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Fort Ross & Salt Point News September 2012

[Fort Ross Conservancy](#)

A California State Park Cooperating Association

Park Service Reduction

Fort Ross Only Open on Saturdays & Sundays



Due to Russian River district service reductions, Fort Ross State Historic Park will be open only on Saturdays and Sundays, effective September 4. Reef Campground and day use are closed. Salt Point's Woodside Campground is closed effective September 4. Fisk Mill and Stump Beach Day Use are closed.

This is an interesting time for California State Parks. As disclosed in the [Sacramento Bee](#), in July state officials revealed that the department had been sitting on \$54 million in surplus money in two special funds, at the same time the department closed many parks because of supposed funding shortfalls. ([Fort Ross Conservancy board of directors' response to this disclosure](#) can be found on our website.) Two bills now on the governor's desk, [AB 1589 Huffman](#) and [AB 1478 Blumenfield](#), address the allocation of these funds and the overall funding shortfall within State Parks.

However, while not on the official closure list, Fort Ross and many parks and campgrounds on the Sonoma coast are closed due to service reductions. It is our concern that Sacramento and our friends at the California State Parks Foundation will again work to "save" the closed parks, allocating a disproportionate amount of funding and energy to parks on the official closure list and once again short-changing those operating under service reductions. We realize it's a cleaner story (and easier marketing) to track the 70 parks on the list rather than hundreds of parks experiencing shades of grey in terms of closures, but to our visitors, a locked gate is a locked gate.

Here's where we need your help. Please go to California State Park Foundation's [Take Action](#) page and support AB 1478 --- but please personalize your comment with a shout-out to end service reductions across our parks:

Funding from AB 1478 must be used to end both park closures and service reductions that plague our state parks. Please ensure that this funding is disbursed across the California State Parks system and that all parks are open and accessible to the public.

To get Fort Ross, Stump Beach, Fisk Mill, Reef, and Woodside open again, we need you to contact CSPF and your local representatives. Otherwise we'll still be on the wrong side of a locked gate. Thank you.

Upcoming Events

Fort Ross Orchard Featured at the Heirloom Expo in Santa Rosa September 12, 9am



Susan Rudy will be giving a talk on the historic Fort Ross Orchard at the Heirloom Expo, September 12th, 2012, (9 a.m. in Finley Hall - Speaker Hall 1). The Expo is held at the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds, and in addition to many displays of heirloom plants and animals, the California Rare Fruit Growers Association will hold their annual conference which celebrates heirloom fruit this year. For more information see www.theheirloomexpo.com

Working with the Fort Ross Conservancy, Susan has received \$84,518.00 from [Renova Fort Ross Foundation](#) to stabilize and protect the historic Fort Ross orchard. We are tremendously grateful to both

Susan and the [Renova Fort Ross Foundation](#) for their vision and dedication to protect this vulnerable living resource.

Call House Museum Tours Every Weekend in September, 1pm-4pm

Join a docent-led tour of the Call House every weekend in September between 1pm and 4pm. Learn how local families lived on the coast during the Ranch Era, 1845 - 1976. The house is normally open the first two weekends of the month throughout the year, but for the month of



Photo by Paul Miller

September only, in honor of "Ranch Month," it will be open every Saturday and Sunday! Day-use fees apply.

Lecture on Transition of Fort Ross to John Sutter September 15, 2pm-4pm



Transitions are by definition dynamic, and the sale of Fort Ross to John Sutter is no exception. Join Albert Hurtado, author of [John Sutter: A Life on the North American Frontier](#) and Travis Chair in American History, University of Oklahoma, for a lecture on Sutter's purchase of Ross, and the interactions between the Russians and Sutter in the years that followed. Sponsored by the Fort Ross Conservancy.

San Francisco Public Library, Main Branch, 2pm to 4pm. This event is free to the public. For more information call 707/847-3437.

Settlement Ross and the Missions: A Breadbasket for Russian Alaska October 18, 7 pm



At the Presidio, Golden Gate Club, 135 Fisher Loop, San Francisco. Learn about Fort Ross and its early 19th century role including the farms, ranches and grain fields extending inland along the Russian River and the active trading between the Russians and the Spanish and Mexicans to secure foodstuffs for Russian settlements in Alaska. Presentation by Hank Birnbaum, Fort Ross Conservancy Programs Manager. For more information, see the [Presidio](#) website.

Beyond the Fort: The Ranches, Port & Hunting Station of Settlement Ross October 19, 6pm



At Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa. Early 19th century Alta California hosted the Russian American Company not just at Fort Ross, but also inland farms, ranches, orchards and grain fields, Port Rumyantsev (Bodega Bay) serving as the Russian port, and a hunting station on the Farallon Islands. Presentation by Hank Birnbaum, Fort Ross Conservancy Programs Manager.

Harvest Festival, October 20, 10am - 4pm



This year's Harvest Festival will celebrate the agricultural traditions at Fort Ross. For our bicentennial Harvest Festival, we will have a special interpretive focus on the Fort Ross windmill, which is being reconstructed at Fort Ross thanks to a generous gift from Renova's Links of Times.

During the morning, help us gather the harvest in our orchard. At 1 o'clock join us at the windmill for an interpretive tour. Then, in the afternoon, within the walls of the fort, join us where we will be juicing, baking, making crafts, learning about 19th century agricultural efforts at Settlement Ross, and the group "Kedry" will share traditional Russian song and dance!

The full-size Russian windmill was built by artisan craftsmen in Russia, several of whom will travel to Fort Ross to oversee its installation at Fort Ross in September. For more information on the Fort Ross windmill, see California's First Windmills - The Russian Windmills of Fort Ross by Glenn Farris.

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