

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Jennifer Murray, 831-515-2802



FRIENDS OF SANTA CRUZ STATE PARKS DEVELOPS BILINGUAL CURRICULUM FOR CASTRO ADOBE STATE HISTORIC PARK

The Grant-Funded Educational Materials Target Grades 3-4

MARCH 9, 2017—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends) today announced it has developed bilingual curriculum detailing the California Mexican Rancho Period at the Castro Adobe State Historic Park in Watsonville. Friends will provide the materials free to educators via their website.

Funded by a \$3,000 grant from the California State Parks Foundation, the three-lesson English-Spanish curriculum utilizes Common Core standards to meet educational requirements for third and fourth graders. The curriculum was developed with assistance from Pajaro Valley teachers and State Parks interpreters. The materials can be easily integrated with a field trip to the Castro Adobe.

“The Castro Adobe is a special place with a unique history in Santa Cruz County. Friends is dedicated to preserving this place and sharing its dynamic story,” said Bonny Hawley, executive director of Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks. “Providing resources for teachers and students is one way we are helping people learn more about the Castro’s history.”

The curriculum includes background information on the native Ohlone, the Mission Period and focuses on the Mexican Rancho Period. The curriculum tells the story of the Juan Jose Castro family who resided at the San Andrés Castro Adobe in Watsonville during the Mexican Rancho Era from 1821-1850 when California was under Mexican rule. Prior to the Mexican Rancho era, the Spanish established the California missions from 1769-1834 and changed the lives of the Ohlones as they assimilated into the emerging culture of the area.

“These classroom lessons, combined with a class visit to the Castro, bring a slice of life on a California rancho to students right here in the Pajaro Valley,” State Parks Interpreter Joseph Carr Ritchie said.

The curriculum, formatted as PDFs, is available free on the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks’ website at www.thatsmypark.org/visit/resources.

Castro Adobe State Historic Park, which is being restored, offers field trips to third graders studying local history and fourth graders studying the Rancho Period. The state historic park is currently only open for prescheduled tours, monthly open house events and special celebrations. The next open house event is Saturday, March 18, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

In the future, the park also will serve visitors interested in adobe architecture and preservation,

and its adjacent Edna Kimbro Library and Archives — Center for Early California Studies will provide resources for scholars and visitors interested in the study of the cultural resources of early California.

Free school tours of Castro Adobe State Historic Park are offered. The tours are 2.5 hours long. Visit www.thatsmypark.org/visit/field-trips to sign up, or contact Interpreter Joseph Carr Ritchie at Joseph.Ritchie@parks.ca.gov or 831-226-9669.

About Castro Adobe State Historic Park

Located in Larkin Valley, near Watsonville, the two-story Castro Adobe, built between 1848-49, is one of the finest examples of a rancho hacienda in the Monterey Bay area. The property includes the restored *cocina* (kitchen) and the Potter-Church Garden, a unique outdoor space originally created by then-owners Elizabeth and David Potter (1968-72) in consultation with noted landscape architect Thomas Church.

Friends is leading a multi-year restoration effort to preserve and interpret the new State Historic Park in partnership with California State Parks. Work is currently being done to complete seismic stabilization, finalize the preservation of the historic adobe and establish a visitor center. It is Santa Cruz County's second state historic park and the first non-beach state park in the Pajaro Valley. To follow progress on the restoration effort, visit www.thatsmypark.org/castro-blog. The Castro Adobe, located at 184 Old Adobe Road, is open on a limited basis for special events, such as Open House Days. Admission is free; donations are gratefully accepted. Parking is limited; please carpool.

About Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Established in 1976, 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 provides funding for educational programs, visitor services and capital projects. 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 or via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.

###