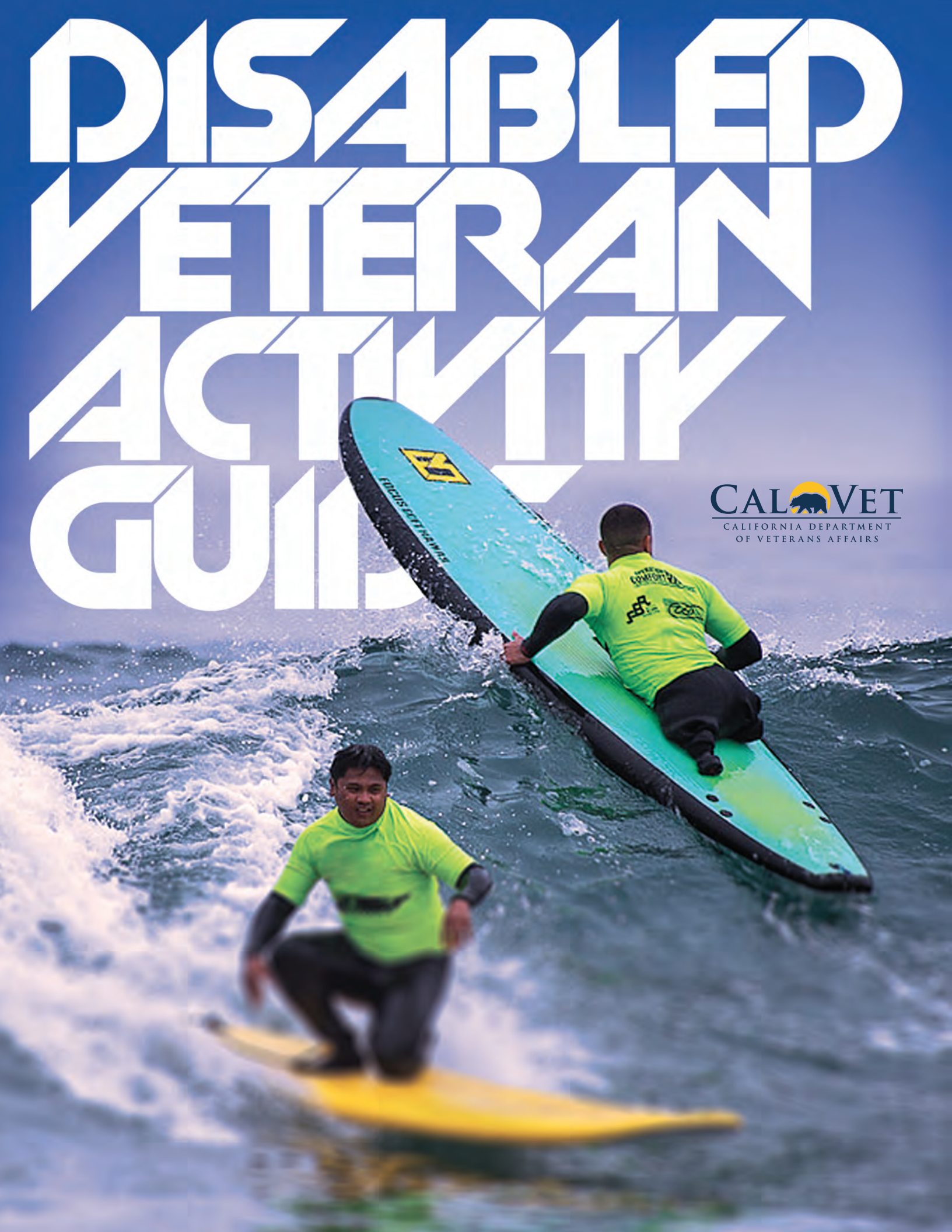
DISABLED VETERAN ACTIVITY GUIDE



CALVET
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

DISABLED VETS, GET INVOLVED!

