

Explore the Coast Overnight

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ALL CALIFORNIANS TO STAY ON THE COAST

Five Year Project Update
2019 – 2024



BACKGROUND

After much public pressure to preserve the coast, in 1976 the California State Legislature passed the California Coastal Act, which expanded the California Coastal Commission (CCC) and mandated the protection and enhancement of natural and scenic resources, as well as the development of public access to and along the coast. Since then, CCC, the California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) have worked hard to protect and provide for lower-cost coastal accommodations (LCCAs) but despite the various efforts from multiple agencies and organizations, barriers to coastal access and low supply of LCCAs remain.

To address this need for coastal accommodations, in 2017 the California State Legislature enacted AB 250 (Gonzalez-Fletcher), codified as Chapter 10 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code Sections 31411-31414. The Legislature declared the following policy findings and goals:

- The right of access to the coast is guaranteed to the people of California by the California Constitution and the California Coastal Act of 1976 (Division 20 [commencing with Section 30000]), which requires that coastal development be regulated, and public access rights to our state's beaches be protected.
- California's Park Forward Commission has emphasized the need to expand access to parks and public lands throughout California to ensure that all Californians and visitors to the state, including those from low-income and under-resourced communities, are able to benefit from outdoor experiences.
- Lower-cost coastal accommodations, including hotels, motels, hostels, cabins, and camping opportunities, are essential elements of coastal and park access because they enable Californians and visitors from a variety of backgrounds, including those of low and middle-income, to enjoy California's beaches and parks and encounter the full range of recreational, educational, spiritual, and other experiences offered.
- A lack of affordable accommodations remains a barrier to coastal access. California's historic supply of lower-cost coastal accommodations has been reduced and continues to be diminished because of high coastal property values and economic pressures to develop new accommodations that are too expensive to be affordable to most visitors.
- California should invest in new strategies and partnerships to improve the availability of lower-cost coastal accommodations, particularly for low and middle-income families. A strategic program to provide affordable accommodations in appropriate areas of our coastal parks and public lands can play an important role in improving public access to the coast. California should also support innovative pilot projects that enable the state to partner with nonprofit organizations and the private sector to provide coastal access.

To carry out the policy goals above, AB 250 called on SCC to work with CCC and DPR to develop and implement the Explore the Coast Overnight program to facilitate the improvement of existing and the development of new lower-cost coastal accommodations. It further provides that both coastal programs and facilities will serve low and middle-income families. To accomplish these goals, SCC was required to prepare an assessment of lower-cost coastal accommodations to guide the establishment of the new Explore the Coast Overnight program and to provide an update on the assessment and projects not less than every five years. The Explore the Coast Overnight Assessment can be found at scc.ca.gov/projects/etco. This report fulfills the legislative requirement for a five-year update from 2019 through 2024.

CALIFORNIA STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY LOWER-COST COASTAL ACCOMMODATIONS PROJECTS

North Coast Region

Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Sonoma Counties

Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center Enhancement

Mendocino County

Status: Complete

On 10/01/2015 the Conservancy provided an \$872,000 grant to the Jug Handle Creek Farm & Nature Center for the construction of a four-room bunkhouse that accommodates up to 22 people, and a classroom for nature education programming. Located between Fort Bragg and Mendocino, the 33-acre property is a five-minute walk to Jug Handle Beach.



Jug Handle Creek Farm and Nature Center

Carrington Coast Ranch LCOA Feasibility Study and Master Plan Sonoma County

Status: In progress

On 05/05/2020 the Conservancy provided a \$150,000 grant to Sonoma County Regional Parks to complete a Master Plan that includes a feasibility study and design for public access amenities, camping and a 3-mile segment of the California Coastal Trail at Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and Open Space Preserve. The 335-acre park is located north of Bodega Bay, adjacent to Highway 1 and the Sonoma Coast State Park.

