Trail Tracks

News from the Poppy Reserve Mojave Desert Interpretive Association

Supporting five California State Parks in the Mojave Desert:

The Antelope Valley Poppy Reserve, Tomo-Kahni State Historic Park, Saddleback Butte State Park, Ripley Desert Woodland, and Providence Mountains State Recreation Area, the home of Mitchell Caverns



President's Message – Fall 2026

By Margaret Rhyne

president@prmdia.org

California State Park Library Pass Program

In 2025, a pilot program provided free day-use passes to over 200 state parks. We are happy to report that after intense lobbying by various state park advocates, this program has been signed into law with the recent passage of AB 1804. The **Library Parks Pass** program allows library patrons to checkout a pass and use it for free vehicle day-use access to parks across the state parks system and, after a set amount of time (usually two weeks), return the pass to the library. Our local Los Angeles and Kern county libraries participate in this program. All you need to do is visit your local library with your library card (which is also free). For more information click here: **California State Park Passes.** While on this page, be sure to read about the free and discounted passes for 4th graders, veterans, and others.

Receive Your Trail Tracks via Email

Beginning with the Winter 2026 newsletter we will provide our newsletter via email as well as U.S. mail. Our email version will allow us to include more photos as well as save money by decreasing postage costs. **Please be assured that we will still continue to mail printed copies to all who want them**. If you would like to switch to email, please send a message to **newsletter@prmdia.org** and let us know. Also, please add newsletter@prmdia.org to your list of contacts so that the emailed newsletter will go to your inbox (and not to spam).

Annual Meeting and Luncheon

All current PRMDIA members are invited to our annual meeting and luncheon on Nov. 21 at the Greenhouse Café in Lancaster. All members will receive an invitation in this newsletter. Events will include a raffle of an original Jane Pinheiro watercolor. Photo: **www.prmdia.org/news**

Hope to see you there!
Margaret Rhyne, PRMDIA president

Edited by Marsha Neill

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Mark Your Calendars:

Tour reservations for Fall and Spring are available for Tomo-Kahni S.H.P. See the article inside this issue for details .

Sept 1 - June 30 tours available for Mitchell Caverns. Details inside.

Oct. 24 Pubic Lands Day Cleanup at Saddleback Butte S.P.

Nov. 21 Annual Meeting & Luncheon (invitation included in this issue)

Jan. 1 First Day Hike at Saddleback

Feb. 6 & 13 Volunteer Training for the Poppy Reserve. Reservations required. Contact callista.turner@parks.ca.gov

Feb. 20 & 27 Volunteer Training for Tomo-Kahni State Historic Park. Reservation required. Contact michael.deagon.parks.ca.gov

March 1 Poppy Reserve's Jane Pinheiro Interpretive Center Opens

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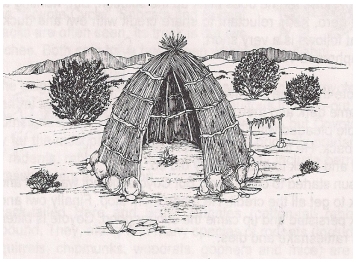
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Tomo-Kahni State Historic Park Tours



Nestled atop a ridge in the Tehachapi Mountains, Tomo-Kahni, or "Winter Village," was the site of a Kawaiisu (Nuwa) village. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of the site, Tomo-Kahni is available to the public by tour only. These tours are led by trained staff and volunteers on Saturdays during the spring and fall months. Reservations are required. Fall 2026 tours are on **Saturdays through October 17.** Spring 2027 tours will be on Saturdays**, April 17 through May 22.** Tour fees are $20.00 per person. Tours are limited to 15 people per tour. Tour reservation information is available on **prmdia.org/tomokahni**

Mitchell Caverns Tours

Mitchell Caverns was run as a resort by Jack and Ida Mitchell from 1934 until 1954. In 1972, the caverns became part of Providence Mountains State Recreation Area. The caverns contain intricate formations including stalagmites, stalactites, helictites, lily pads, draperies, curtains and cave coral. Tours are offered on weekends and some holidays, **September through June.** To make a tour reservation, watch videos about the park, and learn more about this special place, visit **www.prmdia.org/mitchellcaverns.**

Poppy Season 2026

A big thank you to the volunteers who made 2026, our 50th Anniversary Year, a great success. Volunteers walked the trails, photographed wildlife, provided information and helped PRMDIA raise funds through our gift shop sales. During the 2 months and 10 days that the Jane Pinheiro Visitor Center was open, 44 Volunteers served a total of 1,471 hours - an average of 33.44 hours per volunteer. From March through May, visitor attendance was 50,197. Total sales in the Poppy Reserve giftshop were $92,611.04 (gross sales, not profits) and $9,034.36 in sales tax was collected and remitted to the state. Donations and giftshop profits are used for a wide range of projects including docent expenses, resource protection, infrastructure improvements, funding for seasonal workers and a variety of interpretive materials.



As many of you know, after poppy season, there was a small fire at the Reserve. On July 10, approximately 45 acres of the southwest corner of the park burned. A quick response by state park personnel and various fire agencies limited infrastructure damage to just a small section of the fencing along the west side of the entrance road. For photos and more information visit **www.prmdia.org/news.**

Special Events at Saddleback Butte State Park

In cooperation with the Great Basin District of State Parks, PRMDIA supports two yearly events at Saddleback Butte State Park: Public Lands Day and “First Day” Hikes. An Equestrian Ride and Picnic is held every other year. To honor Public Lands Day, a park clean up event will be held on **October 24, 2026**, with handouts and prizes for participants. On **January 1, 2027**, also at Saddleback, three different First Day Hikes will be offered for differing ability levels, including a family hike. Refreshments will be provided at both events courtesy of PRMDIA. Details: **Saddleback**

To view the online version to this newsletter, including photos not in the print version visit:
www.prmdia.org/news

