

Año Nuevo Docent Training Program Guide 2009

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Introduction

Welcome to the California Department of Parks and Recreation Volunteer in Parks Program!

This handbook was put together for your benefit to help ensure your effectiveness as a volunteer/docent. It outlines the job performance standards expected of volunteers/docents working in the San Mateo Coast Sector, answers many of the questions you may have about the day-to-day operation of parks in the sector, and provides information about the sector's volunteer/docent programs, their missions and operations.

State Park Volunteer Tradition

Today's California State Park volunteers/docents follow a proud tradition of direct citizen support for public parks that dates back to the mid-19th century. Volunteer support for public parks began in the 1860s when concerned citizens helped to establish Yosemite, the first park managed by the State of California. From that time forward, California's volunteer forces have never wavered from serving the needs of all Californians.

Volunteers were the driving force behind the creation of our modern system of State Parks. In 1928, a massive statewide volunteer program was organized to survey all of California for potential State Park sites. This volunteer program helped define the ongoing mission of California State Parks and created the foundation upon which our modern system of 278 State Park units rests.

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the State's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valuable natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.

Today, Californians enjoy one of the largest and most popular park systems in the world. The diversity and beauty of California's State Parks attract over 77 million visits annually, challenging park managers to seek alternative and cost-effective ways of providing needed maintenance, visitor programs, and overall operational support.

Volunteers have become an integral link in the overall operation of our State Parks. They provide an equivalent value of millions of dollars in support for State Park programs and projects each year. Such volunteer efforts add to and enrich the visitor's experience, and are of personal value to the volunteers themselves.

Volunteers come from different backgrounds and possess different abilities and desires. Some love to interact with people and make new friends who may have similar interests. Others prefer to work alone. A common motivation is the satisfaction of performing a needed job and doing it well. Volunteering enables people in the community to be actively involved with California State Parks and, in turn, provides the Department additional resources with which to accomplish its mission.

What is a Docent?

Docents are highly trained volunteers who interpret the cultural, natural, and recreational resources of our State Parks. Docents, along with California Park Service employees, are the people with whom visitors are most likely to have contact. Consequently, docents play a dual role of being educators and public relations ambassadors. The Department greatly appreciates the generous donation of your time and many talents.

Docents work all year long in our State Parks in a wide variety of capacities. Whether working at sales counters, leading walks, demonstrating arts and crafts techniques, or helping with special events, California State Park System docents are special, dynamic people whose assistance is invaluable. Thank you for choosing to join this statewide activity!

You are a representative of the California Park Service. A professional docent who is well-informed and dependable radiates pride and self-confidence, and receives respect. You can depend upon the Park staff for advice, support, and encouragement. We will try in every way to help to make your experience a richly rewarding and memorable one.

Docent Program Organization

The docent program is a responsibility of California State Park System, and thus is managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). In the Santa Cruz District, the docent programs are supervised by the sector supervising rangers. Guidelines are established in the *Volunteers in Parks Program Manual*.

Docents are non-paid state employees, subject to employment benefits and coverage (see Benefits). As employees of the State, docents are under the direction and supervision of the designated DPR staff. The docents and the DPR staff work together in ensuring a high quality interpretive program for the public.

Although docents are state employees, all service is on a strictly voluntary basis. Docents cannot be required by any of the park staff or anyone else to do any work which they do not wish to do. Docents do not receive pay or other goods for work performed. Docents do not establish management or operations policies, and they may not be used to replace permanent or seasonal Department staff members.

The District Docent Coordinator is the administrator of the Año Nuevo docent program. This position is held by the Interpreter I, stationed at Año Nuevo. For Pescadero Marsh, the Sector Docent Coordinator is a Ranger I appointed by the supervising ranger. The duties of these coordinators include the following:

- ◆ Coordinate docent recruitment efforts
- ◆ Develop training outline and programs for docents and arranges for continuing training opportunities (field trips, educational activities, and so on)
- ◆ Schedule docents
- ◆ Provide operational support for docents
- ◆ Conduct docent evaluations

- ◆ Reevaluate and revise as necessary the docent program and manuals on a regular basis
- ◆ Maintain volunteer records and prepares annual docent report
- ◆ Maintain a communication network among the docents and with other DPR staff
- ◆ Coordinate all media and public information regarding the docent program

It is, of course, desirable that docents be involved with and have input into the operation of the docent program. The program needs the active involvement of the docents on many levels!

San Mateo Coast Natural History Association

The San Mateo Coast Natural History Association (SMCNHA) is a non-profit cooperating association that supports educational and interpretive programs in State Parks along the San Mateo Coast. This organization consists of a Board of Directors of volunteers drawn from the ranks of docents, volunteers, and members of the community who care about State Parks. The Board of Directors reviews interpretive funding requests each year and develops a budget for expenditures. Volunteers are welcome to attend the board meetings.

Money raised by SMCNHA (pronounced *smack-n-ha*)—through memberships, donations, firewood sales, and the sale of interpretive items from visitor centers and stores—stays here to directly support the local parks, unlike park fees, which go to the State Park and Recreation Fund. SMCNHA funds are used to purchase audio-visual equipment and other equipment, develop displays, publish educational literature, support volunteer programs, and conduct interpretive programs to help the public better understand how valuable these parks are to us and our children. Books, maps, and other items sold at the visitor centers and stores not only raise funds to benefit interpretive programs, through SMCNHA, but also provide visitors with additional information.

SMCNHA maintains a website (www.smcnha.org) that includes much information of use to volunteers and docents in the Santa Cruz District. Check out especially the Docent Resources page, which provides research material, wildlife sightings at the various parks, and useful tools for docents. News and Events articles are posted regularly on topics as diverse as notifications of new volunteer training classes and finding the tag of an Año-born elephant seal in the stomach of a dead orca off Vancouver Island. General information, maps, and photos of all the Sector parks are also provided.

San Mateo Coast Sector Volunteer Programs

Activities

Volunteers work year round in a variety of roles at State Parks along the San Mateo coast. The various activities have different minimum time commitments per month. Volunteers may meet their time commitments by working at different activities in more than one park unit.

Docent Program at Año Nuevo, Half Moon Bay, Pescadero Marsh, and Pigeon Point Light Station

Docents are highly trained volunteers who explain the cultural, natural, and recreational resources of our State Parks by leading interpretive activities. Docents may develop and lead walks, talks, and school group programs.

Docents at Año Nuevo lead tours to the elephant seal breeding grounds during the breeding season from December 15 – March 31. During the rest of the year, they act as roving naturalists. Pescadero Marsh docents lead scheduled marsh walks and act as roving naturalists. At Pigeon Point they may provide formal tours of the grounds or informal interpretation for park visitors. They also organize a shore-based whale-watching program in the spring, when migrating California gray whales come close to the shore. Docents also may participate in and help organize special events, such as the annual ceremonial lighting of the original Fresnel lens at Pigeon Point Lighthouse or activities marking International Migratory Bird Day at Half Moon Bay State Beach. Volunteers who want to become docents are provided additional training to prepare for leading interpretive programs.

Plover Watch Program at Half Moon Bay State Beach

Plover Watch volunteers are active primarily during the western snowy plover nesting season from March into September. They monitor the protected habitat area and observe and collect data on plover activity, as well as on recreational activity in the area. Volunteers contact visitors on the beach to educate them about activities that are incompatible with nesting and to interpret the natural history of the snowy plover. Volunteers may assist with installing symbolic fencing and nest exclosures. Volunteers who participate in this program complete a one-day training session and are asked to contribute a minimum of four hours per month during the nesting season.

Visitor Centers at Año Nuevo and Half Moon Bay

The Visitor Center serves as a place where a visitor can learn about various cultural and natural aspects of San Mateo Coast Sector park units. Volunteers who work in the Visitor Center provide assistance to visitors (answering questions, giving directions, etc.), interpret displays, and sell books and other materials. They are asked to contribute a minimum of eight hours per month throughout the year.

Bookstore at Pigeon Point Light Station

Docents in the Pigeon Point Bookstore answer questions from visitors and sell educational materials and items related to the lighthouse.

Native Plant Restoration Program

Volunteers with this program assist staff in removing non-native plants from designated areas and planting natives. Volunteers sometimes assist with collecting and processing native plant seeds. Volunteers assist with other resource and access issues in the designated restoration areas. Volunteers with this program may participate as a one-time activity or return regularly as a short-term or long-term volunteer. Instruction is provided each day that volunteer activities occur.

Trail Maintenance Program

Volunteers participate in trail maintenance projects at park units, including Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, McNee Ranch, and Burleigh Murray Ranch. Some volunteers return periodically to do trail work and some volunteers attend one-time events. Trail work events are often scheduled in conjunction with statewide Earth Day and Trails Day events. Instruction is provided each day that volunteer activities occur.

Año Nuevo State Park Docent Program

History

The land included in Año Nuevo State Park was acquired over decades in an effort to preserve unique habitats, species, and cultural artifacts along the San Mateo coast. In 1958 the Año Nuevo State Reserve was created to protect a potential northern elephant seal breeding area after an elephant seal was first sighted on Año Nuevo Island in 1955. State Parks acquired large parcels of land east of the State Reserve in the 1980s, including the historic Cascade Ranch buildings. On October 31, 2008, the California State Park and Recreation Commission approved a General Plan consolidating separate Año Nuevo park units into one park—Año Nuevo State Park—with separate natural and cultural preserves within it. Under the plan, an 800-acre Año Nuevo Natural Preserve protects the former Reserve and Wildlife Protection Area, including Año Nuevo Island—sites of major mainland breeding colonies of the northern elephant seal.

