GOVERNOR′S VETO
AB 2770 (Alvarez)
As Enrolled September 3, 2026
2/3 vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) to quitclaim San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park (SPB State Park) to the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians.

Governor′s Veto Message
″This bill would require the state to quitclaim the state-owned land within [SPB State Park].

Under my administration, [State Parks] has worked with tribal governments to foster government-to-government coordination and co-management of natural lands within California tribes′ ancestral lands. Such arrangements now cover more than half of State Parks land. Additionally, my administration has facilitated the return of over 100,000 acres of land to tribes.

While I share the author′s goal of further advancing ancestral land return, I am mindful of the need to approach that important work systematically — by building processes that are transparent and fair to all interested parties. I am concerned that piecemeal measures, like this bill, could undermine those values.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.″

COMMENTS

California is home to the largest Native American population in the country and has 109 federally recognized tribes, with several other groups seeking federal recognition. Very few Native Americans live on their ancestral lands in California today. This is due to the repeated efforts of Spanish, Mexican, Russian, and U.S. governments to subdue and displace Indigenous peoples. For example, the federal government sent three commissioners to California to negotiate treaties with California tribes in 1851. These commissioners negotiated 18 treaties with 139 tribes that would have set aside approximately 7.5 million acres for Indian use and granted other rights to Native Californians; however, when President Fillmore submitted the treaties to the U.S. Senate for ratification in February 1852, senators from California objected and the U.S. Senate rejected the treaties during a secret session. The U.S. Senate then placed the treaties in its archive, concealing the existence of these treaties from the public for more than 50 years.

In contrast, on March 17, 2026, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) launched the state′s first Tribal Stewardship Policy, establishing a statewide goal of expanding tribal stewardship over at least 7.5 million acres of lands and coastal waters in California (the same quantity of property that was never delivered by the state in 1852). This policy sets clear standards to institutionalize meaningful and durable tribal-state partnerships and advance tribal stewardship through tribal access, collaboration, and ancestral land return.

CNRA, State Parks, and the Department of Transportation jointly announced the Reexamining Our Past Initiative—a statewide effort to survey, evaluate and redress the names of existing state parks (including features within the state parks systems such as trails), monuments and transportation systems with racist or discriminatory roots. The state agencies are working with

California Native American tribes, universities, and community partners to address the terms identified. State Parks is currently in the process of developing tribal land acknowledgements for all 280 state parks through new signage and improved interpretation that will better connect the public with tribal history and contemporary experiences. So far, State Parks has consulted with 80 tribes to develop tribal land acknowledgements to be included in signage at 88 state parks. The 2022–23 state budget included nearly $10 million to develop a plan for this work and to update and better contextualize the history of California Native Americans in existing visitor center and museum exhibits at 24 state parks.

State Parks has entered into 14 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and one joint powers agreement with California Native American tribes for tribal access and collaboration over 89 parks units, covering approximately 939,000 acres of land.

According to their website, the ancestors of the San Pasqual Indians lived for thousands of years in the valley carved by the Santa Ysabel Creek near the present site of the San Diego Zoo′s Wild Animal Park. San Pasqual is one of thirteen bands that make up the Kumeyaay Nation in Southern California. There are four other Kumeyaay bands in Northern Mexico. After the arrival of the Spaniards and the establishment of Mission San Diego de Alcala in 1769, many Kumeyaay either left or were forced out of their ancestral homes. The San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians is a federally recognized tribe that maintains a Reservation covering about 1,380 acres in northeastern San Diego County in Southern California. The Reservation is home to about 800 people, including 450 enrolled tribal members.

SPB State Park highlights the rich cultural history of the San Pasqual Valley, featuring exhibits on the Kumeyaay people, the region′s Indigenous inhabitants, and commemorates the 1846 Battle of San Pasqual during the Mexican-American War. In recognition of the Kumeyaay ancestry, State Parks is working closely with the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians to incorporate the robust history, culture, and traditional ecological knowledge of the Kumeyaay people into the park′s visitor center, trails, and programs.

Currently, the SPB State Park is closed to the public for day use, but special events continue to be hosted.

SPB State Park spans 50 acres in the San Pasqual Valley. Only 3.68 acres is owned by State Parks and the rest is owned by the City of San Diego. Currently, there is no MOU between the San Pasqual Band and State Parks regarding this property.

