HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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SONOMA COAST PARK

State Park No. 22

by

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SONOMA COAST PARK

Sonoma Coast Park, consists of a long, narrow strip of coast lands, that stretch along the ocean shore northward from the northern end of Bodega Bay, along the sandy beaches and rocky cliffs to the mouth of the Russian River, a distance of approximately eleven miles, and containing an area of 698.53 acres. The park lands, very irregular in shape lie entirely west of the coast road, between it and the ocean. Geographically the park lies between latitude 38° 19' and 38° 26' north, longitude 123° 5' west. This park is suited only for recreational purposes, that is camping and fishing, since due to strong tides and currents it is too dangerous to swim in the ocean. The scenery is not especially beautiful nor spectacular and there are no large or virgin forest areas.

This part of the coast of California became known to the white people from the time of the first Spanish expedition to California. This was under the command of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Bartolomé Ferrelo. After their arrival in San Diego Bay on September 28, 1542, they proceeded up the coast in their vessels the San Salvador and Victoria, so that by November 15, 1542 they were in the vicinity of Point Reyes and Bodega Bay. Unable to land due to rough weather, the ships were turned back down the coast to the Santa Barbara

Islands where Cabrillo died on January 3, 1543.

Ferrelo and his crews made a second voyage up the coast during February 1543 and by the 25th were back along the Sonoma Park coast. Early in March the two ships again turned south and by March 10 were back at San Diego. Thus to the members of the Cabrillo expedition belongs the credit of being the first Europeans to see and explore the coast of the present state park.[1]

Thirty-five years later Captain Francis Drake in his ship the Golden Hind, entered the Pacific Ocean by way of Cape Horn in 1578, in search of plunder and the north-west passage. After robbing some of the Spanish settlements along the South American and Mexican coasts, he arrived in California waters in June 1579. His vessel needed repairs about that time so the British "Sea-dog" anchored his ship in what he described as a "fit harbor" some place in the vicinity of the present Drake's Bay on June 17, 1579. There the Golden Hind was beached and repaired. The crew camped on shore for several weeks and explored the coast and inland for some miles, during which time Drake took possession of this region in the name of Queen Elizabeth of England, naming the territory "New Albion."[2] Drake and his men, then,

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1. H. H. Bancroft, History of California, I, 69-81.
2. F. Drake, The world encompassed, 131-132; also Bancroft op. cit., 81-94.

were the first white men to land and walk upon this Sonoma coast.

In 1584, one of the yearly ships that made the voyage to the Philippines, was ordered to explore the California coast on its return by way of Japan and the North Pacific. This Galleon was commanded by Francisco Gali, and approached the coast in the latitude of Sonoma Coast Park. It sighted the shore and then turned south without landing or stopping until it arrived at Acapulco.[3]

A fourth voyage to this section of the coast took place in 1595, when Sebastian Rodriguez de Cermeñon in command of the Manila Galleon San Agustin was ordered to explore this territory on his return from the Orient, in an attempt to find, some suitable harbor for the Manilla ships. Cermeñon arrived in sight of land some place north of Bodega Bay and coasted down until it was on the lee side of Point Reyes where his vessel went aground. The cargo and passengers were landed while an attempt was made to float the vessel. Just what happened is not definitely known, but after several weeks of being on shore the crew and passengers departed for Mexico, leaving a large part of a rich cargo of silks and wax on the beach for the benefit

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3. Drake, The world encompassed, 131-132; also Bancroft, op. cit., I, 94-95.

of the natives.[4] Whether members of the expedition actually explored inland or along the shore to the present state park is unknown, but at least it is certain that they saw the coast line.

