



CENTRAL COAST STATE PARKS ASSOCIATION

2020

Year-End Summary



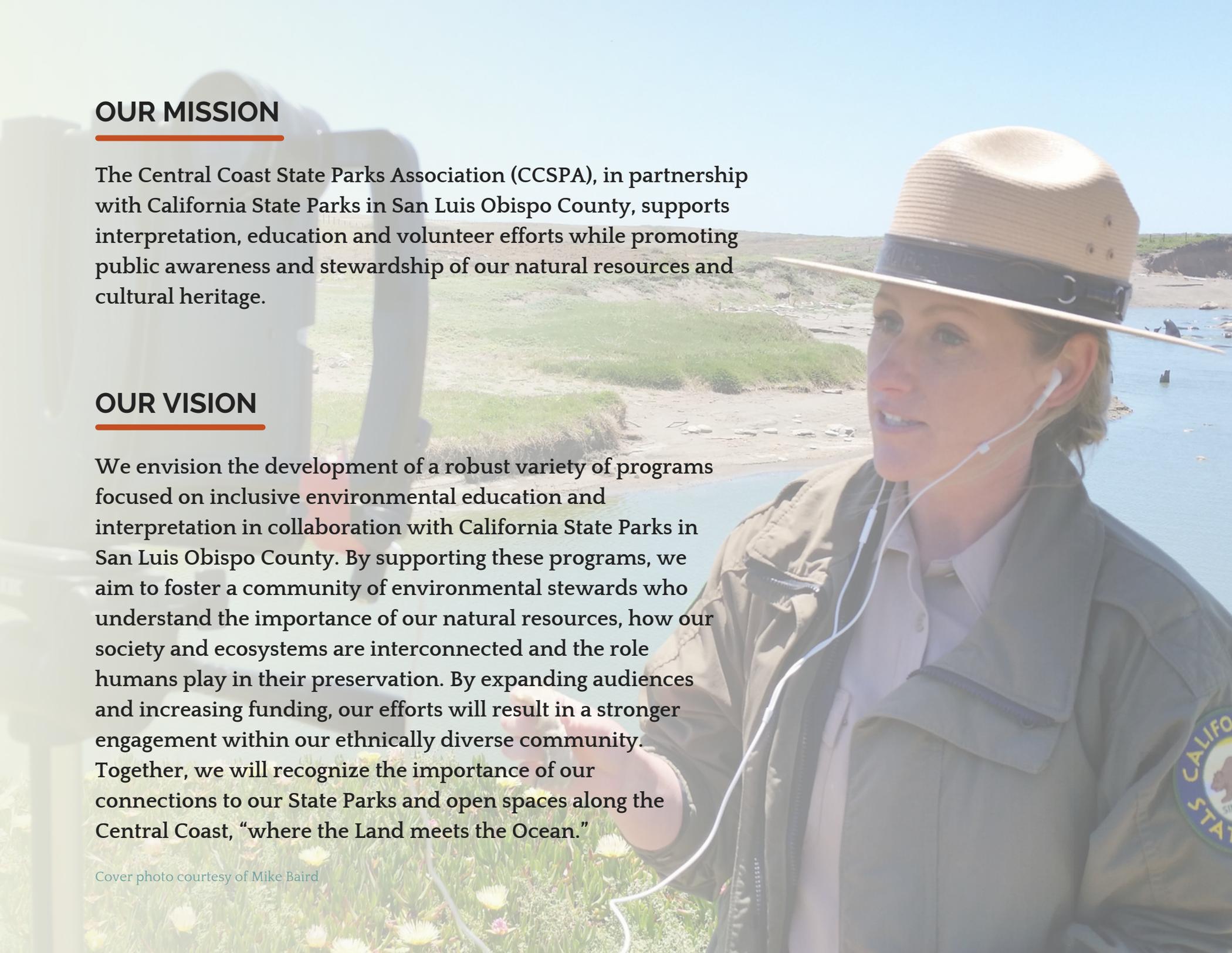
OUR MISSION

The Central Coast State Parks Association (CCSPA), in partnership with California State Parks in San Luis Obispo County, supports interpretation, education and volunteer efforts while promoting public awareness and stewardship of our natural resources and cultural heritage.