Mattole Beach Campground Expansion Humboldt County

Status: In progress

On 05/05/2020 the Conservancy provided a \$94,700 grant to the United States Bureau of Land Management to make infrastructure improvements to the Mattole Beach Campground including additional parking areas and eight new campsites. The project also funded community outreach including campground promotion, natural resource interpretation, and environmental stewardship. The campground is located in unincorporated Petrolia and is part of the King Range National Conservation Area.

Kamph Memorial Park Expansion Study
Del Norte County
Status: In progress

On 06/18/2020 the Conservancy provided a \$240,400 grant to the County of Del Norte to develop a park improvement plan and assess the feasibility of expanding camping at Clifford Kamph Memorial Park. The park is located two miles south of the California state line on US Highway 101 on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The park is just over 3 acres in size and has 14 tent only campsites.



Camping at Kamph Memorial Park

Jug Handle Creek Farm Cabins and Amenities Improvements
Mendocino County
Status: In progress

On 03/02/2022 the Conservancy provided a \$583,400 grant to the Jug Handle Creek Farm & Nature Center to build cabins, bathroom facilities and improvements to related infrastructure enhancing the Center's ability to continue providing educational programs and supporting groups seeking affordable lodging in Mendocino.

Seawood Cape Preserve Public Lower-Cost Overnight Accommodation and Coastal Trail Plan
Humboldt County
Status: In progress

On 02/15/2024 the Conservancy provided a \$315,150 grant to The Wildlands Conservancy to prepare a public access plan for improved hiking trails and parking, coastal signage, an outdoor classroom, a restroom and development of a free campground amenity on the Seawood Cape Preserve. The 128-acre preserve is located 3 miles north of the town of Trinidad.

Lighthouse Cove Lower-Cost Accommodations Project
Del Norte County
Status: In progress

On 09/05/2024 the Conservancy provided an \$835,000 grant to the City of Crescent City to add up to three lower-cost units that will accommodate up to 20 people, and to renovate the existing restrooms at the Lighthouse Cove RV Park in Del Norte County. Steps from the ocean, Lighthouse Cove RV Park currently offers 91 RV camping sites and eight traditional tent sites.

Central Coast Region

San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties

Jalama Beach Campground Expansion and Improvements

Santa Barbara County

Status: In progress

On 04/02/2020 the Conservancy provided an \$80,000 grant to the County of Santa Barbara for preliminary planning to expand the existing campground at Jalama Beach County Park in the city of Lompoc. The campground currently offers basic sites, including 12 beachfront, partial-hookup sites on a hill with a view of the Pacific Ocean, along with two group campsites and seven cabins.



Jalama Beach Campground

Santa Cruz Hostel Renovations

Santa Cruz County

Status: In progress

On 09/22/2022 the Conservancy provided a \$668,000 grant to the Santa Cruz Hostel Society to plan and implement renovations to the Santa Cruz Hostel in the City of Santa Cruz. The project includes the construction of a cottage that accommodates up to three guests, renovations to existing bathrooms and kitchen facilities, accessibility improvements and the creation of a community outreach plan to reduce barriers to access lower-cost coastal accommodations for visitors from California's central valley.

S'MORE: Space for Meaningful Outdoor Recreation and Education

Monterey County

Status: In progress

On 12/01/2022 the Conservancy provided a \$300,000 grant to the Ventana Wildlife Society to prepare designs, environmental review documents, and permit applications to construct a campground and support facilities at Andrew Molera State Park. The facility will include approximately 25-30 tent campsites, a welcome area, parking, picnic area, outdoor grills, fire rings, chemical toilets and an amphitheater. Located in Big Sur, on Highway 1, the park offers visitors miles of hiking, beachcombing as well as panoramic views of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Greyhound Rock Lower-Cost Overnight Accommodations

Santa Cruz County

Status: In progress

On 09/05/2024 the Conservancy provided an \$865,000 grant to the County of Santa Cruz to conduct technical and feasibility studies, community and tribal engagement, and to prepare plans, designs, environmental review documents, and permit applications for a new cabin campground and associated amenities at Greyhound Rock County Park in Santa Cruz County. Located in Davenport, the park offers coastal access, fishing, tidal pools, nature trails and family picnic areas.