The Año Nuevo State Park docent program has been in existence since 1974. Prior to that time, Año Nuevo had relatively few visitors, and just a few male elephant seals appeared during the winter. The number of visitors increased dramatically as a result of media coverage. This made necessary a plan to protect the seals and the park habitats, while still allowing public access.

The Park Service entered into an innovative joint agreement with the University of California, Santa Cruz, to provide an opportunity for students to receive university training to interpret and help protect the seals. The program proved to be very successful, and resulted in a formal guided walk system.

As the number and frequency of seals, as well as visitors increased, the docent program expanded in scope to include community volunteers, a year round program, and specialized walks. The Año Nuevo Interpretive Association (ANIA) initially sponsored the docent program. ANIA was a non-profit cooperating association under contract with the State Park System to aid with the interpretive, educational and related visitor service activities of the State Parks, primarily at Año Nuevo State Park. Today, the majority of docents are year-round community members and the program is managed by State Park staff.

Año Nuevo Docent Activities

Docents work all year round in a variety of roles and are asked to serve a minimum time commitment per month. This time commitment may be met through a variety of different activities.

Guided Walks (December 15 to March 31)

Visitors make their walk reservations through The California State Parks Reservation Service for a specific date and time. The walks originate in the Visitor Center, where a staff person provides an orientation and directs the visitors to the Wildlife Protection Area trailhead. The trailhead

staff maintains closure of the Wildlife Protection Area, assembles each group, introduces the group to their docent, and explains the rules. Then the docent leads the group on a one and one half hour interpretive walk through the Wildlife Protection Area. The group returns to the trailhead, and visitors walk back to the parking lot at their own pace. Total distance and time for visitors is three miles in about two and one half hours.

The Docent Roost

The Docent Roost is a trailer located near the trailhead. It is a place for docents to rest between walks. Water, coffee, tea and soups are provided. There is a cooking stove, refrigerator, and a sink. Please bring food for your lunch but do not leave food in the Roost overnight—it attracts mice. The Docent Roost is provided for your comfort—please keep it clean.

A bulletin board in the Docent Roost provides you with up-to-date information about seals, scheduled activities, program changes and so on. The bulletin board is used by the staff to get important information to docents—please be sure to read it each day that you are on duty at the trailhead.

Visitor Center Operations

The Visitor Center is an integral part of the park program. It serves as the hub of the operation, and most visitors to the park pass through this building. The Visitor Center serves as a place where a visitor can learn about the various cultural and natural aspects of the park, even if that person does not care to walk all the way out to the point.

Docents may participate in additional training to volunteer in the bookstore. The additional training prepares you for the following duties:

- ◆ Visitor assistance (answer questions, give directions, etc.)
- ◆ Interpretation of displays
- ◆ Operation and interpretation of the slide show / video show
- ◆ Bookstore operations and sales

Remember, if you are asked a question and do not know the answer, say so—and try to find the answer. There will always be a staff person to contact and there are many books and materials at hand.

When you are working in the Visitor Center, be sure to dress warmly (in layers) since it is often cold and drafty.

Equal Access Program

The Equal Access Program is designed to allow the opportunity for people unable to negotiate the 3-mile trail to experience the beauty of Año Nuevo. Visitors have access to the dune area along a wooden boardwalk, which extends into the sand dune area. The visitors (accompanied by equal access guides) are transported along a perimeter road to the edge of the dunes, north of the Wildlife Area trailhead. The docents then provide an interpretive talk for the visitors. The joy and amazement that is often expressed by Equal Access visitors (many of whom have never been in the sand dunes before) is a feeling not soon forgotten. Equal Access docents must attend

supplemental training to be eligible to conduct these walks. We welcome and encourage docents of all abilities to participate.

Spring/Summer/Fall Naturalist Program

During the other seasons, docents are stationed near the seals to remind visitors of the regulations and to answer any questions. Although docent and ranger-led nature walks in the park do occur, the schedule is not nearly as intensive as it is during the winter months. This is a more relaxed opportunity for visitors and docents to observe and study the seals for an extended period of time.

During these months, many visitors come to Año Nuevo for reasons other than the seals. They come to enjoy the beach, to bird-watch, to study the plants, or to view the historic buildings.

In the summer, it often is very chilly at Año Nuevo due to the strong northwest winds. Windbreakers, layered clothing, and comfortable walking shoes are excellent items to bring with you. The type of headgear you choose is up to you but something with a visor is good, and a hat will protect you from “no-see-ums” that seem to love to bite the scalp. Sunscreen lotion, lip protection, high-energy snacks, and a water bottle are all items you will need to pack. Field guides, binoculars, and hand lenses will add to your enjoyment of the day as well as the enrichment of the park visitor’s experience. Sunglasses are recommended but we ask that you please do not wear reflective sunglasses.

Most of all, bring a spirit of adventure and exploration. Use your backpack not only as a mini survival kit but as a bag of surprises that you can share with your visitors. It is exciting to watch children’s (and adults’) faces light up when you pull a field guide, a hand lens, a piece of elephant seal skin or some other interpretive aid out of your pack in response to a question.

You are welcome to bring along a friend during your volunteer time as a roving naturalist, but we ask you remember that visitors come first in terms of your attention.

As always, please be sure to wear your docent jacket or shirt (including name tag) so that you are easily identifiable to visitors. The Park staff will be informing visitors of your presence and will encourage visitors to ask you questions. It is your responsibility to be visible, and to contact visitors at the point and remind them of the regulations.

Horse Patrol Program

Dedicated equestrians assist in interpreting and protecting the north end of the Park in the volunteer Horse Patrol Program. Volunteers attend training given by the State Park staff and also demonstrate their equestrian skills. The program (which started in 1984) is serving a great need in protecting the Park and providing interpretive information to the public. For more information, contact the Horse Patrol Program coordinator.

Requirements for Active Status

In order to remain active in the program, docents are required to fulfill these commitments:

- ◆ Attend the training classes and field trips for new volunteers. If a docent misses more than two sessions, he/she will be asked to repeat the training the next fall (unless prior arrangements are approved by the Docent Coordinator).
- ◆ Read the required material and pass the mid-term and final exams.
- ◆ Adhere to the guidelines set forth in the docent manual.
- ◆ Meet State requirements as per the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- ◆ Participate as a docent (in the field) for one full year after training.
- ◆ Work two 8-hour days per month during the Elephant Seal Guided Walk season (December to March).
- ◆ During the Spring/Summer and the Summer/Fall seasons, work two 5-hour days per month or one 8-hour day per month.
- ◆ After one full year of participation, docents may take the Spring/Summer or the Summer/Fall season off after making arrangements with the Docent Coordinator.
- ◆ Any docent taking more than four months off in a year is considered inactive and dropped from the program unless prior arrangements are approved by a Docent Coordinator.
- ◆ Docents working at Año Nuevo are also considered inactive if they miss three of their scheduled shifts without calling or if they are absent for more than two consecutive seasons. Docents may reactivate by repeating designated segments of the docent training course.

Responsibilities

As a docent providing interpretive activities and presentations, there are certain responsibilities that you must meet to ensure the success of these activities:

1. Sign in at the entrance station when you arrive in the morning.
2. During the Guided Walk season, check in with the staff at the Docent Roost. On most days, the Docent Coordinator will be at the Roost in the morning to make the daily walk schedule and update you on trail and elephant seal conditions. In the absence of the Docent Coordinator, the Staging Area park staff (at the Wildlife Protection Area trailhead) will perform this function.
3. Check the bulletin board in the Docent Roost.
4. During the Guided Walk season, be present at the Staging Area ready to lead your walk five minutes before the walk is actually scheduled to begin. You can use this time to interpret display items at the Staging Area, learn something about your group so you can plan ahead on how you will conduct your walk, and help the park staff person gather your group together. The Staging Area staff person should not have to call you out of the Roost, nor should the group have to wait for you.

Pigeon Point Light Station Docent Program

State Historic Landmark History

At sunset on November 15, 1872, Captain Patterson, Principal Keeper of Pigeon Point Light Station, United States Lighthouse Service, climbed the 136 iron steps to the lantern room of the 155-foot tower and lit the oil lamp inside the First Order Fresnel lens for the very first time. The lighthouse has been in continuous operation since then, flashing a light every 10 seconds to provide a warning and navigational aid to mariners.



The United State Coast Guard, which absorbed the Lighthouse Service in 1939, continues to operate Pigeon Point as a fully active, automated aid to navigation. In 1980, the Coast Guard leased the land containing the station dwellings, tower and fog signal building to the California State Parks, which in turn subleased the four residence bungalows and fog signal building to American Youth Hostel Association (AYH) for use as a hostel. The former Coast Guard keeper residences now provide low-cost dormitory-style accommodations for overnight guests of all ages.

In 1984, Año Nuevo Interpretive Association, a non-profit cooperating association under contract with the California State Parks, began offering a weekend lighthouse tour program using volunteers from the Coastside area and docents from Año Nuevo State Park. In the early 1990's, the program administration was assumed by the Pigeon Point Hostel (AYH). During these years the program was hampered by a lack of docents and program continuity as well as inconsistent tour schedules.

In 1996, California State Parks assumed direct responsibility for the lighthouse interpretive program. The docents report to a State Parks Ranger. Docents used to lead lighthouse tours every Saturday and Sunday, weather permitting, year-round. However, in December 2001, two sections of the tower's upper iron belt course broke off. The damage was particularly serious because the belt course functions like a rubber band, holding the tower together. The tower is closed to the public pending its restoration.

Activities

Grounds Tours

Docents greet visitors at the light station on Fridays and weekends, explain the history of the lighthouse and the natural history of the area, and offer free tours of the light station grounds and buildings.

