



## Friends of China Camp, Inc.

# Operations Report for China Camp State Park Calendar Year 2021

Since the Operating Agreement between the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and Friends of China Camp (FOCC) was activated on July 27, 2012, FOCC has met its contractual obligations to operate China Camp State Park and to protect its natural and cultural resources.

On January 31, 2020, FOCC received a letter from DPR Director Lisa Mangat stating that State Parks will convert the term of the existing Operating Agreement to a month-to-month basis. FOCC Executive Director Martin Lowenstein countersigned the letter. In October 2021, DPR initiated negotiations with FOCC for a new Operating Agreement. As of the writing of this report, those negotiations are ongoing.

**The information in this document is presented for the time period January 1, 2021 until December 31, 2021.**

### **I. China Camp State Park: open and thriving**

Since FOCC's original 2011-12 "Save the Park" Campaign, our primary objective has been to ensure that all of the park facilities are open to visitors 365 days a year. FOCC also ensured that visitors would have the opportunity to experience the exceptional natural and cultural features of China Camp in a well-managed environment.

In early 2021, that objective was disrupted when the pandemic forced the temporary closure of some park facilities. On January 1, Back Ranch Meadows Campground, China Camp Village Cafe, and the park's visitor center were closed to the public. Three weeks later, on January 25, all outdoor day-use facilities were reopened. Back Ranch Meadows Campground also reopened that day, but only to same-day walk-ins. Advance camping reservations resumed on February 11.

Special event permits were also impacted by the pandemic. Gatherings were limited to no more than 50 people from January 1 until June 15.

FOCC's in-person events and programs were also suspended. FOCC continued to offer online programs until in-person gatherings were once again permitted by the Marin County Health Officer.

## II. Friends of China Camp Personnel

In the spring of 2017, State Parks approached FOCC to request that FOCC begin moving away from utilizing State Parks employees in China Camp. On December 1, 2017, FOCC initiated its first-ever payroll with five employees. As of December 31, 2021, FOCC had a payroll of eight employees:

- **Martin Lowenstein**, Executive Director
- **Ian Nelson**, Park Manager (through December 31, 2021)
- **Chris Young**, Park Manager (starting December 1, 2021)
- **Sheila Coll**, Program Director
- **Scott Griggs**, Park Maintenance Aide
- **Lucinda Colberg**, Park Administration Aide (part-time)
- **Jose Gonzalez**, Park Aide (part-time)
- **Zoli Bassoff**, Park Aide (part-time)

### A. Maintenance Host

FOCC benefits from the service of a Maintenance Host, who resides with his wife in their RV at the Maintenance Host pad.

### B. Campground Hosts

Back Ranch Meadows Campground has two RV parking spaces allotted for hosts, who manage the campground and staff the campground's entry kiosk. In exchange, FOCC provides hosts with utility hookups for their RVs. As of December 31, 2021, both spaces were occupied by hosts.

### C. Security

FOCC has increased the number of uniformed staff and volunteers in the park. This increased presence offers evidence to the public that the park is being patrolled on the trails, on N. San Pedro Road, at Back Ranch Meadows Campground and kiosk, and at China Camp Village. The augmented uniformed staff also helps to enforce payment for day-use trail and parking fees.

In addition, FOCC has initiated an Incident Log. Staff and volunteers enter details on vehicle break-ins, graffiti, vandalized park property, visitor injuries, or anything else that might assist our security efforts through the identification of incident patterns.

## **D. Janitorial Services**

FOCC contracts with Arriva Cleaning for janitorial services, which includes cleaning and stocking the park's public restrooms. (It should be noted that park visitors regularly comment on the cleanliness of China Camp's restrooms.) Arriva also empties park trash cans 365 days a year.

## **E. Professional Development**

FOCC budgets for and encourages professional development for its administrative staff, skilled aides, and its Board of Directors.

# **III. Revenue Building**

## **A. Revenue Model**

FOCC's revenue model can best be examined as four revenue line items plus one non-monetary line item. In approximate percentages, FOCC's revenue in 2021 came from the following sources:

51%	Membership and other donations
22%	Day-use fees
20%	Campground and other reservation fees
7%	Investment income
PLUS	More than 12,000 hours of volunteer time

If FOCC and other volunteer hours are monetized at a rate of \$31.51 per hour\*, then revenue percentages would be:

38%	Membership and other donations
26%	Volunteer hours monetized
16%	Day-use fees
15%	Campground and other reservation fees
5%	Investment income

\* Value of volunteer time as published by [Philanthropy News Digest](#), 7/23/2020.