South Coast Region
Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties

Crystal Cove Beach Cottages Restoration
Orange County
Status: In progress



On 02/06/2020 the Conservancy provided a \$29,400,000 grant to the Crystal Cove Conservancy to restore 17 historic cottages on North Beach of the Crystal Cove Historic District at Crystal Cove State Park. The grant includes funds provided by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. To date, ten cottages have been fully restored and are open to the public. Located in Newport Coast, the park offers 3.2 miles of coastline, and 2,400 acres of backcountry for visitors to enjoy.

Malibu Bluffs Campground
Los Angeles County
Status: In progress

On 04/02/2020 the Conservancy provided a \$500,000 grant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority to prepare plans, designs, and environmental review documents for a campground and day-use amenities including restrooms, a parking lot, and a picnic area. Located on a coastal bluff above Amarillo Beach, bounded by the Pacific Coast Highway and Malibu Road, the campground will provide a centrally located campground near many attractions.

YMCA Camp Surf
San Diego County
Status: In progress

On 05/05/2022 the Conservancy provided a \$150,000 grant to the YMCA of San Diego County to prepare plans, designs, and environmental review documents for facilities at YMCA Camp Surf in Imperial Beach including a restroom, equipment storage, classroom space, an outdoor kitchen, and outdoor showers. These improvements will support the existing beach camping facilities and programs provided by the YMCA.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION LOWER-COST COASTAL ACCOMMODATIONS PROJECTS

Pfeiffer Big Sur Cabins Monterey County Status In Progress

The Pfeiffer Big Sur Cabins project will build nine prefabricated hard-wall camping cabins for lower-cost accommodations, along with essential infrastructure such as a comfort station with three restrooms and three showers, upgraded parking facilities, and fencing to protect nearby sensitive habitats. Located 25 miles south of the City of Monterey, the new campground lies in the middle of Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and comprises of approximately 3 acres.



Pfeiffer Big Sur Cabin Model

In 2017, the California Coastal Commission approved \$1.7 million of in-lieu funding to prepare an economic feasibility study, schematic designs, environmental review, permit applications, and supporting the construction phase. In the 2021–2022 State Budget, \$4.69 million of DPR’s Prop 68 LCCA funds was allocated for the construction phase, expected to begin in December 2025 and be completed by the end of 2026.

Silver Strand Campground San Diego County Status: In Progress

The Silver Strand Campground project will install 20 camper trailers, each accommodating eight people, 16 dry cottages accommodating six to eight people each, and 16 tent sites, each accommodating eight people at Silver Strand State Beach. The project also includes upgrading the existing restroom building to add new showers and ADA accessibility improvements. Located south of the City of Coronado, park visitors enjoy two and a half miles of ocean beach, and half a mile of bay access.

Since 2020, DPR has allocated \$1.375 million of Prop 68 LCCA funds to complete a business development plan, schematic designs, and environmental review. An additional \$6 million of DPR’s Prop 68 LCCA funds has been set aside for the construction phase, expected to start in the Fall of 2027.



LOOKING AHEAD

The California Coastal Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation will continue to work together to expand and improve opportunities for Californians to stay at the coast. Through periodic coordination meetings, all three agencies work together to identify projects and priorities to achieve this goal.

Since AB250 was enacted in 2017, SCC has awarded over \$10 million of Prop 68 LCCA funds through grants to public agencies and nonprofits. Of the \$30 million allocated, a balance of approximately \$19 million remain. These funds will support projects that are currently in the design phase to move into construction in the next few years. SCC will also continue to accept grant applications on a rolling basis and work with applicants to identify and develop projects that best meet the goals of the Explore the Coast Overnight Program.

For more information, visit: scc.ca.gov/projects/etco