

BIG BASIN REDWOODS STATE PARK GENERAL PLAN

Preliminary Resources Inventory

Interpretive Resources

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Introduction

Interpretation can enhance the park visitor's experience. By providing enjoyable experiences that communicate the story of Big Basin Redwoods State Park's wealth of cultural and natural resources visitors can better understand their relationship to the environment. This promotes stewardship for the preservation of the resources within the park. This interpretive inventory provides an overview of the interpretive support present in the park and surrounding region. It can be used to formulate interpretive goals and guidelines for Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

Present Level of Interpretation

Big Basin Redwoods State Park in the Santa Cruz Mountains is rich in cultural and natural resources. As the oldest park in the State Park system, it had one of the first interpretive programs. The park is similar to other state parks with redwood forest resources but has a unique story to tell. The many fascinating areas for interpretive consideration include the ecosystems of the Santa Cruz Mountains, Waddell Creek Watershed, the historic headquarters, Rancho Del Oso area, 80 miles of interpretive trails, a possible State Park Museum, a nature lodge, interpretive environmental living program opportunities, and other environmental and historic interpretive programs. The park's two distinct areas provide a challenge to integrate the goals of Big Basin/Headquarters and the Waddell Creek/Rancho del Oso areas of the park. Presently no overall and integrated interpretive planning exists for the park.

Park staff provides successful and well-attended campfire and children's programs, and nature walks. They are aware of the need to stay dynamic to reach the people visiting the park. An array of programs ranging from historical walks, dog walks, night hikes, and Spanish walks are currently offered. Noticing a new pattern in park visitation, park staff developed a new interpretive program to serve the increase of camping families with young children. This new interpretive program for two to six year old children with their parents is in addition to the junior ranger program for older children. They are striving to reach non-traditional park visitors.

It is difficult to determine if the current level of interpretation is adequate, since the visitor survey for interpretive needs at Big Basin Redwoods State Park data is not currently available. It will be made available once the DPR's Office of Management Information and Performance Analysis finishes tabulating the results of several years of visitor surveys.

Summary of Interpretation:

Sempervirens Room

Audience: visitors looking for orientation to the park on arrival
Topics: information, recreation orientation, and regulations
Media: live interpretation; 3-D topographic map; video programs that offer an overview of the park's natural, historical and recreational aspects; publications; modest use of graphics and exhibits; historic furnishings and building help visitors connect with historic leisure time camp experience of the 1940s and 1950s.

Nature Lodge

Audience: day user visitors and campers

Topics: the coast redwood; evolution of the topography and microclimates of Big Basin; ecology of the redwood forest, mixed evergreen forest and chaparral; changing human perceptions and uses of the Big Basin, and Leonard Penhale's historical display of specimens.

Media: interactive exhibits, object displays, graphics, text, 3-D map, audio, natural history collections, docent demonstrations and tours

Campfire Center

Audience: day use visitors and campers interested in interpretive programs such as Junior Rangers, Big Basin Nature Club, campfires, other special events and evening entertainment

Topics: all park-related cultural, natural and recreational subjects

Media: live interpretation, audio-visual programs

Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center

Audience: school groups and day-user visitors

Topics: local observable and tangible natural and cultural subjects, e.g. coastal and marsh ecology, resources used by the Ohlone, ocean related topics

Media: primarily docent-led outdoor exploration of park resources with some indoor preparation and follow-up, collections, audio-visuals

Rancho del Oso Day-Use Ranger Station

Audience: day hikers entering or leaving the park on the "Skyline to the Sea" trail, equestrian access, trail camp users

Topics: information, recreation orientation, regulations and their reasons, local natural and cultural history, e.g. coastal and marsh ecology, the Ohlone, Portola expedition, local ranching

Media: live interpretation, publications, exhibits

Outdoor Live Interpretation (non site-specific)

Audience: day-users and campers

Topics: observable and tangible natural, cultural and recreational park resources

Media: rangers, interpreters or docents interpreting actual park resources through demonstrations, guided hikes, roving interpretation, living history programs, junior ranger programs, Big Basin Nature Club

Outdoor Self-guiding interpretation (various sites)

Audience: day-users and campers

Topics: observable park natural, cultural and recreational resources

Media: self-guiding trails including the Redwood Loop Trail, outdoor interpretive panels and displays such as the Redwood Slab

Interpretive Periods

An interpretive period defines the most significant eras or time spans at a park. These periods should be based on Big Basin Redwoods State Park's significant cultural and natural resources. The following five historical periods describe the flow of history of the Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

Prehistoric period occurred before Europeans began to occupy the Big Basin region in the 1800s. The Native American Ohlone people who lived in this region were mainly coastal people. The coastal region of Waddell Beach was the most heavily populated, but people moved to seasonal camps and utilized the mountain areas at different times of the year.

Early European Settlement to the First State Park period occurred from 1850-1902. The Gold Rush in California dramatically increased the need for lumber. The Santa Cruz Mountains became known for its vast timber resources. Two important people associated with this area during this period were Tom Maddock, one of the first settlers in Big Basin, and William Waddell, lumber mill operator at Rancho del Oso. Since the 1870s, the giant trees have attracted people to visit the redwood groves near Boulder Creek.