OUR VISION

We envision the development of a robust variety of programs focused on inclusive environmental education and interpretation in collaboration with California State Parks in San Luis Obispo County. By supporting these programs, we aim to foster a community of environmental stewards who understand the importance of our natural resources, how our society and ecosystems are interconnected and the role humans play in their preservation. By expanding audiences and increasing funding, our efforts will result in a stronger engagement within our ethnically diverse community. Together, we will recognize the importance of our connections to our State Parks and open spaces along the Central Coast, “where the Land meets the Ocean.”

Cover photo courtesy of Mike Baird





For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it.

-Jacques-Yves Cousteau

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When was the moment you truly recognized the importance of our parks, open spaces and the resources they hold? Maybe it was the first hike you took with a friend? Maybe it was that campfire show you attended when you were a kid? Or maybe it was a time of challenge, when the neighborhood trail became a place of respite and rejuvenation?

During 2020, we saw first-hand the importance of our parks and open spaces. The numbers of families, friends and individuals flocking to our parks was nothing less than astonishing. The reflections on this convergence ranged from welcoming this new trend of embracing nature to the urge to protect these precious places from the novice nature seeker finding their ground.

What was most notable in the past year was our desire - CCSPA and State Parks staff, docents and volunteers - to engage and connect with those who love our parks. The desire to provide educational programming ran deep, even when it became a virtual experience. With the closures of park facilities, we were able to accomplish much-needed tasks that will provide a solid foundation for CCSPA and our parks. With your support, CCSPA made the best of 2020, investing our energy in sustaining the interpretive and educational programs in our Central Coast State Parks, now and for years to come.

KRISTIN HOWLAND

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT



Note from the Board...

2020 was challenging for all of us. It was a year to learn new things and adapt to quickly changing situations. The Board learned how to hold meetings over ZOOM and stay the course during scary financial times.

CCSPA was heavily impacted by the closure of our local state park campgrounds. Fortunately, we were able to weather the challenges and continue to expand and grow. The pandemic taught us the real importance of open space and the value of having beautiful state parks in which to recreate, especially with so few other options available.

We are excited about all the innovations our dedicated staff accomplished this year, including moving to a new expanded office, launching an online store, purchasing new quality merchandise and supporting the renovation of the Morro Bay Museum. CCSPA's future looks bright.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marylou Barker-Gooden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARYLOU BARKER-GOODEN

BOARD CHAIR

Everything in nature invites us constantly to be what we are. –Gretel Ehrlich

CELEBRATING SUCCESSES IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC AND PARK CLOSURES

Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished. - Lao Tzu

In March of 2020, CCSPA found our new home. Consolidating storage units into one warehouse at our new location allowed us to organize our merchandise and streamline our retail operations. We undertook the mundane but much needed tasks of inventorying our warehouse and migrating data from old platforms to new that better suited our needs as a growing organization.

As shelter in place orders set in, the need for our long-awaited and planned online store became immediate. We launched our e-commerce store in April and spent a couple of months learning the ropes. By July, it was already a tremendous success and by October we had doubled our projected annual revenue in just 6 months.

But even with our successful online store, our revenue and outreach was severely impacted by closures due to the global pandemic. We needed to get creative! Knowing that many of our local businesses were also suffering, we reached out to develop relationships that would be mutually beneficial and increase our impact. We developed two new custom product lines with local businesses: Fable Soap Company created scented candles for four of our local state parks, and Coastal Peaks Coffee launched two new coffee blends, one each for Montaña de Oro State Park and Pismo State Beach.

But we didn't stop there! We also hosted our first film screening of the **Get Outside! Film Series** with SLOMotion Film. With over 70 people in attendance, Central Coast Brewing Company hosted the in-person portion of the screening, while more than 200 people attended the virtual screening.

And as Monarch butterfly season rolled around, the Monarch Mercantile Trailer returned to the Monarch Butterfly Grove at Pismo State Beach in October. We welcomed our seasoned docents back as CCSPA volunteers and hired additional staff to keep the trailer open 7 days a week.





