

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
NONPROFIT OPERATORS
PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 5080.42
FISCAL YEARS 18/19 AND 19/20

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In compliance with Public Resources Code §5080.42(h)(1), this report serves as the Department of Parks and Recreation's (Department) 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.

This year's report also identifies co-management agreements with nonprofit organizations and the benefits derived from those agreements.

Note: Operating costs identified in this report only reflect those costs associated with the nonprofit partner operator.

Austin Creek State Recreation Area (SRA)

Nonprofit partner: Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods for the operation of Austin Creek SRA: <https://parks.ca.gov/austin>

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

Partner Core Duties:

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards) 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:

Although the park endured unfavorable weather conditions, wildfires, and COVID-19 protocols that reduced visitor attendance due to social distancing and temporary closures, Stewards maintained its interpretive programming, special events, community involvement, and volunteer recruitment. Under normal circumstances, Austin Creek SRA is open year-round with campsites available, weather permitting.

Projects

- Trail maintenance
- Fence repair
- Tree trimming and removal of limbs and downed trees
- Cleanup and removal of brush and weeds
- Continued restoration of Pond Farm site
- Repaired two water system leaks
- Replaced a water line, spigot, and reset fixtures

Programs

- Artist-in-Residence Program
- Camp Host Program

- Docent-led tours
- Forest to the Sea Program
- Stewardship school visits
- UC Naturalist Certification Program

Interpretation and Education

- Adult hikes/lectures/tours
- Docent-led hikes
- Seminar about the legacy of Pond Farm and Marguerite Wildenhain

Special Events

- Armstrong/Austin Creek Trail Run
- Family Day in Your Park
- Sunset Dinner
- Old Grove Festival
- Gourmet Walk in the Woods

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$207,994	\$184,356
Operating Expenditures	\$201,364	\$168,668
Total	\$6,630	\$15,688

China Camp State Park (SP)

Nonprofit partner: Friends of China Camp, Inc. for the operation of China Camp SP: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=466

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

Partner Core Duties:

Friends of China Camp, Inc. (FOCC) 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. The FOCC also employs an Executive Director.

Department Core Duties:

The Department is responsible for managing and preserving the natural and cultural resources, conducting environmental reviews, maintaining the sewer lift stations and main line connections to the city water main, conducting tree hazard inspections, providing training to all partner staff and volunteers, and

providing supervisory oversight for Department staff, FOCC staff, and volunteers. The Department provides public safety oversight, a public safety chain of command, a partnership liaison, and administrative oversight. State Park Rangers also lead interpretive talks and campfire programs on a monthly basis.

The FOCC provides funding 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. FOCC has experience in recruiting volunteers, while Department staff assist them in managing the volunteer program.

Projects

- Stabilized and repaired all informational kiosks including new plexiglass
- Repaired and replaced informational signage
- Removed vegetation, trimmed branches, and the burn pile was sorted, piled, and chipped
- Removed downed trees and repaired landslides on various trails due to storm damage
- Felled trees that were deemed hazardous, then split, seasoned, and used for campfire wood sales
- Repaired and replaced split-rail fencing
- Pay station modem upgrade included replacement of four 2G modems to 4G
- Repaired a failed high-pressure water regulator and replaced two toilets

Interpretation and Education

- Monthly natural and cultural history lectures led by naturalists and professional experts around the region
- Campfire programs – May through September, Natural History volunteers led several campfire programs each month at Black Ranch Meadows
- Indigenous Peoples Month – interactive walk and storytelling November 9, 2019, and naturalist led walk on November 12, 2019
- Foreign language docents – volunteers who speak Mandarin and Cantonese staffed the Village Museum on weekends and by appointment

- San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve led history walks related to king tides, salt marsh, sea level rise, and endangered species
- Tours provided to school, youth organizations and seniors – provided natural and cultural history docent-guided field trips for students, hiking and biking groups

Special Events

- Heritage Day – Annual celebration that primarily recognizes Chinese heritage
- Earth Day – in partnership with the State Parks Foundation the event included trail maintenance, volunteer opportunities, environmental restoration, and coastal cleanup events
- Coastal Cleanup Day – September 2018 event hosted 20 participants who collected over 130 pounds of trash, and 2019 event hosted a local Boy Scout troop
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event held at the Marin Yacht Club to recognize dedicated volunteers for their hard work

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$709,295	\$274,309
Operating Expenditures	\$643,491	\$314,316
Total	\$65,804	(\$40,007)

Note: FY 2019/2020 reporting period ends 12/31/2019, and future financial reports will be by calendar year.

