




RANGERS  
OF CALIFORNIA'S  
STATE PARKS

*By Michael G. Lynch*



Over 125 Years  
of Park Protection and Service

# California State Parks

## RANGER ANNIVERSARY 125 YEARS

"RANGER" — not merely a job description or title, but much more. It is the personification of an ideal, a dedication to public service, a tradition which evokes positive feelings. A friend, a guardian, an ally, a person who is expected to be knowledgeable, helpful, courteous, and professional. One who is genuinely committed to helping the park visitor achieve a wholesome, safe, and rewarding outdoor experience.



1866

1991



1911



1946



## RANGERS

The appointment of the first park ranger stemmed directly from an action of President Abraham Lincoln in 1864.

During the height of the Civil War, Lincoln signed a bill granting Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Redwoods to the State of California, setting aside California's and America's first great-out-of-doors park. Eight years later Yellowstone would be similarly set aside as the first official National Park.

Within two years, the State had set up a Commission to manage Yosemite, and on May 21, 1866, Galen Clark was officially appointed "Guardian" or ranger of the state park. Knowledgeable, courteous, and conscientious, Clark, who would serve a total of 22 years and in later life be known as "Mr. Yosemite," was the first and almost ideal model of a park ranger. Seven others would serve as State Guardians of Yosemite until the Valley's return to the U.S. Government in 1906 when it became part of the larger Yosemite National Park.

The Yosemite Guardians were just the beginning of the little known history of the men and women who have protected, administered and served the public in California's parks for over 125 years.

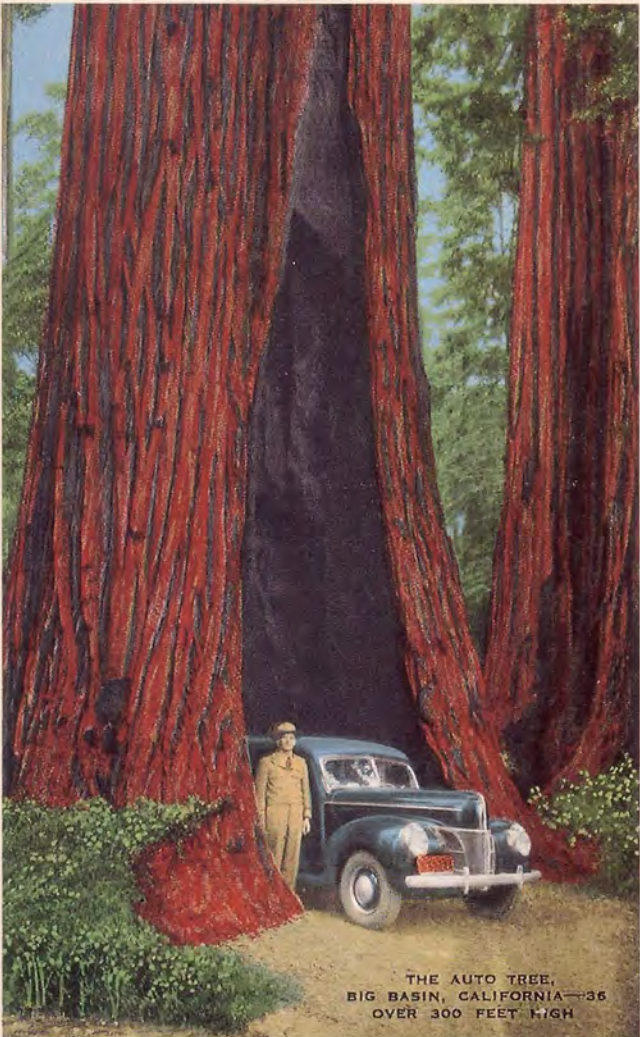
This book chronicles, in photos and words, the fascinating accomplishments and history of California's state park rangers, who have earned the reputation as dedicated helpers, hosts, educators and protectors in our parks.

*Front Cover: Galen Clark, the first park ranger, on patrol near Nevada Falls, when Yosemite was a state park.*

*Inside Front Cover: From a hand colored post card, Ranger Leo Fry and his patrol car, circa 1935, at Big Basin State Park. Title Page: Assistant Warden Joseph Park (1914-1934), behind the wheel of his patrol car, at the entrance to the California Redwood Park, circa 1925.*



*Right: Ranger Leo Fry and his patrol vehicle, circa 1936, from a hand colored postcard. Above: The original photo used to make the card. It was taken by Big Basin Park photographer Roy Fulmer. Below: Another Ranger Fry postcard popular in the 1930s and 40s.*



THE AUTO TREE,  
BIG BASIN, CALIFORNIA—36  
OVER 300 FEET HIGH



"AUTO TREE" 335 FEET HIGH,  
BIG BASIN, CALIFORNIA—43







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# FORWARD

This book is the final project of the California State Park Ranger 125th Anniversary, celebrated in 1991. The idea of an anniversary celebration came from my interest in those who had preceded me in the ranger profession. While researching insignia history in 1989, I realized that California state park ranger history stretched back continuously to 1866. As Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr. had noted in his 1980 book *State Parks of California*, Galen Clark, appointed State Guardian of Yosemite Valley (then a state park) in 1866, was “in effect, the first California state park ranger.” A quick calculation confirmed that 1991 would be the 125th anniversary of state park rangers in California.

The State Park Peace Officers Association of California and the California State Park Rangers Association, both actively supported the idea of commemorating the rangers’ 125-year contribution. Acceptance of the idea by the Department of Parks and Recreation followed and then came official recognition by the State Legislature, the Governor, Lt. Governor and various other organizations.

Consequently, the Ranger 125th Anniversary took place in 1991. It was a year of events, displays, articles, and publicizing, culminated by a major conference, all of which highlighted the “Year of the Ranger.” Many projects regarding the anniversary were

undertaken. These included a “day-in-the-life” photo contest, a special U.S. Postal stamp cancellation, a free day for the public in the original parks, and a professionally produced 30 minute ranger history video. Additionally, many ranger artifacts, old and new, were collected and a large photograph and slide library was established. Finally, enough donations were gathered to fund this publication.

Writing a book on state park ranger history was one of my personal goals. Rangers were well known and appreciated by the public, but there was no written ranger history and I wanted to fill in this gap.

I started research and work on the manuscript in 1990 and everything proceeded fairly well until the 1991 Ranger Anniversary events demanded most of my time and attention. By 1992, most of the

text was completed in draft form, however, a subtle form of writers’ block crept in. It took a year to realize the chilling fact that I had many times more good material than I could possibly fit into the book! It was hard to accept that a great amount of this information would just have to be left out. I was helped over this hump by encouragement and advice from my friends who suggested that this book would just have to be the beginning and other future “volumes” would follow.

So, here is the history of California State Park Rangers “Volume 1”.

— M.G. “Mike” Lynch, December 1995



*125th Anniversary Committee of Bill Monaghan, Susan Ross and Mike Lynch holding the State Legislature’s official resolution commemorating rangers 125 years of service.*

# DEDICATED TO WALT DISNEY

HONORARY CALIFORNIA STATE PARK RANGER



*“Ranger” Disney is pictured here in 1965, at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove, receiving his Honorary Ranger appointment from the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA). Association President Paul Griffin (center) and Executive Secretary Phil Geiger (left) make the presentation. Disney was honored for producing and distributing a film on state parks that was considered instrumental in passage of the 1964 Park Bond Act. Disney’s daughter Dianne reported that he kept his Honorary Ranger plaque on the wall in his office and was quite proud of it.*

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## Chapter 1

# GALEN CLARK: THE FIRST PARK RANGER

**W**HEN YOSEMITE PIONEER GALEN CLARK was named “Guardian of Yosemite” on May 21, 1866, he was the first person formally appointed and paid to protect and administer a great natural park. Not recognized until much later, Clark had become California’s and the nation’s first park ranger.

Clark’s precedent-setting appointment was the result of Federal legislation signed into law in 1864 by Abraham Lincoln. This law granted the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees to the State of California. Not only was the Yosemite grant California’s first state park, it was the first park of its type to be established at the national or state level. It was eight years later, in 1872, that Yellowstone was created as America’s first designated national park.

In 1866, the California legislature formally accepted the Federal grant and provided for an eight member Commission to manage the park. It also gave the Commission the power “to appoint a guardian...to perform such duties as they may prescribe, and to receive such compensations they may fix, not to exceed five hundred dollars per annum.” At the Commission’s first official meeting in May, 1866, Clark, who was also one of the original Commissioners, was designated Yosemite’s Guardian. He would serve 22 years and become known as the most able, conscientious, and well-known Guardian in the park.

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*Galen Clark at the base of the Grizzly Giant Tree,  
Mariposa Grove, circa 1859.*

At age 52, Clark was an ideal choice. His knowledge of the area was unsurpassed. In 1857, he was the first non-Indian to discover parts of the Mariposa Grove. One of the earliest and regular explorers of Yosemite Valley, Clark pioneered a homestead and inn at the site of the Wawona Hotel, now located inside Yosemite National Park. Clark had also been directly involved in influencing many of the prominent

consumption. His health was eventually restored, but wealth eluded him. Clark settled in Mariposa County and worked at many occupations including miner, packer, camp-keeper, homesteader, rancher, road-builder, and innkeeper. However, he never quite succeeded in any of these jobs. Success and prestige, not money, were his reward as Guardian, protector, expert guide and administrator of Yosemite and

injured, no fires were to be allowed in dry grass or undergrowth, no structures were to be erected without Commission approval, and trails, bridges, and ladders were to be kept in order. The Guardian and Sub-Guardian were given authority to “prevent either visitors and settlers from doing anything which would tend to impair the present picturesque appearance of the Valley or its surroundings.”

Furthermore, Guardian Clark was to issue leases to the early settlers in the valley and to persuade them to accept the authority of the Commission and Guardian. Those who refused were to be informed that they would be considered “trespassers” and “liable to the penalties of fine and imprisonment imposed by the last legislation.” This responsibility would turn out to be one of his most vexing and drawn-out duties, as two of the would-be homesteaders, Englishman James Hutchings and Virginian James Lamon, refused to vacate or even apply for a lease. It took eight years of lawsuits, counter suits, state and federal legislation and a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court before the issue was finally settled.



*Galen Clark, sitting on the log, watches two tourists at his rustic inn “Clark’s Station” at Wawona. Clarke homesteaded the area in 1856 which much later became part of Yosemite National Park.*

advocates of preserving the area. Finally, he had deep feelings for the natural splendor of Yosemite. Clark’s love and appreciation of Yosemite was revealed in descriptions of his first visit in 1855. He wrote: “We spent several days...wandering and exploring and viewing the grandeur and sublimity...worshiping in this wonderful sanctuary, this sanctum sanctorum of Nature’s vast mountain temple.”

Born near Shipton, Quebec, and raised in Dublin, New Hampshire, Clark had come to California in 1853 in search of both health and wealth. Then 39, he was a widower, father of five children left with relatives, a failure in several businesses and suffering from

the Mariposa Grove. In his later years, he was referred to as “Mister Yosemite” because of his longtime dedication and devotion to the park.

Clark’s official duties as Guardian began immediately after his appointment. He named Yosemite Valley resident and pioneer Peter Longhurst as Sub-Guardian or assistant ranger. Their duties had been detailed in an eight-page letter of instruction from the Commission. They had to protect the area as well as pacify both the Native Americans and the settlers. The Commission emphasized that Clark and Longhurst were to strictly enforce the new state laws enacted to protect the park. Specifically, no trees or timber were to be cut or

*James Hutching refused to recognize the Yosemite Commission. He fought for 8 years to keep his valley property.*



James Lamon had settled in Yosemite Valley in the summer of 1859 and developed his property with berry patches and apple orchards. Hutchings had bought interest in a hotel and land after the Yosemite bill had been introduced in Congress, but before its passage. Hutchings, who genuinely loved Yosemite and did much to advertise and promote it, was ambitious and aggressive. He refused to acknowledge any authority of the Commission and talked Lamon into going along with him. In 1867, a suit of ejection was filed against him by the Yosemite Commissioners. Hutchings fought back in the courts and the California Legislature. Because of his tactics, no appropriation bills for Yosemite were passed by the Legislature for more than four years. With no appropriations, there was no salary for Guardian Clark or money to develop the park. As a result, Clark went without even partial salary for years, and was never fully paid.

In 1872, the Supreme Court ruled against Hutchings. The ruling upheld the authority of the Commission and the original concept of the federal legislation that Yosemite was “to be held for public use, resort and recreation...inalienable for all time.” Hutchings still would not leave. In 1874, the State Legislature voted \$60,000 to the early settlers of Yosemite Valley, and Hutchings received \$24,000, an enormous sum at the time. Finally on May 19, 1875, the Sheriff of Mariposa County and Guardian Clark, who had been named a special sheriff’s deputy, evicted Hutchings.

Meanwhile, the other settlers and business owners in the Valley had accepted the Commission’s authority. Clark issued them leases and business concessions. Starting with these first leases, Clark and later Guardians became responsible for administering Yosemite concessions to ensure that visitors were well served and reasonably charged.



Galen Clark and the Overhanging Rock at Glacier Point, 3200 feet from the floor of the Valley, Winter Scene.

Modern rangers and superintendents of Yosemite and many other state and national parks still have this often difficult responsibility.

The 1866, Yosemite legislation also set precedent by containing the first park-protection laws in the nation. These laws set fines up to \$500 and possible six-months imprisonment for cutting or injuring trees, damaging any natural objects, setting fires, or destroying or defacing any bridge, structure, or improvement.

---

*Galen Clark surveys his charge, Yosemite Valley, from the Glacier point lookout.*

To carry these laws into effect and to protect the trees and other “natural objects” from threats and actual damage, the Commissioners considered it necessary “that there should be a guardian and sub-guardian, one or the other—during the season of visitors, at least—



*The trust of Guardian Clark as seen in one of the earliest photographs of Yosemite Valley taken by Carleton E. Watkins.*

always in or about the valley and Big Tree Grove, in order to bring about entire safety and security that wanton damages will not be inflicted." Possibly in conjunction with these patrols, Clark made the first known park arrest in 1870. He caught the men responsible for cutting a huge pine in the Valley. Later they were convicted and fined \$20 each by a Mariposa judge.

Clark also had strict orders from the Commission that the Native Americans of the Valley, the Ah-wah-ni-chi tribe of the Miwoks, were not to pull off oak limbs to harvest acorns as was their custom. He explained to the Indians that they were to wait until the acorns dropped before harvesting them. The Mariposa Gazette reported that

the Indians argued that they "failed to fully understand why it was right for the Americans to cut down and destroy large numbers of their best acorn trees in making ranches and that it should be so very wrong for them to cut down a few branches to gather acorns from trees which they had never been paid for." Eventually, Clark was able to persuade them to wait until the crop fell naturally.

Clark's protection duties led him to stop another Indian

practice of annually burning large areas of the Valley. Neither the Guardian nor the Commissioners realized that restricting these "controlled" burns would have long-term negative effects on maintaining the meadows and views in the Valley. In later years, Clark and other Guardians would have to order large-scale cutting of brush and small trees to maintain the "picturesque appearance of the Valley." This picturesque appearance was probably at least partly maintained in earlier years by the burning practices of the Yosemite Indians.

On the other hand, wild fires that destroyed trees and structures, especially the big trees of the Mariposa Grove, were a hazard. As early as July, 1864, Clark and well-known fellow Commissioner Frederick Law Olmsted, fought and patrolled a fire that threatened the Mariposa Grove. In 1870, when another large fire threatened the

Sequoias, Clark and others spent days clearing fire lines. Preventing and fighting wild fires was thus established as a duty of all Guardians and Sub-Guardians. Prevention and protection against wildfires remains one of the modern Ranger's responsibilities, modified in more recent times by policies allowing for controlled burns and allowing natural fires to burn themselves out in some areas.

Because of the lack of appropriations by the State Legislature, many of the early developments in the Valley were accomplished by private effort. Companies and private individuals were allowed to build roads and trails to places of interest and then charge visitors to use them. Clark disliked the practice and urged the Legislature to buy the private toll ways. In a "free park for the world," he wrote, the demand for tolls caused tourists to make a "sudden transit from celestial to terrestrial, from sublime to the ridiculous." Clark added: "Californians should be proud of Yosemite and no longer withhold with miserly grasp, the small amount of money necessary to make improvements and make every road and trail within its limits free from tolls." It was not until eight years after Clark's first term ended in 1880 that the state finally purchased all toll trails and roads within Yosemite Valley.

Unrestrained commercialization of the Valley and Grove were strongly opposed by Guardian Clark. He wrote: "It is a great pity that this wonderful place could not have been kept sacred and 'inalienable' for the wise purpose for which it was donated and none of it given to private enterprise." Clark's efforts in this regard were noted by philanthropist Charles Loring Brace. He expressed his admiration for Clark when he saw that the Mariposa Grove was uncluttered by advertising of the kind that had haunted his journey from San Francisco. Brace also gave an early description of Clark as "...a lover of



the forest — handsome, thoughtful, interesting...he knew more than any of his guests of the fauna, flora, and geology of the State.”

Beginning in 1868, when he first visited Yosemite, John Muir was greatly influenced by Clark. They later made several exploring trips together and shared a mutual love and reverence for Yosemite and its splendid surroundings. Muir judged Clark to be “the best mountaineer I ever met, and one of the most sincere tree-lovers I ever knew.”

During his time as Guardian, Clark served as guide and educator to many Park visitors. Among them were Jessie Fremont, John Muir, Ralph Waldo Emerson, James A. Garfield, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes and other political, educational, and business leaders. Clark’s knowledge of and love for Yosemite, its features, plants, and animals earned him an ever-growing reputation as an expert.

Although plagued by inadequate funds, Clark did the best he could in supervising development,

especially the construction and repair of bridges and trails. In another first in 1878, Clark oversaw establishment of the first public campground in a state park.

By 1880, the winds of political change had reached even Yosemite and the position of Guardian. Because of reports of graft, favoritism, and mismanagement, the Legislature voted to dissolve the existing Commission and replace it with another. On April 19, 1880, Governor George Perkins appointed new Commissioners and incredibly, in September, they elected James Hutchings, evicted settler and long-time bitter foe of the earlier Commission, as Guardian. Suddenly Clark was jobless but not homeless, as the new Commissioners allowed him to lease his Yosemite house for a dollar per year. For the next eight years, Clark operated what he termed a “Tourist Coach,” driving and guiding visitors around the Valley in his wagon, wrote newspaper articles, and prepared an

elaborate grave site for himself in the Valley Cemetery.

A resolution adopted by the new Commissioners testified to their high regard for the ex-Guardian. It stated that “in consideration of his long services in the Valley, the late guardian, Galen Clark, should be treated with great consideration and not be subject to any interference.” Even his old nemesis, Guardian James Hutchings, admitted later that Clark “will be found intelligent, obliging, and efficient in everything he undertakes.”

As the first Guardian and first park ranger, Clark established the ranger job as one of protector, host, and administrator. More than 125 years ago, he began the proud ranger tradition of protection and care of parks, combined with courteous and helpful service to the visiting public. His distinguished tenure was exceptional and one that none of his successors as Guardian could surpass or even equal.



## THE GUARDIAN

**IS A STATE OFFICER**, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, for the purpose of watching over the best interests of the Valley, and superintending the local details connected with its management, under the Board. To him, therefore, all irregularities of every kind should be promptly reported, to insure their abatement. From him, moreover, can be obtained information, not only concerning the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Commissioners, for the management of the Valley in the interests of the public; but the best places to camp, the points most noteworthy to see, and



the best time and manner of seeing them; with answers to every reasonable question intelligent persons may ask concerning this wonderful spot. In short he will, to the best of his ability, be the living embodiment of a cyclopedia of Yo Semite; and that politely, cheerily, and pleasantly.

— James Mason Hutchings *In the Heart of the Sierras*, 1886

*Galen Clark's home and office, the first ranger station.*



## Chapter 2

# STATE GUARDIANS OF YOSEMITE: 1880-1906

14

All the Guardians faced the same responsibilities for protection and administration of Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove. They had to protect the area, greet, inform, try to educate and placate visitors, administer leases and concessions, and oversee developments such as trails, bridges and buildings in the park. All, with varying degrees of effort and success, tried to balance protecting the natural beauty of the park while allowing the widest possible visitor use. This last charge is still one of the most challenging and demanding responsibilities facing park administrators.

### JAMES M. HUTCHINGS

Yosemite's second Guardian and California's second state park ranger, was an Englishman named James Mason Hutchings. He was appointed Guardian in September, 1880, by a new Board of Yosemite Commissioners established by the legislature. The legislation which brought about the new Board also increased the Guardian's salary to \$1,500 per year.

Hutchings' appointment was startling because he had spent the previous 16 years fighting and criticizing the former Yosemite Commission. He had even been evicted from Yosemite in 1875 by Galen Clark, the Guardian he replaced. He did, however, have a genuine love of Yosemite. Throughout his life, he promoted the park in books and lectures, which he illustrated with lantern slides. He harbored no ill will against Clark and later wrote complimentary words about him.

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*President "Teddy" Roosevelt and John Muir ride through Yosemite in 1903 when it was still a state park. Roosevelt would be instrumental in returning the valley to Federal ownership in 1906.*



Characteristically, Hutchings' first report as Guardian emphasized what he felt were the failings of the prior Commission. He complained of the neglect and poor condition of the Valley floor, where views were obscured and growth of forage was prevented by thick underbrush.

