

OUTDOORS FOR ALL

Providing Equitable Access
to Parks and Nature



Administration of Governor Gavin Newsom



San Jose Taiko drummers perform outside at Angel Island State Park. Credit: Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation.



With special thanks to the thousands of Californians who helped build this strategy. A summary of the public input process is found on page 44.

Cover photo: *Families hiking at Henry Cowell State Park. Credit: Save the Redwoods League, Roy E. Williams II.*

A copy of this document can be found online at <https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Access-for-All>.

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A young child peers out from a tent. Credit: Parks California.

November 2023

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Executive Summary

California is known around the world for its iconic and beautiful outdoor places. People travel from far and wide to spend time in the outdoors here, from national and state parks to beaches, mountains, forests, deserts, lakes, and rivers. These diverse environments support health and well-being, and the varied climate supports a year-round outdoor lifestyle that has become part of California's identity. Yet for too many Californians, these places, recreational activities, and their benefits remain out of reach.

Governor Gavin Newsom has prioritized building a California for All, where all the state's residents can thrive. Enabling equitable access to nature and the outdoors is a key component for advancing this commitment and is the fundamental purpose of the Outdoors for All initiative and the strategy outlined in this document.

Championed by Governor Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, Outdoors for All is expanding parks and nature access in communities with little outdoor space, supporting programs to connect people who lack access, fostering a sense of belonging for all Californians in the outdoors, and much more. In 2021, Governor Newsom made a historic \$1 billion-plus investment to expand access to the outdoors,

creating a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve access for all Californians. Working in partnership with the legislature, local leaders, and communities across the state, these investments ensure more Californians can experience the benefits that nature provides.

The Outdoors for All strategy charts progress on equitable outdoor access to date, highlights work underway, and identifies additional actions to realize the promise of a California for All. This strategy outlines pathways that governments, community organizations, philanthropy, private sector, and residents across California can take together to continue increasing access to the outdoors and nature.

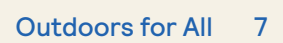


Two teens posing on their surfboards in San Francisco Bay. Credit: City Surf Project, supported by Explore the Coast Grants from the State Coastal Conservancy.

What does it mean to be outdoors?

People enjoy the outdoors in a beautiful variety of ways. Expanding access to the outdoors and nature in California means supporting a wide breadth of outdoor activities across the state.





Call to Action



A person walks at the bottom of a barren riverbed. A graffitied street overpass is in the background. Credit: San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

When Californians think about the outdoors and nature, images like Yosemite National Park or Big Sur State Park may come to mind. These areas inspire a sense of awe and wonder. Outdoor spaces closer to home are just as special. State, regional and neighborhood parks, bike paths, coastlines and other waterways, and schoolyards bring joy, curiosity, connection, adventure, and rejuvenation to people's everyday lives. Californians benefit from all these rich landscapes – big and small, near and far.

The Opportunity

Spending time outdoors directly benefits mental and physical health. It improves mood and happiness, lowers stress, and strengthens people's sense of meaning. Research shows that people who visit outdoor spaces for 30 minutes or more during a week have lower rates of depression and high blood pressure.¹ Access to outdoor spaces also enables exercise, which improves long-term physical health. The outdoors also provides spiritual and cultural connections for many. Health care professionals recognize these benefits, and in some places have started to issue medical prescriptions to spend time in nature to improve health outcomes.²

Outdoor spaces are foundational to civic life, acting as living classrooms and community hubs. They inspire and educate visitors of all ages to care for their community and the environment. People who visit local parks have a greater sense of community connection, which improves quality of life.³

Parks and outdoor spaces also have environmental benefits. They help communities adapt to climate change by serving as a refuge from extreme heat, filtering polluted water that runs off roads after it rains, and storing carbon dioxide in trees. When designed with ecosystem health in mind, parks and other outdoor spaces can be good for wildlife and biodiversity, too, providing places for plants and animals to thrive.^{4,5}



Three people taking photos in the trees, on a wooded deck at Natural Bridges State Beach. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

Finally, outdoor recreation is a reliably powerful economic engine for the state. California is home to the nation's largest, active outdoor-industry economy, contributing \$54 billion in economic spending annually and 517,000 direct jobs.⁶

The Challenge

In California and across the country, outdoor access and its many benefits are not equitably distributed to all communities. Access is too often determined by race and income. A history of discriminatory policies and exclusionary zoning have led to long-term disinvestment, fewer parks and outdoor spaces, and less coastal access for many communities.⁷ The practice of redlining led to neighborhoods with far fewer trees and parks that provide shade and clean the air for lower-income residents and communities of color. Instead, these neighborhoods have more paved surfaces that absorb and radiate heat.^{8, 9} During extreme heat events some cities experience differences of up to 12 degrees between formally red- and green-lined areas.

For California tribes, a historic legacy of governmental discrimination, displacement, and violence has led to distrust in state-managed spaces. For well over a century, California's government policies forcibly removed California tribes from the lands and resources that have sustained their communities since time immemorial. These decisions have severed these original stewards from their homes, sacred sites, natural resources, and cultural lifeways.

"Redlining"

"Redlining" refers to the efforts of the Homeowners Loan Corporation to designate neighborhoods of color and low-income residents as "undesirable," leading to systematic and racialized disinvestment.^{10, 11}

Across California, many communities still face significant barriers to accessing outdoor spaces and recreational activities, even in rural areas. These include complex rules and regulations; limited facilities for people with disabilities; the cost of transportation, entrance fees, and permits to use outdoor spaces. The high cost for outdoor gear and instruction for activities, like mountain biking or whitewater paddling, are additional barriers.

Many people also feel unwelcome or unsafe in public outdoor spaces. In some places, local homeowners have discouraged visitors from using public spaces.¹² Some have experienced racial and ethnic discrimination while recreating outdoors.¹³ Where parks and open spaces do not reflect the state's diverse history and people, or where language access is not provided, many feel unwelcome. Establishing welcoming places where all people feel safe and have a sense of belonging is essential to building an Outdoors for All.

The Call

Providing high-quality parks, beaches, and other outdoor spaces that are welcoming and accessible to all California communities is essential and is needed now more than ever. They improve health, strengthen connections, and enhance people's lives. This was demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic when even more Californians turned to outdoor spaces to connect, play, and rest. The state is meeting the promise of a California for All by establishing new outdoor spaces where there are none or too few, supporting managed access to and recreation in these places, and fostering a sense of belonging there for all Californians.

California is already expanding equitable outdoor access and building an Outdoors for All. State agencies are partnering with regional and local governments, communities, and organizations to expand outdoor access. Federal, regional, and local agencies are funding new green spaces and access to waterways in places that need them. Organizations are reshaping their work to provide a more equitable approach to getting Californians outdoors. Scores of innovative model programs are underway – many highlighted in this strategy – that are actively expanding Outdoors for All.

Outdoors for All is an initiative built to strengthen a growing movement that engages all Californians. It is led by a broad array of governments and land managers at all levels in partnership with community organizations and tribes, who all bring established networks, a history of advocacy, and lived experiences. Together, this movement can continue to build momentum from these efforts towards a future where everyone can experience and benefit from California's incredible outdoor spaces.

Setting the Stage



Two children play with a human-sized beach ball in front of a view of the downtown Los Angeles skyline at Los Angeles State Historic Park.
Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

Under the Newsom Administration, a historic investment of more than \$1 billion has been dedicated to expanding outdoor access. California State Parks is administering over \$500 million to more than 100 communities through the Statewide Parks and Community Revitalization Program, creating new parks in neighborhoods that need them most. In the Central Valley, Dos Rios Ranch Preserve will become the first new state park in more than a decade, providing public access in an area of the state long identified as needing more parks and green space. Along California's iconic coast, the Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy and State Parks are partnering to build lower-cost accommodations to increase coastal access.

Grants from regional conservancies, CAL FIRE, and California Natural Resource Agency are being deployed to create multi-modal, accessible and multi-benefit green trails, allowing residents to walk, run, and roll to get to work and school – or simply just for fun. Grants for green schoolyards are creating much-needed cooling relief for learning and play.

Innovative pilot programs are enabling more people to visit state parks. [In partnership with First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, California State Parks created the California State Park Adventure Pass](#) to provide yearlong, free entry for fourth graders and their families at 19 state parks. Californians can also borrow the [State Library Parks Pass](#) at their local public library to receive free day-use entry to over 200 state parks.

In addition, State Parks and the Department of Social Services have bolstered their collaboration to make it easier for families receiving CalWORKs assistance to receive a [Golden Bear Pass](#) for free entry to all state parks for the year. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, and those qualifying as low-income also qualify for a free Golden Bear Pass. A Limited Use Golden Bear Pass also provides off-season access to all adults 62 and over, while the [Disabled Discount Pass](#) provides a 50 percent discount to people with permanent disabilities for state parks facilities.

