



THE LANDS END VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy has partnered with the National Park Service (NPS) to bring a new, multi-faceted visitor experience to the Sutro Heights Historic District of San Francisco. Located along San Francisco's rugged Pacific Coast at the northwest edge of the City, the Lands End improvement project includes a new "green" visitor center, upgrades to the USS *San Francisco* Memorial overlook and parking area, a new trailhead and overlook at Merrie Way, renovations and extension of the Coastal Trail, expanded bicycle and vehicle parking, and restoration of coastal views and natural habitat.

THE LANDS END LOOKOUT:

Open daily from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, the new 4,150-square-foot visitor center is located at the corner of Point Lobos Avenue and Merrie Way just above the ruins of Sutro Baths in the Richmond District of San Francisco. Designed with the surrounding landscape in mind, the Lookout's architecture draws from the natural landscape and cultural history of this remarkable site, utilizing a blend of modern and naturally-sustainable materials, and features educational and interpretive exhibits, a museum store and café, and visitor restrooms.

Educational and Interactive Exhibits: Visitors can learn from panels and interactive displays that tell the story of the coast's geology, the original inhabitants of Lands End, the Yelamu (Ohlone) tribe Adolph Sutro's role in developing the area in the 1880s, and the archeological remnants of the amusement park *Playland at the Beach*. Hands-on educational exhibits also highlight the many animals and plants in the area, and explain why native plants and habitat restoration are key to the endurance of coastal wildlife.

Interpretive Museum Store: The Lookout's new museum store features a wide selection of unique interpretive merchandise, including *Lands End Reflections*, a book of photographs and quotes highlighting the history and culture of the area; and a product line featuring the colorful past of Sutro Baths, *Playland at the Beach*, and the Musée Mécanique "arcade" at the nearby Cliff House. Lands End merchandise is also available for purchase online at <http://store.parksconservancy.org/store/>.

Lookout Café: The new Lookout Café serves a selection of fresh, locally-sourced grab-and-go fare, including the *It's It*, originally developed by George Whitney for sale at *Playland at the Beach*. In partnership with the nearby Cliff House restaurant, the menu follows the principles of *Food for the Parks*, a Parks Conservancy initiative that aims to expand the availability of nutritious, local and sustainable fresh food to national park visitors.

Sustainability and Design: Designed to achieve LEED Gold certification, the Lookout's architecture harnesses daylight, prevailing winds, and the topography to create an innovative "passive" design that conserves energy, water, and embodied carbon. Ecological components of the new Lookout include reclaimed Redwood siding, natural ventilation and lighting, low-flow fixtures, native-plant landscaping and photovoltaic systems. Large windows present visitors with stunning 30-mile views of Sutro Baths and the

California coastline. The structure also offers storage space for the ongoing volunteer-driven stewardship efforts that will maintain and preserve Lands End and the adjacent California Coastal Trail.

Interpretive Landscape Elements: Carrying the interpretive experience through to the gardens and courtyard of the Lands End Lookout, a number of outdoor artifacts were commissioned to further reflect the cultural history of the area. Highlights include cast-concrete replicas of statues that Adolph Sutro had commissioned from his many trips abroad during the mid-nineteenth century; recreated to exact likeness in the 1980s, the replicas include a life-size stag and two grand lions safeguarding the entrance to the new building.

TRAILS & OVERLOOKS:

In collaboration with the NPS, Parks Conservancy staff and volunteers have enhanced the Lands End trail system, built overlooks, improved forest health, placed new trailhead and wayfinding signage, and restored native habitat for birds and other wildlife.

USS *San Francisco* Memorial Overlook: Situated just above the Coastal Trail, this unique spot is dedicated to the USS *San Francisco*, a WWII cruiser that sustained 45 hits and 25 fires during the Battle of Guadalcanal, and offers expansive views of the Golden Gate and Marin Headlands. Completed in 2010, improvements included upgrades to the parking area and overlook, including improved visitor accessibility, repaving and configuration of the parking lot, and the addition of permeable surfaces with native plantings for improved drainage and water recycling.

Merrie Way: The new ADA-accessible trailhead and overlook at Merrie Way provides the main entrance to the Coastal Trail at Lands End. In 2008, the NPS expanded parking facilities and restored views and habitat and closed informal trails in the area to ensure ongoing stewardship efforts to protect coastal dune scrub and wetland habitat.

California Coastal Trail at Lands End: Completed Spring 2008, work along this trail corridor has focused on habitat restoration and visitor experience enhancements. Along the trail east of Mile Rock, this project has increased canopy and understory bird habitat and boosted tree species diversity at a site frequented by birders and wildlife enthusiasts.

VISITOR INFORMATION:

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