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**THE STORY OF CALIFORNIA'S STATE PARKS CAPTURED IN AWARD-WINNING FILM *CALIFORNIA FOREVER***

***CALIFORNIA FOREVER to PREMIERE on PBS in SEPTEMBER 2012***

**SAN FRANCISCO (June 13, 2012)** – [Backcountry Pictures](http://BackcountryPictures.com) and KQED present [California Forever](http://CaliforniaForever.com), 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](http://CaliforniaStateParks.com) as well as their priceless legacy. [California Forever](http://CaliforniaForever.com) is scheduled to air nationally in September 2012 (check local listings) and on [KQED 9](http://KQED.com), 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 and directed by Academy Award-nominee [David Vassar](http://DavidVassar.com). The program was produced by [Sally Kaplan](http://SallyKaplan.com) and David Vassar. 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 these parks and their value.



Point Lobos State Natural Preserve  
Frame from PBS documentary - *California Forever*  
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"The story of California State Parks is the story of California. It is also the story of the 'park idea' and how it spread from California across the country and around the world. The scenic beauty and historic sites that California State Parks protect celebrate our heritage, and helps define what it means to be a Californian," said David Vassar. "In *California Forever*, we hope to encourage viewers to explore state parks in their neighborhoods and across California; to remind them of the priceless legacy that parks protect and to honor the individuals and groups who fought so hard to preserve them over the last 160 years."

**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. 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* 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.



Off-road enthusiasts at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area. CREDIT: Photo by David Vassar, Backcountry Pictures Inc. – copyright 2011

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An Official Selection at the International Wildlife Film Festival, *California Forever* received the award for Best Educational Program in 2011. It also was selected for screenings at the 2011 American Conservation Film Festival, the 2012 Wild & Scenic Film Festival and the 2012 Environmental Film Festival of Washington, D.C.

In addition to David and Sally, *California Forever’s* creative team includes Christopher Tufty, director of photography; Christian White, editor; Tony Humecke, composer; and Richard Doyle, narrator. The producers scouted

more than 100 parks, and the Backcountry Pictures crew shot in 46 of them over a two-year period. The arresting visuals of California's state parks were acquired at 4k resolution with a RED ONE digital camera.



Backcountry Pictures shares a light moment while shooting *California Forever* at Point Lobos State Natural Preserve. From left to right, Camera Assistant-Josh Heller, Sound Recordist-Fred Runner, Director-David Vassar, Director of Photography-Christopher Tufty. CREDIT: Photo by Joeann Edmonds-Matthew - copyright 2011

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 Hoeffler Family Foundation and Active Network. Fiscal sponsorship is provided by the International Documentary Association.

### **About 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 Backcountry Pictures, please visit [www.backcountrypictures.com](http://www.backcountrypictures.com).

### **About KQED**

KQED ([kqed.org](http://kqed.org)) has served Northern California for more than 50 years and is affiliated with NPR and PBS. KQED owns and operates public television stations KQED 9 (San Francisco/Bay Area), KQED Plus (San Jose/Bay Area) and KQET 25 (Watsonville/Monterey); KQED Public Radio (88.5 FM San Francisco); [kqed.org](http://kqed.org) and [KQEDnews.org](http://KQEDnews.org); and KQED Education. KQED Public Television, one of the most-watched public television stations in the country, is the producer/presenter national series such as *Sound Track*; *CA State of Mind*; *Richard Bangs: Quest for Wonder* and *Essential Pépin*. KQED Public Radio is the most-listened-to public radio station in the nation and the most popular in the Bay Area. Visit [bit.ly/KQED-CA4](http://bit.ly/KQED-CA4) for more information. To view the trailer [click here](#).

**MEDIA, PLEASE NOTE:** To request an interview with David Vassar or Sally Kaplan, a *California Forever* DVD or BluRay disc, high-resolution photography and/or additional information, please contact Gretchen Krueger ([Gretchen@landispr.com](mailto:Gretchen@landispr.com)) or Jordana Heinke ([Jordana@landispr.com](mailto:Jordana@landispr.com)). Please also visit [www.cal4ever.com](http://www.cal4ever.com) and [www.backcountrypictures.com](http://www.backcountrypictures.com) for more information. To view the trailer, please [click here](#).



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