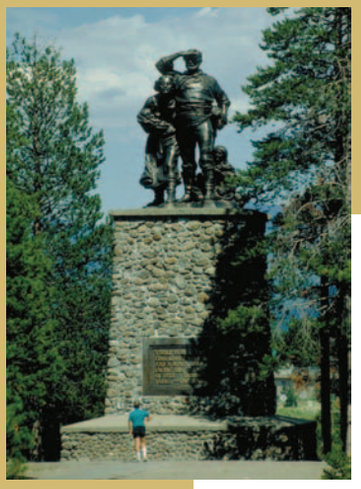

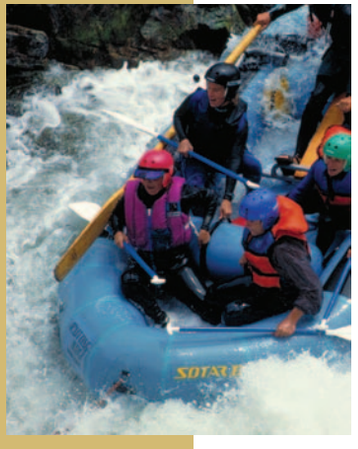

Park and Recreation Trends in California

2005

State of California
Resources Agency

AN ELEMENT OF THE CALIFORNIA OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANNING PROGRAM

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Date: *May 13, 2005*

Subject: *Park and Recreation Trends in California*

There can be little question that Californians have a love affair with the great outdoors. Their pursuit of high-quality outdoor recreation experiences is unrelenting. As urbanized as the state has become, Californians still think of themselves as active, dynamic, out-of-doors people. With a mild climate, long coastline, spectacular scenery, and highly diverse landscapes, Californians are blessed with outdoor recreation activities that are varied and numerous. From neighborhood playgrounds to national icons, Californians have many parks, recreation areas, programs, and services from which to choose. By no means, though, should this harmonious situation cause service providers or decision makers to be complacent. As noted in this report, changes in the size and structure of California's population, changing participation patterns, and shifts in recreation styles and preferences will have a dramatic effect on the adequacy of existing park and recreation services.

This report examines the trends affecting parks, recreation areas, programs, and services. By understanding these trends, providers can conduct needs assessments, analyze market demands and niches, and identify programs that are likely to be successful. Understanding the likely direction of these trends will enable providers to adjust to the types and kinds of park and outdoor recreation settings that are needed, the facilities and programs that will likely be supported, and the appropriate levels of services to be provided. Ultimately, understanding current and future trends allows service providers to better position their activities to respond to market changes and to secure greater support.

Dr. Emilyn Sheffield, Chairperson of the Department of Recreation and Parks Management at California State University, Chico prepared this report. Dr. Sheffield is widely recognized as one of California's preeminent park and recreation futurists. Staff in the California State Parks Planning Division contributed to the development of the report. The report is presented as a part of State Parks' ongoing support to service providers.

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Park and Recreation Trends in California

Introduction

Californians have a long-running love affair with the great outdoors. From neighborhood parks to national icons, they can select from hundreds of parks and public lands and thousands of outdoor recreation experiences. But growth is looming large in California with the population aging and becoming more diverse. The impact of these trends on outdoor recreation is the subject of this report.

Population–The Driving Force

Changes in the size and composition of California's population, more than anything else, will drive the impacts on the delivery of park and recreation services in the coming years. Since gold was discovered in 1848, sparking the greatest peacetime migration in history, California has been growing rapidly. In the first 150 years of statehood, California grew from fewer than 100,000 citizens in 1850 to almost 34 million in 2000.[1] Between 1950 and 2000 alone, California's population increased by 200%.[2] Currently, one in eight U.S. residents calls California home. If California continues to add nearly 500,000 persons each year, by 2012, the population could easily exceed 40 million. The 50-million mark will be passed sometime between 2030 and 2040 if current growth rates persist.[3]

Changes in the size and composition of California's population, more than anything else, will drive the impacts on the delivery of park and recreation services in the coming years.

