



Top 10 Stewardship Travel
Hikes, Walks and Docent Led Tours
in WineCoastCountry Along CA's Central Coast
HWY 1 Discovery Route

San Luis Obispo, CA – (February 13, 2014) – There are many breathtaking hiking trails, interesting walks, and illuminating docent-led tours in California's [WineCoastCountry](http://WineCoastCountry.com) that offer visitors the opportunity to learn more about nature, history, and to just feel good while making a difference on vacation. Spanning 101 miles of prime Pacific coastline conveniently located midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, this spectacular region consists of 10 diverse artisan towns and seaside villages rich in character and history.

[Stewardship Travel](#)

Vacationers can now enjoy a more meaningful vacation by participating in the country's first Stewardship Travel program full of fun, authentic, and inspiring activities with area historians, scientists, and specialists. There are over 70 unique activities and/or contribution opportunities in more than ten locations, including: [Ragged Point/San Simeon](#), [Cambria](#), [Cayucos](#), [unincorporated Morro Bay](#), [Los Osos/Baywood Park](#), [Avila Beach & Valley](#), [Edna Valley](#), [Arroyo Grande Valley](#), [Oceano](#) and [Nipomo](#). The country's first [Stewardship Travel program](#) heralds California's next big step in eco and heritage travel.

Here are the top 10 hiking trails, walks and Docent Led Tours:

1) The Pecho Coast Trail featuring Docent Hikes to Point San Luis Lighthouse

3 Avila Pier

San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Phone: (805) 541-8735

Join the docent-led hikes to Point San Luis Lighthouse along Pecho Coast Trail held every Wednesday and Saturday. The secluded beaches, rugged cliffs and broad coastal terraces of the Pecho Coast have been privately owned and inaccessible to the public since the Spanish Mission Period. Once known as the Rancho Canada de Los Osos y Pecho y Islay, this pristine area is situated north of the Point San Luis Lighthouse and west of the Irish Hills on California's Central Coast. It became open to the public in 1993 for guided hikes with the creation of the Pecho Coast Trail. The federally designated Piedras Blancas Light Station Outstanding Natural Area has more than doubled in size — to 476 acres from 232 — under a partnership agreement between

State Parks and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The hike to the Point San Luis Lighthouse is 3.75 miles round trip and moderately strenuous with uneven terrain, steep cliffs and grades, narrow trails, and crumbling earth. Sturdy hiking shoes are required. Bring plenty of water as well.

2) Ragged Point

19019 Highway One

San Simeon, CA 93452

Phone: (805) 927-4502

Ragged Point Inn's self guided nature trail to the beach begins at the Ragged Point Inn Gazebo. The Ragged Point Nature Trail drops more than 300 feet in less than 1/8th mile zigzagging back and forth across Ragged Point. The trail starts out steep then gets steeper and has many switch-backs. The rough and rugged trail to Ragged Point's private beach is only for the fit and adventurous but it is worth the short hike if you are up to it. The beach is fun and wonderful and often a great place to get some solitude. Please remember that the surf, beach, and trail can be dangerous and you should proceed with caution.

3) Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

Cambria, CA 93428

Phone: (805) 927-2202

The Ranch is far from the largest of coastal ecosystems, but packs more biological diversity into a confined area than many larger properties. It is bordered on the north by a mile and a half of riparian habitat that encompasses tidal effect zones, seasonal freshwater marches and wetlands dotted with birds. The Monterey pine forest (part of three remaining native stands in the world) serves as habitat and cover for wildlife moving between the coastal range and the ocean bluffs. To learn about the upcoming docent-led walks at the Ranch, visit the [Docent Walk Schedule page of Cambria Ranch Walks](#). Walks are generally held on Saturday or Sunday, topics of discussion vary and the walk is led by an expert in the field. The walk is limited to 25 people so reservations are required and can be made by calling (805) 927-2202 or emailing reservations@cambriaranchwalks.com. Participate for a few hours in monthly restoration activities or plant a tree with your family during Thanksgiving weekend.

