

State of California - Natural Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION		MANUAL
DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE		Administration
No. 2010-03		CHAPTER
SUBJECT Social Media		DAM 0100 Public Relations
ISSUED	EXPIRES	REFERENCE
September 22, 2010	When Incorporated	IT Policy Letter 10-02

DPR 375 (Rev. 10/2001)(Word 6/25/2002)

WHEN APPLICABLE, ENTER THE NUMBER AND DATE OF THIS DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE IN THE MARGIN OF THE MANUAL PAGE, ADJACENT TO THE SECTION(S) AFFECTED BY IT.

This Departmental Notice (DN) provides policy, guidance and clarification of issues regarding the Department of Parks and Recreation's (Department) use of social media Web sites, including Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, blogs and other similar sites. Correct usage of these sites will establish a clear and consistent image for California State Parks. The policies in this DN apply to the entire Department, including its formal relationships with concessionaires and cooperating associations.

The policies and guidance in this DN are effective immediately.

A. LEGAL AUTHORITY

IT Policy Letter 10-02 assigns agency responsibility for the monitoring and management of social media sites to comply with State Administrative Manual (SAM) Section 5310 and Social Media Standards set by the State Information Management Manual (SIMM) Section 66B.

B. BACKGROUND

California's State Park System is recognized as the most geographically diverse and resource rich state park system in the nation. Accordingly, the Department has determined that clear and consistent messages are needed to communicate a unified image to current and prospective park visitors and to convey the diversity of our parks.

The Deputy Director of Communications is responsible for public information activities of the Department and directs the work of the Communications Office, through which news releases, and other public information materials are issued, and interviews with the news media are initiated. However, each employee shares in the responsibility for maintaining good public relations. The public's attitude toward the Department is often determined by personal contact with Department employees.

A new form of personal contact has come into being through the use of the Internet on social media sites. The Pew Research Center found that 75 percent of 18-29 year olds have created a profile on social media sites. Forester Research also discovered that four out of five online Americans are active in creating, participating in or reading some form of social content at least once a month.

The Social Media companies make it possible for every individual with access to the Internet to create a page and post messages for the public, as well as receive feedback from the public with the exchange completely anonymous on both sides.

In this new environment of communicating with our current and prospective visitors, it is critical that we continue to maintain a consistent image and ensure that we conduct ourselves online in the same professional manner that we do in person, in news releases and in news interviews. The policy is not intended to dampen enthusiasm. It simply provides workable and acceptable guidelines.

It differentiates California State Parks from other park and recreation providers, and helps promote park advocacy and consumer loyalty. When communicated consistently across all points of contact, the California State Parks brand will become familiar to consumers and motivate them to cherish, preserve and protect parks.

C. DEFINITIONS

Social Media is the various forms of communications, such as text, photos, and video posted to social Web sites that allow for interaction among individuals, groups and organizations in and around the content on the Web sites. Social media are primarily Internet and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. For government departments, it is another tool to communicate openly with the public.

Users are people who actively post messages, photos or videos on social media Web sites, including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia, blogs and other similar sites currently in existence and yet to be invented. At California State Parks, they are individuals who have the approval from a unit manager or superintendent to represent their park, division, office or other unit to the public and who are well informed of the statewide and Departmental social media policies and procedures. These include the *California State Parks Social Media Handbook*. This policy applies to permanent and seasonal employees, Department volunteers, student interns, and retired annuitants.

D. GENERAL POLICY

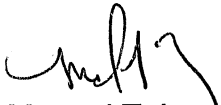
It is the Department's Social Media Policy to:

1. Communicate to current and prospective park visitors a unified and consistent messaging that maintains the Department's brand image on social media and social networking pages online.
2. Incorporate into park social media communications, the identified messages and conduct outlined in the *California State Parks Social Media Handbook*.
3. Protect the Department's messaging and brand image against unauthorized use, whether intentional or unintentional, by individuals or organizations, to the extent practicable.
4. Contractors, including Cooperating Associations and Concessionaires, are not permitted to utilize social media sites as official representatives of California State Parks or any unit within California State Parks.

SOCIAL MEDIA ELEMENTS

Because social media sites are a key point of consumer contact, policies for social media conduct should be followed by all divisions, units, individuals, involved in communicating with the public on social media sites on behalf of California State Parks. Incorporating the messaging correctly and consistently will create a strong, unified style and tone. See the *California State Parks Social Media Handbook* for specific usage guidelines. The handbook is posted on the Departmental Intranet in the Document Library. Hard copies can be requested from the Communications Office. Policies and guidelines concerning brand image (including 2007-02 and *Brand Standards Handbook*) are meant to work in tandem with the Social Media policy and guidelines and must be adhered to, as well as Department policy regarding the use of the Internet (DAM Chapter 1600).

Questions about social media can be directed to the Communications Office.



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