

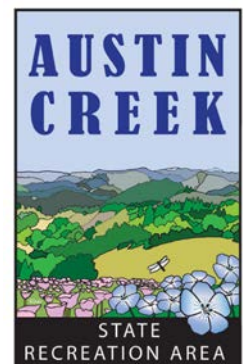
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

2012 Austin Creek State Recreation Area

Operation & Financial Report



Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
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STEWARDS OF THE COAST AND REDWOODS
Operations Report – August 15, 2012 to August 31, 2013
Austin Creek State Recreation Area
Prepared by Michele Luna, Executive Director

Hours of Operation

- Austin Creek, like Armstrong Redwoods, is open daily from 8 am to one hour past official sunset.
- Bullfrog Pond Campground was opened on August 17, 2012 and stayed open year-round except for 1 week during the winter when downed trees prevented access to the campground.
- Three backcountry sites were reopened before Memorial Day weekend in 2013 and stayed open for the rest of the report period.
- The entrance station at Armstrong Redwoods was staffed year-round on the weekends, 4-5 days a week during the winter, early spring and late fall, and 7 days a week during the later spring, summer and early fall.

Visitor Services & Public Safety

- With the shortage of Ranger staff at Armstrong Redwoods, Stewards handled most of the Visitor Service operations in Armstrong as well.
- Stewards' office staff handled reservations for groups wanting to reserve 4 or more campsites at a time at Bullfrog Pond campground.
- Office staff also fielded lots of phone inquiries from those who were directed to us by way of the DPR and Stewards websites.
- Stewards recruited and trained public assistance hikers and equestrians to monitor the trails in Armstrong and Austin Creek, to give out information, provide directions, dispense water, and report any unusual activity.

Special Events

- Five different sites in Austin Creek SRA were identified as potential special event sites for groups ranging from 20 to 100. They include Schoolhouse Flat, Vista Point and three sites in Bullfrog Pond Campground (the campfire center, two relatively flat campsites next to one another, and an area overlooking the pond).
- Weddings: Stewards began advertising Austin Creek SRA as a wedding venue for small intimate groups. One wedding was held early in the summer of 2013 at Vista Point.
- In early May, Stewards conducted the first Armstrong/Austin Creek Trail Run in partnership with Pacific Coast Trail Runs, Inc. The event was a success and raised money for Austin Creek SRA.
- The first Sunset Dinner on August 31st, 2103 was a great success and was held at Schoolhouse Flat. This was the first time the site was used for this type of event.

- Other events were held in Armstrong Redwoods and provided support for operations in Austin Creek SRA: Family Day in Your Park (June), Art in the Park (July), the Old Grove Festival (September).

Interpretive Programs

- Ten Junior Ranger Programs were held on Sunday mornings from 10:00 – 11:00 am at the campfire center at Bullfrog Pond Campground from June 2 to August 4th.
- Three Star-gazing events were held at Vista Point.
- Docent-Led Hike took place with 30 Boy Scouts.
- School programs included Waldorf School from Arizona (40 students) and SSU Freshman students and instructors (group of 20).
- Docent Recruitment and Training took place for Public Assistance Volunteers.
- Seminar about the Legacy of Pond Farm and Marguerite Wildenhain took place in June.
- National Leave No Trace trainer program in collaboration with the Northern Area Boy Scouts Pomo District took place at Bullfrog Pond Campground.

Cultural Resource Management

- Pond Farm Pottery is a significant cultural site in Austin Creek SRA, and a partnership has been developed with Stewards, State Parks, the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) to restore and repurpose the site for future sustainability.
 - NTHP provided a \$10,000 grant to pay for a restoration cost estimate.
 - CSPF funded a consultant to do a marketing survey and a business plan.
 - DPR applied for Prop 84 funds with the help of the partners and were awarded \$443,000 for stabilization of the barn and Marguerite' home.
 - The first meeting with partners, including DPR staff from Sacramento and the Russian River District, was held to plan for the Prop 84 funded project.
 - The first stakeholders meeting was held with past Pond Farm students, the local artist community and others interested in order to provide a project update and discuss potential future programming for the site.

Natural Resource Management (Stewardship workdays)

- CSPF supported two Park Champion workdays in Austin Creek. Volunteers helped clean up the campground, repaired food lockers and did brush clean up. Volunteers also helped get the backcountry sites ready for opening.
- 10 additional volunteer workdays were held to do trail maintenance, wood splitting, railing repairs on fencing and tree removal.
- Stewards supported the Youth Ecology Corps by providing 3 weeks of work, 4 days a week for 5 hours/day. Trail clearance was accomplished by about 6 youth.
- Staff did lots of brush cleaning, campground clean up, weed eating, put up signage and painted the entrance kiosk.