## **B. Financial Sustainability**

FOCC can continue to keep the mission of California State Parks only if it can sustain itself financially. Like many healthy nonprofit organizations, FOCC generates revenue from three general streams: 1) park revenue, 2) fundraising revenue, and 3) investment income. Each year, focus is put on increasing all three revenue streams.

Gross revenue for 2021 was approximately \$1,078,000, resulting in a surplus of approximately \$438,000. The large surplus was a result of: 1) a major donor

making his 2022 gift in December 2021; 2) repairs to the Back Ranch kiosk being funded in 2021 with expenses to be incurred in 2022; 3) forgiveness of the \$39,509 Payroll Protection Program loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration; 4) receipt of a \$15,000 California COVID grant; 5) two successful fundraising appeals; and 6) the high yield collection of day-use fees during a high visitation year.

FOCC invests surpluses so that they may be used for planned capital projects and for unexpected expenditures that may arise from storms, fires, or other *forces majeures*.

## **C. Revenue Initiatives**

### **1. FOCC Board Donations**

In early 2021, 100 percent of the FOCC Board of Directors collectively donated \$28,280 to support FOCC's general operations of the park.

### **2. Spring Appeal**

In May 2021, FOCC launched a fundraising appeal to raise money for park operations. The centerpiece of the appeal was the replacement of many of the barbeque grills, picnic tables, and trash bins. The Spring Appeal raised \$35,170.

### **3. Year-End Appeal**

In December 2021, FOCC launched a fundraising appeal to raise money for park operations. The centerpiece of the appeal was 2022 trail maintenance and new trail signage. The Year-End Appeal raised \$44,393.

### **4. Developing Major Donors**

FOCC has made it a priority to develop donors to support China Camp State Park. During 2021, donors, defined as individuals donating more than the price of an annual pass, contributed \$373,000 toward operations and capital projects.

### **5. Firewood**

Due to the sufficient number of trees that have fallen on trails or have been felled by FOCC per the directions of State Parks' environmental scientists, FOCC has been able to supply campers with firewood without purchasing wood from outside sources.

## **6. Increased Visitor Services Staff Yields Increased Fee Collection**

Beginning in Summer 2020 and continuing through 2021, additional park aides have been on staff, primarily stationed at the gate to China Camp Village, where they remind park visitors to pay parking fees. The Back Ranch Meadows kiosk has also remained well-staffed with volunteers, park aides, and campground hosts, where they focus on welcoming incoming campers, and selling day-use and annual passes.

Increased staffing has boosted day-use collection yield from approximately 40 percent to over 95 percent.

## **7. Investment Income**

Given the sufficient cash reserves at Bank of America, FOCC's invested reserves at Charles Schwab have been in a balanced portfolio of equities and fixed income since August 2020. For 2021, the balanced investment portfolio increased \$62,600 from dividend income, interest income, and realized and unrealized gains.

# **IV. Day-to-Day Operations**

## **A. Operations Depend on Volunteer Support**

Although FOCC operates the park daily with the help of paid employees, volunteers play a critical and vital role in handling the park's operations, including maintenance, bookkeeping, membership, communications, and interpretive programs. Volunteers also staff the China Camp Village Cafe and the Back Ranch Meadows entrance kiosk, and serve as trail ambassadors, regularly monitoring trails by bike and on foot.

## **B. Communications Systems**

FOCC maintains a Wi-Fi internet connection to serve the campground hosts, the maintenance host, volunteers, and staff working at the Back Ranch Meadows kiosk, China Camp Village Cafe, and the ranger station.

The internal radio system is used for real-time park communications. Radios are used currently in conjunction with trail maintenance work days.

Ongoing communication among FOCC employees, FOCC board members, and core volunteers is maintained by email and by Google Drive, which contains an employee calendar, park entrance staffing calendar, programs calendar, and copies of board minutes, committee notes, and other key documents.

