



FEDERATED TRIBES

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California Indian Tribes

To whom it may concern:

**THE CLOSURE OF CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS -
A CRISIS AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES**

I am sure that you are aware of the funding problems with the California State Parks and the prospect of their closure. This has been an on-going crisis in recent years (since the time of Governor Schwarzenegger), and it seems to be getting more critical. But every crisis can also be an opportunity, and this situation could be a major opportunity for California Tribes. I will explain this briefly; and if you think your tribe might be interested this project, then see the web-site for more details:

www.federatedtribes.com/parkclosure

It goes without much explanation that the California Department of Parks and Recreation is at a pivotal moment in its nearly 150 year history and is on the verge of being dismantled. The Department is the steward of some of the greatest natural and historical wonders in the world, also providing healthy, inexpensive recreational, and educational opportunities for millions of people - not only for people in this and other states but also from all over the world. The California State Parks administers 278 parks encompassing 1,400,000 acres of land, with over 280 miles of coastline; 625 miles of lake and river frontage; nearly 15,000 campsites; and 3,000 miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails. It is a vast and luxurious, ecological preserve and resource system.

What is usually over-looked in the discussion about these park lands is that they are close to being pristine in terms of the original Native American land, which, obviously, has exceptional significance to California tribes.

What is the real nature of this crisis? First, we heard in 2009 that the State budget deficits would require that the Parks needed to be closed; but we all know that the parks are essentially self-funding from permit and various use fees; and with a minor adjustment in those fees, the parks could be made to be break-even or profitable. So, any need to close them did not seem

to be honest or real; and because of public pressure, the Legislature allocated money to temporarily keep them running. Now, in 2012, we are told that the budget deficits once again require foreclosures. This time, private donors raised millions of dollars to save the Parks but suddenly, a secret \$54 million fund for parks was discovered in the State coffers, so it really was not a crisis. What is going on here?

I think, along with some of my associates, that what is really happening is an under-cover group of private interests are deliberately trying to put the California State government into financial duress so that it must sell-off many of its valuable public assets - particularly the park lands and facilities. For example, recall the episode of Governor Schwarzenegger, just before him leaving office in 2010, when he attempted to sell 11 prime state building to a private group of investors who would then lease the buildings back to the State at a sizable profit. Fortunately, that deal was quashed by a court action; but I think this reflects what is now being attempted, on a much bigger scale, with the Parks. Think of how many and highly profitable golf courses, resorts, gated communities, condominiums, and the like could be built on the Park locations, which if the State is financially insolvent could be had by developers (domestic and foreign) at a very cheap price.

Irrespective of any such a conspiracy, even if the State must sell off the Parks to cover its deficit spending, the right of first refusal should go to Native Americans.

Here is the opportunity. Did you know that there is a common law regarding the decommissioning of government land and facilities, in which the indigenous (original) peoples should have the first option to acquire such property (essentially free) because the land originally belonged to them and because it was, essentially, confiscated (not legally purchased) from them. If Native Americans are not interested in the land, then it should be offered to the next ranking, public agency; and if declined there, then it can be offered on the open market, to private parties, at competitive prices. This is certainly true of Federal property; and it may apply (or should be made to apply) also to State property. Herein is the opportunity for California tribes.

Given the possibility that private interests might be preparing to make a lunge for park lands, California tribes (and other preservationist allies) should be prepared for making prohibitive and mandatory injunctions to thwart any such action in court and counter with legislative actions and a public relations campaign. This will be a complex operation as explained in more deal on the web-site - www.federatedtribes.com/parkclosure .

What is appropriate here is for your tribe to consider this situation and, if concerned, to contact us as an interested party, and from there, we will start assembling the group and defining the strategy. Any communication is confidential, and your interest is appreciated.

Best wishes,

Chadd Everone