



Newsletter

Winter 2016

[DONATE](#) | [VOLUNTEER](#) | [BECOME A FRIEND](#) | [ANNUAL PASS](#) | [CONTACT US](#)

In this edition of the Friends of China Camp Newsletter:

[A Treasure Trove of Natural History](#)

[Preserve, Protect and Participate](#)

[5000 Years at the Park](#)

[Earth Day at China Camp State Park](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Volunteers Operate China Camp State Park](#)

What's New at China Camp State Park?

Letter from Ed Lai, Chairman of the Board

The Friends of China Camp team completed its third year as operators in partnership with the California State Parks. We are fast becoming a stronger, more resilient organization through improvements in park operations, services and stewardship. The changes include incorporation, obtaining a separate 501(c)3, and revising and expanding the bylaws. Thanks to these transformations, FOCC, Inc. is a far better run organization.

Thanks to the work of the California Conservation Corp and the Park Champion volunteer crews, we completed the first stage of our major trail restoration project. Thousands of hours of volunteer time and the fine work of the State Park staff contributed to a highly successful year. Those who joined us at our annual Heritage Day in August experienced a celebration with traditional Chinese entertainment. Visitors participated in numerous nature walks and docent-led tours, and learned about the park's cultural history, its ecosystems and the scientific studies now being conducted. It was a pleasure to welcome new docents who joined us in supporting programs in natural and cultural history.

We have been privileged to partner with outstanding organizations including educational and research groups to increase quality services and programming. Many thanks to everyone who has been involved. We're looking forward to renewed collaborations in 2016.

Thanks to a grant from the California State Parks Foundation, our redesigned, user-friendly website is now available at <http://friendsofchinacamp.org>. To keep you more informed about the happenings at China Camp, we will also begin publishing a quarterly on-line newsletter in 2016.

Park attendance and park revenues have increased significantly, but we still have more work to do to meet our goal of a balanced budget and financial sustainability. Please stay involved and continue to offer your support by visiting the park, and through volunteer efforts and donations. Every dollar given and every volunteer hour contributed helps keep our treasured park open and thriving.

Here's to the New Year and to all the promise it brings.

Ed Lai, Chairman



Detailed reports on the accomplishment of the FY2014-2015 and plans for FY 2015-2016 are available on [our FOCC website](#).

[A Treasure Trove of Natural History](#)

A total of more than 140 species of birds, 26 species of mammals, 44 species of fish, and 15 species of reptiles and amphibians have been observed within the site. These include nearly four miles of Bay shoreline (beaches, cliffs, mud flats, salt marsh, coves), four major can-

[Preserve, Protect and Participate](#)

A prime educational goal is to foster the public will to protect the natural and cultural features in the park and beyond by incorporating preservation, restoration, conservation and education efforts. Before the area became a park in 1977, there was poaching and other unlawful activities harmful to wildlife and the various ecosystems. Scars of abuse included features blasted by shotguns, hills rutted by motorcycles and trees felled by vandals. Much progress has been made through plant rehabilitation, major trail restoration, non-native species eradication, maintenance and restoration of historic structures.

yons and many small ones, from the bay shore to the hill crest of over 1,000 feet in elevation, large variety of shorebirds as well as numerous species of freshwater and upland birds and two endangered species. While there are a few existing bay shoreline parks around San Francisco Bay, they do not have the exceptional features of China Camp. China Camp State Park is the last place in the entire Bay Area where an unimpaired natural landscape stretches from bay-shore to mountain top.

FOCC and its partners offer opportunities to learn about the ecosystems, fascinating wild life and plant species and issues affecting the Park's environment. Visit the Natural History Center at the Ranger Station during your visit. Check the website and email announcements for program details.

Learn more: [China Camp Natural History](#)



FOCC/DPR stewardship efforts are managed through environmental evaluations and programs implemented by Park staff, volunteers working through the CA State Parks Foundation "Park Champions" team, ongoing efforts of Foot and Bike Ambassadors and others in the Volunteers in Parks Program, and by every visitor to the park.

