

Little Hoover Commission
June 26, 2012 Hearing on the California State Park System
Testimony of Barclay Ogden, Director for Library Preservation at UC Berkeley

I am Barclay Ogden, Director for Library Preservation at UC Berkeley. My specialty is care, repair, and restoration of library collections, everything from antiquarian books to digital documents. The management activities associated with my area of responsibility are assessing preservation needs of the collections, managing risks of collection loss, and deploying technologies used to preserve the media on which documents are created, e.g., paper, film, magnetic tape and optical discs, to ensure that information remains accessible now and into the future. As a manager responsible for the care of cultural heritage materials, my goals are to ensure that library materials most needed to serve the academic community receive a high priority for preservation and to ensure that risks of damage and loss to all the collections are managed as cost effectively as possible with available resources. Like the current State Parks situation, resources to manage the care of the UC Berkeley library collections fall short of long-term preservation needs.

My work is an expression of the University's commitment to preserving history. In parallel fashion, the Commission is exploring the State's obligation and commitment through State Parks to care for and protect California's heritage sites and collections, that is, to preserve our common history. If, as a culture, the history we remember makes us who we are, then little is as important to a culture as its memory. The objects of history, including heritage properties and collections, help us remember, and in doing so grow increasingly valuable over time.

If I were challenged with reducing operating expenses to maintain heritage properties and collections under the stewardship of California State Parks, I would pursue three lines of inquiry to gather data to support decision-making on operational changes, and to avoid taking action contrary to the interests of the State of California:

1. How can the risks of damage and loss of State Parks' historic properties and collections be managed most cost effectively? By determining the asset values of its properties and collections, the value of assets can be weighed against the costs of managing the risks of loss to acceptable levels. Each of the hazards that together comprise an overall risk of loss, for example, fire, theft, and vandalism, can be analyzed separately using actuarial and insurance claims data to identify comparable losses elsewhere. The costs of measures to mitigate the risks also can be calculated and compared to the anticipated reduction in risk to arrive at a cost-benefit ratio that then can be used to allocate limited resources.
2. How do the Parks' historic properties and collections promote the societal values for which they were collected and made available to the public, thus helping to justify the

costs of maintaining access to them? For example, how do the collections and properties contribute to:

- Social stability? A sense of connectedness to the past is thought to help stabilize the many different cultures that make up California's citizenry. When people feel "connected" to the histories they share with others, they are more stable, are better caretakers of shared heritage and less likely to abuse the property and rights of others. Is crime reduced, along with the expense of maintaining police services, when society is more stable? On the other hand, when people feel disenfranchised by society will they strike back as vandals and terrorists? Are the stresses of the current California economy leading to conditions where people are more likely to feel disenfranchised? Are losses of homes, jobs, health care and other social services destabilizing the social order? Do people now, more than in better economies, need to feel connected to California's history in order to feel that they are part of a society that has survived difficult times and offers hope for a better future? Could continuing access to California's state parks be a low-cost investment to help ensure the safety and stability of its citizenry?
 - Learning from the past? It appears to be human nature to cycle through a familiar series of challenges in distributing political power and material resources necessary to living in society. To ignore the lessons of earlier efforts to address civilization's enduring challenges is to risk repeating history's sometimes very costly lessons. How do State Park's documents, its historic buildings and its collections of artifacts help tell California's story and help us remember our past to avoid future mistakes?
 - Inspiring California's creators of tomorrow? The economic future of California in part stands on the shoulders of its past successes. Yesterday's California creators may inspire tomorrow's. For school-age children especially, does the opportunity to be thrilled by California State Parks' forts, trains, planes, mechanical inventions, gold nuggets and Indian artifacts that are otherwise often thought to exist only in Hollywood films, help inspire career paths and subsequently generate wealth for the State?
3. How much revenue is generated by cultural tourism to California State Parks' historic and cultural sites? How much revenue would be lost if access to State Parks' historic properties and collections is reduced? Presuming the most significant sources of revenue are transportation, meals, lodging and other retail sales, how can businesses that benefit from their proximity to State Parks help maintain and provide access to them?

If the Commission or State Parks already has access to data to address these lines of inquiry, the challenge to reduce operating expenses could be narrowed to options to which the data point. If the Commission does not have access to relevant data, I would recommend that research be undertaken to discover if data are available or readily could be compiled. Each of these queries has a community that might be approached: for example, risk consulting firms for question 1, historians, sociologists and cultural anthropologists for question 2 and state agencies that deal with taxation for question 3.

My thanks to the Commission for the opportunity to contribute ideas to this important study.