Over the last three years, the administration has also made sizeable investments in programs that foster a sense of belonging in the outdoors. Tribal land acknowledgements for all 280 state parks are being reflected in new signage and educational materials to better connect the public

to tribal history and contemporary experiences. A new partnership between the California African American Museum and State Parks will help research, interpret, and communicate the stories of Black Californians. State Parks' Outdoor Equity Grants are funding organizations that connect youth and community groups with the outdoors. The Coastal Conservancy's new Coastal Stories program is amplifying and celebrating the voices and stories of those who have been historically excluded from the coast. The Coastal Commission's Whale Tail Grants are funding projects and programs focused on coastal protection, public access, and environmental justice. These are just some of the many projects and programs leading the way for outdoor access.

These historic investments support an existing and ever-growing movement to ensure all communities have outdoor spaces to play, rest, or gather, and that everyone can easily access them and participate in a range of recreational activities there. Both outside of and in partnership with government efforts, this movement is also rooted in the work of countless tribes, community-based organizations, philanthropic and educational institutions, nonprofits, and individuals who have a legacy of advocating for equitable outdoor access, public health, biodiversity, and climate action. Outdoors for All seeks to acknowledge, amplify, and build on this leadership. This initiative will further align the Natural Resources Agency's programs and strengthen collaboration among these efforts. This strategy presents an exciting opportunity to come together across the state to continue to increase this movement's impact and make equitable access a reality for all Californians.

Vision and Guiding Principles



A person exploring a narrow slot canyon in Anza Borrego Desert State Park. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

Vision and Guiding Principles

Outdoors for All is focused on providing all Californians with equitable access to the state’s cultural, historical, and natural resources. “Equitable access” means that all people can experience and enjoy California’s outdoors regardless of who they are or where they live. It also means that everyone can experience the outdoors in a way that is safe, welcoming, convenient, affordable, and culturally relevant.

Everyone, no matter who they are or where they live, should have access to the outdoors. The actions within each of the priority areas of the Outdoors for All strategy aim to advance this vision. Realizing this vision will require the partnership and resources of government, the private sector, and philanthropy and will be achieved when:

- 1. Everyone can regularly access and experience the outdoors while feeling a sense of belonging, and that they are safe and welcome.** This allows everyone to form their own relationships with the outdoors that are filled with joy, curiosity, and wonder. Cultural, ceremonial, and sacred access for California Native American tribes is protected to honor ancestral ties.
- 2. Everyone can visit the outdoors without financial burden.** This means fees, permits, gear, classes, and transportation costs or availability do not prohibit people from enjoying parks and natural places.
- 3. Outdoor spaces reflect and celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of California’s many communities, cultures, and histories.** Parks and outdoor programs are developed in multiple languages and for a broad range of people, including youth, elders, and people with disabilities. Visitors learn about the history of tribal stewardship of these lands.
- 4. Stewards of outdoor spaces represent California’s diversity.** Everyone who desires to do so can pursue careers and leadership roles in outdoor recreation, natural resources, and restoration professions.
- 5. Everyone is inspired to better care for California’s lands and waters and protect the health of their communities and ecosystems.** Humans’ relationship with nature is driven by mutual care. This relationship is nurtured in

schools and through community programs, which teach people how to minimize impacts on nature while recreating. Additionally, state policies and initiatives improve both access to the outdoors and public health.

Achieving this vision of Outdoors for All relies on the continued commitment and incredible work of governments, community groups and leaders, philanthropy, business, and residents across California who are already leading the way and aligned in this common purpose.

Outdoor access should be universal, yet everyone has different access needs and preferences. This strategy uses a variety of approaches to overcome the many barriers Californians face to reaching the outdoors.

As part of Outdoors for All, state agencies and departments commit to the following five core principles. These guide all priorities within the strategy and describe how the Natural Resources Agency will implement them. The broader network of partners is encouraged to embed these principles in their own approaches.

This strategy recognizes that outdoor spaces exist in many shapes and sizes, and refers to nature spaces that include, but are not limited to federal, state, regional, and local parks, ecological preserves, wildlife refuges and marine sanctuaries, beaches, lakes and rivers, trails, urban greenways, urban tree canopy, etc. However, when referring specifically to parks managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the term “state parks” will be used.



Equity and Environmental Justice are Essential for Outdoor Access

Many of the underserved communities burdened with environmental pollution and climate change impacts are also denied the resources and decision-making power to achieve healthy communities. Outdoor access is one part of achieving environmental justice, by providing safe reconnection to land and a seat at the decision-making table. Outdoors for All aims to provide resources and greater support to enhance frontline communities' ability to drive change.

The agencies and departments engaged in Outdoors for All commit to identifying actions to repair and cause no further harm, benefit, build trusted relationships, and proactively and continuously learn new ways of partnering with underserved communities. This includes meeting existing community needs as a pathway to outdoor access. By working more closely with and investing in underserved communities, the state agencies and departments can facilitate their full involvement in designing policies, processes, and programs.

“Equity”

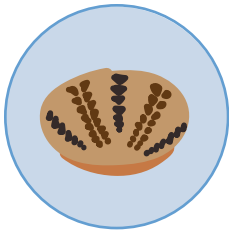
Based on the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, equity is defined in the context of social and racial equity, and means achieving fair outcomes for all groups, while fully acknowledging and addressing unequal starting points. When equity is achieved, no one factor, like race or zip code, can predict individual or community access to quality outdoor spaces.^{14, 15, 16}

“Underserved Communities”

Underserved communities have disproportionately carried the burden of harm from exploiting natural resources, economic disinvestment, under-investment, and or social and political disenfranchisement. They can include people with low-incomes, or residents of rural areas. These conditions have led to a lack of access to parks, and the outdoors and therefore this is the definition that the Outdoors for All strategy uses to identify one of the initiative's key target communities.



A person in a wheelchair prepares to kayak in San Francisco Bay. Credit: Environmental Traveling Companions, supported by Explore the Coast Grants from the State Coastal Conservancy.



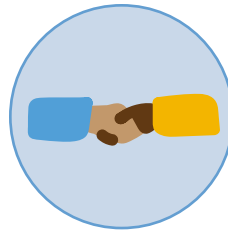
California Native American Tribes are Close Partners

Outdoors for All seeks to strengthen partnerships with California Native American tribes through collaborative problem solving to increase and enhance tribal access, stewardship, restoration, and use of ancestral lands, waters, traditional foods, and natural resources – all to enable continuation and revitalization of tribes’ cultural lifeways, foods, and ecosystems.

The state will address programs, policies, and procedures that have hindered progress and limited the state’s ability to regularly consult with and engage tribes in meaningful ways. The Natural Resources Agency and its departments acknowledge that it will take time and trust-building to heal centuries of harm. Strengthening tribal partnerships necessitates the need for early, often, and meaningful consultation and collaboration on policies regarding public access to ensure protection of culturally significant and sacred sites and ceremonies.



Veronica Cortina, Program Coordinator for the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council, and Janell Bunch, Education Manager for the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council, share their gratitude and explain how the \$2.4 million grant from the California Conservation Corps’ Tribal Nature-Based Solutions grant program will benefit the tribe and its students. Credit: California Conservation Corps.



The Agency Builds and Grows Lasting Collaborations

The state cannot do this alone – creative partnerships are key to moving forward successfully. The Natural Resources Agency and its departments must identify ongoing and new, creative ways to work across federal, tribal, state, regional, and local governments as well as with philanthropic, academic, and private sectors. Federal partnerships and coordination will help increase access for federally managed lands and waters in California. Regional collaborations can ease coordination across state and federal lands. Collaboration also includes convening and growing the existing constituency of advocates and funders. This requires engaging non-traditional partners across sectors – including public health, education, social services, and transportation – and underserved communities.

Outdoors for All will also strengthen and catalyze partnerships and collaboration with and within the Natural Resources Agency. The state can achieve more effective collaboration by sharing ideas and knowledge and by aligning and prioritizing related policies and funding across government.

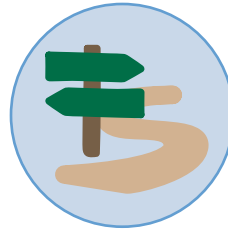
The state also seeks to involve community members more meaningfully in planning, designing, implementing, managing, and evaluating outdoor projects. This means communities can participate in these project phases, and easily give input within a realistic timeframe. State entities can continue to improve coordination so that this engagement does not burden communities with limited time and resources.