4.) Audubon Sweet Springs Nature Preserve Monthly Stewards Day

660 Ramona Ave.

Los Osos, CA 93402

Phone: (805) 239-3928

The Sweet Springs Nature Preserve is located on the shores of Morro Bay in the quiet town of Los Osos. Morro Bay is an important stop for migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway and is globally recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA). The Bay and surrounding areas are known for having a high number of endemic species, as well as a unique convergence of northern and southern species at the edge of their range. Such unusually rich biodiversity has prompted a number of conservation efforts, with the Sweet Springs Nature Preserve being among them. In order to ensure that these natural resources remain for us to enjoy long into the future, Audubon invites visitors and residents to help protect and care for them. Volunteer work parties are held the second Saturday of each month from 9am to 12pm, and are open to locals and

visitors. Activities include everything from landscaping to trail and structure maintenance.

5.) *Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Natural History Center*

1065 Guadalupe St.

Guadalupe, CA 93434

Phone: (805) 343-2455

Founded in 1999, the Dunes Center is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Originally conceived by a group of concerned citizens, in 1989 The Nature Conservancy's efforts to help preserve and restore the Guadalupe Beach and Oso Flaco Lake Natural Areas planted the seeds for a dunes visitor center. The Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex is comprised of 18 miles of coastline and is one of the most ecologically significant and largest intact coastal dune ecosystems on earth. A significant portion of the nearly 22,000 acres is under public management and open for recreation. The Dunes Center, a historical home converted to a natural history and history center, in downtown Guadalupe opened in 1996 featuring an education program that reaches over 4000 students annually. Visitors are invited to join the docent-led walks in the dunes and enjoy the guest speakers.

6.) *Stewardship Walk, Talk & Wine Tasting at Stolo Family Winery & Vineyards*

3776 Santa Rosa Creek Road

Cambria, CA 93428

Phone: (805) 924-3131

Join Stolo Family Winery & Vineyards every first Saturday of the month on their 23 acre vineyard up beautiful Santa Rosa Creek Road, just minutes from the small, historical coastal town of Cambria. Take a short educational walk through the vineyards and learn the history of the location, the benefits of planting a vineyard crop on agricultural land, and what it takes to maintain a low yield, high quality vineyard in a coastal location. Get a sneak peak of what's going on in the vineyard at the time of your visit and how it affects the vines and overall growing season. Finish your stewardship walk and talk in the rustic tasting room and winery with a complimentary sample of 3 estate wines. Learn briefly about the boutique wine making process and connect the flavors of the wine with the vineyard itself. Each traveler or local visitor will learn about the unique past of the Stolo Family Vineyards site and how the vineyards continue to preserve the agricultural history of the property. More importantly, each participant will have an exclusive opportunity to directly connect with the agricultural process from vine to bottle. Contributions to Cambria's Historical Society welcomed.

7.) *Cayucos Land Conservancy Bluffs & Nature Walks*

Highway 1 at San Geronimo Road

Cayucos, CA 93430

Phone: (805) 995-0805

The "Bluff Walks" and nature walk programs offers guided hikes on the Bluffs and other ecosystems on the coast. The guides are experts on at least one of the property's resources, e.g. resident and migratory birds, its geologic history, the marine life that inhabit the near-shore waters, native and non-native plants, or prehistoric and cultural history. These guided walks last 1-2 hours and are not physically strenuous, but do require the ability to walk over uneven ground. The walks are very informal and allow for participants to ask questions of the leader and to talk with other group members. They are always accompanied by a Cayucos Land

Conservancy Board Member who can answer questions about the history of the Estero Bluffs State Park or the Conservancy.

8.) El Moro Elfin Forest Docent-Led Nature Walks

Elfin Forest

Los Osos, CA 93402

Phone: (805) 528-0392

The El Moro Elfin Forest in Los Osos, adjacent to the Morro Bay Estuary, is a 90-acre natural area belonging to San Luis Obispo County Parks and California State Parks. Its plant communities include coastal brackish marsh, riparian woodland fringe, pygmy oak woodland, maritime chaparral, coastal dune scrub, and oak and manzanita complex. The Elfin Forest supports more than 200 species of plants, as well as 110 kinds of birds, 22 species of mammals, and 13 species of reptiles and amphibians. It is home to rare plants, butterflies, snails and birds. Chumash middens occur throughout the park. Third Saturday Walks in the Elfin Forest are docent-led nature walks that focus on different topics. The Walks usually begin around 9:30am at the boardwalk at the end of the 15th Street path. Participants should wear comfortable shoes, as well as long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Please leave pets at home. Walks generally last 1 1/2 to 2 hours. For information call (805) 528-0392 or visit the website. The Elfin Forest is open to the public from 6am to 10pm daily. It offers great handicap accessible boardwalks via 16th Street.

