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MEDIA CONTACT:

Paula Maxfield

831-246-0425

paula@millermaxfield.com



FIRST ANNUAL MOLE & MARIACHI FESTIVAL TO BENEFIT SANTA CRUZ MISSION ADOBE STATE HISTORIC PARK

*EVENT TO FEATURE MOLE MADE BY LOCAL CHEFS, LIVE MUSIC, WINE,
BEER, KIDS ACTIVITIES, A SILENT AUCTION AND MORE*

SEPTEMBER 4, 2013–SANTA CRUZ, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends), a non-profit organization dedicated to sustaining the legacy of our local state parks and beaches, today announced its first annual Mole & Mariachi Festival will take place Saturday, October 5, from 11-4p.m. at Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park (144 School Street) in downtown Santa Cruz.

Guests will enjoy great local food, wine and beer, live music, dancers, artisan crafts, fun for kids of all ages and a silent auction. Local chefs will prepare *mole* (a traditional Mexican sauce, sometimes made using chocolate). *Mole* dishes will be judged by event attendees and by a panel of local celebrity judges.

The new festival highlights the comeback of Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park, which was scheduled to close in 2012, but was saved by Friends. The Mole & Mariachi Festival also heralds the comeback of a heritage-themed festival at the Mission. The last such event held at the Mission was the Mission Fiesta organized by the Adobe Coalition, the City of Santa Cruz and the California State Parks in the first week of October from 1980 through 1990, with smaller versions held in some years during the 1990s. Prior to the Mission Fiesta of the 1980s and 90s, a similar event was held at the site from the 1920s until the start of World War II. The first week of October is traditionally recognized as the birthday of Santa Cruz, the name given to a local creek (now Majors Creek) by the Portola expedition in 1769, then established as a mission in 1791 and later incorporated as a city in 1876.

Admission to the Mole & Mariachi Festival is free with donations welcome. The event is a benefit for Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks in support of Mission restoration projects, educational programming for school children and community cultural events at the park. Friends' agreement to fund maintenance and operations at the park includes a commitment to work with the community and build on an existing long-term partnership with California State Parks to make needed improvements.

To join the event as a chef, to volunteer or to donate silent auction items, please email Nancy.Connelly@ThatsMyPark.org.

For more information about the Mole & Mariachi Festival, visit www.ThatsMyPark.org or www.facebook.com/events/415631128543444/.

More about *mole*: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole_\(sauce\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole_(sauce))

About Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park

The Santa Cruz Mission Adobe State Historic Park is home to the oldest building in Santa Cruz County. Built between 1822 and 1824 by local Ohlonean and Yokuts Indians, the park's signature adobe is the only remaining structure from Mission Santa Cruz, founded in 1791. One of just four adobe buildings left in Santa Cruz County—and sometimes confused with the nearby replica mission

chapel—it is the only building of its kind preserved as a museum in the State of California. The adobe served as housing for Neophyte families who lived and worked at the Mission, which operated until 1834 when it was secularized. After decades of private ownership, the adobe was sold to the State of California, extensively restored and finally opened in 1991 to the public as the Santa Cruz Mission SHP.

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks saved Santa Cruz Mission Adobe SHP from closure in 2012. Friends' donor agreement to fund maintenance and operations at the park, as well as continue operation of the [Mission ParkStore](#), also includes a commitment to partner with the community and work with California State Parks to make needed improvements. Key improvements that have already been implemented include the opening of new interpretive exhibits, renovated outdoor cooking facilities and new hours of operation to serve local school children. The park is supported by the Mission Adobe Committee, members of which include representatives of Friends, State Parks and dedicated community volunteers.

About Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks is an entrepreneurial nonprofit sustaining the legacy of our state parks and beaches. Through an innovative partnership with California State Parks, and by leveraging local community support, Friends has provided millions of dollars of funding for educational programs, visitor services and capital projects. Founded in 1976, Friends is passionately dedicated to the preservation of our spectacular natural environment and rich cultural history. Friends also operates six ParkStores, offering nature- and history-themed merchandise for sale to benefit local parks and beaches. Learn more about Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks at ThatsMyPark.org or via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Pinterest](#).

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