Outdoors for All is Integrated Across Government Initiatives

Outdoors for All is an essential part of California's environmental priorities and must be integrated across all sectors of government. This strategy aligns with existing policies and programs to further the state's impact. Expanding outdoor access across communities furthers California's commitment to conserve 30 percent of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030 (30x30). As the state confronts climate change, these outdoor spaces also help protect residents from climate impacts. Outdoors for All is a companion strategy to the Natural Resources Agency's [Pathways to 30x30](#) and also leverages the nature-based solutions put forward in the [Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy](#), [Climate Adaptation Strategy](#), and [Climate Change Scoping Plan](#). Aligning government efforts to advance multi-benefit projects ensures more cohesive and efficient efforts.

Outdoors for All also incorporates the state's commitment to equity and environmental justice, which was bolstered by Governor Newsom's [Executive Order N-15-19](#) apologizing for state-inflicted violence and maltreatment against California Native American tribes and [Executive Order N-16-22](#), which helps embed equity into state planning and community engagement processes. Equity and environmental justice strategies outlined in this document are in alignment with efforts [now underway at the Natural Resources Agency and throughout state government](#).



Improvements to Access are Clear and Tangible

The state of California commits to transparently demonstrating progress toward the priorities of the Outdoors for All initiative. The initiative includes collecting and sharing key achievements and progress to remain accountable to the people of California. Success is broadly defined within each of the priorities below but developing specific measures of progress and tracking tools will be done in collaboration among the Natural Resources Agency, its departments, and equitable access advocates and professionals.

Progress will occur at multiple scales and timeframes. Some of the strategies contained here are already underway by departments who are creatively developing new programs and initiatives. The Outdoors for All initiative seeks to increase investments and expand this work throughout the Natural Resources Agency and ensure efficient and coordinated progress. Existing programs from these leading departments will serve as key models for others around the state and nation. Other components of the strategy have a longer timeline and require further exploration and perhaps even legislative action.



A person seated in an all-terrain wheelchair is on a trail among the redwood trees at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

Achieving the Six Priorities for Outdoors for All



A youth rock climbs at Joshua Tree National Park. Credit: Outdoor Outreach, Eh Ler Tha.

Priority 1: Establish Spaces for People and Nature to Thrive



Children pointing at what they see in the La Jolla Tidepools. Credit: Ocean Discovery Institute.

Through Outdoors for All, the state can improve the conservation of land and waters while also increasing access for all Californians. Creative, multi-benefit approaches to access will conserve and restore the state's natural landscapes and degraded lands, enhance community well-being and connection, address historic inequities, and activate a more inclusive community of environmental champions.

All Californians deserve access to parks and outdoor space with well-maintained public facilities that offer multiple ways to recreate for people of all ages and abilities. While expanding access, the state must also maintain and manage

them so that people and nature thrive, including protecting access for the long-term by designing outdoor spaces to withstand and adapt to climate change.

The state will have demonstrated this commitment to progress for people, communities, and nature to all thrive when California:

- **Increases the percentage of residents who live within a half mile of quality outdoor space.**
- **Establishes pathways for land access agreements for all California Native American tribes.**

Strategies:

1.1. Develop, improve, and maintain local and regional outdoor spaces

1.1.1 Prioritize funding programs for park and open space development in park-poor communities such as the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program, and the Urban Waterways Program.

1.1.2 Create priorities for park-poor communities and disability accessibility within existing funding sources for open space acquisition, development, enhancement, and/or maintenance, including trails and community infrastructure (e.g., restrooms, water fountains, picnic tables and benches, shade structures, lighting, public art, sports facilities, access points and recreational infrastructure for beaches and waterways, and motorized wheelchair charging outlets and other features for people with disabilities) that support healthy, safe, frequent, and culturally relevant recreation for all ages and abilities.

1.1.3 Assist tribal, local, and regional entities to bring federal investment to California for outdoor space renovation and acquisition, especially in underserved communities.

1.1.4 Collaborate with tribal, local, and regional disability organizations, aging and elder councils to ensure nearby outdoor spaces have features to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities and older adults, such as shaded benches, distance markers, and level paths, to support parks as accessible and intergenerational settings. Accessibility features for a diversity of disabilities – such as physical, sensory and cognitive – should be included in projects from the beginning, and be regularly maintained and improved.

1.2. Support tribal ancestral land return as a pathway for outdoor access

1.2.1 Consistent with California's 30x30 initiative, explore administrative and regulatory pathways to advance the return of ancestral lands to California Native American tribes. This could include aligning efforts with the Natural Resources Agency's Tribal Nature-Based Solutions program, transferring lands held by state, regional, local, and private ownership to tribal governments, and supporting inter-tribal consortia or land conservancies.



Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program



Two children walk and skateboard on a path through a park with grass and trees while others enjoy the shade of a large tree at Universally Accessible Park, Fresno. Credit: California State Parks.

The Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program is a competitive grant program administered through the State Parks Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS). The program creates new parks and recreation opportunities in “underserved communities” across California. This grant program is highly popular, with the number of project applications far outstripping the funding available. Since 2008, the program has awarded four rounds of funding, totaling over \$1.16 billion in grants and 299 grant projects. These grants funded the creation of 179 new parks and the expansion and renovation of 120 existing parks.

State Parks structures these grants to support applicants and ensure meaningful community engagement. State Parks staff provide technical assistance for applicants and grantees at the county level. In addition, this grant requires applicants to engage residents in park design through community meetings, hosted in the local community. The program also considers travel and scheduling limitations to increase resident participation.

1.3. Support the use of cultural easements by California Native American tribes to protect cultural and sacred sites

1.3.1 Facilitate the creation and purchase of cultural easements to support California Native American tribes' access to land for cultural uses, harvesting, and ceremonies and to protect culturally significant and sacred sites.



Kashia Band of Pomo Indians Tribe Cultural Access Easement

In Sonoma County, the nonprofit Save the Redwoods League granted a cultural access easement to the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians tribe. This easement provides the Kashia access and protection in perpetuity to their sacred site on the coastal bluff, on which they hold seasonal ceremonies, gather seaweed, harvest abalone, and lead traditional prayers and other spiritual and cultural activities.¹⁷ The California State Coastal Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board partially funded this easement.



California's Newest State Park



*A large tree along a river at Dos Rios Ranch near Modesto.
Credit: Saxon Holt/PhotoBotanic.*

A transformational project to establish California's newest state park shows how expanding outdoor access and protecting biodiversity are mutually achieved. What was once a farm prone to frequent flooding from the nearby San Joaquin and Tuolumne rivers is being restored to natural riverside habitat by the nonprofit River Partners and their collaborators. "River Partners' vision for Dos Rios Ranch is a multilayered win for the Golden State," said California Secretary for Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot. "Dos Rios Ranch will help nature restore underground water storage, and it will help California meet its commitment to conserve 30 percent of land and coastal waters, and it will create greater opportunity for all Californians – especially those in the San Joaquin Valley – to enjoy the health benefits of being with nature."¹⁸ Dos Rios Ranch Preserve will also include permanent tribal access for cultivating and harvesting traditional plant materials in a 4+ acre area within the park. State Parks, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Water Resources, and the Wildlife Conservation Board are all engaged in making this new park possible.

1.4. Support multi-benefit solutions for access and environmental priorities

1.4.1 Seek opportunities to leverage available funding to acquire and/or restore land which creates access to nature for underserved communities, preserves biodiversity, protects waterways, and provides nature-based solutions for climate resilience. For example, construct trails and other features that integrate best with natural environments and locate them to minimize wildlife impacts.

1.5. Support deferred maintenance projects statewide that seek to expand access to recreation and provide a safe and welcoming experience for visitors

1.5.1 Where they do not already exist, build equitable access considerations into prioritizing deferred maintenance projects, such as evaluating overall park access and quality to identify high-need areas.

1.5.2 Explore bolstering California's capacity to meet deferred maintenance needs through technical skill-building programs, such as those offered by the state and local conservation corps, that ultimately lead to state employment opportunities.





New Public Beach Access Projects



A view of a Malibu beach and the Surfrider Stairs, an access project designed and managed by MRCA. People are playing and walking on the beach. Credit: MRCA.

A creative partnership between the California Coastal Commission, State Coastal Conservancy, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has resulted in two newly completed public beach access projects on surplus state land in the City of Malibu. With funds from the Coastal Act Violation Remediation Account (VRA) MRCA designed, built, and now manages two new stairways from the Malibu Lagoon State Beach parking lot on Pacific Coast Highway to the beach at the foot of the Malibu Pier, complete with new trash bins and public access signage. Down the coast at Big Rock Beach, MRCA replaced an informal bluff trail with a new engineered stairway to a pocket beach called Maritime Rocks using VRA funding. A time-lock allows for daytime access year-round, and a bench and an ADA accessible platform provides scenic views of Santa Monica Bay. Signs with QR codes linked to local tide charts allow visitors to safely time their visits to those times when the beach is at its widest. The VRA is the account into which administrative penalties from successful Coastal Act enforcement actions are deposited for use on projects that expand public access and restore coastal resources. Addressing the VRA backlog could help fund additional equitable access projects.

