



California State Parks  
*In cooperation with*  
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods



# Volunteer Handbook



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## **I. INTRODUCTION TO STEWARDS**

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards) is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with California State Parks in the Russian River District to support volunteer, education, and stewardship programs. Stewards comprised of 10-15 active Board Members, 9+ staff, 500 members, and 300+ volunteers. There are 89 cooperating associations like Stewards throughout California. Each association has a contractual relationship with State Parks and operates on State Park property to fulfill its mission.

### **Mission and Vision**

Stewards' mission is to promote, restore and protect the natural and cultural resources of Russian River area State Parks through education, interpretation, and public stewardship.

Stewards' vision is to be the link between people and their parks. Stewards provides the public with opportunities for personal inspiration, satisfaction, and nurturing of spirit and intellect through environmental stewardship programs.

### **How Stewards Began**

Stewards began with a group of dedicated volunteers just like you. Stewards, formerly known as Stewards of Slavianka, was launched in 1985 when grassroots environmentalists and State Parks staff began working together through the Cooperating Associations Program of California State Parks. Stewards is related to, but independent of California State Parks.

Stewards began with two programs, Seal Watch (founded by Dian Hardy) and Whale Watch (founded by Bea Brunn) at Sonoma Coast State Park. By 1987, volunteers at Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve (SNR) opened a small visitor center (founded by John and Pauline Gilbert) and began leading nature walks. In 1990, the volunteers saw their dream of a new visitor center become a reality when a trailer was purchased for this purpose. In 1992, Stewards funded a new visitor center at Salt Point State Park overlooking spectacular Gerstle Cove. In 1997, Stewards began operating the visitor center in Jenner, overlooking the Russian River estuary. In 2003, Stewards' members voted to change the name to increase funding and volunteer support through greater name recognition.

### **Why Stewards Needs You**

California Volunteers In Parks Programs (VIPPP) increases public support for state parks and helps individuals better understand management decisions. Volunteers can enhance existing programs or begin new projects. They can provide service on a temporary, intermittent basis or through long-term assignments. Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and often bring abilities and expertise that are not otherwise available to state parks. In 2021, 221 long-term volunteers in the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District gave 42,783 hours of their time.

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## II. STEWARDS AND CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

### Volunteers In Parks Program (VIPP)

A California State Parks volunteer is an individual under the direction of Department personnel who, of his or her own free will and without compensation or financial gain, contributes goods or services to assist California State Parks in the accomplishment of its mission. Volunteers are not considered employees within the legal meaning of the term and do not have the same rights as employees.

*The mission of California State Parks 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 valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.*

Volunteers are vital to fulfilling the mission of California State Parks. The first volunteers served over 100 years ago. Today, the Volunteers in Parks Program has grown to over 40,000 volunteers who donated around 1,138,000 hours in 2019. Volunteers assist staff in countless ways, in nearly all of California's state parks. For more than a century, volunteers have preserved the most treasured places and taught the public about their value. Volunteers interpret state parks' resources, keep trails in good repair, spearhead special events, and offer a welcoming face in campgrounds and visitor centers.

Volunteering in California State Parks gives people fresh ideas and the chance to help their favorite parks. Volunteers work together to enrich visitors' experiences. In California State Parks, volunteering benefits everyone.

### What's the Relationship

Stewards is a cooperating association working with the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the Russian River Sector. Cooperating associations are non-profit charitable 501 (c)(3) organizations dedicated to enhancing the educational and interpretive programs in California State Parks. Collectively, the network consists of 89 associations and serves most of the 280 state parks. These associations, with more than 34,000 members and donors, provide critical funding, personnel, and volunteers for state parks' educational and interpretive needs.

