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**California State Parks Foundation Statement on Fiscal Year 2010-11
Budget Proposal**

Governor's proposal would eliminate General Fund support for state parks and replace with promise of oil-drilling money

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) rejects the Governor's proposal to eliminate core public funding for California's 278 state parks and replace it with uncertain funding from an oil drilling project that has not been approved for California, as announced in his proposed 2010-11 State Budget today. He has resurrected the Tranquillon Ridge offshore oil drilling proposal and has attempted to give this controversial and uncertain financial proposal environmental credentials by directing its proceeds to the state park system.

“The proposal to support state parks with uncertain oil offshore drilling revenues is the wrong idea at the wrong time,” said Elizabeth Goldstein, President of CSPF. “It's noteworthy that the Governor has finally come around to the side of park advocates and park users in California by proposing to fund state parks, instead of cutting them as he's proposed in the last two budget cycles. But pegging the fiscal future of the state park system to offshore oil drilling sets up an unacceptable tradeoff between coastal protection and park preservation, and attempts to provide a band-aid for our state park system yet again. Band-aids are not what's needed; what's needed for state parks is a reliable, sustainable funding source, and CSPF and our partners are working toward that in the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010.”

In 2009, the Tranquillon Ridge project was defeated administratively at the State Lands Commission. It also failed to pass out of the Legislature during budget negotiations in the fall. Given this history, its prospects are far from certain to be adopted this year.

“Tying the funding needs of our state parks to proceeds from the Tranquillon Ridge deal is once again playing politics with our state park system,” said Goldstein. “The threat of park closures over the last two years has shown that long-term, stable funding is needed for our state park system, not these desperate yearly budget attempts to give political

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cover, instead of true solutions. Californians are frustrated with their state park system being held hostage in the budget process and are actively working on a solution that will get state parks out of the Sacramento budget gridlock.”

“The Tranquillon Ridge proposal carries the threat of environmental impacts and significant doubts about the enforceability of its purported financial benefits,” said Goldstein. “Coastal protection and park preservation are two critical and widely accepted environmental priorities that Californians have supported for generations. CSPF recognizes this tradeoff as untenable for the public and for state parks and urges the Legislature to reject this proposal.”

CSPF has worked hard to find a long-term sustainable funding tool for State Parks. It is a lead supporter of the California State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010, in circulation to qualify for the ballot in November 2010. This initiative will provide adequate funding for state parks in perpetuity, removing the threat of park closures once and for all. By establishing a new, dedicated funding source, the measure directs new revenues from an \$18 vehicle surcharge to replace current General Fund support for the state park system, freeing up \$130 million annually for other state budget purposes. In return for Californians’ investment in their world-renowned state park system, the Act provides free day-use access to state parks for Californians. Nothing of the Tranquillon Ridge proposal provides such long-term and sustainable solutions for the financial woes of our state park system.

About CSPF

With over 115,000 members, the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) is the only statewide independent nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, enhancing and advocating for California’s magnificent state parks. CSPF is committed to improving the quality of life for all Californians by expanding access to the natural beauty, rich culture and history, and recreational and educational opportunities offered by California’s 278 state parks—the largest state park system in the United States. For more information about California’s state parks, visit www.calparks.org.

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