

**MEDIA ALERT**

August 10, 2020

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**Parks California Launches Free Virtual Guided Tours Highlighting Behind-the-Scenes Access to Three California State Parks**

- *Parks featured in the initial three events span Northern California Redwoods to San Diego Desert*
- *Expert speakers will share little-known facts and timely stories from each park in focus*

**WHAT:**

California's 280 state parks offer a rich history that can provide much more to their visitors beyond the benefits of experiencing nature. With its new virtual series, [ParkSpeak](#), Parks California hopes to connect community members across the state with a guided, behind-the-scenes tour exploring the histories and ongoing efforts within three geographically dispersed state parks.

Parks California, a statewide nonprofit with a mission to strengthen state parks and inspire all to experience them, created ParkSpeak to amplify important work happening between the California State Parks department, regional staff and local partners to enhance the park experience, provide equitable park access to youth and restore connections between tribal communities and their native lands, among other noteworthy collaborations.

**WHY:**

California's state parks are as diverse as its people. The dispersed locations and distinct makeup of each park tends to attract local stakeholders who care deeply for their local state park. With this regional caretaking approach, the extraordinary partnerships and collaborations that could offer benefits to the larger park system can get lost at the local level. Parks California aims to shed light on these collaborations and special projects to lift the stories beyond park borders and highlight the caring, thoughtful approach required to protect and evolve so many special places statewide.

**EVENTS:**

- Patrick's Point State Park - Thursday, August 13, 6 p.m.  
Sumeg Village in Patrick's Point State Park is an important location for the Yurok Tribe. Hear how this partnership has engaged in restorative justice.
  - Victor Bjelajac, North Coast Redwoods District Superintendent
  - Skip Lowry, North Coast Redwoods District Interpreter & Yurok/Mountain Maidu/Pit River Descendant
- La Purisima Mission State Historic Park - Thursday, September 24, 6 p.m.  
Where early California meets the digital age - learn from La Purisima Mission State Historic Park staff as they share the history of this special place.
  - Greg Martin, Channel Coast District Superintendent
  - Ann Boggess, La Purisima Mission State Historic Park Interpreter

- Anza Borrego Desert State Park®, Thursday, October 15, 5 p.m.  
The partnership between Anza Borrego Desert State Park® and the Anza Borrego Foundation is increasing equitable access for youth. Join us to learn more about their efforts.
  - Ray Lennox, District Superintendent Acting, Colorado Desert District
  - Bri Fordem, Anza-Borrego Foundation Executive Director
  - Sally Theriault, State Park Interpreter II, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®
  - Lydia Stinson, State Park Interpreter I, Colorado Desert District

**QUOTES:**

**Kindley Walsh Lawlor, President and CEO, Parks California**

“Parks California and the ParkSpeak series are raising awareness of California’s state parks by exploring the authentic stories, histories and projects of each. When more people understand what’s happening in their parks, they are more likely to feel connected to, enjoy and care for these important places.”

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- **Organization:** Parks California
- **Links to use in your story:** [Parkscaifornia.org/parkspeak](https://parkscaifornia.org/parkspeak)