### Being a VIPP versus a Stewards Volunteer

Stewards provide volunteers the opportunity to obtain State Park Day Use Passes if they accrue sufficient volunteer hours (see [Section III. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING](#)). When volunteers receive a stipend for their services or they are volunteering at an event that specifically benefits Stewards and are serving alcohol, they cannot count their hours towards passes. The following programs currently fall under this category:

- Seabird Monitoring - If a volunteer opts to receive a stipend
- Pinniped Monitoring - If a volunteer opts to receive a stipend
- Camp Host in Austin Creek SRA (Bullfrog Pond Campground) - If a volunteer opts to receive a stipend.
- Special Events - When a volunteer is serving alcohol
- Office volunteering – When a volunteer is helping organize items for an auction to raise funds for Stewards

## **Representing Stewards and California State Parks: Responsibilities and Volunteer Conduct**

State Park Volunteers are members of the park staff within the Russian River Sector of the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District. As a volunteer, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects pride in yourself and in the State Park System and adheres to a standard of conduct. To operate the interpretive program efficiently, all volunteers must adhere to certain rules, procedures, and standards. The following information is intended to give you some guidance along these lines. The volunteer service agreement may be terminated at any time by either party with or without cause.

### **Professionalism**

- Respect the cultural and ethnic diversity of California, and ensure the park is free of all harassment and discrimination.
- Do not discuss confidential information with members of the public without prior authorization from a member of park staff (e.g., your Volunteer Coordinator), including crimes, accidents, disciplinary actions, employee or volunteer grievances, and proposed policy changes.
- Do not speak to the media on behalf of California State Parks without specific authorization from the volunteer coordinator or supervisor. For example, volunteers participating in an environmental living program covered by media may request authorization to discuss the program.
- Be dependable and on time for your assigned shift.
- Follow all park rules and regulations and all laws, and accept the guidance and decisions of the volunteer coordinator.
- Treat duties and assignments seriously. Attend all required training that applies to volunteer duties. Notify the volunteer coordinator of any questions or difficulties you may have regarding your assignment or duties.
- Check with the volunteer coordinator before offering services to allied agencies to ensure coordination between agencies.
- Refuse any offers of work-related gratuities, gifts, or favors. Never keep lost and found items. Never use park supplies or materials for personal use.
- Do not use or attempt to use for private gain or advantage any department symbol, badge, identification card, supplies, service record, facility information, time, equipment or the prestige or influence of a department volunteer position.
- Demonstrate and encourage safety awareness and practices. Actively participate in safety programs and identify/report unsafe working conditions.
- Keep accurate records of your volunteer hours, and report them in a timely manner and in accordance with the park's policies and procedures.
- Do not smoke in any state building, state vehicles, or outdoors in accordance with state law.
- Do not report to duty while under the influence of intoxicants or illegal drugs, and do not take alcoholic beverages during your volunteer shift. If you are on legal medication that influences your ability to fulfill your assignment, notify your volunteer coordinator.

### **Public Contact/Communication**

- Public service is the volunteer's highest priority. Serve the public in a fair and impartial manner, avoiding any activity that compromises your authority. Be friendly, honest, courteous, patient, and helpful in all interactions with the public.
- Avoid any activities that distract you from providing service, or compromises your authority during your volunteer shift (e.g. personal cellphone usage).
- Do not recommend to the public any specific local businesses.
- Do not express, display, broadcast, distribute, or otherwise communicate to the public any personal beliefs, opinions, messages, or points of view while being identified as, or performing the duties of, a California State Parks volunteer.
- If you witness a violation of park rules, contact and caution park visitors by providing information only. You do not have state park peace officer status or authority. Report violations of laws or rules to a ranger if needed.

### **Personal Conduct**

- Maintain open and honest relationships and develop trust with department employees, other park volunteers, concessionaires, and park visitors.
- Present a positive attitude and have the ability to rise above personal disagreements. Offer assistance and support to fellow volunteers and park staff. Make every effort to make visitors feel welcome.
- Be sincere in your offer of volunteer service to others, recognizing the value of the job you have volunteered to do.
- Be a key player on the park team:
  - Continuously improve your skills and knowledge base and speak up if you have questions or want to improve your understanding.
  - Set goals.
  - Analyze and solve problems.
  - Be progressive and open to change.
  - Understand the California State Parks' mission and your role in achieving it.
  - Understand your chain of command while knowing how your program area interacts with other programs.
- Set a high standard for personal grooming and appearance. Wear the approved uniform correctly, and make sure the uniform is clean and well kept.

All volunteers are encouraged to repeat training sessions as a refresher and to assist in sharing information and experiences as a volunteer (more information on trainings in [Section IV. HOW TO VOLUNTEER](#)).

