

# Scarce money taking toll on California State Parks

By Sacramento Bee

The images won't appear in any California State Parks brochure.

Mackerricher State Park: Fifty elementary-school kids arrive for their annual end-of-year camping trip, only to find the drinking water contaminated.

Mount Tamalpais: A trail near the visitors center greets disabled visitors and families with a 12- to 50-foot sheer drop-off – and no guardrail.

Hearst Castle: The marble Neptune Pool at California's most famous state park leaks so much that stalactites have formed in a cavity underneath.



Pam Valentine and Sue Wood found the showers at Bothe State Park in Napa Valley in June to have issues.

Photo/Kathryn

Reed

Look beyond the crashing waves and towering redwoods, and California's 278 state parks are a tangle of troubles. The nation's largest state parks system is weighed down by a \$1.3 billion maintenance backlog, according to a review of park records by the *Sacramento Bee*.

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