## **V. Maintenance and Capital Improvements**

### **A. Volunteer Maintenance Events with Partners**

FOCC resumed California State Parks Foundation work events in 2021, hosting two events. Proof of vaccination and/or a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours was required. FOCC also partnered with the Point San Pedro Road Coalition, Peacock Gap HOA, and the San Rafael Fire Department on a work day pulling invasive broom. FOCC also hosted its annual trail maintenance event with the El Cerrito Mountain Biking Team. In addition, regular maintenance was done weekly throughout the year by FOCC's core volunteers. Volunteers also helped out as needed to address urgent issues. All told, a total of 73 events accounted for approximately 3,200 volunteer hours.

### **B. FOCC Trails Work Group**

The FOCC Trails Work Group is tasked with the restoration and long-term maintenance of the trail system in China Camp State Park. The Trails Work Group is led by a member of the Board of Directors, the Park Manager, and one core volunteer. Major restoration work is done in two-day intervals, typically with 8 to 15 volunteers. The first day is a staging and trail preparation event. The second day is dedicated to trail restoration. During this time and for several days after the completion of the work, the work area is closed. Detours are posted.

The goals for the Trails Work Group include:

- Restoration of the full trail system to current DPR multi-use trail standards
- Development of trail maintenance standards for China Camp SP
- Provision of a safe environment
- Protection of the sensitive ecology of the park
- Keeping the park clean and esthetically inviting
- Recruitment of volunteers (VICCs) with diverse skills

### **C. Achievements**

#### **1. Park Informational Signage**

- a. Some faded and incorrect signage was replaced.
- b. "Slow and Say Hello" sandwich boards were repaired and are displayed at various locations along Shoreline Trail.
- c. Several sidewalk stands were damaged. New ones were purchased and used for various temporary signage, including COVID-19 rules and closures, reminders not to feed the coyotes, and fee information.
- d. A PEF for installation of consistent trailhead signs and trail signposts was approved. Signs have been ordered.

## **2. Trail Work**

Trail conditions throughout the park were continually monitored. Issues were reported by FOCC's Foot and Bike Ambassador Team, as well as maintenance volunteers and visitors.

After work-plan approval from State Parks Bay Area District Trails Chief Mike Nelson, the section of Shoreline Trail behind Back Ranch Meadows Campground was repaired. In addition, small sections of tread repair were done on other trails where safety was a concern. Additional tread work was deferred due to the drought.

With consultation from District Trails Chief Mike Nelson and Associate State Archaeologist Kate Green, restoration of the Shoreline Trail tread around Back Ranch Meadows Campground was completed.

Several dozen fallen trees, which were obstructing trails, were removed. One tree fell on Bridge #3, breaking the side railings. As structural elements, the side railings were repaired immediately, and no extended trail closure was required.

Routine trail work continued to be done throughout the year, including grooming, culvert clearing, removing earth-to-wood contact on bridges, repairing split rail fencing, and improving trail drainage by repairing nicks.

A prescription for the restoration of the ADA section of Shoreline Trail has been done. The work will start in 2022.

## **3. Fire Mitigation**

- a. Vegetation was removed around structures at China Camp Village, as well as structures in the corporate yard, the campground, picnic areas, and two lots on McNear Drive. Vegetation debris was chipped and removed.
- b. Branches above barbecues and fire rings were trimmed to 10 feet.
- c. Collected brush was mulched.
- d. BBQ boxes at picnic areas were repaired or replaced with new ones.
- e. Ash in barbecues and fire rings was removed on a weekly basis.
- f. New fire hoses were purchased. Building of fire hose boxes has begun. They will be installed adjacent to wharf hydrants.
- g. All wharf hydrants were tested and are functional. The height on two of the hydrants was extended.

## **4. Storm Damage**

- a. Multiple downed trees that obstructed trails and campsites were removed.
- b. The debris that collected in the flooded campground was cleaned up. Ruts in the utility access road were repaired. Sandbags on the uphill side of the

lower campground bathroom were reinforced to prevent further mud accumulation. Culverts were cleared multiple times. Debris that obstructed waterflow in the creek under bridges was removed. Debris was removed from the flooded campground parking lot.

