

Crime ruining fun for state park users

By Matt Weiser and Marjie Lundstrom, Sacramento Bee

Holiday visitors seeking a quiet day off beside the water at Folsom State Recreation Area on July 5 instead had front-row seats to a pursuit, as park rangers chased an assault suspect on foot through throngs of picnickers.

It was like a scene from a big-city television crime drama. But this was a state park.



Mountain
bikers in
Washoe Meadow
State Park in
Tahoe.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Crime is on the rise in California's state parks, up nearly threefold in the last decade, according to Department of Parks and Recreation data analyzed by The Sacramento Bee.

Last year, 62,575 crimes were reported in the parks – or about 170 a day, compared with 65 a day in 1999 – even as crime in the rest of the state declined. Taking park use into account, crime last year reached record per-capita levels.

Read the whole story