9.) Ancient Oaks Preservation Walk at Lopez Lake

6800 Lopez Drive

Lopez Lake Recreation Area

Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Phone: (805) 788-2385

The Ancient Oaks Preservation Walk is a Ranger-led interpretive hike throughout the oak woodland forest of Lopez Lake, discussing the natural history and benefits of the stately oaks. Stewardship Travelers will help preserve the oak forest for future generations by collecting acorns for propagation, planting seedlings, and protecting and caging young oak trees. The oak woodland plant community is home to many unique plant species and wild animals. Work side-by-side to preserve the majestic oak forest for future human generations by planting the next generation oak forest. This hike is held annually on the second Saturday of October and starts at 10am. There is no cost to participate, but standard day use and camping rates of Lopez Lake Recreation Area do apply.

10.) Cayucos "The Little Town That Could" Estero Bluffs Walk & Talk

San Geronimo Road at Highway 1

Cayucos, CA 93430

Phone: (805) 995-1787

Take a stroll through conservation history and the Estero Bluffs, and learn how a small California coastal town has stayed small while preserving its surrounding natural places for generations to come. It is the inspiring story of 25 years of commitment, unusual partnerships, and one town's shared vision; it is the story of "The Little Town That Could." Walk the short Bluffs trail just north of Cayucos down to the secluded beaches with the enthusiastic leader, Susan Lyon, a local rancher, Cayucos Land Conservancy board member, and regional catalyst for Stewardship Travel.

Enjoy the spectacular ocean views, bird and wildlife sitting, native plants, and shoreline tide pools while exchanging stories of creative and collaborative conservation. Cayucos Land Conservancy co-founder and land use attorney Roger Lyon once said, "In all the land use issues I have been involved there is always controversy. There are usually two or three different camps with different points of view. That was not the case in Cayucos, we had virtual consensus from the entire community. Everyone was united in the vision and the vision was that the view from Highway 1, traveled by 4 million people a year, would remain there forever." And now it is preserved, because of The Little Town That Could.

For a full guide of coastal trails in California, please visit <http://www.californiacoastaltrail.info/cms/pages/main/index.html>. For information on how to make the most of your stay in WCC, visit WineCoastCountry.com. For the latest news on the area, visit the blog WineCoastCountry.com/slo, and facebook.com/WineCoastCountry and follow postings on Twitter.com/Hwy1DiscoveryRt.

About WineCoastCountry & The SLO County Business Improvement District

WineCoastCountry (WCC), the coastal region of San Luis Obispo County located midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, is where the best of northern and southern California meet. The San Luis Obispo County Business Improvement District (SLO CBID) was founded in 2009 by a group of the area's leading lodging owners (hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, and vacation rentals) to promote the WCC region as a visitor destination ideal for road trips, family vacations, wine, adventure, agri-tourism and stewardship opportunities. From lush farmland to the sparkling Pacific Ocean, the area boasts vast stretches of white sandy beaches and picturesque rugged coastline, renowned wineries, the world famous Hearst Castle, bucolic farmland, wildlife, pristine forests, beautiful state parks and untouched natural beauty as far as the eye can see. A sampling of activities includes horseback riding on the beach, locavore dining, surfing, biking, hiking, world-class golfing, and much more. Visitors can experience the best of the region along the WCC Discovery Route, a breathtaking drive that showcases the area's rich offerings. For information on how to make the most of your stay in WCC, visit WineCoastCountry.com. For the latest news on the area, visit our blog WineCoastCountry.com/slo, join us on Facebook facebook.com/VisitSloCounty and follow us on Twitter.

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