



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND GUIDELINES

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD

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The San Joaquin River Conservancy's social media policy is an official document that provides guidelines and requirements for employees who post content on behalf of the department on various social media platforms as either their fulltime duties or duties as assigned at the division or district level. This policy is a resource to help the department maintain its brand voice while mitigating social media risks. Additionally, the policy aims to protect your accounts from hacking and imposter accounts.

The San Joaquin River Conservancy uses social media accounts to expand the Conservancy's impact on the community. To increase public interaction and awareness, engagement, and exposure to our work, our partnerships, and parkway properties. As official communication platforms, San Joaquin River Conservancy's social media accounts, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, X (formally known as Twitter), YouTube, TikTok, Threads, etc., must contain content that positively reflects the department's brand, is lawful and does not compromise the integrity or image of the department or its mission.

Definitions

Social media: Various forms of communication, such as text, photos, and video, which allow interaction among individuals, groups and organizations. Social media are primarily Internet- and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. For government departments, it is another tool to communicate openly with the people we serve.

User: Any person who actively posts text, photos, or video on social media Web sites including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Reddit, YouTube, Wikipedia, Blogs and other similar sites currently in existence and those yet to be invented.

Account Administrator: A user who has administrative privileges to change account settings, manage communication, and post on behalf of an organization or agency.

Fan / Follower: A user (either employee or member of the public) who has chosen to follow or "Like" the San Joaquin River Conservancy social media account or page. A fan or follower will generally see the majority of posts from the San Joaquin River Conservancy social media account.

Post: Communication of text, pictures, video, or a combination of all three, on behalf of the department.

Content: The actual substance of the post; the specific words, pictures, and videos to be used in the communication.

Establishing and Maintaining Social Media Communication

User requirements for use and content by the State CIO's Social Media Standard

1. Users shall connect to, and exchange information with, only those Social Media web sites that have been authorized by agency management in accordance with the requirements within this and other agency and State policies.
2. Users shall minimize their use of “other than government” sections of the Social Media web sites.
3. Users shall not post or release proprietary, confidential, sensitive, personally identifiable information (PII), or other state government Intellectual Property on Social Media web sites, including but not limited to copyrighted material. Accidental disclosure should be immediately reported to the Department ISO.
4. Users who connect to Social Media web sites through State information assets, who speak officially on behalf of the state agency or the State, or who may be perceived as speaking on behalf of an agency or the State, are subject to all agency and State requirements addressing prohibited or inappropriate behavior in the workplace, including acceptable use policies, user agreements, sexual harassment policies, etc.
5. Users shall not speak on Social Media web sites or other on-line forums on behalf of an agency, unless specifically authorized by the agency head or the agency's Public Information Office. Users may not speak on behalf of the State unless specifically authorized by the Governor.
6. Users who are authorized to speak on behalf of the agency or State shall identify themselves by: 1) Full Name; 2) Title; 3) Agency; and 4) Contact Information, when posting or exchanging information on Social Media forums, and shall address issues only within the scope of their specific authorization.
7. Users who are not authorized to speak on behalf of the agency or State shall clarify that the information is being presented on their own behalf and that it does not represent the position of the State or an agency.
8. Users shall not utilize tools or techniques to spoof, masquerade, or assume any identity or credentials except for legitimate law enforcement purposes or for other legitimate State purposes as defined in agency policy.
9. Users shall not mix their professional information with their personal information.
10. Users shall not use their work password on Social Media web sites. The password(s) for Social Media efforts conducted for San Joaquin River Conservancy shall conform to the departmental password policies and shall additionally be stored in a secure location reachable by the unit manager, superintendent, or other appropriate authorizing authority.



General Social Media Guidelines

Account Administrators and Posting

There may be more than one account administrator to the San Joaquin River Conservancy social media account. The Social Media Liaison will administer social media accounts via an account that is created with the info@sjrc.ca.gov email address, not a personal account. No post should be published without the approval of the Social Media Liaison. This is to ensure that social media traffic metrics and impressions are not hindered by conflicting publishing times from existing publishing schedules, or that content that does not fit these guidelines or fit into the larger social media plan is published.

