

# DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

NONPROFIT OPERATORS

PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 5080.42

FISCAL YEARS 15/16 through 17/18

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In compliance with Public Resources Code §5080.42(h)(1), this report serves as the Department's notification regarding the status of Operating Agreements with Nonprofit Organizations.

Consistent with notification requirements, the following information outlines the core responsibilities of each nonprofit partner, and the Department, for each State Park; operating costs; revenues; and the benefits to the Department and the State Park System as a result of the partnership.

Note: Operating costs identified in this report only reflect those costs associated with the nonprofit partner operator. Departmental costs for each of these State Parks units can be found in the annual Statistical Report available from the following link. [http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=23308](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23308)

## **Austin Creek State Recreation Area**

**Nonprofit partner:** Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Austin Creek SRA: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=452](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=452)

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods: <https://www.stewardscr.org/>

### **Partner Core Duties:**

Austin Creek SRA is open year round with campsites available, weather permitting. The operator is responsible for basic park operations including: visitor services, fee collection, special events, volunteer recruitment, trail maintenance, and housekeeping, for a primitive campground with 24 sites, three back-country campsites, roughly 37 miles of designated trails and two day-use areas.

This park includes Pond Farm Pottery, a significant cultural site listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the Studio Pottery Movement and ceramist and teacher Marguerite Wildenhain, who lived, worked, and taught at Pond Farm.

### **Department Core Duties:**

The Department retained responsibility for two water systems, four septic systems, natural and cultural resource protection, public safety, employee residences, environmental reviews, and overseeing volunteers.

### **Assessment of Benefits:**

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods increased its interpretive programming and special events, while also increasing community involvement and volunteer recruitment.

### **Projects**

- Guest House renovation completed with ADA improvements
- Trail maintenance
- Repaired interpretive panels at Pond Farm
- Fence repair
- Tree removal
- Continued restoration of Pond Farm site

### **Programs**

- Docent-led tours
- Tidepool/Forest to the Sea Program
- Stewardship school visits
- Junior Ranger Program
- Watershed/Environmental Living
- Citizen Science/Stewardship experience
- UC Naturalist Certification Program

## Interpretation and Education

- Delivered several new interpretive programs
- Oral History Video Project
- Whale and seal watching
- Adult hikes/lectures/tours
- Seabird monitoring
- Bilingual natural and cultural resource programming

## Special Events

- Armstrong/Austin Creek Trail Run
- Weddings
- Family Day in Your Park
- Sunset Dinner
- Old Grove Festival

Financial Information	FY 2015/2016	FY 2016/2017	FY 2017/2018
Revenue	\$195,831	\$188,768	\$215,277
Operating Expenditures	\$194,028	\$190,242	\$200,404
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,803</b>	<b>(\$1,474)</b>	<b>\$14,873</b>

## China Camp State Park

**Nonprofit partner:** Friends of China Camp, Inc.

China Camp SP: [http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=466](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=466)

Friends of China Camp, Inc.: <https://friendsofchinacamp.org/>

### **Partner Core Duties:**

The operator is responsible for park operations including: visitor services, fee collection, volunteer recruitment and coordination, fundraising, special events, trail maintenance, and housekeeping for a 1,500 acre park. China Camp SP contains 30 campsites and one large group campsite which can accommodate 40 campers. Additionally, the operator employs an Executive Director.

### **Department Core Duties:**

The Department manages and preserves the natural and cultural resources, conducts environmental reviews, maintains the sewer lift stations and main line connections to the city water main, conducts tree hazard inspections, provides training to all partner staff and volunteers, and provides supervisory oversight for department staff, partner staff, and volunteers. The Department provides public safety oversight, a public safety chain of command, a partnership liaison, and

administrative oversight. State Park Rangers are also leading interpretive talks and campfire programs on a monthly basis.

Additionally, the operator pays for two Department employees (one Ranger and one Park Maintenance Worker) as well as several seasonal park aides and seasonal maintenance personnel.

### **Assessment of Benefits:**

China Camp SP and the campground are open year round. The number of volunteer hours increased as a result of more community support and regular programs such as the California State Park Foundation supported Park Champions Program. Friends of China Camp has experience in recruiting volunteers, while Department staff assist them in managing the volunteer program.

