



Portola and Castle Rock Foundation

Inspiring the Protection of Castle Rock and Portola Redwoods State Parks Through Quality Educational Experiences and Infrastructure Improvements

President's Message

Thank you for your support. In this newsletter we highlight improvements made at both Castle Rock and Portola Redwoods State Parks. With support from donors, members, and volunteers, the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation will continue to make a difference. I wish each and every one of you a wonderful summer. Hope to see you on the trails soon!

--James Rauen

Stu Langdoc Memorial Bench Installed in Castle Rock State Park

When our dear friend Stu Langdoc passed away on January 27 of this year, the Foundation knew we had to do something special and fitting for him and, Castle Rock, the park he cherished. In a very short time, the wheels were in motion to build and install a memorial bench at Goat Rock Overlook. We were able to obtain a quick approval from Supervising Ranger Emily Bertram and knowledgeable guidance from



Ranger Tyler Knapp in the preparation and installation. We received strong-arm help via volunteers from the Bay Area Climbers Coalition to dig

holes more than two rocky feet deep for the bench placement and prepare the area. There was no doubt that we would use Stu's working plans to build his bench, plans he had used in times past for similar memorial benches. With the right sentiment agreed upon, the bronze plaque was ordered for a rush delivery. The clear heart redwood was a challenge as we wanted the wood to be perfect, free of knots and checks, a difficult promise for

most sawmills. After several false-alarms, and field-trips, explaining what was needed and why, we found a cooperative partner in Healdsburg Redwood Lumber and Supply Co. The work of preparing the redwood and assembling the bench went according to Stu's plan. The bronze plaque was added, and the weight-lifting exercise began. A group of four, including several Directors from the Foundation spent most of Monday, May 16, moving the bench from the Partridge Interpretive Shelter down the path to Goat Overlook.

Lots of "measure twice and cut once" dialogue ensued. As the installation drew to a close we took a moment, enjoyed the view, and paid our respects to Stu, one of Castle Rock's most important advocates, at his new memorial. The old-growth redwood adds a long-lasting, thoughtful, presence, and a sturdy bench for contemplation.



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Castle Rock New Welcome Panel

Welcome to Castle Rock State Park
Marvel at magnificent rock formations and expansive views

Whether you choose a challenging hike, exhilarating climb or to spend time communing with nature, Castle Rock State Park is your gateway to the Santa Cruz Mountains. The park's 34 miles of trails take you through lush forests of redwood, Douglas-fir, oak and madrone that open to sweeping views.

Within the park's canyons and along steep ridges you will see many unusual rock formations that give Castle Rock its name.

Protect the unique rock features and abundant natural treasures. Leave no trace, so that this special place is just as beautiful for your next visit, and for future generations.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- The park is open from 6 a.m. to sunset. Only campers registered in backpack trail camps may remain in the park overnight.
- Dogs (except for service animals) and glass containers are prohibited throughout the park.
- Horseback riding and bicycles are restricted, please refer to the map.
- Please respect private property rights and stay on designated trails.
- Be aware of rattlesnakes, ticks and poison oak.
- All vegetation, wildlife and geologic features in the park are protected by law and must not be disturbed or removed.
- If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please email: Volunteer@portolaparks.org or www.portolaparks.org.

Keep Our Parks Crumb Clean
Never feed wildlife. Pack your trash and leave no food, fat, or messy crumbs. Litter, crumbs and leftover food attract predators that feed on forest birds.

Choose Your Adventure

Easy

- Castle Rock Loop (Main Parking Lot) - Hiking**
Hike through the most beautiful forest and discover ancient oaklands throughout the park. Castle Rock offers stunning opportunities for a range of activities, and is a wonderful area for watching. The viewpoint loop is the easiest hike in the park and great for families with children.
Distance: 2.0 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes
- Castle Rock Falls (Main Parking Lot) - Hiking**
Follow the Searsville Gap Trail through stands of madrone, oak and Douglas-fir to Ring Creek. Follow the creekbed trail to Castle Rock Falls. Sit on the rock wall of the river. Listen to the sound of the water splashing over the falls. Enjoy spectacular views of the east and the San Lorenzo Valley from the viewing platform. If you're lucky, you may see children playing in the falls.
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Moderate