Direct Communication, Comments, and Private Messages

It is important to remember that direct response twittering and wall-to-wall communications are viewed in public forums. This is not like talking on the phone on a private one-on-one conversation. Social Media Liaison should always be aware of tone, attitude, and how the communication will be perceived when communicating in public forums from San Joaquin River Conservancy social media accounts. The Social Media Liaison should refrain from participating in dialogue and online discussions with social profile visitors as much as possible, which includes making comments or directly responding to comments from the San Joaquin River Conservancy account. If a direct question is posed in a comment section or through a private message, the Social Media Liaison may respond and encourage the person to ask their question via email to info@sjrc.ca.gov. The Social Media Liaison should constantly monitor comments, disallow/remove any inappropriate or distasteful comment, and use discretion in alerting the Executive Officer regarding sensitive information. San Joaquin River Conservancy media accounts shall not be used to create a public forum for rebuttal or controversial issues. All efforts will be made to mitigate debate or argument in public settings.

Fans and Followers

Any administrator on the San Joaquin River Conservancy social media account may not follow private citizens or commercial profiles from within the San Joaquin River Conservancy social networking profile. Account administrators should not click onto the profiles of Friends, Fans, and/or Followers of the San Joaquin River Conservancy from within the Department account.



Guidelines for Gathering Content from the Field

Gathering content for social media at work can be difficult but is important. Gathering content, taking pictures, or filming shall not interfere with staff duties. If enough personnel are on scene, staff are encouraged to take pictures that can be used by the Department's social media; Posting any footage or other content from work on personal Social Media profiles is strictly prohibited. Video footage is a great way to show the work that staff do, however there is increased liability that the Department must protect itself from when using video. Any content from work must be sent to the Social Media Liaison and posted from a department profile.

Social Media Evaluation

The Social Media Liaison will be responsible for constant monitoring and evaluation of social media metrics, impressions, and traffic. The Social Media Liaison will review social media metrics with the Executive Officer periodically and make adjustments in strategy or content if deemed necessary. Units should only engage in social media if this new activity can be sustained. Updates need to be made regularly, with at least one or two people designated to keep the pages active and dynamic. If not, then it is best not to launch a site, as allowing a site to stagnate could be detrimental.

Personal Social Media Use

Personal social media profiles have a nexus to the workplace, and the San Joaquin River Conservancy social media accounts. All administrators should be extremely cognizant of this fact, and exercise caution before posting or sharing content on their personal profiles.

Liability and Legal

Every effort should be taken to foresee the creation of liability in content that is posted on behalf of San Joaquin River Conservancy social media accounts. It is also important to consider that posts may be used in future lawsuits, and that material that could compromise the Department's position should not be posted; San Joaquin River Conservancy social media accounts will not be used under any circumstance to discredit allied law enforcement agencies or be used in a way for personal financial or monetary gain. Anyone authorized to speak, blog, tweet or post on behalf of California State Parks-either for his/her unit or the department as a whole – is prohibited from providing political commentary and personal opinions while on duty or otherwise representing the department. San Joaquin River Conservancy, as a department within the executive branch of the state government, does not participate in political activities or provide opinions on



political decisions or matters. San Joaquin River Conservancy does not lobby or campaign on issues, even on those that may affect the department. Such activities and decisions are left to the Governor and the Legislature. State employees may not expend work time, public funds or state resources of any kind on any form of political speech or to assert a personal opinion when they are outside their employment duties. This restriction includes the use of such things as office supplies, state computers, fax machines, printers, copiers, and telephones. It also includes expenditure of work time, public funds or state equipment for unauthorized statements on social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or any similar site.

Terms and Conditions for Social Media Followers

Department and individual park unit social media followers play an important role in creating a diverse community of outdoor advocates. It is critical to remember the role the public has in shaping respectful and relevant online conversation.

Social media disclaimer: Below is a disclaimer/policy for comments that shall appear on all official accounts (linked in bio) for the San Joaquin River Conservancy on all social media platforms:

This account is intended to be a limited forum for communication and discussion between the San Joaquin River Conservancy and members of the public about specific park-related topics or the various recreational and cultural programs that the department manages. Comments should be respectful and courteous for other users and San Joaquin River Conservancy staff to facilitate connecting people with meaningful memories and experiences.

San Joaquin River Conservancy reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments, including those comments that are not topically related or that include profane or obscene language, sexual content, threats, defamatory statements, the encouragement of illegal activity, violations of the legal ownership interests of another party, solicitations of commerce, statements in support or opposition to political candidates or ballot propositions, content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination or information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

Any content posted may be subject to public disclosure upon request. Activity on this account is subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies. As a reminder, San Joaquin River Conservancy does not necessarily agree with or endorse comments that individuals post and reserves the right to determine what is respectful and courteous.



