

2021 PARKS UPDATE ♥ YOUR PARKS!



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PARKS & BEACHES

- Año Nuevo State Park
- Bean Hollow State Beach
- Big Basin Redwoods State Park
- Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park
- Butano State Park
- Castle Rock State Park
- Castro Adobe State Historic Park
- Coast Dairies State Park
- Fall Creek State Park
- Gazos Creek State Beach
- Half Moon Bay State Beach
- Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park
- Lighthouse Field State Beach
- Manresa State Beach
- Manresa Uplands State Beach
- Montara State Beach
- Natural Bridges State Beach
- New Brighton State Beach
- Palm State Beach
- Pebble State Beach
- Pescadero State Beach
- Pigeon Point Light Station
- State Historic Park
- Pomponio State Beach
- Portola Redwoods State Park
- Rancho del Oso
- Rio Del Mar State Beach
- San Gregorio State Beach
- Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park
- Seabright State Beach
- Seacliff State Beach
- Sunset State Beach
- The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park
- Twin Lakes State Beach
- Wilder Ranch State Park



DEAR PARK SUPPORTER,

While our theme for 2020 was “survive and thrive,” 2021 has been a year for “nimble navigation” in the new normal. Sailing carefully through a public health crisis, wildfire recovery, drought and ongoing economic uncertainty, our Friends team has continued to make progress on our mission to ensure our parks and beaches are thriving and available to all.



We've worked closely with our partners at California State Parks to keep the public and our staff safe in the face of ever-changing conditions, while endeavoring to recover from the social and economic impacts of last year's devastating fires and the ongoing public health emergency. Like last year, our work in 2021 required us to quickly switch gears and stay on top of shifting mandates, adapting as we went, and exercising creativity.

We've settled into managing the extended impacts of COVID, which feels less like an episodic crisis and more like a challenging reality that will be with us for some time to come. Together we're reconciling how we can have more of a life in one another's company, while constantly calibrating our activities to minimize risk. We're enjoying a slow return to the familiar, if not necessarily to normal.

Through it all, our beautiful parks and beaches continue to play a central role in our physical and mental health. With increased park access this year came visitation like we've never seen before. We staffed and supported our state parks and kept collaborations going during the busiest summer that anyone can remember. It's been another momentous year and there's a lot to be proud of as Friends marks 45 years as a nonprofit. Despite the many challenges of 2021, our entire team has strived to treat everyone with compassion and civility.

The love and support you show for our parks by visiting (and paying your entry fees), volunteering, donating, becoming a Friends member, and shopping in our ParkStores, continue to help us ensure our parks and beaches are thriving and available to all. Thank you!

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Bonny Hawley".

Bonny Hawley, Executive Director

FIND NEW ADVEN TURE



FINDING NEW ADVENTURE

State parks and beaches were great places to be in 2021. People embraced outdoor spaces and activities as safe, calming and happy options while the COVID-19 pandemic continued to be a concern.

Friends launched the Find New Adventure campaign to encourage visitation during off-peak days and hours, as well as to promote positive mental health and self-care. People were encouraged to check out less-popular parks, beaches and trails, and be good stewards of the environment. The campaign featured messages like “Pick a new path ... literally” and “Wander on a weekday.”

Friends supported the return of in-person events, which now include new practices such as online pre-registration and masking indoors.

The public also regained access to several fire-impacted state parks in 2021:

- a portion of the Rancho Del Oso Unit of Big Basin Redwoods State Park now welcomes weekend visitors
- Butano State Park is open for day-use
- some trails in the Fall Creek Unit of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park are again accessible

Following construction to fix storm damage, the day-use parking lot at New Brighton State Beach reopened at the end of the summer. Friends’ ParkStores also reopened at Seacliff and Natural Bridges state beaches, Wilder Ranch State Park and Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park.





FIRE RECOVERY

More than a year after the devastating CZU Lightning Complex Fire, recovery from this climate disaster is well underway – for both parks and people.

Since the fall of 2020, Friends has been supporting long-term recovery work at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, as well as other state parks that sustained damage, including Año Nuevo State Park, Butano State Park, the Fall Creek section of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, and the Rancho Del Oso and Little Basin sections of Big Basin.

Through our unique position as co-management partners with California State Parks, we established the Friends Fire Fund to initially provide direct, immediate assistance to 29 State Parks and Friends staff who suffered catastrophic losses.

Following the initial emergency response, Friends helped save 15 old-growth redwood trees in Big Basin by funding hazard-removal pruning. Because these damaged trees posed a hazard to the public, pruning prevented these irreplaceable, priceless and unique trees from being cut down. Generous support from the Sempervirens Fund helped make possible this work by Christianson Tree Experts of Boulder Creek.



Friends also supported the publishing and release of *Big Basin Redwood Forest, California's Oldest State Park*. This new book by author Traci Bliss shares the epic, historical saga of Big Basin and the groundbreaking environmental movement that attracted individuals from every walk of life. Proceeds from sales of the book through Friends benefit the Fire Fund.