He recommended establishing productive fields and beautiful park-like grounds. Although "productive fields" sounds non-park-like today, during the early years of Yosemite the isolation of the Valley made it necessary that most food for residents and tourists be produced in the Valley. Hutchings also envisioned a "picturesque road" on the outer rim of the meadows "throughout the entire circumference of the Valley, [which] would enable all lovers of the sublime and beautiful to enjoy the finest drive on earth." Other recommendations of his included new bridges, walks, stronger enforcement against tree cutting, plus the removal of fences and the clearing of the ground around the Big Trees to prevent fire damage.

Finally, there was one item that Hutchings and former Guardian Galen Clark agreed on. Both strongly felt that all privately built toll roads and trails within the park should be purchased by the state. Larger appropriations made this possible during and immediately following Hutchings' term. Increased funding also allowed Hutchings to direct improvements to bridges and roads, particularly the circle road around the floor of the Valley.

While Guardian, Hutchings made at least one arrest for the unauthorized cutting of a "noble tree," which he termed an "outrage." He felt that no standing tree, living or dead, should be cut down without written permission from the Guardian.

Abuse of the Yosemite watershed was another concern of Guardian Hutchings and the Commission. Abuses included



overgrazing by sheep, setting of fires by sheepmen, and tree cutting by loggers above the Valley. In fact, the Commission appealed to the Federal Government to enlarge the Yosemite Grant to include the whole Merced River watershed. The idea to expand the Park was to be repeated by later Commissioners and was also taken up by others like John Muir. Eventually it led to the formation of a national park surrounding the state park in the Valley.

Hutchings' abrasive personality and lack of subtlety resulted in conflicts with the Board of Commissioners. There were also charges of mismanagement to the undue benefit of concessionaires in the park. On October 20, 1884, the Commission removed him as Guardian. He moved back to San Francisco and began writing his

*Top: James Hutchings seen here in 1902 only minutes before the wagon accident that took his life. Middle: Guardian Walter Dennison, circa 1885. Lower: Mark McCord, Guardian from 1887-1889.*

finest book, *In the Heart of the Sierras*, first published in 1886. Even after his term as Guardian, no year was complete for Hutchings without at least one visit to Yosemite. While entering his beloved Valley in the fall 1902, with his third wife, the team of horses pulling his wagon got spooked and bolyed down Big Oak Flat Road. Careeing out of control, the wagon crashed—the impact killing Hutchings. Although a constant critic of the management of the park, Hutchings’ possessive love and lifelong promotion of Yosemite were never questioned, and appropriately, he was buried in the Valley’s Pioneer Cemetery.

#### WALTER E. DENNISON AND MARK McCORD

Walter E. Dennison became the third Yosemite Guardian in 1884. Dennison was a young engineer who had been a mining and transportation official before his appointment. Unfortunately, he had no special knowledge or appreciation of Yosemite or its management.

As Guardian, Dennison reported that the Valley was becoming denuded by over pasturing, yet trees and underbrush needed to be removed to improve the Valley views. Ironically, he was later charged with allowing the over-grazing and plowing of the Valley’s meadows.

During Dennison’s term the State budgeted \$40,000 for construction of a badly needed new hotel, later named the Stoneman after the Governor who was instrumental in getting the appropriation. Dennison also oversaw the construction of the Vernal Falls bridge and a trail from Nevada Falls to Glacier Point. The trail allowed a one-day circuit trip from the Valley to Glacier point, Sentinel Dome, Nevada Falls and Vernal Falls.

His term lasted little more than two years. He was succeeded by Mark L. McCord, an employee of the powerful Southern Pacific Company. Like Dennison, McCord

was a political appointee with no particular qualifications for either the position or the place. During McCord’s short term, the Stoneman Hotel was completed and leased out for \$100 per month. He recommended increasing Mirror Lake by damming it to provide more water for irrigation, boating, and angling. He also recommended moving the public campground to give campers more pasture for their animals.

Both Dennison’s and McCord’s terms were marked by poor public relations and poorer management. The criticism culminated in violent newspaper charges made by landscape artist Charles D. Robinson. Backed up by photographs, Robinson made 22 charges of mismanagement, such as cutting timber for personal gain, disfiguring natural features, and fencing for farm land. A State Senate investigation ensued in 1889. More than 30 witnesses appeared, producing 430 published pages of testimony.

Galen Clark gave lengthy testimony at the hearing. He did not blame any of his successors, but again emphasized that Yosemite “should not be managed for the purpose of making money, because it is a section of California that California should be proud of...the State should take so much pride in its management as to be willing to

appropriate liberally toward all the improvements necessary.” The results of the hearing were inconclusive, except that it moved the appointment of Guardians away from politics.

In a surprise move on June 6, 1889, McCord was fired. The Commissioners wanted a Guardian who was above politics, knowledgeable about Yosemite, someone with integrity, who could be impartial, diplomatic, but forceful in managing the park for the benefit of all. Their choice was 75-year-old Galen Clark. The “Mariposa Gazette” expressed public approval by writing:

“A more fitting appointment would be impossible. Mr. Clark...is familiar with every inch of land, and every tree in and for miles around the Valley, and is well-acquainted with all the lessees. He knows how the visitors should be treated and withal is an educated, refined, moral and upright gentleman. He is a great lover of nature and will not permit natural beauties to be ruthlessly destroyed in order that some person may derive a pecuniary profit.”

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*Ever increasing numbers of tourists and their activities created more responsibilities and duties for the Yosemite Guardians.*



### GALEN CLARK RETURNS

Aging, but still vital, Galen Clark was again Guardian, but this time he had the backing of the Commission and the funding from the State Legislature to make many of the needed improvements and reforms. These included clearing brush for views, removing unnecessary fences, repairing structures, and reducing fire hazards in the Big Tree Grove. In addition, he had guard rails set on the brinks of cliffs so timid people could appreciate the views and maintained good relations with both travelers and concessionaires. The Commissioners officially commended his efforts.

In October, 1890, a 932,600 acre "forest reserve" was established around Yosemite Valley. Eventually named Yosemite National Park, this larger park surrounding the Valley was the work of John Muir, Robert Underwood Johnson, and other far-seeing preservationists. The new national park was protected in

the summer by Army Cavalry troops. The different management of the two parks was a problem, as sheep, cattle, fires, and hunters paid no respect to artificial boundaries. The problems of dual control and the shortcomings of the State administration of the Yosemite Grant ultimately resulted in the return of Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove to the Federal Government, but not until 1906.

In 1895, Clark, with the support of the recently organized Sierra Club, recommended the hiring of summer patrolmen or seasonal rangers for the park. Private campers and visitors had increased as had the problems with dirty camps and vandalism. Clark wrote the Commission that, "a small percentage of them (tourists) commit acts of malicious mischief and even serious damage...One or two of the mounted patrol men now in Yosemite during the season of the most visitors would have a great restraining influence on this lawless class."

Approved by the Commission, the summer patrols' official duties included visiting the camps, enforcing regulations, noting park conditions, taking visitor complaints, and writing a daily report to the Guardian. The hiring of summer patrolmen or seasonal rangers at Yosemite was the beginning of another park service tradition that is still with us today. Former President Gerald Ford is among the many famous and not so famous "90 day wonders" or seasonal rangers who have worked in state or national parks.

During the 1890's, the Commission adopted and published a detailed set of Rules and Regulations for Yosemite. Most of these rules would look familiar to park visitor or rangers today. For instance, the discharge of weapons

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*Galen Clark, in his later years known as "Mr. Yosemite," at the Mariposa Grove. The cabin shown was office and home to the Grove's early Sub-Guardians.*



was prohibited, no trees were to be cut or injured or any natural object defaced. Automobiles did not enter the Valley until 1900, but no one was to drive a horse or wagon faster than a walk over any bridge.

The Commission directed that: "The Guardian shall exercise general police supervision in the Valley and Grove, and shall forbid and prevent all acts that tend to a breach of the peace, for the discomfort of visitors, or injury or destruction to property." The Commission also provided that: "The Guardian shall promptly cause the arrest of any person violating Rules XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, and XX and prosecute the offender or offenders to the full extent of the law." Rules XVI to XX related to illegal campfires, cutting trees, defacing natural objects, discharging firearms, allowing horses or stock to run at large, and driving too fast. In addition, the Guardian was also to give safety inspections to all horses, trappings and vehicles used for hire. Unsuitable or unsafe equipment or animals were to be removed from the Valley. In regards to the enforcement of horse and vehicle laws and safety inspection of related equipment in the park, the Guardians might also be considered the first State traffic enforcement officers.

In 1897, at the age of 83, and after nearly eight more years as Guardian, Clark retired "in favor of a younger and I trust more effective man." He had built a winter home in Summerland in Santa Barbara County, but each spring he returned to Yosemite where he worked as a guide and sold seeds from pine cones. He authored three small factual books, *The Yosemite Valley*, *Big Trees of California*, and *Indians of the Yosemite*.

On March 24, 1910, Clark died in his sleep in Oakland, California. He was 95. Clark was buried in the grave site he had improved in the Yosemite Valley Cemetery.

Clark, as the longest serving



and best of the Guardians, was memorialized by the Yosemite Commission upon his retirement. They wrote: "Whereas, his faithful and eminent services as Guardian, his constant efforts to preserve, protect and enhance the beauties of Yosemite; his dignified, kindly, and courteous demeanor to all who have come to see and enjoy its wonders, and his upright and noble life, deserve from us a fitting recognition and memorial;

*...Therefore, be it resolved...That we recognize in him a faithful, efficient and worthy citizen and officer of this Commission and of the State."*

*Above: Miles Wallace, Guardian 1897-1899. Below: Motorized vehicles first arrived in Yosemite in 1900 and have impacted the area ever since.*

#### MILES WALLACE

Miles Wallace succeeded Galen Clark as Guardian in 1897. Prior to his appointment, Wallace had served as District Attorney in nearby Madera County. His Yosemite administration was marked by general improvement and maintenance of public buildings and roads. Many shacks and shanties were removed or renovated.



The removal of brush and rubbish begun by Clark was continued to improve the views of cliffs and falls.

Wallace recommended construction of an electrical power plant, but it was 1902 before a regular system was developed in Yosemite. Like many previous Guardians, Wallace recommended small dams above the main water falls to maintain their flows during dry periods. Yosemite visitation had reached an all time high of 4,500 by 1899, more than triple the number of visitors just ten years earlier. Still, to increase visitation, Wallace was in favor of some judicious advertising of Yosemite to compete with Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon.

During his tenure, the Sierra Club was provided a building to be used as a visitor center. The attendant at the center provided information on camping, travel, and the natural and scenic wonders of Yosemite. William E. Colby, a dedicated amateur naturalist, was the Club's first representative. In 1900, Galen Clark served as custo-



dian of the Sierra Club room for \$35 a month.

Wallace served only two years as Guardian. In 1899, he returned to the practice of law in Fresno. Before his departure, he allowed a new concession, a private camp, to begin business near the base of Glacier Point. Called Camp Curry, after its founders Jennie and David Curry, it became one of the famous names still associated with Yosemite Park concessionaires.

JOHN F. STEVENS & GEORGE HARLOW

Wallace's successor was John Stevens, who served as Guardian from October, 1899, to July, 1904. Prior to being appointed, he had been employed by the Washburn Brothers, who had financial interests in almost all the major Yosemite businesses. Several people claimed that as Guardian, Stevens paid more attention to the Washburns than to the good of the park.

Some improvements were made in the Valley while Stevens was in office, notably the building of an electric plant. To compete with the popular Camp Curry,

*Stephen Cunningham was a well known Sub-Guardian stationed at the Mariposa Grove in the 1870s and 80s.*

Camp Yosemite was established near the base of Yosemite Falls. Its drawing card was Galen Clark, then 87, as host.

Yosemite state park operations were so severely underfunded that a 50-cent head tax was placed on each passenger on the transportation lines into the valley. Even this tax was not enough. The State's lack of adequate appropriations became one of the major factors in the growing movement to return Yosemite Valley to Federal control.

President Theodore Roosevelt's visit in 1903 was probably the most important event during Stevens' term. Roosevelt and John Muir spent three days on the trails, camping and talking. The President came away strongly in support of returning Yosemite Valley to the Federal Government.

In June, 1904, the last State Guardian was appointed. He was George T. Harlow, who had been a Yosemite Commissioner since 1896.

YOSEMITE STATE GUARDIANS

| Name               | Period of Service |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Galen Clark        | 1866 to 1880      |
| James M. Hutchings | 1880 to 1884      |
| Walter E. Dennison | 1884 to 1887      |
| Mark L. McCord     | 1887 to 1889      |
| Galen Clark        | 1889 to 1897      |
| Miles Wallace      | 1897 to 1899      |
| John Stevens       | 1899 to 1904      |
| George Harlow      | 1904 to 1906      |

KNOWN SUB-GUARDIANS

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Peter Longhurst        | 1866 |
| George Fredrick Leidig | 1868 |
| Stephen M. Cunningham  | 1878 |
| Stephen M. Cunningham  | 1882 |
| Mr. Leach              | 1904 |



One incident is recorded regarding Guardian Harlow that is representative of the resource-protection and management duties and problems facing the Guardians as well as modern rangers.

In the Mariposa Grove, the famous “Grizzly Giant” was leaning more and more each year, and one side had no green growth at all. Harlow and Mr. J.J. Lermen, who later wrote of the incident, solicited public suggestions. Everything from cable wire to letting the tree die was proposed. An inspection gave the cause and possible solution. Lermen wrote: “For over fifty years, persons on foot or on horseback had been tramping around the base of the tree, with the result that the soil...was nearly as hard as concrete and...had been packed down so that the great immense roots of the tree...were exposed to the weather, to the extent of two-thirds of their circumference.” Lermen and Harlow felt that the tree was “dying for lack of food.” They had humus piled several feet deep around the tree for a hundred feet and awaited developments. Lermen recorded: “The first development was a red hot criticism from that portion of the public that loves to write letters to the press on every subject...in which they criticized generally all of the members of the Commission and the Guardian ...for monumental fools in thinking they could prevent the tree from falling over by piling a lot of dirt upon top of its roots.” The cure, however, worked and the “Grizzly Giant” began to recover from being nearly loved to death.

Harlow had been in office for only a year when the bill to return Yosemite to the Federal Government was signed by the Governor. On June 11, 1906, President Roosevelt signed the Federal bill that officially accepted Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove as a part of Yosemite National Park. After 1906 and until 1914, when civilian rangers took charge of the

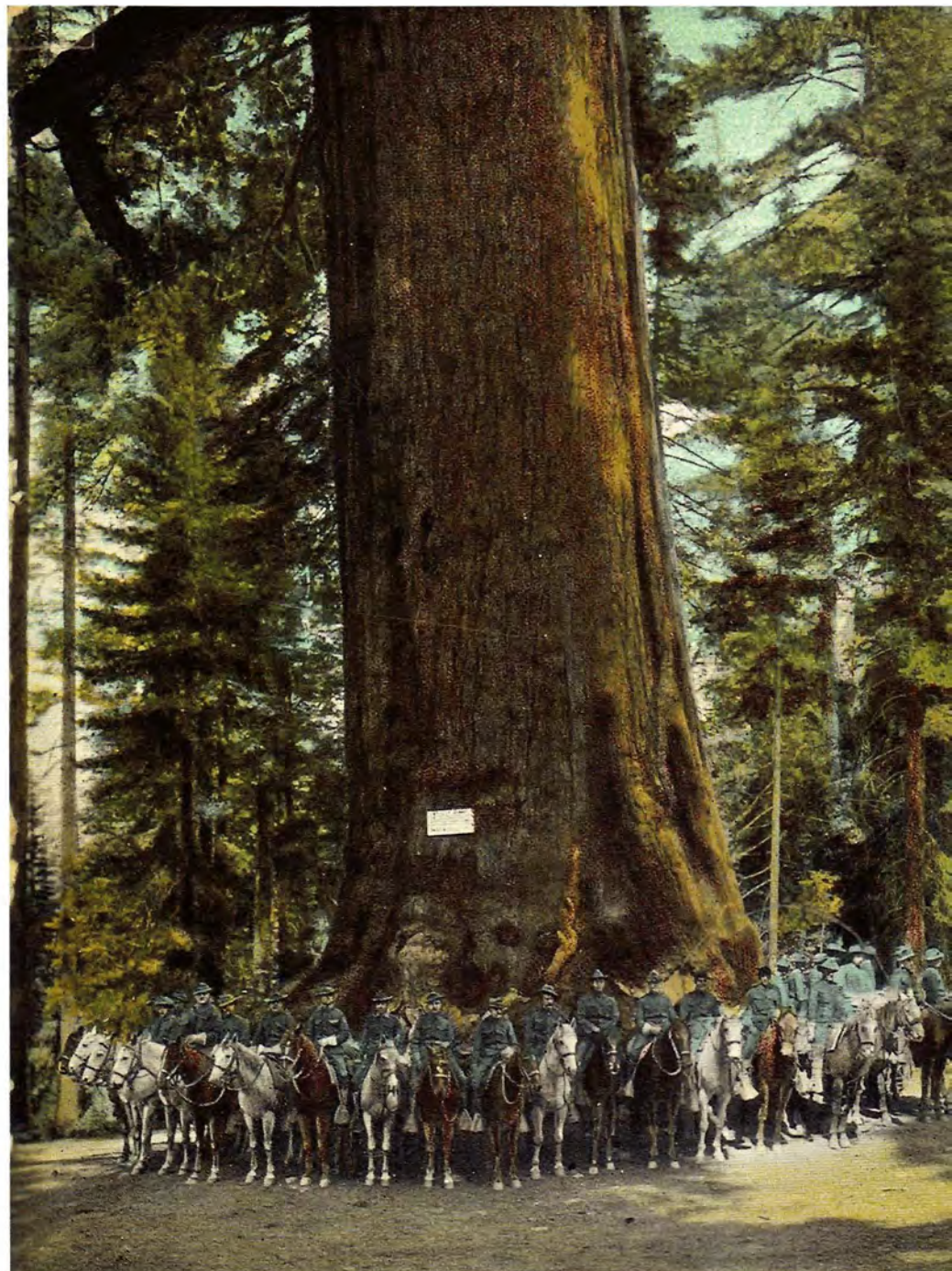
Park, Yosemite Valley was administered by Cavalry troops as a part of the larger National Park.

Termination of the Yosemite State Grant and its guardianship was not the end of California’s park rangers. In 1891, a Guardian had been appointed at the Marshall state monument for the discovery of gold at Coloma. Another Guardian or ranger, later titled park warden, had been appointed at the California Redwood State Park at Big Basin in 1903. These positions, established during the era of the Yosemite

Guardians, and many after them, carried on the traditions and duties begun in 1866 by Galen Clark, California’s first State Park Ranger.

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*The end of the State Guardians at Yosemite and the Mariposa Grove came in 1906 with the return of these areas to the Federal government. The Guardian’s duties were taken over by Army Cavalry troops, pictured here in front of the Grizzly Giant in the Mariposa Grove.*







## Chapter 3

# FIRST GUARDIANS /RANGERS OF THE EARLY PARKS

**T**he first state parks of today's park system were established before Yosemite Valley was returned to the Federal Government. The earliest of these was the Monument to James Marshall of California gold discovery fame. The first Marshall Monument Guardian, Ezra Smith, was appointed in 1891. In 1895, another Guardian, William Todd, was appointed at the newly established Sutter's Fort Monument in Sacramento. Finally, in 1903, J.H.B. Pilkington was appointed Guardian at the California Redwood Park established at Big Basin the year before. The California Redwood Park was the first great-out-of-doors park that is still in the current park system. With Yosemite's return to the Federal Government in 1906, Big Basin would have the single largest concentration of rangers in any park until well after World War II.

At the turn of the century, there were four guardians/rangers and several other deputies or assistants working in four independently operated state parks at Yosemite, the Marshall Monument, Sutter's Fort and Big Basin. Little is known about the early guardians at Sutter's Fort, except that after Todd, the second guardian was James A. White appointed in 1903 and that E.H. Cox Sr. served as the third guardian from 1909 to 1913.

The following chronicles the early rangers at the Marshall Monument and the California Redwood Park.

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*Dedication of Marshall's Monument, California's first historical park, in 1889.  
The first historical park ranger/guardian was appointed in 1891.*

## MARSHALL MONUMENT'S EARLY GUARDIANS

The California Legislature in March 1891 required that the Governor appoint a Guardian for the “care and protection of the Marshall Monument and grounds from vandalism and injury.” The monument and grounds included a statue of James Marshall which overlooked the site of Marshall’s discovery of gold that started the California gold rush. The monument was the State’s first historical park and designated landmark. Only 25 acres in size, it was comprised of the Monument site, Marshall’s cabin, and the hillside plot that had once been used by Marshall for growing apples and grapes.

Work had begun in 1888 to erect the monument to Marshall and a year later it was finished. On May 6, 1889, a grand dedication celebration was held, with Governor Waterman and many legislators in attendance. Also, most likely in attendance was Coloma businessman and rancher Ezra M. Smith, destined to become the first Guardian at the Monument and California’s first historical park ranger.

Smith was appointed Guardian of Marshall Monument in the spring, 1891, by Governor Waterman. He had lived in Coloma since the early gold rush days and had owned the Nichols Hotel in 1854. Listed as a “farmer, west side Sacramento Street” in the 1862 Coloma Business Directory, his name appears periodically through the years in Coloma’s history as he bought and sold land and engaged in gardening and dairy ranching. He gained the nickname “Cow” Smith because he had operated the first commercial dairy in Coloma.

