coordinator, Santa Cruz District: cholden@parks.ca.gov (831) 335-3455.

Grover Hot Springs State Park, three miles west of Markleeville on Hot Springs Road, is a great choice for a get-together because there's the added bonus of the park's hot springs pool and regular swimming pool for relaxation and entertainment. The park does not have a group camp, but has site-specific reservations, so a group could reserve several sites together. For reservations, call ReserveAmerica at (800) 444-7275 or on line at www.parks.ca.gov. The park phone number is (530) 694-2248.

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