Population and Demographic Trends to Watch

An understanding of trends and their most likely implications is essential as the population increases and the rate of demographic change accelerates. Park and recreation professionals are working hard to respond to changes in patterns of population growth and changing recreation activities and preferences. Understanding the most likely direction of change may enable providers to position their services and respond more quickly to market changes.

The interactions of several changes will have dramatic impacts on California recreation and park service providers:

- California's population will approach 50 million before 2040.
- California's population is becoming more culturally and racially diverse.
- California's senior population will double by 2020.
- California's baby boomers are approaching retirement age.
- California's 18–40 year-old young adults are creating new ways to experience the great outdoors.
- California's K–12 children will accelerate the rate of change.

Lands not acquired now may be unavailable or prohibitively costly in the near future.

California's population will approach 50 million before 2040.

California is projected to add between 425,000 and 525,000 persons annually through 2030.[4] For comparison, this is like adding a city about the size of Sacramento every year. Sometime between 2030 and 2040, California is projected to have more than 50 million residents. Compared to the 2000 census figures, this increase represents an additional 16 million people or the current population of California's three largest counties: Los Angeles, San Diego, and Orange. Providing housing, jobs, roads, and other public infrastructure for this growth will make land more scarce and costly. It will also impact open spaces and natural resources, especially near urban areas. The expanding transportation infrastructure, particularly for mass transit and freeways, will be challenging and expensive. Californians prefer to travel in their personal vehicles and their equally entrenched commitment to solo commuting remains unchanged despite increasing travel times and crowded roadways. Lands not acquired now may be unavailable or prohibitively costly in the near future. With this level of growth, even activities with static or declining rates of participation will grow in absolute terms because there will be more Californians to participate.

California's population is becoming more culturally and racially diverse.

Part of California's complexity lies in the diversity of its population. California, currently 12% of the entire U.S. population, is also home to varying percentages of the total U.S. population of several racial and ethnic groups:[5]

- 36.1% of the U.S. Asian American population
- 31.1% of the U.S. Hispanic or Latino population
- 29.3% of U.S. Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders
- 23.6% of all persons choosing "Two or More" races in the 2000 census
- 13.5% of the U.S. American Indian/Alaska Native population
- 9.5% of the U.S. White population
- 6.5% of the U.S. Black population

The proportions of California's ethnic and racial groups will continue to change through 2020 and beyond. California's Hispanic population is projected to comprise 43% of the state's population by 2030.[6] Between 2000 and 2020, population increases are projected for several racial and ethnic groups:[7]

- A 58% increase in Hispanics
- A 55% increase in Asian/Pacific Islanders
- A 29% increase in Native Americans
- A 20% increase in African Americans
- A 4% increase in persons of European descent

Another important element of California's rich racial and ethnic diversity involves the country of birth. California leads the nation in the number of foreign-born people living in the state. Nationally, 11% were born outside the United States; in California, that percentage climbs to 26%. More than 50% of California's foreign-born came from Mexico and 33% came from Asian countries.[9] A remarkable 37% of California's foreign-born have arrived since 1990, making California a large and important center for recent immigrants.[10] Many of these recent immigrants have limited experience with the ready availability of outdoor recreation and public lands. Ways to encourage Californians to become users of and advocates for parks and recreation should be developed.

"Diversity marks our state population and immigration shapes our state".[8]

A remarkable 37% of California's foreign-born have arrived since 1990, making California a large and important center for recent immigrants.[11]

California's senior population will double by 2020. California's senior population, those 60 and older, will "increase by 112% during the period between 1990 and 2020."[12] More than half of California's counties, many in central and southern California, will see their senior populations double.[13] The oldest, those 85 and older, will increase at an even faster rate. From 2030 to 2040, as the baby boomers begin reaching 85 years of age, the influence of these elders will be its strongest.[14] With additional California seniors will come the need for more senior programs and facilities. Additional mobility enhancements will be needed to ensure their independence and access to outdoor experiences.