There is no clear statutory or administrative process for State Parks to sell, grant, or dispose of state park properties. According to State Parks, it is unclear if it has ever removed properties from the state park system. Without clear statutory authority, it is unlikely that State Parks could dispose of any property. The only route by which state park property could be disposed would be to declare the land surplus, although it is unlikely that state park property would ever qualify.

According to the Author
″[This bill] is a critical step toward justice for the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, whose ancestral lands in the San Pasqual Valley were stripped from them through a legacy of state and federal failures. This bill rectifies a historic wrong by returning state-owned parcels within the [SPB State Park]—land that holds profound cultural and spiritual significance, including a tribal cemetery—to the tribe at no cost. By transferring these 3.68 acres, we honor the tribe′s unbroken

connection to this land and align with California′s commitment to reconciliation with Native communities.

The San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians envisions a public park that celebrates their history and contributions—a space for healing and learning that benefits all Californians. [This bill] is not just about land; it′s about seizing this opportunity to turn empty promises into meaningful progress and demonstrate that California′s path forward includes honoring its past.″

Arguments in Support
The Chairman of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians writes in support and sponsorship of this bill. The Chairman shares that some of the ancestral homeland of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians became property of the state and is now [SPB State Park]. ″This state park has not been in operation for many years and remains closed to this day. We believe that this return of ancestral land back to San Pasqual is in line with the Governor′s and Legislature′s commitment to ensure the protection and well being of California′s first people, our cultures, and our land.″

Arguments in Opposition
None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill has the following fiscal impact:

1) State Parks will incur one-time costs [General Fund, State Park and Recreation Fund (SPRF)] to facilitate the property transfer. State Parks expects fee title land conveyance to cost between $100,000 and $200,000, and notes it would work with and reimburse DGS for this work. For its part, DGS anticipates one-time costs of approximately $60,000 to prepare title reports and process the transfer (General Fund). DGS notes it would recover these costs from State Parks. While these estimates differ, the exact cost will likely depend on the details and complexity of the transaction.

   State Parks has an existing lease with the San Diego County Archaeological Society and anticipates that termination of the lease will cost the department about $5,000. Additionally, the San Diego Archaeological Center houses some of State Parks′ and other entities′ collections. State Parks estimates costs of approximately $30,000 for specialized packing and $43,000 for temporary storage of its curatorial collection, with additional significant costs for long-term storage.

   State Parks notes the City of San Diego has indicated it is unable to transfer the property it owns – approximately 65 acres, including a majority of the park′s facilities – to the Tribe due to utility easement restrictions. The overall cost of effectuating the city′s transfer of land is unknown but is likely to include about $5,000 for terminating the state′s lease with the city and $38,000 for additional relocation of materials and collections.

2) One-time revenue loss of an unknown amount, potentially in excess of $150,000, to the state by quitclaiming SPB State Park at no cost to the tribe, thus foregoing a future sale of the property by the state (General Fund).

To the extent there is deferred maintenance on the property, requiring the state to quitclaim the park may also result in potential one-time costs and ongoing cost savings of an unknown amount to State Parks, as State Parks may need to undertake maintenance activities prior to the transfer, but would no longer need to continue maintenance afterward.

3) One-time local costs, likely minor, to the City of San Diego to exempt the transferred lands from property taxation. These costs are potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates, although it is unlikely the city would submit a claim. And while the bill exempts transferred lands, and improvements on those lands, from real property and documentary transfer taxes, the bill states that the state shall not reimburse any local agency for lost property tax revenue

The Legislative Analyst′s Office (LAO) recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around $35 billion per year in the 2027-28 fiscal year (FY) and ongoing. In February 2024, the LAO projected the SPRF to have an annual gap of approximately $18 million between its estimated revenues and projected expenditures in each of the next few years. This structural deficit would cause SPRF to become insolvent before the end of FY 2029-30.

VOTES

ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 11-0-2
YES: Papan, Jeff Gonzalez, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Hart, Muratsuchi
ABS, ABST OR NV: Gallagher, Rogers

ASM GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION: 22-0-0
YES: Blanca Rubio, Davies, Alvarez, Berman, Bryan, Carrillo, Dixon, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Gipson, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Pacheco, Ramos, Michelle Rodriguez, Solache, Soria, Ta, Valencia, Wallis

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0
YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0-3
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez, Sanchez

SENATE FLOOR: 40-0-0
YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-1
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez

UPDATED

VERSION: September 3, 2026

CONSULTANT: Stephanie Mitchell / W., P., & W. / (916) 319-2096 FN: 0004613