

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

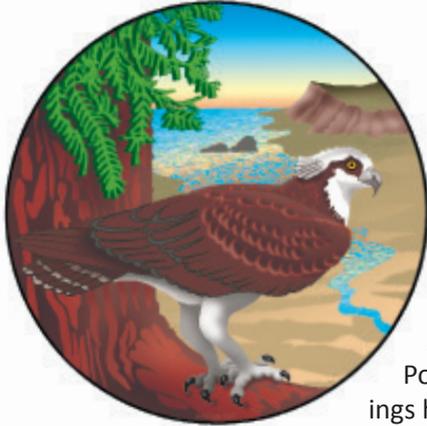
Preservation through Education and Stewardship

Russian River Sector State Parks

Volume XXXV, Number 2, Summer 2020

Reopening Your State Parks

Michele Luna, Executive Director



Covid-19 has changed our lives in ways we could never have imagined. We know how important getting outdoors is for all of us and Stewards is committed to help open our parks with safety precautions in place so you can reap nature's nurturing benefits without major concern for your health.

Stewards continues to be instrumental in assisting California State Parks throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, from temporarily shutting down our visitor centers, Armstrong Redwoods SNR and Austin Creek SRA, including our popular Bullfrog Pond Campground, to implementing changes required as soft closures and soft openings have been announced. Despite having to furlough our staff for two weeks, once we secured a SBA Payroll Protection Loan, our staff were back to work keeping Stewards going.

Operations staff used the time without park visitors to work on fuel reduction and other maintenance projects. Most of our administrative staff are working from home and we have been meeting via Zoom video calls weekly to discuss how to keep organizational tasks moving forward. We engaged with our volunteer groups this way as well, who were appreciative of the opportunity to connect, share how they were doing and give input on how volunteering might look as our parks reopen. Reopening of our State Parks began on May 1st. We are currently in the soft reopening stage where visitors can drive to our parks, with both parking lots and restrooms available. Face masks and physical distancing continue to be required.

Stewards is now preparing for the reopening of our visitor centers at Armstrong Redwoods and in Jenner and welcoming back campers to Bullfrog Pond campground. New protocols have been written, and materials and supplies purchased to make our parks safe for staff, volunteers and park visitors. Special thanks for the input we've gotten from volunteers and to Annie Cresswell and Nik Szcsey for preparing the VC's, to Scotty Lawyer for designing and installing new plexiglass shields and to Scotty and Rachel Hallaway and Carlos Amador for handling our reopening responsibilities as park co-managers of Armstrong Redwoods SNR and Austin Creek SRA.



Our programs manager Kimmie Barbosa Soeiro and I have been working with volunteers to get some of our programs back up and running with new protocols in place as well. Our trail crews are working again on clearing trails, with much catching up to do. Citizen science monitors are starting to collect seabird nesting data and pinniped monitors will be back again soon. Seal Watchers have returned to the beach keeping our Harbor seal colony at the Russian River mouth safe now that park visitors are back. Kimmie also worked with volunteers to provide great video content showcasing our coastal tide pools and wildflowers. View them on social media and also on our YouTube Channel. <https://www.youtube.com/user/stewards9177>.

The closing of our parks has had a significant impact on Stewards 2020 budget. We are working to recover about \$150,000 in lost revenue from day-use and camping fees, firewood sales as well as our visitor centers. In addition, most of our fundraising events have been cancelled along with fee-generating field seminars. We did run a very successful online Spring auction that raised over \$6,000 with special thanks to Leslie Carrow, Nik, Annie and volunteers Amy Racina, Jan De Wald and Clara Else. Our Summer Appeal has gone out and you will read more about an idea we have for a partial live and/or virtual Old Grove Festival later in this newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Stewards during this challenging time. It is heartwarming to receive your kind words and donations. We know many of you are experiencing challenges in your own lives as a result of the world we are living in at this time. Please stay safe and know that we WILL get to the other side and be stronger for it.

Mission

Stewards Promotes, Restores & Protects Your State Parks.

Vision

Stewards is the link between people and their parks.