Why China Camp State Park is a significant California site:

- CCSP earned the status of California Historic Landmark (site924) and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (#79000995) in 1979.
- It is one of the waterways and wetlands in Marin included as part of the May 2013 naming of the San Francisco Bay as an international Ramsar "wetland of importance".
- It is part of the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and serves as an indicator site.
- It is located on the Bay Area part of the Pacific Flyway, a major highway in the sky for migratory birds.
- It is a vital link on two major public pathways: The San Francisco Bay Trail and The San Francisco Bay Water Trail which encourages optimum use of parks.
- Natural tidal marshes provide a marsh-terrestrial ecotone (a transition zone) which offers some protection from flooding and damage during seasonal changes, wet and dry years and climate changes.
- It provides habitat for threatened species including the Ridgway Rail and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and is a nutrient rich areas for nursery animals getting acclimated to salt.

5000 Years at the Park

Chapter One: Coastal Miwok

Human presence here goes back thousands of years, during which the Coastal Miwok People settles in small villages near San Pablo Bay and along small streams. Fortunate to live in a mild climate, they utilized the abundant resources of the woodlands and the waterways in all aspects of life: for food, shelter, mobility, and development of rich cultural existence. The communities were guided by a headman (hoypu) who provided direction on behavior and work demands, and a woman leader (mayen) who oversaw the important ceremonial activities. Our county owes its name to Chief Marin of the Coastal Miwok. In spite of periods of disarray and forced servitude during a time of European/Mexican dominance, the Miwok people maintained social and geographic ties, and later recovered their federally recognized tribal status as The Graton Rancheria in 2007. Friends of China Camp is working with the tribal government to increase our visitors' understanding of the first chapter of our history.

Learn More: [Coastal Miwok](#)

The China Camp Village Museum is open daily for self-guided tours. Group docent Tours may be arranged by calling the Visitor Center 415-456-0766.

I Saw a Birdie! Over There.

This past year, Friends of China Camp offered a series of monthly natural history walks, ranging in topics from "Following the Tracks" to "Front Seat for the King Tides." We also trained eight new natural history docents who will be helping us offer exciting programs to schools, seniors, community groups, scouts and others



Earth Day at China Camp State Park

Save the Date!

Earth Day is an annual international event that is held to demonstrate support for environmental protection sustaining a healthy, diverse biosphere. It was first celebrated in 1970, and is now coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network and celebrated in more than 192 countries.

As part of its mission to engage China Camp State Park visitors in enjoying and appreciating its natural resources, [Friends of China Camp](#) is hosting a special Earth Day celebration, with a number of special events.

For the past 17 years, [California State Parks Foundation](#) has provided grants to hosting parks for the purpose of celebrating Earth Day with "Restoration and Cleanup" activities. Friends of China Camp is please to announce its participation in this event on Saturday morning, April 16, from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Please join us in the building and sealing of new food storage lockers for our campsites. These will replace our existing old, small, non-raccoon-proof lockers. For this project we need enthusiastic volunteers 12 years of age and older.

On Saturday afternoon starting at 1:30 pm there will be family friendly natural history interpretive activities with Earth Day themes, including walks, games, and art projects.

Date: Saturday, April 16

Time:

- 8:30AM: Registration for morning event
- 9:00AM – 12:30PM: Storage locker building. Lunch is provided. Sign up at [California State Parks Foundation](#) Details about where to meet and what to bring will be provided via email.
- 1:30PM – 4:00pm Family friendly interpretive activities. Additional details can be found on the FOCC website as of March 1, 2016

Join us

To celebrate the Earth
To spiff up our campground
To enjoy China Camp State Park
To learn more about how interconnected we all are

UPCOMING EVENTS

Park Champions Work Day

February 27 - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Park Champions Work Day

March 19 - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

[SEE ALL UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



The All-Volunteer Members of Friends of China Camp Operate the Park

Since July 2012, Friends of China Camp (FOCC) has operated China Camp State Park in cooperation with the [California State Parks](#). FOCC and our State Parks partners are creating a partnership model that will have an impact on the future of the entire California State Park system.

China Camp State Park is a community-funded park. It is kept fully open and thriving solely on its own revenue (camping, day-use, annual passes, special events) and contributions to Friends of China Camp, as well as thousands of hours contributed by our volunteers. All fees collected at China Camp State Park stay within Friends of China Camp for use in operating the park; no fees go to Sacramento. While working to increase park visitations and fee collection revenue, FOCC continues to be ever-mindful of maintaining equitable public access for the park's visitors.

[See more information about how the partnership works.](#)

How You Can Help

[DONATE](#)

[VOLUNTEER](#)

[BECOME A FRIEND](#)



Copyright © 2016 Friends of China Camp, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)