

State parks-motor fee headed to November ballot



By Paul Rogers, Santa Cruz Sentinel

A plan to charge California motorists \$18 a year to shore up the state parks system's financial troubles took another step toward the November ballot on Monday when environmental groups submitted about 760,000 signatures to election officials.

Under state law, the campaign needs 433,931 valid signatures of registered California voters to qualify the initiative. Elections officials have until June 24 to certify the measure.

If approved by a simple majority of state voters on Nov. 2, the measure would increase annual vehicle registration fees for California motorists by \$18 a year, and allow any car with California license plates free admission to the state's 278 parks, which currently range from about \$6 to \$15 per visit. State parks include redwoods forests such as Big Basin in Santa Cruz County, historic sites such as Marshall Gold Discovery park in El Dorado County and beaches like Malibu Creek near Los Angeles.

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