State Parks

Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve
Austin Creek State Recreation Area
Sonoma Coast State Park

Contact

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www.stewardscr.org

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Black Lives Matter to Stewards

Stewards Board and Staff

As we absorb both the horrors and hopes of the present moment, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. We are committed to confronting the systemic racism that has created unjust conditions in public spaces, including parks, where Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) too often find themselves at personal risk just by being out of doors. And we must never lose sight of the fact that so many of our parks came into existence by stripping indigenous peoples of their connections to the land.

We recognize that we can no longer operate as we have in the past and that working toward racial justice must be integral to Stewards' future in restoring and protecting our California State Parks. We are committed to creating and implementing a plan to improve our outreach efforts and park access in order to move closer to realizing Stewards' vision of serving as 'the link between people and their parks.' And we look forward to engaging BIPOC in developing community-led approaches that create new models for park stewardship programs.

Stewards commits to serving as an advocate for equity of access and inclusion in our parks. We will join with the California State Parks Foundation, California's Natural Resources Agency, and our State Park partners to advance policies that promote access and keep our parks safe and welcoming for BIPOC and marginalized communities.

We also commit to staying in touch with you as we continue to listen and to learn, keeping you informed of our efforts and welcoming your input as we move ahead to support BIPOC at this critical juncture in the history of our country and of our public lands. Stewards is grateful for your ongoing support during this time when safety and health have become irrevocably intertwined in confronting the multiple pandemics affecting us individually and as a nation.

New Diversity and Equity Committee

Stewards is recruiting members of our community to join our new Diversity and Equity Committee. While creating more diversity within our board, staff and volunteers has been an ongoing goal of Stewards, we are now making a stronger commitment to this objective. Programs Manager Kimmie Barbosa Soeiro and board member Brittany Kelly will co-chair the committee with participation by other board members, staff, volunteers and community members. The committee will help us finalize strategic planning objectives that will be added to our existing Strategic Plan. Initial objectives include:

- Community Building by creating genuine relationships with BIPOC community members to promote environmental justice.
- Creating a Community to Career Pipeline for BIPOC youth and adults to enter the field of conservation and ecology.
- Increasing BIPOC participation in leadership, training and program roles within Stewards.

We have heard from a number of you interested in supporting this effort and we encourage more of you willing to participate to contact Kimmie at kimberly@stewardscr.org. A Zoom meeting will be scheduled soon to launch this new committee.

Picnic Table Donor Program

Stewards is now offering supporters an opportunity to donate an ADA-compliant picnic table in one of our state parks. Your table can have your family name, a memorial designation or be engraved to honor a loved one. Tables are 8 feet long and 3 inches thick and made out of con-heart redwood.

For info contact: michele@stewardscr.org



Cal Report

Greg Probst, Sonoma Coast Ranger and Cooperating Association Liaison

My daily duties on the coast this spring consisted primarily of education and enforcement of the local shelter in place order and the full closure of our local parks and beaches. This is the first time in the history of State Parks where safety measures such as vehicular access closures, park closures, and cancellation of reservations have been implemented at this large of scale and in response to a pandemic.

It was both an extremely challenging time and as well as a very rewarding time for me. I was able to speak with thousands of persons from all over northern California (and beyond). More importantly, I was able to listen to them vent and/or speak about their current frustrations, fears along with their personal connection and passion for our local parks.

The State of California recognizes the benefit of the outdoors to all persons during these challenging times. As such, State Parks is working with local officials on a phased, regionally driven approach to increase access at parks where compliance with both state and local public health ordinances can be achieved. The Sonoma Coast beaches are finally open and people have flocked to them in record numbers. State Parks is now getting back to our primary mission ensuring visitors are able to safely “recreate” themselves while they visit our local parks.

This spring we were fortunate enough to have lifeguard Tim Harvey re-join us in the Russian River area to help ensure that our coastal visitors are safe while recreating along the coast. Tim was recruited back here from the Ventura area in order to help manage the Russian River Sector Junior Lifeguard program (currently on hold this year due to COVID-19). The state junior guard program in Ventura was very successful under Tim’s tutelage; this program had approximately 1000 participants each summer. We look forward to continuing this type of success here in the Russian River area. The junior lifeguard program is designed to provide quality water safety education while improving young people’s physical conditioning, their understanding and respect for the natural environment, and helps to build respect for themselves and others in the process. Respect for the park environment is increased by the understanding gained by daily physical contact with the natural environment along with interactive education on the local natural environment. Increased self-respect is gained through personal progress and accomplishments. Respect for others is increased by constant contact with compassionate instructors and by working with other youths in a team building environment.