In October 2006 a new interpretive center, created in partnership with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, was opened in the Fog Signal Building. The center provides another focal point for docent interpretation with exhibits, including a large model of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse showing its interior.

Bookstore

Docents also staff the Pigeon Point Bookstore, which sells educational materials and items related to the lighthouse. Docents in the store answer visitors' questions, as well as sell merchandise.

Whale Watch

In April and May docents organize a shore-based whale watching program during the northern migration of the California gray whales. Whale sightings can be spectacular, with gray whale cow and calf combinations frequently swimming within 30 or 40 yards of the point. Docents utilize a wide variety of hands-on displays to help explain to visitors the natural history and physiology of these massive creatures.

Maintenance and Native Plant Restoration

Docents can participate in a variety of other activities at the light station, including helping with such maintenance chores as painting and making minor repairs. They can also help with a native plant restoration project, initiated California State Parks in 2004, using volunteers to remove non-native plants on the lighthouse grounds and plant or encourage the growth of native plants.



Requirements for Active Status

In order to remain active in the program, docents are required to fulfill these commitments:

- ◆ Attend the training classes for new volunteers.
- ◆ Read training handouts, including purchasing and reading the 84-page book *History of Pigeon Point Lighthouse*, and pass any quizzes and exams.

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- ♦ Adhere to guidelines set forth in the volunteer handbook.
- ♦ Meet State requirements per the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- ♦ Participate as a docent for one full year after training.
- ♦ Work one 7-hour shift per month. Docents are encouraged to work extra shifts if they are able.
- ♦ Docents may also fulfill their time commitment by contributing an equal amount of work on other projects—such as native plant restoration—at Pigeon Point, or by volunteering at other State Parks in the San Mateo Coast Sector.
- ♦ Any docent who misses three consecutive months or four shifts in a year shall be considered inactive and dropped from the program unless prior arrangements are approved by the Docent Coordinator.
- ♦ Docents may reactivate by repeating designated segments of the docent training course.

Docent Responsibilities

- ♦ Show up as scheduled and on time. Open station or bookstore and coordinate with other docents who will lead ground tours or provide roving interpretation.
- ♦ Find a substitute if unable to work a scheduled shift and notify Docent Coordinator.
- ♦ Notify the Docent Coordinator and other docents if you will be unavoidably late.
- ♦ Adhere to and enforce all safety rules.
- ♦ Complete maintenance and cleaning tasks as assigned.
- ♦ Be available to answer questions and welcome visitors when not leading tours.
- ♦ Close the station or bookstore.

Pescadero Marsh Docent Program

History

Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve is part of Pescadero State Beach. Acquisition by the State began in 1958 and the Natural Preserve was named and classified in 1974. Formed at the confluence of Pescadero Creek and Butano Creek, the marsh is the largest coastal wetland between San Francisco and Elkhorn Slough in Monterey County.

The 235-acre Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve includes a complex of several habitats—a tidal estuary, freshwater marsh, brackish water marsh, dense riparian



woods, and northern coastal scrub. It is an important wintering ground for waterfowl on the Pacific flyway. More than 200 species of birds have been recorded in the marsh; more than 60 nest there, including great blue herons and egrets. Species in the marsh listed under the Endangered Species Act include the San Francisco garter snake, California red-legged frog, tidewater goby, steelhead trout, and Coho salmon.

Recognizing the unique features and needs of Pescadero Marsh, the Pescadero Marsh Docent Program was implemented in the spring of 1988. Docents provide guided walks in the marsh for the public and school groups and assist with special programs. The docent program is managed out of the State Parks Pescadero Office at the end of Water Lane, west of the town of Pescadero.

General Information

Docents working at Pescadero Marsh are welcome to stop by the Pescadero Office at the end of Water lane when staff is present. A telephone is there, a restroom and shower (outhouses are located at the South Pescadero and North Pescadero parking lots), hot and cold water, and a resource library that you can use to look up answers for questions, refresh you memory, and add to your store of knowledge. Docents can bring their own food and drink with them or go into the town of Pescadero where there are restaurants and a market.

Activities

Docents work year round in a variety of roles and are asked to serve a minimum time commitment of four hours per month. This time commitment may be met through variety of activities:

Guided Walks

The meeting times and locations for guided walks may vary depending on trail availability, desired variety, wildlife activity, and so on. The Docent Coordinator, however, will always inform you in advance of the advertised starting time and meeting place for your walk. Generally walks are provided year round, weather permitting. Walks are currently offered on the first Sunday of the month at 10:00 a.m. and on the third Sunday of the month at 1:00 p.m.

Except for short portions, all of the Marsh trails cover fairly level terrain. The walks usually last 1½-2 hours and cover 1-2 miles. There is plenty of time for looking and exploring. There are two primary trails: the Butano Loop Trail and the Sequoia Audubon Trail.

Roving Naturalist

As a roving naturalist you may either be scheduled for the activity or undertake it because no one showed up for a scheduled walk. This type of assignment ideally combines the opportunity for giving information and/or interpretation. In circulating throughout the Preserve, you may be asked a variety of questions. Some of these questions require only factual replies (for example, location of the nearest restroom) while others could lead to informal, spontaneous, brief interpretive exchanges. It is important to be able to recognize the difference and to know when to explore an idea more fully. You will need to develop sensitivity to what a visitor really wants to know. Of course, sometimes the visitor does not know what he or she wants until a choice is presented. In any event, roving naturalists have an ideal situation in which they can dispense information effectively and interpret the situation in an exciting way.

The roving naturalist employs techniques and suggestions covered in the interpretation section of this handbook. Bring a spirit of adventure and exploration. Use your backpack as a bag of surprises that you can share with your visitors. It is exciting to watch children's (and adult) faces light up when you pull a field guide, hand lens, compass, or other interpretive aid out of your pack in response to a question.

In walking through the Marsh, you are also an extra set of eyes and ears for what is happening in the area. Inform the staff of any problems, unusual wildlife sightings, and so on. Occasionally you may see visitors violating park regulations in the Preserve (fishing at the wrong time of the year, dogs, barbecuing, and so on). Politely inform them of the violation while avoiding a confrontation.

Other Activities

On an "as needed" basis, you can become involved in other activities:

- ◆ Assisting the Docent Coordinator in program implementation (typing, scheduling, telephoning, training assistance)

- ◆ Ongoing research, flora and fauna (bird) surveys
- ◆ Special projects
- ◆ Trail maintenance
- ◆ Installation and upkeep of interpretive displays

The Docent Coordinator can provide interested docents more detailed information about these other activities.

Requirements for Active Status

In order to remain active in the program, docents are required to fulfill these commitments:

- ◆ Attend the training classes and field trips for new volunteers. Docents who miss more than two sessions will be asked to repeat the training course unless prior arrangements are approved by the Docent Coordinator.
- ◆ Read the required material and pass any tests.
- ◆ Adhere to the guidelines set forth in the volunteer handbook.
- ◆ Meet State requirements per the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- ◆ Participate as a docent (in the field) for one full year after training. Active Pescadero Marsh Docents participate 4 hours per month for at least 11 months per year.
- ◆ Any docent taking more than three months off in a year shall be considered inactive and dropped from the program unless prior arrangements are approved by the Docent Coordinator.
- ◆ Docents may reactivate by repeating designated segments of the docent training course.



Butano State Park Docent Program

History

This redwood park offers a variety of trails for hiking, mountain bicycling and backpacking as well as, overnight camping. Docent Naturalists at Butano lead nature walks, give campfire programs, staff the interpretive center, and serve as roving naturalists. Docents in this popular park play an important role by interpreting nature to visitors.

Activities

Guided Walks

Docent-led nature walks are conducted each Saturday from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. The walks begin at 2:00 P.M. and last from one and one half hours to two hours and begin at the Interpretive Center. Docents should plan to arrive one half hour early to interpret the display items and learn something about your group so you can plan ahead how you will conduct your walk.

Campfire Programs

Campfire programs are held each Saturday night from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. The time is variable and dependent upon sunset. The campfire program usually lasts about one hour and the subject is generally left up to the docent, although emphasis should be on natural resources or an outdoor theme. A typical campfire program may begin with the docent setting up, building a fire and conducting some sort of warm-up activity. This could be a game, a funny skit, songs, or a question and answer time.

The main body of your presentation is equally flexible but could be a slide show, storytelling, a talk about some aspect of the park, history, or Native American crafts demonstration. Here is where you can use your imagination. Experiment! Ask other docents what has worked for them in the past. Programs that are geared towards children often have greater success and are enjoyed by adults as well.

Junior Ranger Program

Junior Ranger programs are held on weekends from Memorial Day through Labor Day at 10 am to 12 p.m. in the campfire center. For kids of all ages, explore all topics of natural history found within the park, nature hikes are often taken during these times.

Projects

In addition to these programs, there is ample opportunity for docents to get involved in a variety of other projects that may interest them. Docents may assist in installation and upkeep of interpretive displays, perform trail maintenance, or design a campfire program.

Butano State park is a multi-use unit providing opportunities for day use, overnight camping, mountain bicycling, and backpacking. Docents can benefit from this diversity of park use by choosing their own focus and creating a personal “niche.”

Requirements for Active Status

In order to remain active in the program, docents are required to fulfill these commitments:

- ◆ Attend several interpretive programs at Butano State Park, review programs with Park Ranger or PIS before presentation.
- ◆ Read the pertinent material.
- ◆ Adhere to the guidelines set forth in the docent manual.
- ◆ Meet State requirements as per the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- ◆ Commit to a minimum of one interpretive program per month, and one campfire program per year.

Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center/ Ranger Station Docent Program

History

In 1913, Theodore Hoover bought 3,000 acres of the Waddell Valley, and as an early conservationist and naturalist, he considered this land ownership to be a protective stewardship. He named the property ‘Rancho Del Oso,’ which in the 1970’s was turned over to the California Department of Parks and Recreation as part of the Big Basin Redwoods State Park. In 1985, Hulda Hoover McLean (Theodore Hoover’s daughter) gave her home to the Sempervirens Fund, which then allowed the home to be converted into the Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center.

The Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center is managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation and is supported by the Non-profit Waddell Creek Association. The Center is staffed by an Interpretive Specialist and a team of docents, all of whom are essential for creating a quality visitor experience.

This park offers both easy and challenging trails that meander through seven distinct plant communities: Monterey pine forests, Redwood forests, Riparian woodlands, Chaparral, Coastal scrub, and Coastal dunes. Docents interpret the diverse characteristics of these communities and the incredible array of wildlife that is found in each by leading nature walks, staffing the Nature and History Center, and serving as roving naturalists that interact with hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, backpackers, and beach goers.

Activities

Upon successful completion of the Docent Orientation Program, docents will interpret the natural and cultural history of Rancho Del Oso, which makes up the Western Sector of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Docents will interpret through various activities such as:

- ◆ Hosting the Nature and History Center or the Ranger Station
- ◆ Leading regular guided nature walks into Waddell Valley (beginning every Saturday at 1PM)
- ◆ Assisting with special presentations and events
- ◆ Assisting with school groups
- ◆ Serving as a roving naturalist

Other Activities

- ◆ Performing light gardening and cleaning activities
- ◆ Conducting flora and fauna surveys

- ◆ Designing and maintaining the interpretive displays
- ◆ Researching special projects
- ◆ Trail maintenance

Requirements for Active Status

In order to remain active in the program, docents are required to fulfill these commitments:

- ◆ Docents are required to work no less than one 4-hour shift per month for at least one year
- ◆ Attend training sessions and enrichments
- ◆ Read required material
- ◆ Meet State requirements as per the Volunteer Service Agreement
- ◆ Adhere to California State Parks guidelines and rules

Responsibilities

As a docent providing interpretive activities and visitor services, there are certain responsibilities that ensure your success:

- ◆ Open and close the Nature and History Center or Ranger Station
- ◆ Keep record of accurate statistical information (Number of visitors per day, hours of interpretation, and hours of volunteer service)
- ◆ Replenish brochure containers and make note of what shop items are needed
- ◆ Answer phone calls and visitor questions pertaining to camping, trails, and all other park information
- ◆ Operate shop and complete Daily Shop Report

Docent Standards / Guidelines / Responsibilities at Año Nuevo

Docents are unpaid California State Park employees and members of the interpretive staff of the Santa Cruz District. As a docent, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects pride in yourself and in the State Park System. In order to operate the interpretive programs efficiently, all volunteer staff members must adhere to certain rules, procedures and standards. The following information is intended to give you some guidance along these lines. Docents who show an unwillingness to conform to these standards will be asked to leave the program.

Punctuality

Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early for all training programs and work commitments. It is essential that you be on time.

Complete your walk on time. This is very important. At Año Nuevo, walks will back up behind you if you are slow (groups are not allowed to pass the group in front of them). As a result, you may have to begin your next walk without taking a break. In addition, many visitors have to be back in the parking lot at a specific time for transportation.

Dependability

Docents are vitally important to the success of daily operations. In other words, we need you. If an unforeseen emergency arises, try to find a replacement from the docent roster. If you are unable to find a replacement, you are required to call and inform the Docent Coordinator. At least one day advance notice is preferred. Docents who do not show for duty and do not call more than three times will be asked to leave the program.

All docents are expected to find a substitute if you are unable to work on a day for which you are scheduled. Give the name of the substitute to the Docent Coordinator prior to the scheduled day of service. Plan in advance for this possibility. We will supply a list of active docents and the days they are available for service. We strongly recommend that you talk with possible substitutes early in the season, to work out a plan whereby you will substitute for each other if necessary. If you are unable to work and cannot find a substitute, call the Docent Coordinator: (650)879-2032 for Año Nuevo docents; (650) 879-2170 for Pescadero Marsh docents and (650) 879-2040 for Butano Program docents. When you are ill, finding a substitute is not necessary, but please call.

Participation in more than one program

In order to participate in more than one program, docents must meet the general requirements and attend all docent training and field trips for new volunteers that are specific for that program.

Appearance

You must maintain a professional appearance when serving as a docent. Anything less would distract from your presentation. You must wear the approved name tag and the approved jacket or shirt.

Attitude

A pleasant and professional attitude is important. All visitors are guests, and it is a primary responsibility to see that their visit is pleasant, enjoyable and safe. Sincere concern and friendly interest should characterize dealings with all visitors. The public expects and deserves to be treated in a courteous and professional manner. If a visitor comes to you with a complaint, explain to him/her what action you can or cannot take, and report the matter to a ranger. If a visitor asks you to identify yourself, do so.

Above all, never give false or misleading information to the public—if you are not sure, do not be afraid to say so. At the same time, try to be well-informed and helpful. Avoid any public criticism of the Department, staff or policies. If there is something you disagree with, discuss it with the Docent Coordinator or Supervising Ranger.

When dealing with visitors, please remember that a Park Visitor:

- ◆ is our guest, and should be treated as such.
- ◆ is the most important person in any park.
- ◆ is dependent on us for a better understanding of the philosophy of the Park Service.
- ◆ is not an interruption of our work but one of the purposes for it.
- ◆ does us a favor when visiting a park. Serving the visitor is the service we perform.
- ◆ is not a cold statistic but a human being with feelings and emotions like our own.
- ◆ is someone who brings us his/her needs for the outdoors. It is our job to help satisfy those needs.
- ◆ is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give.
- ◆ expects good manners from Park employees and docents.

Behavior

Immoral conduct, the illegal use of drugs, reporting to work with alcohol on the breath, being drunk or drinking alcohol on duty, or commission of a serious crime are all expressly prohibited, and will result in your being asked to leave the program.

It is your responsibility to treat your co-workers and park staff with courtesy and respect; to obey all lawful orders; to report to the park on time and ready to work; and to remain alert while on duty. It is not proper to listen to radios or cassettes, play cards, read, gossip, or perform other such activities in view of the public. Keep private visiting to a minimum when the public is present. Do not use public contacts as a soap box for your private views.

Authority

As a docent, you do not have peace officer authority. You should be familiar with park rules and regulations and, using your best judgment, you should caution park visitors if you witness a violation of these regulations. You are to report all violations of law or park rules that you witness to a ranger. You are, of course, expected to personally comply with all park rules and regulations.

State Property

State vehicles and equipment are for official use only. After training, you may be permitted to operate certain vehicles and pieces of equipment. You are not to operate a vehicle or piece of equipment without specific authorization to do so.

When you are authorized, you will have additional responsibilities to report any malfunction, to perform the specified maintenance and care procedures, to complete the necessary paperwork and to avoid accidents. You are not to pick up riders or hitchhikers in a State vehicle. You are not to abuse or misuse a piece of State equipment or operate in violation of the California Vehicle Code or any other law.

Confidentiality

Certain information of which you may become aware is confidential and must not be discussed with persons not employed by the DPR. Confidential information includes such things as crimes and incidents, rescue and accident reports, disciplinary actions, employee grievances, budget proposals and proposed policy changes. If you are questioned about these matters, politely but firmly refer the questioner to Park staff.

Privileges

Docents should not expect special privileges or favors regarding park use or use of facilities. The use of State property or equipment for your personal benefit or the acceptance of any gratuities resulting from your participating in the docent program is not permitted. However, docents are entitled to certain benefits; see the Benefits section.

You are not entitled to keep any money, clothing, or other valuables found in the park. All found items should be turned in to a ranger no later than the end of your working day. Visitors reporting lost items should talk with a ranger. If none is available, take the visitor's name, address, and telephone number, a description of the item lost, and a date and location where it was lost. Give this information to a ranger.

Interpretation

You will be required to read various publications and this manual in order to become familiar with basic information. It is important that all docents know and adhere to the same facts for a consistent interpretive program.

A satisfactory speaking voice and the ability to communicate effectively are basic requirements for effective interpretation. Park staff will assist you in your interpretive efforts. It is important that you possess the ability to accept constructive criticism for reasons of self-improvement. All

docents are encouraged to repeat training sessions as refresher, and to assist in sharing information and experiences as a docent. In addition to attending training sessions, periodic evaluations will be conducted to encourage individual improvements.

Equipment

Wear your name tag and the approved jacket or T-shirt when leading a walk. If it is raining, you may wear rain gear over the jacket or shirt.

Please bring with you the equipment necessary to ensure the success of your walk:

A watch

If giving a walk, it is important to begin and end your walk on time.

Layered clothing

Weather conditions can change quickly along the coast, and wind can cool temperatures quickly. A warm day can suddenly become chilly when the fog rolls in. If you are miserable you will not be able to provide a very good experience for the visitors! Wear appropriate clothes for the conditions and expect those conditions to change. For cold weather, consider gloves and thermal underwear.

Hat

A hat not only keeps your hair out of your face and protects you from the sun but it can also protect your scalp from biting insects.

Sturdy footwear

Wear shoes in which you are comfortable walking.

Lip protection

Wind, rain, salt air, sun, and talking will all quickly contribute to painful, chapped lips.

Sunscreen

Even in the winter and on overcast days, sunburn is possible.

Sunglasses

Non-reflective sunglasses are friendlier.