Some eight years passed, and then another ship arrived to explore the coast of Northern California. This time the expedition came from the south. Sebastián Vizcaíno set out from Mexico in command of three vessels with the special purpose of exploring the coast for an interoceanic passage and a good port for the Philippine ships. He arrived in San Diego on November 10, 1602. From there the vessels sailed up the coast that winter, discovered Monterey Bay, and on January 3, 1603 continued their voyage up the coast. On January 6th Vizcaíno on the San Diego reached Point Reyes and looked for traces of Cermeñon's cargo. He anchored there but did not land, and the following day continued north in search of his other ship. After sailing to latitude 43° north both vessels the Tres Reyes and San Diego turned south and again passed along the shore of the present Sonoma Coast Park.[5]

After Vizcaíno's expedition, a full one hundred and seventy years went by before another ship explored these

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4. Bancroft, History of California, I, 96-97.
5. Ibid., 97-109.

waters. By this time the southern half of California was being settled, San Diego, Monterey and five missions had been established, and there was much interest in exploring the northwest coast. Therefore, in 1773 Captain Juan Perez was ordered to sail north as far as latitude 60°, and to survey the coast down to Monterey. Perez sailed from Monterey on the Santiago in June 11, 1774 and after going up to the latitude of British Columbia turned to the land coasting down the shore, passing the Sonoma coast about August 24, 1774.[6]

The following six years a number of other voyages were made along this coast by such navigators as Bruno Heceta, Juan Perez, Francisco Bodega y Cuadra, and Antonio Maurelle in 1775; Bodega and Ignacio Artega in 1779. All these men saw the coast between Bodega Bay and the Russian River.[7]

Several years later, in July 1786, a French scientific expedition commanded by Jean Francois Galoup de la Perouse sailed down along the California coast and took a look at the Sonoma coast.[8]

Although the coast was by now fairly well known,

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6. Bancroft, History of the northwest coast, I, 150-156.
7. Bancroft, History of California, I, 240-247; 320-330.
8. J. F. G. de la Perouse, Voyage autour du monde, II, 270-275.

there were still other explorations. In 1791, Alejandro Malaspina in command of two ships, coming from Mexico, sailed past the Sonoma Coast on the way north and on the return voyage, but did not land.[9]

Then in 1792 came Captain George Vancouver commanding the Discovery and the Catham, with a scientific expedition that spent over a year on the Pacific Coast, making maps of this region. His vessels passed by the region of this state park but no landing was made here.[10]

At this point the Spaniards fearing that England might wish to occupy territory north of San Francisco Bay, made an attempt to establish a settlement at Bodega Bay. In 1793, Viceroy Revilla Gigedo gave orders to the commander of San Blas to send a ship with supplies and men to establish a fort there. The Aranzazu brought the orders and supplies in July 1793. In August, Lieutenant Goycoechea with a sergeant and ten men crossed San Francisco Bay and opened a road to Bodega where they expected to find the ships, Sutil and Mexicana with the equipment. However, something went wrong because the ships and men returned to San Francisco in August 1793, the establishing of the post

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9. Bancroft, History of California, I, 490-491.
10. C. Vancouver, Voyage round the world, I, 196-200; II, 240-250; also Bancroft, op. cit., I, 501-516.

having been postponed for a year. The supplies were left in San Francisco but the post was never established at Bodega by the Spanish.[11]

At the beginning of the 19th century a new group of expeditions visited the Sonoma Coast. This time they were American and Russian, in quest of sea-otter skins. Such sailors as Captains Winship and O'Kain with the aid of Russian and Aleut Indian hunters spent much time along the coast in the vicinity of Bodega Bay, between the years 1803 and 1806. Thereafter, the Russians carried on the otter hunting, and in 1812, Baranof, the governor of the Russian colony in Sitka, Alaska, sent a large party of Russians and Aleut Indians to establish posts along the California coast for the purpose of hunting the sea-otter and to raise grain and cattle for the Alaskan settlements. It was in this way that the Russian posts at Bodega Bay and at Fort Ross, eighteen miles north of Bodega were established. Thus the Russians became the first settlers in the vicinity of Sonoma Coast State Park.[12]

At Bodega Bay where the Russians found a good harbor and landing, they built several large warehouses where

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11. Bancroft, History of California, I, 515-517.
12. Ibid., II, 88-96; 294-320.