Crystal Cove State Park

Nonprofit partner: Irvine Ranch Conservancy for the co-management of Crystal Cove SP: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=644

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

Partner Core Duties:

The Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC) plans to support the restoration, maintenance, protection, and co-management of select natural resources within Crystal Cove State Park (CCSP). The agreement between the Department and IRC consists of two phases. Phase 1 focuses on the development of a Natural Resources Management Plan by the IRC. This Plan is consistent with the park’s approved General Plan and supports the CCSP natural resources management program. The Plan focuses 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 acres 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 currently under review by the Department

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$0	\$0
Operating Expenditures	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0

Note: The Crystal Cove cabins are operated under the Concession agreement and therefore, those revenues and costs are not identified in this report.

Jack London State Historic Park (SHP)

Nonprofit partner: Valley of the Moon Natural History Association for the operation of Jack London SHP: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=478

Valley of the Moon Natural History Association: <http://www.jacklondonpark.com/>

Partner Core Duties:

Valley of the Moon Natural History Association (VMNHA) 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, conducting environmental reviews, maintaining water testing, water treatment, and maintenance of water main distribution system pipelines, ongoing museum care and maintenance training, tree hazard inspections, providing environmental review process training, and project concept overview and reviews.

Assessment of Benefits:

Jack London SHP is open year-round, seven days a week from 8:00AM to 5:00 PM. Volunteer resources, community support, and community events have increased, including the expansion of environmental education programming.

Projects

- ADA path to picnic area
- Rebuild cottage porch
- Historic orchard replanting and stabilization
- 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)
- Photography classes
- Docent training
- Broadway Under the Stars by Transcendence Theatre Company
- Specialty and educational tours (K-12)
- Launched Nature's Design-Common Core Science Standard for 7th grade students

Interpretation and Education

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

Special Events

- Mindful walks
- Family walks
- Free Redwood Hike & Yoga

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$861,731	\$831,741
Operating Expenditures	\$775,399	\$605,160
Total	\$86,332	\$226,581

Note: FY 2019/2020 reporting period ends 12/31/2019, and future financial reports will be by calendar year.

Old Sacramento State Historic Park (SHP)

Nonprofit partner: Historic Old Sacramento Foundation for the co-management of Old Sacramento SHP: 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. Several staff are cross trained to work at the Sacramento History Museum as well. Although the visitor center is normally open and staffed seven days a week from 10:00AM to 6:00PM, except for select holidays, during a 2019 renovation, the visitor center was operated as a satellite museum, and, consistent with COVID-19 pandemic protocols, the visitor center was temporarily closed to public access from March 2020 through the end of June 2020.

Department Core Duties:

The Department is responsible for general utilities, natural and cultural resource protection, and providing training for Foundation 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 providing necessary orientation to new staff and volunteers.

Projects

- Acquired several displays to match the flavor and décor of the location to enhance retail sales
- New canvas signage installed on the outside of support columns
- Installed a 3-D map of Old Sacramento showing the restoration of demolished and existing historic buildings from the 1860's to 1880's

Programs

- Living history demonstrating period music, games, and crafts

Interpretation and Education

- Provided visitors a demo and display of Anytime Tours application that gives a self-guided virtual walking tour of historic district

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$85,063	\$71,543
Operating Expenditures	\$85,160	\$63,712
Total	(\$97)	\$7,831

Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area (SRA)

Nonprofit partner: Mendocino Area Parks Association for the operation of Standish-Hickey SRA: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=423

Mendocino Area Parks Association: <http://www.mendoparks.org/>

Partner Core Duties:

The Mendocino Area Parks Association (MAPA) was responsible for park operations including visitor services, maintenance, fee collection, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, special events, and housekeeping for a 1,000-acre park. The operating agreement expired on October 31, 2018 and will not be renewed.

MAPA's responsibilities were carried out by thirteen staff, which included 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. In September 2018, MAPA began transitioning operational responsibility to the Department. The operating agreement expired on October 31, 2018, and the Department resumed full operation of the park.

Assessment of Benefits:

During July, August, and September 2018, all three campgrounds were open and available to the public, which included 161 campsites. MAPA operated the park from July 6, 2012, through October 31, 2018. During that time the park was open year-round and several deferred maintenance projects were completed, including road and trail work and campground and restroom enhancements.

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$201,525	NA
Operating Expenditures	\$171,129	NA
Total	\$30,396	NA

Note: This agreement expired in Fiscal year 2018/19 and was not renewed.

Sugarloaf Ridge State Park (SP)

Nonprofit partner: Sonoma Ecology Center for the operation of Sugarloaf Ridge SP: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=481

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

Partner Core Duties:

Although Sonoma Ecology Center (SEC) 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. The park includes 49 campsites and one large group campsite which can accommodate 50 campers, and 21 miles of trails.

Department Core Duties:

The Department is responsible for managing and preserving natural and cultural resources, conducting environmental reviews, water testing and treatment, maintenance of water main distribution system, conducting tree hazard inspections, providing environmental review process training, trail maintenance guidance, and partner training.