Photos courtesy of Highway 1 Discovery Route

GIVING A LITTLE TLC

Plant seeds of happiness, hope, success, and love; it will all come back to you in abundance. This is the law of nature.

-Steve Maraboldi

The historic Spooner Ranch House in Montaña de Oro sits on land which has been continuously occupied for over 9000 years. From the indigenous inhabitants of the Pecho Coast to European explorers, ranchers and farmers, this land has been home to humans. In the early 1900's, the Spooner family built and lived in a house not far from the bluffs overlooking a spectacular sea cove. Today, the Spooner Ranch House provides a unique glimpse into a bygone era. With period furnishings and living history depicting members of the Spooner family, the house reveals what life was like during this period of the region's history.

COVID-19 precautions meant the temporary closure of the Ranch House. Without the attention of our dedicated volunteers and docents who helped care for and clean the furnishings and displays, the house was suffering from neglect. Mildew and dust settled in the corners and mice began nesting in the closets. With your enthusiasm and support, we raised over \$7500 to give the Spooner Ranch House the TLC it deserves! Prior to reopening and welcoming our treasured docents, volunteers and public back into the Ranch House, it will be professionally cleaned, with all linens and costumes dry cleaned.

We could not have been so successful in this effort if it had not been for Los Osos Rexall, SLOPOST and the Coast Mounted Assistance for their generous donations to the "Help Us Clean House" at the Spooner Ranch House fundraiser.





COASTAL EXPLORERS VIRTUAL SUMMER CAMP & YEAR-END GIVING

Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.
-Frank Lloyd Wright



During this time of global pandemic, in order to keep themselves and others safe, volunteer docents and State Park Interpreters have been unable to offer in-person walks and presentations. But that doesn't mean that interpretive and educational activities haven't been happening. This past summer, CCSPA funded the first-ever **Coastal Explorers: Bridging Youth and Families to Parks Program** hosted by State Park Interpreters. Using the latest technology, students and their families participated virtually in park-themed science activities, offering them a deeper understanding of the natural and cultural diversity in our parks and inspiring them to become environmental stewards in their own communities. In the words of one parent, "Thank you for providing opportunities that connect our children to nature especially during these difficult and challenging times where we are unable to do so safely due to Covid-19. Thank you for bringing happiness and a breath of fresh air to our doorstep!"

We hope that soon our parks will once again bustle with in-person walks, talks, and teaching. But the development of virtual learning opportunities like Coastal Explorers has been a silver lining to these challenging times. Through the passion for nature education of supporters like you, we were able to raise over \$9000 for the Coastal Explorers program during our year-end appeal. We could not have done this without you!

WHAT LIES AHEAD

2021 has made quite the entrance already! As we look forward to our parks reopening and life returning to normal, CCSPA and State Park staff have been turning our attention to the reopening of the Morro Bay State Park Museum of Natural History. The closure offered a much-needed opportunity to clean and revamp museum spaces and exhibits. There have been several upgrades to the museum's entrance and gift shop, including a mural by local artist Marcie Hawthorne, which will bring new life to the gift shop with beautiful images of our local marine wildlife. We will be launching a fundraising campaign to continue these efforts to revitalize the museum. Stay tuned!

As we look toward the future, we are planning to host our next screening from our **Get Outside! Film Series**. These screenings will help us achieve our goal to spark meaningful conversation about the need for parks and open spaces and the importance of hands-on environmental education and advocacy for our natural resources.

In March, the Monarch Mercantile trailer will move from the Monarch Grove to its new off-season location at the Grand Avenue entrance to Pismo State Beach. We're hoping that by keeping the trailer open at this new location after the butterflies have left the Grove, we will increase our outreach into a new audience as well as provide us with another revenue stream to support our parks.

We are busy with Cal Poly interns working on our blog, the Virtual MindWalks program and our future Podcast! Stay tuned for more information!