With his appointment as Guardian, “Cow” Smith not only had to not only protect the monument and grounds, but but also had to keep in proper repair the road on the grounds and administer the area under the rules and regulations prescribed by the



Governor. Guardian Smith’s pay was 50 dollars per month.

The Marshall Guardian was required to live on the grounds of the Monument or within one mile of it. He held office at the pleasure of the Governor, but in a provision somewhat unusual at the time, could only be removed for cause, after a trial.

A trial was never needed for “Cow” Smith. He faithfully carried out his duties as Guardian and was well-known and well-liked by town residents. He was always interested in the town children, and kept a winter storeroom full of choice fruits to distribute to them during the cold months. He was also remembered for planting the first

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*Ezra “Cow” Smith, first guardian/  
ranger at the Marshall Monument  
and his wife.*

flowers and flowering shrubs on the Monument grounds. He served as Guardian until 1896 and died in December 1899.

In 1896, Philip Truscher was appointed the second Guardian of the Marshall Monument. He was a forty-niner, who had immigrated from Germany and had come out to California from Ohio in 1849 on the California Trail. During the winter of 1849-1850, Truscher, at age 21, had worked for James Marshall as a logger, supplying pine

logs to Sutter's sawmill. He spent many of his years in Coloma as a miner, and took out a number of rich ore pockets from the slopes of nearby Mt. Murphy.

Guardian for 3 years, Truscher tried to supply the Monument area with water for the visiting public as well as the shrubs and flowers. An expert stone mason, he built the first stone steps and walls on the Monument grounds.

In 1899, sixty-two year old Francis Nichols was appointed Guardian. He had worked as a miner for many years and then became one of Coloma's principal fruit growers. He died in 1904.

Union Civil War veteran James A. White was Guardian from 1903 to 1906, but little else is known about him. A succession of appointments followed including William N. Stearns in 1906, Sylvester A. Hamlin in 1911, and three months later William C. Miller. After Miller, Galen W. Morrill was appointed in 1917. Upon Morrill's death in 1932, the job was taken over by his widow Clara Morrill who worked until 1935. Clara Morrill thus became one of the first women state park rangers, after Harriett E. Weaver who had started work at Big Basin in 1930.

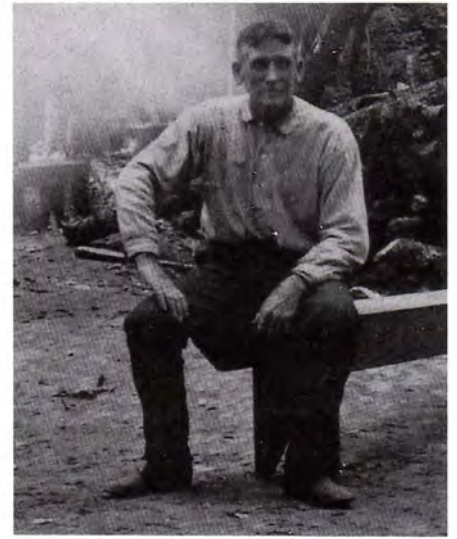
It was about this time that the Guardian title was changed to Custodian. In the early 1900s, the title of Custodian had a more substantial meaning as "one who guards and protects or maintains: one entrusted with guarding and keeping property or records." Certainly, early and modern rangers are still custodians of California's natural, cultural, and historical treasures. In 1945, the Custodian title was changed to Ranger.

During Galen Morrill's tenure in 1928, the Monument was incorporated into the newly organized State Park System administered by the Division of Parks. The cornerstone of this new State Park System was the California Redwood State Park at Big Basin which had been established in 1902.

## THE RANGERS/ GUARDIANS/WARDENS OF CALIFORNIA REDWOOD PARK

In 1902, through the successful efforts of Andrew P. Hill and the Sempervirens Club, the California Redwood Park was established in the Mountains above Santa Cruz. After the creation of the State Park System in 1928, it would be called Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

While negotiations for the park were in progress, the president of the Big Basin Lumber Company, H.L. Middleton, closed the area to hunters and campers and assigned George Denison as the caretaker. With the formal establishment of California Redwood Park, both Denison and the Horticulture Commissioner for Santa Cruz County, J.H.B. Pilkington, applied for the newly created position of Guardian. Pilkington was selected by the recently formed Redwood Park Commission on July 1, 1903 and began his duties at a salary of \$125 per month. Shortly afterwards, the Commission changed the title to Park Warden.



*Above: J.H.B. Pilkington was the first park warden at the California Redwood Park. Below: The Sempervirens Club and Andrew Hill (center of photo) were instrumental in establishing the Redwood Park. Hill was later a candidate for park warden.*

Under Pilkington, California Redwood Park was readied for opening to the public. Existing roads were repaired, new roads were constructed, and a camping



area developed. On June 1, 1904, Big Basin officially opened with the first “rules” posted for the “proper and orderly regulation of visitors and campers to the park.”

On September 7, the “Big Fire of 1904” started near a lumber mill adjacent to the park. Even with valiant efforts on the part of Warden Pilkington and his volunteers, over one thousand acres of park burned, as well as fifty private residences and several lumber mills. The trees and buildings in the main area of the park were saved, however, due to Pilkington’s leadership in directing the fire-fighting crews.

On March 6, 1905, Governor George Pardee abolished the Redwood Park Commission and in its place established a State Board of Forestry consisting of himself, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, and a State Forester to be chosen by the Governor. G.B. Lull, a friend of Santa Cruz Senator and Boulder Creek businessman Sam Rambo, was selected as State Forester. In

1907, rumors circulated that Rambo was retiring as State Senator and wanted an appointment as Park Warden. The rumors were true and Warden Pilkington was told by Forester Lull that his services would no longer be needed as of June 30, 1907.

Sam H. Rambo became the second Park Warden of the California Redwood Park on July 1 at a salary of \$1500 a year. J.H. Creed was employed as Deputy Warden at \$100 per month. Sam Rambo visited Big Basin for a few hours each week while Creed actually managed the park. Under Rambo, the park’s first lease agreement was signed. It turned a renovated cottage into a dining room, boarding house and recreation center.

In 1907, State Forester Lull saw the opportunity to “clean up” the debris remaining in the park from the 1904 fire. Lull entered into an agreement with W.M. Elsom, the husband of the concessionaire, to cut the dead timber in the park and process it into rails, shakes, and posts. Eventually Lull, Warden Rambo and Deputy Warden Creed allowed Elsom to cut not only dead trees but also redwoods which were obviously still alive.

Word of the cutting soon

*A hand colored postcard shows Big Basin’s Warden (probably Fred Moody) and his office in the mid-1930’s.*

spread. A grand jury investigation took place and a local newspaper contained the following headline:

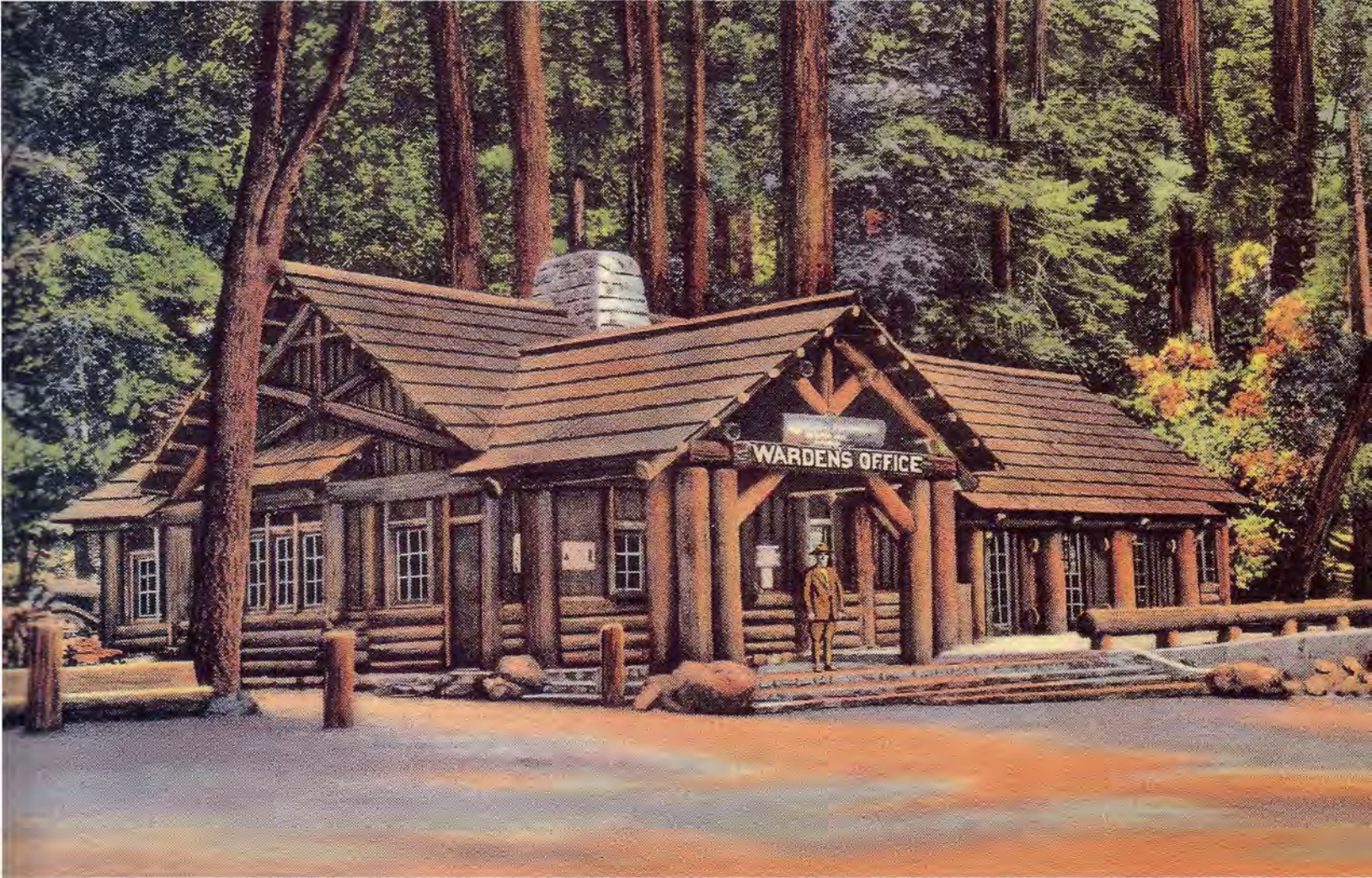
### **“The Rape of the Redwood Park How the State forester and the Park Warden have betrayed Their Trust and Sold for Song the Priceless Possessions of Posterity”**

Sufficient pressure was put on the Governor to finally admit to wrongdoing on the part of Lull, but no disciplinary actions were taken against him. With the election of the progressive Governor Hiram Johnson, Lull was removed (allowed to resign) as State Forester, and a bill introduced to reestablish the park commission. The bill became law and Governor Johnson selected the California Redwood Park Commission in 1911. The commission met in the governor’s office on March 3, and their first action was, “moved, seconded and carried that the Warden and Deputy Warden be discharged and that commissioner Middleton at once take possession of the park.”

With the removal of Warden Rambo, the Redwood Park Commission searched for an individual to manage the Redwoods of Big Basin. The Commission narrowed its search to two people, W.H. Dool and Andrew P. Hill. Hill was the founder of the Sempervirens Club and had been instrumental in the creation of the Park. Notwithstanding this historical connection, on March 20, 1911, William Henry “Billy” Dool was appointed third Warden of the California Redwood Park. He held the position until his death in 1931.

*Illegally authorized wood cutting in the park led to a scandal and replacement of Park Warden Sam Rambo.*





## THE RANGER NAME

**POSSIBLY THE EARLIEST RECORDED REFERENCE** to the term “ranger” is found in the English Rolls of Parliament, dated 1455. This usage referred to a royal forest officer or gamekeeper appointed to patrol royal forests to prevent poaching and trespass. In North America, an early use of the term was in Colonial Virginia where rangers were authorized by the House of Burgesses to protect settlements.

During the French and Indian War (1756), elite military units, like Roger’s Rangers, were used by the British as scouts and troops in heavily forested areas. Later during the Revolutionary War, military units again used the title ranger and it has continued to be used in the U.S. military to this day.

The most well known early American rangers were probably the “Texas Rangers.” First organized in 1835 as a semi-military unit, they were later constituted as a permanent police force.

The first use of the title “park ranger” occurred at the turn of the century. At this time, the army had the responsibility to patrol Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. Starting in 1898, the army hired several civilian “Forest Agents” to patrol the areas during the winter. Within a short time, army dispatches began referring to these agents as “park rangers.”

With the formation of the National Park Service in 1916, the park ranger title was officially adopted by the U.S. government. The first state park rangers were aptly titled “Guardian” in 1866. Used for nearly 40 years, the guardian title was changed to “Warden” in 1903.

For another 40 years, Warden, Assistant Warden, Custodian and Superintendent were all used. The title “State Park Ranger” was adopted in 1945 and it continues in use today.



### *The Early Parks*

Dool was born in Canada in 1860 and left home at the age of 14, arriving in Boulder Creek, California in 1875. He was employed as a "flume walker" in the area, and later operated a butcher shop. In 1902, Boulder Creek incorporated with Dool as one of the 5 trustees. He successfully ran for mayor on the

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*Ranger Fred Canham was famous for "calling in the deer" to be fed and viewed by park visitors.*

platform of reducing the number of bordellos and saloons in the new town. Unfortunately, Boulder Creek did not succeed economically and it soon unincorporated. Dool then worked, ironically, for the S.H. Rambo Co. in charge of its collection department.

Warden Dool's day typically began at 5:00 a.m. with litter clean up and ended after the 9:00 p.m. campfire program. Dool began Big Basin's first true interpretive programs in an amphitheater

constructed for that purpose. He also was responsible for the development of numerous facilities including a swimming pool (later removed) and witnessed the building of the northern entrance road into the park.

W.H. Dool through his personal energy professionalized the Warden's job. Aiding Dool during these early years were several deputy wardens included Joseph Park, who was Assistant Warden for 20 years from 1914-1934, C.A. Reed



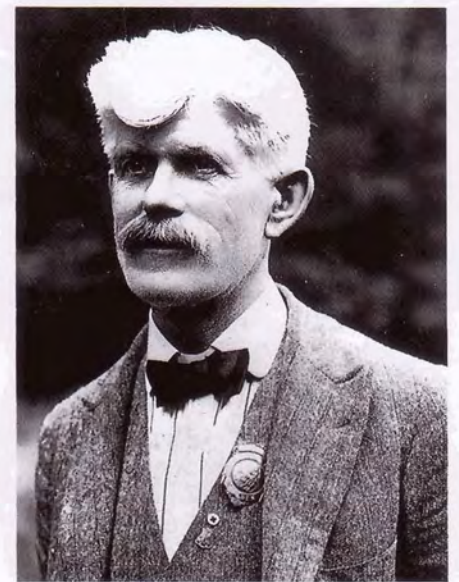
CALLING WILD DEER TO FEED, BIG B



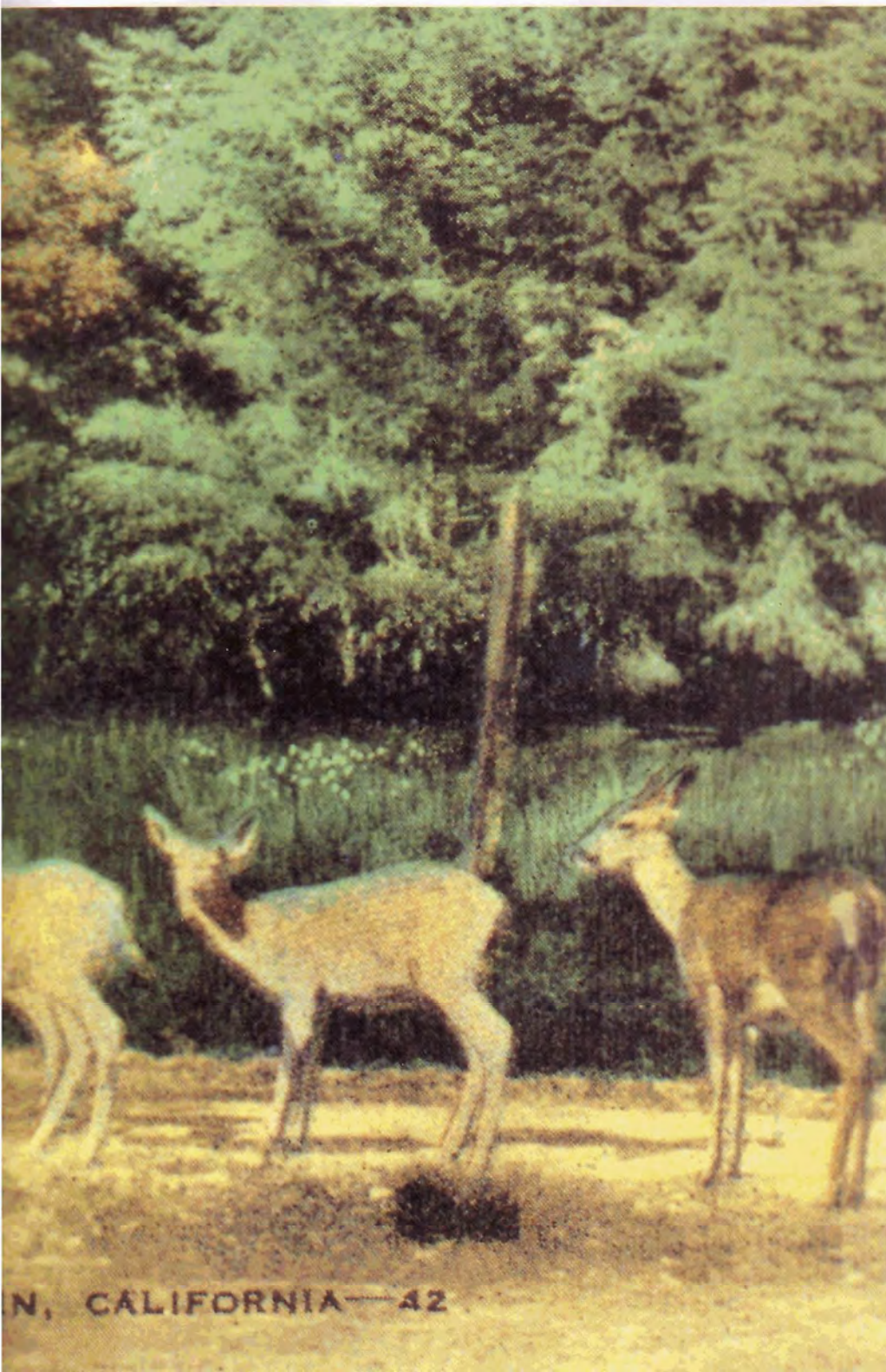
appointed in 1919, Elmer Crawford, Charlie Lewis, and Fred Canham. With Dool's passing in 1931, George R. Gray was appointed Warden. By this time Big Basin Redwoods State Park had entered a new period as a part of a larger state park system, and the era of the early Wardens of Big Basin ended.

From these very early parks, the slow and individual growth of state parks continued until 1928. The major park addition during this time was Humboldt Redwoods State

Park, brought into public ownership by the efforts of the Save-the-Redwoods League that started in 1920. In 1922, two people, Solon Williams and G.E. Thompson, were employed by the State Forestry Board to administer Humboldt. Williams, a Deputy State Forester, acted as supervisor of the park and Thompson was his assistant. In 1928, Humboldt became part of the newly organized State Park System and Thompson became the park ranger supervisor.



*Top: Asst. Warden Joseph Parks served for 20 years at Big Basin, 1914-1934. Above: W.H. Dool, the longest serving Warden at Big Basin from 1911-1931, professionalized the warden job. He wears the first known park badge.*







## Chapter 4

# PARK SYSTEM RANGERS

**T**he formation of the State Park System and the Division of Parks in 1928 brought about major changes in the ranger service. Prior to this time, there were no more than a dozen permanent staff working independently in 17 parks. Actually, many parks like Burney Falls and Mt. Diablo had no staff, facilities or public use. The legislation setting up the Division of Parks provided for a parks chief, a statewide park commission, formal police powers for rangers, rules and regulations with the power of law, and a bond act for the purchase and development of new parks.

Colonel Charles B. Wing was appointed the first state park chief. Energetic and with a long history in parks, Wing's influence is clearly seen in all the early park policies and programs. Wing and the new park commission ushered in many changes that were the roots of the modern park system of today. Later, W.A.S. Foster would serve as assistant chief of the Division.

From the formation of the park system in 1928, three eras in the ranger service can be distinguished. These eras could be called the "jack-of-all-trades" era from 1928 to after WWII, the post war "specialization" era from the later half of the 1940s until the 1960s, and the "professional generalist" era which started in the late 1960s and has continued until the present time.





## Park System Rangers

Starting in 1928, a great expansion of the park system occurred. Many new rangers were hired into the parks and they were required to be real jack-of-all-trades. Most parks had only one or two rangers who had to not only protect the park resources, but also provide all the visitor and maintenance services and often build any park facilities. In many cases, Rangers like Roland Wilson at Point Lobos and C. M. "Pop" Traynor in the Northern Redwoods, had to live in tents or other temporary structures for many months and sometimes up to two years while they built their own park houses! During this time a grade 1 ranger made \$100 per month and a grade 3 ranger (Warden) made up to \$180 per month.