### **Projects**

- New ADA interpretive panels were installed to enhance visitor experience
- GPS system developed to more precisely identify the location of reported emergencies as well as pin pointing areas within the 15 miles of trails which require maintenance
- Restoration of fire roads
- Expanded volunteer foot and bicycle patrols have reduced the level of vandalism and established a visible deterrent for potential offenders
- Repairs and restoration to the Village's historic fishing equipment including the shrimp shaker
- Debris and hazardous tree removal
- Website and email communication overhaul to increase outreach and community engagement

### **Interpretation and Education**

- Natural history training programs for docents and other volunteers who regularly interact with visitors
- Nature walks – interpretive staff offered, on average, two free walks for the public each month
- Campfire programs – May through August, Natural History volunteers led three to four campfire programs each month
- Foreign language docents – volunteers who speak Mandarin and Cantonese staffed the Village Museum on weekends and by appointment
- School presentations and field trips – provided both on campus interpretive programs and field trips for K-8 schools, after-school programs and Boy and Girl Scout troops

## Special Events

- Heritage Day – Annual family event celebrating the cultural history of China Camp State Park
- Images of China Camp – Local artist exhibit showcasing the park with 20% of proceeds donated to FOCC
- China Camp Celebration – A thank you event for community supporters and volunteers

Financial Information	FY 2015/2016	FY 2016/2017	FY 2017/2018
Revenue	\$412,241	\$404,381	\$619,868
Operating Expenditures	\$101,282	\$215,503	\$548,928
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$310,959</b>	<b>\$188,878</b>	<b>\$70,940</b>

## Crystal Cove State Park

**Nonprofit partner:** Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC)

Crystal Cove SP: [http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=644](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=644)

Irvine Ranch Conservancy: <http://www.irconservancy.org/>

### **Partner Core Duties:**

The Department's first Co-Management Agreement began August 1, 2017. The IRC wants to support the restoration, maintenance, protection, and co-management of select natural resources within Crystal Cove State Park (CCSP). This agreement consists of two phases. Phase 1 will focus on the development of a Natural Resources Management Plan by the IRC. This Plan will be consistent with the park's approved General Plan and will support the CCSP natural resources management program. The Plan will focus on several key areas including management objectives, management of wildlife and sensitive plants, invasive species, wildfire, recreational use and infrastructure, and opportunities for public engagement and stewardship. Phase 2 or "Maintenance Obligations" will include implementation of the Natural Resources Management Plan to guide annual natural resources management activities. IRC will undertake both phases under the direction and participation of the Department.

CCSP contains almost 3,000 acres of coastal terrace and backcountry, including globally important Mediterranean ecosystems, centrally positioned as a major component of more than 12,000 acre of publicly-owned conservation and recreation landscape.

### **Department Core Duties:**

The Department is responsible for managing CCSP. IRC is providing the resources necessary to develop a Natural Resources Management Plan.

**Assessment of Benefits:**

The new Natural Resources Management Plan will reduce Departmental cost and increase efficiency.

**Projects**

- Natural Resources Management Plan

<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>FY 2015/2016</b>	<b>FY 2016/2017</b>	<b>FY 2017/2018</b>
Revenue	NA	NA	\$192,733
Operating Expenditures	NA	NA	\$141,257
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>\$51,476</b>

*NOTE: This agreement began in Fiscal Year 2017/2018.*

**Jack London State Historic Park**

**Nonprofit partner:** Valley of the Moon Natural History Association

Jack London SHP: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=478](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=478)

Valley of the Moon Natural History Association:

<http://www.jacklondonpark.com/>

**Partner Core Duties:**

The operator is responsible for basic park operations including: visitor services, fee collection, interpretation and education, fundraising, special events, trail maintenance, and housekeeping, for this National Historic Landmark consisting of 1,400 acres. Jack London SHP is a day use park containing a museum, private event venues and picnic grounds able to accommodate up to 850 guests. This park also contains sensitive archeological and native sites, significant habitat area for many threatened and listed species, including: steelhead and Chinook salmon, northern spotted owl, California red-legged frog, and California freshwater shrimp.