California offers a wealth of opportunities for disabled veterans to participate in recreational activities from surfing to a day of fishing, there are activities for disabled veterans and opportunities for volunteers who want to be involved in providing these events and experiences for veterans. Many of these programs use sports and recreation to enhance the rehabilitation of injured service members and veterans.

U.S. PARALYMPIC SPORTS

U.S. Paralympics Sports (USPS) connects communities and organizations that provide sports and recreation opportunities for people with physical and visual disabilities, with an emphasis on youth, injured service members and veterans. It's about putting people and resources together – all across America.

USPS works with Paralympic athletes to give them the training, support, and preparation they need to compete in the Paralympic Games, the second largest sporting event in the world, after the Olympic Games. The organization sponsors camps and competitions, all designed to prepare them for their moment on the world stage.

The U.S. Olympic Committee's Paralympic Military & Veteran programs use sports to enhance the rehabilitation of injured service members and veterans. While still on active duty, military men and women can access Paralympic sport programs at medical treatment facilities and Warrior Transition Units at different installations across the country. USPS provides the training and expertise needed to implement activities that can be adapted for wounded, ill and injured service members.

When veterans return home, USPS works to connect them to ongoing programs in their communities so they can continue to lead healthy, active lives along with their family members and friends.

USPS athletes show the world the power of what's possible. As Paralympic Ambassadors, these athletes serve as role models and mentors to youth, veterans with disabilities, injured servicemen and women and others in communities across the country. The athletes are inspiring all Americans with their stories of perseverance and creating global awareness for the importance of health and wellness for people with physical and visual disabilities.

At USPS, it's not just about sporting events. It's about using sports to inspire possibilities, because once a person with a disability believes he or she can play volleyball, or swim, or run, it's a small step to believing they can do every day things as well—the things they may have once seen as impossible.

To view a list of USPS sport competition activities by disability, go to **http://findaclub.usparalympics.org/sports-by-physical-disability.aspx**.

To find a searchable, interactive listing of Paralympic sports programs in California, go to **http://findaclub.usparalympics.org/search.aspx**.

PARALYMPIC GAMES COMING TO SAN JOSE

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and U.S. Paralympics Sports has announced that San Jose was selected as one of four sites for the 2013 Valor Games, a competition for veterans and service members with a physical disability.

The Valor Games were established in 2011 by World Sport Chicago in partnership with U.S. Paralympics and Veterans Affairs to provide an introductory sports competition for veterans and service members with a physical disability and to promote sports at the community level.

In addition to San Jose, the Valor Games will take place in Chicago, IL; Durham, NC; and San Antonio, TX. Funding for all four of the competitions is being provided by the USDVA.

Qualifying athletes include veterans or active duty service members from any era. Their physical disabilities may fall into the following categories: amputation/limb loss; post-traumatic stress; spinal cord injuries; stroke; traumatic brain injuries; visual disabilities and any disability rating from the USDVA.

To learn more about the sports being offered in San Jose, June 11-13, 2013, the registration process and volunteer opportunities, please visit **www.valorgamesfarwest.com**.

For more information about the 2013 Valor Games, please contact Beth Bourgeois, U.S. Paralympics, at (719) 866-2039 or beth.bourgeois@usoc.org.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP) is the leading provider and promoter of accessible sports and recreation opportunities for children and adults with physical disabilities in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

BORP's Paralympic Sports Program for Disabled Veterans offers frequent opportunities for veterans and armed forces members with physical disabilities and visual impairments to participate in sports and fitness activities—on weekends and during the week, on their own or with their family and friends, on biking trails or on basketball courts, on the water or on the ice.

BORP has ongoing activities that are available to all service members and veterans with a physical disability or visual impairment. Some of the ongoing programs include adaptive cycling, goalball, wheelchair basketball, sled hockey, and adaptive fitness classes. BORP is currently serving veterans at its cycling center from the USDVA Palo Alto and The San Francisco Medical Centers.