1.6. Coordinate with school districts and regional governments to enhance green schoolyards and explore opportunities for schoolyards to fill park gaps outside of school hours

1.6.1 Support opportunities to open green schoolyards to their local communities, and encourage school districts and local governments to enter into shared or joint-use agreements to increase overall community outdoor space.¹⁹



Green Schoolyard at the César Chavez Education Center



A child hangs upside down on playground equipment at César Chavez Education Center in Oakland, California. Credit: Trust for the Public Land.

The California Schoolyard Forest System is a statewide initiative to increase tree canopy on public school grounds across California to shade and protect students from extreme heat and rising temperatures due to climate change.²⁰ This partnership between Green Schoolyards America, the California Department of Education (CDE), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Ten Strands, school districts, and county offices of education aligns state and local policy, funding, planning, and technical assistance to support broad adoption.

In 2021, the Oakland Unified School District unveiled its first green schoolyard at the César Chavez Education Center. The newly transformed living schoolyard replaced 13,000 square feet of asphalt with natural play areas, a mini-grass field, 58 new trees to cool the playground and provide shade and seating areas for students, a bioswale designed to channel stormwater runoff and remove debris and pollution before emptying into the bay, and a new outdoor classroom complete with an orchard and planter boxes. This project was funded through a partnership between the City of Oakland, the State Coastal Conservancy, and The Trust for Public Land.²¹

1.7. Support connecting different sized outdoor spaces, including statewide and regional trail networks, to provide diverse experiences for all skill levels, with the co-benefit of creating wildlife corridors

1.7.1 Support local, regional, and federal planning efforts to improve various types of trail connections, including greenways with distance markers and seating, between outdoor spaces to encourage depth of experience and different activities for users who range from limited mobility to intensive physical recreation.

1.8. Ensure outdoor space development and management is consistent with California's Climate Adaptation Strategy, Scoping Plan, and Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy

1.8.1 In collaboration with relevant partners, identify priority areas for the acquisition of lands and waters that can act as natural buffers to climate change impacts and provide and protect recreational access.

1.8.2 Develop recreational opportunities around post-fire recovery so regions impacted by wildfire can continue to sustain outdoor recreation-based economies.

1.8.3 In keeping with California's Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, restore and repurpose former working landscapes for environmental, cultural, and societal use. These working landscapes may have been previously used for agriculture, mining, oil, and gas extraction, etc.

1.9. Support implementation of anti-displacement measures to ensure access to open space does not lead to gentrification

1.9.1 Explore the use of equitable development plans for parks and outdoor spaces to protect against displacement.



India Basin Waterfront Park



Children play on a playground with natural features at India Basin Waterfront Park in San Francisco. Credit: San Francisco Recreation and Parks.

The state awarded \$8.5 million of Proposition 68 funding in 2020 and \$25 million of general funds in 2021 to the creation of [India Basin Waterfront Park](#).²² As part of San Francisco's India Basin Waterfront Park equitable development plan, which includes anti-displacement efforts, project planners evaluated revitalization projects in other cities, such as Washington D.C.'s 11th Street Bridge Park, to glean insights and identify best practices.

1.10. Collaborate with private landowners, and federal, state, regional, and local governments to explore opportunities to expand recreation access on private lands

1.10.1 Through partnerships with private landowners, explore the use of partnership, joint-use, lease, and other access agreements to develop and allow recreation on private lands, including working lands. Identify and share agreement best practices.

1.10.2 Partner with local governments, including county planning departments, to implement simple, clear, and accessible permitting pathways to allow for low-impact camping on private property, particularly agricultural properties and properties that abut public lands.

Priority 2: Foster Belonging



*A close-up of a child's face and two small American flags at a naturalization ceremony at Angel Island State Park in San Francisco.
Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.*

Providing physical access to quality outdoor spaces across the state is only one part of achieving Outdoors for All. These spaces should also be welcoming to everyone. Outdoor spaces must respect the historical and current connections between the land and all Californians, especially California Native American tribes. People of color, with disabilities, who identify as women, and members of LGBTQ2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit) communities must feel safe and celebrated in the outdoors. This includes telling stories that honor all of California's peoples, correcting historical inaccuracies in our storytelling, expanding language access, building trust between visitors and residents, and enhancing a sense of emotional and physical safety. The Natural Resources Agency and its departments can continue to cultivate belonging

through inclusive outdoor education and stewardship opportunities that help everyone build a strong connection to nature. Public outreach and information can be used to break down the elitism within outdoor recreation by promoting a range of options and celebrating the many ways people of all abilities choose to be outdoors. Strengthening these connections with the outdoors will benefit both people and nature.

The strategies outlined in this section will help achieve a future where everyone feels safe, welcome, and encouraged in the outdoors, and can enjoy California's lands and waters without hesitation.

The state will have succeeded when:

- **Californians feel a sense of safety and belonging in parks and outdoor spaces.**

Strategies:

2.1. Share culturally diverse, relevant, and relatable stories and images of California's peoples and history through the programming, interpretive materials, art, and signage offered at outdoor spaces, cultural and historic places, and museums

2.1.1 Pursue early, often, and meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes on the development of best practices and messaging for sharing tribal cultures and histories. These consultations shall be followed for the development of location-specific programming, interpretive materials, and signage.

2.1.2 Engage in partnerships with community members, community-based organizations, and colleges and universities to broaden the images, stories and histories told in outdoor spaces, cultural and historic places, and museums to reflect and strengthen a shared sense of belonging for all of California's diverse communities.

2.1.3 Convene with staff from the state's cultural and historic places and museums to identify opportunities to connect Outdoors for All with existing planning and programming efforts.



Coastal Stories Grant Program

The State Coastal Conservancy's [Coastal Stories grant program](#) is helping to make the outdoors more inclusive and welcoming for all Californians by fostering representation of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and other historically excluded groups in outdoor spaces through storytelling installations, including murals, signage, monuments, and guides. This grant program aims to directly support and empower representatives of BIPOC and/or other historically excluded groups to develop and share their coastal perspectives and stories, correct one-sided histories, and retell stories in more inclusive and accurate ways.



State Parks Tribal Land Acknowledgements

State Parks is currently in the process of developing tribal land acknowledgements for all 280 state parks through new signage and improved interpretation that will better connect the public with tribal history and contemporary experiences. The 2022-23 state budget included nearly \$10 million to develop a plan for this work and to update and better contextualize the history of California Native Americans in existing visitor center and museum exhibits at approximately 20 state parks. These improvements will bring forward California Native American voices, recognizing and respecting their governments and communities as traditional stewards of this land, and the enduring relationship that exists between them and their traditional territories.

2.2. Foster public appreciation of and connection to California's natural and cultural resources

2.2.1 Develop shared messaging across departments that elevates appreciation for and connection to the outdoors.

2.2.2 Explore public-private partnerships to coordinate a comprehensive high-visibility statewide communications campaign. This should include showing the diversity of California's people outdoors, including underserved and LGBTQ2S+ communities, and people with disabilities. Engage trusted messengers in the community, such as tribes and community-based organizations, as campaign partners.

2.3. Support improvements to language access for outdoor programming, educational materials, and staff at open spaces, cultural and historic places, and museums

2.3.1 Increase language access across programs by identifying what documents must be translated, when, and in what languages, and offering programming in these languages as funding allows.

2.4. Build trust between and among staff and visitors

2.4.1 Create additional opportunities for public safety officers to better understand and be responsive to community needs on safety, such as through intentional dialogue with local community leaders on safety needs and participation in local community events in a way that bolsters trust.

2.4.2 Ensure Natural Resources Agency entities, employees, public safety officers, and volunteers continue to meet and improve required sensitivity, implicit bias, and cultural humility trainings for parks and outdoor spaces.

2.4.3 Review first response protocols throughout the Natural Resources Agency, particularly in response to visitors' concerns about other visitors. Consider adding additional training about common sense approaches before taking enforcement action.

2.4.4 Support the programming and necessary features for outdoor spaces to be venues for fostering a sense of community and building trust, such as through regularly scheduled community events for locals and visitors. For example, in state parks this includes outdoor concerts and cultural and local events related to park histories and stories.

2.4.5 Explore an intra-agency effort to address the broader societal challenge of public safety in outdoor spaces, and to evaluate ongoing progress.

2.4.6 Explore additional Memorandum of Understandings and agreements concerning public safety responsibilities with tribal police, tribal public safety officers, tribal environmental compliance officers, and tribal officials.