The increase in senior adults is being fueled, in part, by baby boomers approaching retirement. These boomers will transform aging and the meaning of social services for senior adults. Generally healthier and more active than any previous generation of seniors, these elders will continue seeking engaging outdoor recreation experiences.

California's baby boomers are approaching retirement age. Every institution has been influenced by the generation known as the baby boom. The leading edge of California's baby boom is nearing 60, and the trailing edge of this group turned 40 in 2004. This, the largest generation ever, is fast approaching its golden years with an appetite for adventure and an aversion to slowing down. For California boomers, the outdoors has been an important extension of the California lifestyle, and they are likely to carry this attitude forward into retirement. The older portion of the baby boom is anticipating a satisfying and experience-filled leisure lifestyle. With children starting careers or college, their trailing counterparts are approaching their prime years in terms of workforce and political involvement. This generation, born and bred in prosperity, is looking for an amenity-rich and meaningful outdoor recreation experience, increasing the need for programs, facilities, and infrastructure. Boomer seniors will be drawn to conservation and heritage causes, adding much-needed capacity to California's citizen-steward ranks. They will travel extensively and participate in

record numbers in second-home and RV ownership. They will assemble vast collections of digital equipment and motorized and mechanized outdoor recreation gear.

California's 18–40 year-old young adults are creating new ways to experience the great outdoors. The self-reliant young adults who ushered in the digital revolution continue to probe its frontier. Technologically fluent and well educated, these young professionals are comfortable with change and cultural diversity. They are well attuned to the global nature of life in the 21st century. Electing to marry later or not at all, and postponing children and home purchases, many are enjoying an extended period of freedom from many of the traditional rites of passage. Consequently, they are remaining friend and group oriented longer than their predecessors. Fun, broadly defined, is essential. In terms of recreation and leisure, they view travel as a right and often seek experiences rather than acquisitions. Into extreme sports and adventure recreation, these young adults are constantly on the move and looking for the next source of excitement. They came of age during the digital revolution and during a period of rapid expansion of muscle-powered outdoor recreation (e.g., mountain biking, kayaking). Attuned to the rapid speed of change, many of their leisure choices involve technology. Seeking a balance between work and leisure, they generally choose recreation that involves day-trips and often includes multiple activities in one excursion. New and better equipment enables them to go farther more quickly than ever before.

Baby boomers, born and bred in prosperity, are looking for an amenity-rich and meaningful outdoor recreation experience, increasing the need for programs, facilities, and infrastructure.

California's K–12 children will accelerate the rate of change. Almost 40% of California's households include children under the age of 18. The annual number of incoming school-aged children has remained fairly steady, except for an increase in the early 1990s that is now bolstering middle school enrollments and increasing the need for after-school child care programs. These younger Californians are more ethnically and culturally diverse than any of their predecessors, further accelerating the rate of change in the state. Today's youth are the most urban of any generation. Nearly three-fourths of California's elementary and secondary students live in only 10 of California's 58 counties. Five southern California counties have 56% of all K–12 school-aged children. Riverside County has the distinction of being one of the largest K–12 counties in terms of enrollment as well as one of the fastest growing. San Benito, Placer, and Madera counties are three other California counties with fast-growing enrollments.[15]

While there are certainly more recreation and leisure alternatives available to today's youth than ever before, many are sedentary or solitary in nature. For the social and heath-related benefits of outdoor recreation to accrue for these generations of children and youth, access to outdoor recreation must be available and involvement modeled and encouraged. Where K–12 enrollments are robust, there will be

increasing need for outdoor recreation facilities and programs to ensure that new generations have access to and skills for enriching outdoor recreation experiences.

Demographic projections suggest large increases at either end of the lifespan, with many new Californians from immigration and births, and an increasing number of older Californians. Families with children, youth, and senior adults are large markets for park and recreation service providers, so increases in these segments of the population will increase demand for recreation and leisure services. These important user groups will grow throughout the state but will be concentrated in the urban areas of southern and central California.