Membership of Stewards of The Coast and Redwoods is not required, but it is desirable to keep updated about current activities in the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District. You can receive a 20% discount when you register for educational seminars and trainings and make purchases at Armstrong Visitor Center and Jenner Visitor Center and online E-Store ([stewardscr.org/store/](http://stewardscr.org/store/)).

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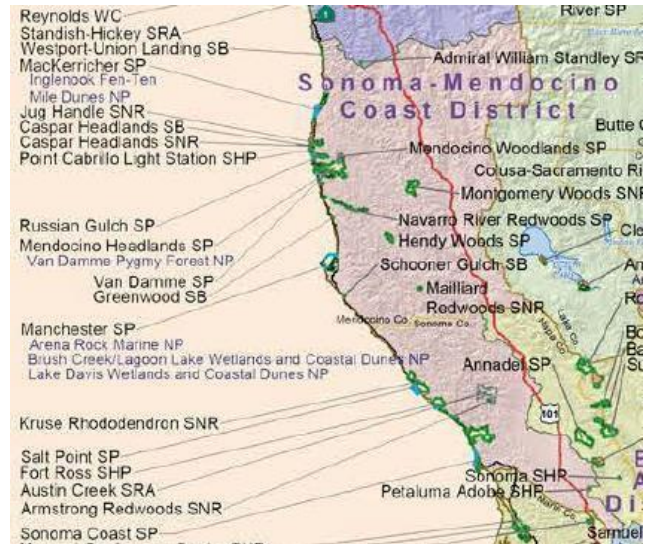
### III. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

#### Parks Passes: Regional and State

It is important that volunteers record their hours on the on [Better Impact Volunteer Management Software](#) by the first day of each year. Volunteers who submit:

- at least 48 hours receive a free Day Use Pass for all State Parks in the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District:

- Westport-Union Landing SB
- MacKerricher SP
- Jug Handle SNR
- Caspar Headlands SB
- Caspar Headlands SNR
- Point Cabrillo Light Station SHP
- Mendocino Woodlands SP
- Russian Gulch SP
- Mendocino Headlands SP
- Montgomery Woods SNR
- Van Damme SP
- Greenwood SB
- Navarro River Redwoods SP
- Henny Woods SP
- Manchester SP
- Schooner Gulch SB
- Mailliard Redwoods SNR
- Kruse Rhododendron SNR
- Salt Point SP
- Fort Ross SHP
- Austin Creek SRA
- Armstrong Redwoods SNR
- Sonoma Coast SP



- at least 200 hours receive a free Day Use Pass for State Parks listed on [DPR208TC](#).

#### Annual Volunteer Celebration and Awards

Stewards honors the service of volunteers during the annual Volunteer Celebration, which usually happens the first Friday of December. At this event, Stewards serves drinks and appetizers, organizes a silent auction, and plays a slideshow with photos of volunteers serving in programs throughout the year. Most importantly, Stewards presents awards to those who have gone above and beyond as volunteers.

- Volunteer recognition awards - for newer volunteers who have contributed significantly to their programs.
- Poppy awards - recognition from State Parks (criteria includes number of hours and length of service - must have volunteered with State Parks at least five years to qualify)
- Medallion awards - the highest recognition from State Parks

#### Exclusive Volunteer-Only Opportunities

Throughout the year, programs staff may arrange special opportunities available only to

volunteers. Keep an eye out for tours at the Bodega Marine Lab, Outer Bodega Bay boat trips, a trip to the Marine Mammal Center, and more!

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## IV. HOW TO VOLUNTEER

### Step One: Paperwork (VIPP vs. Stewards)

All volunteers must complete the proper paperwork prior to volunteering. VIPP and Stewards volunteer paperwork are available on Stewards' website ([stewardscr.org/volunteer-opportunities/](http://stewardscr.org/volunteer-opportunities/)) or at Stewards' office in Armstrong Redwoods SNR. Please complete and email paperwork to [Schall.Amelia@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Schall.Amelia@parks.ca.gov) or mail to Amelia Schall, Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District Office, 12301 N Highway 1, Box 1, Mendocino, CA 95460. This paperwork ensures that State Parks and Stewards have all the proper information in case you are injured while volunteering. Injuries that occur during a volunteer shift are eligible for coverage by worker's compensation (read more on worker's compensation and incident reports and emergency contact information in [Section VII. RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES](#)).

