

September 9, 2011

Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: Assembly Bill 42 (Huffman) – SUPPORT

Dear Governor Brown:

The Marin Conservation League supports AB42 as a way to facilitate alternatives to keep open some of the parks scheduled for closure. We encourage you to sign the bill. We are working with other groups in Marin to keep the four state parks on the closure list in our county open.

Since 2008 there have been repeated threats of closure, which has undermined the morale of staff, as their numbers shrink. It takes years to train qualified people to run our state parks. If parks are closed, it will take a long time to bring them back to operational capacity. A generation of young people would lose access to these irreplaceable natural, cultural and historic resources.

Allowing the Department of Parks and Recreation to enter into operating agreements with qualified nonprofit organizations can be an important mechanism to achieve effective, efficient management of state parks. Nonprofit organizations have been working closely with DPR staff for years, providing services to enhance the visitor experience.

AB42 provides a new mechanism to maintain the legacy of our state park system and keep our parks accessible for all Californians. Having a park in such an operating agreement will enable DPR the opportunity to redirect precious public resources to parks that will remain directly managed by the state. The nonprofit operators may have the ability to attract philanthropic support, private donations or in-kind support that would augment fee-based revenue generated in the park.

We urge you to sign the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Stompe".

Susan Stompe
President

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