Also consider bringing the following recommended items:

- ◆ Insect repellent (it helps!)
- ◆ Field guides
- ◆ Binoculars
- ◆ Food
- ◆ Tissues
- ◆ Magnifying glass

Benefits

After-hours Walks

Guidelines

All Santa Cruz District docents and other eligible participants are entitled to after-hours walks during the elephant seal breeding season at Año Nuevo. Maximum group size is ten persons, including yourself. Participants must sign up with the Año Nuevo Docent Coordinator.

Año Nuevo docents may sign up for an after-hours walk after submitting a guided walk season schedule. For each additional after-hours walk, two additional days of leading guided walks must be scheduled between the after-hours walks.

Only active, committed docents are eligible for after-hours.

Two weekend or holiday after-hours are permitted per season; there is no limit to the number of weekday after-hours walks.

All after-hours participants must follow the current regulations and stay on the normal guided walk trail.

Advance reservations must be made for all after-hours walks by contacting the Año Nuevo Docent Coordinator, **(650) 879-2032 at least 48 hours in advance.**

Additional Instructions

- ◆ You are responsible for remembering the date and time of your after-hours walk.
- ◆ Be prompt. Check in with your guests at the Visitor Center at the designated walk time. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will not be able to conduct your after-hours walk.
- ◆ In order for the park's day-use fee to be waived, you must be in the vehicle as it arrives at the entrance kiosk. Your ticket fees will always be waived. All other guest cars will need to pay the park's day-use fee.
- ◆ All regulations that apply to visitors are in force during your after-hours walks. You must remain on the trails, you must stay within the restricted areas, no food or drink is allowed (except water), and the walk must be a maximum of 1.5 hours. When you arrive at the Wildlife Area Trailhead, find out what time you are expected to return to the trailhead.
- ◆ Guides on after-hours walks should not attempt to crowd or to pass other groups.

NOTE: If a participant in an after-hours walk does not comply with these instructions, the docent may be denied the privilege of booking future after-hours walks.

Observation of Walks

This is a chance for you to go along on a walk to observe and learn the techniques of other docents. This is especially beneficial for new guides. You may come out any day of the week, but please observe the following guidelines.

- ◆ It is up to the Docent Coordinators to determine when you can observe a walk.
- ◆ Do not bring anyone else with you. Observation of walks is permitted because we want to help docents improve their skills.
- ◆ You must be back at the trailhead at the time designated by the Año Nuevo staff.
- ◆ You need not accompany the entire walk but if you plan to leave the walk, you must be readily identifiable as a docent. Wear the docent jacket and name tag.
- ◆ If you are not scheduled to lead any walks on the day you come, you may observe as many walks as you wish.
- ◆ If you are scheduled to lead your own walks, notify the Docent Coordinators at the beginning of the day so they can schedule your observation and regular walks within the daily schedule.
- ◆ Be courteous while observing. Do not correct another docent or interrupt the walk. If visitors ask you questions, explain that you are only observing, and refer the question to the docent in charge of that walk.

Elephant Seal Observation

This is a chance for you to sit and observe elephant seals at Año Nuevo for an extended period of time. This privilege is reserved for Año Nuevo docents only. Please observe the following guidelines:

- ◆ Make the necessary arrangements with the Staging Area staff or Docent Coordinators and the Point Ranger.
- ◆ You must have worked for a minimum of three days at Año Nuevo in order to qualify.
- ◆ All regularly scheduled walks must be covered before time can be taken for observation.
- ◆ Arrangements must be confirmed with the Staging Area staff. The location and length of observation should be discussed with the Point Ranger.
- ◆ Observers will be off the guided walk trail and within the Wildlife Protection Area. Every effort must be made not to disturb the seals or interfere with the work of researchers nearby. Observers are cautioned to be alert to seals around them at all times, especially if using a camera or binoculars, and to use good judgment.

District-wide VIP Pass

The Volunteer in Parks (VIP) Pass is a volunteer ID card which provides free day-use entrance to all park units within the Santa Cruz District. To be eligible for this card, a volunteer must maintain an active status.

Statewide VIP Pass

To qualify for this pass, a docent must volunteer a minimum of 200 hours during the qualifying year. The qualifying year is defined as January 1 through December 31. This pass is good for day-use admission at any State Park within the state of California but may not be used for tours at Hearst San Simeon SHM.

Overnight Accommodations

Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel

There is no charge for Año Nuevo docents who would like to stay the night at Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel during the breeding season (December 15 – March 31). Reservations for free accommodations are recommended well in advance and are only for dorm-style beds, not private rooms. Call (650) 879-0633 during office hours from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. or from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Hostellers must provide their own linen or sleeping bags and clean up after themselves. Anyone accompanying the docent (spouse, guest) has to pay the regular rates:

Check-in time is 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Smoking is permitted outside the buildings only.

Butano State Park

Santa Cruz District docents may camp at Butano State Park for free provided the following conditions are met:

- ◆ Docents are not displacing paying members of the general public.
- ◆ Docents camp in the “walk-in” sites during busy times.
- ◆ Docents adhere to the same rules and standards expected of the general public.
- ◆ From Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends and during holiday periods, docents should call in advance at (650) 879-2040 to make arrangements with park staff and ensure space availability.
- ◆ If a docent is camping for free and the campground fills up, the normal camping fees will be collected.

Federal Tax Deductions for Volunteers

A number of tax benefits are available for volunteers under the general charitable contribution deduction of the Internal Revenue Code. Volunteer may deduct unreimbursed expenditures made incident to rendition of services to a qualifying organization.

Qualifying organizations include: units of government; organizations formed for scientific, literary, or educational purposes; charitable groups and others.

The following are representative types of expenditures that may be deducted:

- ◆ Automobile mileage (at actual expense at a per-mile standard rate specified in the tax code)
- ◆ Bus and cab transportation expense
- ◆ Parking and tolls
- ◆ Special uniforms
- ◆ Telephone bills
- ◆ Entertainment and meals for others
- ◆ Costs of meals and lodging if away overnight
- ◆ Travel expenses above per diem allowance
- ◆ Tickets for charity benefits (above actual value)

The following may not be deducted:

- ◆ Value of volunteer time
- ◆ Dependent care expenses
- ◆ Your own meals and entertainment (unless away overnight)

Items for which a volunteer receives reimbursement may be deducted only to the extent that the amount of reimbursement is below the actual expenditure.

In general, the following requirements apply to these deductions:

- ◆ Must be amount actually paid during a taxable year, not just a pledge.
- ◆ Must be made to a qualifying organization.
- ◆ Must be actual out-of-pocket amount: if banquet ticket is purchased, deduction is for the amount in excess of the value of the meal.
- ◆ Must be recorded: volunteer should know the name of the organization to which the contribution is made; amount and date of each contribution; and method of valuing in-kind contributions.
- ◆ Where possible, especially for large gifts, statement of donation should be obtained from the organization accepting the donation.

A complete description of federal tax deductions for volunteers can be obtained free from the local IRS Taxpayer Assistance Service. Ask for Publication #526, "Income Tax Deduction for Contributions."

Workers Compensation

Docents are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance in the event of injury while working in the park.

Additional Benefits

In addition to the above benefits, Docents will also:

- ◆ Receive three times a year docent newsletter that will advise you of operations and special events.
- ◆ Periodic enrichment programs and special outings.
- ◆ New skills, knowledge, and person enrichment.
- ◆ Annual docent appreciation party, sponsored by SMCNHA.

California State Park System

Introduction

The State Park concept is generally believed to have started in California in 1864 when President Abraham Lincoln signed an act of Congress transferring the areas then known as the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove of Sierra redwoods to California. In 1905, however, the lands were returned to the federal government.

Three years earlier, in 1902, the present California State Park System began with the establishment of the California Redwood Park at Big Basin in Santa Cruz county. It is only fitting that one of our state's proudest possessions, the magnificent coast redwoods, should have provided the inspiration for the creation of California's first permanent park.

Today, with almost 300 park units, California has the most diversified and one of the largest park systems in the nation. Represented in those units are outstanding examples of the state's unique scenery, including redwoods, deserts, historical units, scenic reserves, recreation areas, and mountain parks for the public to enjoy.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation acquires, designs, develops, operates, and maintains units of the State Park System. These activities are directed toward the accomplishment of eight principal objectives:

- ◆ Secure and preserve elements of the state's outstanding landscape, cultural, and historical features.
- ◆ Provide the facilities and resources that are required to fulfill the recreational demands of the people of California.
- ◆ Provide a meaningful environment in which the people of California are given the opportunity to understand and appreciate the state's cultural, historical, and natural heritage.
- ◆ Maintain and improve the quality of California's environment.
- ◆ Prepare and maintain a statewide recreational plan that includes an analysis of the continuing need for recreational areas and facilities and a determination of the levels of public and private responsibility required to meet those needs.
- ◆ Encourage all levels of government and private enterprise throughout the state to participate in the planning, development, and operation of recreational facilities.
- ◆ Meet the recreational demands of a highly accelerated, urban-centered population growth through the acquisition, development, and operation of urban parks.
- ◆ Encourage volunteer service in the State Park System.

Types of Park Units

While most people agree that parks are for recreation in one form or another, people have widely divergent conceptions of just what constitutes recreation. Some crave the opportunity for leisurely walks in quiet and beautiful surroundings or a restful camping experience. Others will seek more strenuous activities, such as aquatic sports, snow sports, or hiking steep mountain trails. The prime ingredient in recreation is change of activity or occupation. In modern times, the opportunity to get close to nature in one form or another is one of the most rewarding forms of change.

In meeting the public's diversified recreational needs, the California State Park System must balance resource protection and visitor use. Although the various units of the State Park System are commonly referred to as *parks*, in reality there are several different designations (as defined in the Public Resources, Section 501a).