Tim has been a state park lifeguard since 1972 and he brings with him a huge depth of knowledge, experience, and wisdom to our local area. In early June, Tim was the primary reason a boater in distress was not injured or killed when he lost control of his vessel near Goat Rock. In darkness, Tim single-handedly paddle boarded out to the vessel. He then manually placed two anchors into the water so that the boat would not crash onto the rocks overnight. Tim’s can do attitude, positive spirit, and kindness is not only compelling but much needed during these extraordinary times.

As always, I want to thank you ALL for being stewards of our coast and redwoods. You are much needed more now than ever. Wishing you all a safe and wonderful summer.



Meet Kimmie Barbosa Soeiro

Stewards is very excited to welcome Kimberly (Kimmie) Barbosa Soeiro to our team. She was raised in the south central valley of California after her parents came to the United States from Minas Gerias, Brasil. She moved to Sonoma County in 2011 to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology at Sonoma State University, followed by a Master’s in Public Policy at Mills College. Kimberly has been working in the non-profit sector since 2008, where she began developing and implementing programs for children, youth, and adults. In 2019, Kimberly spent a year solely learning and volunteering with organizations to conduct wildlife and watershed restoration, care for at-risk species, and engage in land stewardship. Kimberly is very excited to join Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods as Programs Manager, and looks forward to sharing her passion for creating positive outcomes in her community through programs, community engagement, outreach, and education.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in a program?
Call Stewards at
(707) 869-9177 or email
kimberly@stewardscr.org

PROGRAMS

Armstrong Redwoods/ Austin Creek

Visitor Center Staffing
Docent Tour Guides
Trail Crew/Maintenance
Pond Farm Docent Tours
Roving Docents/Public
Assistance
Lizzie Armstrong Welcome Ctr

Sonoma Coast State Park

Visitor Center Staffing
Seal Watch
Whale Watch
Tide Pool Program
Watershed Program
Sonoma Coast Trail Crew
Willow Creek Trail Crew
Pinniped Monitoring
Seabird Monitoring
Roving Docents/Public
Assistance

Other Projects

Mobile Marine Van
Forest to Sea Nature Store
Office Help & Special Events

VOL. PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Vacant, Watershed
Greg Armstrong, Seal Watch
Dori Heath, ARVC
Bill Bambrick, Trail Crews
Hollis Bewley, Seabird &
Tidepool Programs
Julie Cross, Seal Watch
Linda Fisher, JVC
Mary Follis, Seal Watch
Norma Jellison, Whale Watch
Rich & Colleen Draffin, Whale
Watch
Michael Murphy, AC Mounted
Assistance Unit
Keary & Sally Sorenson,
Marine Debris

Whale Watch - not much of a season

Norma Jellison, Whale Watch Coordinator

The whales continued to swim north to Alaska even though Whale Watch volunteers and visitors were not at the Bodega Head promontory to see them pass by. Sadly, WW had to shut down in mid March.

The LA Chapter of the American Cetacean Society likewise had to shut down - this census site has been on site at Pt Vicente daily December to May for 40 yrs with exception of 2 yrs in early 1980s. Their last day was on March 18 and this report indicates a whaleapalooza of an ending for them: Thirty-seven northbound GRAY WHALES! One GRAY whale breached three times. A large pod of at least five whales milled at "Whale Rock"; there may have been up to seven whales. We watched them as they were swimming underwater, and then surfaced and blew simultaneous rainbow blows ("rainblows"). A trio rolled around, displaying their pectoral flippers.



Photo by Paul Brewer taken off Gualala

Our Stewards Bodega Head Whale Watch didn't share a similar ending as we were plagued (pun intended) by bad weather and a dearth of volunteers and then the actual shut down of State Parks. April and May are usually our best months, as that is when the mothers and calves typically come by and are very close in. So, not being there to witness the annual parade was hard for many of our long time volunteers.