- Programs requiring completed VIPP paperwork: most programs listed in [Section V. VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES](#)
- Programs requiring completed Stewards paperwork: Special Events, Office Volunteers, Pinniped Monitoring and Seabird Monitoring (If a volunteer opts to receive a stipend)

### Step Two: Trainings

#### • Orientations and Trainings

To well prepare volunteers to represent Stewards and California State Parks, Stewards require volunteers to attend scheduled trainings. New volunteers may begin to volunteer before going to the scheduled volunteer trainings if the required paperwork has been completed and the volunteer is mentored by an experienced volunteer. We highly encourage experienced volunteers to attend a training every few years as a refresher, and to receive program updates. If you are unable to make the scheduled dates, we ask that you plan to attend the next required training at your earliest convenience. Attendance at the following FREE volunteer trainings is mandatory. Please visit Stewards' website for dates and to register online.

- General Volunteers in Parks Program (VIPP) Orientation
- Relevant program-specific trainings

#### • Shadowing or One-on-One Training

If you cannot make the scheduled training date but want to get started, staff may arrange a shadowing or one-on-one training with an experienced volunteer until you feel confident enough to successfully complete the duties on your own. The experienced volunteer will go over all the responsibilities involved with the program, and you should shadow them during their shift(s). You may shadow as much, or as little as you like, depending on what is arranged between the new and experienced volunteers.

#### • Seminars - Additional Training

Educational seminars are offered throughout the year and can provide volunteers with additional information pertaining to the program(s) they are interested in. Members of Stewards receive a 20% discount. Fee waivers are available for volunteers who are unable to pay. Visit Stewards' website ([stewardscr.org/upcoming-events-programs/](http://stewardscr.org/upcoming-events-programs/)) to view and register for educational seminars.



### Step Three: Connect with Program Coordinators

Stewards' volunteer programs have Program Coordinators who assume additional responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- Keeping a current list of all volunteers involved with the program
- Scheduling volunteers for shifts
- Serving as the main contact between Stewards programs staff and program volunteers
- Training new volunteers

Program Coordinators are excellent mentors, and will help a new volunteer who is just getting started. The following volunteer programs have program coordinators:

- Armstrong Trail Crew
- Armstrong Visitor Center
- Armstrong Redwoods Docent
- Armstrong Roving Docent
- Jenner Visitor Center
- Seabird Monitoring and Roving
- Seal Watch
- Sonoma Coast Trail Crew
- Tidepool Education
- Watershed Program
- Willow Creek Trail Crew
- Whale Watch

For all other programs not listed, email the Stewards office [stewards@stewardscr.org](mailto:stewards@stewardscr.org) for more information.

### Step Four: Recording Volunteer Hours

Be sure to record your hours on [Better Impact Volunteer Management Software](#) before December 31st of the year for you to be eligible for one of the California State Park volunteer passes. Note that those who have accrued enough hours (48 or 200) by early December should have them recorded then, but that hours done late in December can be recorded in early January. So that you don't forget hours that you have volunteered, we recommend that you report your hours weekly or monthly, or at least keep an accurate record of your hours until you report them.

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## V. VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve and Austin Creek State Recreation Area

**Armstrong Redwoods Docents** – *Weekdays, some weekends*

**Roving Guides:** Walk the trails in Armstrong Redwoods to interpret the redwood ecology, cultural history, and provide visitor information.

**School Field Trips:** Lead a 1-2 hour walk in Armstrong Redwoods for K-12 students and interpret redwood ecology.

**Other Groups** (group tours, individual parties, and others): Lead customized walks in Armstrong Redwoods.

**Armstrong Trail Crew** – *2nd and 4th Wednesday of the Month*

Give Stewards' operations staff a hand with projects such as fencing, storm damage, repairing

facilities, maintaining trails, and [fuels reduction](#).

**Armstrong Visitor Center**—*Daily 11 AM-4 PM (off season) 10 AM-4 PM (peak season)*

Interpret the redwood ecology and cultural history, provide visitor information, and conduct nature store sales.