- c. Multiple slides on various trails were cleared.
- d. Clogged gutters and downspouts on structures in the corporation yard were cleared.

## **5. Garbage Can Containers**

Building of new garbage can containers began.

## **6. Village Interpretive Garden**

No work was done due to the drought. Plans for wildlife-resistant raised beds are in progress.

## **7. Painting**

The deck and ramp to the ranger station were treated, painted, and sealed.

Handicap stenciling on the pavement in the parking lots was repainted.

## **8. Split Rail Fencing**

Multiple repairs or replacements of split rail fencing were done throughout the park.

## **9. Hazardous Materials**

Hazardous materials found in China Camp Village's storage areas were moved to the hazardous materials shed or were taken to Marin Sanitary for disposal.

## **10. Esthetics**

Park entrances, China Camp Village, China Camp Point, and all picnic areas were regularly mowed and weed-whipped.

Trash pickup was done routinely during volunteer work events. Most of the trash was found on the San Pablo Bay side of N. San Pedro Road, where littering and wanton dumping continue to be a chronic problem.

## **11. Potholes**

Potholes were repaired on Miwok Meadows Fire Trail, China Camp Village parking lot, Monument parking area, the access road to the lower



campground, Peacock Gap Fire Road, and the en-route/group camping parking area.

## **12. Invasive Plant Removal**

Under the direction of DPR, various invasive plants were removed. The app Survey123 was used to document invasive plant locations and/or removal.

## **13. Structural Repairs**

Picnic tables throughout the park were inspected and repaired. Ten irreparable picnic tables were replaced with new ones.

The large barbecue in Miwok Meadows Picnic Area was repaired.

The underside of the ranger station was professionally cleared of raccoon scat. FOCC sealed the area.

The shrimp processing building in China Camp Village was cleaned, and raccoon scat professionally removed. The raccoon access points will be sealed soon. When completed, this area will be included in docent-led Village tours.

The shrimp processing area is closed to the public due to needed repairs.

## **14. Campground Food Lockers**

Minor repairs were done as needed.

## **15. ADA Pending Improvements**

FOCC attended the DPR-organized site review for the proposed disability access improvements to three comfort stations. Approximately 14 contractors participated. The work will begin in Fall 2022.

## **16. Lift-Station Upgrade**

FOCC attended the CEQA review for lift-station upgrades and provided information about operations that will assist in building the project plan.

## **17. Seasonal Maintenance**

Culverts were cleared prior to winter rains. Following the rains, bridges were cleaned of earth-wood contact.

## **D. Acquisitions**

A grapple rake attachment for the Ditch Witch was purchased, providing a clearing capability that cannot be done by the other attachments.

An electric Makita wheelbarrow was purchased for transporting up to 200-pound loads on trails.

Twenty new picnic tables were purchased to replace damaged or unstable ones.

Ten new barbecue grills were purchased to replace damaged ones.

## **E. Plumbing**

A water line in China Camp Village was repaired, saving 5 gallons of water per hour.

Replacements for broken faucets have been ordered but have not arrived due to supply chain problems.

# **VI. Communications and Donor Stewardship**

## **A. FOCC Website**

The Friends of China Camp website, [www.friendsofchinacamp.org](http://www.friendsofchinacamp.org), was completely overhauled and relaunched in 2021. It continues to be a key communication tool for park visitors and supporters. The site includes information on park rules, amenities, fees, reservations, park programs, and events. It also includes articles covering natural and cultural history as well as newsworthy topics. The site can also provide timely alerts and real-time updates, such as road or trail closures or other activities impacting the park. Information on how community members can become FOCC volunteers and supporters is emphasized.

## **B. MailChimp**

FOCC uses MailChimp to notify our supporters of upcoming events. Quarterly electronic newsletters are an effective tool for keeping our supporters informed of park projects, event highlights, volunteer recognition, community involvement, major donations, research being done in the park, and much more. There are currently 8,158 subscribers, a roughly 9 percent increase over 2020.

## **C. Broadening NextDoor and Other Communications**

In an effort to broaden messaging, FOCC recruits volunteers from around Marin County to post China Camp messages on their respective neighborhood's NextDoor site. Volunteers also share details on other communications channels,

such as neighborhood associations, which can be effective tools for FOCC outreach and communications.

