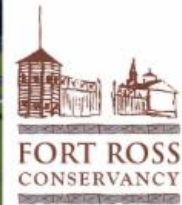


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FEBRUARY 2018



## Fort Ross & Salt Point News

Dear friends of Fort Ross and Salt Point,

Greetings from Palm Springs, California, in the shadow of the beautiful San Jacinto mountains! I'm here with my colleague Song Hunter taking part in a busy few days of conferences and meetings. The main conference is organized by [Public Lands Alliance](#), a national organization uniting public land agencies. California State Parks is participating, and they've co-organized on the margins of the main conference a state-wide training for both their staff and partners such as Fort Ross Conservancy. And the [California League of Park Associations](#) board on which I serve took advantage of its team being in the same place at the same time, scheduling a rare in-person board meeting this week as well.



Several days in, I'm happy to report feeling optimistic that brighter days are ahead for our beloved park system! The highlight for me this week has been talking to California State Parks Director Lisa Mangat and others from her executive team. We are beginning to see the positive changes brought on by Sacramento's [Transformation Team](#)\*, in particular with changes to hiring practices. A good local example is our new district superintendent Terry Bertels, hired from outside law enforcement and the State Parks system to manage the Sonoma Mendocino district. He brings a fresh perspective and strong leadership, and we are pleased to welcome Superintendent Bertels to our team. Other changes include strengthening the contractual partnership between State Parks and nonprofits such as FRC to create new opportunities for each organization to play to its strengths. These changes will, in time, coalesce into system-wide improvements with broad impact. We are also seeing increases in State Parks funding through the SB1 transportation and fuel tax which will support bringing new maintenance staff to Fort Ross and Salt Point.

I'm confident that these improvements will make a difference on the ground at our parks, and that's something we can all get behind.

Hope to see you soon at Fort Ross and Salt Point,

Sarah Sweedler  
Fort Ross Conservancy CEO  
[sarajs@fortross.org](mailto:sarajs@fortross.org)

\* [Final Transformation Progress Report](#), May 23, 2017: summarizes the accomplishments and foundational work the department completed over a two-year period to better serve California's diverse population and create a more inviting, relevant state park system. Such efforts include strengthening relationships with partners and local communities, streamlining payment processes, and improving access for all Californians.

### HARBOR SEAL SURVEY VOLUNTEER TRAINING

**Saturday, March 10th, 9-11 AM**  
Fort Ross State Historic Park  
(Meet at the Visitor Center)



Come join us for an onsite field training that will introduce you to our Harbor Seal surveys. Surveys take about two hours and are conducted by walking approximately two miles of beautiful low-tide shoreline and monitoring our pinniped friends.

There are twelve Saturday surveys scheduled from March through July of 2018. Surveys can be completed any day, Thursday through Monday, around the Saturday target dates.

Survey data is sent to the National Park Service's SF Bay Area Network Inventory & Monitoring Program. By contributing to the long-term monitoring of harbor seals, this data will aid in protecting seal colonies and assessing the health of the marine ecosystem!

Free training offered by Fort Ross Conservancy. Please contact Hank Birnbaum, to confirm attendance or arrange for alternative training time. [hankb@fortross.org](mailto:hankb@fortross.org) or (707) 847-3440 or 847-3437.

## SPRING CELEBRATION

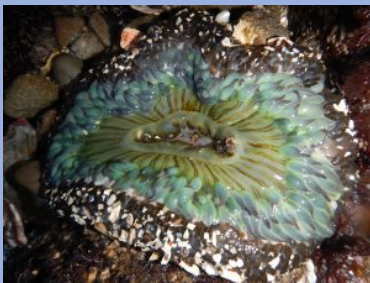


**Saturday, March 24th, 12 PM - 3:30 PM**

Fort Ross State Historic Park

Join our Kedry volunteers for the festive "**Verbnoye Voskresenie**" (Pussy Willow, not Palm) Sunday, a family-friendly holiday featuring traditional Russian/Slavic ritual and song and fuzzy catkins, welcoming Spring! Symbolic willow walk around the village and lyrical singing while doing crafts.

## INTRODUCING THE FORT ROSS CONSERVANCY BLOG



Welcome to the [Fort Ross Conservancy Blog](#)! We hope you enjoy this collection of observations made by the dedicated and enthusiastic staff. Each one of us is a passionate naturalist, finding joy, beauty and importance in every moment we get to spend outdoors here at the park and the surrounding Sonoma County.

## LONG GONE, NOW FOUND



Having been discovered and lost, this "common anchor" has been found once again by Steve Pearce, a great-grandson of George W and Mercedes Call of Fort Ross. Steve spied it in the chaos of the shed in the Call picnic grounds then notified neighbor and local historian Lynn H Rudy to assist in identification of the object. After a survey of photographs and written records, Lynn and Steve believe that this might be the anchor that was used on the *J F Eppinger*, a sailing schooner that wrecked in Fort Ross Cove on January 2, 1901. A note in the Call family archives located in the library at Fort Ross says that an anchor was found 200 feet south of the old landing on the north edge of the cove. The "*Eppinger* anchor" had been displayed in the fort compound in the 1980s--then went "missing"--apparently stashed in the barn for safe keeping, it seems. Though John McKenzie identified the anchor as being from the shipwrecked *Eppinger* he did not provide the source for that information; no further evidence has been located to determine the exact ship that this anchor belonged to.

The Call family told the story of the when the *Eppinger* went aground: Carlos, aged 20, swam out to the crew with a light line which they attached to a heavier one and threw up to the chute (or maybe Carlos swam it up as well?). Thus all the crew of six were saved. G W Call wouldn't let his son Carlos be nominated for a Carnegie hero medal, "as he was just doing what he was expected to do."



The newspaper sketch of the *Eppinger* sinking, 2 January 1901.

## FORT ROSS CEMETERY NEWS



Cadaver sniffing dogs and radar detectors on strollers at Fort Ross! State Park archaeologists and field crew survey the Fort Ross Cemetery in preparation for a potential restoration project. More information is coming soon.

Visit our website at [WWW.FORTROSS.ORG](http://WWW.FORTROSS.ORG) for details

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