



# Volunteer in Parks Program

## SAN LUIS OBISPO COAST DISTRICT

### Friends of the Elephant Seal

#### Docent Duty Statement



- Title:** Friends of the Elephant Seal Docent
- Purpose:** To serve as a representatives of California State Parks and to educate park visitors about elephant seals and other marine life as well as foster stewardship for the ocean in accordance with the missions of California State Parks and the Friends of the Elephant Seal.
- Duties:** Volunteers work under the direction of the Coastal Sector Visitor Services Superintendent through the agency of Friends of the Elephant Seal. Volunteers will serve as a point of public contact and conduct interpretive sessions for the public within Hearst San Simeon State Park at locations under the direction of park staff where interpretation and education is needed and best utilized for protection of the Elephant Seals and the public. This interpretation includes formal presentations to school groups and group tours as well as roving interpretation to visitors. Docents work in outdoor conditions which can include weather variations such as heat, cold, rain and wind as well as long periods of standing and speaking to visitors. In cases of extreme weather, docents must be self-directed as to whether to continue an assigned shift. Docents may also experience periods of high visitation with a large number of visitors.
- Qualifications and Skills:** Volunteers are representatives of California State Parks while on duty in the State Park. Conduct must reflect pride in their service to the visitors and a dedication to providing the highest level of public service by maintaining a professional appearance and attitude. Volunteers must be friendly, courteous and possess good communication skills. They must be punctual, dependable, and possess a willingness to learn and share their knowledge of the northern elephant seal and the ocean environments vital to its survival. Volunteers must be able to meet the physical requirements of the assignments and work duty shifts as scheduled, unless extreme weather conditions develop. Volunteers wear a State Park Volunteer badge and/or other authorized identification while on duty.
- Training:** Completion of the Friends of the Elephant Seal's four-day training program and completion of three on-the-job training sessions under the mentorship of an experienced docent. Volunteers are encouraged to attend in-service workshops, lectures and seminars to update skills and obtain new information.
- Commitment:** The requested commitment of time is 12 hours at the rookery per month. If the docent lives more than 40 miles from the rookery, the commitment is reduced to 9 hours.
- Benefits:** Volunteering outdoors in a beautiful oceanfront setting; the opportunity to meet fascinating people from around the world; the personal satisfaction of reducing seal harassment; providing on-going education about marine life; formation of enduring friendships while enriching and enhancing the experience of park visitors. Volunteers receive complimentary tours at Hearst Castle and other benefits while actively participating in the Volunteer Program.

#### For More

**Information:** Supervising Ranger-North Sector  
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San Simeon, California 93452  
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