they stored skins and supplies that were to be shipped. They also had a pier where vessels landed or took on cargo, and there was a small ship-building yard where several launches were constructed during the thirty years of the Russian occupation. Houses for the Russians and the Aleut Indians were also built, but there was no fort at this place. There being no good timber near-by, nor land for planting crops the main establishment was built at Fort Ross eighteen miles farther north. A road was built by the Russians between Bodega and Fort Ross that ran along not far from the shore to the mouth of the Russian River where they had a ferry on which the river was crossed. This old road is followed very closely by the present highway that runs along the eastern side of the Sonoma Coast Park.[13]

By the time Bodega was established the sea-otter had been almost exterminated from that vicinity by the Russian ships which had hunted there during the preceding ten years. Therefore, Bodega became the base from which the ships and hunting canoes went out north and south along the coast, also into San Francisco Bay.

This establishment was also used during the later years of the Russian occupation by foreign ships as a con-

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13. Bancroft, History of California, II, 294-320; also California Historical Society, The Russians in California, 1-64.

venient place for unloading goods which they wished to smuggle into California. It was considered more or less a free port by the American and British traders as well as by the Russians. This fact led to innumerable protests made by the Spanish and Mexican authorities to the Russians during the thirty years 1812-1842, but all of them went unheeded. One of the most notorious of these cases occurred in July 1840 about a year and a half before the Russians withdrew. An American ship Lausanne commanded by Captain Josiah Spalding landed passengers. The captain also went overland to San Francisco to do some trading without paying duties. Meanwhile, M. G. Vallejo then commandant at Sonoma heard about it and he sent a detachment of troops to Bodega to prevent the landing of goods to arrest the Captain and reprove the Russians for allowing such actions on the part of foreign ships. This caused the Russian commander Alexander Rotchef to feel insulted and there ensued a long controversy between him and Vallejo that lasted for months.[14]

By the end of 1840 the hunters had practically ex-

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14. Bancroft, History of California, II, 294-320; also California Historical Society, The Russians in California, 1-64; also G. Tays, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and Sonoma," Quarterly, California Historical Society, XVII, No. 1, March 1938, 62-66.

terminated the otter and seal from the California coast. The Russian farms and cattle ranches along the Sonoma coast were not producing the necessary food for the Alaskan settlements. Furthermore the Mexicans and Americans were settling the interior north of San Francisco Bay, thus preventing the Russians from expanding inland. All these factors combined caused the Russians to decide to abandon their California properties. Therefore, throughout 1841 they carried on negotiations with Sutter, Vallejo and Alvarado for the sale of their establishments and cattle. At the end of the year they made a deal with Sutter selling everything, even a fictitious right to the land for 30,000 pesos. Early in 1842, the last members of the Russian settlements at Ross and Bodega sailed away and left the coast in the hands of Sutter's representative.[15]

When the Russians moved out, Sutter sent Robert Ridley to take possession and manage the properties for him. After several months Sutter replaced Ridley with John Bidwell, who continued at Ross and Bodega until late in 1843 when he was recalled to New Helvetia and William Benitz took his place.[16]

No sooner did the Russians move out, but the government claimed possession of the land and authority over

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15. Bancroft, History of California, IV, 176-189.
16. Ibid., 186-187.

that part of the territory. By 1843, Governor Micheltorena had made several grants in this vicinity, one of them was to Captain Stephen Smith, who first came to California in 1840 as master of the bark George Henry. He liked the country around Bodega, so he made arrangements with Governor Alvarado to introduce a steam mill, the first in California. In 1843 he returned from Baltimore with the mill machinery which he set up at Bodega. On his way here with the mill he also picked up men who could set it up and operate it. In Baltimore he employed Henry Hägler, a carpenter; at Valparaiso he hired David D. Dutton, a millwright; at Payta, Peru, where he married a sixteen year old girl Doña Manuela Torres, he picked up William A. Streeter, an engineer. At other ports up the coast he engaged Phillip Crowley and John Briggs; at Santa Cruz he loaded lumber for his mill. Then at San Francisco he shipped James Hudspeth, Nathaniel Coombs, John Daubinbiss, and Alexander Copeland. With this full compliment of men and materials, Captain Smith sailed his ship into Bodega in September 1843 and built his mill.