#### **D. Facebook and Instagram**

FOCC uses Facebook and Instagram to expand public awareness about China Camp State Park and Friends of China Camp. Between the two platforms, thousands of individuals can be reached with real-time information, including events, activities, and other news impacting the park and its visitors. In 2021, as in 2020, these social media platforms were critical in disseminating important public safety alerts and closure notices from DPR, the County of Marin, and the California Department of Public Health as it related to park access during the pandemic. We have also used Instagram and Facebook to notify the public about upcoming virtual events and trail closures, as well as park-related alerts from the National Weather Service, the local fire department, and local law enforcement agencies.

Facebook and Instagram provide a public forum for FOCC and China Camp State Park stakeholders, and offer a way to interface with FOCC. Through concentrated efforts from FOCC's volunteers and staff, FOCC has greatly expanded its social media content posts, viewership, and engagement. On Instagram, followers doubled in 2021 (from just over 500 followers in Dec 2020 to over 1,000 followers in Dec 2021). By Dec 2021, Facebook had also seen a 10 percent annual increase in followers.

Increasing numbers of followers and viewers turn to social media's "instant messaging" or "direct messaging" to ask questions and share information about the park, such as illegal trail use, downed trees, and homeless encampments. Questions on campsite availability, weather, and trail conditions are also common. Messages are answered by volunteers as quickly as possible.

Here are the links to FOCC's Facebook and Instagram pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofChinaCamp/>

<https://www.instagram.com/friendsofchinacamp/>

#### **E. NeonCRM Donor Database**

FOCC uses a cloud-based donor management database called NeonCRM. The database makes it easy to track and manage donors, send out membership renewal emails, and acknowledge donations. In 2021, FOCC upgraded the payment processor from PayPal to NeonPay for seamless integration with the NeonCRM database.

### **VII. Volunteer Services**

Volunteers continue to be of essential value to the park's operation, services, and maintenance.

## **A. FOCC transitions from Volunteers in Parks Program (VIPP) to Volunteers in China Camp (VICC)**

In 2020, DPR requested that FOCC take over the management of China Camp's volunteer program and transition away from the Volunteers in Parks Program (VIPP) managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. FOCC created the Volunteers in China Camp program (VICC) in Summer 2021. Elements of VICC include:

1. Onboarding documents adapted by FOCC.
2. Auto insurance, accident insurance, and general liability insurance, with all policies carried by FOCC.
3. An orientation program provided by FOCC staff and lead volunteers.
4. Background checks using the Sterling Volunteers private background check system.
5. Proof of vaccination or weekly negative COVID test requirement.
6. The opening of FOCC's Better Impact volunteer database account, and subsequent transfer of volunteer data from DPR's account to FOCC's account.

In 2021 volunteers had the following roles at China Camp:

- trail and facility maintenance
- Back Ranch Meadows kiosk attendant
- natural history docent
- cultural history docent
- foot and bike trail ambassador
- village cafe and museum docent
- ecological restoration
- administration
- communications (website, social media, and e-blasts)
- camp host and maintenance host

Into 2021, volunteers continued to work with personal protective equipment, such as masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes. Until social distancing restrictions were lifted, volunteers were asked to maintain a 6-foot distance at all times from other volunteers, staff, and members of the public.

Interpretive docents led online programs via Zoom until June 2021, when Governor Gavin Newsom lifted the stay-at-home order and social distancing requirements. In-person outdoor programs and museum tours resumed at that time.

China Camp's volunteers contributed over 12,000 hours in 2021 to support the operations of the park. Most hours logged were trail maintenance volunteers who contributed 3,098 hours, administrative volunteers who contributed 2,637 hours, and campground and maintenance hosts who contributed 2,360 hours.

## **B. CSPF Volunteer Work Days**

China Camp State Park resumed California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) Work Days in 2021. Either proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test was required for volunteer participation.

## **C. FOCC Board Officers and Committees**

### **1. Annual Elections for FOCC Board and Officers**

The following FOCC Board Officers were elected for a 1-year term beginning July 2021:

- **Arlin Weinberger:** Board Chair
- **Steve Deering:** Vice Chair
- **\*Ed Lai:** Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- **Andy Kives:** Secretary

\*In October 2021, Ed Lai resigned as CFO. Title of the position was changed from “CFO” to “Treasurer.” Board Member **Lee Kirkpatrick** was elected to fill the new role of Treasurer.

