

Dear Hoover Commission,

I understand that on Thursday, August 16th, the Commission intends to discuss Staffing at State Parks. I am very pleased that this is taking place as it is long overdue. I am a State Employee who has worked 31 of my 32 years for State Parks in the Technical Field, and I am currently the Facility Manager/District Maintenance Chief for the Monterey District.

It is the ongoing practice of State Parks, to require their District Superintendents to be State Park Peace Officers. Early in my career I made the decision not to become a State Park Peace officer. At the time, back in 1983, I had planned on becoming a Ranger and pursued that through the then Field Ranger Training program being accepted into the program, but then made the decision to stay on the Technical side. The reason for my change of mind was that I witnessed the beginning of what has become the current mind set of State Parks; it is no longer a Resource Agency, but another law enforcement agency. State Park Peace Officers (SPPO) primary focus is Law Enforcement and the current training emphasizes that. Because of this and the fact that almost all District Superintendents come up through the SPPO ranks, the view of Field Operations, the parks that the public visits, has become skewed. In 2003 the reorganization that created the Sectorization of the Districts created more lower level positions for more Superintendent positions that required the employees to be SPPO's. These lower level Superintendent positions were the lead managers in Sectors, for example, in Monterey, there are four Sectors, each with their own Superintendent, all of whom are Peace Officers. These positions were responsible for the operation of the Sector including Visitor Services and Technical Services operations, but had little if any Technical expertise. Resources, both Cultural and Natural, still were managed by Program Managers at the District Level. The decision was made back around the first of this year to allow Districts if they wished, to "de-sectorize" the Technical side. Some have, and in the case of my District, we have, leaving the Sector Superintendents in place, but reducing their responsibility and oversight of the Technical employees. I would say that their workload has been reduced somewhat even though they retain their current classification.

I encourage the Commission to continue to look at the proposed Park Manager series, the Park Attendant series, and the reduction of the number of badged employees in the Department, as well as also considering the consolidation of the Department with DFG and the possibility of contracting out the Law Enforcement duties to other agencies, such as CHP. We have too many badged employees doing non badged level tasks, for instance, campground operation and interpretation

In closing, I believe with the recent revelations of the incidents up at our HQ, the staffing models up there also need to be addressed.

Sincerely,

Larry Tierney