Impressed by the old growth redwood forest and concerned over their demise, photographer Andrew P. Hill cofounded the Sempervirens Club, an organization established to preserve the redwood groves of the Big Basin area. Because of the Sempervirens Club's perseverance and support from the community, they convinced the state legislature to pass a bill in 1901, to purchase 2500 acres of land in Big Basin. After much political negotiating, the first 3800 acres were officially acquired for \$250,000 in 1902, from the Big Basin Lumber Company. The governor established the Redwood Park Commission and J.H.B. Pilkington was appointed the first warden of the California Redwood Park.

Early years at Big Basin period occurred from 1902-1933. The first few years at Big Basin were tumultuous. In 1904, the park suffered a destructive forest fire, and in the years to follow endured bad park management, a scandal by the Park's first wardens, and outcries from the public over the continued destruction of the park's natural resources. In 1904, the governor abolished the Redwood Park Commission and handed the management of the park over to the state forestry until 1910. Despite the park's problems, Big Basin was a very popular tourist destination and resort. By the late 1920s, Big Basin had the first concession in State Parks with the Big Basin Lodge, which included a hotel and cabins for rent. The park also boasted a governor's camp, general store, post office, photography studio, lunch counter, campfire programs that ended in dancing, tennis courts, and a lake, besides the usual hiking, picnicking, and camping. By 1928, the governor established the State Park System. Andrew P. Hill played an integral role in the early management at Big Basin as well as important contributions as an artist and photographer. After Hill's death in 1921, his assistant F.R. (Roy) Fulmer took over A.P. Hill's position as photographer and created many well-known postcards and booklets of the time.

The Depression Years & Wartime at Big Basin period occurred from 1933-1952. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed buildings at Big Basin such as the Nature Lodge Building, the Park Headquarters Building, the current Campfire Center, trails and other park infrastructure. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) contributed paintings and drawings

for exhibits in the Nature Lodge, which opened in 1950. Harriet "Petey" Weaver was hired at Big Basin as the first female ranger in the California State Parks system, and she is noted for her interpretive programs, drawings and stories. In 1937, the first recreation leaders were hired and Don Meadows became the first hired naturalist. Following World War II, there was a large increase in tourism at the park. Leonard Penhale created new interpretive exhibits using his taxidermy skills.

The Modern period from 1953 to present found more emphasis placed on the interpretation of redwood ecology and the preservation of cultural and natural resources at the park. Land continued to be acquired and added to the park, often with the financial contributions of the Sempervirens Fund and Save-the-Redwoods-League. Rancho del Oso (RDO) and Waddell Beach were annexed and state wilderness and natural preserves at RDO were established. A "Back to nature" movement saw the deconstruction of the lodge, removal of many other buildings, ceased the deer feeding, and celebrated the first discovery of a marbled murrelet nest. The Skyline to the Sea trail was opened, trail camps were built and several other campgrounds were developed and changed.

Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes provide clear messages allowing park visitors to understand the significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources of a park. Thematic interpretation brings a personal understanding and point of view for the resources. Big Basin Redwoods State Park needs a unifying theme or overall theme. A unifying theme provides a conceptual focus and the general approach for the interpretive offerings at the Park. It sets the overall interpretive tone and direction, and implies the desired result interpretation should have on visitors' attitudes and perspectives. Primary themes define the most essential ideas, and secondary themes provide more detailed perspectives on one or more of the primary themes. The following is a collection of various proposed primary and secondary themes and theme topics for Big Basin Redwoods State Park. These can be used to help develop a unit-wide thematic interpretation.

From "Big Basin Redwoods State Park Interpretive Prospectus April 1975":

Primary Themes:

1. The total environment and ecology of the watershed.
 - a. The watershed concept and its relationship to the human environment.
 - b. Various plant communities in the park.
 - c. Animal life of the park and its association with various plant communities.
2. The origin of the redwood conservation movement and the beginnings of the State Park System.

Secondary Themes:

1. Pioneer life and associated early logging activities.

From Draft "Scope of Collection Statement" December 2000:

Proposed Interpretive Themes:

1. Native American involvement with the area of Big Basin, RDO, and Waddell Beach.

2. Unique recreational activities at Big Basin: Resort-style recreation and community life at Big Basin indicative of the early years at the park such as tennis, dances, swimming, the lodge and cabins, and specialized tours.
3. CCC & WPA: Federal involvement with Big Basin.
4. Private organizations' involvement with Big Basin: The Sempervirens Club and Fund, Save-the-Redwoods-League, Mountain Parks Foundation, Waddell Creek Natural History Association, etc.
5. Park development over time: development & modification of campgrounds, roads, trails, structures, water, and septic systems.
6. Individuals who have influenced Big Basin development: Andrew P. Hill, Leonard Penhale, Don Meadows, Roy Fulmer, Warden Dool, Petey Weaver, concessionaires, volunteers, and park staff.
7. Local Connections with Big Basin: Trail crews and community involvement.

Centennial Themes approved 2001 by Centennial Committee (made up of State Park Staff, Volunteers, and Mountain Parks Foundation Board Members)

Purpose: To honor those who have protected Big Basin over the last one hundred years and to inspire people to protect our cultural and natural heritage.