### **2. Bylaws Amendment**

The FOCC Board amended the FOCC Bylaws to allow persons who are not board members to serve on the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, and Development Committee, all of which are standing FOCC Board committees.

The FOCC Board amended the FOCC Bylaws to create an Executive Committee, consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

## **D. Back Ranch Meadows Entrance Kiosk**

The Back Ranch Meadows entrance kiosk has been staffed by campground hosts, volunteers, and park staff. Hours are typically Saturdays and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and weekdays noon to 3 p.m.

## **VIII. Print Media Coverage and Promotion**

Primary communication with supporters and park visitors was realized through the FOCC website and through quarterly newsletters and e-blasts initiated during this FY. In addition, China Camp also appeared in the following print media:

*Marin IJ*  
“Giving Marin” initiative

Free ad space sponsored by the *Marin IJ* for the month of February, 2021.

*Marin IJ*, Local News, July 27, 2021

“China Camp road flooding project gets \$525K grant,” by Will Houston

<https://www.marinij.com/2021/07/26/china-camp-road-flooding-project-gets-525k-grant/>

*Insider*, Parenting Section, September 2, 2021

“Travel influencers share 11 things kids learn from traveling, beyond the fun memories,” by Daryl Austin

<https://www.insider.com/travel-influencers-share-why-they-travel-with-their-kids-2021-9>

*Marin Independent Journal*, Lifestyle Section, September 19, 2021

“Marin’s fall color comes from poison oak,” by Wendy Dreskin

<https://www.marinij.com/2021/09/19/marins-fall-color-comes-from-poison-oak>

*Marin Independent Journal*, Education Section, September 29, 2021

“San Anselmo student film explores race, class in early 1900s Marin,” by Keri Brenner

<https://www.marinij.com/2021/09/28/san-anselmo-student-film-explores-race-class-in-early-1900s-marin>

*UC Santa Cruz Newscenter*, October 26, 2021

“Reclaiming Coast Miwok history through Indigenous interpretations of archaeology,” by Allison Arteaga Soergel

<https://news.ucsc.edu/2021/10/archeology-coast-miwok-history.html>

*Florida News Times*, Tech Section, October 28, 2021

“Regaining the history of Coastal Miwok through indigenous interpretations of archeology”

Provided by University of California Santa Cruz

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Provided by University of California Santa Cruz

*Marin Independent Journal*, Local News, November 17, 2021

“San Rafael seeks public comments on political redistricting”

by Adrian Rodriguez

<https://www.marinij.com/2021/11/17/san-rafael-seeks-public-comments-on-political-redistricting>

*San Francisco Chronicle*, Bay Area Section, November 30, 2021

“Even after COVID hiking boom, Bay Area parks still have a strong pull,” by Michael Cabanatuan

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/The-COVID-hiking-boom-is-still-going-strong-16650308.php>

*SF Gate*, Travel, California Parks, December 24, 2021

“The best 20 California hikes SFGATE staffers discovered in 2021,” by Ashley Harrell, Nico Madrigal-Yankowski, Alex Shultz

<https://www.sfgate.com/california-parks/article/The-best-20-California-and-Bay-Area-hikes-16720394.php>

*KPIX5 CBS SF BayArea*, Outdoor Recreation, December 26, 2021

“California State Parks Push New Year Day Resolution: Take A Hike!”

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2021/12/26/california-state-parks-push-new-year-day-resolution-take-a-hike>

*Pacific Sun*, Best of Marin 2021

China Camp State Park wins #1 in two categories:

“Best Bike Route/Trail”

“Best Park/Open Space”

<https://pacificsun.com/best-of-recreation>

## **IX. Park Stewardship**

### **A. North San Pedro Road through China Camp State Park**

North San Pedro Road is a county road that runs through China Camp State Park. How the road is used affects park life.

Trash is frequently dumped along N. San Pedro Road, and FOCC’s employees and volunteers pick up this trash on a daily basis. FOCC continues to work with Marin County Public Works to find solutions to stem the dumping along the road.