Well known 1938 Rangers like Everett E. Powell, Jess T. Chaffee, and C.L. "Roy" Cushing at Pfeiffer Redwoods, Robert Coon at Mt Diablo, Wm. L Kenyon at Big Basin, Charles M. Lewis at Boulder Creek,

and Elmer J. Pool at Richardson Grove were responsible for every aspect of the park operation. Construction of trails, campgrounds, roads and other facilities were often done solely by park staff, frequently using free or "appropriated" materials and only the labor they could produce themselves. This construction and maintenance was in addition to the visitor services and park protection duties which required much of their time during heavy visitor use periods. Between 1928 and 1946, the permanent field staff, which was primarily rangers, rose from 14 to 96. Each park had a park supervisor who reported to one of several District Superintendents throughout the state. In 1938, the state was divided up under three Superintendents E. P. (Percy) French at Dyerville, Guy L. Fleming at La Jolla, and Harry L. Blaisdell at Aptos.



Rangers, during this time and through the post-war era, were

required to live in the parks. This requirement was offset by low rents which in 1946 were normally no more than \$25-\$30 per month including utilities. Rangers were transferred from park to park, at state expense, on a fairly regular basis. The Department feeling at the time was that a varied park work experience and not allowing rangers to stay too long in a given park, were in the best interests of the park system.




























The ranger work week was a minimum of 48 hours in six eight-hour days and it was department policy that, "during the period from May 1 to September 30, the regular day off must not be Saturday or Sunday, nor legal holidays." In addition, rangers were, "subject to call in case of emergencies on the basis of seven days per week, twenty-four hours per day." And of course, there were no provisions for over-time pay.

It was not until 1948 that a 40 hour week was established for

### District Superintendents

1928 - 1980

|  |   |   |  |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <br>PERCY FRENCH  | <br>GUY FLEMING    | <br>LEE BLAISDELL  | <br>EVERETT POWELL | <br>BOB COON    | <br>JACK KNIGHT      |   |   |
| <br>BILL KENYON   | <br>JESS CHAFFEE   | <br>GEORGE HOLMBOE | <br>CLYDE NEWLIN   | <br>JIM WARREN  | <br>GORDON KISHBAUGH |   |   |
| <br>JIM TRYNER    | <br>TINY PHILBROOK | <br>BOB HATCH      | <br>JIM WHITEHEAD   | <br>LLOYD LIVELY | <br>BILL HAUSSLER    | <br>DICK BROCK   |   |
| <br>CARL ANDERSON | <br>CURT MITCHELL  | <br>TED WILSON     | <br>MILT FRINKE     | <br>HERB HEINZE   | <br>RON MCCULLOUGH   | <br>JOHN MICHAEL | <br>KEITH CALDWELL |



*Top: Early rangers had to be jack-of-all-trades. Left: Ranger Al Whittington shows off his patrol car, with its new state park decal, at Big Sur about 1940.*

rangers. Regarding the long overdue reduction, the headline of the department employee newsletter proclaimed

“TWO DAYS OFF — DREAMS DO COME TRUE”.

Of course this was only the minimum work hours, premium credit for overtime hours would not arrive for another 35 years.

The second ranger era started with another expansion of the park system and the ranger force following WWII and continued through the late 1960s. In the five years following the end of WWII, state park field staff jumped from under 100 to nearly 250 and continued to expand afterwards. Internally this rapid growth brought to an end the early tight-knit “park family,” where everyone knew or had worked with everyone else in the Division. The official end was characterized by Chief A.E. “Chick” Henning, who in November 1947, wrote to all employees:

“In years gone by, while this

Division was small, the custom developed whereby the general exchange of Christmas Cards was carried on. The Division, however has now grown to such an extent that if the practice were followed, it might prove to be a considerable financial burden to some of the personnel and if that should be the case, it would destroy the spirit and pleasure incident thereto. For the above reason, I want all the personnel to feel free to limit the exchange of Christmas Cards to a basis of personal desires.”

The state park “family” still survives today in a modern form, but gone are the days when every ranger personally knew every other ranger.

The rapid expansion and increased demands of this era brought about a specialization of what had been ranger jobs and duties. For instance, park planning became specialized, as did acquisition, construction and historical research. These functions were no longer performed or headed up by rangers and in most cases were centralized into the Sacramento headquarters.

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*Well known park figure Jim Whitehead at Big Basin, c. 1949. Starting as a stock clerk in 1947, he worked through the ranger ranks to District Superintendent and, after retirement in 1977, served four years as a State Park Commissioner.*



Ever increasing park use has resulted in more and more ranger time spent in public safety duties.



At the park field level, many similar changes were also occurring. In addition to rangers, new classifications were established. Employees with titles of seasonal naturalist, recreational leader, historian and guide began to be commonly used in the field. These employees primarily provided services for visitor recreation, education and interpretation of the natural or historical aspects of the park. Closely tied and generally recognized as rangers, many of these specialized field employees later entered the ranger ranks. For instance, Earl P. Hanson, at one time a nature guide at Big Basin, later went up the ranks and eventu-

ally served as one of the better known chiefs of the Division.

Probably the most fundamental changes in the "old time" ranger job occurred in 1956 when regular maintenance duties were transferred to a new classification titled Park Attendant. From 1956 on, if a position was primarily maintenance, the Park Attendant class was to be used. At the same time this change was made, a college education was added to the requirement for the ranger class. Rangers continued to do maintenance work and Park Attendants also did some visitor services jobs, but the split was a trend that would take full effect in the late 1960s.

Ranger Linda O'Kelley patrols Big Sur State Beach by horse.

Even with these changes, most ranger work continued as before. For instance, work with the park resources was a constant duty. One example was reported by Prairie Creek Redwoods Chief Ranger C.L. Milne on the work done with the rare Roosevelt Elk. In 1936, only the remains of one illegally hunted dead Elk were found in the dense forest of Prairie Creek. However by 1948, nearly 150 Elk were counted. Milne explained, "By patrolling the Park night and day in cooperation with the local game

## WOMEN UNDER THE RANGER HAT

**THE FIRST WOMAN TO JOIN** the state park ranger field force was Harriett “Petey” Weaver in 1930. She would work in the department for 20 years and retire from state park service in 1950 with “Deputy Ranger” badge #105.

Petey’s park career came about from a visit to the California Redwood Park in 1929. She recounted that the day she drove under the park entrance sign, “California Redwood Park — To be Preserved in a State Of Nature,” changed her life. Her arrival in the ranger work force a year later ended a 75 year tradition of male only rangers. Petey would work in four different parks over the next 20 years. An author of over 10 outdoor related books, she also chronicled her time in state parks in a booklet titled, *“Them Were the Days!”*

Additional women served shorter periods in the early ranger ranks. One was Clara B. Morrill who served three years at Marshall Gold Discovery State Park. Starting in 1932, she replaced her deceased husband who had been the Marshall ranger for 15 years. Several other women are listed in the Park Commission Minutes of the early 1930s as being designated as “police Officers for and in State Parks of California.” All were assigned to historical parks. These women included Laura Bride Powers at Monterey, Theoda D. Borie at Sonoma, Anna Bell Vance at Pio Pico, Mrs. Eugene Sage Abbott at Monterey Theater, and Mrs. W. H. Wirt. The 1938 Division of Parks roster lists additional women including Mrs. Isabel Hartigan at Monterey, Dolores Alvarado Connors at Pio Pico, Mrs. Pauline Hays at Sonoma Mission, Mary L. Greene at Monterey, Daisy V. Barbour at Sonoma, and Erema Armitage at Pio Pico Mansion.

The first curator at the Vallejo Home State Historic Monument was Luisa Vallejo Empanan who served from 1933 to 1943. Also working at Vallejo Home in the 1940’s was Madie D. Brown. Brown had been the first woman to be appointed to the State Park Commission in 1931 and was a Commission member for five years. Another early woman Park Commissioner was Mrs. Grace Richardson Butterfield. An activist and

former president of the California Federation of Women’s Clubs, Mrs. Butterfield was appointed to the Commission in 1936. In 1921, before the establishment of a statewide park commission, Mrs. Maude L. Dodge was appointed to the Mt. Diablo State Park Commission.

Following Petey Weaver’s retirement from state parks in 1950, there was a 19 year gap in the hiring of women into ranger work. The earlier women rangers in historical parks had been replaced by men or the positions reclassified as guides or curators. It was not until 1969 that women were again hired into ranger positions. About a dozen women were hired into part-time ranger jobs between 1969 and 1971. Two of these, Paula Pennington and Holly Huenemann, stayed on and pursued careers as state park rangers.

Paula Peterson became the first full-time modern woman ranger in 1972. Paula had a difficult task being the first, of what would be many, women to permanently enter the ranger ranks in modern times. Be it finding a proper uniform or just the idea of women in law enforcement, Paula and early women rangers had many problems and stereotypes to overcome. Even the public was a bit confused. Newspapers around the state came out with headlines like, “First Girl Ranger At Big Basin,” “Paula’s Pretty — And a Park Ranger” and “Perils of Paula, The Park Ranger.” Paula now serves as a chief ranger. Other early women rangers who have pursued park careers are Kate Foley, Kay Schmidt Robinson, Sherrin Grout and Mary Stokes.

From one permanent women ranger in 1972, there are now 91 women who serve in all levels within the ranger ranks. Women make up about 20% of the state park ranger service.



*Top: Petey Weaver broke the 75 year all-male ranger tradition in 1930. Left: Ranger Holly Huenemann gives direction to a young OHV motorcyclist.*

warden, poaching was almost eliminated. By baiting the Elk with apples and keeping camera fans from scaring them back into the forest, we soon had a small herd of Elk in Prairie Creek. Their number has gradually increased.”

The final era of ranger service began in the late 1960s under the one of the best known park figures in the country, William Penn Mott, Jr. Mott, who would be in the forefront of the park movement for 50 years, would also later serve as the Director of the National Park Service. As Director of State Parks, Mott brought about what can be called the modern “professional-generalist” ranger. Under him, nearly all the field level park work was split between two distinct classifications,

rangers and maintenance workers, and the Department field structure was completely changed. Virtually all maintenance duties were transferred to a newly established park maintenance worker series, which included maintenance workers, supervisors and chiefs. The individual parks were restructured into Park Areas, usually made up of several parks and headed by an Area Manager. Under the Area Manager, two new sub-divisions, representing the new split in ranger and maintenance services, were headed up by a Chief Ranger and a Maintenance Supervisor.

In the new field organization, seasonal naturalists, field historians and many guide positions were phased out and rangers began to provide all the educational and

interpretive programs in the parks. At the same time, the ranger classification was totally rewritten to recruit from college graduates and a professional State Park Manager class was established for higher level ranger positions. In addition, with a dramatic increase in crimes occurring in state parks and the professionalizing of law enforcement in general, rangers, old and new, were trained to the state’s standards for all peace police officers in California.

One of the most far reaching changes occurred in training and continuing education. From an almost non-existent training program of 24-40 hours, new college educated rangers began their career by receiving over 400 hours of training and instruction. This occurred mainly in



## BE A RANGER

“HUNT — FISH — LIVE IN A LOG CABIN — BE A RANGER!”

...proclaimed outdoor magazines of the 1920s. This glamorized view of the ranger job still exists today. When coupled with the real benefits of working as a ranger, it has made landing a California State Park Ranger job quite difficult. Even though entrance requirements are very high, 2,000-3,000 applicants vie for only about 25-50 ranger openings per year.

The first rangers were hired (and fired) at will by a commission or representative appointed by the Governor. For instance, in 1929 the Chief of State Parks, Colonel Charles Wing, traveled north to the small town of Burney to find a ranger for Burney Falls State Park. He questioned the postmaster and store owner. Their recommendation was Burney resident Jack Allen. Wing hired Allen on the spot. Allen promptly took up his duties and camped out in the park for the next two years until he could build his own residence.

It doesn't happen that way any

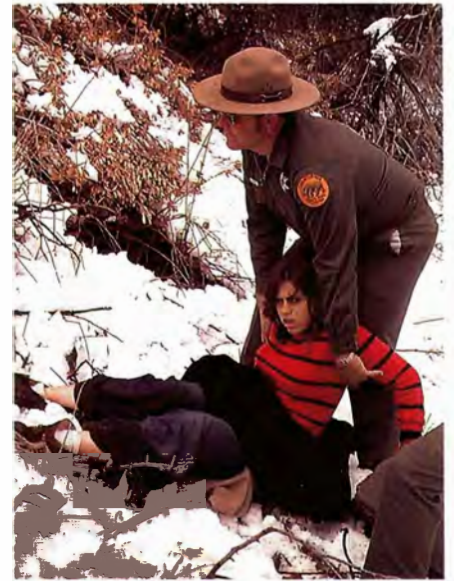
more. Civil Service laws enacted in the early 1930s changed the hiring system to include minimum requirements and testings. The first formal requirements were a ninth grade education and three years of experience in park work or a high school education. Other early requirements included being able to “size up situations and people accurately” and being industrious, resourceful, tactful, have a pleasing personality and be willing to work alone. The first Civil Service listing of ranger duties in the 1930s included, patrolling and protecting game and plants, fighting fires, performing maintenance duties, giving information, answering questions and submitting reports. This is surprisingly very similar to ranger duties 60 years later.

Over the years additional requirements were added to the ranger job and some have changed. For instance, one major change is in the area of fire fighting. Until the 1950s, fighting wildfires was an important and integral ranger responsibility. Now, although park fire prevention and protection remains a major duty, actual fire suppression is done primarily by



Watch for this great entertainment! "THE FOREST RANGERS" is coming soon to your favorite theatre. If you live south of San Francisco ask your local theatre manager when "THE FOREST RANGERS" is coming!





*Education and assistance are just some of the rangers duties. Top: An unknown ranger leads a campfire session at Humboldt Redwoods in the 1930s. Right: Ranger Steve Johnson on the nature trail with a school group.*



*Above: Ranger Tex Ritter helps an accident victim at Cuyamaca State Park.*

professional firefighters in the Department of Forestry or local fire agencies. Another major change that occurred in the late 1960s is that rangers do not routinely perform maintenance work.

Today, the requirements to be a ranger include a minimum of two years of college with a four year degree preferred. Over the last 20 years, virtually all new rangers have had a college degree. Other requirements include good physical health, positive personal characteristics including emotional maturity, tact, self-confidence, and sensitivity to needs and attitudes of others, and a willingness to wear a uniform and work on weekends, holidays and irregular hours.

Because rangers are state peace officers with full police powers, an applicant must be a U.S. citizen, not have any felony conviction, pass a drug screening test, and pass a psychological test. Additionally, new hires must complete the California Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) course which includes the use of firearms.

Once selected, a new ranger spends over five months in the state park training center learning their new job. This includes training in park service philosophy, law enforcement, interpretation, public relations, first aid, and other ranger duties. Upon graduation they are assigned to their first park.

Unlike early rangers, a modern California State Park Ranger is not paid totally in beautiful scenery and sunsets. By the early 1990s, new rangers had a starting salary of a

little over \$2,000 a month and journey level rangers were making over \$3,000 a month plus benefits which include a public safety early retirement plan.

Summer or seasonal park work is the traditional way to gain experience and a competitive edge towards a permanent ranger job. About 2,000 part time seasonal or summer employees are hired directly by individual state parks. These "seasonals" collect fees, register campers, give out information, pick up litter and garbage, do routine maintenance chores and perform other similar park work.

Those interested in ranger work must apply to the State Personnel Board in Sacramento. Testing occurs only every two or three years. The process includes a written test and an oral interview. Top scoring candidates must also pass a background check, a physical exam and a psychological test before being hired. The State is actively seeking women candidates and candidates from under represented minority groups.



*Current ranger job requirements include a college education, a background check, psychological and physical testing, and successful completion of police training.*



### *Park System Rangers*

the department's new training center at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove. All rangers were also encouraged and supported in a wide variety of continuing training and career related education. Inspired and actively promoted by Director Mott, the new training programs and center were brought into successful operation by Training Officer James Kruger. Training at the new center (later named after Director Mott) included courses in

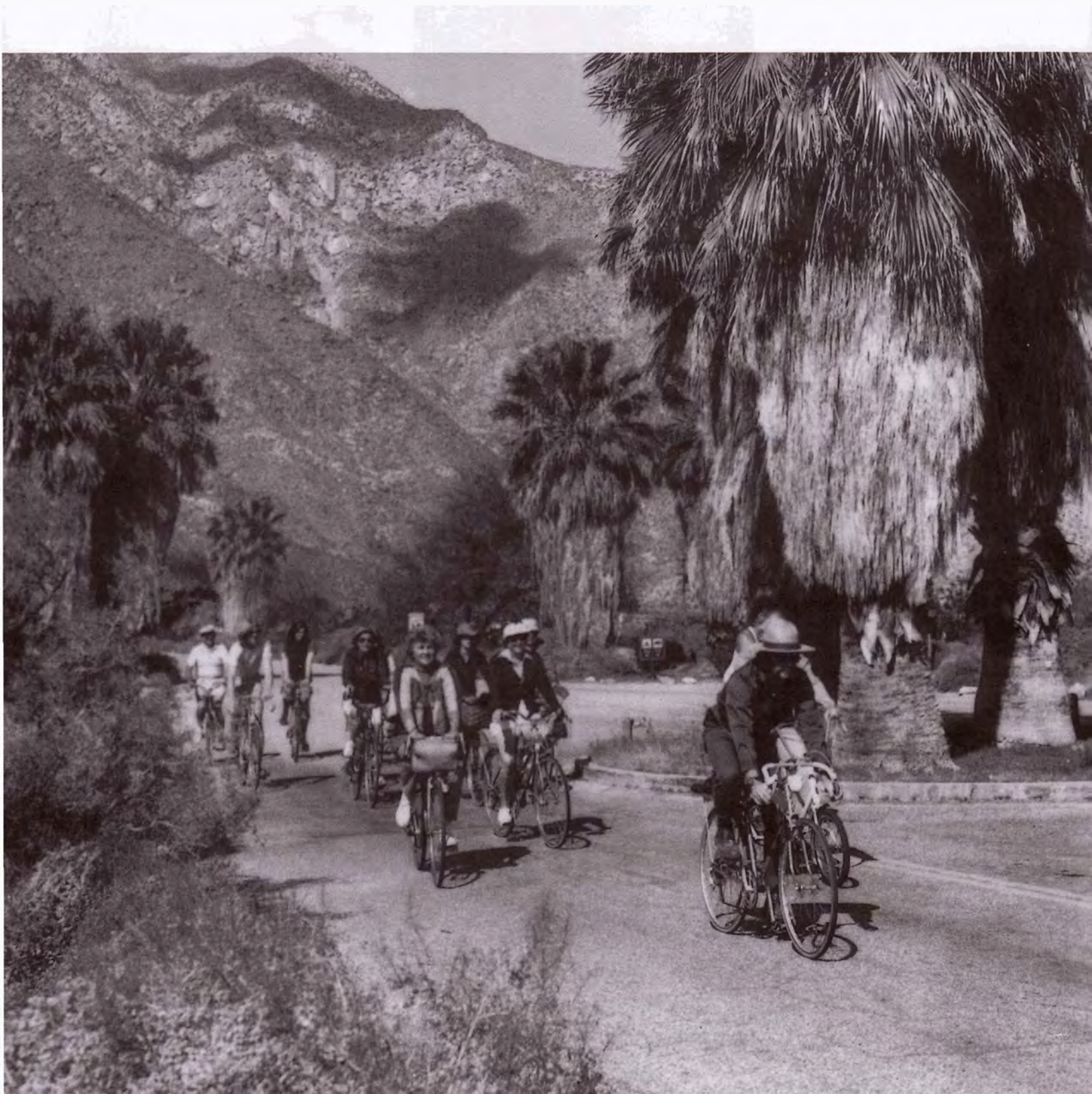
park administration, resource protection, law enforcement, interpretation, public relations, resource management, first aid, park philosophy and much more! The professional training of rangers has continued to expand. By 1991, newly hired rangers were provided over 800 hours of training to start off their careers.

With this training and the other changes occurring in parks, rangers had added two more fundamental

duties to the traditional jobs of patrolling and administering the parks, greeting the public, providing information, and assisting visitors with all manner of problems, large and small. They now took on a much more active role in general law enforcement in the parks and in directly providing interpretive and

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*Ranger Fred Jee leads a bike hike at Anza Borrego State Park.*



## THE RANGER STETSON

THE MOST RECOGNIZED RANGER SYMBOL is their hat. Sometimes referred to as a “Smokey the Bear” or campaign hat, it is known throughout the California state park service as “The Stetson”. This name comes from the original maker, John B. Stetson.

The Ranger Stetson has a colorful past. It starts in 1858, when John B. Stetson went west, possibly to die of “consumption,” which he had contracted working with his family in the hat trade. During the summer of 1862, while sitting around a campfire near Pikes Peak, Stetson, showing his fellow wanderers the felting process, decided to make a felt hat. Using the fur from jackrabbits, beavers, skunks, and other fur-bearing animals, he made his first genuine Stetson hat. It was big and very peculiar looking, but it gave protection from the wind, rain, and sun. Some of his companions admired it, but most of them considered the odd-looking hat to be a perfect object for jokes and wisecracks. All kidding came to an abrupt halt when a Mexican bullwhacker offered him a five dollar gold piece for it.

A healthy Stetson returned to the hat trade in Philadelphia in 1863. His first commercially successful hat was copied after the one he had made around the Pikes Peak campfire. Called the “Boss of the Plains,” it was a natural colored hat, with a four inch brim, four inch top, and a strap which served as a band. At first it was made of one grade of material and sold for five dollars. During the years the material grew finer and the cost increased until finally a thirty dollar price tag was attached to a pure beaver, or nutria hat. This “Boss of the Plains” is truly the hat from which all modern Stetsons evolved.

