

PARKS UPDATE ❤️ YOUR PARKS!



Friends of Santa Cruz
State Parks
That'sMyPark.org
f i d i



Parks & Beaches Supported

- 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 LOVER,

Thank you for supporting our 34 beautiful state parks and beaches across Santa Cruz and coastal San Mateo counties!

Despite the daunting challenges our community has suffered over the past four years from fire, COVID, and severe weather, the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks and State Parks team have worked with our community to make tremendous progress for our beloved parks in 2024.

Seacliff & New Brighton – The historic storms of 2023 caused catastrophic damage to our coastal parks, but the recovery process provides an opportunity to be visionary and strategic about how to plan for environmental sustainability in the era of climate change and ensure access. The public planning process is now underway. Please join us at SeacliffResilience.org.

Big Basin – Public access to our oldest state park continues to expand as it recovers from the CZU Fire, with the inaugural summer parking shuttle, reopening of the Butano Trail Camp, and increasing use of the Rancho del Oso campground on the ocean side of the park.

Wilder Ranch – A devastating flash flood this past winter destroyed the park visitor center. Planning for the rebuild is just beginning.

Castro Adobe – On this 35th anniversary of the Loma Prieta Earthquake which nearly destroyed the Castro Adobe, we celebrated the completion of museum quality-exhibits to share the cultural history of the adobe through a theme called “If These Walls Could Talk.” Thanks to our community, the adobe has been repaired, restored, furnished, interpreted and is open for the public to enjoy!

Kids2Parks – Our equity park field trip program Kids2Parks is starting its 10th year and is poised to serve more students than ever before thanks to our generous community supporters.

The love and support you show for our parks by visiting and paying your entrance fees, volunteering, donating, becoming a Friends member and shopping in our ParkStores, helps us ensure our parks and beaches are thriving and available to all.

See you in the parks!



Bonny Hawley, Executive Director
Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks





SEACLIFF RESILIENCE & RECOVERY

The coastline is always changing – now possibly faster than ever. The historic storms in early 2023 caused catastrophic damage to our coastal parks, with devastating impacts to core elements of Seacliff and New Brighton State Beaches and the visitor experience. Friends quickly stepped in to create the Seacliff Recovery Fund to support State Parks. Thanks to generous donors we have received support from locals and people from as far away as Maine, Texas, and Oklahoma. Watch the video about Seacliff created for Friends, California State Parks, and Parks California by Luma Creative and Miller Maxfield, Inc.



Watch the video



The first Seacliff Community Workshop was held on September 26, 2024, with over 300 people attending.

RECOVERY AT BIG BASIN AND WILDER RANCH



Park access was increased for the summer with the addition of a free pilot shuttle program, a new interim parking area, and weekend Santa Cruz METRO bus service to the park. Visitation continues to grow.



We welcomed the 100,000th visitor at Big Basin Redwoods State Park since reopening on July 22, 2022. Friends collaborated with the Boulder Creek Business Association and Mountain Parks Foundation to create a gift basket for the winner. Contributing businesses included River Dogs, Boulder Creek Pizza & Pub, Air & Fire A Mystical Bazaar and Scopazzi's.



Camping at Rancho del Oso, the coastal side of Big Basin, opened last year and continues to provide a popular camping opportunity.



Four inches of rain fell overnight on January 21, causing Wilder Creek to catastrophically overflow its banks, inundating the Visitor Center and ParkStore, the historic Cow Barn and washing away ranch fencing. The Meder House now hosts a mini Visitor Center and ParkStore until the main Visitor Center is rebuilt. Friends has established the Wilder Ranch Recovery Fund to support these efforts. Thank you, generous donors!



