



Friends of China Camp, Inc. (FOCC)

PLAN for the OPERATION of CHINA CAMP STATE PARK for FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

We are pleased to submit the Friends of China Camp operating plan for FY 2020-2021, as operator of China Camp State Park in partnership with the California State Parks. The operating plan is in keeping with the Operating Partnership Agreement, which is currently on a month-by-month basis.

Information regarding park hours, fees, reservations, interpretive programs and events, and safety regulations are posted on our website at www.friendsofchinacamp.org, albeit temporarily modified to comply with the COVID-19 regulations.

FOCC may be contacted at the park phone number (415-456-0766), the FOCC business phone number (415-488-5161), or the info@friendsofchinacamp.org email address.

The information in this document is presented from the time perspective of July 1, 2020, looking forward.

1. Hours of Operation

FOCC plans to keep the operating hours the same as in the previous fiscal year.

- a) The park will remain open seven days a week, 365 days a year, from 8:00 AM to sunset.
- b) The bayside day-use locations including China Camp Village, China Camp Point, Buckeye Point, Weber Point, and Bullhead Flat will remain open from 8:00 AM to sunset daily. When the COVID-19 regulations are lifted and evening events are allowed, hours for day-use locations may be extended.
- c) The campground will continue to be available seven days a week throughout the year unless *shelter in place* orders restrict public access. Check-in time will be after 2:00 PM. Check-out time will be by 12:00 noon. The campground gate at North San Pedro Road will close and be locked at 9:00 PM. There will be a 7-day camping limit between April 1 and October 30. The rest of the year there will be a 15-day limit with an annual limit of 30 days. Some campsites have been temporarily closed to reduce the population density and to help maintain the

required social distancing suggested in the COVID-19 regulations. Camp sites are currently available by reservation only, except for the group camp site, which is available for a single family as a walk-in site. Campers are screened by park staff/hosts before they enter the campground and are required to wear masks in common areas and to maintain social distancing standards.

2. Fee Schedule

The planned fees for 2020-2021 are:

Parking at designated lots: Daily Fees

Passenger cars \$5.00 (includes trail use for four passengers)

Buses up to 24 passengers \$20.00

Buses with 25 or more passengers \$40.00

Trail Use: Daily Use Fee

\$3.00 for each hiker, biker or equestrian

Annual Passes

Parking passes include Trail passes for up to four people: \$60.00

Trail passes: Planned increase from \$35.00 to \$40.00 on January 1, 2021. Due to price inflation alone, \$35 in 2012 would be \$39.30 in 2020.

Campground Fees

Individual campsites with a capacity of 8 campers each are \$35 per night. The group campsite with a capacity of 40 campers is \$175 per night. However, the group campsite, as of March 29, 2020, is no longer available by reservation online until further notice and is temporarily being used as a single-family walk-up camping site, and the price has been reduced to \$35 per night.

Hike & bike sites with a capacity of 8 campers per site are \$5.00 per person. Since June 29, 2020, these sites have also been temporarily closed to help control density in the campground during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Permitted Day-Use Fees for Buckeye Point and Weber Point

Buckeye Point and Weber Point are not available for reservation until further notice. Permitting is temporarily suspended to comply with COVID-19 regulations. The picnic areas are available to household groups on a first come, first served basis.

Permitted Day-Use Fees at Miwok Meadows, China Camp Point, and China Camp Village

Fees at Miwok Meadows, China Camp Point, and China Camp Village are dependent upon the nature of the site use, the number of people attending, hours of use, and special conditions or circumstances, such as the presence of alcohol at the event,

which requires additional staff time. Permitting is temporarily suspended to comply with COVID-19 shelter-in-place regulations until further notice. The picnic areas are available to household groups on a first come, first served basis.

3. Special Event Plan

When COVID-19 social distancing restrictions are lifted by DPR and by the Health Officer of the County of Marin, it will be FOCC's intention to permit, facilitate, and organize special events in the coming year, which will be in keeping with the recreational, cultural and natural history aspects and mission of the park.

a) **Heritage Day.** Heritage Day is held at the end of every summer, charging no fees except for \$5.00 parking. Heritage Day for 2020 has been canceled, as it would have been difficult to “ensure that social distancing, face covering, and all other requirements, including Health Officer orders, are enforced”.

b) **Examples of Recreational and Environmental Events**

- i. King Tide interpretive walk with the SF Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve staff (with King Tide Initiative photo opportunities)
- ii. Tai Chi at full moon
- iii. Nature walks
- iv. Nature-themed book club
- v. Monthly museum talks
- vi. Earth Day volunteer opportunities for trail work
- vii. Park Champions volunteer work events in partnership with the California State Parks Foundation

4. Natural Resource Protection Plan

a) **General.** FOCC will continue to partner with DPR, with DPR taking the lead to plan, implement, and review actions and procedures that meet legal requirements for compliance with approved planning documents, environmental laws, internal and external regulatory mandates, and policies required for China Camp State Park as outlined in the Operating Partnership Agreement.

b) **Partnerships.** FOCC will continue to develop and maintain working relationships with other partners to move natural resources planning and implementation forward through mutual projects and fundraising efforts on behalf of the park's natural resource protection and rehabilitation. Areas of mutual interest include climate change and its effect on tidal marshes and lowlands at CCSP and surrounding communities. As is the case with DPR, FOCC

also has a close working relationship with SF Bay NERR, Marin County Parks, Marin County Fire Department and the Marin County Sheriff's Office.

