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Parks Now Welcomes \$1B Visionary Investments in California Parks, Outdoor Equity

As champions of equitable access to parks and outdoor spaces, the Parks Now coalition is delighted to see \$1 billion proposed in Governor Newsom's "May Revision" to the state budget for making parks more accessible and welcoming for Californians across the state.

The pandemic showed us how much Californians want--and need--more places where we can grab some fresh air, go for a walk, and simply be in nature. We've also learned that access to these spaces remains deeply inequitable. Not everyone in California lives within walking distance to parks and green spaces; even when they do, they don't always feel safe or welcome in these spaces.

The governor's proposed investments in parks and outdoor access programs are exactly what we need to begin to address these needs and strengthen our state's ability to accommodate future visitors. Funding for more parks in park-poor neighborhoods, urban greening, outdoor equity programs, free state parks access for 4th grade students, maintenance and restoration of existing parks, and a historic expansion of Explore the Coast grants are the shot in the arm California needs to build healthy and resilient communities.

In this budget proposal, Governor Newsom demonstrates a strong commitment to take meaningful action on outdoor access and equity. We see it as an extension of the priorities he laid out in his 30x30 executive order, which calls for prioritizing access in the state's efforts to protect 30 percent of California's land and water by 2030.

We look forward to working with the Newsom administration and legislative leaders on moving forward the budget proposal, and maximizing the impact of these investments with future collaborations to break down institutional barriers to outdoor access while building a diverse and culturally competent outdoor workforce.

About Parks Now

Parks Now represents a coalition of California-based organizations committed to public health and social and environmental justice, who share a belief that access to parks, the coast, and public land is fundamental to healthy, vibrant communities. For more information, visit <http://www.caparksnow.com/>

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