

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NATURALIST-LED BACKPACKING TOURS OFFERED IN SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS-AREA STATE PARKS DURING SUMMER 2016**  
FRIENDS OF SANTA CRUZ STATE PARKS AND FOUR OTHER PARTNERS ARE COLLABORATING WITH STATE PARKS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO BACKCOUNTRY AREAS

JAN. 25, 2016—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends) today announced five naturalist-led backpacking trips will be offered in four State Parks in the Santa Cruz Mountains during summer 2016.

The Guided Backpacking Adventures Program will travel trails in Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Castle Rock State Park, Butano State Park and Portola Redwoods State Parks. Trips will range from 11.5 to 31.5 miles, with durations of one to three nights in the backcountry.

State Parks naturalists will lead the hikes. Friends, Sempervirens Fund, the Waddell Creek Association, Mountain Parks Foundation and the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation are sponsoring the trips, which began as a State Parks pilot program in 2015. Two trips were offered in Big Basin Redwoods State Park last year.

“Increasing access to State Parks is a priority for us,” said Bonny Hawley, executive director of Friends. “The Guided Backpacking Adventures Program is one way we can share the amazing natural beauty of our State Parks with visitors and help them experience areas of our State Parks they may not normally visit.”

The 2016 backpacking adventures include:

- Skyline to the Sea 40th Anniversary Adventure, Big Basin and Castle Rock State Parks: June 23-26. Cost: \$250.
- A Night Among the Ancients, Portola Redwoods State Park: July 9-10. Cost \$100.
- Waddell to Waterfalls, Big Basin State Park: July 23-24. Cost \$100.
- One Night, Three Waterfalls, Big Basin State Park: Aug. 13-14. Cost \$100.
- Butano to Waddell — the Trail Less Traveled, Butano and Big Basin State Parks, Sept. 16-18.

Registration opens Feb. 1 and is limited to 10 people per trip. Children 13 and older must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian 21 or older; children younger than 13 are not allowed on the trips. Call 831-291-8273, email [backpacking.adventures@parks.ca.gov](mailto:backpacking.adventures@parks.ca.gov) or visit [www.thatsmypark.org/parks-beaches/guided-backpacking-tours](http://www.thatsmypark.org/parks-beaches/guided-backpacking-tours) for more.

## **About Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks**

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks is an entrepreneurial nonprofit sustaining the legacy of our state parks and beaches. Through an innovative partnership with California State Parks, and by leveraging local community support, Friends has provided millions of dollars of funding for educational programs, visitor services and capital projects.

Founded in 1976, Friends is passionately dedicated to the preservation of our spectacular natural environment and rich cultural history. Friends also operates six ParkStores, offering nature- and history-themed merchandise for sale to benefit local parks and beaches. ParkStore locations include Natural Bridges, New Brighton, Santa Cruz Mission, Seacliff, Wilder Ranch and Online. Learn more at [ThatsMyPark.org](http://ThatsMyPark.org) or via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.

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