The Good Life–California's Outdoor Recreation Lifestyle

Outdoor recreation is as much a part of California as the coastline, forests, valleys, lakes, rivers, and mountains that shape the state. To ensure the best possible match between the demand for outdoor recreation and the supply of outdoor recreation opportunities, many well-designed studies to chart California's outdoor recreation patterns and preferences through the years have been commissioned. The most recent, *Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California–2002: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan*, provides an important snapshot of contemporary outdoor recreation in California.[16] Other datasets include additional information about recreation in California and the western United States. From this body of research, an outdoor recreation profile for California emerges with these key elements:

- Californians are avid and active outdoor recreation enthusiasts.
- Californians look to their outdoor recreation pursuits for relaxation and natural values.
- Californians differ in their participation patterns and outdoor recreation styles.
- Californians are using advances in technology and transportation to expand their outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Californians will continue their love affair with the great outdoors into the foreseeable future.

Californians are avid and active outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Californians are active outdoor enthusiasts with 65.5% to 92% reporting participation in the most popular outdoor recreation activities. In 2002, the top 10 adult or family outdoor activities were walking, driving for pleasure, visiting historic sites, attending cultural events, beach/pool activities, visiting museums, picnicking at developed sites, wildlife viewing, trail hiking, and using open turf areas. Annually, average participation days ranged from more than 100 for walking to about 7.5 for visiting museums.[17]

California's youth reported similar outdoor recreation involvement, albeit with increased participation in water-related recreation. They reported walking for fun and fitness most often and engaged in walking more often than any other outdoor recreation activity. The next three most common outdoor recreation activities were all water related: pool swimming, visiting water sites, and beach activities.

Rounding out the top ten youth outdoor recreation activities were visiting outdoor nature centers, outdoor cultural events, and historic/cultural sites, followed by picnicking, biking on paved surfaces, and playing on open turf areas. Due to the small sample size, these data are best interpreted as trend data, but they indicate areas of interest and possible future growth.[18]

Typically, these favored outdoor recreation activities do not require specialized equipment or training and are available at low cost throughout the year. Some require a sizeable investment of public resources in terms of facilities and public safety. If the number of participants and the number of times they participate are measures of popularity, the most popular outdoor recreation activities for Californians and California youth appear in the box below:[19]

All Californians	California Youth
Walking for fun/fitness	Walking for fun/fitness
Driving for pleasure	Pool swimming
Wildlife viewing	Beaches, surf play
Trail hiking	Visiting non-beach water sites
Using open turf areas	Bicycling on paved surfaces
Pool swimming, beach activities	Using open turf areas

The vast majority of Californians visit parks and public lands. When asked to compare their 1997 and 2002 levels of outdoor recreation involvement, most reported equal or greater amounts of time devoted to outdoor recreation. When respondents reported less involvement in outdoor recreation activities, work schedule was the most frequently mentioned barrier. Most of the factors that led to decreased participation were beyond the managerial control of park and recreation agencies.[20] The most commonly reported barriers that could be controlled by agencies were security and facilities related. Some respondents reported reducing their levels of participation due to safety concerns and the lack of facilities specific to their interests.

Californians look to their outdoor recreation pursuits for relaxation and natural values. Public park and recreation programs, facilities, and lands play an important role in connecting people to nature and to each other. As part of the 2002 Public Attitudes and Opinions Survey, Californians were asked to identify the primary benefits and values of their outdoor

recreation experiences. More than 50% of the respondents identified these factors as very important to their enjoyment of outdoor recreation:[21]

- Being able to relax
- Feeling safe and secure
- Being in the outdoors
- The beauty of the area
- Getting away from crowded situations
- Releasing or reducing tension
- The quality of the natural setting
- Being with family and friends
- Doing something that children enjoy
- Having a change from the daily routine
- Keeping fit and healthy

Being able to relax in a safe and secure outdoor setting and enjoying the beauty of an area are the top factors that lead to outdoor recreation enjoyment.[22]

