



## The Peelian Principles and the Park Ranger Profession

by Matt Cerkel

Originally, I wanted to include the Peelian Principles in my latest Under the Flat Hat article, but as it took shape I realized I could make it fit. The Peelian Principles were developed from the ideas of father of modern policing, Sir Robert Peel, for whom the English “bobbies” are named. Peel was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century political statesman and social reformer. “Peel’s Metropolitan Police Act 1829 established a full-time, professional

and centrally-organized police force for the Greater London area, known as the Metropolitan Police.” The nine principles were set out in the “General Instructions” and have been issued to every new police officer of the Metropolitan Police since 1829. The principles are still relevant today and are directly applicable to park rangers with law enforcement duties.

The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.

The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.

Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.

The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.

Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.

Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.

Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.

Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.

The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.

# From the Redwoods

Dear Park Professionals,

With a hectic Summer upon us, it can be difficult to plan into next year, let alone next week. But I'd like to ask you all to take a moment to think about the 2016 California Parks Training Conference. In 2016 we celebrate our 40th Anniversary as an organization. Our 2016 Conference in Santa Rosa will reflect our rich history, our dedicated and tireless founders and the future of both our organization and our profession. This really will be something special. The Conference Planning Committee is hard at work setting up fabulous programs for us all. I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to any of you who may be interested in presenting or volunteering at the event. Please email me with any interest you may have. Also, if you have a need for training, please let me know that, too. Below are some of the early release highlights, including the venue, approximate cost and some of the classes that we already have lined up for you. Please keep checking the website for more information.

Thank you, everyone. And as always, stay safe.

Yours in unity,

**Heather Reiter**

PRAC President

Chief Ranger, City of Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation Department

## 2016 Conference Updates

**When:** February 29 – March 3, 2016

**Where:** Flamingo Conference Resort and Spa

[www.flamingoresort.com](http://www.flamingoresort.com)

2777 Fourth Street

Santa Rosa, CA 95405

(707) 545-8530 or (800) 848-8300

**How to book a room** (for stays during 2/28/16-3/4/16):

- For standard rooms (\$90/night) visit [www.calranger.com](http://www.calranger.com) for the exclusive booking site or call (707) 545-8530
- For Executive King rooms (\$119/night) call (707) 545-8530
- For Suites (\$199/night) call (707) 545-8530

**Approximate/Unconfirmed Cost of Conference** (not including lodging): \$275

### List of Confirmed Sessions:

- Use of UAV for Land Management
- K-9s in Parks
- 2016 Legal Update
- Marijuana Cultivation Investigation
- Trail building and management
- Beer Interpretation with Ira Bletz (additional fee required)

### Unconfirmed Sessions:

- Racial Profiling
- Fire Investigation
- Trail Cameras
- Gang intelligence update

# The Dying Tree Nature's Bequest

by Gillian Martin



A tree with loose bark invites other occupants as well. Look nose-close and you may discover a lizard tucked behind. It's likely regulating its body temperature, escaping a predator or dining on insects breeding there. That is, if the probing woodpecker didn't beat him to it! And where mature, large coniferous or deciduous trees reside, the Brown Creeper makes its nest in those same shaded rooms that loosened bark provide. Even more assets are discovered there. Insect cocoons and spider egg cases help the nesting creeper bind her twigs, moss, leaves and lichen together.

In addition to providing a nesting site, shelter and food for wildlife, a dead tree supplies perches for hunting, territorial defense and courtship. There's nothing like an unobstructed view to see and be seen! What better place for the Red-tailed Hawk or Great-horned Owl to survey for prey and dine with his kingdom laid out before him.



*Red Fox – Carolina K. Smith MD*

Our eyes dismiss a dying tree. Our fears tell us to cut it down and haul it away quickly. How often do we ask, "Does the tree need to be cut down completely?"

A dying tree has a commendable destiny. Whether it still stands, is reduced to a hollowed stump, or exists as downed wood, most of its "life" occurs in a complex, intriguing, unseen world. Imagine a time-share that is used by different species, for vastly different purposes, in every stage of its demise. A dying tree is an awesome thing! I don't know of a man-made structure that matches its ecological usefulness! Few living things are as overlooked and unappreciated, except of course by wildlife and the vast industry of inhabitants at work on its remains in the soil below. Nature bequests dying trees to enrich habitats.