- c) **Trails Restoration.** FOCC, in collaboration with DPR, is continuing the restoration of over 14 miles of trails in the park. The goal of the project is to restore the trails to DPR standards. FOCC's volunteers are leading 8-10 workday events per month. After the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, the monthly maintenance events with the CSPF Parks Champions will resume, with an emphasis on the easier sections of the trails.

PG&E will be restoring the tread and drainage on Back Ranch Fire Trail from the campground to an upper elevation slide area. The installation of a gate, for the purposes of slowing the downhill speed of bikers into the campground, is being discussed. Given that repairing the Back Ranch Fire Trail was selected for Proposition 68 funding, the need for these public funds will have to be reduced or eliminated altogether.

PG&E will also be restoring the tread on Power Line Fire Trail, clearing brush to allow vehicle access, and removing Scotch and French broom.

- d) **Fire Mitigation.** FOCC continues to keep grasses cut, trees trimmed, fire trail access clear of obstructions and maintain buffer zones around structures. This includes the two property lots on McNear Drive. In addition, old railroad ties, telephone poles and other flammable lumber that was left in the burn area prior to 2012, will be removed. FOCC is participating in neighboring community FIRESafe Marin planning meetings. New signage for Red Flag Days is being developed. Also see 4c above for fire trail work being done by PG&E.
- e) **Split Rail Fencing.** FOCC has surveyed all existing split rail fencing and is working with DPR to determine which fences can be repaired or replaced without cultural impact and which fencing sites may need additional surveys.
- f) **Trail Culverts.** FOCC is working to maintain the structural integrity of trail culverts, to clear them of debris prior to the rainy season, and to keep them patent during the winter storms.
- g) **Invasive Plant Removal Project.** DPR has given FOCC the approval to remove the following invasive plants from designated areas in the park: Fennel, Scotch/French Broom, English Ivy, Cape Ivy, Stinkwort, Spurge, blackberry and Italian Bull Thistle. FOCC has been approved to remove those plant species from around the Peacock Gap Trail Road, Five Pines Point, Bullet Hill Trail, Northern Shoreline Trail, Turtle Back Trail, the Village and areas around Back Ranch Campground. These are areas in the park where invasive removal can be easily achieved without disturbance to the native flora or cultural resources.

When the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, FOCC will engage youth and adult groups for removal events, including Boy/Girl Scout groups, school groups, Earth Day volunteers, and other groups.

- h) **Non-system Trail Evaluation and Prescription:** A number of old trail and road alignments, dating back to before the park was formed, still exist and are used by hikers and bicyclists. FOCC, in collaboration with DPR, will evaluate the most established non-system trails and roads in the park and determine if any should be adopted or permanently closed. Either action would require funding and partnering with other organizations such as CCC, CCNB and MCBC to implement the prescriptions and conduct outreach to educate park visitors about the changes to gain their cooperation.

5. Cultural Resource Protection Plan

FOCC will continue to support DPR's mandate to secure and protect historical and cultural artifacts through historical building maintenance and split rail fence maintenance and installation, as directed by DPR.

- a) **Stabilization of Historic Structures.** FOCC will continue the ongoing stabilization program of historic buildings in China Camp Village, including corrugated roof structures, building foundations, gutters, windows, and siding, as needed.
- b) **Cultural Landscape Report.** In July 2020, FOCC will receive the final submittal of a Cultural Landscape Report for China Camp Village. The CLR is being produced by two prominent historians, Stephen Haller and John Martini, and funded by private donations solicited by FOCC. A Cultural Landscape Report guides management and treatment decisions about a landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems, and use when that use contributes to historical significance.
- c) **Café Stabilization and Sealing.** Now that this project has been chosen by DPR to proceed, Proposition 68 funds may be used in 2020-2021 to stabilize and seal the historic café in China Camp Village. Not only would this project make the café safe, rodent free, and protected from roof leaks, it would also bring the café to code, or at least closer to it. It is FOCC's hope that Prop. 68 funds will also be used to fund, prior to this project, an Historic Structure Report for the café.
- d) **China Camp Village Timber Pilings.** Now that this project has been chosen by DPR to proceed, Proposition 68 funds may be used in 2020-2021 to repair at least 30 timber pilings that support the museum, processing sheds, and pier. As a result of wave action and salt erosion, Noble Consultants, Inc. has assessed that

13 pilings have a condition of “IMMEDIATE REPAIR – CRITICAL”, and 17 pilings have a condition of “IMMEDIATE REPAIR – BAD”.

6. Interpretive Plan for Natural History

In-person natural history programs remain cancelled until further notice due to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. However, the FOCC program director will continue to work with docents to develop and implement online interpretive programs in natural and cultural history until social distancing restrictions have been lifted.

