

# Calif. won't pay to keep national parks open

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Thousand of visitors were turned away Tuesday from national parks across California as the federal government shutdown took effect.

But for parks lovers and tourist businesses hoping for a bailout from Sacramento to keep iconic sites open, the answer was no. California Gov. Jerry Brown, whose state is home to 26 national park units, from Yosemite to Death Valley to Point Reyes National Seashore, said no state money will be offered to keep the gates open.

Not only are there a lot of parks, said H.D. Palmer, a spokesman for the state Department of Finance, but California's budget is finally balanced after years of multi-billion-dollar deficits, and can't afford the expense.

"Also, if the state were to take that action, there is no guarantee that it would be reimbursed," Palmer said.

On Monday, the governor of South Dakota, Republican Dennis Daugaard, sent a letter to the director of the National Park Service offering state funding and employees to help keep open Mount Rushmore, the state's top tourist attraction. Arizona's governor used state money in 1995 in an arrangement with national parks leaders to keep Grand Canyon National Park open during the last federal shutdown. Arizona's current Gov. Jan Brewer said Monday her cabinet considered the idea but the state won't bail out the Grand Canyon this time.

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