Let's start the story with natural cavities found in upright trees and in fallen logs. They serve as dens for the bear, fox and raccoon. Bats and bees use them too. And did you also know they make a useful pantry? A storage site for nuts, berries and insects can tip the scale as to who makes it through a bitter winter.

While all types of industry and territorial issues are being attended to by its visitors, the tree submits willingly to its dismantlers. Fungi. Over time they will ultimately convert the tree to duff and return its nutrients to the soil. The shuffling and wing flapping gyrations of a Dark-eyed Junco suggest just how much it enjoys a dust bath thanks to a rotting log!

Fungi, too, are good hosts and job-sharers. They house insects which raise their families within their close, moist, fleshy corridors or under their leathery canopies. And furthermore fungi become food for deer, raccoons and countless other foragers. These diners thank the fungi. They transport their spores to other locations that serve as new job sites. In the world of a dying tree, reciprocity abounds!

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# The Dying Tree Nature's Bequest

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*Pileated Woodpecker – Willie Linn*

One of the most critical relationships between dead trees and wildlife involves the woodpecker. What a prolific excavator! With a few exceptions, this family of birds needs rotting wood in which to excavate nest sites. Is it accidental “wisdom” that the woodpecker reciprocates by contributing to the decay process? While excavating and probing for grubs and insects, it picks up and transports fungal spores on its bill and feathers. More fungal colonies mean more rotting wood and in time more nesting and roosting opportunities. You see, the carpenter of the bird world generally prefers to make a new cavity than to reuse one. (The Northern Flicker, the poorest excavator, is sometimes one exception.) So as if to “give back” to its neighborhood, the woodpecker leaves its abandoned cavities to dozens of secondary cavity nesting species. Could the bluebird, nuthatch or chickadee conceive of a better neighbor? Rangers! We are overdue to hail the woodpecker! At the 2014 International Conference of Woodpeckers in Spain, habitat loss was identified as the greatest threat to woodpeckers world wide. No surprise!

Let's address concerns about hazard trees. The International Society of Arboriculture ([isa-arbor.com](http://isa-arbor.com)) has a number of resources for risk assessment. A certified arborist is the person most qualified to make determinations about a tree's safety. If a tree is considered safe to stand for a few years then the door opens for discussion about how the tree should be managed. Do you know that the Nuttall's Woodpecker, just as an example, will nest in a rotting stump only 4' high? They'll accept a tree without a single limb! Many other woodpeckers do. The taller the tree, the greater its usefulness. It's best if it's diameter is

at least 15” and better yet if it offers strong, mature limbs for perching. Top the tree and shorten its limbs if you must, but if you can, leave limbs at least 18” in length. (That much allows room for the deep cavities woodpeckers excavate.)



*Mountain Bluebird – Tom Reichner*

Bump up the tree's perceived value by calling it a wildlife tree. Put a sign on it that explains its benefits. Now there's an opportunity to change public perception and turn conversation into education! How about referring to it as a “teaching tree” and invite youngsters to learn “how to read a dead tree!” Look for clues left by wildlife. Consider this. Hey kids! Let's sketch illustrations of what we see. What might have made those small holes with jagged edges? Is a woodpecker's bill more like a hammer or a chisel? (Chisel is the answer.) What was it after? But hmm, are all the small



holes on this tree the same? What do old trees and grandparents have in common? A fourth-grader once laughed aloud and said, “They fall down a lot!” Another said, “Their branches looks like my

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# The Dying Tree Nature's Bequest

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grandma's arthritis." We want kids to make connections to things they already know.



Pull out the California Natural History Guide. The one that is an Introduction to California Beetles by Evans and Hogue. You'll find material there to start a conversation about forest pests. Or how about page 191 of The Laws Field Guide of the Sierra Nevada. Don't miss the part about beetle galleries! Holy Bageebers! You could suggest a research or art project just about the variations in beetle galleries!

Cavities draw lots of curiosity. Are there large natural cavities that a fox, an owl or raccoon might use? Or how about smaller, round ones made by woodpeckers? Some holes may be started but not completed. How many reasons can you imagine why a woodpecker would start a hole and never finish it? And let's not overlook scrape- signs made by deer and bear that have used the tree as a billboard to say "stay away!" or "don't mess with me!"