The original uniforms of the National Park Service included a soft-brim campaign style hat. These uniforms were adapted from those used during the period when the national parks were

administered by the military. National park rangers began wearing the stiff-brim, Belgian Belly color (named after the beautiful reddish buff, pastel like color of the under fur of the Belgian Hare), hat in 1934, when the Stetson Company standardized the manufac-

turing of the Ranger Stetson. It was even earlier than this, in 1901, that the Royal Canadian Mounted police adopted a stiff brim Stetson as their official uniform hat.

Most early California State Park Rangers wore a soft-brim Stetson. At the first employees conference in 1938, a uniform study was requested to standardize uniforms. A year later, a uniform committee recommended a State Park uniform, consisting of Lincoln gray-green trousers and jacket, gray shirt, black tie, black leather goods, and the stiff-brim Belgian Belly color Stetson. Since this first official uniform, everything but the Stetson has seen drastic change.

The only controversy surrounding the State Park Stetson was regarding what type of crease to have on the top. In 1947, after several years of friendly debate and rivalry over the two most popular creases, the “Calaveras” or modified (deep) crease was officially adopted over the dimple-like “pinch” crease.

Today, the state park ranger uniform consists of green pants and jacket, tan shirt, and black leather gear, topped by the well known “Stetson”. This hat, proudly worn by rangers for over 50 years, is fittingly named after the man who regained his health in the great outdoors.



*The well known ranger hat has only changed slightly over the last 50 years. Left: Ranger Steve Singer shows off his hat.*



Top: Rangers Murrell Gregory, Nelson Gerhard and Chet Boyle in their 1948 uniforms. Middle: Ranger badges L-R, 1928, 1945, 1953 & 1961 (with slight variations) and 1972. Other rangers badges are pictured on pages 29 and 44.

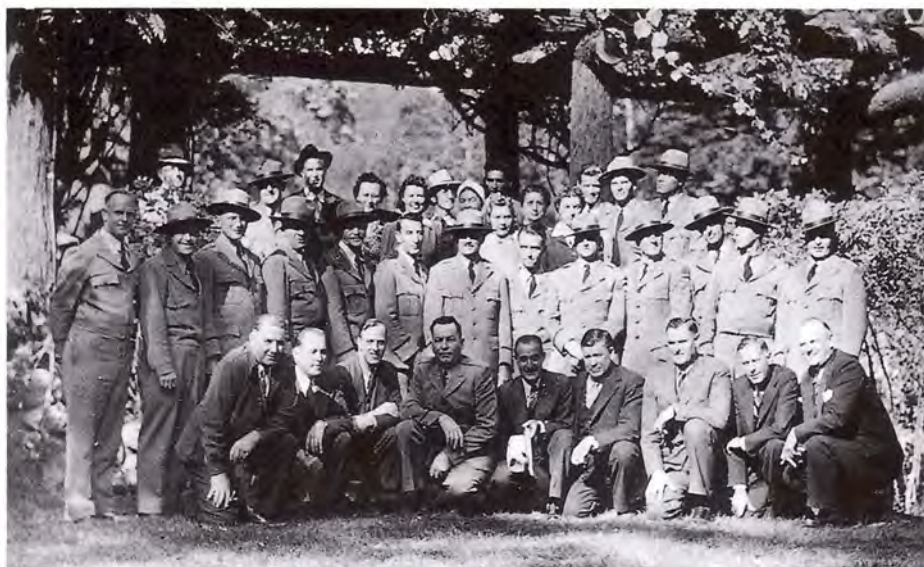
educational services like campfire programs and guided hikes.

In the first half of the “professional” era, ranger salaries and benefits lagged far behind compa-

rable pay for both college degree positions and state law enforcement jobs. In 1979, field level rangers made \$1180-\$1294 a month. With the advent of new labor laws in 1979 and an aggressive new ranger labor organization, ranger pay by 1990 had increased to a top step of over \$3,000 a month. Rangers had also gained most law enforcement employee benefits like enhanced disability benefits and inclusion in the peace officer early retirement program.

One of most well known state park figures that transcended all the

Several state park patches have been issued or worn over the years. In 1940, the “poppy” patch (top left) became the first official patch. This was followed by the “golden bear” patch (top right) from 1947-1964. Row two holds the 1964-1974 patch and the current patch (right) which started being used in 1974. Row three holds a small patch, originally developed for women rangers, but now used as a cap badge and a badge patch developed in 1986 for specialized duties like motorcycle patrol. Row four holds a “Ranger” badge patch and an unauthorized “backwards” bear patch developed by several uniform shops so that the bear could face forward when applied to the right sleeve.



The second state park all-employee conference in 1940 at Big Sur featured the first official ranger uniform. Adopted in 1939, the uniform was Lincoln gray-green, with black leather and of course the ranger Stetson hat.



rangers' eras, was John H. "Jack" Knight. Jack Knight started as a seasonal park employee in 1937 at Big Sur. He rose through the ranger ranks working at virtually every level. After serving over 41 years, he concluded his park career in 1980 as the Associate Director of the Department in charge of the Operations Division. Other well known operation chiefs or deputy directors for operations, not mentioned earlier, include A. E. "Chick" Henning, Darwin Tate, Earl P. Hanson, Newton B. Drury (who also served as a Director of the National Park Service), Edward P. Dolder, Charles A. DeTurk, and in more modern times, Garth Tanner and Jack Harrison.

The modern "professional-generalist" ranger was summed up in 1989 by Carolyn Warner, a member of the National Commission on Public Service. She said that she was fascinated to find out

what park rangers are expected to be. She accurately described the modern ranger as, "protectors, explainers, hosts, caretakers; people who are expected to be knowledgeable, helpful, courteous and professional; people who find you when you're lost, help you when

*A rare gathering of all State Park Superintendents in May 1985.*

your hurt, rescue you when you're stuck, and enforce the law when you or others can't abide by it."

*Ranger Jack Knight who served 41 years, is watched by a young admirer at Calaveras Big Trees in 1946.*







## Chapter 5

# PROTECTING THE PARKS & UPHOLDING THE LAW

**I**t started with a telephone call from the Calaveras County Sheriff's Office. Two armed and dangerous robbers were trying to escape across the mountains to Markleeville. Could Ranger "Pop" Traylor try to stop them until the Sheriff's men could arrive?

It was the mid-1930's at Calaveras Big Trees State Park and the adventure was later recorded by Ranger Traylor's young daughter Florance. Pop armed himself and enlisted the aid of Jack Connell at the nearby resort. They blocked the road with logs just as the robbers came speeding up. Florance finishes the story: "As the car approached they fired some warning shots in the air and yelled out for them to halt, but they didn't and they rushed on in an attempt to get around the barricade. Pop and Mr. Connell filled their tires and gas tank full of holes and the two outlaws climbed meekly out of their car with their hands in the air." Though much rarer than regular ranger protection work, adventures like this have occurred with some regularity throughout ranger history.

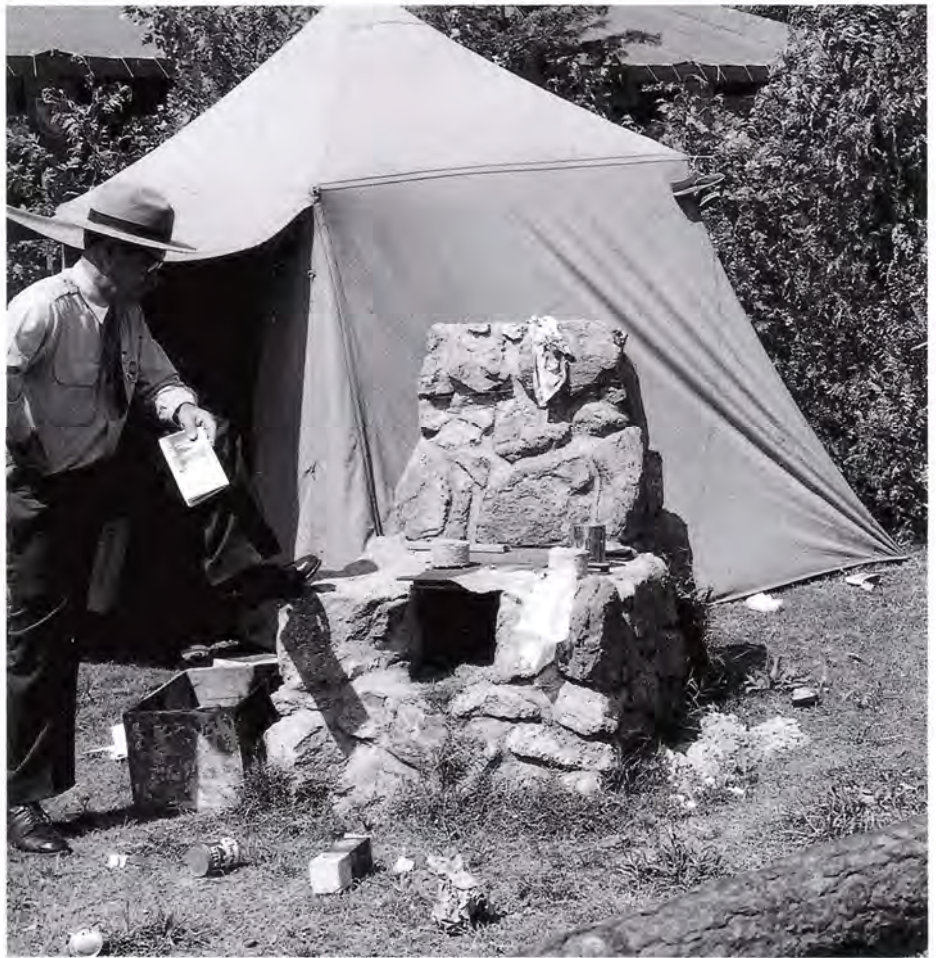
Park protection work was the first and most fundamental ranger duty and it remains so today. It forms the very basis of the ranger profession. Even enforcement of general laws in the parks was one of the earliest ranger duties and continues to be so today.

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*Big crowds and increased non-traditional park use,  
means more public safety work for rangers.*



Above: Current Ranger badge.  
 Right: Ranger A.J. "Tony" Trigeiro in a littered campsite. Traditional ranger enforcement work was primarily protecting park resources from misuse and abuse and is still one of the ranger's primary duties.  
 Below: Even homicides occur annually in the state park system.



Galen Clark's initial 1866 letter of instruction was almost entirely concerned with protection and enforcement duties. The Yosemite Commission was very concerned about preventing injury and destruction of park resources, some of which (including tree cutting) had already occurred. In their first official report in 1867, the commission stated, "It is also necessary that the guardian and sub-guardian

should be endowed by the State with police or constabulary authority, so that offenders may be arrested on the spot where the mischief is done."

The legislation establishing the

guardian/rangers in other early state parks also clearly required protection duties. For instance, the 1891 Act for the Marshall Monument specified, "The duties of the Guardian shall be to take charge of the said monument and grounds, and to preserve and protect the same from injury and vandalism."

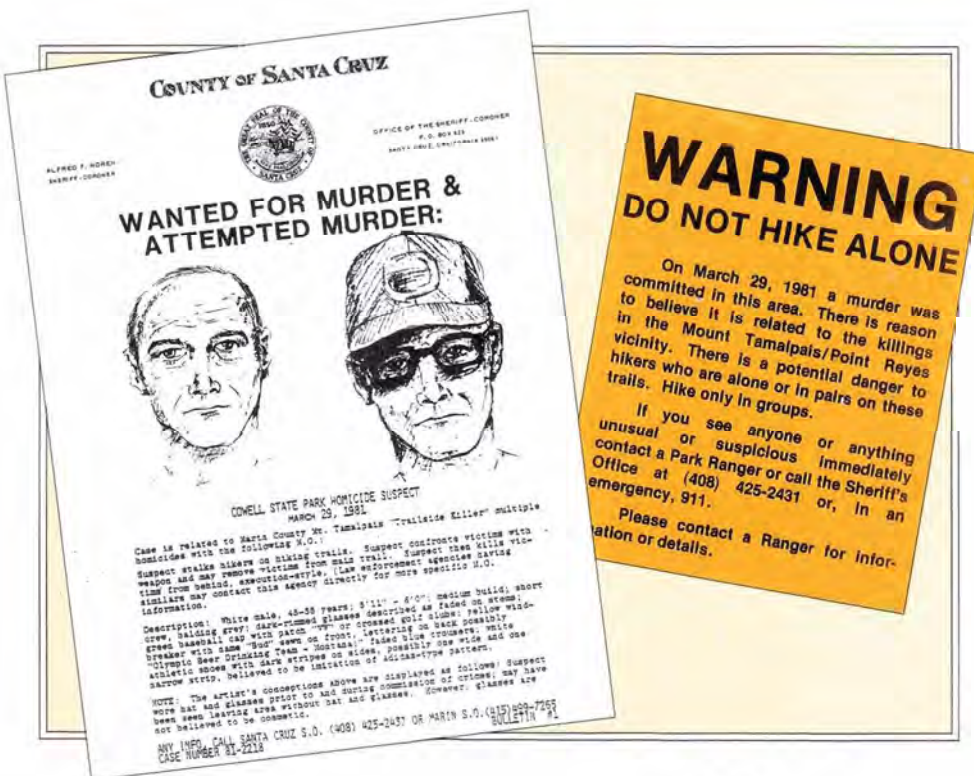
Ranger protection/enforcement work has been summed up as:

*Protecting the park from people;*

- *Protecting the people from the park;*

- *Protecting people from each other.*

During the first 100 years, the emphasis and need was primarily in the first two areas. For instance, the Yosemite State Guardians reported several arrests for cutting of trees and injuries from climbing accidents. They also had "people" crime problems. In 1882, Guardian James Hutchings reported that





“Sometimes we are visited by rough characters from the mountains, who, when crazy with liquor not only became nuisances, but sometimes endanger human life.”

The 1927 Statutes establishing the Division of Parks provided by law that, “It shall be the duty of the state park commission to protect the state parks from damage and to preserve the peace therein.” Further it gave the commission, “the power to confer on the chief of the division of parks and such other employees as they may designate, the full authority and powers of peace officers for said parks.”

In a report to the Governor’s Council on June 24, 1930, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources reported that the commission had acted to designate rangers, “as police officers for the state parks of California, with full authority and power as peace officers as defined by the laws of the state, and placed them under the authority of the Chief of the Division of Parks, thereby providing for a regular police organization for the protection of state parks of California.”

Though rangers were park policeman and responsible for protection and law enforcement in parks, official police authority and actions were rarely needed in the early days. Most ranger enforcement work during this time was related to protection and administration of the parks. The vast majority of it was done by education, warnings and maintaining a visible presence. Serious crimes that did occur were normally referred to and handled by the local county sheriff or police department.

During the 1930s, 40s, and 50’s, ranger enforcement actions were regularly reported in the State Park newsletter “*News and Views*.” Here are some typical examples of these reports:

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*Rangers patrolling by off-highway vehicle (OHV). Rangers make up the single largest group enforcing OHV laws.*

*“Ranger Louis Wakefield apprehended a duck-hunter working in one of the sloughs at Morro Bay State Park...The justice found the violator...guilty of hunting in a State Park, and fined him \$25.00.”*

*“Clyde C. McGill of Castella, convicted of dumping garbage in Castle Crags State Park, this month was fined \$20...Chief Ranger Ben Twight issued a complaint against McGill...Twight pointed out that the great amount of garbage dumped along the roads in the park is a serious problem in the Castella area...”*

*“Deputy Ranger Ray of Point Lobos Reserve State Park found a party of five persons on Gibson Beach in the park...with evidence that they had camped all night, and had built a fire...He placed charges against them...fined \$50”*

*“BIG BASIN REDWOODS STATE PARK, James B. Chaffee, Assistant Ranger. On Friday, Aug. 12, the dance was secured at 10:10 P.M. due to the fact that a large group of teenage boys ganged up in the middle of the floor ready to do*

*battle. The dance was secured to prevent a possible young riot.”*

*“COLUMBIA HISTORIC STATE PARK, A. A. Beck, Assistant Ranger. Six shots were fired from within State property, King’s Grocery. Bullets pierced wall and ceiling of Wright’s Restaurant...No one was injured and damage slight...Maurice King held in county jail awaiting court hearing.”*

Starting in the late 1950s, the addition of high use state beaches and recreation areas close to urban populations had brought about a different situation in many parks. Crime in these parks was much higher than in traditional more remote and lightly used parks. Added to this, local law enforcement agencies in some areas were unable or unwilling to take on the added workload brought about by the establishment of new parks. This change was personified by the opening of Folsom Lake State Park in 1956. Folsom attracted millions of people to a once rural area that previously had few enforcement problems. The Placer County



Sheriff's Department resisted taking over all the new law enforcement work generated by the park. They wanted state parks to provide the day-to-day law enforcement services, while they would back up rangers and investigate the more serious offenses that occurred in the park. In a more modern example, the City of Huntington Beach, during a budget crisis, eliminated their 18 member police beach enforcement unit. This unit had provided virtually all the law enforcement at the heavily used Huntington State Beach. It was replaced by state park rangers, complete with weapons, body armor, riot helmets and canine units.

The trend of acquiring high use and urban oriented parks with

the associated enforcement problems has continued to the present. By the mid 1960s, the trend was in full swing. In the 1967-68 fiscal year over 8,000 criminal offenses were reported in the state park system. These included one murder, 10 rapes, 248 assaults, 838 car burglaries, 1,079 drunkenness cases, 335 drug cases and 35 riots. General crimes outnumbered park violation by a three to one margin.

In response, State Parks commissioned an in depth study of the problem. The result was a 113 page report. Titled "*Crime Control in the California State Parks*" it was completed by the State Commission on Peace Officer Standards and

Training (POST) in 1968.

Authored by Edward M. Toothman and Harry V. Reynolds, Jr., under POST Executive Officer Gene S. Muehleisen, its findings were eye-opening and included over 60 recommendations for action. The report stated, "the Park System is ill-equipped and unprepared, both in terms of trained personnel and essential equipment, to cope with the problems of crime and disorder in the Parks." It also reported that, "In many of the parks the ranger faces the same dangers as a police officer who is working on the city streets." Recommendations included basic police training, better radio communications, rewriting of the Department's enforcement

## DESERT PATROLMAN

[The following is a contemporary account of ranger work in the mid-1950's. Written by an unknown ranger, it was originally printed in the January 1957 State Park employee newsletter.]

**THE DUTIES OF STATE PARK RANGERS** stationed in the Anza Desert and Borrego State Parks are not generally known to other men in the field. Much of their work is patrol with jeeps to protect state park lands. Without puncture-proof tires, a flat tire in some remote area of the desert could not only be disgusting but disastrous. The men making these patrols always follow a predetermined route and have frequent time checks. If they do not report to a predetermined point within an hour of the time of the report, a search party is immediately organized and begins to search under the direction of the Park Supervisor: they are also hopeful of getting a two-way radio system soon. These patrols usually begin early in the morning and sometimes go on until evening. An average patrol is about 60 to 90 miles per day with very little of this on paved roads or even on improved roads.

Superintendent Kenyon requires that a full report of each patrol be made in writing to the district office, with copies to Sacramento. On their reports the rangers note prospecting activity, trespass, items of natural history and any other items out of the ordinary. Many people think of the desert as just a mass of useless desert waste: actually it is one of the most interesting areas in California in true beauty, flora and fauna, and as such is one of the four remaining areas of California where true wilderness remains. In this

respect, park status is its highest use, for this type of country is practically useless for agriculture or urban development. Duty in this park is truly an inspiring one, especially for one with a flare for the unusual. Daily, rangers are finding things hitherto unknown — where else in the System can you be sponsored on a continuous exploration party?

*The following are a few quotations from ranger reports:*

"On arriving at McClain's I noted the trailer in the yard and the body of a dead man sitting in a chair by the trailer door."

"Parked the jeep and climbed to a low saddle to the west and upon reaching the top found hundreds of pieces of petrified wood scattered among black and burnt rocks."

"On the way, a sandy alluvial fan was crossed which was no doubt included in the Indian campsite, as broken pieces of pottery were scattered all about. Some of it was skillfully made but other pieces were very crude."

"Unexploded rockets, bombs and shells are found throughout the area south of 17 Palms in the Borrego bad lands. They are very dangerous and may explode if someone should pick them up."

"There are also numerous tin cans punctured by bullets: also, cut agave and juniper bush in the near



*Rangers Jim Baird and Dan Ash eradicating marijuana growing on park lands, a big problem starting in the late 1970s.*

policy, a department law enforcement training program, regular police safety equipment, a uniform crime reporting system, and closer liaison with local law enforcement agencies. Adoption of the report and a commitment to implement its many recommendations, has led to the high professional law enforcement standards in effect for rangers today. In the 25 years since the completion of the report, virtually all of its recommendations have been put into effect.

vicinity. The area is heavily used and needs constant patrol in order to hold down the vandalism.”

“The White-winged Doves have now arrived in the desert to nest.”

“At the head of the upper grove, we came suddenly upon the precipice of a beautiful 30-foot waterfall, guarded by a one full-skirted palm, and ringed by a leafy dome of tall trees.”

“I found one very nice example of rose rock. This piece would have been a collector’s item, except it had been broken by a hammer hound. A hammer hound is a poor relation to a rock hound.”

“One of these caves located a few hundred feet south of the fence and approximately 100 feet above the floor of the gorge supports a number of hieroglyphics and two grinding holes left by by-gone Indians.”