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

Assessment of Benefits:

The park is open for camping year-round (weather permitting), 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
- Rebuilt Red Mountain Horse Bridge
- Food box repairs in the campground
- Cleaned culverts and ditches along the roads

Interpretation and Education

- K-12 ecology school field trips
- Summer Science Camp
- Holiday day camps
- Campfire programs during the summer
- Nature hikes with an emphasis on natural history, plant ecology, general ecology, wildflowers, mushrooms, fitness, and Parks Rx to increase health and happiness

Special Events

- Co-hosted the first Spanish language star parties with the Robert Ferguson Observatory

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	\$537,693	\$442,159
Operating Expenditures	\$481,958	\$504,415
Total	\$55,735	(\$62,256)

Multiple park units within Santa Cruz District: 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 Park, Coast Dairies State Park, Half Moon Bay State Beach, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Lighthouse Field State Beach, Manresa State Beach, Montara State Beach, Natural Bridges State Beach, New Brighton State Beach, Pescadero State Beach, Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park, Pomponio State Beach, Portola Redwoods State Park, San Bruno Mountain State Park, San Gregorio State Beach, Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, Seacliff State Beach, Sunset State Beach, The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, Twin Lakes State Beach, and Wilder Ranch State Park.

Nonprofit partner (Co-manager): Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (FOSCSP) for the co-management of multiple park units: <https://thatsmypark.org/>

Partner Core Duties:

The FOSCSP is responsible for visitor services, assisting with the care, maintenance, operation, administration, restoration improvement and development of parks; working with District staff to plan, design, and implement innovative projects, programs, and initiatives, identify and prioritize projects; plan design, construct, staff, improve, and manage facilities to enhance community use, enjoyment and understanding of parks; collaborating on strategic planning, marketing and revenue development planning; assisting District staff with marketing and outreach efforts; supporting District special events through planning, funding, and staff assistance; providing community outreach services to engage current and potential park users with the goal of expanding the use of the State Park System by people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities; engaging in environmental and historic restoration projects, conservation, and related programs; and fee collection.

Department Core Duties:

The Department manages and preserves the natural and cultural resources, conducts environmental reviews, provides training to FOSCSP and volunteers about the project review process, and provides semi-monthly payments to FOSCSP, as authorized by Public Resources Code 5080.42(a)(4).

Assessment of Benefits:

The first few months of the agreement ran according to FOSCSP's FY 2019/20 budget developed in conjunction with the Department's Santa Cruz District. However, due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols, in March 2020, park entrance stations and kiosks were closed resulting in a significant loss of revenue. During this time, FOSCSP retained staff which enabled them to help explain COVID-19 safety protocols and restrictions to park visitors, as well as help resume park operations as soon the restrictions were lifted.

Projects:

- Marketing and signage for new Castle Rock entrance station
- Worked with the Department to design and implement service improvements
- Helped lead the Heritage Tourism Initiative
- Castro Adobe restoration work
- Castro Adobe interpretive planning
- Replaced stolen artifacts and completed alarm upgrade at Santa Cruz Mission SHP
- Rehabilitation of Pigeon Point Fog Signal building
- Replaced Kiosk at Natural Bridges SB
- Cow Barn restoration

- Dust abatement, road repair, and culvert work at Forest of Nisene Marks SP

Programs:

- Created Kids2Parks in collaboration with the Department and held fall field trips
- Hosted PopUp Picnics
- Administered Commemorative Picnic Table Program
- California State Park Backpacking Adventures (CASPBA)

Special events:

- Supported all State Park public special events

Financial Information	FY 2018/2019	FY 2019/2020
Revenue	NA	\$5,163,644
Operating Expenditures	NA	\$6,841,643
Total	NA	(\$1,677,999)

Note: This agreement was executed in Fiscal Year 2019/2020.

Conclusion:

The intent of the Operating Agreement authority provided by Public Resources Code (PRC) §5080.42, was to assist the Department in operating parks that may have been in jeopardy of closure during years when adequate resources were not available to support the continued operation of some parks. Although the original purpose was for a nonprofit organization to operate a State Park in its entirety, it became apparent that, in many cases, there is a continued need for the Department to perform critical, and often, legally mandated roles in the operation of park units.

As the roles of the nonprofit organizations and the Department became more defined, PRC §5080.42 was revised in 2016 to authorize 'co-management' of park units. As the Department continues its efforts with nonprofit park operators, it will continue to evaluate the strengths of each partner and develop agreements accordingly, sharing operational responsibilities to maximize benefits to the State Park System.

These agreements allow the Department to reach and exceed visitor expectations while conserving valuable Department resources, which can be utilized in other park units with less partner support. The Department depends on nonprofit operators to engage communities in valuable educational experiences such as Star Parties and exposing students to local ecology at summer camps at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Partners have found new and

creative ways to attract visitors to State Parks, including the operation of 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 local communities and the new programs they have provided have made a positive impact to visitors' experiences that may not otherwise have been achievable without these partnerships. These impacts have been especially important during the substantial increase in visitation to State Parks during the COVID-19 pandemic.