Reexamining Our Past Initiative



Two people carving a wooden sign bearing the name of Sue-meg State Park. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

On September 25, 2020, the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of State Parks and Recreation, and CalTrans jointly announced the [Reexamining Our Past Initiative](#) – a statewide effort to survey, evaluate and redress the names of existing state parks (including features within the state parks systems such as trails), monuments and transportation systems with racist or discriminatory roots. The state agencies are working with California Native American tribes, universities, and community partners to address the terms identified. One year after the launch of the initiative, the California State Parks and Recreation Commission voted unanimously to rename Patrick's Point State Park to Sue-meg State Park, to honor and celebrate this significant place to the Yurok community.



2.5. Create adult and youth-centered programming, including intergenerational opportunities, at outdoor spaces to inspire and build confidence across a broad range of recreational users and activities

2.5.1 Continue to expand partnerships with and incentivize community-based groups, including health and community service organizations, to provide repeated programming and free or affordable transportation to outdoor spaces for youth, families, elders and older adults, people with disabilities, and those lacking access to those resources.

2.5.2 Gather feedback from communities of all ages to understand which types of activities they desire and recreational skills they want to learn through surveys, community meetings, or events.

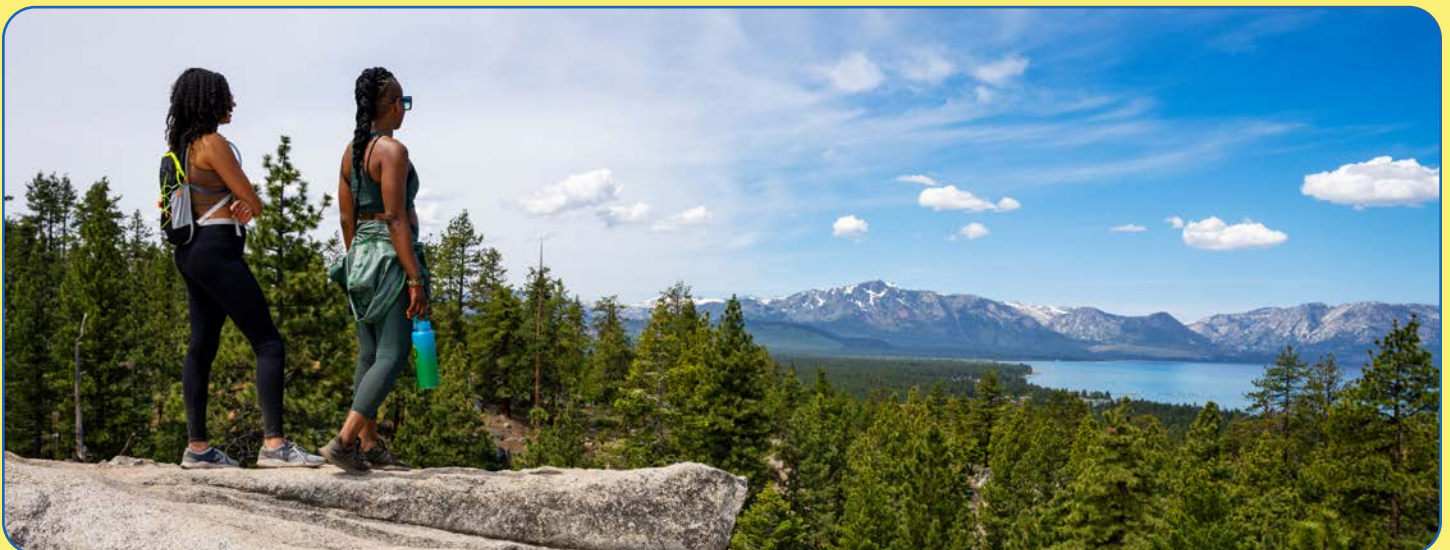
2.5.3 Initiate inter-agency collaboration with California Department of Education, California Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, California Health and Human Services Agency, and California Commission on Aging to create regular outdoor education and community science programming for children and youth, elders, and older adults. Programs should encourage intergenerational learning, provide the health benefits of nature, foster community connection, inspire environmental stewardship and volunteerism, and promote leave-no-trace ethics.

2.5.4 Collaborate with the Department of Education and local school districts to require culturally appropriate environmental literacy, civic engagement, and environmental stewardship in K-12 education.

2.6. Rename offensive and derogatory geographic features and place names across outdoor spaces to address historical wrongs and create safe and inclusive spaces

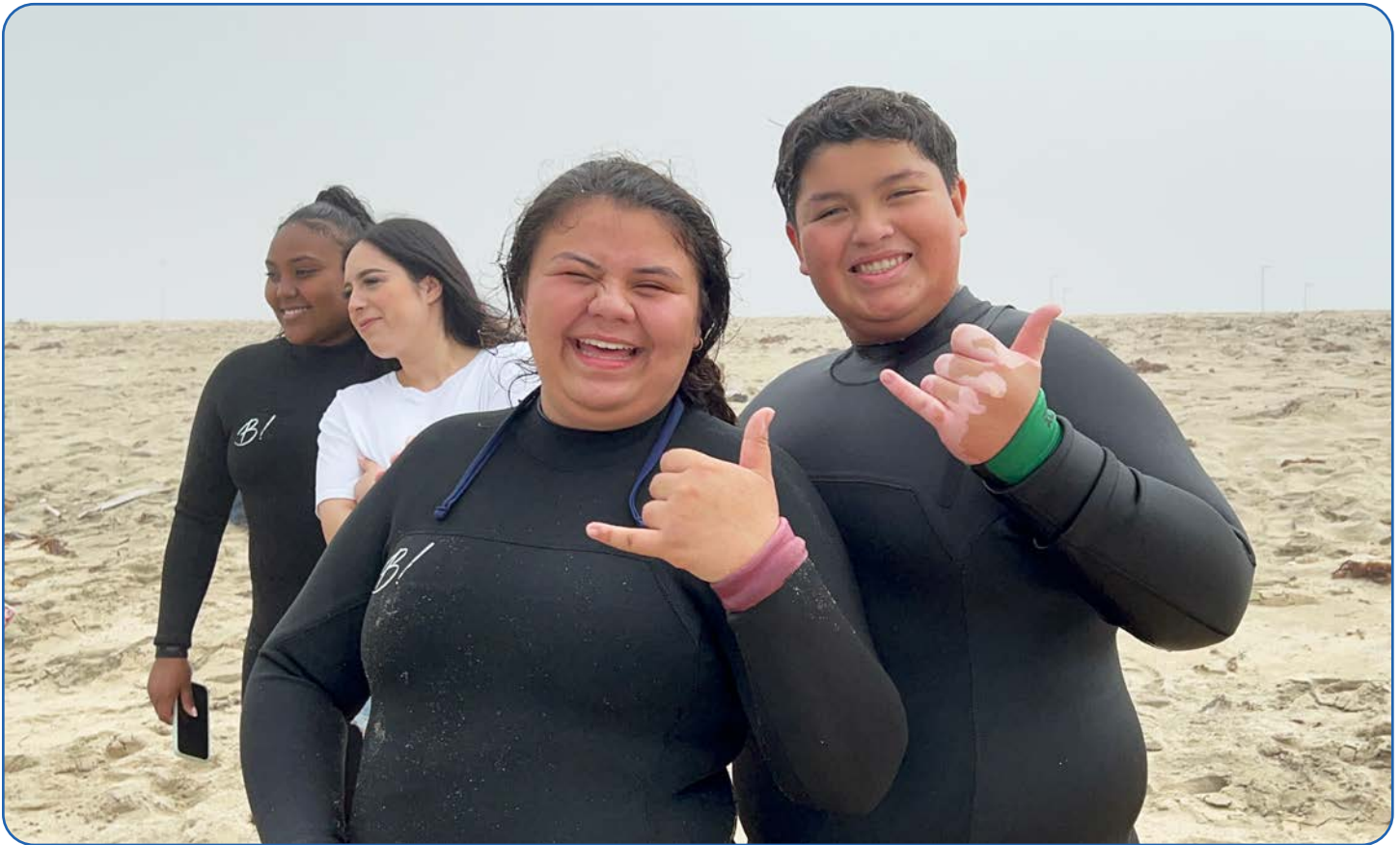
2.6.1 Conduct early, often, and meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes to identify geographic features and place names with offensive and derogatory names and replace them with names that honor and respect tribal languages, pre-contact names of these places, and tribal histories.

2.6.2 Partner with the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names' implementation of Assembly Bill 2022 to address offensive and derogatory geographic features and place names.²³



Two people look at Lake Tahoe, mountains and the woods, from an overlook at Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Credit: California Tahoe Conservancy.

Priority 3: Connect People and the Outdoors



Teens playfully pose in wetsuits on a beach as part of the Kizh Nation Environmental Camp. Credit: Kizh Nation.

Transportation, information-related, administrative, and financial barriers limit Californians from getting to outdoor spaces. Through Outdoors for All, the state will increase Californians' awareness of which outdoor spaces are nearby, what recreational activities they can do there, and how to safely reach these spaces by bike, bus, car, or walking. The state will also ease the processes for gaining entry fees, reservations, permits, equipment, and classes needed for some outdoor activities to increase access, especially for underserved communities and people with disabilities.

