

## A Bit of History: Father of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park

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Who's the Father of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park? Most people, if pressed would say Ralph Dyar who sold Rancho Cuyamaca to the state at a bargain price in 1933. But I'd cast my vote for California Governor Robert Waterman, deeply involved in the Stonewall Mine and Rancho Cuyamaca from 1886 to his death in 1891. Buy why should he be granted the title of Father of CRSP?

Let me explain. In 1846 when Agustin Alvarado claimed the rancho it included 35,501 acres, but Alvarado, who needed money to pay his lawyers, promptly began selling off rancho land, so that by 1869 it had four owners, each with a smaller holding. They in turn sold off parts of their holdings to others. The rancho, once an empire had become many petty kingdoms. Confusion over the rancho's ownership was so great that in 1879 the courts intervened, dividing the rancho into 14 lots lettered AN. Now, Waterman had a great interest in ranching and dairying, owning considerable land in San Bernardino County (remember Waterman Canyon?), so that he decided to buy Cuyamaca land for agricultural purposes, in fact purchasing 6 lots, A-P, a total of 22, 852 acres. He, of course, did not know it, but he had laid the foundation for Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.

After his death, Sather Bank of San Francisco claimed Waterman's land, selling it in 1917 to San Diego's Adolphus Gustavus Gassen, and in 1923 his heirs sold it to the Dyar family. After selling about 2,000 acres they disposed of it to the State of California in 1933, 20, 319 acres. Cuyamaca Rancho State Park was born. But this could never have happened unless Governor Waterman had combined Lots A-P in 1886, caning himself the title Father of the Park.