As soon as he had established himself in his new place, Smith applied for naturalization papers and a grant of land. These were soon granted and by the middle of 1844 he was a citizen and had received a grant of the Bodega Ranch, 35,487.53 acres. This included what is now Sonora Coast

State Park. His steam plant was soon in operation and his steam sawmill and flour mill ready for business. The saw-mills were about one mile northwest from the "Corners," as the village was called, and at the foot of a range of hills upon which grew the giant redwoods which were to feed his saws.

When all was ready, Captain Smith decided to have a grand opening with a picnic and barbecue. He invited all the people in the northern frontier to attend. He got steam up in the three, single-flue, thirty-six by two and a half foot boilers, and several logs were cut in the nearby for-est and rolled to the mill. Several beeves were prepared for the barbecue, and the Captain made his own bread. The feast was ready and the guests began to arrive, just as Smith had planned and hoped they would. It was the first of Bodega's celebrated picnics and the most famous of all those social affairs. All the flower of frontier society was there. The dignitaries, rancheros, vaqueros, and set-tlers of every nationality, race and color with their fam-ilies were present in new sombrero, sarape, high-colored sash, mantilla, or more somber garb.

When all the expected and unexpected guests had arrived, Captain Smith assembled them, and at a signal, the lumber-mill was thrown into gear. Soon the whirling

saw was going through a large redwood log, and there before the assembled multitude the first redwood boards were cut. These were then manufactured into tables upon which the guests were to feast. The Captain, still had other surprises for his company, which was already amazed at the magic of it all. Some wheat that had been grown in the neighborhood was brought, and the steam engine set in motion. Then power was transmitted to the grist mill and some grain dropped in. To the admiration of the people, most of whom had never heard of such a remarkable devise, the grain was sent between the grinding mill-stones, and soon it appeared as soft, beautiful white flour. More magic was produced by Captain Smith, for into a big hot oven went some of the new ground flour that had been kneaded into bread, and out came the fragrant, steaming product to be placed on the tables before the now hungry guests, who greeted it with vociferous acclaim and delight.

After the feasting came the toasting. General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was present as the honored guest and toast-master due to his position on the frontier. When the time came he led the assemblage in a toast to the health and prosperity of his Yankee neighbor, which was drunk in a cup of his own Sonoma wine. In the course of that brief oration General Vallejo referred to the coming

years when many who were present would live to see more steam engines than soldiers in the fertile valleys of California. Even the general lived long enough to see his vision more than fulfilled.[17]

Captain Stephen Smith and his mills, continued to make Bodega township famous as a port for the shipment of lumber, flour, grain and dairy products. He operated the plant steadily until the year 1850, supplying the entire coast with the output as well as exporting to the Sandwich Islands. With the proceeds from the lumber and flour he sold, he purchased the tract of land known as the Blucher Ranch, located in Analy township, containing 23,976.66 acres. This added to his own Bodega Ranch of eight square leagues, made Smith a great land baron with nearly 60,000 acres of forest and farm lands.

When Captain Smith first established himself at Bodega, Sutter was still claiming the land on the strength of the Russian title. He thereupon sent John Bidwell to tell Smith to get himself, his goods and chattle back on his boat. (And get t'hell out of there) Smith had the government on his side so he refused to move. The old Captain was a sturdy, Cape Cod seaman, honorable in all

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17. Bancroft, History of California, V, 724; also T. Gregory, History of Sonoma County, 129-131.

things, God fearing, but afraid of nothing else. He made it plain to Bidwell and Sutter that he was there to stay and he would fight to keep what was his. Thereafter, he was not troubled by Sutter or anyone else.[18]