CASTRO ADOBE



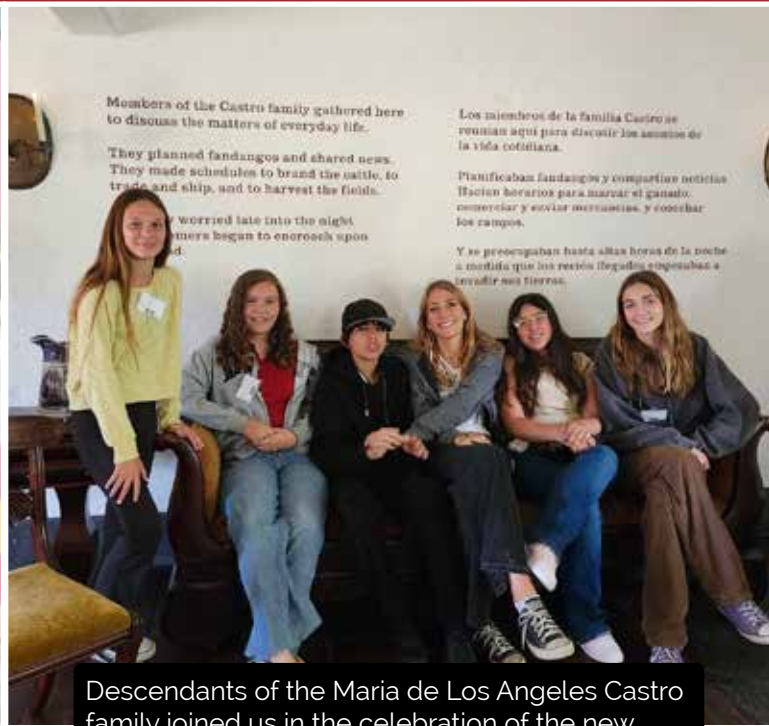
Interpretive exhibits were installed at Castro Adobe State Historic Park in early 2024. This work is the culmination of years of planning and design to create vibrant, touchable exhibits detailing everyday life in a Mexican era Rancho, highlighting the Castro family experience. The Sibbett Group designed the exhibit plans and Gizmo Art Production brought the story and vision to life. Thank you Monterey Peninsula Foundation and our many generous supporters for making this dream come true!



Other exhibit work included the development of a bilingual video for the Fandango room by Lucid Sound and Picture and Miller Maxfield, Inc. featuring dancers from Alta California Dance Company and music by Los Arribeños de San Francisco to show visitors how the traditional dances looked and sounded.



Friends celebrated completion of the interpretation exhibits over three special "Thank You Open House" events this year.



Descendants of the Maria de Los Angeles Castro family joined us in the celebration of the new exhibits. From left to right: Eden Davis, Audia Vierra, Angel Garcia, Alaina Street, Talula Garcia and Evelyn Street.

EQUITY & ACCESS



Friends is kicking off the 10th year of Kids2Parks, a field trip equity program which provides free bus transportation for State Parks field trips serving low-income families in Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. This past school year 2,982 students attended 60 in-person field trips and 1,594 attended 47 virtual field trips. To date more than 16,000 students have enjoyed Kids2Parks field trips. Thank you Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Mountain Parks Foundation, Santa Cruz County Bank, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz Elks Club, Sigma Alpha of Omega Nu Santa Cruz, and many individual donors!



Friends supported the campaign to restore funding for the California State Library Parks Pass. The initiative was successful. Library patrons can check out a pass for the allotted number of days allowed by their library.



Friends and Patagonia Outlet Santa Cruz co-hosted a LGBTQ+ hike at Wilder Ranch.

PUBLIC OUTREACH



Watsonville
Strawberry Festival



Patagonia Outlet Santa Cruz

Welcome Back
Monarchs Day



Ocean Fest



9/11 Stair Climb



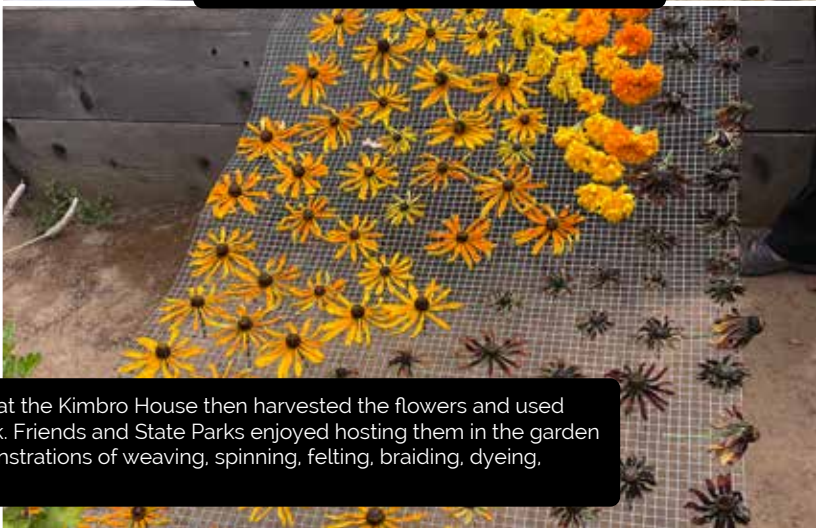
Volunteer workdays
at the Kimbro and Castro



North Coast Rail Trail Groundbreaking



The Santa Cruz Textile Arts Guild grew plants in Joe's Garden at the Kimbro House then harvested the flowers and used them to naturally dye a variety of fibers including wool and silk. Friends and State Parks enjoyed hosting them in the garden and at Castro Open House events where they provided demonstrations of weaving, spinning, felting, braiding, dyeing, basket making and stitching.