- Edgar-Tal Camp Loop (Main Parking Lot) - Hiking**
The rugged trail past Castle Rock and is packed with ever-splashing views of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the San Lorenzo Valley and the coast beyond. Listen for the coyotes' charge between every ridge and find a madrone forest. This hike takes you past the Castle Rock Trail Camp with picnic tables, viewing areas, pit toilets and a water cache. Be ready to be inspired! There are many well trail information about park history and wildlife.
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes
- Siphon-Loughy-Searsville Gap Loop (Main Parking Lot) - Hiking**
There's nothing like the highest ridge of the Santa Cruz Mountains down into the heart of Castle Rock State Park. You will encounter incredible views and a great trail. In the clear air you can breathe life in the distance. This hike takes you past the Castle Rock Trail Camp with picnic tables, viewing areas, pit toilets and a water cache.
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Strenuous

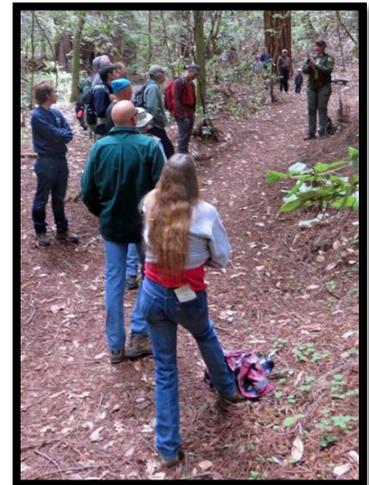
- Mill Park Loop (Main Parking Lot on Summit Road) - Hiking, Trail Running**
This challenge hike will take you to the backbone of the Santa Cruz Mountains. You will gain through a variety of dirt intersections with tree trunks in black oak, the dependent backbone pine and madrone. Sunrise, Spring, about halfway along the hike, make a great lunch stop.
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes
- Gap to Gap (Searsville Gap/Waterman Gap) - Hiking, Backpacking, Trail Running**
This strenuous loop is a great workout for strong hikers. Those looking for an overnight adventure can make "overnights" from the black oak and madrone of Waterman Gap Trail Camp. Hikers hiked both after dark and were very well lit in the open air during the afternoon.
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes
- Skyline to Sea**
From Searsville Gap to Millard Beach. Overnight Parking Available
Distance: 0.5 miles • Length: 1.5 hours • Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Castle Rock State Park

A new welcome panel has been installed at Castle Rock State Park. Funded by a grant from REI, the welcome panel was developed by Portola and Castle Rock Foundation with REI and State Parks. The panel includes a large map and information about the treasures located at Castle Rock.

Volunteer Training Class of 2016

The Portola and Castle Rock Volunteer Class of 2016 are getting comfortable on the trails and in the Portola Redwoods Visitors Center. This program was conducted by Interpretive Specialist I Rose Nelson with input from PCR Foundation Directors. These folks spent four long weeks learning as much as they could about the 2 parks. They have become experts in anything from Parks operations to trail patrol and from good climbing ethics to the flora and fauna of Portola. Some have been hosting the Portola Visitors Center, which is a HUGE help to us and the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. There have also been many reports of roving on the trails. Others are also interested in leading hikes at Castle Rock beginning in August! It is exciting to see our family of volunteers grow and grow!



State Park Volunteers have done a great job of providing eyes, ears, and boots on the ground in Portola Redwoods and Castle Rock State Parks. Park Staff keep the parks operating at reasonable levels of stewardship, but the Parks still need our help. We need more volunteers at Castle Rock, a mainly hiking, rock climbing, and backpacking park, and Portola Redwoods, a mainly camping and hiking park.

Volunteers help Park Staff by being another set of eyes in the park, help visitors by providing useful information and help everyone by staffing the Portola Redwoods Visitor Center Store. Proceeds from the store are used by the Foundation to provide additional interpretive resources for both Parks.

There is always a need for volunteers. For more information about volunteering, please visit our website or email Volunteer@PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org.