Californians differ in their participation patterns and outdoor recreation styles. Despite the generally positive status of outdoor recreation as part of the California lifestyle, not all Californians are involved in outdoor recreation to the same degree. Until recently, the concepts of race, ethnicity, and immigration status were seldom the subject of outdoor recreation research. When these variables have been investigated, there appear to be ethnic and racial differences in both outdoor recreation participation and outdoor recreation style. While it is beyond the scope of this brief report to present an exhaustive summary, Myron Floyd's review of 40 years of research across all levels of outdoor recreation identifies several consistencies:[23]

- Non-Hispanic whites are consistently over represented in most types of outdoor recreation, and African Americans are consistently the most under represented of all ethnic and racial groups in outdoor recreation.
- Racial and ethnic variation in outdoor recreation exists, although the variation is much less pronounced at the local level, in highly developed outdoor recreation settings, and for high-volume outdoor recreation pursuits like picnicking, sightseeing, and walking.

Floyd concludes that differences in outdoor recreation involvement may stem from cultural norms and values, as well as socio-economic status. He notes, though, that the role of discrimination has not been systematically addressed in the research.[24]

Hispanics, due to their rapid growth in California, will greatly influence recreation participation patterns.[25] For most measures, Hispanic respondents were more similar than different from non-Hispanic respondents in the 2002 Public Opinions and Attitudes Survey. But in several important areas, their responses were statistically different from the non-Hispanic respondents. Hispanics were far more likely to report

that they did not feel safe using outdoor parks. They were more likely to think that local parks were needed near them or in urban areas and that more lakeside recreation areas were needed. Hispanic respondents were more supportive of buying more parkland and open space for recreation purposes. Finally, activities that a significanly larger percentage of Hispanics said they would do more often if opportunities were available, and for which they would support government spending, included walking for fitness and fun, driving for pleasure, and field sports (e.g., soccer, football, rugby, softball, and baseball).[26]

While there are clearly racial and ethnic differences in outdoor recreation involvement, it is important to remember that there is also tremendous variation within groups. Further, there are high levels of involvement in many outdoor recreation activities by all Californians. Also, as Deborah J. Chavez points out, low frequency of involvement does not mean low intensity of involvement.[27] Outdoor recreation opportunities are important to millions of Californians.

Understanding recreation style, or how people recreate outdoors, rather than percentage of involvement, enables recreation planners and policymakers to more effectively serve people who do come to outdoor recreation sites. California's large and growing Hispanic population has been the focus of most of the recreation-style research conducted in California.

Ten years of research of the southern California wildlands managed by the USDA Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management[28] and the most recent Public Opinions and Attitudes Survey[29] confirm the following features of Hispanic outdoor recreationists.

Hispanic outdoor recreation participants often

- prefer to recreate in larger groups and prefer forested sites with water features and amenities to support a day-long, extended-family social outing with extensive on-site meal preparation;
- are interested in an outdoor experience with a strong social recreation component, such as facilities and programs that involve families, programs for children and youth, and family-oriented entertainment events and festivals;
- identify stress relief and having a good family experience as the most important features of a satisfying outdoor recreation excursion;
- enjoy picnicking, day hiking, camping, and large family gatherings in outdoor settings;

- respond to interpersonal communication from multilingual and culturally diverse staff.

Only a few studies have investigated the outdoor recreation patterns and preferences of immigrants. Most have focused on cultural assimilation or the degree to which immigrants adopt the patterns of the dominant culture. Floyd summarizes some of the trend findings as follows:[30]

- First generation immigrants are more likely to recreate with immediate and extended family groups; second and subsequent generations are more likely to recreate in friendship rather than kinship groups.
- For immigrants, recreation appears to preserve cultural heritage and traditions.
- For Hispanics, the emphasis on family endures, with many Hispanic respondents continuing to retain traditional Hispanic family values regardless of how long they have lived in the United States.

Many Hispanic outdoor recreationists continue to retain traditional Hispanic family values regardless of how long they have lived in the United States.