- a) **Programs.** FOCC has altered docent-led programs to be available via online communication platforms like WebX and Skype. Programs will include a virtual naturalist book club, an online birding class & a naturalist educational series. FOCC may provide online children’s programs that focus on the natural history of the marsh. FOCC intends to invite guest speakers, such as experts in the field of natural or cultural history, to give online lectures.
- b) **Education.** School programs and in-class programs remain canceled until the shelter-in-place orders have been lifted.
- c) **Natural History Docent Training Program.** FOCC’s natural history docent training program will be implemented when the shelter-in-place order has been lifted and in-person docent programs will, once again, be allowed to take place. This training program will be in alignment with the goals and objectives of the Interpretation and Education Chapter of the DPR Operations Manual.
- d) **Earth Day 2021.** Despite the cancellation of the Earth Day 2020 program, FOCC is hopeful that Earth Day 2021 will take place and that it will focus, as it did in 2019, on programming for the local Latino community.

7. Interpretive Plan for Cultural History

- a) **Village Museum Programs.** When COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, FOCC will work to expand the Village museum docent hours beyond the typical summer weekend schedule so that there are better opportunities to engage the visitors and to provide assistance. Docents will also provide educational programs to groups of adults and children by appointment. To enhance these services, recruitment of more docents will continue, especially those with skills in Spanish and Chinese languages.
- b) **Heritage Day Festival.** China Camp’s annual Heritage Day event that celebrates the park’s rich cultural history typically includes participation from partnering agencies like the Marin Chinese Cultural Association, Redwood Empire Chinese

Cultural Association, NERR, SF Maritime Museum, San Francisco Go Club, and the Marin History Museum. Although canceled for 2020, plans for a 2021 event will resume when the shelter-in-place order has been lifted.

- c) **St. Erina Project.** The St. Erina, a fishing boat with historical China Camp Village connections, has been brought ashore and displayed on the boat rails as a permanent marine interpretive feature. FOCC plans to develop interpretive signage, educational materials, and programs around historic fisheries equipment and processes in the Village, including the St. Erina.

8. Maintenance

- a) **Housekeeping.** FOCC will continue its highly successful relationship with a local janitorial service for the daily cleaning and light maintenance of all restrooms and showers throughout the park and the emptying of all trash cans. Park aides and volunteers will assist with litter removal and be responsible for mowing, weed and branch removal from public areas, including trails, and other tasks, as needed. While the COVID-19 regulations are in place, additional deep cleaning and sanitation have been included in the daily routine.
- b) **Volunteers.** In addition to its paid maintenance staff, FOCC will continue to use FOCC maintenance volunteers and FOCC Trail Ambassadors, who regularly monitor the trails, remove trash and report hazards or other issues. When COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, FOCC will invite CSPF Park Champions volunteers, Bay Area bicycle organizations, and others to join volunteer events.
- c) **Toro Track Mud Buggy.** FOCC plans to raise funds from donors for the purchase of a Toro Track Mud Buggy, which will complement the one that FOCC already owns.
- d) **Eagle Scouts.** FOCC will continue to support and guide Eagle Scouts with projects that benefit CCSP as well as provide an opportunity for the Scout to plan, develop and give leadership to others. These activities will resume when the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

9. FOCC Organizational Changes

For 2020-2021, FOCC anticipates having two full-time administrative employees, one full-time park manager, and three uniformed park aides -- one full-time and two part-time, on the payroll.

Staffing the Back Ranch Guard Kiosk. FOCC will continue to staff the guard kiosk at the entrance to Back Ranch Meadows with park aides, seasonal campground

hosts, and volunteers from 9 AM to 6 PM every day of the week. FOCC believes that it is essential to enforce fee collection in the park, and FOCC has seen that an increased number of payment transactions at the Back Ranch pay station more than offsets the expense of additional paid staff.

Staffing the Upper Village Gate. FOCC will continue to staff the upper China Camp Village gate with park aides and volunteers on weekends. Pay station revenue in 2020 is running 2-3 times higher than in 2019 due, in large measure, to the staffing at the upper Village gate and at the Back Ranch kiosk.

High School Intern. As mentioned under the “Interpretive Plan for Natural History”, for the 2020-2021 school year, FOCC will take on an intern, who is a senior in the Marin School of Environmental Leadership at Terra Linda High School. The intern will help FOCC expand its social media presence.

Volunteers. As a result of DPR’s request for FOCC to discontinue DPR’s Volunteer In Parks Program (VIPP), FOCC will create its own in-house volunteer program, likely to be called *Volunteers In China Camp* (VICC).

Security. FOCC enjoys a positive relationship with the Marin County Sheriff’s Office and with peace officers in the District Office to provide a safe environment for park visitors in China Camp State Park.



This report has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Friends of China Camp, Inc. Submitted: June 30, 2020.

Steve Deering
Chairman, Friends of China Camp, Inc.
email: hsdeering@gmail.com
phone: (415) 847-6652