



## Portola and Castle Rock Foundation

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

**Every dollar we receive counts.** Your donations enable us to do more for Castle Rock and Portola Redwoods State Parks. Our 2025 projects include funding interpretive panels as well as supporting maintenance needs. We will continue to make improvements to the Portola Redwoods Visitor Center including the projects to update the windows and repair the fireplace. In addition, we will continue to support State Parks programs for volunteers, backpackers and the Kids2Parks program. Funding these projects is possible because we receive generous donations from likeminded people, that share our passion for our local State Parks.

**Make your 2024 tax deductible donation now!** Long-time donors have agreed to donate \$2 for every \$1 donated (up to \$1,000) to Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. Please help us earn these matching funds by donating during the month of December.

**Help us do more - Donate** this month to Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. Send us a check, click on our website ([portolaandcastlerockfound.org/donations/](http://portolaandcastlerockfound.org/donations/)) or donate via the PayPal Giving Fund ([paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/110027](https://paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/110027)).

**With support from all** of our donors we can achieve our goals.  
**Please donate today!**

## 2024 Highlights

### **Portola Trail Crew**

Established in 2021, the Portola Trail Crew meets several times a year to help Park staff maintain the trails in the Park. They also help to install the seasonal bridge and other park improvements as



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directed or requested by Park staff. There is always room for more volunteers on these monthly efforts.

Volunteers spend time every month making progress - it's amazing how much the steady monthly workdays have contributed to visitor enjoyment and the overall condition of Portola's trails.

*Learn more about the Portola Trail Crew or sign up to volunteer next month.*  
[portolaandcastlerockfound.org/portola-trail-crew/](http://portolaandcastlerockfound.org/portola-trail-crew/)

### ***Coyote Ridge Trail Pedestrian Bridge Opening***

A long-awaited bridge over Peters Creek near the entrance to the Portola Redwoods opened in 2024. Visitors can once again hike a loop from the Escape Roads in the campground across the bridge, returning through the forest via the Coyote Ridge Trail. We celebrated the opening on July 27th with ribbon cutting and a guided hike.



In addition to PCRFB guests, Park visitors and employees, we were also joined by District Superintendent, Chris Spohrer and Road and Trail Manager, Chris Pereira. Two of the workers on this project, Matt Weil and Eamon Reynolds were given the honor of cutting the ribbon. Planning for this project began in 2015, with the original bridge closed to visitors for the past 7 years. The bridge is part of an accessibility project that, in the future, will provide more access to disabled visitors. Our amazing State Parks Interpreters led a guided hike between the Visitor Center and the bridge. Refreshments were enjoyed on the Visitor Center front porch.



### *Tip Toe Falls Stair Project, Portola Redwoods*

The Tip Toe Falls project to replace the wooden stairs that form the path to Tip Toe Falls began this fall. The project includes replacing 43 rotting wood steps leading down to the Pescadero Creek crossing. The steps are estimated to be 35+ years old. Additional steps are needed to correct irregular stride pattern and reduce step height, making the path more accessible and safer for a total of





65 new steps. DPR staff, CCC, and Portola Volunteer Trail Crew are carefully working on this project as weather permits. Big Creek Lumber graciously donated the lumber for this project to Portola and Castle Rock Foundation.

### *Visitor Center Update, Portola Redwoods*

By Andrew Shimizu, Historian II, California State Parks, Santa Cruz District

Following the successful completion of the reroofing project, the historic Portola Redwoods Visitor Center has been undergoing continuous maintenance efforts to improve the energy efficiency and fire resiliency of the building, all while following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Working within these guidelines ensures the historic integrity of the resource is maintained, while still being able to make the necessary improvements to preserve the structure.

One of the major concerns identified by both Parks staff and collaborating partners was the inoperability of the original double-hung wood windows, not allowing for proper airflow and ventilation, and the disadvantages of single pane glass regarding fire resilience. The 96"x36" original wood windows serve as important character defining features of the building; prominent architectural components of the historic resource that contributes significantly to its physical character.

Using the windows as a learning opportunity, Santa Cruz State Park's restoration staff led a historic window restoration training for district staff. The staff attending the class learned the nuances of maintaining

100-year-old windows and learned how to investigate and solve problems such as broken sash cords, freeing painted shut window sash, how to replace broken glass, and general maintenance that ensures the longevity of historic windows. The training was successful in not only teaching how to maintain historic wood windows, but also resulted in the rehabilitation of the Visitor Center windows, leaving them all operable and in solid working condition.

Portola and Castle Rock Foundation was able to secure a generous grant from South Skyline Association to further aid in its funding to fabricate custom storm sash for the Visitor Center windows, thereby increasing the fire resiliency of the window openings. The storm windows will fit into the existing window openings and will provide another layer of insulation and glass barrier, equaling the efficiency of double-paned glass in terms of fire resilience and insulation.

The practice of maintaining historic fabric is advantageous for reasons beyond the historic preservation element; maintaining existing historic windows is both more economically and environmentally sustainable. Maintaining 100-year-old resources, even while upgrading them with exterior storm sash, creates less waste and carbon emissions than would be needed to fabricate new vinyl windows.



Additional work on the Visitor Center was completed by Parks staff this summer to fire harden the structure including the restoration of the rotted exterior windowsill caused from the failing roof. Patching and painting the rotted windowsill will add another layer of fire resiliency in the event of ember cast being thrown on to the building.

## *Member and Volunteer Appreciation Event*

Our amazing State Parks Interpreters were on hand at our appreciation event in September for a guided hike at Castle Rock State Park. Frontera Grill Taco truck provided lunch to our members, volunteers and their guests.



## **Our Mission**

*Inspire Protection of Castle Rock and Portola Redwoods State Parks through Quality Educational Experiences and Infrastructure Improvements*

*Please donate today to help us do more tomorrow.*

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