As I noted, the Gray Whales did continue to head north as some avid Whale Watchers in Gualala/Sea Ranch area continued to see them migrating by. They recently saw numbers of Blue Whales feeding offshore, something we rarely see at Bodega Head from Pt Arena, which juts much further out into the ocean. We have also been seeing Humpbacks off Bodega Bay and Jenner this last month. And lots of Sea Lions headed south, a bit of a phenomenon.

Just to prove the Grays were migrating by, here is a breach in late April off Gualala captured by Paul Brewer, a professional photographer up in the area!

See you next year at Bodega Head!

Old Grove Festival 2020

Old Grove Festival - Sept. 12, Time TBD Armstrong Redwoods Forest Theatre

A magical evening of Bluegrass with **Dirty Cello, One Grass Two Grass, The Real Sarahs**

We are exploring options to allow a determined number of attendees into the event. Our \$500 plus donors would receive 2 tickets to the event and anyone else who purchases a ticket would be entered into a drawing to view the event live. Everyone else would be sent a link to view the show virtually. This is an idea in progress so stay tuned for more information on our website:

www.oldgrovefestival.org



Virtual Programming during Covid-19

As our parks started moving to a soft closure, then to a soft opening, Stewards staff and volunteers mobilized to produce some great video content that we shared on social media as well as through our weekly e-newsletter. Special thanks to Programs Manager Kimmie Barbosa Soeiro, Karen Gebbia, Bill Nay (Father Nayture), Stephen Beck, Laura Morgan and Peter Warner for making these videos possible. You can access them all on Stewards' YouTube Channel at:

https://www.youtube.com/user/stewards9177/videos?view_as=subscriber

Exploring the Intertidal with Bill Nay & Stephen Beck - Videographer - Kimmie Barbosa Soerio



Sea Stars at North Salmon Creek



Tidepool Safety 3-Point Stance



Sea Star Lunch Hour

Sonoma Coast Wildflower Hike with Peter Warner & Laura Morgan - Videographer - Kimmie Barbosa Soerio



Seaside Daisy and Buckwheat



Blue-eyed Grass and More!



California Hedgenettle

Armstrong Redwoods Spring Wildflowers with Karen Gebbia



Armstrong Spring Flowers



Thank you to Karen Nay (far left in photo) for making and donating some great face masks for us to sell on a sliding scale to park visitors.

Special Donor Contributions

Pond Farm PBS Documentary Fund Match

Stewards is honored by a \$5,000 matching donation that has been presented by Clare Dorfman for the Pond Farm PBS Documentary that we are working on with Filmmaker David Washburn. Please help us reach our goal by donating to this special project. We will be running an online art and pottery auction in July with proceeds also going towards this match. Our overall goal is to raise about \$50,000 for this project.

The Julia Terr Fellowship at Pond Farm Artist Residency

Julia Terr was a Sonoma county potter before she tragically passed away in a vehicle accident in 2009. Her family formed The Julia Terr Fund under the umbrella of the Community Foundation of Sonoma. This year, Julia's fund has generously offered a fellowship to cover the fees associated with the Pond Farm Artist-in-Residence program. As a result of Stewards recent Black Lives Matter statement, the family would like to contribute to our efforts to address diversity and racial equity by supporting and promoting Black and Indigenous artists in 2021-2022 at the Pond Farm Artist Residency. The Fellowship will cover two years in the amount of \$5600. Special thanks to Julia's husband Vince Montague for suggesting this meaningful fellowship.

Upcoming Events ~2020

Register & get details at stewardscr.org/upcoming-events-programs.html or (707) 869-9177 or email stewards@stewardscr.org. Year-long offerings are on our website.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we had to cancel a number of our seminars and volunteer training events after March 17th. We are ready to offer some volunteer training via Zoom Video Calls. We will also resume some field seminars with Covid-19 precautions in place including wearing masks and 6 feet of physical distancing. If you would like to attend any of the upcoming seminars and have questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

DOCENT/VOLUNTEER ORIENTATIONS & TRAININGS

PINNPED MONIORING TRAINING

June 23, 1:00 PM - 1:00-3:00 PM, FREE

Instructor(s): Jessica Martini-Lamb (Sonoma County Water Agency), Andrea Pecharich (Sonoma County Water Agency) & Stewards Staff

Virtual Training Via Zoom - Registration Required

Pinniped Monitoring Program volunteers collect data to ensure the protection of harbor seals during Russian River estuary activities as they pertain to mandated work required by the Sonoma County Water Agency for the Biological Opinion.