“To my knowledge, this canyon was previously unexplored by park personnel.”

From the above quotes one can see that these patrols are anything but routine. Many areas patrolled by the desert rangers must be observed on foot because these areas are so inaccessible that even the old reliable jeep must be parked and the “ankle express” must be used from that point on.

The desert grows on many of the rangers who think that these parks furnish the finest duty in the State Park System. The desert must have a similar effect on the people of California as evidenced by the mushrooming public use the desert back country is receiving. No natural province in California is more fragile than our deserts — more slow to recover from damage to natural values. Highly organized patrols aim to promote back country use, yet protect the attractiveness of the areas as well as the safety of the exploring public.



*Far Left: Desert patrol by jeep.  
Left: Ranger Carl Whitefield at the Anza Borrego Palm Grove.*

Issuing of weapons was one of the most controversial recommendations of the POST report. Prior to the 1960's, rangers carried or had access to firearms on an individual basis according to what they felt was necessary to carry out protection work. Rangers like Jack Allen and Vance Rubees reported carrying revolvers in remote park patrols and others like Carl Anderson reported the use of rifles or shotguns when necessary. However, in the 1960s, Department policy prohibited carrying of firearms on duty. In response to the POST report, all rangers were required to take a 240 hour POST approved law enforcement training course which include the use of firearms. In 1971, after receiving this training, rangers in 12 areas of the state were issued standard police equipment, including firearms, handcuffs, tear gas, and batons. By 1975, all rangers were issued this equipment and in the early 1980s, State Parks policy required that it normally be worn at all times. Routine carrying of police shotguns in patrol vehicles was authorized in 1984.

Fighting the higher levels of crime and resultant increase in law enforcement work was resisted by some in the park system. The POST report stated, "As the realities of crime and disorder encroached on the quietness of the Parks, there was a reluctance on the part of earlier



park administrators to recognize or acknowledge these significant changes, and to realistically meet

*Top: Canine Rangers Roy Burner, Don Bowman, Michael Callen, Jose Lopez and John Russo and their canine partners. Above: Full police training is now required of all rangers, including annual defensive tactics training. (L-R) Rangers Mario Rodriguez, Steve Yamaichi, Trainer Rod Stanford, Linda O'Kelley and Bill Berry train as field instructors. Left: Ranger Jeff Price enforcing nudity laws.*

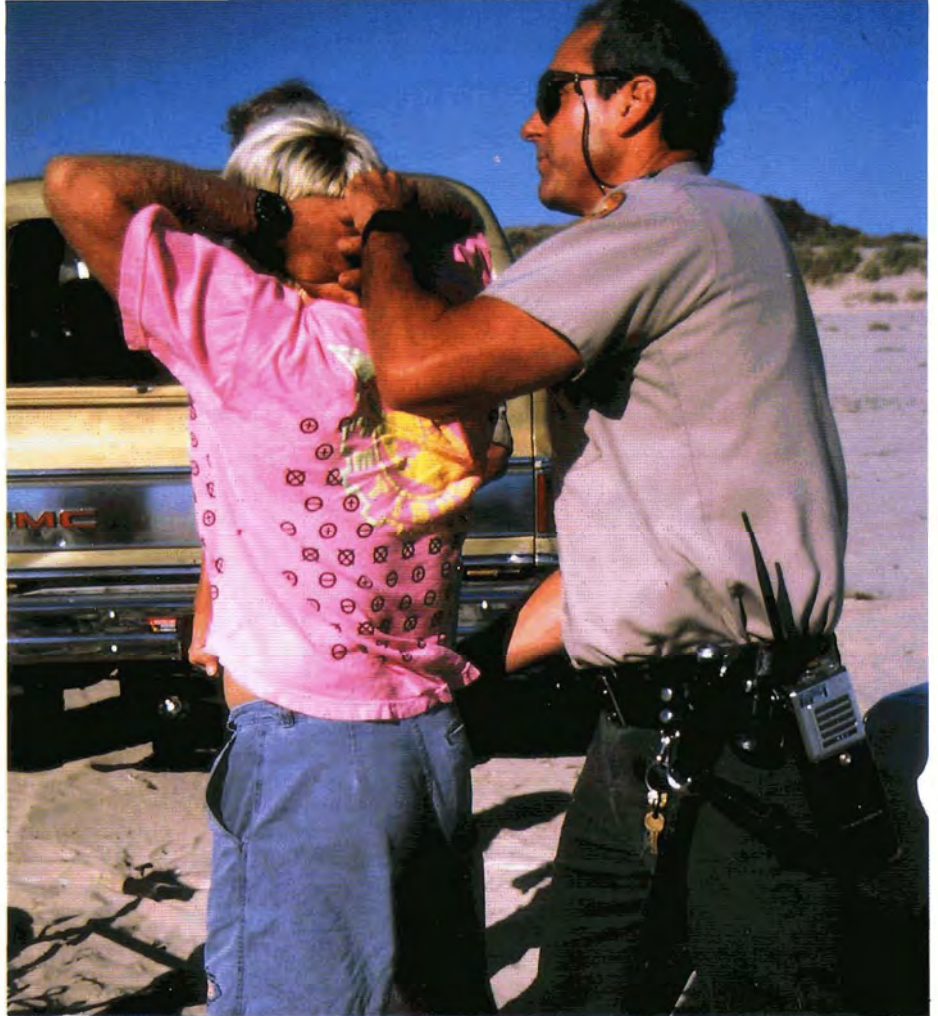


the need of an organized crime control program." This attitude, on the negative side, was a refusal to accept an unwanted reality. On the positive side, it was an effort to maintain a positive approach to park

visitors and forestall the establishment of a “cop” mentality. The majority of rangers accepted the need to meet the enforcement challenge and did so without any diminishment of the ranger image. Superintendent Lloyd Lively summed it up in a 1970 article. He said, “Let us not be too concerned about the public thinking we are ‘cops’ when we are only trying to increase our capability to do the things we are required to do to protect the California State Park System and make it safe for public use and enjoyment...We have pressed for more training in the enforcement field for many years...Now that we have it, let’s put it to good use in a way that fits our philosophy of State Parks and their relationship to the public.”

In more modern times, the pressure for rangers to spend even more of their time in protection duties has increased. By 1978, over 35,000 crimes were reported in the park system, including over 500 physical arrests. This was a 400% increase over the 1968 statistics and reflected both a rising crime rate and expansion of the park system. In response, entry, basic training, and on-going training requirements have all increased. In addition to State mandated training and standards for peace officers, the Department has established even higher standards and training requirements in many areas. For instance, ranger firearms and defensive tactics training and qualifications far exceed the minimum state requirements and are a model for park law enforcement agencies. The Department has also upgraded many of the tools necessary for ranger enforcement duties. Police package patrol vehicles, early replacement of these vehicles, instituting a new statewide radio and dispatch system, establishing a police “K-9” dog program, better

*Cartoonist Phil Frank’s humorous look at ranger enforcement duties.*



personal safety equipment including new and more effective batons, holsters and firearms, are but a few of these improvements. In terms of park protection and park law enforcement, these changes have made California State Park Rangers one of, if not the, most highly qualified, trained, and equipped park ranger forces in existence.

Yet many problems still exist. Although visitor use and enforcement contacts continue to be high, there has been widespread ranger staffing cuts and shortages, large cuts in budgets and equipment, and many uncompleted programs like the radio dispatch centers. For the rangers in the field, these conditions have made providing adequate

*Ranger William Pierce makes a drunk driving arrest at Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area.*

public safety and security in the parks an often very difficult job.

Certainly the challenge of the 90’s will be for less rangers to provide high levels of public safety services for more parks and more people. However, the basic premise and reason for ranger protection work remains the same as it has been for more than 125 years: Protect park resources and values; Protect people from park and nature’s hazards; Protect the public’s right to a safe, secure, and enjoyable experience in their parks.



## Chapter 6

# EXTRAORDINARY ACTS OF HEROISM —THE CALIFORNIA MEDAL OF VALOR

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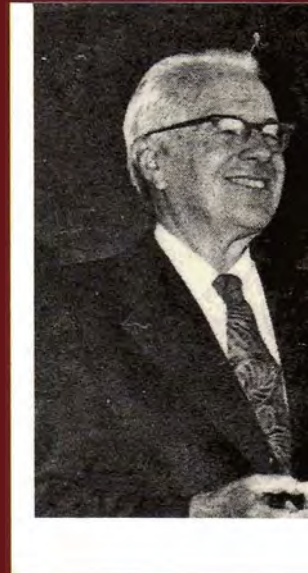
**T**he California Medal of Valor is the State's highest award for "Extraordinary Acts of Heroism" performed by state employees at risk to their own life. Since its authorization in 1958 by the California Legislature, 21 state park personnel have been awarded the Medal of Valor. In addition to the original award, now called the gold category, a silver category was added for heroism which did not endanger the life of the recipient.

The Medal is usually awarded by the Governor, a Department Director or a representative of the Legislature. All recipients are honored on a large plaque in the State Capitol. The original medals were about the size of a dime. During Governor George Deukmejian's administration in the 1980s a larger sized medal was presented along with the original "Tie Tack" medal.

Of course, prior to 1958 and the recognition of the Medal of Valor, rangers had been putting themselves at risk to protect the public, be it firefighting, rescues or in other ways.

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*Medal of Valor recipients: Top left: Chuck Grennell from the State Park Commission; Top right: Joseph Collins from Chief Deputy Director Les McCargo; Middle left: Gary Strachan from Assembly Speaker Willie Brown; Middle right: Bonnie Morse from Governor Deukmejian; Bottom left: Steven Gazzano from Director William Penn Mott, Jr.; Bottom right: Charles Potthast from Governor Edmund Brown.*







## Hero Medals For In Sea Rescue

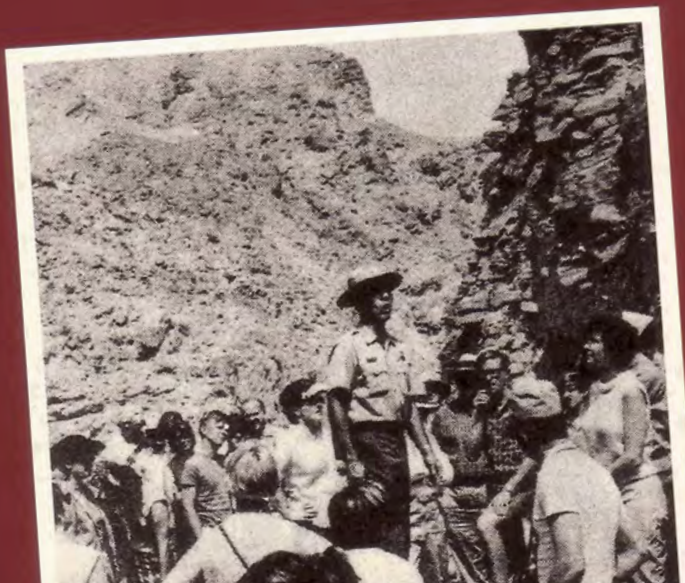
**FORT ROSS** — Two state park rangers were presented medals of valor Saturday in special ceremonies during the celebration of Fort Ross' 150th anniversary and dedication as a national historical landmark.

The rangers, John McKenzie and William Bishop, headed a 16-foot outboard into heavy seas off Fort Ross last month to aid an 80-foot sailing vessel, the Holiday, which was foundering.

They managed to tow the vessel into deep water and keep her out of the breakers until a Coast Guard cutter arrived to complete the job.



**HEROIC RANGERS RECEIVE RECOGNITION**  
Edward Dolder honors John McKenzie, William Bishop





For instance, the February 1940 California Conservationist magazine reported the following episode “starring” State Park Superintendent E.P. (Percy) French, Ranger Elmer Poole and Assistant State Forest Ranger Hubert Mund. Helgor L. Vinum “was clinging to his oarless, half-swamped boat” on the “smashing floodwaters” of the South Fork of the Eel River. French went to Vinum’s rescue in a small boat which almost had the oarlocks torn off by the raging river. Poole and Mund sped down stream on a parallel road ahead of the victim and rescuer. “From the limb of a leaning tree, Mund targeted a rope to French as he and Vinum swept by” and both were brought to shore safely.

There are also numerous modern actions taken by rangers that have brought awards or recognition. For instance, in 1980 Ranger Paul Hladik was presented the Certificate of Merit by the American Red Cross for saving the life of a near drowning victim. In another example, Rangers Vern McHenry and John Stafford were awarded the Placer County Law Enforcement Silver Valor Award for locating and ensuring the arrest of snipers, while they and park visitors were under high-powered rifle fire.

Though there are many other accounts of rangers risking harm to themselves to assist or protect the public, the following descriptions of those awarded the California Medal of Valor provides a documented look at the often heroic actions taken by rangers in the line of duty. The accounts are mainly taken from

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*Medal of Valor Recipients: Top left: John McKenzie and William Bishop from Deputy Director Edward Dolder. Top right: Glen McGowan from Chief Deputy Director Jack Harrison; Middle: Paul Holman and William Robinson with Director Briner, Governor Deukmejian and Chief Deputy Director Garth Tanner; Bottom: George Leetch.*



*21 state park employees have been awarded the Medal of Valor.*

the official citations which accompany the California Medal of Valor.

**YACHT AND CREW  
RESCUED IN HEAVY SEAS**  
*(William B. Bishop, State Park  
Ranger John C. McKenzie, State  
Park Curator)*

A huge wave swept the sailing yacht Holiday and one crewman was washed overboard and lost off the Mendocino Coast. The engine was disabled and the vessel was taking on water. With their radio gone, the three remaining members of the crew built a fire on the deck, which was spotted by Fort Ross Rangers William Bishop and John McKenzie. Bishop and McKenzie, with the help of another person, launched a 16 foot outboard boat in extremely heavy seas and pulled the 80 foot yacht, which was in immediate danger of breaking up on the rocky coast, to deep water. All but one of the yacht’s crew were rescued.

**DIVES INTO DANGEROUS  
WATER AND SAVES THREE**  
*(Charles O. Potthast, State Park  
Attendant)*

On June 8, 1963, Charles Potthast while on boat patrol at the

Salton Sea State Park with Park Aid Leo Wayne Pexa and Fish and Game Warden Jack Bedwell, saw a small boat containing three persons was riding low in the choppy sea. The small boat swamped and it was immediately obvious that the occupants were non-swimmers. Two of the victims, a father and his son, clutched frantically at each other, screaming for help and submerging with each wave.

Potthast quickly guided the patrol boat to the scene and, without regard for his own safety, dove into the water to render assistance. He first secured a floating cushion and thrust it into the hands of the separate victim. Then, he swam to the aid of the struggling pair. After several tries, and with great danger to himself, he succeeded in separating the pair and helping them first to cushions and then to boats which had by this time arrived at the scene. Potthast, who is not a trained lifeguard, remained in the water and passed a tow-line through the bow of the swamped boat and only then allowing himself to be taken aboard the patrol boat.

**TWO YOUNG GIRLS SAVED  
FROM HUGE WAVE**  
*(William T. Parker, State Park  
Attendant)*

On the afternoon of August 12, 1966 Parker was summoned after two young girls had been caught in the backwash of a large wave and swept out more than 100 feet from shore. The men on the Wright’s Beach on the Sonoma Coast formed a human chain and pulled one of the girls ashore. When Parker arrived he found the girl’s mother floundering offshore. She had unsuccessfully gone to the aid of her children.

Appraising the situation, Parker took a life ring and swam to the girl, who was face down in the water. After reaching the girl he put the life ring over her head and towed her back to shore through heavy surf. Although he had swallowed

water and was near exhaustion, Parker returned and pulled the woman to shore, aided by a man with an inflated tire tube and rope. After checking the condition of the girl and seeing that her mother received artificial respiration, Parker called the Sheriff's Office for assistance. The girl was saved, but the mother could not be revived.

### **CHARGES INTO EARTH- QUAKE TO EVACUATE CAMPERS**

*(George W. Leetch, State Park Ranger)*

On April 8, 1968 an earthquake occurred in the Split Mountain Gorge, located in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. At the time of the earthquake, nine families were camped at Split Mountain, a two mile long canyon with sheer, conglomerate walls ranging in height from 300 to 400 feet.

Upon notification of the danger to the campers, Ranger George Leetch immediately went into the gorge and started directing families from the area. The earthquake had caused huge boulders to loosen and crash down the

mountainside, smashing vehicles and blocking the exit. Visibility was almost zero. The campers were confused; some were hysterical. While Leetch was in the gorge trying to calm the campers, an aftershock caused more boulders to fall and added to the confusion. With the earth still trembling, and despite imminent danger to his own safety and life, George Leetch calmed the people and successfully led the campers to safety.

### **PLUNGE INTO POLLUTED WATERS SAVES YOUTH**

*(Knut B. Skjonberg, Lifeguard Supervisor, Eric V. Emery, Lifeguard, Jerry L. Bennette, Lifeguard)*

On January 26, 1969, a young man, having entered the rain swollen Santa Ana River to ride on an inner tube, was being carried out to sea. The river was running bank to bank with an accumulation of mud, debris, trees, rattlesnakes and even spiders swept off the high ground, due to the "worst storm in over thirty years".

These men, having noted the dire peril confronting the panic

stricken youth, his screams drowned by the roar of the surf, unhesitatingly forged their way through the swirling, heaving mass. Clawing their way over the tossing logs, swimming whenever possible, they reached the side of the youth and pulled, tugged and towed him to safety. Due to cuts and bruises and the extremely polluted condition of the water, all participants had to be inoculated and medically treated as a result of their traumatic experience.

### **REPEATED ATTEMPTS SAVES SWIMMER IN HEAVY SURF**

*(Steven R. Gazzano, State Park Ranger)*

On June 26, 1974, at Thornton State Beach in San Mateo County, Ranger Gazzano pulled 17 year old Steven Lopez from the water when the lad couldn't get back to shore.

Lopez had floated beyond the breakers on a plastic float. The float leaked or ruptured and he was

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*Several Medal of Valor actions have involved rescuing people from sinking ships.*



unable to return to shore against the current. A park visitor reported the situation to Ranger Gazzano and the Ranger changed into trunks, grabbed a float, ran a quarter-mile to the beach, and entered the water.

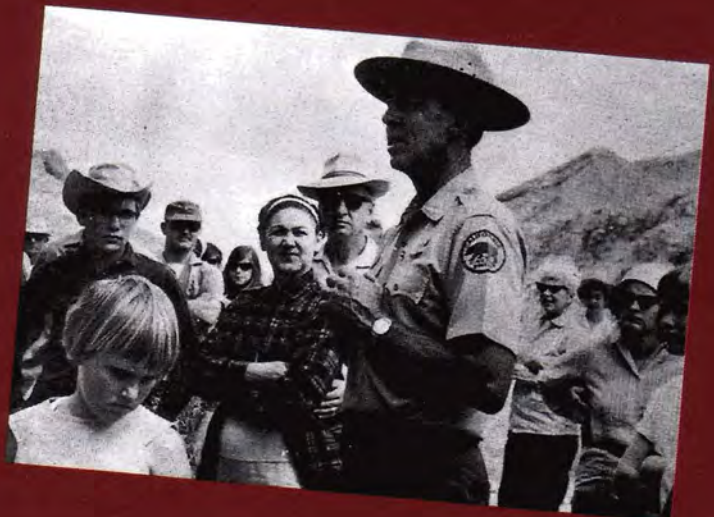
Gazzano was unable to make progress, so he left the water and reentered at a point nearer the victim. With difficulty he swam through the breakers, reached the victim and successfully assisted him to shore.

### **BOAT ACCIDENT VICTIMS SAVED OFF WAVE DASHED ROCKS**

*(Daniel E. Scott, State Park Ranger,  
Lee R. Clark, State Park Ranger,  
Keith R. Williams, State Park Ranger)*

On June 15, 1976, during the early morning hours, Rangers Clark, Scott and Williams, were making preparations to dive for abalone along the rocky cliffs of the Mendocino shoreline. They became aware that calls for help were coming from wind capped waves about a quarter of a mile at sea. Three survivors of a capsized boat were clinging desperately to the overturned craft and to a nearby rock as the cold waves dashed them about and sapped their fast ebbing strength.

Quickly getting into their wet suits the three men dispatched Bruce Williams, brother of Ranger Williams, to Mendocino for help and started the long arduous swim to attempt a rescue. The three Rangers, though not trained as lifeguards, and very much aware of the hazards of rough, cold water and rocks, swam to the victims, one of whom had a severe heart condition. With concentrated effort, Rangers Clark, Scott and Williams systematically brought the three



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*Medal of Valor Recipients: Top:  
William Parker with Governor  
Ronald Reagan; Middle: Governor  
Reagan presents awards to Kurt  
Skjonberg and Eric Emery; Bottom:  
George Leetch.*



immediate danger to himself, clearly prevented the loss of a life and were dedicated to the attempt to save another.

### **PAIR RESCUED FROM NEAR FREEZING WATER**

*(Gary Strachan, State Park Ranger)*

Ranger Strachan risked his own safety and life in saving the lives of two swimmers caught in the riptide off Gold Bluffs Beach, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, May 16, 1980. Upon arriving at the scene, after receiving an emergency call, he observed two people approximately 100 and 250 meters off shore. Water temperature was 43 degrees, with waves six to seven feet high and a strong riptide moving rapidly out to sea.