Topic: 100 years of Big Basin History and the need for ongoing preservation efforts.

Theme: Visionaries, inspired by the majesty of the redwood forest, launched a tradition of setting lands aside for the public to enjoy. Since then visitors, workers, and new visionaries have continued to develop relationships with Big Basin and protect its resources. Our ongoing participation in these stewardship roles will be critical in meeting changing needs and ensuring the park's preservation for future generations.

Main Points:

1. Visionaries step in at critical moments in time to protect Big Basin through their dreams and dedication.
2. Visitors find peace, rejuvenation, and community in Big Basin, though the meaning of recreation has evolved over time. By maintaining their relationship with the park, visitors protect it.
3. Through a variety of roles, park staff and volunteers maintain Big Basin on a daily basis and help to shape its character.
4. As our understanding of ecology increases, our preservation efforts evolve over time.
5. Why preserve Big Basin? The majesty and magic of the redwoods awes and inspires us. The park provides a sanctuary of peacefulness in a busy world.

Secondary Points:

1. Women played important roles in Big Basin's history as visionaries, visitors, and workers.

2. The redwood forest moves us to create. In turn, artistic interpretations raise awareness and inspire us to pursue our own connection with nature and preservation efforts.

Themes as Proposed by District and Park Staff 2001:

Primary Themes:

1. Redwood Ecology (perhaps contrasting old-growth to historically logged forests)
2. Origin of the redwood conservation movement and its impact on the birth of the state park system.

Secondary themes:

1. Resort life / Early campers / changing philosophies in park development and uses. (This is a natural progression from the story of the Sempervirens Club and the movement to set aside a public park. It might be considered as a primary theme combined with the Establishment story.)
2. The watershed as an ecologically significant feature
3. Diverse natural communities of Big Basin (this could be a sub theme of the watershed topic)
4. Pioneer life (This might be melded into a general “historical uses” context. There was minimal Native American activity within Big Basin, more in the area of Rancho Del Oso. There was a pioneer family living near the headquarters of Big Basin. There are also good pioneer stories from RDO.)
5. Historical representation of both the diversity and abundance of animal life as demonstrated by the Penhale exhibit

Interpretive Staffing

For the Headquarters area Big Basin Redwoods State Park’s Ranger staff supervises three interpretive positions. One State Park Interpreter I position working as a permanent intermittent for 1,500 hours per year. Two Park Interpretive Specialists (PIS) work during the summer. Each PIS works about 25 hours per week.

At the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center an Interpretive Specialist works half time under the lead of the District Interpretive Specialist.

Interpretive Facilities

The **Sempervirens Room** at the Park Headquarters building serves as a park orientation and information center, and meeting room for off-season interpretive programs. The Mountain Park's Foundation operates a bookstore in this room, selling books and other materials related to the Park's resources. Bookstore sales staff also answers a lot of questions from park visitors. A popular interactive computer kiosk provides general information about the park and detailed information on several trails. The Sempervirens Room displays exhibits on Big Basin's cultural history. Topics interpreted include:

- Historic recreational use of the park
- Early day transportation to the park
- History of the CCCs at Big Basin
- Early conservation efforts of the Sempervirens Club
- The founding of the park
- Preserving a watershed
- Life of the pioneers in pre-park days

The **Nature Lodge** received new exhibits in 1989 interpreting the park's natural resources. The DPR Office of Interpretive Services (OIS) developed and installed this exhibit. OIS only completed about two thirds of the planned exhibits because of budget overruns. The plan included two or three more components for this facility. Since then district staff, volunteers, and a local exhibit designer designed and installed an additional exhibit comparing and contrasting the three species of redwoods. The popular back room of the Nature Lodge has been used to display many of the original mounted natural history specimens from an older exhibit in the Nature Lodge. It preserves an important historical exhibit style. Leonard Penhale, a park naturalist prepared most of these bird and animal specimens, in the 1940s or 50s. This facility is sometimes staffed by volunteers on weekends, but on weekdays is left open as an unstaffed facility.

The **Redwood Loop** is a self-guided trail within easy walking distance from Park Headquarters. Docents lead guided walks on the trail on the weekend. This redwood loop walk goes through some of the most impressive redwood groves found anywhere. A self-guided brochure for this loop is sold at the bookstore, Headquarters, and head of the loop trail. It is currently being updated. The guide is also available on loan in several languages including the following: Japanese, German, Spanish, Dutch, and French. Approximately the following visitors used the self-guided brochure on the loop trail: 25,000 visitors in fiscal year 1998/1999; 29,303 visitors in fiscal year 1999/2000; and 15,926 visitors in fiscal year 2000/2001.

The **Campfire Center** was built during the parks early years. The CCC reconfigured and rebuilt it in the 1930s. Restoration/rehabilitation of the campfire center is planned in the next few years.

Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center with the help of the Waddell Creek Association has presented the natural and cultural history of this coastal end of the park. There is also a small bookstore, a meeting space, and a small office for the seasonal Park Interpretive Specialist. A comprehensive interpretive plan has not been completed for the Center. The RDO bunkhouse connected to the Center is not being used at this time.