State Parks

State Parks are major areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, often containing significant historical, archaeological, geological, or other such values. In them are preserved the most significant examples of California's varied landscape. Parks are managed as a composite whole in order to restore, protect, and maintain their natural environmental complexes for the benefit of present and future generations. Improvements are limited to those necessary for public enjoyment and education, in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values. While parks ordinarily embrace land areas, they may also include underwater environments.

Historical Units

The historical units are areas established primarily to preserve objects of historical, archaeological, and scientific interest and places commemorating important persons or historic events. Public facilities are limited to those necessary for the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of visitors, such as access, parking, water, sanitation, interpretation, and picnicking.

Recreation Units

Recreation units consist of areas selected, developed, and operated to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. There are five types of recreation units:

- ◆ **Recreation Areas** provide multiple outdoor recreational opportunities to meet other than purely local needs. They are selected for having terrain capable of withstanding extensive human impact and for their proximity to large centers of population, major routes of travel, or proven recreational resources, such as man-made or natural bodies of water.
- ◆ **Underwater Recreation Areas** are in the underwater environment and provide surface and subsurface water-oriented recreational opportunities while preserving basic resource values.
- ◆ **Vehicular Recreation Areas** are those where topographic features and associated recreational vehicle access are the primary values. Such areas are chosen to ensure that no substantial natural values are lost, and that adjoining properties do not incur adverse effects.

- ◆ **Beaches** front the ocean, lakes, or bays, providing swimming, boating, fishing, and beach-oriented activities.
- ◆ **Wayside Campgrounds** are relatively small areas suitable for overnight camping and offering convenient access to major highways.

Reserve Units

Reserves are areas embracing outstanding natural or scenic characteristics of statewide significance; where natural ecological associations, unique faunal or floral characteristics, geological features and scenic qualities are preserved in a condition of undisturbed integrity. Improvements are strictly limited to the minimum day-use facilities necessary for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of the Reserve's natural features. State Reserves may be either terrestrial or underwater environments of the state.

Natural Preserves

Natural Preserves are distinct areas of outstanding natural or scientific significance established within the boundaries of other State Park System units. For example, Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve is contained within Pescadero State Beach. Areas designated as Natural Preserves are of sufficient size to allow, where possible, the natural dynamics of ecological interaction to continue without interference and to provide, in all cases, a practical management unit. Habitat manipulation is permitted only in those areas found by scientific analysis to require manipulation to preserve the species or associations that constitute the basis for the establishment of the natural preserve.

Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Areas are also established within the boundaries of other State Park System units. State wilderness areas, in contrast with those areas where people and their own works dominate the landscape, are located where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by people and where the visitors do not remain. No permanent improvements or human habitations are permitted in a wilderness area. It is protected and managed to preserve its natural condition.

Organization

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is one of several state departments in the Resources Agency. The executive office of the Park Service is the Director of Parks and Recreation, who is appointed by and holds office at the pleasure of the Governor.

The San Mateo Coast Sector is part of the Santa Cruz District. The San Mateo Coast Sector includes Año Nuevo State Park, Butano State Park, Half Moon Bay State Beach (comprised of Francis, Venice, Dunes, and Roosevelt Beaches), Cowell Ranch Beach, Montara State Beach (including McNee Ranch), Gray Whale Cove State Beach, Burleigh Murray Ranch, Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park, Pescadero State Beach (including the Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve), and San Gregorio, Pomponio, Bean Hollow, and Pebble Beach State Beaches.

State Park Rules and Regulations

PARKS ARE FOREVER -- with our help and cooperation. It is very important that the Park visitor is given this message. Parks are for people to use and enjoy -- not to abuse and destroy. Without protection, the highly perishable values of the areas preserved in the California State Park System could soon be destroyed by heedless people.

In most cases, park protection can be accomplished by interpretation of park philosophy, policy, and rules and regulations. Enforcement becomes necessary only if and when other means prove insufficient. Most people who misuse or abuse a park area or facility do so only through thoughtlessness. It is usually sufficient to bring to their attention the permanent nature of the damage resulting from their improper use.

Though some may resist compliance because of lack of understanding, it is rare that a simple explanation of the reasons behind the rules will fail to obtain willing cooperation. Only a small percentage of visitors will, once they understand the "why", continue to resent or resist a rule. They may require special attention and perhaps enforcement actions.

As a docent, you may encounter situations where you must decide whether a visitor's actions merit only an explanation of a rule or more drastic action. If enforcement action is required, or a public relations problem seems imminent, remember, State Park Rangers have peace office authority. Do not threaten or try to bluff the visitor. Never hesitate to call upon a DPR Ranger for guidance or assistance in any situation that threatens to become a problem.

Every docent is charged with the responsibility of observing and recognizing any acts that may constitute potential hazards to the safety of people or property. Such acts should be reported promptly to the supervisor or any other Ranger. This will permit effective action to eliminate the hazard. It will also help forestall or minimize the liability in case of accident.

It is important that each docent read and become familiar with the Rules and Regulations of the State Park System, especially those that apply specifically to Año Nuevo State Park, Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, and Butano State Park.

Summary of Important Rules and Regulations

The following is a summary of some of the more important rules and regulations. Refer to the publication, *Department of Parks and Recreation State Parks Rules and Regulations (1979)* for exact details.

Animals

No one is allowed to hunt, injure, or otherwise disturb any animal within the boundaries of a Park System Unit. State Fish and Game regulations govern all fishing activity. At Año Nuevo State Park, these rules govern activity out to the mean tide line. At Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, there is a steelhead season from November through February on Pescadero and Butano Creeks.

Plants and Driftwood

Visitors are not allowed to pick, dig up, mutilate, destroy, disturb, move, burn, or carry away any plant material. At Butano firewood is available for purchase, down wood may not be collected.

Geological Features

No person shall destroy, disturb, mutilate, or remove earth, sand, gravel, minerals, or rocks.

Archaeological Features

No person shall remove, injure, disfigure, or destroy any object of paleontological, archaeological, or historical interest or value.

Special Permits

Special permits are issued to certain parties that enable them to collect, tag, etc. without being liable for prosecution for violation of the foregoing regulations.

Dogs and Other Pets

Pets are not allowed out of a vehicle. Exception: If pets are on a leash six feet long or shorter, they are allowed on all Santa Cruz District *beaches*, except at Año Nuevo State Park. Dogs are allowed on a leash in the campground at Butano but are not allowed on trails. Dogs are not allowed anywhere at Rancho Del Oso.

Fires

Fires may not be lit or maintained within Año Nuevo State Park wildlife protection area, Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, or Waddell Beach. Elsewhere they are allowed only in designated stoves, fire rings, or in containers such as hibachis.

Litter

Disposing of anything, other than in trash receptacles, is not allowed.

Firearms and Fireworks

Not allowed.

Bicycles

Not allowed, except on designated roadways. At Butano, bicycles are allowed on the fire roads but not on the trails. Ranch Del Oso allows bikes on the Skyline-to-Sea Trail up to the end of the road but not on single-track trails.

Peace and Quiet

No person shall, at any time, use radios, phonographs, televisions, or other audio equipment at a volume that emits sound beyond the immediate vicinity of the individual.

Nudity

Topless (female) and nude sunbathing are not allowed.

Closing Time

No unauthorized person is allowed in a posted closed area or in the park during closed hours (Sunset to 8:00 a.m.).

Reference to Vehicle Code

All California Vehicle Code rules apply.

Program Guide

Off-highway Vehicles

Not allowed off roads.

Horse and Other Riding or Pack Animals

Not allowed in District parks, except in designated areas and by Mounted Assistant Unit members on patrol.

Camping

Not allowed, except in designated campsites at Half Moon Bay, Butano State Park, and Rancho Del Oso with proper registration.

Public Resources Code

The Department shall protect the State Park System from damage and preserve the peace therein. Any person who violates the rules and regulations established by the Department is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment in the County Jail for a time not to exceed 90 days, or by a fine not exceeding \$500, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Docent Coordinators

Año Nuevo

The work schedule of the Docent Coordinators is variable during the off season. During the Guided Walk Season, a Docent Coordinator is at Año Nuevo daily but may be out in the field. For docent coordination needs, call (650) 879-2032 or email anovolcoordinator@parks.ca.gov.

Half Moon Bay

The programs are coordinated by State Park Rangers at the Kelly Avenue Ranger Station. To contact a docent coordinator, call (650) 726-8819 or email hmbplover@hotmail.com.

Pescadero Marsh & Tidepool

These programs are coordinated by a State Park Ranger at the Pescadero Office. To contact the Coordinator, call (650) 879-2170. Messages can be left on the answering machine or with other rangers.

Butano State Park

The campfire and nature walk programs at Butano are coordinated by a State Park Ranger and a Park Interpretive Specialist. To contact the Coordinator, call (650) 879-2040. Messages can be left on the answering machine.

Pigeon Point Lighthouse

This program is coordinated by a State Park Ranger at the Half Moon Bay Ranger Station. The coordinator is mostly available on weekends. To contact the coordinator call (650) 726-8819.

Rancho Del Oso

This program is coordinated by a Park Interpretive Specialist and a State Park Ranger. The coordinator is mostly available on weekends. To contact the coordinator call (831) 427-2288 or to contact the State Park Ranger, call (831) 425-1218.

Emergencies

There is always the possibility that you may be working as a docent or in the area when an emergency arises. Notify Park staff immediately. At Año Nuevo there should be someone available at the staging area, visitor center, kiosk or the Park office. If you cannot locate anyone in these areas, call *Central Dispatch* or 9-1-1 on the telephone. At the Pescadero Marsh and tidepools, staff may be at the Pescadero office or at the North Pescadero kiosk (depending on the time of year). The California Department of Forestry (CDF) station is also located on Pescadero Road. At Butano, staff may be found at the kiosk, or in the Butano office. In the campground, contact the park host. At Rancho Del Oso, there is a pay phone in front of the ranger station. At Half Moon Bay State Beach, there should be someone available at the entrance station. (In the Half Moon Bay Ranger Station or Visitor Center, first dial 9 to get an outside line.)