Big Basin supporters are curious to learn how the park is doing since the fire. Since in-person park tours remain unsafe, Friends collaborated with State Parks to create an award-winning short film and a 3D virtual tour, providing an immersive experience that helped mark the one-year anniversary of the fire. Friends is also supporting State Park's efforts to engage stakeholders and the public in an effort to reimagine the future of Big Basin through virtual events, memory sharing and an online survey. Visit reimaginingbigbasin.org to learn more.

We are deeply moved that people from around the globe responded with incredible generosity to address the devastation of our beloved state parks and those who work in them. We're working hard to support the next phases of fire recovery.

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The arrival of 2021 marked an exciting, yet at times slow, return to the familiar.

Adapting to changes and developing new opportunities, Friends increased work to support local state parks and beaches with many successes:

- Employed 102 field staff to support park operations.
- Funded 35 State Park Interpreters who provided educational programs at local parks and beaches.
- Launched the Beach Wheelchairs program, doubling the number of chairs at local beaches.
- Provided 16 Friends program staff who supported education, equity and inclusion, conservation, facilities improvements, historic preservation and cultural events.
- Funded 12 State Park positions including a historian, maintenance aides, park aides, and road and trails staff.
- Embraced the busiest summer at parks and beaches that anyone can remember, while maintaining partnerships and adapting to the variable COVID landscape.
- Partnered with Bookshop Santa Cruz to host a virtual book talk with Helen McDonald, author of *Vesper Flights*, addressing the importance of science and literature in nature conservancy.
- Organized the 14th Annual Feed-the-Force event to support State Parks and other allied agencies that protect our local State Parks and Beaches on the 4th of July.
- Raised awareness of how the community can help preserve the monarch population at Natural Bridges and Lighthouse Field, working in partnership with California State Parks and others.

Great progress continued throughout 2021 at Castro Adobe State Historic Park:

- Installed the fire suppression system and the fire monitoring and burglary alarms.
- Continued development of an engaging, interactive house museum.
- Researched exhibit and historic images.
- Obtained approval for ADA accessible furnishings.
- Conserved and restored painted baseboard and chair rail.
- Completed interior finishes for windows, doors, and flooring.

- Connected community members to jobs with California State Parks and Friends through in-person job fairs held in partnership with Access2Employment and the Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce.
- Co-hosted three COVID-safe open house events at the Castro Adobe, offering tours to nearly 260 visitors.
- Collaborated with Kitayama Brothers' KB Farms to host the first ever drive-through Gerbera-N-Go Festival, which raised funds to benefit Friends, as well as the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau's agricultural worker vaccination program.
- Planned roof replacement.
- Completed an emergency response plan.
- Organized the Kimbro Archives and initiated the creation of a governing board.





Friends Tribute Table Program



In 2021 family and friends honored Annie & David, Tony Barnett, Brian & Kati Chorley-Ketz, Kay & Claude Earls, The FitzGerald Family, Uwe Kerkhoff & Peggy Doyle, James Gregory Moore, The Porter-Cooley Family, Bruce Richmond, Susan Sundback, and the honored the memories of Madeleine Crawford, Barbara Draper & Bonnie Lewis, Alan Fisher, Alyne Fisher, Kathy & Gary Gaines, Lynette Harisson, Roberta Haver, Suzanne Kaiser, Diane S Kaye, Ken Kettler, Hanna Kirby, Amir Makleff, Mickenzie "Mick" Tyler Martin, Barbara McCowan, Christine Morgan, Thomas Morgan Sr., Spencer O, Forrest Pascal-List, Arunay Pruthi, Tomi & Bob Roninger, Edna Strodder, Chris Thollog, June Thomas, Jack, Doris & Jude Waage, and Karen & Chet JR White.

YOUR SUPPORT MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN 2021

- Kids2Parks, the innovative park equity program bringing students from Title 1 schools on state park field trips was conducted via 91 virtual field trips for 2,238 children during the 2020/21 school year.
- The CARS Donate Your Vehicle Program raised \$4,523 for local state parks from the sale of 6 vehicles generously donated by community members.
- The Friends Tribute Tables program grew substantially with 45 picnic tables dedicated to friends and loved ones placed in Santa Cruz County and coastal San Mateo County state parks and beaches.
- Friends earned the 2021 Guidestar Platinum Seal of Transparency.
- The Seacliff, Natural Bridges, Wilder Ranch and Santa Cruz Mission ParkStores all reopened to the public, with Covid-19 precautions in place to provide a safe shopping experience. The stores, including the ParkStore Online, were stocked with science and nature-themed merchandise celebrating the natural and cultural wonders of our State Parks, as well as items featuring Michael Schwab's iconic That's My Park images, which celebrated their 15th anniversary this year!

Your ongoing support is critical to our success – now more than ever before. To give today, please visit us online at ThatsMyPark.org/donate, scan the QR code below or mail to 1543 Pacific Ave., Suite 206, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. As always, all donated funds stay local and are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Tax ID# 51-0183410.





Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks is a vital partner with California State Parks, creatively working to ensure our cherished local parks and beaches are thriving and available to all.



ThatsMyPark.org



Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

1543 Pacific Avenue, Suite 206
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 429-1840

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