Rancho del Oso Self-Guided Nature Trail is within easy walking distance of the Nature and History Center. Visitors can learn much about the area's natural history by walking this loop trail and reading a booklet that is keyed to numbered posts along the trail.

Rancho del Oso Ranger Station provides the entryway for most visitors coming from the coast. This is a popular day use-hiking route. In addition, hikers on the Skyline to the Sea Trail pass the Ranger Station upon completing their hike. Volunteers staff a bookstore on weekends and dispense park information.

Interpretive Programs

In the **Headquarters** area the campfire programs are presented most weekend evenings during the camping season, and some weekday evenings. Live interpretation and slide programs interpret the parks cultural and natural history. In fiscal year 1998/1999, eighty programs were presented to 7,400 participants; fiscal year 1999/2000, seventy-five programs were presented to 6,858 participants; and fiscal year 2000/2001, sixty-four programs were presented to 6,350 participants. They present four to six campfire programs per week.

Interpreters and docents lead numerous hikes that most often begin at the Park Headquarters building. During the busy camping months programs are offered weekdays as well as weekends. During fiscal year 1998/1999, 4,300 people participated in 200 guided hikes and tours; fiscal year 1999/2000, 4,033 participants in 171 hikes; fiscal year 2000/2001, 5,002 participants in 273 hikes.

Junior Ranger programs are offered to campers during the summer camping season. The 57 programs presented in fiscal year 1998/1999 by the seasonal Park Interpretive Specialists attracted about 700 children. In 1999/2000, 70 programs attracted 833; the number of participants was not available for the 2000/2001 fiscal year.

In fiscal year 1998/1999 ranger and interpretive staff conducted 20 off-site school programs with 730 students participating. School outreach programs have not been done for the past two years due to lack of park staff. The Centennial curriculum plans involve an off-site outreach program. Seasonal staff and volunteers conducted seven on-site programs in 1999/2000 with 294 students participating. In 2000/2001 226 students participated in seven on-site programs.

The interpretive special event of Founder's Day commemorates the 1902 founding of Big Basin. The interpretive staff coordinates this September event. The park also conducts an evening interpretive event in the Halloween season, "The Missing Arm of William Waddell", combining history and imagination in the nighttime forest.

At the **Rancho del Oso** area the interpretive staff, docents, and outside guests present weekend nature walks. These programs normally meet at the Nature and History Center and explore a nearby natural area. Currently about 60-80 children per month attend school group programs at Rancho del Oso. Occasional evening natural history programs are offered at the Nature and History Center as well as receptions to introduce new art or photo exhibits showing at the Center. A special event, "Newt Night", has been a very popular evening event occurring in mid-February for the past several years. In September a Grizzly Bear Festival is planned for the grand opening of the new grizzly bear display.

Interpretive Associations

The **Mountain Parks Foundation** is a 501(c)-(3) organization that has been assisting California State Parks since 1973. The Foundation helps fund educational and interpretive activities that enrich the experience of park visitors to Big Basin and Henry Cowell Redwoods State Parks. Some of these activities include nature and cultural history special events, children's summer day camps, exhibits in nature centers, park maps, and brochure and book publications. Proceeds from Mountain Parks Foundation stores at Henry Cowell and Big Basin Park Headquarters assist visitors in learning more about the resources in these state parks.

The Foundation currently supports several projects that will enrich the experience of the 1.5 million annual visitors to Big Basin and Henry Cowell Redwoods State Parks. The rehabilitation of the Henry Cowell Visitors' Center will provide exhibits of the many ecosystems and provide interactive learning experiences for the thousands of students and families who visit the park annually. The project to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Big Basin Redwoods State Park includes numerous activities including a book and exhibit of photographs titled "The Grand Vision, A Journey Through Big Basin Redwoods State Park". They also plan to develop a School Outreach Program on redwood ecology and the history of Big Basin, and oral histories produced on CD-ROM with accompanying written histories and website links. A two-day celebration at Big Basin Redwoods State Park in September 2002 is planned along with a Centennial quilt, district-wide lecture series, campfire programs and exhibits. From June eighth to September fifteenth (100 days) there will be 100 days of activities to celebrate 100 years of park operations.

The **Waddell Creek Association** is a smaller but very active cooperating association. Their all-volunteer efforts take place at the Rancho del Oso (RDO) end of the park. They have taken on a large role at RDO with involvement in many areas. They support the operation of the Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center and a small but growing gift shop. They generate funds mainly through donations from their loyal membership. They use these financial resources toward improving maintenance, repairs and operations at RDO, including paying for construction of a bridge on the marsh trail connection from the Center to the Ranger Station.. They hold their monthly board meetings in the Center, where they have recently added a grizzly bear exhibit.