Ramada Project Approaches Completion

We are pleased to announce the rebuilding of the historic Ramada at Portola Redwoods State Park is almost complete.

From 1943 to 2011, Park visitors extensively used a Ramada structure, located adjacent to the Campfire Center and surrounded by second-growth Redwoods. The Ramada has been the site of many family and group events such as weddings and family reunions, and as an inclement weather shelter for multiple generations.

Funded by Peninsula Open Space Trust, Save The Redwoods League, California State Parks Foundation and the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation, State Parks has contracted to build a replacement structure to maintain the look and feel of the original structure.



Once completed, the Ramada may be reserved by groups for special events, is available for general picnicking use and also provides a meeting and project area for the Jr. Ranger interpretive program.



Hikes in 2016

Meet at the Castle Rock kiosk every Saturday at 9:30am for a guided hike. Each hike is approximately three miles and will last two hours. No need to RSVP, just show up with plenty of water. It's also suggested that you dress in layers. The hike is free, parking is \$8.

The PCR Foundation is planning additional guided hikes at Portola Redwoods and Castle Rock State Parks in 2016. Be sure to provide your email address to receive notification and information about these hikes. You can send us a note via our website or send an email directly to Info@PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org.

Donations

The Portola and Castle Rock Foundation depend on donations from supporters like you. Please consider making a mid-year donation now to help us fund future projects.

Membership

Will you support our community's cherished parks by accepting this invitation to become a Member of the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation? As a member, you will receive hiking and climbing maps for both Parks, a discount at the Visitor Center store, and organized hikes led by experienced docents. You'll also be invited to our annual Member Appreciation Event, a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the beauty of our community with friends and neighbors.

As a neighbor and member of our community, we would love to welcome you to the team that stands up for our two Park jewels. These precious local resources deserve your support. You may join for \$35 as an Individual Member or up to \$1,000 as a Patron Member. To learn more and join, visit our website at www.PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org.

Volunteer Events

Funded by a grant from National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF), Portola and Castle Rock Foundation worked with Sate Parks, Bay Area Climber's Coalition (BACC) and Hands on Bay Area (HOBA) to hold two volunteer days at Castle Rock State Park during Google's Google Gives volunteer program.

With our first two workdays, we were able to educate about 50 Google employees on PCRf's mission and get them directly involved in several maintenance projects. Volunteers worked on the following projects:

- Removing French Broom, an invasive plant species
- Clearing culverts of plants and debris to enable drainage
- Trash removal
- Re-painting weathered parking lot curbs and the Ranger kiosk.
- Sanding and painting the railing to Castle Rock Falls overlook, which previously had several names carved into it

Not only were we able to accomplish these projects, we also received a monetary donation from Google.



Amazon Smile... shop and support PCR Foundation

AmazonSmile is a great way to give back when you shop. Use the URL below to shop on Amazon. Same price to you and Amazon will donate 0.5% of each purchase to the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. Thank you for your support. smile.amazon.com/ch/94-3151586

Ground Breaking for the New Kirkwood Entrance to Castle Rock State Park

On May 14, the Sempervirens Fund hosted a BBQ lunch to celebrate the ground breaking ceremony for the new Kirkwood Entrance to Castle Rock State Park. The event was held on the property acquired for the new entrance which is about a quarter mile west of the current Main Parking Lot. The new entrance will include a visitors center, picnic tables and flush toilet facilities. Pictured here are key supporters of the project breaking ground - including the Sempervirens Executive Director, Sara Barth (2nd from the left) and Portola and Castle Rock Foundation President James Rauhen (6th from the left).



For more on the project please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/SempervirensFund/>

Cars 4 Causes...donate your vehicle

The Portola and Castle Rock Foundation has partnered with Cars 4 Causes. Call 1.888.444.2392 to arrange for Cars 4 Causes to remove your unwanted vehicle. We'll receive a cash donation and you'll receive a donation receipt to apply to your tax return.

http://www.cars4causes.net/charity-car-donation/portola-and-castle-rock-foundation?_vsrefdom-charity_pages