For many natural resource agencies, outdoor recreation is an important, but by no means singular, agency goal. In an era of well-documented needs and preferences and declining resources, increasing numbers and greater variation will challenge planners and managers to serve people's needs while maintaining consistency with the mission and goals of the agency. As the diversity and size of California's population increases and the urban-wildland interface expands, it will become even more important to understand similarities and differences in outdoor recreation participation and style, and the associated implications for planning outdoor recreation sites and facilities.

Californians are using advances in technology and transportation to expand their outdoor recreation opportunities. Californians love personal vehicles and outdoor recreation gear. They use both to expand their outdoor recreation opportunities. California's expansive road system provides access to far-flung destinations, and vehicles of every imaginable size and shape routinely hit the road in search of scenic vistas or active adventures. Once Californians arrive at their destinations, they set off on muscle-powered, mechanized, or motorized outdoor recreation equipment for further adventures and exploration. All-terrain equipment and navigational aids (e.g., Global Positioning System units, customized digital mapping software, and cellular phones) allow more people to go farther faster than ever before. All this equipment-aided outdoor recreation is costly to the consumer and to service providers. Though pursued in natural places, mechanized and motorized outdoor recreation, in particular, require infrastructure in the form of trails and staging areas. They also require a different style of management for visitor safety, noise, user conflicts, and environmental disturbance. This is a growing area of outdoor recreation and a cause of user conflict and managerial concern.

Californians also pioneered the digital revolution that brought personal computers and the Internet within the reach of millions of Californians in their homes, gathering places, or worksites. California led the way on information delivered via the Web. In the relatively short decade since the widespread availability of the Internet, almost all outdoor recreation providers have added an Internet component to their communication and information efforts. The Internet has increased access to information about opportunities for outdoor recreation. Information, in much greater detail than previously imaginable, is now available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. People make virtual visits to public lands and purchase maps, books, and information materials via the Web. New forms of outdoor recreation will be created, enabled, or promoted to communities of interest that know no geographic boundaries via the Internet. Geocaching, a high-tech adventure game that uses GPS technology and clues to locate hidden objects, is merely one of many such innovative mergers of the Internet and outdoor recreation.

Public land management has become highly visible through the Internet. Consequently, more people are learning about and commenting on outdoor recreation concerns on public lands. Managerial documents are posted for public review and comment. Far-flung digital communities are augmenting face-to-face interactions with local interests. With the speed of an Email, advocacy groups are mobilized, and information is circulated in expanding, loosely knit circles. Combined, these forces make public land management more visible as they increase and accelerate the expectations of the public.

Californians will continue their love affair with the great outdoors into the foreseeable future. Based on demographic changes and recent participation patterns, it is likely that Californians will continue their outdoor recreation involvement into the foreseeable future, albeit in some new and different ways. Mostly, though, the short-range future of five to seven years will be more similar than different from the immediate past.

Some outdoor recreation activities, already enjoyed by millions of Californians, are likely to increase along with the state's population. These activities can be enjoyed with minimal equipment. Many have a strong social recreation aspect, and the entire family can participate. Further, in most, participants of widely ranging skill levels or interests can find satisfaction in their pursuits. Even those with flat or slightly negative changes in the percentage of participants will grow due to increases in California's population. Look for these perennial favorites to continue to dominate the future of outdoor recreation:

- Walking
- Picnicking and family gatherings in the outdoors
- Swimming (e.g., pools, lakes, streams)
- Developed camping
- Visiting beaches
- Sightseeing
- Outdoor sports events and concerts
- Visiting nature centers and historic sites

Other forms of outdoor recreation in California bear watching because they are growing quickly and already have millions of enthusiasts. If growth rates continue, day hiking, bicycling (including mountain biking), running, and wildlife viewing may join the list of perennial favorites as the mega-outdoor recreation activities of California.

