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CASTRO COASTAL CONNECTION SHARES PAJARO VALLEY HISTORY

WATSONVILLE, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends), a local non-profit supporting dozens of state parks and beaches in Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties today announced two translated interpretive events at Sunset State Beach sharing the history of the Castro family, one of the founding families of California.

The Castro-Coastal Connection, a campfire event presented by State Parks Interpreter Joseph Carr Ritchie, explains the link between Santa Cruz County's first State Beach, Sunset State Beach, and Castro Adobe State Historic Park, the county's next State Historic Park. Once upon a time, the properties currently owned by State Parks were part of a larger land grant holding of the Castro family. The Castros arrived in California as part of the Anza Expedition 240 years ago and eventually made their way to Santa Cruz County. During the Mexican Rancho period of 1821-1850, they grazed cattle in the coastal hills and shipped hides from an *embarcadero* (wharf) that once existed between Sunset and Manresa State Beaches.

The Castro-Coastal Connection will begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday, July 23, and Saturday, Aug. 20. The program, which includes a slideshow, hot chocolate and roasting marshmallows, aims to bring local families out to experience the State Beach and enjoy the translated (English/Spanish) presentation. The talk will be in the campground area at Sunset State Beach, 201 Sunset Beach Road in Watsonville. The program is free. Parking is \$10 and supports the park. Participants will be invited to future Open House events at the Castro Adobe State Historic Park.

About Castro Adobe State Historic Park

Located in Larkin Valley, near Watsonville, the two-story Castro Adobe, built between 1848-49, is one of the finest examples of a rancho hacienda in the Monterey Bay area. The property includes the restored *cocina* (kitchen) and the Potter-Church Garden, a unique outdoor space originally created by then-owners Elizabeth and David Potter (1968-72) in consultation with noted landscape architect Thomas Church.

Friends is leading a multi-year restoration effort to preserve and interpret the new State Historic Park in partnership with California State Parks. Work is currently being done to complete seismic stabilization and make the upstairs *fandango* (dance) room fully accessible by installing a lift, building new interior stairs and integrating a steel beam to strengthen the second story. It is Santa Cruz County's second state historic park and the first non-beach state park in the Pajaro Valley. The Castro Adobe is open on a limited basis for special events, such as Open House Days. To follow progress on the restoration effort, visit www.ThatsMyPark.org/projects/castro-adobe.

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 provides 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. ParkStore locations include Natural Bridges, New Brighton, Santa Cruz Mission, Seacliff, Wilder Ranch and Online. Learn more at ThatsMyPark.org or via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.

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