Strachan radioed for back-up help while others removed his boots and he unstrapped his gun and other equipment. Stripped to his underwear, he entered the water, swam to the victim furthest from the shore, and, fighting desperately against the tide, tried unsuccessfully for several minutes to bring the cold and exhausted swimmer closer to shore and safety. Anxiously looking toward the beach, the Ranger noticed the second swimmer had been carried safely ashore by the waves and a bystander was entering the surf to aid in the rescue with a surfboard. The bystander, unfamiliar with the use of the board, was soon in trouble.

Ranger Strachan left the first swimmer's side, retrieved the surfboard, and instructed the second swimmer to cling to a floating crab pot. Cold and exhausted, Strachan returned to the first swimmer, a large man, and with considerable effort pushed him ashore. Then, with all the remaining strength he could gather, Strachan returned to the second man and brought him through the treacherous riptide and waves safely to shore.

### **FISHERMAN SAVED FROM FALL**

*(Joseph P. Collins, State Park Ranger)*

On March 10, 1981, State

Park Ranger Joe Collins carried out the successful ocean rescue of Bill Bourke, a fisherman who had fallen from the rocks adjacent to West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz. After being flagged down by Bourke's wife, Collins realized the immediate danger to the victim, who had fallen adjacent to the bluff in extremely heavy surf conditions. Quickly Collins responded by grabbing a rescue tube from his vehicle and stripping down to work pants. Diving into the water, he untangled the victim from his fishing line and moved the him away from the rocks and up coast out of danger. He then had to swim approximately 500 yards to bring the victim to a safe landing area.

By diving into the heavy surf with no immediate assistance available, Ranger Collins did not hesitate to put his own life in danger to save another. In addition, he was able to withstand the hardship of having to remain in extremely cold water for forty minutes while being able to swim the victim to safety.

### **WOMAN WEDGED IN WATERFALL**

*(William L. Robinson, State Park Ranger, Paul G. Holman, State Park Ranger)*

Ranger Robinson, followed by Ranger Holman, on June 4, 1983, responded to an emergency call that a young woman was caught in Upper Green Valley Falls at Cuyamaca State park. Ranger Robinson observed that the victim's foot was wedged in the boulders under a ten foot cascade of icy water. Her head was being held above water by a male companion who had also been injured. Secured by a lifeline, Ranger Robinson plung-ed into the cascade, relieved the victim's friend and attempted to fasten ropes around her for support. Failing in this endeavor, he positioned himself precariously on a slippery ledge above the victim and continued to hold her head out of the water.

Ranger Holman joined Ranger Robinson and stood below the woman on a small rock trying in vain to overcome the force of the water and free her trapped foot. By now the victim was experiencing difficulty in breathing and the Rangers attempted to provide life-

*Rangers Jordan Fisher-Smith and Alan Marshall on a medical emergency at Pismo Beach.*



saving air with the use of a rubber hose, but the victim, suffering from extreme cold, clamped her jaw closed shutting off the flow of air.

Approximately 15 minutes later a Forestry crew lowered an air pack to the Rangers. With the air pack securely fastened, park personnel asked for volunteers from a crowd of approximately 150 people to assist in diverting the water. A human chain was formed and with the use of sandbags the flow was lessened and the woman was removed to safety after more than an hour of being submerged in below 40 degree water. Both Rangers were suffering from shock and exhaustion from exposure to the cold water when the rescue was completed.

#### **ELDERLY VICTIMS SAVED IN BOAT MISHAP**

*(Bonnie Morse, State Park  
Technician)*

On June 11, 1984 State Park

Technician Morse responded to a report of a capsized boat imperiled by strong wave action and three fishermen calling for help at the Salton Sea. After calling for backup assistance, Ms. Morse rushed to Sneakers Beach where she observed one of the victims approximately 25 yards from shore clinging to a flotation cushion. Without hesitation she entered the water and brought the man safely to shore. Leaving him in the care of others, she again entered the water, and with the cushion, swam to aid his companions who were clinging to the bow of the boat approximately 100 yards from shore. Upon reaching the elderly victims, she kept them calm with words of encouragement while waiting for a rescue boat to maneuver into position. As the boat drew closer, Ms. Morse grabbed the mooring line, assisted in positioning the boat and helped lift both men safely into the rescue craft.

#### **PET ALMOST DROWNS VICTIM AND RESCUER**

*(Michael Drago, State Park Ranger)*

On July 3, 1986, Ranger Drago, after being alerted that two boys were caught in the swift current of the Sacramento River, rushed to the scene. Seeing only one boy, he ran down a steep embankment and immediately swam to the youth, reaching him just as he went under the water. In spite of experiencing muscle cramps, Ranger Drago proceeded to swim toward shore with the boy. His efforts were further hampered by the boy's dog climbing on his back and scratching him. Despite these obstacles, Ranger Drago held on to the youngster until a rescue boat could reach them.

#### **WOMAN SAVED FROM SUBTERRANEAN GROTTTO**

*(Glen McGowan, State Park Ranger II)*

On August 26, 1986 State Park Ranger Glen R. McGowan responded to an accident at Point Lobos State Park, Monterey County. A woman had fallen through a narrow crevice in the rocks into a deep subterranean grotto filled with violently turbulent sea water.

Upon his arrival at the accident scene, Ranger McGowan observed the victim being battered against the vertical rock walls of the subterranean grotto. Her husband, his body covered with abrasions from his attempts to rescue her, was clinging to a ledge. Another man was on a ledge about three feet above the water.

Although well aware of the dangers with which he was confronted, Ranger McGowan jumped 15 feet into the 51 degree water. He raised the woman's head above the water and was eventually able to place a life jacket under her head and chest. During this entire time he attempted to ventilate her, while being buffeted about in the surging channel. A number of times the

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*Rescue training. Most Medal of  
Valor awards have been water related  
incidents.*



wave and surge action carried them the length of the 35 foot channel. Several times they were pulled inland toward underwater caves, which were creating an undertow. At those times, Ranger McGowan had to kick backward vigorously to keep from being pulled beneath the surface. It was approximately 35 minutes before rescue crews were able to pull the woman from the water. Before Ranger McGowan would allow himself to be pulled from the channel, ropes were lowered to pull the victim's husband and the man on the ledge to safety. Once both men were removed from the rocks, Ranger McGowan tied the rope around himself and was lifted out of the grotto. He was then treated for hypothermia and lacerations.



*Rangers have been involved many ocean cliff rescues, none so dramatic as Glen McGowan's rescue at Point Lobos.*

### LIST OF STATE PARK RECIPIENTS OF MEDAL OF VALOR

- |     |                     |      |     |                     |      |
|-----|---------------------|------|-----|---------------------|------|
| 1.  | William S. Bishop   | 1963 | 12. | Keith R. Williams   | 1976 |
| 2.  | John C. McKenzie    | 1963 | 13. | Eric Walbergh       | 1977 |
| 3.  | Charles O. Potthast | 1964 | 14. | Charles E. Grennell | 1979 |
| 4.  | William T. Parker   | 1966 | 15. | Gary Strachan       | 1980 |
| 5.  | George W. Leetch    | 1969 | 16. | Joseph P. Collins   | 1982 |
| 6.  | Knut D. Skjonberg   | 1971 | 17. | William L. Robinson | 1983 |
| 7.  | Eric V. Emery       | 1971 | 18. | Paul G. Holman      | 1983 |
| 8.  | Jerry L. Bennette   | 1971 | 19. | Bonnie Morse        | 1984 |
| 9.  | Steven R. Gazzano   | 1974 | 20. | Michael C. Dragoo   | 1986 |
| 10. | Daniel E. Scott     | 1976 | 21. | Glen R. McGowan     | 1987 |
| 11. | Lee R. Clark        | 1976 |     |                     |      |





## Chapter 7

# RANGER ORGANIZATIONS & HONORARY RANGERS

**T**wo organizations, the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA) and the State Park Peace Officers Association (SPPOAC) represent state park rangers. Both groups bestow Honorary State Park Ranger status on worthy individuals.

### CSPRA

The oldest of the two organizations representing rangers is the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA), formed in 1964.

Organized on behalf of the 350 rangers in the park service at the time, CSPRA's founding objectives were to: "represent, advance, and to promote the interests and standards of the profession of California State Park Rangers and to provide a medium of exchange of professional thought, and to promote sound judgment, high quality and economy in planning, development, operation and maintenance of facilities and



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*Top left: The 1964 founding Board of Directors for the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA) represented many of the better known rangers in the park service at the time. Standing from the left: Darrell Knoefler, Gordon Kishbaugh, Henry Saddler, John Michael, Kirk Wallace and Mel Whittaker. Seated from left: Lewis Myer, CSPRA President Paul Griffith and Executive Secretary Philip Geiger. Not pictured is first Vice President Alfred Salzgeber.*

*Bottom left: The State Park Peace Officers Association of California (SPPOAC) 1989 Board of Directors. Back row from the left: Lisa Mulz, Suzanne Westover, Joe Von Hermann, Ken Morse, Mike French, Juvie Ortiz III, Steve Johnson and Vern McHenry. Front row: Parks Director Henry Agonia, Nancy Fuller, Vic Trevisanut, OHV Deputy Director Lee Chauvet, Bob Burke and Chief Deputy Director Jack Harrison.*

services offered the public by the Division of Beaches and Parks.”

The idea of a rangers’ association was formulated in 1964 at a park supervisor’s meeting at Columbia State Historic Park. Those present believed an organization was needed to represent the interests of rangers to park management on various professional issues. This idea, with the help of several individuals and the California State Employees Association (CSEA), resulted in several organizational meetings. On November 4, 1964, CSPRA held its first Board of Directors meeting and in 1965, its first General Executive Council or general membership meeting at the Asilomar Conference Grounds. The first President was Paul Griffith, supervisor at Squaw Valley State Park. Alfred Salzgeber was elected the first vice president. Phil Geiger, later made an honorary ranger, was the first executive secretary. In 1968, Ranger Doug Bryce became the executive secretary. For over 25 years, he has been the behind-the-scenes coordinator and manager for CSPRA affairs. He retired from state parks in 1988, but continued on as CSPRA’s Executive Manager.

In 1967, CSPRA was incorporated as a professional organization, and in 1969, it was recognized by the state as an authorized representative of its members for employeematters. Thus, CSPRA became both a professional and an



*Doug Bryce, longtime CSPRA Executive Secretary, pictured here at Calaveras Big Trees early in his ranger career.*

employee representative association. In 1979, with the passage of the State Employee-Employer Relations Act, CSPRA chose to again become a solely professional organization.

Since 1964, CSPRA has accomplished many tasks and achieved some important goals. CSPRA has been in the forefront of many of the vital issues of the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and many environmental battles. These accomplishments include:

- Establishment of a State Park training center and the Ranger Trainee Program (1965–1968);
- Establishment of a uniform allowance and pay parity for rangers (1965-1979);
- Fought for various environmental issues including successful

opposition to Grunion egg destruction by State Parks (1973), Pescadero Marsh reclassification to reserve status (1974), and opposition to live burl sales by private concessionaires (1975);

- Supported various legislation and initiatives including the 1974 and all later Park Bond Acts, the California Coastal Plan, and the California Bottle (Recycling) Bill;
- Assisted and promoted interpretation including funding of the Junior Ranger Program (1974 & 1975), donating interpretive equipment to the state parks and providing interpretive training scholarships for training not funded by the state.

Today, CSPRA continues to lead in the effort to maintain the integrity of the State Park System. One of CSPRA’s largest ever projects is the SAVE BODIE! campaign. This effort is headed up by the SAVE BODIE! Committee chaired by Donna Pozzi. The Committee has been in the forefront of the fight to prevent the mining of Bodie Bluff and the spoiling of the Bodie historical area. The Bodie fight is possibly California’s largest statewide historic preservation battle of the 20th century.

Just as CSPRA is concerned about the resources of the State Park System, it is also concerned about individual members. Since its creation, CSPRA has provided relief for its members in times of disaster or personal tragedy. Keeping the spirit of the park family alive is one of CSPRA’s most important objectives.

On the professional side, CSPRA has provided an annual conference and workshop on the issues of interest to its members. Since 1967, CSPRA has also been providing education and training scholarships to its members.

Starting in 1979, CSPRA has opened its membership to all State Park employees and has broadened its goals to include an even wider variety of park and environmental issues. The future promises to be a very difficult one for parks. Tighter budgets, ever-increasing demands on the park heritage, population growth,

### CSPRA PRESIDENTS

|                |            |                |            |
|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Paul Griffith  | 11/64–6/66 | John Mott      | 3/82–2/84  |
| Al Salzgeber   | 7/66–12/67 | Jeff Price     | 3/84–12/85 |
| Richard Brock  | 1/68–2/70  | Rick Palmer    | 1/86–2/88  |
| Wesley Cater   | 3/70–2/72  | Donald Murphy  | 3/88–2/90  |
| Jack Welch     | 3/27–2/74  | Bud Getty      | 3/90–2/92  |
| Herman Schlerf | 3/74–2/76  | Nina Gordon    | 3/92–4/92  |
| Ron McCall     | 3/76–2/78  | Wayne Harrison | 5/92–2/94  |
| Denzil Verardo | 3/78–2/82  |                |            |

and changing demographics will place intense pressures on parks. More than ever, CSPRA and its members will be needed to serve as the conscience for the Department of Parks and Recreation, and to do everything they can to maintain the integrity of our natural, historical and cultural heritage.

## SPPOAC

The State Park Peace Officers Association of California (SPPOAC) was formed in 1979 to represent rangers on labor and employee issues. This second ranger association was organized within the context of new laws providing for labor organizations and collective bargaining for state employees. SPPOAC was founded by Mike Lynch, who also became its first President and served in that capacity for eight years. The first Vice Presidents were Dave Bartlett and Paul Hladik.

In the very beginning,

SPPOAC took up many employee issues including pay equity, safety retirement, better training, and uniform standards that had been previously pursued by the Califor-



nia State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA), prior to 1979. SPPOAC picked up these long simmering issues and many more that had built up over the years. Other early issues included the timely replacement of patrol vehicles, radio dispatch inadequacies, peace officer authority, peace officer certification, transfer policies, safety equipment of all types and many other economic, work and professional issues.

SPPOAC developed a very effective legislative program. SPPOAC sponsored and was instrumental in the enactment of many laws regarding rangers. The SPPOAC legislative program was also very effective in protecting rangers from detrimental legislation and in gaining beneficial amendments and changes to other legislation. From general peace officer authority, to safety retirement, to

## SPPOAC PRESIDENTS

|           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| 1979-1987 | Mike Lynch       |
| 1987-1988 | Steve Johnson    |
| 1988-1989 | Vic Trevisanut   |
| 1989-1990 | Steve Johnson    |
| 1990-1992 | Joe von Herrmann |
| 1992-     | Jay Galloway     |

## SPPOAC MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Legislation:

- Statewide general peace officer authority (SB 1447 - 1980).
- Authority to order evaluation for mentally disturbed (SB 1761 - 1980).
- Misdemeanor/infracton status for park regulations (SB 173 - 1980).
- Mandated dispatch study (AB 1183 - 1981)
- Inclusion of rangers in safety Retirement (AB494 - 1982).
- Citation fine money to go for ranger training (SB 1548 - 1982).
- Authority for rangers to trap or dispatch dangerous domestic animals (AB 2637 - 1982).
- Permanent transfer of 1/2 million dollars a year of boating money to the Department of Parks & Recreation (AB 1207 - 1983).
- Authority for DPR control of tidelands in parks (SB 996 - 1983).
- Criminal penalties for providing false information to a ranger (AB 3408 - 1984).
- Authority to investigate and issue citations in vehicle accidents (AB 692 - 1987).
- Forfeiture of weapons used in park violations (AB 1680 - 1987).
- Required completion of full peace officer (POST) training for rangers and superintendents (SB 2243 - 1988).

- Easier prosecution of juveniles for park violations (SB 2195 - 1988).
- Provides "Ranger" title may only be used by peace officers (AB 805 - 1989).
- Official recognition of rangers 125 year history (ACR 95 - 1990).

### Other accomplishments:

- More than doubling of ranger pay between 1980 and 1990.
- Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certification for rangers (1980).
- Successful opposition to non-peace officers in the ranger/superintendent management classes.
- Gaining safety equipment including 90,000 mile replacement of patrol vehicles, light bars, breakfront holsters, body armor, radios, code 3 equipment, PR24 batons, stainless steel firearms, speed loaders.
- Major improvements for Permanent Intermittent (P.I.) Rangers, including pro-rated parity with Rangers I's in salary, training, retirement, and transfer to full-time positions.
- Elimination of the ranger-technician classification.
- Seniority transfers for Ranger I's.



Top Left: 1980s SPPOAC legislative team of President Mike Lynch, Vic Trevisanut, (Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy), Lisa Beutler and Mario Rodriguez. Bottom right: Illustrator, author and Honorary Ranger Phil Frank regularly featured rangers in his syndicated cartoon series.

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providing more money for training and department operations, SPPOAC has been involved in most of the major legislation that directly effects rangers.

One of the most significant

and beneficial improvements gained by SPPOAC was the long fought for inclusion of rangers in the enhanced safety or peace officer early retirement program. Brought about by extensive legislation and collective bargaining effort, safety retirement allows rangers and superintendents up to a 75% retirement at age 55 (with 30 years of service). This replaced a retirement program in which employees had to work until age 65 or older to retire. Safety retirement not only benefits the individual, but insures a younger ranger force to carry out

the rescues, searches, arrests, patrols and other physically demanding aspects of the job.

Working in affiliation with the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) and the California Union of Safety Employees (CAUSE), SPPOAC was able to effect major improvements and benefits for Rangers through the state collective bargaining process. Rangers, who entered the 1980s as one of the lowest paid peace officers groups in state service, made major salary and economic gains, including



doubling their salary between 1980 and 1990. For comparison, in 1980, California state rangers were making significantly less than their counterparts in the National Park Service. Less than 10 years later, state park rangers were being paid 30% more than their Federal park ranger colleagues.

## HONORARY RANGERS

Honorary Ranger status is bestowed by both the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA) and the State Park Peace Officers Association of California (SPPOAC). The designation as an Honorary State Park Ranger has gone to the following list of individuals who have made significant contributions to the ranger organizations, the ranger profession or to parks in general.

*Honorary Rangers: Top: Roger Chatterton, an outstanding ranger academy instructor for two decades; Right: David Brower, environmental activist; Far right: Wm. Penn Mott, Jr., a towering figure in the park field for nearly 50 years.*



## HONORARY RANGERS — CSPRA

*(in alphabetical order)*

Ansel Adams – 1984  
 Harriet Allen – 1978  
 William Alsup – 1993  
 Sally Altick – 1987  
 Victoria Araujo – 1988  
 Dr. Harold Biswell – 1985  
 Harry Blaisdell – Sr. – 1965  
 David Brower – 1991  
 Pearl Chase – 1972  
 Harry M. Daniel – 1988  
 John B. DeWitt – 1985  
 Walt Disney – 1965  
 Edward Dolder – 1973  
 Newton B. Drury – 1965  
 Bertram Dunshee – 1978  
 Verna Dunshee – 1965

Phil Frank – 1990  
 Percy French – 1965  
 Phil Geiger – 1968  
 William Goodall – 1968  
 Earl Hanson – 1972  
 Joseph Houghteling – 1980  
 Howard King – 1980  
 Joseph Knowland – 1965  
 Claud Look – 1973  
 Wm. Penn Mott, Jr. – 1979  
 Roscoe Poland – 1986  
 Wilma Poland – 1986  
 Everett Powell – 1965  
 Josephine Read – 1974  
 Lawrence Rockefeller – 1966  
 Catherine Stone – 1984

Joe Stone – 1984  
 Harriet Weaver – 1971  
 James Whitehead – 1981  
 Vern Whittaker – 1981

## HONORARY RANGERS — SPPOAC

Len Delaney – 1984  
 Jerry Eaves – 1986  
 Bill Camp – 1989  
 Roger Chatterton – 1990

## Chapter 8

# RANGERS IN THE 90'S

**T**he ranger mission remains much the same in the 1990s and for the future as it has for the preceding 125 years. The basics are still protecting park resources, interpreting park values, educating and assisting the public, and administering the parks on a day to day basis in a manner that will help preserve their future value.