Captain Smith continued to enjoy the fruits of his toil, and when the United States took California he raised the flag at Bodega. During 1846-1848 he served as civil magistrate, in that township. He also owned a number of city lots in San Francisco, where he died in 1855 at the age of 69. He left his property to the young Peruvian wife, who in 1856 married Tyler Curtis. The three children, Manuela, Stephen, and James B. Smith, later inherited a large share of the Bodega properties.[19]

Although Smith's grant had been made by Governor Micheltorena on September 14, 1844, it was brought into litigation before the United States Land Commission in 1852. A claim was filed by Stephen Smith and Manuela Smith, later to be Manuela T. Curtis, before the Commission on February 9, 1852, and their right was confirmed by the Commission on February 21, 1853, and it was taken to the District Court which confirmed it on July 5, 1855. The contestants appealed from this decision, but the appeal

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18. T. Gregory, History of Sonoma County, 129-131.
19. Bancroft, op. cit., V, 724.

was dismissed on April 2, 1857, two years after Captain Smith's death.[20]

In 1850, the state legislature divided the state into eighteen counties, and one of the original counties was Sonoma. Before that date the state had had no such political subdivisions. At the time Sonoma County was organized it extended from Bodega Bay north, to include all of the present Mendocino County. Then in 1859, the legislature created Mendocino County out of the northern part of Sonoma County. Thus from the beginning, Sonoma Coast State Park has been a part of and within the limits of the present Sonoma County.[21]

After Captain Smith took up his grant at Bodega there were other persons who acquired property in the vicinity of his land. When he died some of his grant passed into other hands, so that by the time the state acquired the area along the shore there were a number of owners holding frontage on the ocean. The original owners, of course, were the Indians.

The Indians living along the coast in the area now within Sonoma Coast State Park and Bodega Bay belonged to

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20. J. P. Munro-Fraser, History of Sonoma County, California, 153.
21. O. C. Coy, The Genesis of California counties, 1, 19, 55.

the Coast Miwok nation. Their territory extended to Duncan's Point. From there north to the mouth of the Russian River the park area was inhabited or controlled by the Pomo Indians. Of the present park area the land about the head of Bodega Bay was the most thickly populated, there being about a dozen villages of Miwok Indians within a radius of five miles from the bay.

These Indians were discovered by Francis Drake in 1579 and he and his crew spent five weeks in close contact with them. From the detailed description left by the members of that expedition it can be seen that in customs and general culture the Miwok were very similar to the Pomo. According to Drake's narrative the Miwok houses were dug partly into the ground, with poles set into the earth and joined together at the top like a spired steeple. These poles were covered over with grass and branches then with layers of earth, which made them water proof. There was a hole in the top to let out the smoke of the fire built in the middle of the floor. These houses were very warm, the people sleeping upon the ground on beds of rushes around the fire.

The men went naked, but the women wore skirts made from bulrushes. They also wore a shawl about their shoulders made of deer skin with the hair on it. These people had long hair tied up in a knot behind, with feathers stuck into

it. The chief wore a feather headdress made somewhat like a crown, and on his shoulders a rabbit skin coat that reached to the waist.

Their baskets were made of rushes and were so well made as to hold water. Around the brim of the baskets they hung pieces of pearl shells, to signify they were only used in the worship of their gods. Some of the baskets had designs wrought with matted down red feathers from woodpecker scalps.

The money was made of pearl shells and was hung in long strings and the number of such chains determined the wealth and social position of the owner.

Bows and arrows were their only weapons and these were used skillfully, yet they were not very deadly because the bows and arrows were small and seemed more suited for children than men. They were very strong runners, going swiftly and for a long time. They seldom traveled at any other pace except on the run. They even fished in shallow water by running down the fish and catching them by hand. The Miwok had no canoes or boats but occasionally used tule rafts. Taken as a whole the Miwok resembled their neighbors to the north and east the Pomo, in all their culture, social customs, tribal organization, and ways of life.[22]

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22. A. L. Kroeber, Handbook of Indians of California, 272-278; also S. A. Barrett "Pomo Indian Basketry," American archaeology and ethnology, VII, 134-168.

