



Fort Ross & Salt Point News February 2013

Fort Ross Conservancy

A California State Park Cooperating Association

March 3, 1pm: Marine Mammal Monitoring Training



In this informational session we will describe the new marine mammal observation program at Fort Ross and give you an opportunity to train and sign up to help us with this exciting field work. This is your opportunity to engage with science at a local level. FRC intends to go out in the field once a month, and once a week during the breeding season.

Joining us will be local experts Dr. Joe Mortenson, co-author of "Field Guide to Marine Mammals of the Pacific Coast, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia," and Jamie Hall of the Gulf of Farallones National Marine Sanctuary who have been

conducting field work here since the late 1990's. They will present a slide show teaching us how to identify the marine mammals off our coast and will discuss the logistics of what's required to participate in our monitoring program.

This two hour meeting at the Fort Ross Visitor Center will explore the importance of becoming a "citizen scientist". A separate follow up morning excursion to the Sea Lion Rocks will be scheduled later in March. At that subsequent field training all materials and spotting scopes/binoculars will be provided.

The Fort Ross Sea Lion Rocks, Bodega Rock and Ano Nuevo host the most southerly and fragile extension of the Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) population in the Eastern Pacific. Providing an accurate year-round count of their presence will help with questions such as:

- What is the trend for Steller Sea Lions at Fort Ross?
- Does Fort Ross host a breeding colony? (Are there pups here, and if so, when?)
- What is the relation between California Sea Lions, Harbor Seals, Elephant Seals and Stellar Sea Lions at Fort Ross? How does each population use the offshore rocks and marine resources? Are they competing for space?
- What other marine mammals call these rocks home?

We invite all to attend this meeting and learn about the health of the waters off Fort Ross. Volunteers who sign up for the monitoring program can receive a small travel stipend. Call 707/847-3437 with questions.

March 9, 1pm: Windmill Turning

The windmill is experiencing its first Sonoma coast winter and is standing tall and unbowed. However, this structure requires regular attention to keep its many moving parts working freely. Join us for our monthly "windmill turning" where we will spin the blades, rotate the millhouse, and learn a little more about this wonderful structure. For complete details on all Fort Ross events, go to our [Events](#) page.

Email Lindsey.Elliott@parks.ca.gov with questions. BYOHH - Bring Your Own Hard Hat, if you've got one.



March 9, 3pm: Historic Orchard Presentation



Join local expert Susan Rudy to learn more about the historic Fort Ross orchard. Her talk will focus on the Russian and American Ranch Era and the contemporary efforts to preserve their legacy. She will also discuss the Russian-era cherry trees and the changes in orchard management through the decades.

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.

Park entrance fees apply. Call 707/847-3437 with questions.

March 12: 11th Annual Park Advocacy Day, Sacramento

Join the [California State Parks Foundation](#) and over 100 park advocates from throughout California for our 11th Annual Park Advocacy Day and help us send a powerful message of support for California's 280 state parks.

During Park Advocacy Day, participants dedicate an entire day meeting with policymakers at the Capitol to discuss state park related legislation and budget issues. These meetings have a lasting impact on legislators as they make important decisions about state park protection and the funding of California's state system.



Participants come from a variety of backgrounds and affiliations, and include state park users and state park volunteers, as well as representatives from cooperating associations, environmental, recreational and other state park related nonprofit organizations. The one thing that all participants consistently have in common is the desire to make sure that California's state parks are protected and well maintained. Fort Ross Conservancy team will be there to make sure Fort Ross and Salt Point state parks are well represented, and we need you to come out and lobby for Fort Ross as well!

Please go to this [CSPF link](#) for registration information.

March 23: Park Champions Work Day at Salt Point



Thanks to a generous grant from California State Parks Foundation, Fort Ross Conservancy will be holding 4 volunteer work days at Fort Ross and Salt Point parks. Join us at Salt Point's Gerstle Cove for a day-long volunteer effort to make improvements to Salt Point's Gerstle Cove. We will spend the day clearing brush along the trail and making repairs to the Visitor Center.

We can accommodate up to 32 volunteers.
Work day runs from 10am - 3pm on March 23rd.
Minimum age is 12 years.

California State Parks offer free camping at Salt Point on both Friday and Saturday night (March 22 and 23) for all volunteers who pre-register and work the full day. Camping will be provided in the Woodside Hike & Bike area, available for Friday and Saturday night (Check in March 22 after 2pm and 3/23, with check out by 12 noon on March 24).

To register, go to [California State Park Foundation's Park Champions Calendar](#) and click on the work day (March 23, and upcoming work day on May 4).

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