Recreation

- Stewards maintained and operated 24 campsites at Bullfrog Pond Campground. Campsites were cleaned, tree hazards were removed, tables leveled and storage lockers fixed and painted. Restrooms were equipped with sanitizer dispensers.
- A camphost site was established with a small trailer (larger trailers are not able to access the campground). A storage trailer was purchased for storing equipment and supplies and for selling camping supplies and firewood.
- Backcountry campsites were cleaned up and outhouses were repaired before opening in Spring of 2013. Campsites are maintained weekly.

Signage and Marketing

- Signage was designed and purchased to identify the new operating partnership.
- New signs purchased for Austin Creek by DPR prior to the operating agreement were installed at key locations in the park.
- New brochures were produced to inform the public about Bullfrog Pond Campground and the backcountry camping rules and regulations, as well as interpretive facts about the park.
- Information about Austin Creek operations was updated on Stewards' website.
- Stewards staff worked with DPR to update the DPR website with current information about the park.

Concession Operations

- The park has a horse concession that operates seasonally by reservation. The concession contract is for both Armstrong Redwoods and Austin Creek SRA. Concession revenue is reported and submitted to DPR, with no revenue diverted to Stewards.

AB 1478 Funding

- Stewards applied for AB 1478 Matching Funds for Austin Creek SRA. In June, 2013, \$256,446 was approved for:
 - Staff and equipment for maintenance, events and other improvement projects to keep the park open
 - Trail repair and stabilization and improvement deferred maintenance project
 - Pond Farm deferred maintenance project



**ANNUAL REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT
OPERATING AGREEMENT**

Park Unit: AUSTIN CREEK STATE RECREATION AREA

Operator: Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

State's Fiscal Year: July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 (Actual August 15, 2012 to June 30, 2013)

Estimated Visitors: 210,671

ANNUAL REVENUE	Fiscal Year Total
Armstrong/Austin Creek	Aug '12 - June '13
Austin Creek – Camping fees	28,528
AR/AC Entrance Station – Day-Use - 30% for AC	35,937
California State Parks Foundation Grant	56,000
Other grant support (Pond Farm)	10,000
Other Donations and Fundraising	7,292
Special Events – Weddings, EcoAdventures	100
Firewood Sales	517
Park Passes - No percentage to Stewards	-
Total Revenue Austin Creek	138,374
Value of Volunteer Time	18,622
Total Revenue plus donated time	156,996
ANNUAL EXPENSES	
Armstrong/Austin Creek	
Salaries	63,933
Benefits - 15%	9,590
Office - Equipment & Supplies	3,005
Housekeeping Supplies	1,382
Insurance/Legal	15,674
Signage/Brochures	1,445
Vehicles (Truck and UTV), gas	18,815
Field Equipment and Supplies	2,221
Tree survey	1,000
Utilities - Trash, Electricity, pumping, Phone	1,684
Camphosts (trailer and supplies) storage	1,100
Pond Farm Expenses	10,000
State Park Expenses - To PCA	500
Total Expenses Austin Creek	130,348
Net Rev/Exp Austin Creek - No Vol. Time	8,026

FINANCIAL NARRATIVE

August 15, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Background: Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods entered into an Operating Agreement with DPR for Austin Creek State Recreation Area in September of 2013. The agreement was signed by the Director on June 27, 2013 but was delayed going to the Department of General Services and the Attorney General's office. Stewards was given an early entry permit to operate until the final agreement went into effect. The entrance kiosk for both Armstrong Redwoods and Austin Creek began operating under Stewards' management on August 15, 2012 and Bullfrog Pond Campground opened on August 17, 2012. The Backcountry campsites in Austin Creek were opened before Memorial Day in 2013.

Revenue: Operational revenue from day-use and camping fees generated \$64,465 during the report period. Stewards retains 30% of the day-use fees for Austin Creek. This percentage was negotiated with District staff and will be revisited on an annual basis.

Other revenue generated for park operations were derived from grants (\$66,000), donations (\$7292) and special events and campfire wood sales (\$617). Firewood sales were limited by the fact that there was a fire ban put into effect in May of 2013.

In-Kind Volunteer Time: Volunteers were used to accomplish stewardship and natural resource projects. Volunteers contributed 752 hours @ \$24.75/hour for a value of \$18,622 of in-kind services. http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

Expenses: Per the Operating Agreement, all money derived from operational revenue must be used for Austin Creek operations. Since Austin Creek expenses exceed operational revenue by \$65,266, Stewards used fundraising revenue to cover expenses. Carryover net profit was used in the next quarter to cover increased staffing levels.

Staffing include one full-time Field Operations Manager and one part-time service aide during the slow season. During the busy season, Stewards employs one full-time service aide and two part-time service aides. During this accounting period, Field Staff expenses were \$51,105.

Additional staffing costs include administrative hours from Stewards' Executive Director, Administrative Director, Administrative Assistant, and two office assistants. Those expenses were \$12,828 for the reporting period.

The largest expenses incurred were for one-time purchases and insurance. One-time purchases include a used truck, new UTV, and a storage trailer (\$19,915). Insurance costs for the 5700 acres and campground operations are \$15,674 annually.