In the neighborhood of Sonoma Coast State Park, the Miwok and Pomo Indians lived mainly by hunting and fishing. On land they had such large game as the elk which was plentiful in Marin County, the deer, grizzly and black bear, also many smaller animals such as rabbits, squirrels, badgers, beaver, rats, mice, and any other small animal available. These Indians also used the insects such as grasshoppers, ants, worms etc., which were considered great deliecies.[23]

Along the ocean shore and the streams of the park area there was an abundance of food. The waters of the ocean along this coast were teeming with animals used for food by the Indians. The sea-otter and the seal were the chief sources, and of these there were hundreds of thousands, until about 1800, when the Russian and American fur hunters arrived on the coast and exterminated them in the course of some forty years.[24]

The sea also contains a great variety of fish, in the waters of this coast park. Chief among the species are the halibut, turbot, mackerel, herring, sardines, anchovies, smelt, sturgeon and salmon, while the creeks and rivers

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23. J. Grinnell, Fauna of California, 76-207.
24. W. H. Davis, Seventy-five years in California, 4,5. 22, 93-109, 135, 155; also Bancroft, California pastoral, 217, 459-471.

abound with trout. The salmon and sturgeon go up these streams to spawn.[25] In fact there are some 465 known species of fish to be found in these waters of California most of which may be used for food. There are about twenty species of perch and several varieties of flounders. The rock cod and other fish are represented by a number of varieties.[26] This coast is also the home of other marine life such as sponges, clams, devil-fish, abalone, crabs, lobsters, and many species of seaweed and other plants.[27]

Besides the sea animals and plants the shore of Sonoma Coast Park is the habitat of many species of sea birds. There are at least thirteen kinds of open sea birds that come to this area to nest. There are also some sixteen kinds of shore birds which are to be found along the shore of the bays, inlets and mouths of streams in the park area. Furthermore, some eighteen varieties of water fowl are to be seen in this area at some season of the year.[28]

The number of species of land birds that live or visit this area during different seasons of the year is also

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25. J. S. Hittell, Resources of California, 126-143, 433.
26. D. S. Jordan, Nature and science of the Pacific Coast, 115-124.
27. C. A. Kofoid, Nature and science of the Pacific Coast, 124-133.
28. I. O. Wheelock, Birds of California, 3-81.

very large. Of these the most common and numerous are, the sparrows, robins, meadow-larks, blackbirds, hawks, pigeons, woodpeckers, quail, doves, wrens, warblers, thrushes, finches, humming-birds, and flycatchers.[29]

Wild plant life in the form of wild flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees, is another factor that makes the Sonoma Coast Park attractive, especially during the winter and spring when the rains bring out all these plants at their best, the species of wild flowers and shrubs are of course too numerous to be listed here but mention may well be made of some of the more common varieties that are to be seen in bloom. Of these the California poppy and lupine are the most conspicuous. Then there are larkspurs, wild mustard, golden-flax, golden-pea, wild rose, dogwood, honeysuckle, sunflower, fawn-lily, mariposa lily, Johnny-jump-ups, hollyhock, California vetch, and pussy's-ears. The more common shrubs and grasses are: the wild-oats, fox-tail, rye-grass, soap-root, Indian-onion, hazelnut, beach-nut, sour-grass, pig-weed, wild-lettuce, watercress, gooseberry, strawberry, blackberry, elderberry, clover, buckeye, grapes, manzanita, nightshade, and toyon-berry, also a large variety of ferns.[30]

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29. J. Mailliard, Field work among the birds and mammals of the north coast of California, 26-50.
30. C. F. Saunders, With the flowers and trees in California, 5-10; 60, 109-145, 152-155; also P. B. Kennedy, Flowers, annotated list of the wild flowers of California, 13-H152.