The state will have made progress on connecting people to the outdoors when:

- **Visitors to California's outdoor spaces represent the state's diversity.**



Strategies:

3.1. Make information about California's parks and outdoor spaces easier to find and understand

3.1.1 Explore opportunities to consolidate, standardize, and map information about how and where to access the outdoors and recreational activities across California, making information easy to find and understand. Work collaboratively with key partners to integrate information on parks and the outdoors from the local to federal scale.

3.1.2 Explore public-private partnerships to create a public information campaign in multiple languages and share the tool above through a range of venues, such as public meetings, grantee networks, and more.

3.2. Explore opportunities to offer free broadband on state recreation lands, and cultural and historic properties, allowing for more accessible information, inclusive signage, programming, and connectivity to address safety concerns

3.2.1 Coordinate with State Parks on the implementation of the broadband goals as per their forthcoming strategic plan.

3.2.2 Facilitate inter-agency collaboration, including engagement with the Broadband Council and its various initiatives, to leverage existing state and federal broadband funding to support these efforts.



3.3. Enhance and create more green, accessible, safe, active, public, and shared transportation options linking the outdoors and communities

3.3.1 Prioritize multi-benefit green active transportation corridors, including greenways and trails, that safely connect people with recreational destinations, employment locations, and community centers.

3.3.2 Collaborate with school districts to provide transportation access to connect youth to the outdoors and recreational opportunities.

3.3.3 Continue funding and exploring opportunities to expand grants that promote creative and affordable transportation options, including Explore the Coast and Parks California's Route to Parks grants.

3.3.4 Identify opportunities to coordinate with transit partners – including transportation service and planning agencies, as well as local paratransit providers – to improve transit options to state parks.



Connected Communities Project



Six Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship Youth Crew 2022 members pose with equipment and yellow hardhats in the woods. Credit: Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship.

The Connected Communities Project in the Lost Sierra provides a multi-benefit model that supports the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the region. Spearheaded by Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship, federal land managers, and community partners, the vision of the project is to provide multi-use trail connectivity between 15 communities in six Sierra counties. It is building a recreation-focused economy and bringing jobs to an economically challenged area that has been significantly impacted by wildfires. To date, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has invested more than \$1.4 million to create a Connected Communities trails master plan and help fund portions of its implementation.



Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway



An adult and child bike along the Dennis Machida Greenway near South Lake Tahoe. Credit: California Tahoe Conservancy.

Urban forestry and greening projects can be used as a tool to make active transportation pathways for walking and biking safer and more welcoming. Model projects include the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway in South Lake Tahoe built by the California Tahoe Conservancy, El Dorado County, and several partners. The Greenway is a fully accessible shared-use trail that is used by visitors and residents seeking access to trails and beaches, students attending nearby schools, and workers getting to and from their jobs.

3.4. Explore ways to provide free access to California state parks for low-income communities

3.4.1 Continue to explore promotion of and reduce barriers to accessing the Golden Bear Pass, Limited Use Golden Bear Pass, and the Distinguished Veteran's Pass, providing free entrance to California state parks to all CalWORKs and SSI recipients, adults over 62, and California veterans. Do the same for the Disabled Discount Pass, which provides a 50% discount for vehicle day-use, family camping, and boat use fees at over 100 state parks.

3.4.2 Continue to explore focused, sustainable Adventure Pass and Library Parks Pass programs that allow Californians, particularly those from low-income communities, to access select state parks for free. These programs could apply lessons learned from the successful pilots.

3.5. Support tribal members in harvesting culturally significant materials in outdoor spaces

3.5.1 Where feasible and through tribal agreements, remove permit requirements for tribal members to harvest culturally significant materials on state lands and waters, including but not limited to those managed by: State Parks, Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Water Resources, and the state's regional conservancies.

3.5.2 Support tribally managed native plant nurseries through existing budgeted programs. Explore easing the contracting processes for these nurseries when native plants are needed for state-operated restoration projects.

3.5.3 Support the long term and sustainable growth of native and traditionally important plants on public lands that are managed or co-managed by tribes through cultural practices and Traditional Ecological Knowledges for tribal gathering and ceremony. Prioritize locations that are easily accessed by tribal members of all ages and abilities and limit non-tribal use or harvesting of materials to the extent that it infringes on tribal uses, ecosystem integrity, etc.

3.6. Explore public-private partnerships to support gear libraries and low-cost outings and classes at outdoor spaces

3.6.1 Partner with regional park districts and local organizations to host and expand gear libraries at outdoor spaces statewide, including the FamCamp® program within state parks and wheelchairs that facilitate beach and other outdoor access.

3.6.2 Explore opportunities to provide discounts on gear, outings, outdoor guides, skills classes, and other accessible programming to underserved communities and people with disabilities. This could begin with grantees from the Outdoor Equity Grants Program and Youth Community Access Grant Program.



FamCamp®



FamCamp program participants gather in front of a FamCamp gear trailer. Credit: California State Parks Foundation.

Gear libraries reduce the cost of gear, train group leaders and educators with outdoor skills to lead trips and empower a broader range of outdoor enthusiasts. State Parks and the California State Parks Foundation operate FamCamp®, a statewide program that introduces California underserved communities, who would otherwise not have the opportunity, to have overnight outdoor recreational experiences. The FamCamp® program provides a trailer full of camping equipment and a campsite reserved at a State Park. The campground is usually located relatively close to an urban area and is available during the prime camping season. Community organizations participate in a State Parks-led training to receive access to the FamCamp® program, then invite community members to participate.

3.7. Prioritize funding and a streamlined process for building lower-cost coastal accommodations

3.7.1 Consider financial or permitting incentives for existing or new lower-cost coastal accommodation developers.

3.7.2 Streamline process for building lower-cost coastal accommodations.



Low-Cost Coastal Accommodations



Two children roast a marshmallow in a fire on the beach at Samoa Coast State Park at sunset. Credit: Carissa Ranario.

The State Coastal Conservancy, the California Coastal Commission, and State Parks have worked closely together to develop and implement the Explore the Coast Overnight program to facilitate the improvement of existing and the development of new lower-cost coastal to specifically serve low and middle-income families and give them meaningful coastal experiences. With \$60 million in funding from Proposition 68 and in-lieu fees collected by the Coastal Commission, several campground, cabin, and hostel projects have been planned and implemented. Examples include the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park Campground, Crystal Cove Cottages, and JugHandle Creek Farm and Nature Center.

3.8. Prioritize partnerships with nonprofits that provide youth and families from underserved communities and people with disabilities with access to state lands through supervised programming

3.8.1 With permission from nonprofits who are parties to the agreements, create a library of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and other partnership agreements to serve as examples to help facilitate partnerships between federal, state, and local government partners.

Priority 4: Co-Create with Communities



A tribal member holds a basket and is speaking to a small group gathered outside as part of the Interagency archeology and cultural fire workshop near Mariposa, CA. Credit: CAL FIRE.

Parks and other outdoor spaces are a public good that should serve the diverse needs of all Californians. The state will continue to seek early, often, and meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes and engage and center communities in planning and programming, in alignment with existing state policy. These actions help ensure inclusivity and that communities' needs are met in a meaningful way.

The state envisions tribes and community members as true partners in designing and managing parks and outdoor spaces and seeks to further celebrate and support their work. These actions will guide state's approach to partnering with California Native American tribes and community

organizations and build their capacity to engage in collaborative planning over the long-term.

The state will have made progress to actualizing an Outdoors for All when, in collaboration with the Natural Resources Agency's tribal, equity, and environmental justice priorities:

- **The state responds to and integrates the priorities of underserved communities, including California Native American tribes.**
- **Underserved communities, including California Native American tribes, can easily participate in decision-making processes.**

Strategies:

4.1. Conduct early, often, and meaningful tribal consultations with the goal of enhancing tribal partnerships and collaboration

4.1.1 With permission from tribes who are parties to the agreements, create a library of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and other partnership agreements to serve as examples that help facilitate tribal, federal, state, regional, and local government collaboration. Share additional research, resources, and trainings to support tribal, state, regional, and local government efforts to build collaboration.

4.1.2 Explore simplifying permitting processes and other agreements with tribes to increase tribal access to and use of ancestral lands and natural resources.

4.1.3 Encourage and verify meaningful tribal partnerships and collaborations with non-tribal government applicants seeking state grant funds.

4.2. Invite and embed meaningful tribal consultation and community engagement into grant processes

4.2.1 Emphasize the importance of tribal consultation and community engagement in grant applications for outdoor access and park development by designing processes that involve residents, especially underserved communities, throughout project processes, including land acquisition and management. Apply best practices for community partnerships from existing successful models, for example Explore the Coast and Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program.