Several cars and an RV were parked along the shoulder of N. San Pedro Road for weeks and months on end during 2021. Other than in the campground, vehicles are prohibited from being in the park after hours. The presence of those vehicles brought roadside cooking, increased littering, and complaints from neighbors of the park. State Parks rangers stepped up nighttime patrols to clear the road of those vehicles, and the road has remained clear ever since.

### **B. Repairing Back Ranch Meadows Entrance Kiosk**

In December 2021, FOCC began repairs of the Back Ranch Meadows entrance kiosk as part of its ongoing infrastructure maintenance of the park. The project is being funded by FOCC donor Jeff Craemer, and the project contractor is Seaside Construction, which also repaired fire damage to the Bullhead Flat comfort station in 2018.

## **X. Interpretive Programs**

### **A. Visitor Center**

The visitor center, which includes information and displays about local wildlife and the natural features of the park, closed in late March 2020 due to the pandemic. It reopened in 2021.

### **B. Natural History Interpretive Programs**

#### **1. Docents**

From March 2020 to May 2021, interpretive programming was offered only remotely via Zoom. In-person interpretive programming resumed in June 2021 after California's shelter-in-place order was lifted. FOCC's interpretive docents led educational hikes, Junior Ranger programs, China Camp Village museum tours, and programs about the history of local indigenous peoples.

#### **2. Village Talks**

Due to the pandemic, the monthly Village Museum lecture series was canceled until further notice. However, FOCC still hosted monthly docent-led virtual and outdoor programs. Programs included birding, the history of the local indigenous people, the history of China Camp Village, and more.

#### **3. Educational Programs**

From March 2020 to May 2021, all programming was conducted online. FOCC resumed in-person educational programs beginning in June 2021. These docent-led programs included bird-watching hikes, botany hikes, Junior Ranger programs, museum tours, and full moon hikes. FOCC's naturalist book club meetings continued remotely via Zoom throughout 2021.

Cultural history docents led Village Museum tours for the following groups: Girl Scouts of America, Bay Area Chinese Genealogy Group, UC Berkeley, Hamilton Elementary, and various private groups.

In April 2021, FOCC received a grant from the California State Parks Foundation to produce a self-guided tour of Miwok Meadows Shoreline Trail loop. This short educational booklet was printed in English and Spanish and available to the public throughout the month of April to celebrate Earth Day. FOCC contracted Marco Berger, a bilingual naturalist and community liaison, to support the creation of the booklet. The content of this booklet will become available on FOCC's website beginning Spring 2022.



In September 2021, FOCC partnered with Marin Lifehouse and the Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) to offer an educational program for visitors with mobility disabilities. The Education Coordinator of NERR provided a guided tour around Turtle Back Trail, a handicap-accessible loop, which offered visitors an up-close experience of China Camp's tidal saltwater marsh. The program focused on the park's unique marsh and oak woodland ecology.

### **C. Interpretive Partners**

FOCC's partnership with NERR, the Marin Chinese Cultural Association (MCCA), and the Marin Museum of the American Indian (MMAI) remains strong. Two of FOCC's board members share leadership roles with MCCA, and our organizations cross-promote events. FOCC's executive director attends quarterly meetings convened by the local NERR office in Tiburon.

### **D. China Camp Village Museum**

The China Camp Village Museum was open throughout 2021. The museum, which is housed in one of the historic structures in China Camp Village, provides exhibits and interpretive displays about the history of the village and the Chinese shrimping industry. For most weekends in 2021, the museum was staffed by cultural history docents.

## **XI. Special Events**

### **A. Heritage Month**

Heritage Day, celebrated annually, primarily recognizes and celebrates the rich cultural heritage of China Camp State Park. Due to the pandemic, FOCC was not able to host a public festival as had been done in previous years. However, in lieu of a large festival, during the month of September, FOCC offered small public museum tours that celebrated the cultural history of the park.

### **B. Annual Public Meeting**

On October 24, 2021, FOCC hosted, per the Operating Agreement with DPR, China Camp's annual public meeting for the community. It was held in the China Camp Village Museum. Several FOCC operational representatives presented updates on each facet of FOCC's operations – personnel, financial status, trail policy and maintenance, interpretive programs, preservation efforts, and governance.