In addition BORP has ongoing Yoga classes serving Veterans at the USDVA SF Medical Center. We also offer Adaptive Rowing, and an Adventures and Outings program which offers hikes, carriage rides, and camping trips.

For more information, contact BORP at 3075 Adeline St, Suite 155 Berkeley, CA 94703, (510) 849-4663, info@borp.org.

SCUBA

SCUBA diving can provide a beautiful respite from the above-water world. Certification allows you to dive around the world. Disabled Veterans SCUBA Project is a 501(c) (3) non-profit of unpaid volunteers that provides Basic Open Water SCUBA Certification for veterans with disabilities, including (but not limited to) traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress disorder, paralysis (paraplegic, quadriplegic), amputation (1 to 4 limbs) or blindness.

For more information about the Disabled Veterans SCUBA Project in Los Alamitos, California, visit **www.disabledveteransscubaproject.org** or call (562) 421-3094.

SCUBA CERTIFICATION COURSES

In partnership with the Naval Medical Center San Diego and the Veterans Administration, San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation (SDASF) provides adaptive sports opportunities to injured service members. Eligible participants include all active service members and veterans.

For more information, visit **www.sdasf.org**, or contact San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation, P.O. Box 153792, San Diego, CA 92195, (619) 336-1806.

FISHING

Monterey Bay Veterans Inc. "Sports Rehabilitation Center" is a non-profit organization with a mission of providing wounded warriors, disabled veterans and the physically challenged, a diversion therapy program with a special emphasis on marine activities including sports fishing, scuba diving, boating safety courses, and marine environmental education.

The "Independence Fishing Program" consists of daily (by appointment) fishing trips for those who qualify utilizing two vessels, the 49 foot (Defever) "Independence", and the 60 foot (Pacifica) "Freedom". Both boats are owned and operated by Monterey Bay Veterans Inc.

For over 25 years, Monterey Bay Veterans, Inc. has hosted two nationally recognized sports fishing events annually. The Wheelchair Salmon Fishing Derby and the Wheelchair Rock Cod Fishing Derby not only brings fun and excitement to our deserved disabled veterans, but adds a level of competition to our diversion therapy program.

For more information, contact Monterey Bay Veterans, Inc., P.O. Box 481, Monterey, CA 93942, MBVInc@pacbell.net, (831)901-0217.

FREE AND REDUCED-FEE FISHING LICENSES

The Department of Fish and Wildlife issues a reduced-fee ($6.70) sport fishing licenses to any honorably-discharged veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces with a service-connected disability rating of 50% or more.

Free License are available to blind and disabled individuals that are immobile.

Contact DFW License Sales Office at 1740 North Market Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95834 (916) 928-5805 or find a local office at **www.dfw.ca.gov/licensing/officelocation**.

SURFING

AmpSurf is a non-profit organization made up of amputees, veterans and friends, people with disabilities, especially our veteran heroes, and family of the disabled. Their goal is to promote, inspire, educate, and rehabilitate through adaptive surfing and fun safe outdoor activities that everyone can participate in and enjoy.

All events are free to participants, but a reservation deposit is required at least 2 weeks in advance of the event you wish to attend. Reserve your spot with a refundable deposit of $50 for one-day events and $150 for multi-day events. (Reservations need to be made at least 2 weeks prior to the clinic to receive a refund. After the 2 week deadline there will be no refunds given.) On the day of event, beach sign-ups will have an additional $25 fee for each day. Special grant funds are available for disabled veterans.

For more information contact AmpSurf Headquarters, 340 Pomeroy, Pismo Beach, CA 93449, P.O. Box 5045 San Luis Obispo, CA 93403, (805) 733-0302, info@ampsurf.org.