Central Dispatch: (831) 649-2810

It is actually better to call State Parks Central Dispatch, rather than 9-1-1, because they are more familiar with our parks than other dispatchers you may reach. In addition, cell phone 9-1-1 calls are not answered in the local area.

No matter what dispatcher you reach, you must provide clear information about the emergency and the location in order get help as soon as possible. Give the nature of the emergency and its location. Get the name, address, and telephone number of the party involved or the reporting party after you have called the information in to Dispatch. Do not administer first aid unless you are certified—wait for the arrival of trained employees or emergency personnel.

If a crime has been reported to you and you have information about a suspect, give as much detail to Dispatch as possible—age, race, hair color and length, clothing description, vehicle description (if applicable), and the last location seen or direction traveled. If someone reports a crime or an incident to you, keep the person with you until a staff member has identified the person and collected contact information.

Injured Wildlife and Beached Marine Mammals

You may receive reports of injured wildlife or beached marine mammals. Get information as to the exact location of the animal, so the animal can be evaluated. Sometimes the visitor who reports the information is willing to help staff find the animal. If the visitor does not stay, ask for the person's name and a telephone number. This way we can get additional information in the event we cannot locate the animal.

Marine Mammals: Marine Mammal Center (415) 289-SEAL

If it is a marine mammal, we usually evaluate the condition of the animal and report it to the Marine Mammal Center. They want to know the type of marine mammal (e.g., sea lion, harbor

seal, elephant seal), the approximate weight, the approximate length, any observable injury, and any general health signs. Marine Mammal Center will either send its volunteers to evaluate whether to rescue or advise us of what to do next. People should stay away from the animal. We have signs we can post in the area to keep people away if it seems necessary.

Injured Birds and Animals: Peninsula Humane Society (650) 340-8200

If an injured bird or animal is reported, we should evaluate it to see if it should be captured. Sometimes we are able to free a bird from garbage in which it is caught (including fishing line or plastic bags) and release it. Sometimes a bird or animal will need to go to Wildlife Rescue for treatment and care. If a bird or animal is brought to you, place it in a cardboard animal carrier. Have a ranger evaluate it to see if we can take care of it and release it. If the bird or animal has not been captured, locate a ranger so the bird or animal can be captured. If we have a captive bird or animal that has an obvious injury or illness that we can not treat ourselves, we should contact the Peninsula Humane Society. They will usually arrange for an Animal Control Officer to pick up the bird or animal and transport it to Wildlife Rescue.

Oiled Birds: Oiled Wildlife Care Network (530) 752-4167

Oiled birds are sometimes found on the beach. Live oiled birds are sent to Wildlife Rescue via the Peninsula Humane Society. We report oiled birds to the Oiled Wildlife Care Network. They sometimes collect the dead birds or animals for testing.

Dead Birds and Animals

If you receive a report of a dead bird or animal, pass on the information to a ranger. Sometimes we leave dead animals to decompose and let nature take its course. However, we sometimes will remove or bury them if there are any health, safety, or other resource issues involved. For example, we may remove dead animals that might attract predators or scavengers to the plover habitat area at Half Moon Bay State Beach. Beach Watch, a National Marine Sanctuaries program, collects statistics on dead birds and animals, so only volunteers and parks employees familiar with the protocols should remove these carcasses from the beach.

Addresses / Telephone Numbers / Email

Año Nuevo State Park

New Years Creek Road
Pescadero, CA 94060

(650) 879-0227 (recorded message)
(650) 879-2025 (public)
(650) 879-2032 (docent hotline)
(650) 879-2031 (fax)

Email: anovolcoordinator@parks.ca.gov
Web Page: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/anonuevo>

Butano State Park

1500 Cloverdale Road, Box 3
Pescadero, CA 94060
(650) 879-2040

Half Moon Bay State Beach

95 Kelly Avenue
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

(650) 726-8804—Ranger/Lifeguard Line and Voicemail (Volunteer voicemail box 7#)
(650) 726-8816—Fax
(650) 726-8819—San Mateo Coast Sector Office Line
(650) 726-8820—Entrance Station

Pescadero State Beach and Marsh Natural Preserve

404 Water Lane
P.O. Box 370
Pescadero, CA 94060
Ranger Office—(650) 879-2170

Pigeon Point Light Station Historic Park

210 Pigeon Point Road
Highway 1
Pescadero, CA 94060

Bookstore—(650) 879-2120
Lighthouse Hostel Information—(650) 879-0633

Rancho Del Oso

3600 Hwy 1
Davenport, CA
Ranger Station (831) 425-1218
Nature Center (831) 427-2288

Santa Cruz District

3003 Big Trees Park Road
Felton, CA 95018
(831) 335-6318

Central Dispatch

(831) 649-2810

California State Parks Website

www.parks.ca.gov

California State Parks Reservations

1-800-444-7275 or <http://ra1.reserveamerica.com/> for camping reservations
1-800-444-4445 Año Nuevo and Hearst Monument tours

San Mateo Coast Natural History Association (SMCNHA)

San Mateo Coast Natural History Association
c/o Año Nuevo State Reserve New Year's Creek Road
Pescadero, CA 94060
650-879-2041
Email: info@sanmateocoastnha.org
Website: www.smcnha.org

Wildlife Numbers

Marine Mammal Center (415) 289-SEAL
Peninsula Humane Society (650) 340-8200
Oiled Wildlife Care Network (530) 752-4167

Presentations and Activities

Interpretive Tips

What is Interpretation?

Freeman Tilden, in his excellent book *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957), defines interpretation as “An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media...” rather than simply to communicate factual information. Tilden illustrated his point with six main principles:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Interpretation is not the same as information. Interpretation is revelation based upon information, but they are entirely different things.
3. Interpretation is an art that combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction but provocation.
5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and it must address itself to the whole person rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children, say, up to the age of 12, should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach.

Principles of Interpretation

By keeping these principles in mind when presenting your programs and activities, you will be more successful in achieving the goals of interpretation:

- ◆ To help park visitors understand that the place they are visiting is related to the place they call home
- ◆ To help visitors understand the interrelationships among as many aspects of what is being observed as possible
- ◆ To help visitors have an inspirational, relaxing, good time
- ◆ To arouse curiosity and sometimes satisfy it
- ◆ To conserve park resources through an understanding and consequent appreciation
- ◆ To provide visitors with an escape from the pressures that assault them

- ◆ To show the relationship between what is being observed/experienced to the lives of the observers
- ◆ To give the kind of interpretation that will encourage visitors to figure some things out for themselves
- ◆ To give accurate, interesting information that forms the foundation for an interpretation of data

General Guideline for a Successful Walk

Good planning and preparation are fundamental to walk that presents a well-rounded, unified story rather than a disjointed catalog of facts. Your walk should have a plot or theme with a beginning, middle and end. Set the stage and generate interest through a good introduction. Include supporting material, suspense, climax, rhetorical questions, illustration, and other devices needed to get across key points. Develop logically to reach an effective conclusion. Have several themes developed for use in your walks. If you don't, you will quickly become bored giving the same talk all the time and it will show in the way you present the information.

The tone of your walk is set by the first few minutes you spend with your group. Begin your presentation at the meeting location. This will give late arrivals an opportunity to join the group. During this introduction, several elements should always be included:

- ◆ Introduce yourself and give a brief overview of the docent program (welcome visitors interested in becoming docents to leave their names and addresses).
- ◆ Find out about your group - where are they from? Have they been to the park before? Ask them to make you aware of any health or safety problems.
- ◆ Give an overview of the State Park System; explain what a State Reserve or a Natural Preserve is and why they are important.
- ◆ Tell them about the walk - where you will be going, how long, type of terrain. Capture their attention by telling them about something you are going to show them later on, or relate some little known fact about the park.
- ◆ Encourage the visitors to use all their senses on the walk - to smell, hear, touch, and speculate as they follow you.
- ◆ Encourage your group to ask questions and to stop you at any time they see something interesting.
- ◆ Inform the group of any "trail requests": stay on the trail and off the plants, don't get ahead of you.

Know the area that you plan to cover and learn the route thoroughly. Be aware of what resources you can use on the route. Be aware also of any trail hazards and inform your group, particularly about poison oak. This plant is found in abundance along many portions of the trails.

Know how many people are in your group, and keep the group together. Constantly look back to make sure the group is not straggling.

Keep the lead at all times; turn around to talk to the group. Hold your head up, and project your voice over the heads of those near you (this does not mean shout!). If someone has a hearing problem, try to make sure that she/he is near you. Speak clearly, strongly, and with confidence. People will ask you questions while you are walking. Talk to them but repeat the question and the answer when you stop. (Remember to write down questions you couldn't answer and then look them up later. Do not hesitate to say, "I don't know." Then add, "I will find out.")

Be aware of weather conditions. Situate yourself so that your group is not facing the sun. Stand "upwind" from your group so your voice won't be carried away.

Make your stops purposeful. Stop to see, hear, or smell something - not just to deliver a speech. Involve your group in the environment. Shorter, more frequent stops are more effective than droning on in one spot.

Adjust your vocabulary to the level and age of your audience. If you have a mixed age group, talk to the younger people; the adults will ask further questions if they are interested. For all ages, a large number of facts and dates is not necessary. Most will be forgotten anyway, but the feeling they get from the experience won't be forgotten.