**Department Core Duties:**

The Department is responsible for managing and preserving the natural and cultural resources, conducts environmental reviews, maintains water testing, water treatment and maintenance of water main distribution system pipelines, ongoing museum care and maintenance training, tree hazard inspections, provides environmental review process training, and project concept overview and reviews.

**Assessment of Benefits:**

Jack London SHP is open year round during peak season and Thursdays through Mondays the remainder of the year. Volunteer resources, community support,

and special events have increased, including the expansion of the Broadway Under the Stars series during the summer.

**Projects**

- House of Happy Walls Exhibit Redesign
- Trail maintenance
- Invasive species removal
- Fence repair
- General day-to-day housekeeping

**Programs**

- Organized hikes (twilight, spring and fall wildflowers, bird watching, nature appreciation, etc.)
- Piano concerts (quarterly)
- Broadway Under the Stars by Transcendence Theatre Company
- Specialty and educational tours (K-12)

**Interpretation and Education**

- Weekend guided tours provided by docents
- Docents staff the museum and cottage
- Horseback riding
- Audio tour app

**Special Events**

- House of Happy Walls New Exhibit
- Free Redwood Hike & Yoga

<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>FY 2015/2016</b>	<b>FY 2016/20 17</b>	<b>FY 2017/2018</b>
Revenue	\$529,489	\$893,792	\$822,730
Operating Expenditures	\$838,505	\$837,583	\$800,049
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(\$309,016)</b>	<b>\$56,209</b>	<b>\$22,681</b>

**Old Sacramento State Historic Park**

**Nonprofit partner:** Historic Old Sacramento Foundation

Old Sacramento SHP: [http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=497](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=497)

Historic Old Sacramento Foundation: <http://oldsacramento.com/about/whos-who/historic-old-sacramento-foundation>

**Partner Core Duties:**

Historic Old Sacramento Foundation (Foundation) began operating the visitor center in October 2016, after reopening part of the BF Hastings Building for the enjoyment and benefit of the public. While the Foundation continued funding



the visitor center staff they also hired additional staff. The visitor center has been open and staffed seven days a week from 10:00AM to 6:00PM, except for select holidays. Several staff are cross-trained to work at the Sacramento History Museum as well.

**Department Core Duties:**

The Department is responsible for general utilities, natural and cultural resource protection and providing training for operator staff and volunteers about the project review process. Portions of the building will continue to be managed and maintained by the Department.

**Assessment of Benefits:**

The Foundation has increased community involvement and volunteer recruitment, while provided necessary orientation to new staff and volunteers.

<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>FY 2015/2016</b>	<b>FY 2016/2017</b>	<b>FY 2017/2018</b>
Revenue	NA	\$117,000	\$72,300
Operating Expenditures	NA	\$102,450	\$26,800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>\$14,550</b>	<b>\$45,500</b>

*NOTE: This agreement began during Fiscal Year 2016/17.*

**Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area**

**Nonprofit partner:** Mendocino Area Parks Association and Team Standish

Standish-Hickey SRA: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=423](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=423)

Mendocino Area Parks Association and Team Standish:

<http://www.mendoparks.org/>

**Partner Core Duties:**

During peak season (May 15-September 15), all three campgrounds are open and available to the public, which includes 161 campsites, and during the off season, 35 campsites remain available. The operator is responsible for park operations including: visitor services, maintenance, fee collection, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, special events, and housekeeping for a 1,000 acre park.

Partner responsibilities are carried out by thirteen staff, which includes eleven part-time staff.

**Department Core Duties:**

The Department manages and preserves the natural and cultural resources, conducts environmental reviews, maintains the septic systems, potable water well and treatment system and main line connections to the water treatment system, conducts tree hazard inspections, and facility condition assessments to

identify deferred maintenance needs, provides training to all partner staff and volunteers, and coordinates duties with partner staff and volunteers.

**Assessment of Benefits:**

Standish-Hickey is open year round and several deferred maintenance projects have been completed, including road and trail work and campground and restroom enhancements.