Every clue an organism leaves behind is a hieroglyph; a thank you for nature's bequest to it. A dead tree is a story about the cycle of life; about respecting and preserving nature's intentions; about understanding there is a purpose for everything; an invitation to look a second time, even at the "ugly" and infested. The tree may be sending us a message that something is wrong in the surrounding environment. What might that be? Like birds, dead trees give their life to let us know. That warning is a bequest to us as well.



*Beetle gallery*

There are overriding safety reasons to remove a dying tree, including to protect the health of other trees and to balance the aesthetic value of a park; but next time, before you tape or spray that red X on the tree, please ask, "Does it have to be removed completely?"



*Gillian Martin is the Program Director of the Cavity Conservation Initiative.*

For more information: [cavityconservation.com](http://cavityconservation.com)

# Under the Flat Hat

by Matt Cerkel

Park rangers are “protectors, explainers, hosts, caretakers, people who are expected to be knowledgeable, helpful, courteous and professional: people who find you when you’re lost, help you when you’re hurt, rescue you when you’re stuck, and enforce the law when you or others can’t abide by it.” I believe this saying best illustrates the attributions of a park ranger is. In the last article I stated that “I believe the generalist park ranger is a peace officer ranger with other duties including, but not limited to wildland firefighting, EMS, search and rescue, park operations, education/interpretation and limited resource management and maintenance duties.” How do we achieve the goal of having park rangers that can meet these challenging and wide-ranging duties? To help answer this question I developed the acronym KASE (Knowledge, Authority, Skills and Equipment) to assist.

The knowledge needed to become a professional park ranger is broad and comes from many sources. I’ll start with education. To become a park ranger a person should have an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree in a park or resource related field. This helps build a solid foundation for their career. Knowledge also includes the classroom portion of a law enforcement or public safety academy, continuing education, and conference sessions in the varied disciplines in which park rangers specialize. Knowledge also comes from reading and, more recently, podcasts. Finally, knowledge also includes on-the-job experience.

To be a park ranger peace officer you need to have authority granted by the state in two separate codes: your enabling act (which is specific to the type of agency that employs you) and the Penal Code. The enabling acts for California park rangers can be found in such codes as the Government Code, Public Resources Code or the Water Code. These enabling acts will sometimes have a specific sections granting enforcement authority (expressed power) and at

other times the authority is an implied power. Some “expressed power” sections include Public Resources Code 5380, 5558(b), 5560.1, 5561, 5786.17(c), and Water Code 71341.5. Additionally, the Penal Code needs to grant peace officer authority to park rangers through 830.31(b), 830.34(d) and for reserve park rangers 830.6. For non-sworn park rangers with law enforcement duties a similar path is followed with the enabling act and the Penal Code, in this case “public officer” authority as granted by Penal Code 836.5. A non-sworn park ranger may be considered a “code enforcement officer” as authorized by Penal Code 829.5 if that the park ranger “has enforcement authority for health, safety, and welfare requirements, whose duties include enforcement of any statute, rule, regulation, or standard, and who is authorized to issue citations, or file formal complaints.” Authority also comes from the agency employing the park ranger. The park ranger is appointed by the employing agency, which grants the park ranger the authority to do the job. The agency through its general orders, policies and procedures, and field operations guide defines how a park ranger does the job and how they can use their granted authority.

The park ranger uniform and the way a park ranger vehicle is marked represents the authority that is granted to the park ranger. A final note about the park ranger uniform, nothing represents the authority more than the flat hat (Smokey Bear hat). The flat hat is a key part of representing your authority and identifying you as a park ranger. A good park ranger must also understand their authority. For example; park rangers with peace officer authority need to see that authority as a tool to help them perform their primary duty. Yes, you may have the authority to take law enforcement action off of park property, but unless there is a public safety necessity to intervene why make enforcement stops for minor violations out of park jurisdiction?