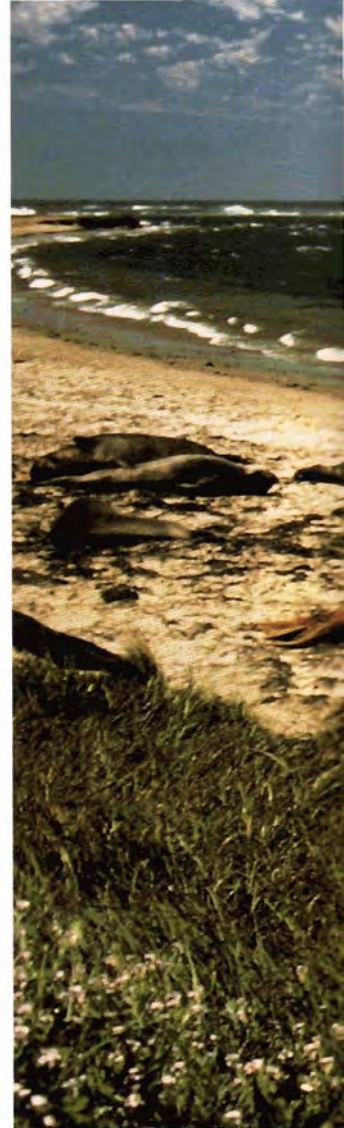
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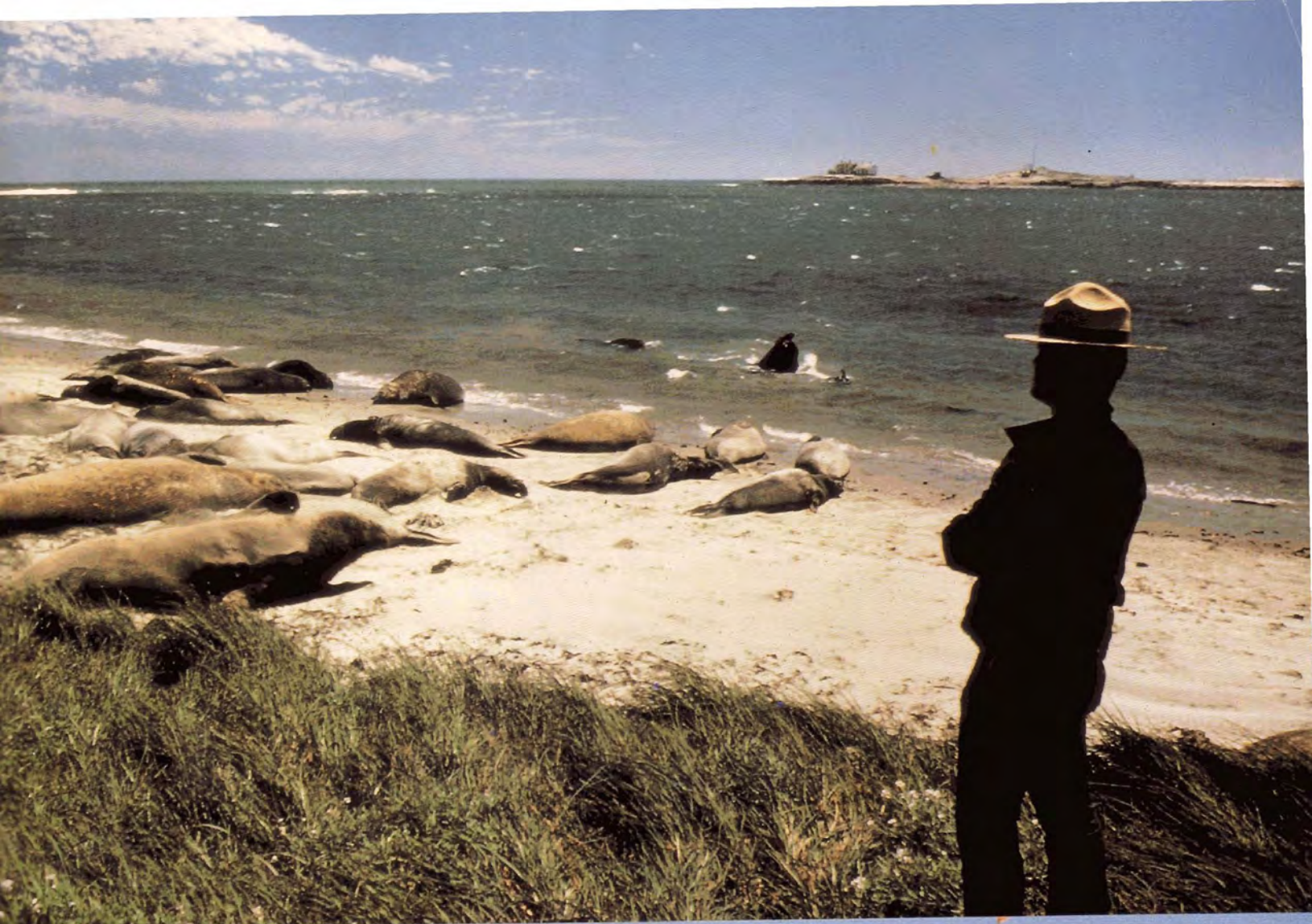
The tremendous increase in park use maybe the single biggest factor between challenges faced by the rangers of old and those of today and tomorrow. For instance, during the first two decades that Yosemite Valley was a state park, the average number of visitors was less than 2,000 a year. Many current parks have two or three times that number of people on a summer day. Some parks have as many people entering in a single hour. With over 75 million state park visitors a year and 600 rangers (or one ranger for every 125,000 visitors), the intensity of a ranger's job can be extremely challenging.

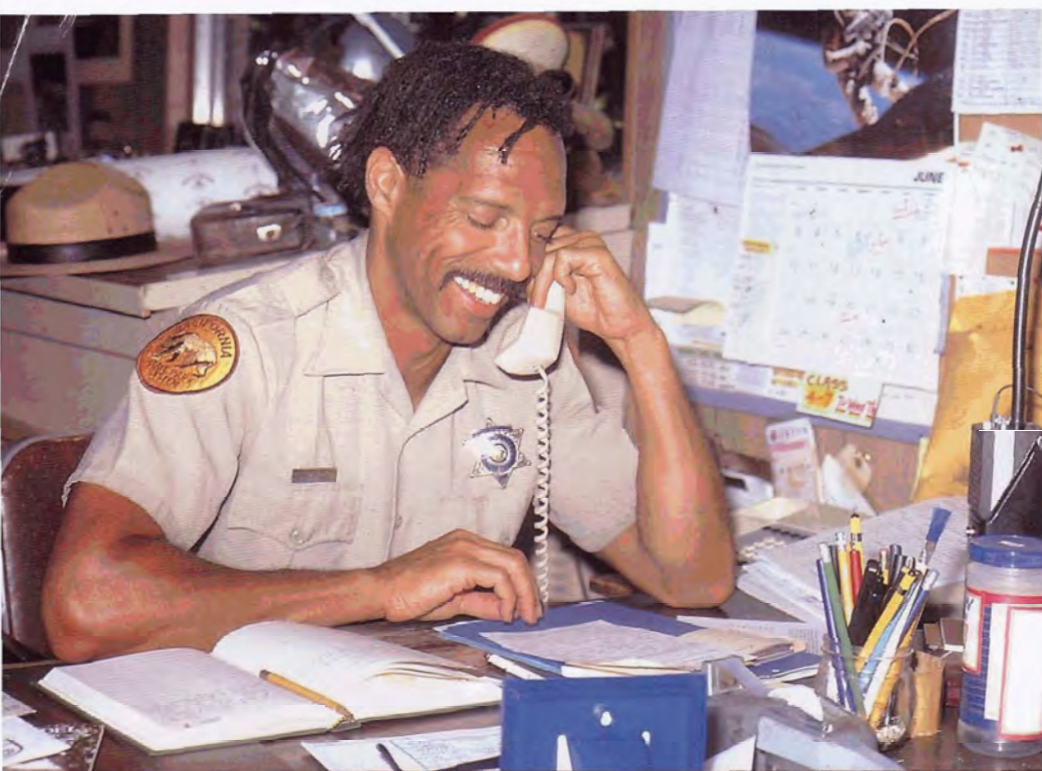
The increase in park use, the development of high use recreation parks, the establishment of urban oriented parks, and steadily decreasing park budgets in recent years, have shifted much of the rangers' time to public safety duties. Unfortunately, the homeless, drug abuse, gang violence, suicides, drunk drivers, and even rapes and murders are all now a permanent part of the park system. This steadily increasing use, and misuse, will undoubtedly result in even more protection and law enforcement duties for rangers in the future.

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*Top right: Protecting and interpreting park resources: Ranger Kevin Williams with the elephant seals at Ano Nuevo State Reserve. Bottom right: Intensive recreation use is here to stay: Ranger Alan Marshall investigates an off-highway vehicle enthusiast's roll-over at Pismo Dunes.*



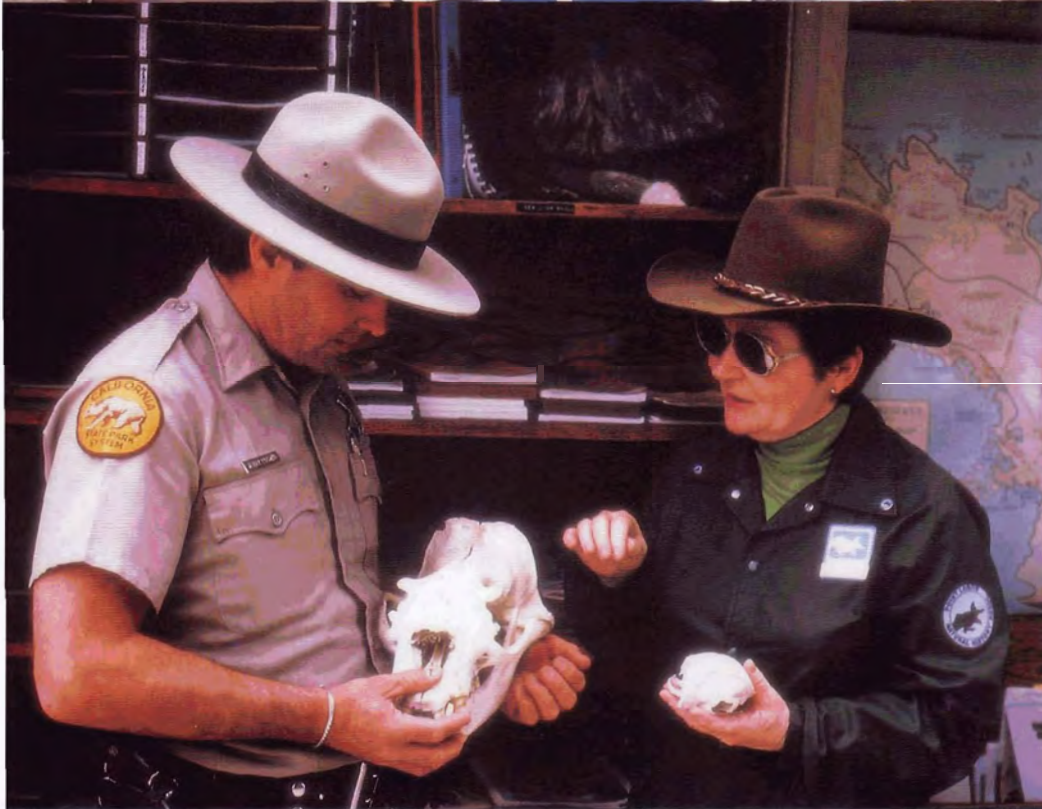




In the same vein, accident and first aid calls are much more frequent in modern high intensity recreational activities like off-highway vehicle use, mountain biking and power boating. Added to this are the millions of visitors who want and deserve more and better education and interpretation programs and services. Without a doubt, no matter what form it takes, dealing with people in the park setting is the modern ranger's primary job.

To carry out this challenge, today's rangers are highly trained and perform their duties using a wide variety of tools, including computers, cellular phones, video cameras, radio systems, and radar. Rangers use safety gear of all types, including firearms, handcuffs, body armor, dive equipment, mountain, cliff and whitewater rescue gear, and more. The traditional horses and pick-ups, though still used, have been joined by airplanes, dirt bikes, whitewater rafts, boats of all types, mountain bikes, ATVs, and police cruisers.

Some comparisons illustrate the extent of the modern state park ranger service. Rangers make up the second largest law enforcement agency in state government (after the California Highway Patrol) and have the largest state K-9 (canine) program. Rangers operate the largest non-federal fleet of patrol vessels in the state. They are the single largest group operating off-highway vehicle (OHV) parks and enforcing OHV laws. Nationally, California State Park Rangers are the second largest park ranger group in the country, after the National Park Service.



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*Top: Ranger Wardell Noel works at the ever present paperwork. Middle: Ranger Gerald Loomis works with a park volunteer. As budgets decrease, volunteers will undoubtedly have an expanding future role in park operations. Bottom: Positive public contacts, education and interpretation will always be part of a rangers duties, as demonstrated by Ranger Steve Goraman.*





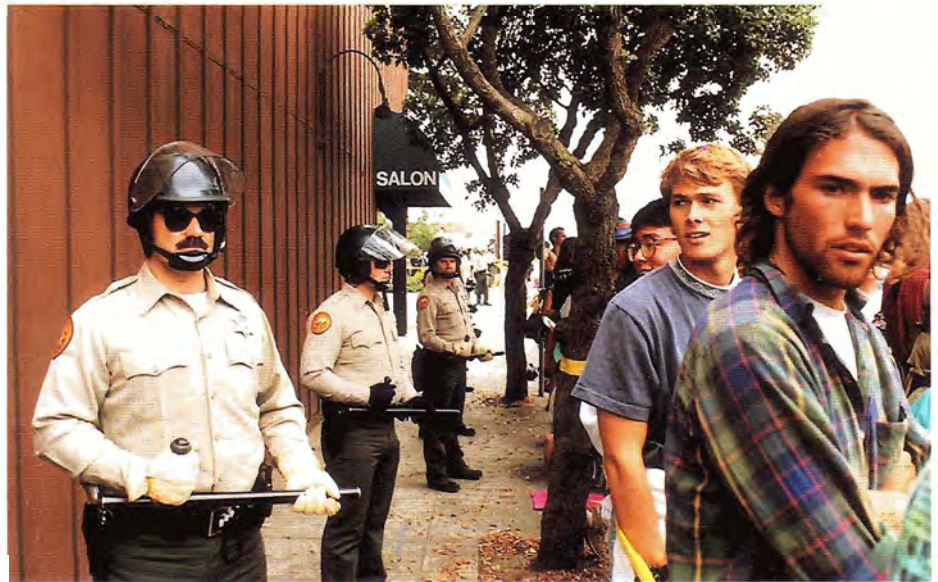
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*Ranger Dave Collins and other members of the ranger special response team providing crowd control at the 1990 "Redwood Summer" demonstrations in northern California. In recent times rangers have been called more and more to assist outside of the parks.*

In recent times, rangers have been called more and more to assist outside of the parks. In the past, this has included providing protection for visiting dignitaries like the Pope and Queen of England. In emergencies, they have also been mobilized to assist in non-park related problems like the Medfly infestation campaign, providing security at the state

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*New ranger tools include the first ranger patrol plane, flown by the first ranger-pilot Gene Hammock. Inset: Ranger Manfred Knaak assists Gene in preparation for his patrol flight.*



capitol during demonstrations and crowd control duties for demonstrations against nuclear power plants and cutting of the redwood forests (Redwood Summer). On a more local basis, rangers now regularly participate in joint agency operations like drunk driving checkpoints, marijuana eradication programs and special

multi-department drug enforcement teams.

To help meet the many modern-day pressures and duties of being a ranger, educational and other entry requirements have risen, as has the training provided after being hired. From the era of only on-the-job training 20 years ago, rangers now start out their career







with over 5 months of formal classroom and academy training. This basic course includes training in park protection and law enforcement, interpretation, defensive tactics, rescue and first aid, resource management, park philosophy, and the working-with-people skills necessary to carry out all ranger duties successfully.

Another modern change is that the days of the one ranger park are mostly gone. In the current state park system, individual parks are organized into Park Districts headed up by a Superintendent and a Chief Ranger. Individual rangers often

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*Top Left: Ranger Dan Murley directs Father Oleska of the Russian Orthodox Church to fire off the cannon at Fort Ross State Historic Park. Lower Left: Ranger Tracy Becker checks vehicle identification at Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. Rangers make up the single largest group operating off-highway vehicle (OHV) parks and enforcing OHV laws. Below: "Raising the Flag" at Refugio State Beach, Ranger Gary Lumbley.*


report to central locations and may patrol or work in different areas of the District as needs dictate.

Until the late 1960s all rangers usually lived in a park, but today, only one or two rangers normally live in each park and have a 24-hour/seven-day-a-week responsibility. The large majority report for their shift and go home when the job is done for the day.

These changes do not mean that ranger dedication and professionalism are dead, far from it. Rangers continue to be among the best trained, most committed and dedicated public servants you are likely to find. The typical ranger joined and has remained in the park service because he/she has an interest, commitment, and personal make-up, which combines a deep appreciation for parks, a willingness to protect park resources, and the ability to share, educate and work with a large, sometimes almost overwhelming, visiting public.

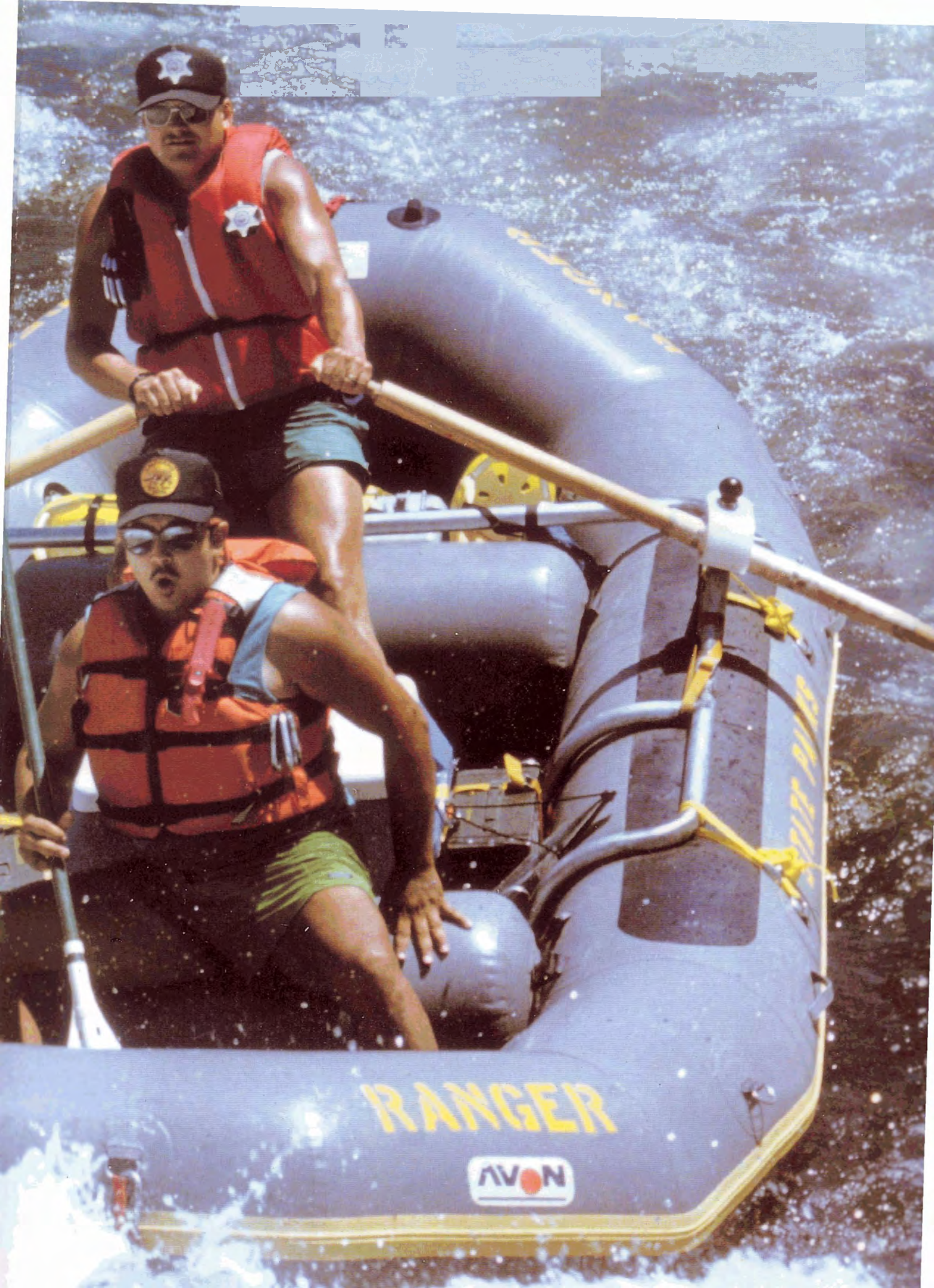
In the future, as it has been in the past, these qualities will undoubtedly be the hallmark of a California State Park Ranger.





*Inside back cover: Ranger Poppelreiter  
and aid Jason Samora on whitewater  
patrol, M.F. American River, Auburn  
State Recreation Area.*

*Back cover, top left: Ranger Chuck  
Edgemon, Ano Nuevo State Beach,  
1991. Top right: Ranger Bob Burke  
and friends, Sierra District. Bottom  
left: Ranger Al Beck, Calaveras Big  
Trees, c. 1940. Bottom right: Ranger  
Kathy Franklin, Morro Bay State  
Park, 1986.*



RANGER

AVON





## ENJOY YOUR PARKS

California State Park Rangers invite you to enjoy the natural and cultural treasures and recreational opportunities available in the most diverse state park system in the nation. The California State Park System contains beaches, rivers, lakes, deserts, mountains, forests and historical sites which are located in over 270 individual parks. Recreational possibilities are almost endless and include traditional pursuits like camping, swimming and hiking to off-highway vehicle use, power boating and whitewater rafting. In the parks you will find rangers and other park staff, including maintenance workers, seasonal aids, and administrative people, ready to assist you and dedicated to making your visit safe and enjoyable.

For more information about California's state parks, contact your nearest state park or write to the California State Park, P.O. Box 94296, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP STATE PARKS

For more than 25 years, the non-profit California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) has helped our beautiful state parks, raising tens of millions of dollars to complete more than 60 state park projects.

Many opportunities exist for you to assist CSPF on behalf of our parks. Join as a member and receive useful benefits, or look at the bigger picture and consider a tax-deductible bequest, donation or gift to the Foundation, in your name, that will benefit either a specific state park project (of your choosing) or other park projects that need your assistance.

With your help, the CSPF will continue its mission to conserve and enhance one of the finest park systems in the world.

For more information, please write: The California State Parks Foundation, P.O. Box 548, Kentfield, CA 94914 or call: 415-258-9975.



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