Interpretive Concessions

There are no interpretive concessions at Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

Interpretive Collection

The museum collections at Big Basin Redwoods State Park consist of a variety of objects related to the park's history. A significant portion of the collection is archival documents such as historic photographs and postcards of the park. These objects document the early years at Big Basin and show buildings, activities, people, and the natural resources of the park. A.P. Hill and F.R. Fulmer produced many of the postcards and photographs in the first thirty years of the park's existence. The park was fortunate to receive glass plate negatives made by A.P. Hill that were later donated by John Fulmer. There are also many photographs and postcards of the park that are from unknown sources. Park staff and volunteers have collected park brochures, memorabilia, and programs throughout the years. Much of the photographic and WPA art collections are currently stored at Photographic Archives and the State Museum Resource Center in West Sacramento, and will be used at the park when exhibits are developed.

Mounted natural history specimens make up another large portion of the museum collection. Some natural history specimens date back to 1948, when the first exhibits were installed in the Nature Lodge. Leonard Penhale, naturalist and taxidermist on staff, prepared most of the natural history specimens from this era. Other specimens were added when needed, and in 1989-90, when the exhibits at the Nature Lodge were revised.

Historic objects in the collection include tools, timber-industry equipment, bottles, plates, objects from archaeological sites, and items used at Big Basin that were found or donated from several sources. These objects are stored at the park in designated storage areas and at the State Museum Resource Center.

There are some Native American materials such as mortars, pestles, shell and bone fragments, and a few baskets. Some of these materials are from archaeological sites within the park, some have been donated, and others are from unknown sources. Most of these objects are stored at the State Museum Resource Center.

Recently, the department acquired a few of Harriet "Petey" Weaver's personal items relating to Big Basin. These are her uniform, hat, badge, original drawings, photographs, correspondence, books, and other personal objects that were transferred from another unit. These are stored in the Santa Cruz District Museum Collections Office. If a State Park Museum is built, the park plans to develop an exhibit about Petey Weaver and display this at Big Basin.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park currently exhibits some of its objects in the Nature Lodge, Sempervirens Room, and the ranger's trailer at Rancho del Oso. Eventually, the park would like to utilize the collections for changing exhibits in the Park Headquarters and other locations. Big Basin has an extensive archival collection that will be made available for researchers for study purposes. The park would also like to acquire and make available interpretive natural history collections for study purposes. The park does not plan to use any of the current objects for hands-on-use.

Regional Interpretation

Nearby State Parks in San Mateo County

Ano Nuevo State Park is located in San Mateo County off Highway One north of Big Basin. It is not open to the public. A general plan for the unit is planned. The plan will provide interpretive direction for the unit.

Ano Nuevo State Reserve on the coast north of Big Basin and across Highway One from Ano Nuevo SP is home to the largest mainland-breeding colony of the northern elephant seal. The popular interpretive program provides docent-led guided walks from December through March. These 1½-hour guided tours provide the only access for the public to view the seals. The program has 200 active docents. School programs, reserved through Reserve America, completely sell out. The California State Park Foundation sponsors the Ano Nuevo SealCam Project, a live video picture of the seals shown on the web and in the visitor center. The Reserve is closed December 1 to 15. The only visitation from the beginning of April to the end of November is with permits issued from the kiosk. During this period docents provide roving interpretation.

Butano State Park is inland to and borders Ano Nuevo SP. They are both in a general plan process. Butano SP's small nature center is across from the kiosk. It opens only when a park aid is available, which is usually in the summer and on the weekends. The nature center will move into a new building, and the exhibits will be redone in the next two years. Weekend campfire programs are offered in the summer. Volunteers lead occasional Junior Ranger programs and trail walks.

Portola Redwoods State Park offers 53 campsites in a shaded canyon of mixed evergreen Redwood forest. This family oriented park's visitor center interprets natural history with exhibits of bats, birds, snakes, and animals. A touch table provides an interactive area with antlers, redwood bark and other objects. At the Friday and Saturday campfire programs over 100 people attend. On the weekend adult nature walks, a Junior Ranger and a Little Ranger programs are conducted. The Little Ranger program of songs, stories, and little nature walks for 3 to 6 year-olds are well attended.

Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park located on the San Mateo coast outside of Pescadero is one of the tallest lighthouses in America. Docents lead tours of the historic lighthouse on weekends year round with additional tours on Fridays in summer.

Pescadero State Beach includes a mile-long shoreline and across Highway One Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve. Docents lead guided school tours of the marsh and weekend guided walks for the public.

Nearby State Parks in Santa Cruz County

Castle Rock State Park contains miles of trails, rock formations with rock climbing, and a hike in campground. An open shelter with interpretive panels on the geology of Castle Rock can be reached with a short hike. A park ranger gives a limited number of interpretive talks.

Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park has a large successful interpretive program. The Nature Center with large panel displays, taxidermy exhibits, touch displays and interactive areas for children, interprets the natural history of redwoods and some of the cultural history of the area including the nearby Fall Creek area lime industry. The Nature Center is planned for renovation in a year with the design process now occurring. Docents staff the Nature Center seven days a week. Park interpretive staff coordinates the docent program. "Grove Rover" docents provide one to two hours interpretive contact in the nearly one mile fully accessible redwood grove trail. Docents provide year-round Saturday grove walks and special guided walks by request with varying topics. Special "Fall Creek" hikes are mostly docent-led walks. Park interpretive staff provides the Junior Ranger program with some help from docents. Park interpretive staff provides campfire programs. "Lil' ones Nature Club" program for 3 to 6 year olds and parents meets once per week.