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Just like knowledge, the skills required to be a competent professional park ranger are broad. Many of the skills are first learned in the academy, other training venues, and the classroom. Many of the skills need continued ongoing training and, in some cases, this training is legally required (such as POST perishable skills) or required to maintain a certificate (EMT or CPR). These certifications and trainings are often overseen by organizations outside of the employer. Such as The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), the American Red Cross, an EMS agency, California State Fire Marshal, Cal OSHA, California Incident Command Certification System (CICCS), or the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Skills can be defined as the following:

- The ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance.
- Dexterity or coordination especially in the execution of learned physical tasks.
- A learned power of doing something competently: a developed aptitude or ability.
- For a park ranger the skills to perform the job might include the following:
  - Defensive tactics
  - Firearms training
  - Patient assessment
  - Applying a splint
  - CPR
  - Boat operations
  - ATV operations
  - EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operations Course)
  - Operating a fire engine
  - Performing a progressive hose lay
  - Rope rescue
  - Swift water rescue
  - Chainsaw operations
- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Trail building
- Plant identification
- Leading an interpretive hike

Obviously, this list of park ranger skills is not complete, but it does illustrate the broad skills required to be a professional park ranger. Competency is needed in each required skill, but few will be an expert in all skills. Within these skills sets there is the need to specialize, but that where experts come into play. The experts or those who show an extra interest in certain skills can become the trainers in those skills. Some skill sets will require the trainers to become a certified instructor. In some cases, it may also be easier to form partnerships with allied agencies and use their certified instructors.

Equipment is the last part of KASE. Quite simply, the equipment requirements for the professional park ranger are having the proper equipment readily available to do the required job duties in a safe, effective and efficient manner. A park ranger who is a peace officer should have all the tools (and training) needed to perform their role so they can safely protect themselves, the public, and the park. If a park ranger is tasked with firefighting or as an EMT they also need adequate equipment. If you make a mistake cleaning a toilet it is probably not going to get somebody killed, but you make a mistake in one of the public safety duties and it could jeopardize somebody's safety or life. This means Park ranger EMTs or EMRs must have adequate medical kits including oxygen and an AED. Park rangers performing firefighting must have proper PPE (including fire shelter) and suppression equipment. Park ranger peace officers have the proper PPE and enforcement equipment. Finally, if the park ranger is expected to use a vehicle to respond to a public safety

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(law enforcement, EMS or fire) emergency calls the vehicle needs to be equipped with proper lights and siren as defined by the Vehicle Code for authorized emergency vehicles.

So where does this leave us? The four parts of KASE are intertwined. You need the knowledge, skills and equipment to exercise your authority. With equipment (especially public safety equipment) you need the authority, knowledge and skills to use it in a proper, safe and legal manner. The Park Rangers Association of California's "Park Ranger Training and Standards-Generalist Park Ranger Certification" provides the minimum skills needed for today's professional park ranger <http://www.calranger.org/services/cert.html>. More agencies should adopt it as a certification required to be a fully qualified park ranger and as a way to ensure their park rangers have the knowledge and skills to perform the duties asked of them. Park agencies should use experienced, competent park rangers that are POST certified FTOs, who are comfortable and knowledgeable in all aspects of the job, to train new park rangers. Few agencies can afford specialized park rangers that have limited focus on just a few parts of the broad range of park ranger duties. Personally, I see State Parks moving towards "specialization" and in the end it will be a move in the wrong direction and likely to hurt the parks more and erode public support further. Ideally, every park ranger should have the following:

- The ability (through knowledge, authority, skills and equipment) to respond to law enforcement incidents, medical emergencies, and other public safety emergencies that occur in their parks.
- Use a law enforcement profile and demeanor appropriate in a park setting.
- Park visitors appreciate an enforcement style fitting the circumstances and the area. But park rangers need to have the ability

to use higher profile law enforcement, when needed.

- The ability to inform and educate park visitors and the community about the importance,
- value, and need to preserve and protect park and open space areas for the future;
- The ability to assess park facility and resource needs and recognize adverse environmental impacts related to public use of sensitive areas.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to successfully interact with members of different work groups (park maintenance, resource management), supporting organizations, and allied agencies.
- Perform a wide variety of duties related to park operations including minor
- Maintenance and the identification and the timely elimination of public or health hazards.
- The ability to serve as a field naturalist and "interpret" the historic, cultural, and natural history of the area.

As a mounted law enforcement park ranger said in a Yosemite Nature Notes podcast "in most parks you know a ranger is kind of expected to do everything, expected to know everything. We wear a tremendous amount of different hats." This is a proud tradition of our profession. It takes a real effort to maintain this tradition, but it can and should be done. If we move away from this tradition it will be at our own and our park's peril, and we as a profession will risk the support of the public.



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