4.2.2 Consider opportunities to engage community members in grant decision-making, such as adding community representatives to application review teams as is the practice for the Natural Resources Agency's [Youth Community Access grants](#).

4.3. Update the grant applications of the Natural Resources Agency and its departments to increase support and reduce barriers for underserved communities, including California Native American tribes, and the organizations that serve them

4.3.1 Evaluate opportunities to trim grant application and reporting requirements, and to implement other best practices that reduce administrative barriers and burdens, while preserving accountability.

4.3.2 Consider separate funding pools within existing grant programs for small and large organizations to reduce funding inequities and ensure smaller organizations and target communities with fewer resources can access state resources. Similarly, consider setting aside funding for tribes and rural communities to ensure there is funding that meets their unique needs.

4.3.3 Increase staff's ability to offer and accept grant applications in languages other than English.

4.3.4 Explore opportunities to fund technical assistance through local assistance funds to the most underserved communities to build their capacity to apply for funding and engage in collaborative efforts.

4.3.5 Convene Agency staff to identify and implement best practices for making grants more accessible and equitable for underserved communities and organizations who serve them.

4.3.6 Explore ways to accelerate reimbursement timelines, and streamline administrative processes for tribes and nonprofits who contract with the state.



Bilingual Vamos a Pescar Grant Applications

In 2022, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife offered English and Spanish [applications](#) for their [Vamos a Pescar](#) community grant program. This grant program funds fishing programs, classes and activities committed to educating and engaging diverse, multi-generational, bi/multi-lingual participants new to fishing, boating and aquatic stewardship in California.



WHALE TAIL® Grants

Since 1998, the Coastal Commission's [WHALE TAIL® Grants](#) have supported experiential education and stewardship of the California coast and its watersheds, with an emphasis on equity, accessibility, and inclusion, and engaging communities that have historically had few such opportunities due to systemic and geographic barriers. In 2021-2022, staff worked with Justice Outside to carry out an intensive review to improve how this focus is implemented throughout the lifespan of the grants cycle, from funding announcements to the selection and implementation of proposals.

An equity analysis report was produced to describe the changes made, including modifications to application materials, increased outreach, improvements to the selection process, and adjustments to applicant and grantee rules and requirements. These changes have supported implementation of more equitable coastal access and educational programs, and increased the program's reach and impact throughout California.

4.4. Collaborate with other agencies to build best practices for public meetings that are accessible to people with disabilities, and increase involvement by underserved communities through language access and greater transparency and education about state processes

4.4.1 Support existing efforts to increase access and diversify participation in public meetings across the Natural Resources Agency, sharing effective strategies that can be replicated or expanded.

4.4.2 Regularly communicate and share information in multiple languages with local government and community-based partners about public meeting processes, comment periods, and funding notices, and provide guidance on how their members can engage.

4.4.3 Engage trusted messengers in the community, such as tribes and community-based organizations, to spread information about agency decision-making processes directly to their communities.



Reimagining the Future of Big Basin State Park



Two park rangers cut a large red ribbon in front of a small wooden cabin, with a sign that reads "Welcome! #BackToBigBasin" in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

Following the 2020 wildfire that devastated Big Basin Redwoods State Park, State Parks engaged stakeholders and the public in a process to [reimagine the future of Big Basin](#). The Reimagining Big Basin process provided updates on the park's conditions and recovery efforts, and informational and educational resources regarding the challenges and opportunities of reestablishment. It also sought input regarding the vision for the park's future through events, webinars, surveys, and a website.



4.5. Collaborate with the Governor's Office to enhance outreach efforts for appointed positions on Natural Resources Agency boards and commissions to increase community representation

4.5.1 Support increased tribal and community outreach for board and commission application processes.

4.5.2 Explore how appointed positions can advance and support the state's goals for equitable access.

4.6. Identify opportunities for tribal governments and community-based organizations to co-create and co-manage parks and outdoor spaces

4.6.1 Identify opportunities and best practices for the co-creation of educational and interpretive programming and co-management of lands and waters with tribal governments and community-based organizations, where and if desired by these communities.

4.7. Continue to grow the Natural Resources Agency's capacity to meaningfully engage underserved communities.

4.7.1 Consider developing a set of universal standards for equitable engagement to apply to park development projects and outdoor access programs across all departments.



Chah-pek-w O' Ket'-toh "Stone Lagoon" Visitor Center and El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park



California State Park interpreters Maya Rainer and Princess Colegrove, Yurok Cultural Resources Department Director and Tribal Heritage Preservation Officer Rosie Clayburn, Yurok Tribe Interpretation Coordinator Nicole Peters stand in front of an exhibit at Chah-pek-w O' Ket'-toh Visitor Center. Credit: Parks California.

The [Chah-pek-w O' Ket'-toh "Stone Lagoon" Visitor Center](#) and [El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park](#) serve as two examples of co-management agreements between State Parks and a tribal government and community-based organization, respectively. Managed by Yurok Cultural Resources Director and Tribal Heritage Preservation Officer, the Chahpek-w O' Ket'-toh "Stone Lagoon" Visitor Center now contains a multitude of digital and conventional displays that reflect the Tribe's longstanding cultural connection to the lagoon. The Tribe and State Parks hired Yurok interpreters to share the Tribe's history from pre-contact to contemporary times.

Down the coast, El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park is operated by the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation under an operating agreement with California State Parks. The Santa Barbara Trust works closely with California State Parks, the City of Santa Barbara, the County of Santa Barbara, and various cultural and educational constituencies to attract and inform a broad audience through its restoration projects, exhibits, living history demonstrations, public events and lectures, and public school programs.

Priority 5: Build Equitable Career Pathways and a Representative Workforce



California Conservation Energy Corps members install equipment. Credit: California Conservation Corps.

Who greets visitors to parks? Who leads the programs at outdoor spaces that tell California's stories? Who makes decisions about the future of the state's lands and waters? The backgrounds and identities of the people who make up California's environmental and outdoor workforce affect where outdoor spaces are located, who they are designed for, and where funding is distributed.

A workforce that reflects the diversity of the people of California is an essential component of Outdoors for All. It allows all Californians to see themselves reflected in those who steward outdoor spaces, fostering a sense of safety and belonging, and inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.

The Natural Resources Agency and its departments are already working to create systems that recruit and retain talented staff who are experts

in both relevant subject matter and the communities they serve. The state will continue to advance workforce development strategies within Outdoors for All in alignment with its workforce development and equity priorities.

The strategies listed below are part of the Agency's overarching strategy to cultivate an equitable workforce, and their success is necessary to achieve Outdoors for All. Many of these strategies are already underway through collaboration between the Natural Resources Agency and department leaders and staff.

The baseline to achieve progress and measure success will begin with:

- **All levels of the outdoor and natural resources workforce reflect the diversity of California.**

Strategies:

5.1. Bridge internship, conservation corps, and other career development programs to careers with the state

5.1.1 Identify classifications for which the entry-level requirements thereof can be met by time spent in the California Conservation Corps (CCC). Explore opportunities to apply this strategy to other local conservation corps programs.

5.1.2 Explore partnering with educational and youth-serving institutions and organizations to house paid internship programs with the Natural Resources Agency.

5.1.3 Support partnerships with Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families career development programs to develop specific pathways to state natural resources careers.

5.2. Enhance strategic and inclusive career outreach and programming through dedicated staff at the Natural Resources Agency's Career Center

5.2.1 Make the state's hiring process more approachable by supporting and participating in tribal and local career fairs and by hosting monthly workshops with the Natural Resources Agency's departments, commissions, and conservancies.

5.2.2 Leverage the state's connections with tribal governments and community-based organizations to circulate state job postings within the communities they serve and in a manner that is relevant to the communities. Collaborate with federal partners to extend impact.

5.2.3 Increase and prioritize recruitment of local tribal and community residents to fill staff roles across the Natural Resources Agency and its entities, including roles in outdoor spaces, cultural and historic places, public safety, and museums.

5.2.4 In the Natural Resources Agency's programming, find ways to connect current and future staff to the services, resources, and career pathway opportunities at the Career Center.

5.2.5 Invite and encourage tribal partners, students, non-profit organizations, youth organizations, and social service organizations to visit the Career Center and activate its services.



CAL FIRE Firefighter Training Standards

CAL FIRE changed its training standards so that Corps members on a CAL FIRE/CCC hand crew are fully qualified to apply for a job on a CAL FIRE firefighter hand crew as a Firefighter I.

5.3. Continue coordination of intra-Agency workgroups and California Department of Human Resources to reassess job classifications, hiring processes, and salary ranges

5.3.1 Evaluate job classification requirements, such as college grade point average, formal experience, education, and legal or formerly incarcerated status, to determine if each requirement is crucial to the performance of employees or creates unnecessary barriers for entry.