Three major events occur at the park. "Bug Day" in May celebrates the lives and times of fascinating insect neighbors. "Ohlone Day" in September brings several thousand participates for Native American activities. "Halloween in the Park" invites visitors to take the Redwood Trail and talk to the animals with docents dressed as native animals.

District interpretive staff oversees Ranger Explorers, a summer day camp for children. This program has its own director and two seasonal park staff positions. Henry Cowell Redwoods SP hosts the Explorers for two separate, two-week sessions with a morning and afternoon camp. With 20 children in each camp session, the park hosts 80 Ranger Explorers.

The shared cooperating association for Big Basin Redwoods SP and Henry Cowell Redwoods SP is the Mountain Parks Foundation. The Foundation operates the both parks' bookstores. The old-growth Redwoods are common to both parks, but they are separated by a trip of 30-40

minutes on a windy road. There appears to be an attendance difference between the two parks. Henry Cowell's local repeat visitation comes mainly from the Santa Cruz County side of the mountains, while Big Basin's repeat local visitation comes more from the Santa Clara County side. International visitors come to both parks.

Wilder Ranch State Park provides an interpretive program of life on the ranch. This program covers a wide range of topics from animals who live in the various plant communities, to the people who lived there, beginning with the Ohlone people to the Wilder family. New displays are being built for the visitor center. School groups and the public participate in ranch tours of the historic ranch buildings and nature walks on coastal ecology. Living history interprets turn of the century dairy ranch activities. Special events include a turn of the century Harvest Festival in October and an old fashioned Fourth of July.

The Forest of Nisene Marks has several outdoor interpretive panels but no visitor center. The interpretive staff at Seacliff coordinates the interpretive programs at Nisene Marks, including taking reservations for school groups. Many of the same schools send groups year after year. Docents and park staff from Seacliff interpret the second growth redwood forests for school groups. The many guided walk programs cover the history of the park and natural history of redwoods. There is a redwood loop. A seasonal bridge allows the only access to Marcel's old growth forest with twisted trees. The guided walk programs are available year round by request. Guided bike rides provide interpretation and recreation.

Seacliff State Beach visitor center receives over 30,000 visitors a year. The exhibits interpret the cultural and natural history of the area. Over 50 docents work at the visitor center and lead programs for visitors and school groups. Guided walks include topics such as the pier out to the old concrete ship, the history of the area, Ohlone people and their use of plants, fossils, beach ecology, and Seacliff as gateway to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. A covered ramada built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) serves as a location on weekends for the many arts and crafts, and games provided to help children get involved and learn by doing.

New Brighton State Beach includes a campground overlooking northern Monterey Bay. From Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day campfire programs and Junior Ranger activities are provided.

Natural Bridges State Beach visitor center opens Thursday through Sunday and contains a bookstore and gift shop. The center's exhibits include tidepools, native animals, and Monarch butterflies. Public tours and walks occur on weekends. Reserved school group programs are scheduled on weekdays. The Monarch Butterfly Natural Preserve is the highlight, with monarch migration from October to February. School groups concentrate on the tidepools in the spring. The docent-led walks cover various themes. These walks include nature, beach, tidepool, bird, and butterfly walks. Younger children participate in "Tank Talks". The two special park events are "Welcome Back Monarch Day" festival in October and "Migration" festival in February.

Santa Cruz Mission State Historical Park in downtown Santa Cruz interprets the Native American experience at the Mission. The active school program makes up 50% of the interpretive program. Topics include the culture of the Ohlone people, Santa Cruz Mission and connection with other missions, the use of natural resources by the Ohlone and the changes and adaptations with the Mission. Ranger Explorers are guests. A monthly campfire program includes Native American story telling with topics changing seasonally.

San Mateo County Parks

San Mateo County Parks & Recreation operates 17 separate parks and numerous trails.

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach provides activities related to education and interpretation of natural resources. This includes the ecological systems of the inter-tidal reef, and the beach, uplands and marsh/wetlands complex and recreational activities, such as walking, nature study and picnicking (restricted to Moss Beach Entrance), that are compatible with protection of natural resources. Educational and interpretive activities include tours led by Reserve staff, docents and trained volunteers; workshops, seminars and classes; and training for docents, volunteers, and tour leaders.

Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve is located in Redwood City. The preserve is home to rare animal and plants in many plant communities. Docent-led flower walks are held in the spring each year. An interpretive center is planned for in the future.

Pescadero Creek Park is the nearest San Mateo County park to Big Basin State Park and include the following parks: Sam McDonald, Memorial, and Heritage Grove. The main interpretive activities occur in Memorial Park.

Memorial Park interpretive center is opened daily, May-September. The center has natural and historic exhibits, game boards, and hands-on articles for visitors to experience. The park provides regular campfire and naturalist programs during the summer months. A Park Naturalist leads evening campfires, nature programs and walks on various trails. Pamphlets are also available for self-guided walks on the Mt. Ellen Nature Trail.

Heritage Grove includes an old-growth Redwood forest on Alpine Creek, adjacent to Pescadero Creek Park. Some of the largest Redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains provide a network of trails.