There are two ways that people can volunteer for this program. One is as a State Park volunteer where you can count your hours for a park pass or you can be a Stewards volunteer and earn a \$50 per shift stipend to cover your mileage and a meal. When you sign up it's important to let staff know your preference.



WATERSHED EDUCATION PROGRAM TRAINING

Thursday, August 27, FREE
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Virtual training via Zoom with site visit scheduled

Instructors: Staff and Experienced Docents

Learn to lead students in interactive watershed citizen science activities. Includes the life cycle of Salmon, water quality testing, and benthic macroinvertebrates. Registration Required

COMMUNITY EDUCATION SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

HIKE WITH MIKE

Saturday, October 17, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM,
\$20/\$16 for members

Instructor Mike Roa, retired teacher
Meets at Armstrong Redwoods SNR

In this workshop Mike will share with you how to use curriculum developed for docents to effectively lead Armstrong group tours of all ages. Registration required.

SONOMA COAST ECOSYSTEMS HIKE/DOCENT TRAINING 2020

Saturday, October 17, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM,
\$20/\$16 for members - Meets: Shell Beach Parking Lot, Hwy 1, CA 95450
Registration required.

Instructors: Laura Morgan (Author of The Three Jewels), Breck Parkman (Senior State Archeologist, State Parks Retired), Scott Lawyer (Geologist & Stewards Operations Manager)

Learn about the botany and flora of the Sonoma Coast, the pre-history of our coastal plainslands and the unique geologic history, landforms, plate tectonics and their significance on our coast during this popular and engaging seminar that doubles as a docent orientation. Please note that this a moderate all-day hike from Shell Beach to the bottom of Goat Rock, carpool optional from Goat Rock Beach back to Shell at the end of the instruction. Please be sure to bring plenty of water, wear layers and sturdy foot wear, pack a lunch and be prepared to hike in all weather conditions.



In Appreciation of Our Donors, Sponsors & Funders ~ 2019 -2020

Special thanks to major donors who moved up their donations to earlier in the year to help us with revenue reductions due to Covid-19.

\$30,000

Resources Legacy Fund Foundation

\$25,000

Sonoma County Vintners

\$15,000- \$24,999

Marcy & Jim Beck

Gregory Fearon & Pat Kuta

\$10,000 to \$14,999

County of Sonoma

Kristin Hite

Save the Redwoods League

\$5,000 to \$9,999

County of Sonoma

Russian River Recreation & Park District

Fred and Jocelyn Euphrat

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Doug and Leslie Bowman

California State Parks Foundation

Kathryn A Law

Laura Morgan

Joanne and Terry Dale OBO Amelia and Neil McDaniel

Dennis P Martino

Russian River Chamber

Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Estate of Josephine C. Marks

