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The story of California's state parks

AirTalk



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Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park

California is blessed with a wealth of wildly divergent outdoor experiences: from hiking to off-roading, from surfing to bird-watching to rock climbing. If you've ever been to Yosemite, Big Sur, Hearst Castle or Lake Tahoe, you know some of the beauty and diversity of California's state parks. But do you know their history?

In a new two-part documentary, *California Forever*, producers David Vassar and Sally Kaplan delve into the beginnings of our vast state park system. The discovery of the giant Sequoias by Augustus T. Dowd in 1852 gave birth to Yosemite, California's first state park. Since then, it's grown to nearly 300 parks, encompassing 1.4 million acres, 280 miles of coastline and 3,000 miles of trails. *California Forever* explores the efforts of the visionaries who worked to ensure the preservation of our beaches, woods, lakes and deserts for all generations.

Lately, however, the future of California's state parks has been threatened by overuse, growing urban density, lack of funding and bitter conflicts between preservationists and recreationists. The film delves into those challenges as well. As summer winds down, treat yourself to an exploration of California's as yet unspoiled wilderness.

Guests:

David Vassar, writer/director/co-producer of California Forever; Oscar-nominated and Emmy-winning film and television writer, director and producer.

Sally Kaplan, co-producer of California Forever; writer, director, producer for numerous programs and series for Lifetime, Discovery Channel, Animal Planet and others.

Elizabeth Goldstein, president, California State Parks Foundation