There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.
-Rachel Carson



Photo of artist Marcie Hawthorne in front of "Young Sea Lion In the Bait Ball"



The least movement is of importance to all nature. The entire ocean is affected by a pebble. -Blaise Pascal

GRATITUDE

With profound gratitude we thank you for your support in sustaining the environmental education programs and activities in our Central Coast State Parks. As a local nonprofit organization, we depend on you, our community to make each program a reality.

CCSPA VOLUNTEERS

Monarch Mercantile Trailer:

Marylou Barker-Gooden

Peggy Burhenn

T.J Carsey

Missy Collet

Valerie Glahn

Jan Ojerholm

Judy Zaretzka

Headquarters:

Rick Barton

Terry & Jerry Brewster

Ann Fryer

Nancy Howland

Francesa Manheim

Wood Program

Coordinators:

Ted Coulton

Barbara Hagerty

Blog Contributors:

Diana Barnhart

Faylla Chapman

Claudia Freitas

Marlin Harms

Sharon Iranpour

Sara Kelly

Sally Krenn

Karen Watts

Norma Wightman

BUSINESS & CORPORATE SPONSORS

Los Osos Rexall

Shanbrom Family Foundation

RETAIL PARTNERSHIPS

ADKTD

Coastal Peaks Coffee

Fable Soap Company

Mama Ganache Chocolate



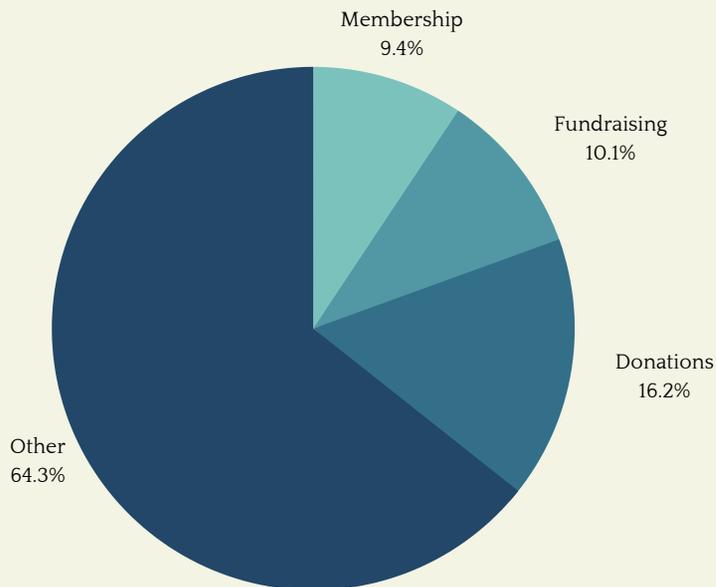
Spotlight: A special thanks to Tom & Mary Kay Eltzroth in recognition of their sponsorship of the Mind Walks Lecture Series

ADDING IT ALL UP

In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. - Alice Walker

REVENUE

Membership	\$19,385
Fundraising	\$20,973
Donations	\$33,563
Other (retail, grants, programs, etc.)	\$133,370
Total	\$207,291



EXPENSES

Membership	\$ 6,090
Fundraising	\$45,079
Operations	\$ 71,683
Programs	\$167,073
Total	\$289,925



Please note: 2020 finances do not reflect a typical year due to COVID-19 closures and impacts. Totals do not include COVID stimulus funding.

Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries." -Jimmy Carter

SUPPORTED BY CCSPA

Annual visitors and program participants below reflect approximate in-person attendance in a normal (i.e. non-pandemic) year:



Visitors to Monarch Grove

85,500



Visitors to the Oceano Dunes Visitor Center

7,000



Visitors to the Museum of Natural History

42,000



Visitors to the Spooner Ranch House

16,500



Attendees to Mind Walks

1,900



Attendees to AWN Programs

9,700



School Group Participants

6,500



Campfire Program Attendees

3,000

Numbers below reflect virtual attendees in 2020 (during pandemic):



Digital Junior Ranger Program Views

4,800



Visitors to (virtual) Campfire Program

4,900



PORTS Virtual Education Program Participants

6,300



Virtual Mind Walks Participants

5,300



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS
FOR ALL YOU DO FOR
OUR CENTRAL COAST STATE PARKS!