Comments may be removed, at San Joaquin River Conservancy-'s sole discretion, if they contain:

- Graphic, obscene, explicit or hate speech, including disparaging language based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, or age.
- Abusive language or comments that can be interpreted as intending to defame anyone or any organization.
- Personal attacks, insults or threatening language toward individuals, groups, or institutions.
- Private, personal information published without consent.
- Material that infringes on the rights of any third party, including intellectual property, privacy, or publicity rights.
- Statements in support of or opposition to a political campaign, candidate, or ballot measure.
- Unauthorized solicitations or advertisements, including spam such as the same comment posted repeatedly on a profile.
- False information or that which is unrelated to the mission of State Parks.
- Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- Comments and/or hyperlinks to materials totally unrelated to the content of the forum.
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- Photos that fall into any of the above categories.

Participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided. All links posted as comments on San Joaquin River Conservancy posts will be reviewed and may be deleted. Repeated violations of our comment policy may cause the user to be blocked from social media platforms. Additionally, we reserve the right to enforce this acceptable use policy at our discretion. San Joaquin River Conservancy Parks may remove any posted messages that it considers to be in breach of this policy.

Managing Public Comments

Authorized social media leads may delete comments that contain prohibited content as described in this handbook and as posted in terms and conditions on official social media accounts. Content and comments will not be deleted simply because they are critical of the state, officials, or employees; content will be deleted when it violates stated policy. If there are questions on deleting comments, leads can check with the Communications Officer.

Collaboration With Other State Agencies

The power of social media helps San Joaquin River Conservancy to connect with outdoor enthusiasts. The department also recognizes the value of collaborating with other state agencies to achieve shared goals and objectives.

Through social media partnerships with other state agencies, San Joaquin River Conservancy can amplify its message and reach a wider audience. The department regularly collaborates with other state agencies on social media initiatives, including:

- **Cross-promotion:** Partner with other state agencies to cross-promote each other's content on social media. For example, a post may be shared from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife about fishing regulations on San Joaquin River Conservancy's social media channels, and they might share a post about a new trail opening at a park.
- **Joint campaigns:** Collaborate with other state agencies to develop joint social media campaigns that promote shared goals and objectives. For example, collaborating with the California Natural Resources Agency on commemorative months campaigns.
- **Shared content creation:** Work with other state agencies to create content that benefits all involved entities.

San Joaquin River Conservancy believes that communicating social media partnerships with other state agencies is an important part of the department's transparency and commitment to working together. This includes sharing information about joint initiatives, tagging partner agencies in posts and cross-promoting events and programs. Before interacting with social media accounts not sponsored by other state agencies, care should be taken to clearly identify the external source of information and to assess whether the interests align with the mission of San Joaquin River Conservancy. Verify with the Communications Officer that collaboration is appropriate.

Responding to Complaints on Social Media About San Joaquin River Conservancy Employees

Before responding to any complaint posted to a department social media account regarding the actions of an employee, an attempt to verify that the person(s) in question are current employees of the department must be made. If complaints can be handled at the local level, they should be addressed through the proper chain of command, depending on the severity of the complaint and the subject of the complaint (don't involve staff who are the subject to the complaint). If the complaint is of a sensitive matter, for example hate speech, possible criminal activity or inappropriate behavior that could tarnish the department's reputation, it shall be routed through the Executive Officer for review and possible follow-up from Human Resources, the Equal Employment Opportunity Office, or the Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Division, depending on the circumstances.



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Once guidance is received on how to move forward with a response, ask the user to reach out directly via a department email.

Sample draft messages:

- **For non-employee complaints:** “Hello. Thank you for your message and for bringing this matter to the department’s attention. The person in question is not a San Joaquin River Conservancy employee.”
- **For possible messages for social media complaints on personnel:** “Hello. Thank you for your message and for bringing this issue to our attention. The department will be looking into this matter.”
- **For possible message IF staff is caught on camera making inappropriate remarks:** “The San Joaquin River Conservancy has zero tolerance for [insert specific issue; e.g., racism] and discrimination of any kind. The department is committed to ensuring staff embody a spirit of equality and respect for all people. An investigation will be opened to investigate the actions exhibited in the video alleging [insert specific issue; e.g., racism] and will take appropriate action.”