Sam McDonald Park contains two different natural environments, a redwood forest and an open ridge with grasslands and shrub

Junipero Serra Park is located in San Bruno. A small visitor center is located at the Park Headquarters. It has exhibits which show the various habitats contained within the Park. The self-guided Live Oak Nature Trail offers a short interpretive loop. A Live Oak Nature Trail Interpretive Guide is available.

San Pedro Valley Park is located in Pacifica off Highway One. A visitor center near the park entrance has exhibits about the ecosystem of San Pedro Valley and its plant and animal species, and some live exhibits. Adjacent to the exhibits at the Visitor Center is a small park library and bookstore containing many trail guides and books about the local area.

Santa Cruz County Parks

The Santa Cruz County Park system has over 30 park and facilities. Most of these sites provide active recreation, not interpretive programs.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park in Ben Lomond has numerous nature programs and interprets the unique sandhill habitat, with its many rare and endangered plants and animals. The park's school program requires a full-time coordinator. In the summer the park hosts a summer camp.

The Scott Creek Beach Park provides signage to educate the public of the snowy plover habitat on the north coast. This beach park will be providing walks.

The Moran Lake Park is now being developed to include butterfly habitat interpretation. A master plan for the park will go through public hearings.

Santa Clara County Parks

Santa Clara County Parks has three main interpretive facilities. There are no entrance fees or program fees at any of their interpretive facilities.

The Almaden Quicksilver County Park in west San Jose serves as the base of their side of the mountains. It has a mining museum dedicated to the history of the New Almaden Mercury Mines, established around 1845 and in operation through the 1970s. It has one full-time and one part time Park Interpreter, plus a dedicated group of volunteers and Docents. The museum is open to the public Friday-Sunday, and on weekdays for school/group tours by reservation.

Chitactac-Adams Heritage Park is located in Gilroy at the base of the mountains (just over the hill from Watsonville). This park is dedicated to the history and culture of the Ohlone Indians and of the village of Chitactac, located on the park site. The park has an interpretive display shelter, a self-guiding interpretive trail with beautiful graphic panels, a large collection of bedrock mortars and several visible petroglyphs. The park is open everyday from 8 a.m. to sunset. Staff led programs are available to groups of ten or more by appointment. The park is very busy during the fall and spring with school groups. One full-time Park Interpreter is assigned to the park and about five active Docents assist with programs as needed. There is also an on-site caretaker who does everything from light maintenance to tours.

Rancho Santa Teresa Historic District facility is nearing completion and located in the Santa Teresa foothills west of San Jose. The site will interpret a slice of California history, from the Ohlone through the Rancho period and into the agricultural heyday of the Santa Clara Valley. Currently, they are designing exhibits and programs for the 1850-1910 ranching/agricultural period and hope to open in the spring. It will have a full-time Park Interpreter assigned to conduct programs at this site.

Several of Santa Clara County parks also have small visitor centers with history, natural history, taxidermy displays, etc. None maintain regular visitor hours, so they open only as staff is available.

All of Santa Clara County parks conduct programs by request based on staff availability. Most of these are conducted by Ranger staff and assisted by Park Interpreters where needed. In addition, they require each park to schedule at least one public interpretive program per month during the peak season of June to September.

The five campground parks are supposed to do a campground program each weekend during the

summer. They happen most of the time and are conducted/coordinated by Ranger staff.

Santa Clara County Parks provides many outreach programs to schools and community groups. Mainly interpretive staff presents these programs, allowing Rangers to stay in their parks. A brochure describes available programs.

They have a Junior Ranger program running in five parks spread throughout the County (Mt. Madonna, Stevens Creek, Hellyer, Ed Levin, and Calero). Jr. Rangers are children age 9-12. They meet once a week for six weeks with Ranger and Interpretive staff. Each 2-hour day has a specific focus, such as wildlife, Ohlone Indians, etc. At the end of the 6-week program, staff takes the children on an overnight campout.

The Santa Clara County Parks website provides more information about the mining museum and Chitactac-Adams. The public program calendar is also there under scheduled park events and programs.

Youth Science Institute (YSI)

YSI is a natural science museum serving Santa Clara County. One of its three sites is Sanborn Science & Nature Center. The Sanborn Science & Nature Center is located in Saratoga in the Sanborn County Park. Exhibits include live animals that populate the Santa Cruz Range, earthquake and geology displays, and an insect zoo. Science day camps are held during the summer. The special event "Insect Fair" takes place every May.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)

The mission of MROSD is: "To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity; protect and restore the natural environment; and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education."

The District's 24 open space preserves include over 45,000 acres kept generally in a natural condition. Each year district docents lead over 200 free hikes and walks. Many of these focus on a particular theme or natural history topic. Several District preserves include historic sites.

Los Trancos Open Space Preserve of 274 acres is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains above Palo Alto. A five-mile trail system is situated at about 2,000 feet in an environment of rolling grassland knolls alternating with open brushland and forest. The 1.5-mile San Andreas Fault Trail hike begins at the parking area. The Los Trancos brochure interprets the landscape features along the trail that are associated with the San Andreas fault zone. Additional trails are also available.

Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve contains the David C. Daniels Nature Center overlooking Alpine Pond. The Nature Center exhibits and hands-on activities highlight the environment of Alpine Pond and the Preserve. The Center is open on weekends March through mid-November. School classes visit during the week as part of the District's environmental education program.

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve contains 2,135 acres. Deer Hollow Farm is a 10-acre historic working homestead and educational center. The preserve is owned and operated by the MROSD, and the City of Mountain View Recreation Department runs the Farm. The Farm is

opened during the week for school and community groups. Topics covered at the Farm include sheep and goats, the farm and garden, wilderness adventure, birds, and Ohlone habitat and village with many hands-on learning activities. Friends of Deer Hollow Farm help to preserve and promote this working farm. A naturalist and volunteer docents conduct environmental education programs and summer day camps at the farm. Special events open to the general public include monthly Saturday farm tours from April through July and an Ohlone Village Open House.

Fremont Older Open Space Preserve offers the Fremont Older Estate. Fremont Older, a San Francisco newspaper editor, built the Fremont Older house, Woodhills, in 1914. The District purchased the property in 1975, and the house is leased to a private party. It has been restored to near-original design, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Docent-led tours of the house and gardens are offered annually, usually in late spring.

Monte Bello Open Space Preserve contains the Picchetti Winery. This winery was built in the late 1890s and operated for many years under the Picchetti Brothers label. The District purchased the winery, homestead, and surrounding property in 1976. The site and buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are being restored by the winery operators and the District. The Winery is open for wine tasting and special events.

Thornewood Open Space Preserve contains the Thornewood Estate. This 87-acre estate was willed to the Sierra Club Foundation and later given to the District. The house, surrounded by 3.5 acres of landscaping is an example of the gracious summer estate life of the 1920s. Currently, the house and 10-acre private leasehold are being restored and are closed to the public. However, the remaining 77 acres of the estate, including an easy walk along wooded trails leading to Schilling Lake, are open to the public throughout the year.

County Offices of Education

Santa Clara County Office of Education is a regional resource serving children, the community and schools. There are 33 school districts in Santa Clara County. Environmental education is offered at Walden West Center Outdoor School in Saratoga, formerly known as Redwood Glen. Walden West is a residential outdoor school for fifth and sixth graders. Each session spans five days and four nights during which students, accompanied by their classroom teacher, live and learn in an outdoor environment. The program is operated on the premise that students learn best through hands-on activities and was established because of the need to educate students about the environment. Summer wilderness experiences are offered for junior high and high school students. The students follow the Skyline-to-the-Sea trail.

San Mateo County Office of Education as an educational service agency serves all 24 school districts in San Mateo County. The county's average daily attendance of students is over 85,000. San Mateo Outdoor Education Program dates back to the 1960's. Jones Gulch in the Redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains in La Honda provides weeklong residential programs for fifth and sixth graders focusing on environmental education. The Office of Education conducts the program in coordination with local schools and the San Francisco YMCA's Camp Jones Gulch.

Santa Cruz County Office of Education serves ten school districts in the county of Santa Cruz. The Office of Education sponsors Santa Cruz County Resident Outdoor Science School. The Outdoor Science School has been in operation in Santa Cruz County for over 20 years. The

school is located in Watsonville at the Koinonia Conference Grounds. The Outdoor Science School functions as a classroom without walls or desks. This program is available to fifth and/or sixth grade students accompanied by their classroom teacher who spend four or five days living on site. Classes are conducted in the forest, at the edge of the creek, in the chaparral, and in the meadow. The most useful tools for learning are readily available; the students' five senses. The subject area most emphasized in this hands-on learning experience is the science of ecology, the relationship between living things and their environment. From an understanding of basic ecological concepts, it is hoped that a deeper concern and sense of responsibility for the environment will result.

Other Interpretive Organizations

California Regional Environmental Education Community (CREEC) Network is an educational project to develop a communication network providing educators with access to environmental education resources to enhance the environmental literacy of California students. The Network is broken into regions to allow access to information for specific areas. CREEC Network Region 5, South Bay Area, serves Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, San Benito, and Monterey Counties. Region 4, Bay Area CREEC Network, serves Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Solano Counties. There are 54 environmental education providers serving Santa Cruz County listed on the Website including Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. The listed 59 environmental education providers serving San Mateo County include Ano Nuevo State Reserve. 86 environmental education providers serve Santa Clara County. At this time Big Basin Redwoods State Park is not listed as a provider in the CREEC Network. State Parks offer numerous educational opportunities including school field trips, environmental living programs, Junior Lifeguards and Junior Ranger Programs; all designed to help students explore the natural history and cultural heritage of California.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) is a Federally protected marine area offshore of California's central coast. MBNMS protects the marine resources along 276 miles of shoreline from Marin to Cambria. Their education mission is to promote awareness, understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary through public education and conservation programs.

Coastal Watershed Council is a nonprofit organization committed to the preservation, protection and management of coastal watersheds. They promote establishment of community-based watershed stewardship program and partnerships with other groups and agencies. CWC provides educational materials to the community and sponsors workshops and lecture series by watershed professionals. Big Basin State Redwoods Park contains one of the 11 watersheds in the central coast region.

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