**Camp Host at Bullfrog Campground (stipend only)** – *Weekdays and Weekends*

Stay overnight at the campground and help campers. Stipends are available for weekend shifts.

**Public Assistance** – *Weekends, some weekdays*

Available at Armstrong Redwoods, Austin Creek, and Sonoma Coast: Hike the trails keeping a lookout for lost hikers to provide basic assistance (water, maps, radio, natural and cultural information, etc.).

**Pond Farm Pottery** – *Meetings 2nd Thursday of the month*

Discover the fascinating history of world-renowned potter Marguerite Wildenhain. Help develop monthly docent-led tours of the site. Help with exhibits and fundraising efforts.

**Special Events** (Earth Day, Family Day, Art in the Park/Gourmet Walk, Old Grove Festival, Other Events/Festivals)—*Usually weekends*

Help with site setup, cleanup, serving beer/wine, cooking, shuttle transportation, making materials, interpreting and presenting exhibits, guiding trail walks, and more.

**Welcome Center** – *Weekends (Friday through Sunday)*

Staff welcome center in the Armstrong Redwoods Visitor Center parking lot to provide visitor information and information about the flora and fauna in the park.

**Stewards Office** - *Weekdays*

Come into Stewards' Office and help with administrative tasks as assigned by staff.

**Sonoma Coast State Park**

**Jenner Visitor Center (JVC)** – *Daily 11 AM-4 PM*

Provide visitor information, perform retail sales, promote Stewards' memberships/volunteer programs, and recommend hiking trails, wildlife viewing opportunities, and other coastal attractions.

**Marine Education Program** – *On select weekdays*

Teach students a variety of topics at locations on the coast, including:

- Cultural History: Early settlers (Pomo, redwood loggers, ranchers, and Russians)
- Marine Protected Areas and Marine Wildlife: Seabirds (April-Aug), harbor seals (Mar-Aug), gray whales (Jan-May)
- Mediterranean Climate: Coastal grassland/scrub, marine layer/coastal fog, plant adaptations, ethnobotany, etc.
- Geology: San Andreas Fault, tectonic plates, marine terraces/uplift, mammoth rubbings at sunset boulders, Hole in the Head, etc.
- Camera Program: Students use Nikon digital cameras to investigate nature

**Pinniped Monitoring – Weekdays**

**VIPP or Stipend:** Observe the pinnipeds at the coast and record scientific data in partnership with the Sonoma County Water Agency.

**Seabird Monitoring – Weekdays and weekends**

**VIPP or Stipend:** Observe the seabirds at the coast and record scientific data in partnership with the Seabird Protection Network and the Bureau of Land Management / California Coastal National Monument.

**Seabird Roving – Weekends**

Interpret the natural histories and nesting behaviors of seabirds found out at the coast.

**Seal Watch – Weekends March through Labor Day**

Educate the public about the harbor seals at Goat Rock to decrease human-caused disturbances.

**Sonoma Coast Roving Docent – Weekends, some weekdays**

Walk the trails at the Sonoma Coast and interpret the marine ecology and cultural history, and provide visitor information. May carry a radio to alert State Parks about emergencies.

**Sonoma Coast Trail Crew – 3rd Wed of Month**

Assist State Parks with stewardship projects such as fencing, repairing facilities, installation of signage, maintaining trails, and [fuels reduction](#).

**Steward Ship (Mobile Marine Education Van) – Weekends, some weekdays**

Join mobile marine education van at schools, the coast, or community events to provide hands-on activities, interpret marine ecology, outreach for Stewards, and sell merchandise to support programs.

**Tidepool Education – Weekdays in spring, some weekends**

**Roving Guides:** Walk the beaches on low tides weekends to interpret the intertidal zone to visitors.

**Tidepool Groups:** Lead a 2-3 hour tidepool exploration with adult or K-12 school groups and educate them on how to protect the organisms.

**Watershed Education – Weekdays (Fall and Spring)**

Teach school field trips about stream ecology. Students will learn about erosion, perform water quality tests, and sample benthic macroinvertebrates living in Pomo Canyon or Fife Creeks.

