

## Brandon: Act today to save county parks

Contributed by Victoria Brandon  
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As detailed in a recent Lake County News article, along with a host of other draconian budget cuts that would hit particularly hard at local communities, children, the elderly, the disabled and other vulnerable groups, Gov. Schwarzenegger is proposing to close 48 of California's state parks and beaches, including both Clear Lake State Park and Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, with catastrophic effects on Lake County.

Both parks protect precious lakeshore habitat; both contain significant cultural resources; both shelter many species of wildlife; both provide important recreational opportunities to county residents and visitors alike.

Each park hosts a vibrant outdoor festival and welcomes school groups for special functions throughout the year, and &ndash; to add an extra touch of irony &ndash; volunteer interpretative associations in each park are currently engaged in massive facilities expansion projects that will greatly augment the parks&rsquo; value to the community.

The meager projected savings from closing these parks wouldn't even result in a net gain to the state budget after deducting direct losses from diminished transient occupancy tax and sales tax revenues generated by park visitors. Potential costs to the people of California from deterioration of public property, increased legal liabilities, and diminished prosperity are incalculable.

Both Assemblymember Patty Berg and State Senator Patricia Wiggins have promised to work hard to keep Clear Lake State Park and Anderson Marsh State Historic Park open &ndash; but they need our help.

Please send a message to the governor: by mail to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol Building, Sacramento, CA 95814 with the message &ldquo;Keep Lake County parks OPEN!&rdquo; Delivery by fax is particularly effective: 916-558-3160. Or if you&rsquo;d rather make a phone call, the number is 916-445-2841.

As always, your own words will convey the strongest message, but there's a great deal of power in sheer numbers too, so don't hesitate to send a form letter if you don't have time to compose your own. A letter can be downloaded from the Sierra Club Lake Group Web site (<http://redwood.sierraclub/lake>) in both pdf and editable Word format.

Please act today to save our irreplaceable community treasures.

Victoria Brandon is chair of the Sierra Club Lake Group. She lives in Lower Lake.

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