5.4. Continue coordination efforts of intra-Agency workgroups to develop career pathways strategies to support aligned efforts in employee retention

5.4.1 Continue to celebrate cultural diversity and heritage months through internal- and external-facing events.

5.4.2 Enhance and create employee resource groups throughout the Natural Resources Agency to support employees and provide affinity spaces.

5.4.3 Provide peer support and mentorship programming within the Natural Resources Agency and its entities to support existing staff and promote advancement.

5.4.4 Enhance the Natural Resources Agency's [careers website](#) as a resource for new and existing employees of the Natural Resources Agency and its entities to find and apply to jobs.

Priority 6: Align Funding to Achieve Outdoors for All



A dozen adults exercising together at Salud Park in Paramount. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer

The Newsom Administration has invested over \$1 billion to-date to advance the Outdoors for All movement. As we move forward, the state recognizes advancing this effort will take an “all-hands-on-deck” approach that will involve collaborating across all sectors – regional and federal government, philanthropic, private, and more – to galvanize this movement to build more healthy, accessible, and quality outdoor spaces and experiences across the state.

The Natural Resources Agency and its departments will continue to find creative opportunities to align funding across sectors and within existing state programs and initiatives for outdoor access. This includes identifying investments in regular operations, maintenance, deferred maintenance, and capacity-building assistance to the most underserved communities.

Strategies:

6.1. Develop and communicate an inventory of equitable access investments and impact

6.1.1 Coordinate with state agencies and departments to identify and inventory all state investments on equitable outdoor access.

6.1.2 Identify ways to compare impacts by using consistent metrics and identify opportunities to streamline investments and improve programming for increased impact.

6.1.3 Continue to promote and increase visibility of access-related grants available, and outdoor education programs for schools offered through the Agency.

6.2. Prioritize resource efficiency and reduce redundancies

6.2.1 Collaborate across all Natural Resources Agency departments and other state agencies to increase efficiency and impact for equitable outdoor access projects, as with the Cutting the Green Tape initiative.

6.3. Establish partnerships with philanthropic and for-profit sectors

6.3.1 Partner with philanthropic organizations to identify opportunities to fill funding gaps.

6.3.2 Convene tribes and community-based organizations with philanthropic entities to help tribes and community partners build the funder relationships they need to better identify and pursue grants.

6.3.3 Partner with the for-profit sector, particularly the outdoor recreation industry, to identify opportunities for collaboration.

6.4. Align existing funding sources to create multi-benefit projects and programs

6.4.1 Partner within the state to integrate equitable access into relevant, existing funding sources.

6.4.2 Seek opportunities for grants given by the state and its departments to include an equitable access element. This includes guidance for best practices in engaging and co-creating with California Native American tribes and underserved communities.

6.4.3 Identify opportunities to prioritize funding for programming, staffing, and capacity building for equitable access, not just capital improvements, or acquisition, through existing programs like Strategic Growth Council's Regional Climate Collaboratives.

6.4.4 Measure and value the benefits of outdoor spaces on air quality improvement in scoring criteria and methodology for Assembly Bill 617 funding.

6.4.5 Prioritize grant applications that advance multi-benefit access projects to leverage funds and meet the goals of multiple state programs (e.g., Outdoors for All, 30x30, Nature-Based Solutions).

6.4.6 Support project planning that aligns with and brings federal funding opportunities to bolster state funding for outdoor access projects.

6.4.7 Leverage resources available through the state's Agreement for Shared Stewardship of California's Forests and Rangelands with the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region to advance access goals.

6.5. Streamline standards and decision-making tools for equitable outdoor access to determine strategic investments for the state

6.5.1 Assess existing state standards and decision-making tools to identify inconsistencies and gaps in determining priority areas of the state for equitably enhancing outdoor access.

6.5.2 Integrate a sophisticated decision-making tool for the Natural Resources Agency and departments to direct and track investments for equitable outdoor access in priority areas.

Implementation of the Strategy



Two children ride their bicycles on a dirt path at New Brighton State Beach. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer

Public lands and waters are inherently civic spaces and, as such, require that everyone work together to achieve their highest and best use for people and the planet. The Outdoors for All strategy is intended as a guide for all Californians to work together toward achieving equitable outdoor access. The strategy's success relies on partnership and collaboration. While it will take the efforts of many to make equitable outdoor access a reality, the state's leadership in providing resources, policies, and coordination can catalyze this work.

Achieving this strategy requires that Californians work together to integrate equitable outdoor access into all corners of the community: how people travel from one place to another, and where they gather to learn, work, and play. People are an integral part of nature. Everyone inherits this connection to the outdoors. The actions in the Outdoors for All strategy will ensure everyone can cultivate this connection regardless of who they are or where they live. This strategy supports and expands on efforts to protect cherished lands, waters, and wildlife for future generations, by protecting this connection to these spaces,

and recognizing the equal importance the outdoors play across neighborhoods, schools, parks systems, and state and federal lands.

Increasing the impact of existing programs and achieving the ambitious new goals set forth in this strategy requires broad collaboration, creative funding, and clear next steps. This includes identifying administrative barriers to access. It will take everyone to make this vision of equitable access a reality and cultivate outdoor spaces for future generations to enjoy.



People tubing down a snowy slope at Tahoe. Credit: Visit Lake Tahoe, Rachid Dahnoun.



Three people snow shoeing among tall trees on Mt. San Jacinto. Credit: Ceri Breeze.

Near-Term Actions

The Outdoors for All strategy contains six priorities for achieving equitable access to the outdoors. Below are the near-term actions the Natural Resources Agency will take.

Create an inventory of equitable access investments and impact, and gaps and solutions

Inventory state investments in equitable access as required for reporting in Assembly Bill 30. Assess gaps and remaining barriers in the inventory of equitable access, and identify solutions.

Identify, track, and standardize best practices that will lead to more inclusive outdoor spaces

Establish baseline data on outdoor access, in partnership with philanthropy, the private sector, and community-based organizations, including those with a health or education focus. Through early, often, and meaningful consultation, engage tribes and tribal communities in this process. Identify ways to measure progress using shared metrics and data.

Prioritize resource efficiency and reduce redundancies by aligning access investments across the Natural Resources Agency

Improve coordination across Agency departments and partner agencies by identifying unnecessary duplication and redundancies and collaborating to increase efficiency and impact. This includes regulatory efficiencies and opportunities to support “Cutting the Green Tape.” Regularly track and report expenditures towards equitable outdoor access; and prioritize a portion of existing funding, including discretionary and grantmaking funds, toward projects that advance equitable outdoor access. This should include aligning with 30x30 and Nature-Based Solutions programs.

Track and communicate progress

Develop actions for regularly checking in on and publicly communicating progress toward the actions in this strategy. Agency departments will collaborate to establish specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic, and time-bound metrics for progress.

Developing the Outdoors for All Strategy



Visitors walk a path among bright yellow and orange wildflowers at the Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Reserve.
Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

The collective knowledge of thousands of community advocates across California shaped the core components of the Outdoors for All strategy. In 2021, advocates provided initial insight and direction on how to best achieve equitable access to outdoor spaces through dedicated discussions for two state initiatives: Pathways to 30x30 and the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy. Along with the Outdoors for All initiative, these efforts prioritize equitable access to the outdoors.

Building on this foundation, in 2022 the Natural Resources Agency held six regional workshops co-hosted by community-based organizations, one statewide virtual workshop, and one public community meeting. Participants at these meetings and workshops expanded on the preliminary recommendations that advocates provided by emphasizing regional priorities, detailing statewide needs, and sharing best practices. The Natural Resources Agency thanks the following organizations for co-hosting these workshops: Fresno Building Healthy Communities, Outdoor Outreach, Parks Now Coalition, True North Organizing Network, TOGETHER Bay Area, Parks California, and Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation.

The Natural Resources Agency conducted four tribal listening sessions and twelve consultations with California Native American tribes. These

closed sessions provided both state and tribal governments opportunities to identify meaningful ways the state can reduce barriers to tribal access to state, regional, federal, and privately-owned lands.

Interviews with leaders and staff from more than 25 entities within the Natural Resources Agency, and federal and regional outdoor space partners were also key to the development of this strategy. These interviews highlighted existing equitable access programs and explored the internal opportunities and barriers to achieving Outdoors for All.

The Outdoors for All strategy was collaboratively developed by the California Natural Resources Agency and Better World Group, with grant funding provided by Resources Legacy Fund.



Thirty-four participants from the Bay Area Outdoors for All regional workshop pose for a photo outside of a white building in the Presidio, San Francisco. Credit: Kimberly Guo.

Appendix A: Sources Informing the Strategy



A person on an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) rides among California poppies at Prairie City State Vehicle Recreation Area. Credit: California State Parks, Brian Baer.

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