GOLF

The PGA of America has partnered with Disabled Sports USA and the Department of Defense to sponsor a program for severely wounded veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. This program is a nationwide initiative that will involve both active duty and retired men and women of the Armed Forces who were severely wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. The aim is to demonstrate value in golf as a sport for rehabilitation and fulfilling recreational pursuit. Golf courses throughout California are participating. For more information contact the Wounded Warrior Project or one of the Disabled Sports USA Chapters for more information.

GOLF PROGRAMS

San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation - San Diego, CA
(619) 336-2764, programs@sdasf.org, **www.sdasf.org**.

KAYAK FISHING

Heroes on the Water helps wounded warriors relax, rehabilitate, and reintegrate through kayak fishing and the outdoors.

Guided kayak fishing excursions, which include adaptive kayaks and equipment as needed, give injured troops an opportunity to hang out with other fisherman, take control of their world from the helm of their kayak, and learn the ropes of kayak fishing–a skill that lasts a lifetime. Kayak fishing is therapeutic for anyone, but particularly for military personnel recovering from injuries and trauma. The mission is to give these heroes a chance to enjoy a challenging outdoor sport that allows them to decompress from the stresses related to combat and from the physical and mental rigors of rehabilitation and join the kayak fishing band of brothers.

For more information, visit **www. www.heroesonthewater.org** or contact:

Southern California Coordinator
CJ Siebler, (619) 929-8571 or cj@oeexpress.com

Northern California Coordinator
Don Anglin, (510) 374-9185, kayakdanglin@gmail.com.

SPECIALIZED ADAPTIVE SPORTS

Through their partnership with high-quality, specialized disabled sports providers, the Wounded Warrior Project is able to deliver dynamic and engaging year-round sports and fitness programs to help injured service members gain confidence and independence, while adapting to life after injury. With adaptive equipment and trained instructors, warriors can participate in almost any sport or fitness activity, moving them beyond rehabilitation and toward a full and productive life. These programs are designed to encompass all areas of fitness and exercise including nutrition and physical training to build a healthy and fit lifestyle.

Through these partnerships, they provide warriors, immediate family, and primary caregivers with year-round seasonal fitness, sporting, and exercise activities. Winter and summer outdoor recreation activities such as water skiing, snowboarding, skiing, bicycling, golf, therapeutic horseback riding, healthy cooking classes, and rock climbing are just a few activities from which you have to choose. Re-energize and re-invigorate your body while adapting a healthy and fit family lifestyle.

For more information, contact the Wounded Warrior Project, 2468 Historic Decatur Road, Bldg. 905, Suite 150, San Diego, CA 92106, (877) 832-6997.

WINTER-SUMMER SPORTS

The Warfighter Sports, part of Disabled Sports USA, program offers more than 30 winter and summer adaptive sports through our nationwide network of more than 100 community-based chapters. These year-round sports experiences include skiing, snowboarding, cycling, wheelchair basketball, track and field, water sports and much more. This program serves severely injured military, both active duty and veterans, with a permanent physical disability. Disabilities served include amputations, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, visual impairments and significant nerve and muscle damage.

For more information, visit **www.warfightersports.org**.

Disabled Sports USA has nine chapters in California offering many recreational options:

Adaptive Action Sports - South Lake Tahoe, CA
Sports Offered: Motor Sports, Skateboarding, Wakeboarding, Skiing/Snowboarding
info@adacs.org, **www.adacs.org**

Adaptive Athletics Association - Mountain Center, CA
Sports Offered: Tennis
(760) 831-2736
aaa@adaptiveathletics.org, **www.adaptiveathletics.org**

Disabled Sports USA Eastern Sierra - Mammoth Lakes, CA
Sports Offered: Ski, Snowboard, Nordic, Biathlon, Kayak, Rock Climb, Camp, Hike, Cycle/Mountain Bike, Horseback Ride
(760) 934-0791
info@disabledsportseasternsierra.org
www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org

