

Calendar Event



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California State Parks

AMIA members attend “Closing Parks is Bad for Business” rally

As part of the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) ongoing “Save Our State Parks Campaign,” a new business-oriented campaign was launched to send a powerful message to Gov. Brown and the Legislature: 'Closing Parks is Bad for Business.' The new campaign kicked off during a state parks march and rally at the Capitol on Tuesday, November 1st, where advocates gathered to bring awareness to the negative impacts park closures will have on California's economy.

Participants marched from the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park to the Capitol where they gathered for a rally to emphasize the negative impacts the park closures will have on the economy. Several business leaders addressed the crowd, including: John Severini, president/CEO of CalTravel, Christina Strawbridge, chair of the Benicia Economic Council, Kevin Murphy, general manager of Sports Leisure Vacations, and Christopher Grant Ward of Folk4Parks.

After the rally, participants delivered 125 oversized 'Closing Parks is Bad for California' postcards filled with signatures and messages from tens of thousands of park supporters from throughout California, as well as approximately 35,000 citizen petitions urging the governor to protect state parks and keep them open.

Lake County was represented at the event by Gae Henry and Henry Bornstein of the Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association (AMIA). Henry and Bornstein helped deliver large sized postcards covered with signatures and heart-felt messages. Some of the large postcards came from those who attended the Old Time Bluegrass Festival, a fundraiser for AMIA held at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park in September.

Following the delivery to the Governor's office, rally participants attended a joint legislative hearing that was held by the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife and the Assembly Committee for Accountability & Administrative Review. Elizabeth Goldstein,

president of CSPF, testified about how our state parks system cannot continue to exist as it does today, let alone strive for improvements or excellence, if the state continues to defund California State Parks.

The hearing was standing room only with park supporters from all over the state filling the room and spilling out into the hallway. The hearing lasted over four hours, touching on a variety of topics, including how the decision was made by the California State Parks Department to choose the parks to be included on the closure list. Additional areas discussed were the economic impacts of park closures, local and regional perspectives, and the hidden costs of state park closures.

State Parks Deputy Director Herms said that the state is working with the Federal Parks Foundation and a number of non-profit groups in the hopes of keeping many of the parks on the closure list open.

“We’re working closely with our local State Parks Rangers to continue keeping Anderson Marsh State Historic Park open and accessible to the public for hikes, tours, field-trips & special events” said AMIA Board Member, Henry Bornstein. “The Park had been scheduled to ‘seasonally close’ in mid-September, but it is still open thanks to AMIA funding and the support of Clearlake Police Department Volunteers in Policing Services (VIPS). At this time, AMIA is able to continue offering field-trips and monthly walks & tours. We are encouraged by the support of our local Sector & District Parks Rangers and are working hard to see what it will take to continue to keep the Park open and accessible to the public after the scheduled July 2012 closure date.” #####