A group will move eagerly to the next spot if you entice them with some hint about what to expect there. Example: "up ahead is a plant the Indians used for medicinal purposes. We still use an extract of the same plant for the same purpose. See if you can spot it and guess what it was used for." People don't particularly like to be led like sheep, and will appreciate these "teasers."

Watch out for misinformation: don't pass on material you are not sure of. Just because someone else said it is true, don't assume it is. Find out for sure - help each other.

In developing your walk, there are many areas of information that might be included:

- ◆ History of the park (Native American, early explorers and settlers, recent history, land acquisition)
- ◆ Ecological themes, such as dune dynamics or marsh evolution
- ◆ Importance of the coastal environment and why we should preserve it
- ◆ Diversity of life forms, including endangered species
- ◆ Tracks and other signs of animal life forms
- ◆ Plant and animal adaptations
- ◆ Information about specific plants, birds and other animals: history, lifestyle, and historical uses, etc.

Have a definite point for dismissal and let the group know the activity is over. Do not let it just disintegrate.

Interpretive Techniques

The following are examples of activities that you can do to enliven your walk and make it more dynamic. There are many references (available through staff) that provide more techniques such as these. Remember, you do not have to be a botanist or any other type of scientist to help people have fun on a walk and learn to look and wonder!

- ◆ Use a small hand mirror to flash a spot of light on a distant object you wish to point out to the group.
- ◆ Take along an inexpensive compass to illustrate directions. It is surprising how children and adults can become disoriented while hiking. A good start to any guided walk could include compass orientation.
- ◆ Define a small area on the ground and ask the individuals of the group to count and point out each different thing they can see, such as rocks, sand grains, leaf, twig, ants, etc. Compare the numbers and variety.
- ◆ Take along one or more inexpensive magnifying glasses. If the group is too large, let everyone look at something on a leaf or tree trunk, etc. Let them imagine themselves in a smaller world.
- ◆ Always look for tracks in the sand, dust, or mud. Show tracks and ask if anyone recognizes them. Ask if anyone knows the direction or the size of the animal. Sometimes it is exciting to have no one able to identify the tracks.
- ◆ Fur, whiskers, etc.

Special Presentations

Community groups, clubs, and other organizations occasionally ask for special presentations such as slide shows and/or talks. At the request of the Docent Coordinator, you can assist the ranger in giving the program or give it yourself. Preparation is the key to a successful program, and there are many resources that you can use for the “how-to’s” of preparing for your program. The ranger staff will be able to assist you.

Special consideration in giving talks includes arriving at the presentation site in plenty of time to check out all the equipment you may need. This includes such things as audio-visual equipment, seating arrangements, lights, ventilation, etc. Once you are sure everything is in a state of readiness, you can start mixing with the audience as they arrive. This informality:

- ◆ Establishes a friendly, informal atmosphere
- ◆ Helps weld the audience into a responsive whole
- ◆ Gives you an opportunity to assess the mood of the audience
- ◆ Provides you with information you can use in the introduction and presentation
- ◆ Helps you visualize the audience as a collection of individuals rather than an amorphous mass
- ◆ Makes it easier for you to manage nervous tension at the beginning of any talk
- ◆ Allows the audience to feel comfortable enough to ask questions and take interest

When your talk is over, make yourself available for further questions and discussion. This will be a time when you can get some genuine feedback on your talk, and a time when you can give further service to people who are especially motivated.

In using slides, remember that they only support the theme you have chosen to develop. If the equipment fails, for one reason or another, you can still have a meaningful presentation if you are not dependent on the slides.

Generally, the slides should flow smoothly along to punctuate, underline, and emphasize what you are talking about. They should not be used as cues in your presentation. Too many interpreters wait for the slide to come on the screen to remind them what to say next. In professional slide programs, the verbal message usually slightly precedes (one to three seconds before) the slide, which then comes along and supports what has been said.

Slide selection is of paramount importance. Your individual preference and taste comes into play, of course, but all slides should be clearly focused, neither under- nor overexposed, clean, and right-side up. You will have to choose slides that seem most appropriate to you and then seek advice from docents, the ranger staff, and your audience. You can generally tell from an audience's reaction how they feel about your slide choice. The main thing is to select slides that support your theme. In giving the presentation, speak to the group from a place where you can easily be seen and heard.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q. How far is it to...?

From the intersection of Año Nuevo entrance and Highway 1, all mileage is approximated:

- ◆ Half Moon Bay = 30 miles, north
- ◆ Pescadero = 13 miles, north
- ◆ Pigeon Point = 6.5 miles, north
- ◆ San Gregorio = 19 miles, north
- ◆ San Francisco = 55 miles, north
- ◆ Davenport = 11 miles, south
- ◆ Santa Cruz = 20 miles, south

From the intersection of Pescadero Road and Highway 1, all mileage is approximated:

- ◆ Half Moon Bay = 15 miles
- ◆ Pescadero = 2 miles inland
- ◆ Pigeon Point = 6.5 miles, south
- ◆ San Gregorio = 7 miles, north
- ◆ San Francisco = 40 miles, north
- ◆ Santa Cruz = 37 miles, south

Q. What is the best way to get to....?

San Francisco: Highway 1 through Pacific to Interstate 280, or Highway 1 to Half Moon Bay, then east on Highway 92 and north on Interstate 280.

The Peninsula and/or the East Bay: North on Highway 1 to Half Moon Bay, then east on Highway 92.

The South Bay: South on Highway 1 to Santa Cruz, then north on Highway 17. Alternate route: North on Highway 1, east on Highway 84 to Woodside, south on Interstate 280.

Q. Where is the nearest....?

Gas station: The towns of Santa Cruz to the south and Pescadero in the north.

Restroom: State Park restrooms are located at Año Nuevo State Park, Bean Hollow, Pebble Beach, South Pescadero, North Pescadero, Pomponio Beach and San Gregorio parking lots.

Drinking fountains: Behind the Año Nuevo Marine Education Center and by the restrooms in the parking lot. None at Pescadero Marsh.

Grocery store or restaurant: The town of Davenport to the south. The Costanoa resort and the towns of Gazos Creek and Pescadero to the north.

Phone: By the entrance station at Año Nuevo State Park.

Where can I picnic?

Picnic facilities (barbecue grills and picnic tables) are located at Rancho Del Oso, Bean Hollow, Pebble Beach, South Pescadero, Pomponio and San Gregorio. Visitors are welcome to enjoy cold picnics anywhere as long as they carry out any litter with them when finished. They can also take hibachis and portable stoves onto the beaches but not into the Preserve or the Wildlife Protection Area at Año Nuevo State Park.

Where can we camp?

Half Moon Bay State Beach has 52 units. Directions: Continue north on Highway 1 into Half Moon Bay and turn left on Kelly Avenue. Follow Kelly Avenue until it ends.

Butano State Park has 20 developed sites for trailers and campers, and 19 developed walk-in sites. Directions: Follow Pescadero Road to Cloverdale and turn right, continue south for 7 miles to the park. From Año Nuevo, follow Gazos Creek Road to Cloverdale and turn left.

Memorial County Park has camping on a first-come, first-served basis. Directions: Follow Pescadero Road approximately 15 miles.

Rancho Del Oso has backpacking sites and horse camping sites. Directions: Approximately 1 mile south of Año Nuevo State Park.

How can I make camping reservations?

State Park camping reservations are made through The California State Parks Reservation Service ticket agency, not through the individual parks. Visitors wishing to make a reservation can call The California State Parks Reservation Service toll-free at 1-800-444-7275.

Can we fish here? What do people catch?

Yes, there is fishing as long as all Fish and Game requirements are obeyed, including license requirements. Surf anglers catch surf perch, rockfish, flounder, striped bass, starry flounder, sanddabs, cabezon, and other local fish. There is steelhead season in the Preserve from November through February. **EXCEPTION:** There is no fishing allowed at Waddell Creek or Rancho Del Oso

Will we see whales off the coast?

Early in October, the pregnant female California gray whales begin their annual 10,000 mile journey to Baja California, where they will give birth to their young. Non-pregnant females, mature males, and juveniles follow over the succeeding weeks. The expectant females travel alone or in groups of two or three with little rest and seldom pausing to feed, traveling up to 20 hours and 100 miles a day. The trailing whales travel in groups and reach Baja California in six to eight weeks. During their journey, the males and females court and mate. By mid-January, most of the early females have reached Baja, and stragglers continue to arrive for another month or more.

From February to June, gray whales migrate northward in two distinct phases. By mid-February, newly pregnant females have left the lagoons for the long journey north. Adult males follow (continuing to court these females over the next several weeks), trailed by juveniles of both sexes. New mothers and their calves are last to leave, occasionally remaining as late as May or June.

When and how can I see the seals at Año Nuevo?

The elephant seal guided walk season is December 15 through March 31. It is during this time when the breeding season takes place. The bulls arrive first, as early as late November. The females begin to arrive in mid-December and continue through February. Most of the adults are gone by mid-March but the weaned pups remain until late April. The elephant seals return during the summer to molt. Females and juveniles return during April through May, sub-adult males during June through July, and adult males during July through August.

From December 1 through 14, the Wildlife Protection Area is closed to the public. From December 15 through March 31, the Wildlife Protection Area is open to visitors only by guided walks conducted daily by trained volunteer docents. This is to protect both seals and visitors alike during this sensitive season. Visitors must make advance reservations through The California State Parks Reservation Service to take part in a walk (call 800-444-4445). Walks are conducted daily. The Park is open during the rest of the year for general visitation with permits issued upon entrance to the Park.

Where can we go tidepooling?

Good tidepooling sites can be found anywhere between Pigeon Point and Pescadero State Beach. Remind visitors that all Fish and Game regulations are strictly enforced.