PARK SUPPORT SUCCESSES



Friends employed over 100 field staff and 13 program staff. Friends also funded State Parks staff including, 19 facilities development staff and 36 interpretive staff.



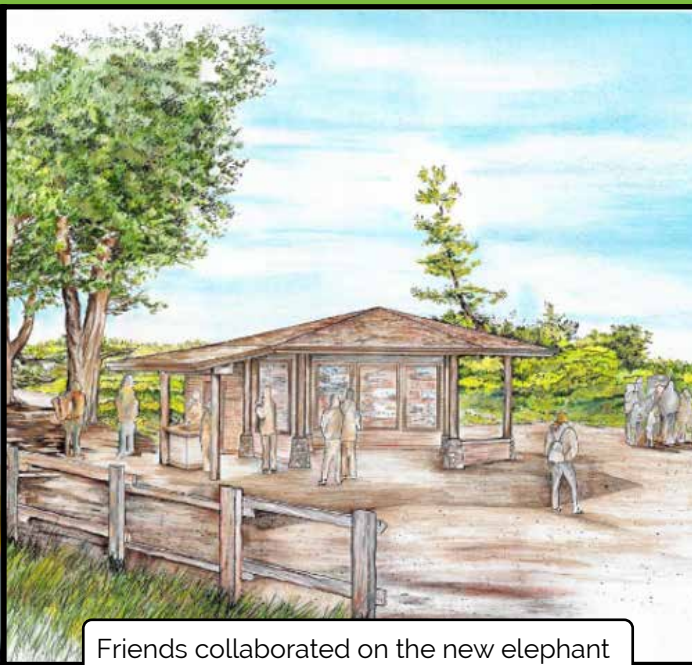
Friends was awarded "Excellence in Partnership & Commitment to Safety" by TheZenith, a Workers' Compensation Company, for our proactive approach to worker safety.



The trail camp at Butano State Park reopened, four years after it was damaged by the devastating CZU Fire. Reservations are available at ThatsMyPark.org/Visit/Trail-Camps.



In addition to our friendly visitor service staff, Automatic Pay Machines have been installed at several local state parks and beaches, giving visitors another option to pay for parking to help Friends support our parks.



Friends collaborated on the new elephant seal tour staging area project. It will be completed just in time for this year's season. Thanks to Coastside State Parks Association for funding this project!



Restoration of the iconic Pigeon Point Lighthouse is underway, and Friends is working with Parks on the historic furnishings plan.



In 2024, family and friends honored Marc & Rachel Druzin and Diane Evans, and honored the memories of Sarah Barnett, Richard (Ric) Beach, Mickey Beebe, Gabrielle "Gabi" Jensen Benz, Christopher William Farnisky, Grant & Ginny Fletcher, Liz Friedman, Jorel Jassy, Wendy Oldfield Kahn, Atahan Kiliccote, Brad Macdonald, Denny & Cindy McCarthy, Milton Meyer, Kasey Louis Miller, Gloria Nieto, Jonathan "Jon" Oakes, Anthony Ornellas, Carol Ortega, Forrest Pascal-List, Michele McCawley Rimando, Glen Schaller, Chuck Tamagni, Sharon Louise Timoner, Jesse Velazquez, Kai Otto Wesener, Ernie Winsor, and Tonja & David Worthy.



ThatsMyPark.org/tribute-tables

YOUR SUPPORT MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN 2024

Friends thanks the following great community supporters who have donated their time, money and special talents in 2024:

- Kitayama Brothers KB Farms donated office supplies
- SC41 Furniture hosted a fundraiser
- Heart Sangha kindly donated to Friends during their annual day of mindfulness
- Artist Ginger Dykaar, donated a portion of her sales from Open Studios to Friends this year
- Professional Firefighters of Santa Cruz County Local 3535 hosted a 9/11 memorial event and donated a portion of proceeds

Become a member of Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Member support enables us to preserve state park lands, protect historic and cultural treasures, and support dynamic programs that inspire and build connections between people and nature.

ThatsMyPark.org/Membership



Friends operates ParkStores at Seacliff, Natural Bridges, Wilder Ranch, New Brighton and Santa Cruz Mission as well as the always-open ParkStore Online: ThatsMyPark.org/collections.

ThatsMyPark.org



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.

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

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To give today, visit us online at ThatsMyPark.org/donate, scan the QR code, mail to our return address, or call 831-429-1840. All donated funds stay local and are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Tax ID# 51-0183410.

