

## ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM



*The Foundation envisions a California that manages, stewards, and conserves its water and land to support a resilient environment and healthy communities.*

# Durable, relevant protected lands

The S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation invests in increasing the durability and relevance of California's protected lands network to enhance local communities, preserve wildlife habitat, and provide recreational opportunities for all.

## Goal

California is home to vibrant, sustainable, and valued State and National Parks. Partnerships steward large landscapes across jurisdictional and sector boundaries.

## Approach

- A** Implement the [Parks Forward Commission's recommendations](#) for State Parks.
- B** Enhance collaborations between National Parks and their nonprofit partners.
- C** Demonstrate opportunities for large-scale landscape stewardship. Enhance the California community of practice.

## Intended outcomes

- ✓ The California Department of Parks and Recreation has stable revenue, effective leadership, diverse visitors, and strategic partnerships that support and extend its work.
- ✓ National Parks in California and beyond are models for partnerships that create accessible, welcoming parks where people connect with, enjoy, learn about, and support their parks.
- ✓ Land trusts in California are supported technically and organizationally by strong, sustainable regional and national entities.
- ✓ Public and private partners are working together to manage ecosystems at a landscape scale; three to five models of landscape-scale collaborations demonstrate effectiveness.

## Progress to date

- Targeted investments are increasing the individual and collective capacity of land trusts throughout the state. In 2015, the Foundation concluded a multi-year, in-depth sustainability program for 13 key land trusts and related organizations doing vital conservation work in California.
- In March 2017, the California Department of Parks and Recreation completed important institutional reforms, including modernization of financial and operational systems and implementation of human resources reforms, in order to better serve and represent California's diverse population and create a more inviting, relevant state park system.

## Field building and learning

- Through evaluation, conducted in partnership with the nonprofit community, the Foundation is building knowledge for the field about the efficiency and efficacy of cross-jurisdictional land stewardship as an approach to large landscape conservation.
- In partnership with nonprofit and agency partners, the Foundation will document and share lessons learned on building vibrant 21<sup>st</sup> century parks.