Of the trees growing along the park area or in the vicinity, the list is much smaller. In this part of the country the redwood and live-oak are the more numerous, with some lowland fir, California nutmeg, California laurel, willow, big leaf maple, alders, Madroña, and tanbark-oak.[31]

The Sonoma Coast State Park is not only of interest for its land, marine, plant, and animal life, but also for its geological structure, which is plainly evident in its beaches and hills. The oldest rock formation in the territory is that which begins at the north end of Bodega Bay. It is a small remnant of limestone or white marble similar to the limestone of Santa Cruz mountains. With this limestone there is quartzite and mica all of which overlie the granite. The age of this formation can only be guessed at, from its relation to the granite which is intruded in it, as there is no palaeontological evidence available in it. The granite is supposed to be of post-Jurassic age, therefore the limestone strata cannot be later than jurassic.

In the Bodega Peninsula especially at the north end of the peninsula the formations are buried under aeolian sands. While the coast line to the north of Salmon Creek is made up entirely of Franciscan sandstone. This is a

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31. W. L. Jepson, The silva of California, 8-279.

hard massive gray sandstone, weathering yellowish brown, and is known also as San Francisco sandstone. There are also strata of soft gray shale interbedded with sandstone, as well as massive radiolarian chests in various colors from white to red; intrusive masses of basalt, having peculiar forms known as sphervidal basalt, together with local variations in the forms of diabases. Here also may be found large masses of serpentine, and lastly metamorphic contact zones of glaucophane, actinolite or mica-schists. This structure forms the basement upon which the later rocks of the Coast Range rest, and wherever exposed, shows evidence of having been repeatedly sheared and contorted by the many movements which have affected these mountains,

The most westerly of the Franciscan areas forms a large part of the high ridge, following the coast line from Mt. Tamalpais northward through Marin County to the Russian River and northward, except that part occupied by the granites previously mentioned in the region of Bodega Bay. This Framci scan area varies in width from eight to fifteen miles, and forms a high costal ridge, with a very even crest line, at an elevation of 1,000 to 1,200 feet above sea level.

After the intrusion of the pre-Franciscan strata by the granites, a great period of erosion occurred, as shown by the great unconformity existing between Franciscan and

the older rocks. Upon this old, well worn surface the Franciscan series was laid down. The variety of sediments give evidence of frequent oscillations, while the sharp folding and faulting and volcanic intrusions, show the immense amount of movement that took place subsequently. There were several periods of submergence and elevation. While the recent, gradual elevation was taking place, erosion, dissecting and wearing down to an immense amount has occurred, showing the vast length of time represented.

The geomorphic cycle which had its beginning in the Post-Pliocene times has already reached a stage of early maturity in this range. Following the last elevation, and possibly only one of the retrograde steps in the general elevation of the coast, came the most recent submergence of this region, as evidenced by the flooding of the lower valleys of the streams and the formation of fiord-like estuaries at Russian River Drake's Bay, and Bodega. Evidence exists in submerged kitchen midden of old Indian camp sites to show that this submergence is still going on at a rate which may be measured in terms of inches and hundreds of years. The folding of this series which inaugurated the present Coast Ranges, probably took place at the very end of the Pliocene age.[32] Although this coast may now be submerging

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32. V. C. Asmont, A geological section of the Coast Range north of the Bay of San Francisco, University of California publication in geology, IV, No. 3, 39-87.

there is no danger that the Sonoma Coast Park will disappear under the sea for some thousands of years to come.

The area of Sonoma Coast State Park consists of fine beaches, level land, rolling hills, streams, high rocky points and cliffs. Every mile of its length presents a new view with a beauty all its own. Along the full length of the park there is a highway from which the visiting motorist may enjoy the ever-changing vista of ocean, beach and cliff.