**Willow Creek Trail Crew – 1st Wed of Month**

Assist State Parks with projects such as fencing, removing down trees, maintaining trails, and [fuels reduction](#).

**Whale Watch – Weekends January through May**

Interpret the annual Pacific grey whale migration to visitors from all over the world at Bodega Head.

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## VI. PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

Interpretation is “A mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource.”  
(National Association for Interpretation)

Sam Ham described four essential qualities in his book *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose*:

- Interpretation is Thematic.
- Interpretation is Organized.
- Interpretation is Relevant.
- Interpretation is Enjoyable.

Refer to the guide from the National Parks Service on the fundamentals of Interpretation:

<https://www.nps.gov/grte/learn/management/upload/interp.pdf>

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## VII. RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### Emergency and Non-Emergency Contact Information

\*Emergencies call 911

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Office (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm): +1 (707) 869-9177

State Park Northern Dispatch: +1 (916) 358-1300

Salmon Creek Ranger Station: +1 (707) 875-2603

Sonoma Coast State Park Visitor Center (Jenner): +1 (707) 865-9757

Sonoma Coast Lifeguards: +1 (707) 875-3627

Sheriff Dispatch (Non-emergency): +1 (707) 565-2121

Russian River District Headquarters: +1 (707) 865-2391

Bodega Dunes Campground: +1 (707) 875-3483

Road Conditions: +1 (800) 427-7623

### Medical Care Contact Information

Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) Station 10 Bodega Bay: 911

Sonoma Specialty Hospital: +1 (707) 823-8511, 501 Petaluma Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472

Kaiser Permanente: +1 (707) 393-4000, 401 Bicentennial Way, Santa Rosa, CA

Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital: +1 (707) 576-4000, 30 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital: +1 (707) 525-5300, 1165 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95405

### Disturbance Reporting Contact Information

Report Injured Seals or other Marine Mammals: The Marine Mammal Center, +1 (415) 289-7325

Report Dead Marine Mammals: California Academy of Sciences, +1 (415) 379-5381,  
[marinemammals@calacademy.org](mailto:marinemammals@calacademy.org)

Report Entangled Whales: +1 (877) SOS-WHAL or +1 (877) 767-9425

Report Injured Land Birds: Bird Rescue Center, +1 (707) 523-2473

Report Injured Seabirds: International Bird Rescue, +1 (707) 207-0380

Report Injured Wildlife: Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue, +1 (707) 526-WILD (9453)

Report In-progress Poacher or Polluter Violation or any Fish and Wildlife Violation: +1 (888) DFG-CALTIP (334-2258), CalTIP (Californians Turn In Poachers and Polluters)

Report Oil or Chemical Spill: Cal Emergency Management Agency, +1 (800) 852-7550; National Response Center, +1 (800) 424-8802

### **Potential Hazards**

Working outside in the parks may expose you to certain hazards that you should be aware of. The following is a list of some you may encounter in parks - visit [OSHA.gov](https://www.osha.gov) for resources on how to prevent and respond to exposures:

- [Heat](#)
- [Ticks and Lyme disease](#)
- [Poison oak](#)
- [Rattlesnakes](#)
- [Airborne allergens](#)
- [Insect stings](#)

### **Incident Reports and Workers Compensation Information**

No work is so important that it should be undertaken in an unsafe manner where injury may result. When it happens, volunteers should report an injury to the Stewards and State Parks as soon as possible. Even if you think your injury is minor, please report it. Stewards' goal is to help you get the medical attention you need in the quickest and easiest way possible. If your injury requires immediate medical attention, please go to the nearest hospital.

Report your injury right away no matter how slight the injury may be. Don't delay – there are time limits. If an injury is relatively minor, such as a minor scratch, cut, burn, splinter, or other minor injury, and a doctor's care is not required, a Report of Minor Industrial Injury ([form DPR 761](#)) should be completed, signed by both the volunteer and the supervisor, and turned in to the sector office. If, however, the injured volunteer is evaluated and treated by a medical doctor, then a [Workers' Compensation Claim Form \(DWC 1\) e3301](#) and an Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness ([form 3067](#)) should be completed within 24 hours and sent to the Risk Management Unit for filing with State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF). Once it has been submitted, State Parks will look for your paperwork to confirm that you are signed up for the program you were volunteering for and confirm that you were signed up for your volunteer shift. For this reason, it is important that you turn in your completed paperwork and that you have some record of your volunteer shift with Stewards.