Disabled Sports USA Far West - Citrus Heights, CA
Sports Offered: Rafting, Water Skiing, Boating, Sailing, Canoeing, Kayaking, Tubing, Ski, Snowboard
(916) 722-6447
dsusa@disabledsports.net, **www.dsusafw.org**

Disabled Sports USA Los Angeles - Los Angeles, CA
Sports Offered: Ski/Snowboard
info@unrecables.org, **www.unrecables.com**

Disabled Sports USA Orange County - Tustin, CA
Sports Offered: Ski/Snowboard
(949) 460-6969
dsusaoc@mac.com, **www.theachievers.org**

Discovery Blind Sports - Kirkwood, CA
Sports Offered: Ski, Snowboard, Nordic, Biathlon
(209) 258-2233
discoveryblindsports@yahoo.com
www.discoveryblindsports.org

San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation - San Diego, CA
Sports Offered: Tennis, Basketball, Wheelchair Soccer, Quad Rugby, Ski, Snowboard, Cycling, Canoe, Kayak, Golf
(619) 336-2764
programs@sdasf.org, **www.sdasf.org**

Shasta Disabled Sports USA - Mount Shasta, CA
Sports Offered: Rafting, Camping, Fishing, Boating, Rock Climbing, Ski, Snowboard
(530)925-1531
info@shastadsusa.org, **www.shastadsusa.org**

U.S. Adaptive Recreation Center - Big Bear Lake, CA
Sports Offered: Ski, Snowboard, Sailing, Cycling, Water Skiing, Kayaking, Hiking, Outdoor Activities
(909) 584-0269
mail@usarc.org, **www.usarc.org**

STATE PARKS PASS

Honorably discharged war veterans who are residents of California with a 50% or more service-connected disability, or were held as prisoners of war by forces hostile to the United States, or recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor are eligible to receive the Distinguished Veteran Pass (formerly Disabled War Veteran/Prisoner of War Pass) can receive a no fee lifetime pass to California' State Parks.

Application may be made in person at the Park Pass Sales Office located at 1416 9th Street, Room 144, Sacramento, California. Please allow four to six weeks for application process.

You can also mail completed applications to:

California State Parks
Attn: Distinguished Veteran Pass Program
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

For more information, contact California State parks at (800) 777-0369.

2013 NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS

The State will host the National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic, September 15 – 20, 2013, in San Diego. The NVSSC program (NVSSC) gives veterans with disabilities an opportunity for self-development and challenge through education and recreational activities.

According to VA, "The Summer Sports Clinic offers adventure sports and recreational activities such as sailing, surfing, track and field events, kayaking and cycling (hand and tandem), to those who were recently injured. Complementing the therapy provided in daily rehabilitation programs, the Clinic shares a glimpse of the many exciting recreational opportunities awaiting those veterans who accept the challenge. With the variety of water and summer sports available at the Clinic, this week-long journey hosts veterans from all over the country who have a variety of injuries, ranging from traumatic brain injury and poly-trauma, to spinal cord injury or loss of limb. Its fundamental purpose is to provide early intervention for veterans battling back from injury, not only strengthening their bodies but overcoming and improving their overall being and self-worth."

For more information, visit **www.sandiego.va.gov/ssc/asp**.

To register, contact Tristan Heaton, (858) 642-6426, Tristan.Heaton2@va.gov or Marcela Appelhanz, (858) 642-3658, Marcela.Appelhanz@va.gov.

We are blessed to live in California—surf in the morning, snowboard in the afternoon. These activities are out there for everyone. Some of the programs listed have a cost but veterans' scholarships are often available. So get involved. Volunteers, trainers, sponsors, and participants are always welcome.

We know that all California programs are not included in this booklet, and we are anxious to include those we've missed. If you know of a program that was not included, please contact CalVet at pao@calvet.ca.gov.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs maintains an easily searchable database of sports clubs that are there to assist veterans with special needs. Go to **www.va.gov/adaptivesports/va_clubFinder.asp**.

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