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California Forever

OVERVIEW

California Forever is a two-part PBS television special that tells the story of California's magnificent state parks from Yosemite in 1864 to the present day. Together the two one-hour programs remind viewers of the importance of California's state parks as well as their priceless legacy. [*California Forever*](#) is scheduled to air nationally in September 2012 (check local listings) and on [KQED 9](#), the public media company that serves Northern California, PBS SoCal and KLCS in Los Angeles, KVIE in Sacramento, KPBS in San Diego and KVCR in the Inland Empire.

California Forever was written, directed and co-produced by award-winning and Oscar®-nominated David Vassar and co-produced by Sally Kaplan of Backcountry Pictures. The idea for the film was sparked after David and Sally watched the battle between conservationists and developers over the proposed Orange County Toll Road which would have paved over a portion of San Onofre State Beach. David and Sally felt compelled to tell the story of California's State Parks as a way to remind viewers of its value and to inspire its preservation and protection.

Episode One

California Forever: The History of California State Parks highlights the discovery and creation of California's state parks system and celebrates the individuals and groups whose passion and commitment helped preserve and protect them for future generations. It takes viewers on a scenic, cultural and historical tour of California's state parks highlighting the people, key events and locales that made California history. The episode begins with the discovery of the giant sequoias in 1852 by Augustus T. Dowd and recounts the establishment of California's first state park, Yosemite. Continuing, the narrative moves through the individual stories of citizen action that preserved many of California's most celebrated landscapes as state parks. Included are the coast redwoods, Big Sur, Point Lobos, Hearst Castle, Lake Tahoe and the Anza-Borrego Desert. Historic places and people that commemorate crucial chapters of the California story are also explored including Spanish colonists at Old Monterey, the thousands of fortune seekers from around the world who came to Gold Country, the ill-fated Donner Party and the "first people" such as the Miwok of the Sierra Nevada and Yurok tribe on the North Coast. The plot intersects with many important victories that saved much of California's most cherished landscape and in the process, inspired the creation of the National Park Service and the protection of wilderness.

Episode Two

California Forever: Parks for the Future presents the very real challenges that state parks are currently facing in California. Among these are habitat destruction by overuse, protection of native species at the expense of recreation; reclaiming industrial brown fields to create new parks in dense urban areas; establishing historic sites that commemorate people and events from diverse cultures; and imminent park closures. This episode highlights the trials of balancing peaceful solitude at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park with the growing demand for “off-roading” at neighboring Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area. It then tells of the wildlife preservation efforts for the northern elephant seal and western snowy plover that sometimes limit public access along parts of the central coast. *California Forever* also stresses the importance of reclaiming land for parks in urban settings including the “re-wilding” of the Los Angeles River. Additionally, it celebrates the diverse cultures and histories of many groups who made California home, including the Chinese who first arrived at the Angel Island Immigration Station and freed slaves who created a utopian agrarian community at what is now Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. It concludes with a sequence that underscores a number of threats facing state parks, including encroachment of private industry, climate change and closures as a result of state budget deficits. *California Forever: Parks for the Future* is an invitation to make state parks more accessible to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds and to protect the myriad resources that countless dedicated individuals and groups have fought the last 160 years to preserve and protect.

Funding

Major funding for the PBS broadcast of *California Forever* is provided by Destination Cinema. With giant screen theaters in the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, Hearst Castle, and Victoria, Canada, Destination Cinema provides people with an enhanced travel experience. Working with state and national parks, along with museums across the country and around the world, Destination Cinema creates opportunities for visitors to connect with extraordinary places. Additional support is provided by the Hoefffer Family Foundation, Independent Documentary Association and Active Network.

Technology

Backcountry Pictures captured the arresting visuals of California’s state parks at 4k resolution. The film was shot on a RED ONE camera, with the final master delivered in 2K HD with 5.1 audio mix.

Backcountry Pictures

Founded in 2001, Backcountry Pictures produces films, television programs and visual content for special venues that celebrate the beauty of nature and captures the history and culture of surrounding communities. The company excels in producing programs that impart a sense of wonder about the natural world inspiring viewers to establish their own personal bond with nature.

To learn more about the *California Forever* and Backcountry Pictures, please visit www.cal4ever.com and www.backcountrypictures.com, respectively.



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