

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS
DISABLED ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC)

**Universal Access Award
Information**

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was established, providing comprehensive civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities in areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services and telecommunications.

Even before the passage of the ADA, the Department had been working to make its parks and programs accessible to all visitors. Extensive efforts began in the early 1980s when the Department created the Disabled Advisory Committee (DAC) comprised of persons with disabilities, including State Park employees, as well as members of the general public and advocates for accessibility issues. The Department has recognized the need for universal accessibility and has been a leader in our nation for the development and improvements for the disabled community.

The Universal Access Award represents efforts made by the Department for the removal of barriers for accessibility and increasing opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy and participate in the State Park System. It is to this end that the Universal Access Award recognizes outstanding achievements towards universal access.

Nominations will be reviewed by the DAC, Managers of the Human Rights Office, and the Accessibility Section to make the final selection. The award will be presented by the Director at a ceremony in the work location of the recipient(s). It is anticipated that it will be awarded during the month of October, which is officially designated as "National Disability Awareness Month."

The nominating criteria are as follows:

1. Recognizes employees, teams, volunteers, non-profit organizations, concessions for their outstanding achievements for people with disabilities.
2. Achievement completed within the last two years.
3. Increases opportunities for universal access.
4. Reflects the mission and goals of the Self-Evaluation Plan and the Transition Plan for Accessibility in 2003 and follows the Access to Park Guidelines and its replacement, the California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines 2009.
5. Completes the Nomination form.

* Note: Achievements completed by the Accessibility Construction Unit (ACU) or the Direct Construction Unit (DCU) by the State of California, although worthy of recognition, are not eligible for the award.

Nominations for the Universal Access Award should be submitted to the Human Rights Office, Department of Parks and Recreation. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Gary Nelson, DAC Chairperson, (209) 536-2915 or Manager, Human Rights Office, at (916) 653-9990.