

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2010

CONTACT: Roy Stearns (916) 654-7538
(916) 799-1036
rstea@parks.ca.gov

California State Parks and Russia's Renova Group Sign Compact Agreement

How Russian Company Will Help Preserve State Historic Park

California State Parks has finalized and signed a public-private partnership with Russia's Renova Group for help with Fort Ross State Historic Park, a former Russian settlement in California.

In June of this year, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Renova Group of Companies to establish the framework for the public-private partnership. That cleared the way for California State Parks to begin a discussion on the specifics of what the Renova Group of Companies could do in support of the park.

Today, California State Parks and Renova Fort Ross Foundation signed the formal agreement. It lays out a number of provisions for how the Renova Fort Ross Foundation will be involved in future restoration and use of the historic park, located along the Sonoma Coast north of San Francisco.

"What better way to enhance a former Russian settlement than with a public-private partnership with this company from Russia and the people of Russia," said Ruth Coleman, director of California State Parks. "This agreement will help us continue the restoration and provide for the enhancement of the programs that will help bring the history of this former Russian settlement to life."

The new Compact Agreement will help preserve, restore and tell-the-story of Fort Ross, a trading outpost established by Russian settlers in the early 1800s. Some of the specifics of the agreement are as follows:

- Substantial financial support to help with long-term budgetary problems.

For energy efficient recreation –
California State Parks on the Internet: www.parks.ca.gov>



- Establishment of the Fort Ross Renova Foundation to serve as a key organization for private and public funding and fund raising.
- Support for historical, cultural, natural and educational programs.
- Support for on-going maintenance and capitol improvement projects.
- Scientific programs, student exchanges, cultural events and other initiatives for enhancement of Fort Ross.

In the agreement, State Parks does not give up its management responsibilities for the park, but retains sole discretion as to which projects and programs occur, and the scheduling of such projects and programs. To compliment that, the Fort Ross Renova Foundation shall retain sole discretion over which of the projects within the State Parks' list are selected for use of its funds. It is a cooperative agreement wherein both parties agree to cooperate, coordinate and maintain good communications with each other regarding their efforts for the preservation, protection and enhancement of Fort Ross.

Never before has California State Parks entered into such an agreement with a foreign business group from a foreign nation for such a partnership. In this case, Governor Schwarzenegger's push for public-private partnerships has resulted in the creation of a cutting-edge program that serves the people of California and opens an important cross-cultural exchange between Russia and California. Beyond the financial help, this partnership is especially fitting because this park is Russian in its origins and there is a strong attachment to the park from the Russian community living in California.

Fort Ross was established by the Russian-American Company, a commercial hunting and trading company chartered by the tsarist government, with shares held by members of the Tsar's family, court nobility and high officials. It is located in Sonoma County and is one of California's oldest state parks. The Fort was historically used as a Russian trading outpost and resupply depot for Russian's Alaskan outposts and was inhabited from 1812 to 1841.

#####