Starting from the head of Bodega Bay to visit the park, the visitor leaves a fine beach behind and travels inland for a short distance until he reaches the highway leading north. Turning on to the highway in that direction after a drive of about two miles he arrives at Salmon Creek. There at the mouth of this stream on the south bank is Doyle Point, named after Frank P. Doyle of Santa Rosa, who for years advocated a seaside park in this region. Extending southward from Doyle Point is a fine beach about half a mile long named Doyle Beach, for the same person as the point. This is a good place for camping. Continuing north from Salmon Creek the road runs along the eastern boundary of the park, on a natural shelf between the bluffs and the hills reaching inland. These bluffs are of moderate height and stand between the road and the beaches below. Parking

spaces are available along the road, also on some of the bluffs for those who would stop to enjoy the view or to use the beaches. These beaches are all excellent for picnicking and for seaside sports and recreation especially fishing, as no other part of the California coast offers so many kinds of fish that can be taken. Swimming, however, is not recommended, because of the strong surf conditions, treacherous currents and cold temperature of the water.[33]

After traveling about three miles from Salmon Creek one crosses a small stream named Scotty Creek, and a mile farther north there is a rocky point and small inlet with a beach extending south. This point is known by the various names of Rocky Point, Duncan's Point or Death Rock.

North of this point the park area continues along a beach and sand dunes and bluffs. For the next four miles until it arrives at the Russian River the road swings farther inland to cross the river on a fine bridge about a mile east of its mouth. The park area, however, runs along the shore to the point at the south bank of the mouth of Russian River.

Although Sonoma Coast State Park as it is now constituted is only four years old, the idea for the creation

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33. "Beach, redwoods in Sonoma County New State Park," Motor Land, XXXII, No. 5, May 1934.

of such an area had been expressed for many years by Mr. Frank P. Doyle of Santa Rosa. It was he who proposed it and worked to bring it about, long before general interest in the proposal was aroused. For that reason Doyle is now known as the "father" of Sonoma Coast Park and the point and beach at the mouth of Salmon Creek have been named in his honor.

Some years ago the State Park Commission allocated a fund of $40,000 to be used in carrying the Sonoma Coast Park project to completion. This began about 1931 and by 1934 a number of tracts had been bought. These purchases were as follows: The Wright estate consisting of 263.56 acres and lying just south of the mouth of the Russian River, and stretching along the highway for about three miles was purchased for $18,000. Then the McChristian tract was acquired. This was a small parcel of 21.00 acres for which $4,050, was paid. Lying just south of Scotty Creek was another small piece of land, belonging to Gianini. This consisted of 22.90 acres, which cost the Park Commission $1,417. Just below this piece and adjoining it with Salmon Creek as its southern boundary was the Genazzi tract which contained 37.6 acres, for which $4,000 was paid. About the center of the park area was another small parcel known as the Hitchcock tract which lay between the Wright estate on the north and Scotty Creek on the south. This contained 33.29 acres and $2,563 was its purchase price.

By April 1, 1935, $30,030 had been spent in acquir-

ing most of the land in the park area. There was about $10,000 of the original $40,000 remaining with which to purchase more land. It was then proposed to purchase a tract at the head of Bodega Bay known as the Taylor tract. This was supposed to contain 290 acres and was valued at $10,000. It belonged to Mr. William Despard Taylor. The acreage being uncertain and the boundary lines not definite the tract was resurveyed and found to contain more than the original estimate of 290 acres. A new agreement had to be reached with Mr. Taylor in which the Park Commission acquired control of the property fronting on Bodega Bay and extending to the ocean. This also included a corridor for the purpose of allowing a satisfactory approach to the Ocean Beach from the existing county road. The parcel of land as it was finally agreed upon contained 315.18 acres and the price was $11,279. As the extra cost of the larger tract ran over the original $40,000 allocated an extra allocation of $1,309 had to be made on March 28, 1935. The Park Commission approved the deal and this was the last piece of land added to Sonoma Coast State Park. By this time the park area consisted of 698.53 acres and had cost $41,309 and had a frontage on the ocean of some ten miles. It is the hope of the commission to add desirable tracts of land to the park on the east side of the highway and along the streams as new funds are available in the future.

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