

For the first time in our history, a donation of property . . .



Skip Hand donated his Sebastopol farmhouse to the Parks Foundation to sell and benefit Regional Parks.

In 2019, for the first time in our history, the Parks Foundation received a donation of property to sell and benefit Regional Parks. As a young couple in the 1970s, Victoria White Hand and Skip Hand lived in Berkeley, but they longed to come to Sonoma County. “We wanted to be dirt farmers,” Victoria explained. Eventually they purchased this charming farmhouse in Sebastopol, where they raised chickens, ducks, geese, sheep and all kinds of produce.

Skip and Victoria lived in their quaint farmhouse for 40 years. When the time came to think about their legacy, Skip advocated for their home to benefit Regional Parks.

In August 2017, Skip passed away. The next year Victoria’s trust officer, Andriy Lesyshyn of Exchange Bank’s Trust & Investment Management Department, reached out to the nonprofit Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation to fulfill Skip’s wishes.

The property sits less than a mile from Occidental Road, site of multiple accidents in recent years. In this neighborhood, the West County Trail is simply a bicycle lane on the road’s shoulder. Cyclists and pedestrians must share space with cars passing at 50 mph.

The gift from the White-Hand Family Trust will be combined with other funding, making it possible to construct a safe, 8-foot-wide extension of the West County Trail from Highway 116 to Atascadero Creek. Because of Skip and Victoria’s foresight, their property became a transformational gift that will benefit neighbors and the community at large for generations to come.



SONOMA
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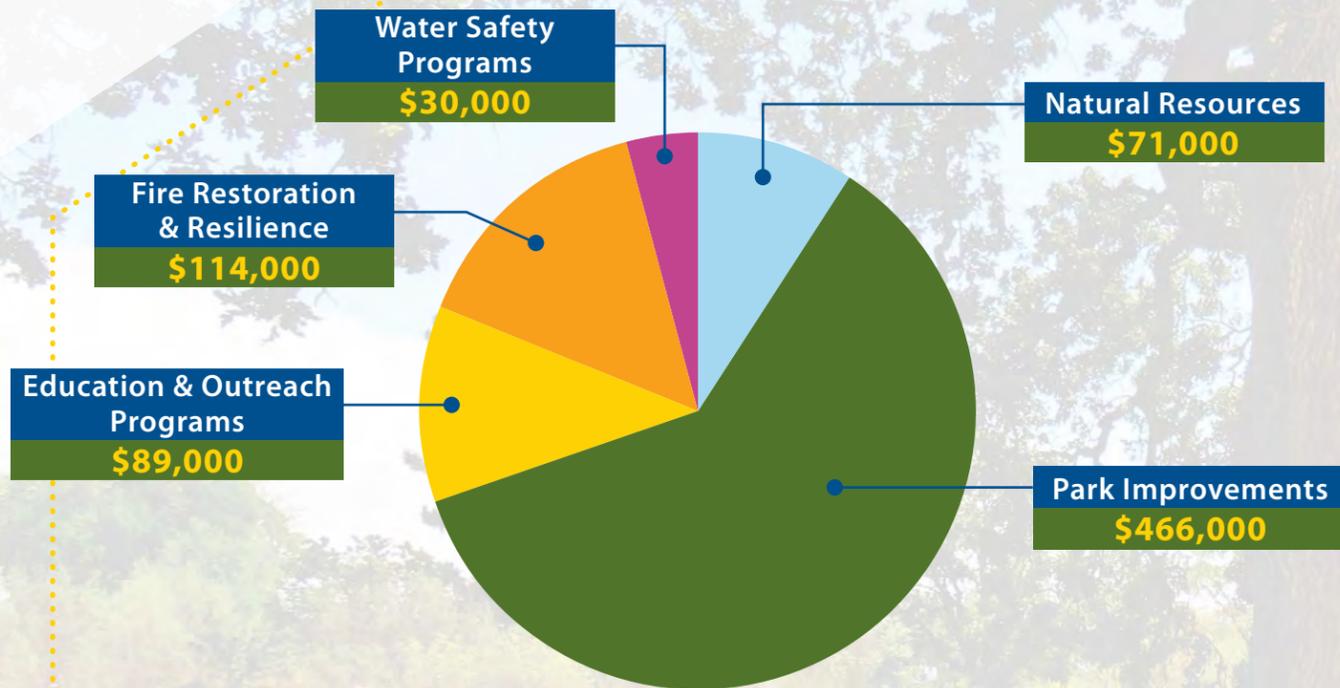
You are the foundation.

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\$770,000 in grants to Regional Parks

This graph shows key funding allocations, which are described in greater detail below.



Bolstering Fire Recovery & Resilience

Left: The Parks Foundation purchased equipment for Regional Parks, such as this mini-excavator, to repair fire-damaged trails, as well as maintain existing trails.



Right: The Parks Foundation supported continued grazing to reduce fire fuels in our Regional Parks.



Enhancing Regional Parks

The Parks Foundation purchases a variety of amenities to make our parks safer, cleaner and more convenient. We also sponsor activities such as trail workdays to improve accessibility.

Examples include:

- An ATV for ranger emergency response and a new restroom at Doran Regional Park.
- New or restored trails at Taylor Mountain and Mark West Regional Parks and Preserves and Helen Putnam Regional Park.
- A new water bottle refill and dog water fountain at Ragle Ranch Regional Park.
- Loaner life vests at parks along the Russian River to help prevent drownings.



Connecting Youth to Parks

The Parks Foundation makes it possible for thousands of children each year to explore our parks.



- More than 18,000 school children participate in Regional Parks field trips each year, and 40% receive financial support from the Parks Foundation.
- Caminitos introduces low-income Spanish-speaking families to the wonders of nature.
- Youth Exploring the Sonoma Coast gives teens a yearlong immersion in stewardship, career exploration and recreation at the coast.
- At summer camps like Kayak Camp, youth enjoy outdoor recreation and also learn about subjects like water quality.

Protecting Natural Resources

The Foundation is proud to support Regional Parks' growing Natural Resources Division.

- Santa Rosa Junior College student field research directly informs projects like restoration of the pygmy forest at Hood Mountain Regional Park.
- The Bear Aware program provides information and infrastructure – such as bear-proof food lockers and garbage cans – to keep bears and humans safe.

