



News Release

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California State Parks Provides Free Memorial Day Admission for Veterans, Active and Reserve Military Personnel

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California State Parks invites veterans, active and reserve military personnel to spend this year's Memorial Day at one of 142 participating state parks offering free admission.

Begun in 1868, Memorial Day is a day to reflect and remember U.S. Military personnel who gave their lives in service to their country. Providing a free day to the Armed Forces and veterans is a small way of honoring all men and woman for their service and sacrifice.

Free admission will be provided at the [California State Railroad Museum](#) located in Sacramento, eight [state vehicular recreation areas](#) located in different regions around the state, and destinations such as:

- [Big Basin Redwoods State Park](#): Established in 1902, Big Basin Redwoods is California's oldest state park. In the heart of the Santa Cruz Mountains, its biggest attractions—literally—are its ancient coast redwoods. Some of these giants are more than 50 feet around and as tall as the Statue of Liberty. At 1,000 to 2,500 years old, some may predate the Roman Empire. The park also offers spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean, lush waterfalls, and a fascinating natural and cultural history.
- [La Purisima Mission State Historic Park](#): Considered the most completely restored mission in California, with ten of the original buildings fully restored and furnished, including the church, shops, living quarters, and blacksmith shop. The mission gardens and livestock represent what would have been found at the mission during the 1820's. Special living history events are scheduled throughout the year. A visitor center features information, displays and artifacts, and a self-guided tour gives visitors the opportunity to step back in time for a glimpse of a brief, turbulent period in California's history.



- [Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park](#): Site of California's largest "hydraulic" mine. Visitors can see huge cliffs carved by mighty streams of water, results of the gold mining technique of washing away entire mountains to find the precious metal. Legal battles between mine owners and downstream farmers ended this method. The park also contains a 7,847 foot bedrock tunnel that served as a drain. The visitor center offers a short video on hydraulic mining and exhibits on life in the old mining town of North Bloomfield.
- [Pismo State Beach](#): Offers all kinds of attractions such as hiking, swimming, surf fishing, and digging for the famous Pismo clam. There are tree-lined dunes and the beach is popular with bird watchers. The park has the largest over-wintering colony of monarch butterflies in the U.S.
- [San Clemente State Beach](#): A California state beach since 1937. It is popular among water sport enthusiasts, and anyone who wishes to escape from inland heat and nearby metropolitan areas for the day. The beautiful mile long beach stretches between the curling ocean surf and the foot of a steep bluff.

For a full list of all participating parks, please [click here](#). Veterans, active duty, and reserve military personnel must show a valid military I.D. or proof of honorable discharge (DD Form 214), in order to receive free admission.

The free admission program was authorized by AB 150 (Olsen), signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. in 2013. It allows California State Parks to offer veterans, active duty or reserve military personnel for the United States Armed Forces and the National Guard of any state a reduced or free day use at participating California state parks. This program will be offered again later this year on Veterans Day, November 11.

Responsible for almost one-third of California's scenic coastline, the California state park system includes 280 parks, beaches, trails, wildlife areas, open spaces, off-highway vehicle areas, and historic sites. It consists of approximately 1.59 million acres, including over 339 miles of coastline, 974 miles of lake, reservoir and river frontage, approximately 15,000 campsites and alternative camping facilities, and 4,456 miles of non-motorized trails.

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