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## **VIII. PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The California Vehicle Code, Penal Code, Health & Institutions Code, Business & Professions Code, and Code of Regulations, as well as local ordinances apply within the boundaries of Armstrong Redwoods SNR, Austin Creek SRA, and Sonoma Coast State Park. It is each visitor's responsibility to know and follow all applicable rules and laws, however, they often need a reminder or ask volunteers for clarification. Therefore, it is helpful if volunteers have a basic understanding of the more commonly asked about and/or violated rules and regulations (see list below). Superintendent's Posted Orders, which outline specific rules for Armstrong Redwoods SNR and Austin Creek SRA, are posted on the outside of the Welcome Center. Volunteers should remember the "inform do not enforce" policy when encountering visitors in violation of the law.

- **Park Hours:** 8:00 AM to one hour after official sunset, 7 days a week, year-round. Only registered campers may remain at Austin Creek SRA between one hour after sunset and 8:00 AM. (CCR 4326)
- **Fees:** Day use and Camping fees are due upon entry and are charged per vehicle (per site for camping). (CCR 4302) Fee receipts or passes must be displayed properly to avoid citation. Self-registration is often required. Day use and Camping fees are paid at the entrance station (kiosk) or at the Welcome Center at the entrance parking lot. Camping fees can also be paid at the entrance to Bullfrog Pond Campground at the self-registration pay station located there. Camping reservations for Austin Creek are handled through [www.hipcamp.com](http://www.hipcamp.com). Camping reservations for Sonoma Coast are handled at [www.reservecalifornia.com](http://www.reservecalifornia.com).
- **Staying on Trail:** Visitors are encouraged to stay on designated trails to avoid poison oak, ticks, and getting lost. It is also illegal to destroy or mutilate plants, which is a likely result of visitors going off trail. (CCR 4306)
- **Dogs:** Not allowed on trails, but allowed on paved roads and must be on 6-foot leash. (CCR 4312)
- **Horses:** Allowed on paved roads, East Ridge Trail, Pool Ridge Trail, and Gilliam Creek Trail ([refer to map](#) and trail signage). Visitors should check the Posted Orders on the outside of the Welcome Center pertaining to trail closures for equestrians. (CCR 4326)
- **Drones:** May not launch, operate, or land within the boundaries of State Parks in the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District, but are allowed to fly over State Parks airspace. Not allowed to harass wildlife or endanger people.
- **Bicycles:** Not allowed on trails, but allowed on paved roads only ([refer to map](#) and trail signage). (CCR 4326)
- **Wood Gathering, Picking Flowers, Rockhounding, Disturbing Wildlife:** Illegal to gather, pick, take, collect wood or any other natural or cultural material or feature from the park. This includes disturbing wildlife. (CCR 4306, 4307, 4308)
- **Fires:** Allowed only at picnic area in park-provided stoves, BBQs, and fire rings, or in visitor-provided BBQ's and stoves. Fires must be attended, contained and in control, and be completely extinguished upon visitor exit. (CCR 4311, CCR 4326) Fire bans in Austin Creek SRA can be in place seasonally, and are posted at the front entrance kiosk.
- **Smoking:** Not allowed on trails. (CCR 4311, CCR 4326)
- **Littering:** Illegal without exception, includes non-native organic matter such as apple cores, corn cobs, orange peels, etc. (CCR 4310)
- **Fishing:** All streams within Armstrong Redwoods SNR and Austin Creek SRA are closed to fishing. Fishing is permitted in Bullfrog Pond and the unnamed pond northwest of the Riggs Fire Road. Fishers over 16 years old must have a valid fishing license. Amphibians and reptiles are protected within State Park boundaries (no take). (F&G 5.05(a), F&G 7.5(b) (155) (B))
- **Hunting:** Prohibited within all park boundaries.
- **Weapons:** Prohibited within all park boundaries. (CCR 4313)
- **Fireworks:** Prohibited within all park boundaries. (CCR 4314)
- **Nudity:** Prohibited in all parks (CCR 4322)