



For Immediate Release

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Events will be held November 13 - 16

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Desert Communities to Hold Events to Celebrate 20th Anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act

Twentynine Palms, CA – Desert communities in California are celebrating an important milestone: the 20th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act. Signed into law on October 31, 1994, the California Desert Protection Act increased protection for 8.6 million acres of the California desert, including Joshua Tree and Death Valley national parks and the Mojave National Preserve. To mark this anniversary, communities across the desert have been holding celebrations throughout the fall months.

From November 13 to November 16, nine events will take place in the desert region; these activities are highlighted below. As celebration events take place, local communities are also renewing their commitment to protect the California desert for the coming decades.

“The 20th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act is a moment for gateway communities to celebrate the great contribution the desert’s public lands bring to our lives,” said Vickie Waite, Executive Director of the Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts. “It’s remarkable to see our communities come together to celebrate protections for this special place and important heritage.”

Event Details

November 13-16 – Ridgecrest

The Ridgecrest Petroglyph and Heritage Festival will include ancient rock art exhibits and tours, hikes, speakers, music, educational workshops, and a step back into the history of Ridgecrest and Indian Wells Valley. Hosted by Ridgecrest Area CVB and City of Ridgecrest. Location: Maturango Museum, Petroglyph Park, Balsam Street, Kerr McGee Center, Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert. Event information: (760) 375-8202. www.rpfestival.com

Thursday, November 13 – Morongo Valley

10 a.m. to 12 noon. – Eco-Discovery Walk in Big Morongo Canyon Preserve with botanist and wildlife biologist Robin Kobaly of The SummerTree Institute. Enjoy an interpretive stroll on the boardwalk through the marsh and riparian woodlands, ending at the Pavilion in beautiful Covington Park around noon, with lunch, music, and art by Morongo Valley Art Colony. Admission free. Limited seating. Wheelchair accessible boardwalk. Location: Begin and end at Covington Park, Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, Morongo Valley, CA 92256; East Drive off Hwy 62 (29 Palms Hwy.). Hosted by The SummerTree Institute and Morongo Valley Community Services District. (760)363-6454. www.bigmorongo.org

Friday, November 14 – Joshua Tree

1 to 3 p.m. – Guided hike on the Mojave Desert Land Trust’s Quail Mountain property in Joshua Tree. The hike is designed for the public with all levels of hiking abilities and includes interpretive signs, brochures, and dialogue about desert ecosystems and the importance of the CDPA. Snacks and beverages available at the trailhead. Admission free. Location: MDLT’s Quail Mountain property near Joshua Tree National Park west entrance, at the top of Park Blvd., Joshua Tree, CA 92252. Hosted by Mojave Desert Land Trust. (760)366-5440. www.mojavedesertlandtrust.org

Friday, November 14 – Joshua Tree

5 to 8 p.m. – Opening reception for CDPA 20th Anniversary Exhibit, featuring artwork from Joshua Tree National Park and Death Valley National Park Artist-in-Residence programs, and a “Crazy Cactus” exhibit from Mojave National Preserve courtesy of Main Street Murals Environmental Arts Youth Program and Desert Discovery Center. Live music, beverages, and refreshments. Admission free. Location: Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Center, 6554 Park Blvd., Joshua Tree, CA 92252. Hosted by Joshua Tree Chamber of Commerce, Joshua Tree National Park Interpretive Staff, and Joshua Tree National Park Association. (760)366-3723. www.joshuatreechamber.org

Friday, November 14 – Cathedral City

5 p.m. - “The Incredible Journey” at the AM/FM Festival. Screening and discussion of the short film produced by youth of the Boys & Girls Club of Cathedral City’s “Leaders In Training” Program. “The Incredible Journey” follows the BGCCC kids through 2014 on their educational and outdoor exploration of public lands in and around the Coachella Valley. Join the journey and participate with the youth as they go hiking and wading in pools at Indian Canyons, climbing rocks at Joshua Tree National Park, and paying a visit with Bowser, the Desert Tortoise at the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa National Monument. Hear the youth reflect on the California Desert Protection Act, which was passed before they were born. Location: The AM/FM Festival at the Mary Pickford Theater, 36850 Pickfair Street, Cathedral City, CA 92234. Information: Scott Robinson (760)770-4965.