### **C. Earth Day and Coastal Cleanup Day**

Earth Day and Coastal Cleanup Day have been annual public volunteer events at China Camp State Park. The purpose of the events is to engage the public to take

on a stewardship role in the park, to help support the maintenance of the park's network of trails, and to help keep our shoreline clean.

On April 10, FOCC partnered with the California State Parks Foundation to host a small, socially-distanced Earth Day event at China Camp Village. Twenty-five volunteers from around the Bay Area picked up roughly 200 pounds of trash and cleaned up over 1.5 miles of coastline, which included China Camp Village, China Camp Point Picnic Area, and Five Pines Point.

On September 18, FOCC hosted Coastal Cleanup Day at China Camp Village Beach. Twenty-six volunteers cleaned up 371 pounds of trash and 200 pounds of recycling along China Camp Village Beach, China Camp Point, and Five Pines Point. Representatives from NERR also joined the event and cleaned up areas along the northern end of N. San Pedro Road.

#### **D. FOCC Volunteer Appreciation Event**

On October 31, FOCC hosted a Halloween-themed volunteer appreciation event at the China Camp maintenance shop. The event was attended by 45 volunteers and staff, and the festivities included dinner, drinks, musical performances, awards, accolades, and fun Halloween movies starring volunteers.

## **XII. Building Partnerships**

FOCC continues to nurture and form alliances in support of park promotion, park operations and enhanced visitor experiences. These groups include cultural associations, educational institutions, conservation organizations, historical societies, community services groups, foundations, clubs, government agencies, and businesses.

#### **A. Direct Financial Support**

The California State Parks Foundation made an Earth Day grant in the amount of \$3,930 to FOCC. The grant was used for a coastal cleanup activity and for collateral materials to support a bilingual self-guided nature tour.

#### **B. Services and In-kind Support**

Services and in-kind support were donated to FOCC for the operations of China Camp State Park by:

- California State Parks
- California State Parks Foundation
- The Harbormaster of San Rafael Yacht Harbor
- QuarryHouse, a stonework business
- FastSigns

- *Marin Independent Journal*
- Giving Marin, a *Marin IJ* initiative
- Andy's Local Market
- Dutra Group's San Rafael Rock Quarry
- Marin Sanitary Service
- Marin County Public Works
- Marin County Sheriff's Office
- Marin County Fire Department
- San Rafael Fire Department

### **C. Publicity and Networking**

Publicity and Networking for the park was provided gratis by:

- Marin Conservation League
- Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association
- Point San Pedro Road Coalition
- Gallinas Watershed Council
- San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Marin County Bicycle Coalition
- Multicultural Center of Marin
- NERR/DPR/FOCC Quarterly Meetings

### **D. Giving Marin – Free Ad Space in the Marin IJ**

Debuting on January 1, 2018, *Giving Marin* has served as a movement fueled by a collection of the North Bay's most community-minded businesses and institutions. The businesses, one per profession, have committed to underwrite marketing space for varying nonprofits every month. Each year, FOCC receives one or two months of free ad space in the *Marin IJ*.

### **E. CSPF's Park Advocacy Day**

On April 28, 2021, the FOCC Executive Director attended CSPF's virtual Park Advocacy Day. For the month of May, CSPF urged participants to 1) learn about the legislative process and issues, 2) lobby legislators on bills impacting state parks, and 3) leverage advocating through social media.

### **F. Elected Officials**

FOCC continued to maintain close relationships with the elected officials who have China Camp State Park in their respective districts. FOCC provided operational updates to:

- ❖ U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman
- ❖ CA State Senator Mike McGuire
- ❖ CA Assemblyman Marc Levine

### **XIII. Financial Status**

The fiscal year for Friends of China Camp, Inc. is January 1 to December 31. Entered into DPR Form 973 is the Friends of China Camp, Inc. 2021 IRS Form 990.

### **XIV. FOCC Board Approval and Signature**

This Operations Report for FY 2021 has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Friends of China Camp. Submitted: March 15, 2022



Arlin Weinberger, Chairperson  
email: [arlinw43@gmail.com](mailto:arlinw43@gmail.com)  
phone: (415) 722-6101