**Projects**

- Repainted, repaired and upgraded restrooms
- Identified and removed 56 hazardous trees
- Removed remaining half acre of Spanish Broom opening up access to Rock Creek which had been closed since after the 1964 floods
- Installed 41 new picnic tables, replaced and repaired food lockers, installed 26 fire rings and BBQs at various campsites
- Removed (in October) and installed (in June) vehicle and foot bridges to the Redwood Campground
- Upgraded or replaced over 40 food lockers at various campsites
- Replaced the stairs and railing on the path to campsite 147 in the Redwood Loop
- Refurbished six small buildings to house seasonal camp staff

**Interpretation and Education**

- Junior Ranger Program
- Campfire Programs
- Naturalist leads interpretive walks and programs

<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>FY 2015/2016</b>	<b>FY 2016/2017</b>	<b>FY 2017/2018</b>
Revenue	\$226,498	\$296,709	\$308,354
Operating Expenditures	\$272,277	\$272,133	\$277,149
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(\$45,779)</b>	<b>\$24,576</b>	<b>\$31,205</b>

**Sugarloaf Ridge State Park**

**Nonprofit partner:** Sonoma Ecology Center

Sugarloaf Ridge SP: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=481](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=481)

Sonoma Ecology Center: <https://www.sonomaecologycenter.org/>

**Partner Core Duties:**

Although Sonoma Ecology Center is the principal entity in the operating agreement, the responsibility for park operations is shared amongst the five group members of Team Sugarloaf: Robert Ferguson Observatory, Sonoma County Trails Council, United Camps Conferences, and Retreats, and Valley of

the Moon Natural History Association. Each group member is responsible for overseeing their areas of specialization. Team Sugarloaf is responsible for park operations including: visitor services, fee collection, special events, trail maintenance, and housekeeping for a 5,000 acre park. Sugarloaf includes 49 campsites and one large group campsite which can accommodate 50 campers, and 21 miles of trails.

**Department Core Duties:**

The Department manages and preserves the natural and cultural resources, conducts environmental reviews, water testing and treatment, maintenance on water main distribution system, conducts tree hazard inspections, provides environmental review process training, trail maintenance guidance, and partner training.

Additionally, the Robert Ferguson Observatory continues to operate under a concession agreement with the Department.

**Assessment of Benefits:**

Sugarloaf Ridge is open for camping year round, the visitor center is open three days each week, and volunteer hours have increased as a result of increased community support.

**Projects**

- Trail maintenance
- Repaired fire damaged trails
- Removed two destroyed bathrooms
- Invasive species removal

**Interpretation and Education**

- K-12 ecology school field trips
- Summer Science Camp
- Campfire programs
- Nature hikes with an emphasis on natural history, plant ecology, wildflowers, mushrooms, geology, and general ecology

**Special Events**

- Robert Ferguson Observatory monthly “Star Parties”

<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>FY 2015/2016</b>	<b>FY 2016/2017</b>	<b>FY 2017/2018</b>
Revenue	\$508,569	\$531,177	\$410,777
Operating Expenditures	\$507,141	\$530,070	\$466,850
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,428</b>	<b>\$1,107</b>	<b>(\$56,073)</b>

**Conclusion:**

The intent of the Operating Agreements authorized pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) §5080.42 was to assist the Department in operating parks that may have been subject to closure during years when fiscal resources were not available to support these parks. Although the original purpose was to have a nonprofit entity operate a State Park in its entirety, it has become apparent over the last few years that, in many cases, there is a continued need for the Department to perform critical and, often times, legally mandated roles in the operation of the park unit.

The authority provided through PRC §5080.42 allows for 'co-management' of park units. As the Department continues its work with nonprofit park operators, and examines the impact of fuel tax revenue to the Department's operational budget, it will evaluate the strengths of each partner and draft agreements for the Department and partners to share operational responsibilities. These agreements will allow the Department to reach and exceed visitor expectations without expending valuable Department resources. The Department depends on nonprofit operators to engage communities in educational experiences such as Star Parties at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park, or exposing students to the local ecology at summer camps. Partners have found new and creative ways to bring visitors into the Parks, such as the Old Sacramento Visitor Center in Old Sacramento State Historic Park. The value these partners add to the Department is almost immeasurable. The connections they have developed with the local communities and new programs they have provided have added a positive impact to the visitor's experience.