Saturday, November 15 – Twentynine Palms

3 to 4 p.m. – Mural dedication for the 20th Anniversary Mural for the CDPA and Joshua Tree National Park by California muralists Chuck Caplinger and Art Mortimer. Location: Old Schoolhouse Museum, 6760 National Park Drive, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277, near Joshua Tree NP Headquarters. Hosted by Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts, Public Arts Advisory Committee of the City of Twentynine Palms, Action Council for 29 Palms Inc., and 29 Palms Historical Society. Information: (760)217-8839. Directions to Museum: (760)367-2366. For more information, visit www.JTNPArts.org and www.29palmshistorical.org

Saturday, November 15 – Twentynine Palms

5 to 10 p.m. – Desert Sky Dinner & Dancing at Smith's Ranch with Southwestern fare, wine/beer and Margarita bar, country music and dancing. Meet VIPs and special guests like Joshua Tree National Park Superintendent David Smith and keynote speaker Dr. Bruce Pavlik, author of *The California Deserts: An Ecological Rediscovery*. Enjoy star gazing on the patio with Coyote Telescope. Social Hour 5 to 6 p.m., Dinner at 6 p.m. Location: Smith's Ranch, 4584 Adobe Road, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277. Event will be hosted by 29 Palms Chamber of Commerce and Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts. **Tickets: \$25/single, \$40/couple, \$150/Table of 8. Tickets available at the 29 Palms Chamber of Commerce (760)367-3445 - 73484 29 Palms Hwy., Twentynine Palms, CA 92277 - and online at: www.29chamber.org.**



Sunday, November 16 – Yucca Valley

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Party with Coyote Cool at the Boys & Girls Club to celebrate the CDPA's 20th birthday. 11 a.m. "Saving the Ancients" workshop with Robin Kobaly of The SummerTree Institute. 12 to 3 p.m. Student artwork and desert project displays, desert conservation information tables, coloring contest, face painting, door prizes, birthday cupcakes, beverages, and family fun! Music by Andy Gorrill's MUSD band students. Solar scope viewing with Tom O'Key of Southern California Desert Video Astronomers. Location: Boys & Girls Club of the Hi-Desert, 56525 Little League Drive, Yucca Valley, CA 92284. Hosted by Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce, Soroptimist of Yucca Valley, and Education Consultant Diana Shay-Diehl/Morongo Unified School District. (760)365-6323. www.yuccavalley.org

About the California Desert Protection Act

The California Desert Protection Act enlarged and re-designated Joshua Tree and Death Valley as national parks, established the Mojave National Preserve, and established 69 wilderness areas managed by the Bureau of Land Management in the California desert. These millions of acres of protected public lands are an important part of the quality of life in the desert region and contribute to the local outdoor recreation and tourism economy.

"The Twentynine Palms community knows how important protecting the California desert is. Our city serves as a gateway community to Joshua Tree National Park and the California desert and many visitors come to our region because of our national parks and public lands," said Kim Ortamond, Vice-President of the Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce. "We're celebrating the 20th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act in recognition of the many benefits the desert provides to our local economy and our community."

Senator Dianne Feinstein is working on legislation to further conserve and protect the desert. Her efforts would add to Joshua Tree, Death Valley and the Mojave National Preserve; establish two new national monuments and new wilderness areas; and protect existing access for hunting, off-roading and other recreation.

"We invite desert residents and visitors alike to join us and celebrate the 20th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act," said Wanda Stadum, President of the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce. "This is a moment for us to come together and enjoy our clear skies, brilliant star-filled nights, and rugged landscape that the California Desert Protection Act helped to protect. The desert contributes greatly to our economy and our quality of life and we must continue to protect these lands."

For a full list of upcoming activities, visit <http://www.caldesert20.org/>. Organizations and community members interested in the anniversary events should contact Vickie Waite, Executive Director of the Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts, at (760) 217-8839 or director@caldesert20.org for more information. Members of the media should contact Sarah Hersh, Full Court Press Communications, at 510-550-8170 or sarah@fcpccommunications.com. Downloadable photos of the California desert are available to media [here](#).

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About the Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts

The Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts is dedicated to fostering the spirit of artistic expression inspired by the park, celebrating the park's majestic landscape and precious wildlife, preserving the park's cultural history, and supporting the preservation, enhancement, and sustainability of the entire California desert region. Learn more at www.jtnparts.org and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/JTNPArts) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/JTNPArts).