The outlook for other forms of outdoor recreation is also bright. Many of these activities are high cost, very specialized, or require specialized settings for participation. Despite these logistical challenges, they still inspire passionate participation. They also bear watching because some are fairly new forms of outdoor recreation, and their staying power and sustainability have yet to be determined. They are presented in alphabetical order due to varying participation figures and rates of growth that make other listing strategies potentially misleading:[31]

- Backpacking
- Canoeing
- Caving
- Cold-water fishing
- Football
- Golf
- Horseback riding
- Kayaking
- Mountain climbing
- Off-road driving
- Outdoor handball/racquetball
- Outdoor ice-skating
- Outdoor tennis
- Personal watercraft
- Salt-water fishing
- Snowboarding
- Snowmobiling
- Soccer

Outdoor recreation stalwarts like walking, picnicking, family gatherings, visiting nature centers, attending outdoor concerts, developed camping, and swimming will continue to be the major types of outdoor recreation into the future.

needs of new and emerging users and user groups. Many of these new groups are very highly organized, though their overall participant numbers are much smaller than the outdoor recreation stalwarts. Further, these new groups seem more likely to define themselves in terms of their outdoor recreation pursuits. They want access to a finite and increasingly scarce supply of outdoor recreation opportunities, and their chosen forms of outdoor recreation are often perceived to be in conflict with the perceptions of existing users or leisure service managers. Managing demand and resolving conflicts will be an ever-increasing component of our jobs.

Despite changes, several constants remain. There is an enduring connection between humans and natural environments. In today's fast-paced and technology-aided society, this longing expresses itself as a desire to find a change of pace and a place to refresh, recharge, and renew. But we are social creatures, and there is also a desire to be with friends and family. And so we flock to parks and public places with the two things we cherish most–our loved ones and our free time. Despite great variation in the ways that people seek to interact with each other in natural environments, their reasons for doing so are remarkably uniform. When asked, people consistently report that they seek outdoor recreation experiences to have fun, relax, and be with family and friends. They want to experience nature, get exercise, reduce stress, and enjoy better health. So while people have more choices for and more diverse styles of outdoor recreation, the benefits they seek are fundamentally unchanged. That means that we, as professionals, can focus our attention on how their respective definitions of fun, relaxation, and family are being expanded or redefined and adjust our systems and processes to continue to facilitate their desired outcomes.

Consequently, we need to keep recreation family friendly, but define family more broadly. As leisure service providers, we increasingly facilitate the "threshold experiences" for youth in sports and outdoor recreation through leagues, clubs, events, and organizations. It is essential for us to ensure equitable access to these important systems so that youth and young adults have opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in outdoor recreation safely and with a high degree of satisfaction.

Leisure service providers can best influence a positive future for California by being means to good ends and by using our collective ability to facilitate these desired "ends" through public lands. While

Opportunities to connect with loved ones, celebrate our heritage, reconnect with nature, and engage in physically active recreation abound as do opportunities for less physically demanding but equally important spiritual and artistic forms of individual and cultural expression.

there are innumerable "good ends" from which to select, three–healthy environments, healthy citizens, and healthy societies–will have the greatest impact on all Californians.

The most readily achievable "good end" is a healthy environment. The health of the land, air, and water that sustain us will be a primary issue in coming years as the population continues to increase. Clean water flows from and is filtered by public lands and open space. Trees and other vegetation help cleanse the air. Wildlife need habitat and corridors to keep their populations strong. Public parks and lands make essential contributions to environmental health.

A healthy citizenry is another "good end" of public lands. Opportunities to connect with loved ones, celebrate our heritage, reconnect with nature, and engage in physically active recreation abound as do opportunities for less physically demanding but equally important spiritual and artistic forms of individual and cultural expression.

The last category, healthy society, is a less apparent "good end" and merits a note of explanation. In an age that is increasingly fragmented, segmented, and encouraged to view itself and its members in terms of isolation, our civic spaces, systems, and programs must mold a common good from an increasingly diverse citizenry. Leisure service professionals have many important contributions to make to the essential end of a healthy society. Perhaps the most important is to provide a support system for the renewal of civic engagement and volunteerism.

Collectively the park and recreation professionals of California are stewards of rich and varied natural and cultural resources. They are the custodians of cherished places that are visually spectacular, economically vital, ecologically critical, culturally significant, recreationally active and emotionally profound–the places of the heart and spirit that define our highest aspirations and values.

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