Art Carter

John and Ethel Cole

Clare Dorfman

Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival

Janell Galanis

Barbara J Parkyn

Yulahlia Hernandez

Tom Toy

Michelle Morris

Cyd Dunning

Janet and Joaquin Sanchez

Hannah Yurth

Laurie Prothro & John Kornfeld

Richard and Jennifer Palmer

Jennifer O'Keefe

Brittany Kelly

Gerard Nebesky

Carol and Peter Lucic

Save The Redwoods League

Russian River Rotary

Hayley McNitt

Barbara Gegan

Karen Guenther

Forrest L Merrill

Daniel Karbousky

Diane and Paul Perry

Mary B Abbott

Rhonda Berney

Cindi Blair

Charyl and Mark Patterson in memory of Steve Bornstein

Marie Martinez

Clark and Carol Mitchel

Bill Nay

Elizabeth Penn

Christopher and Mary Szecsey

Leonard Fisher and Risa Teitelbaum

Virginia Wallace

Julie Zigoris

Elizabeth Zitrin

\$501 to \$999

Michael Foss

Michael Hofman & Janet Moyer

Karen Gebbia

Kathi Moore

Margo Eachus

WestAmerica Bank

JoAnn and Stephen Wilson

Andrea Rosenfield Wolf

Leslie Mills Risbrough

Sandy Zackaray

Douglas and Phyllis Onstad

John Tolonen

Rachael Fisher

Rosaleen Murphy

Lisa Bilodeau

Paul Fajnor

Mrs Connie Coddling

Betty Riess

Richard Shippis

Sara Gunter

Arthur Deicke

California Academy of Sciences

Shannon Rogge

Rosemary Yates

Expeditionary Learning

Parents Assoc

Elisabeth Fletcher Cook

Austin Parnow

Andrew Wieszczyk

Julie Miller

Donna Roper

Stacey Dominik

Ruthie Saia-Braziel

Alison Duke

M DuBose

Michael Haran

Steve and Nicki Hinch

Stefanie Freele

Chelsey Kolbeck

Martin Polsan

Mary Burger

Erika Lutz

Bryan Bowen

\$500

Beth Ann Gerstein

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Alyssa Benedetto

Hollis Bewley

Jennifer Bice

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N D Cary

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The Gilbert Fund

Terry Grant

The Ruffledog Fund

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Theo Park

Roland Pesch

Sandra M Santana

Mora

Kat Stephens

Keith Volkerts

Dale Wannan

Shona Weir

Willow Creek Wealth

Management

Jeffrey Wong

Ways to Leave a Legacy ~ more info at www.stewardscr.org/leave_a_legacy.html

Board member Jeff Edmonds presented information about Donor Advised Funds and about Beneficiary Designations on page 5 of the [Summer 2018 newsletter](#). A Bequest example is also included on page 8. Board member Dale Wannan would like you to consider these giving options:

Gifting Appreciated Stock - If you're fortunate enough to own stock that has gone up in value since you purchased it, you may consider a gift to Stewards. This will not only help a good cause, but enable you to reap substantial tax savings.

Designate Stewards as a Beneficiary on your IRA - These days, many people have a large percentage of their wealth in the form of traditional IRA accounts. Consider designating Stewards as one of the beneficiaries of your IRAs.

Welcome to New Members ~ 2nd Quarter

Osprey Circle

Lauri Wannan

Harbor Seal (Contributing)

Tim Farrell

Mary Garcia

Ai Kanazawa

Barbara O'Donnell

Trillium (Individual)

Patricia Bartholdy-Fifield

Jan Rippingale

Owl (Senior & Student)

Taos Transue

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

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stewards@stewardscr.org | www.stewardscr.org

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Your Stewards Membership
includes a copy of this quarterly newsletter by email or mail, a 20% discount on retail items, special events & community education seminars.

TO MAKE A VEHICLE DONATION CALL:
(800) 320-0476

For more info on how you can contribute to Stewards' Endowments, please contact:
Michele Luna
(707) 869-9177 X 4
michele@stewardscr.org

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Membership Form

YES, I'd like to become a member!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- RENEWAL
- \$25 Owl (Senior/Student)
- \$35 Trillium (Individual)
- \$45 Otter (Family)
- \$100 Harbor Seal (Contributing)
- \$150 Bobcat (Business)
- \$250 Gray Whale (Patron)
- \$500+ Osprey Circle

Payment Type: Check (made payable to Stewards)

Credit Card (VISA, MC, Discover acceptable)

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV #: _____

Signature: _____

Bequests

Your Gift to the Future of State Park Preservation

With your gift of a bequest, future generations will enjoy the State Parks in the Russian River District, including education and stewardship programs supported by Stewards. A gift to Stewards is a rewarding form of giving from your estate. There are several types of charitable bequests by will (or beneficiary designation).

Example: *I hereby give and bequeath to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California, with a principal address at P.O. Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430, (____) percent of my estate, (or) the sum of (____) dollars, (or) the following assets (____). Tax ID # 94-3039895*

For more information and other planned giving options, please contact Michele Luna at michele@stewardscr.org and your legal advisor.