



# News Release

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## **Sutter's Fort to Undergo Most Extensive Restoration Since the 1890s**

### ***Exciting Rehabilitation Efforts Made Possible Through Successful Public & Private Partnerships***

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – California State Parks and the Friends of Sutter's Fort are proud to announce a number of major restoration projects for Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) that, in total, represent the most extensive restorations at the Fort since a major reconstruction effort in the 1890s. While some of the Fort upgrades have already begun, the overall scope of the current restoration project includes the following: restoration of the Fort's historic exterior wall; repair or replacement of the east and south gates; seismic stabilization of the historic Central Building; upgrades to various pathways in and around the Fort; and installation of outdoor lighting for the interior courtyards. Led by California State Parks, the work is scheduled to occur in phases with most of the work being coordinated by the State Parks Northern Service Center. Most of these exciting restoration projects are expected to be completed in 2015 with even more rehabilitation developments in the works for 2016.

These important restoration projects are made possible through a successful combination of public funds and private donations with the support of California State Parks, Friends of Sutter's Fort and private donors. In fact, after being impressed with and motivated by the major roof rehabilitation project that was completed on the Central Building in 2013, Fair Oaks resident and involved community member Ron Leineke pledged to donate needed funds to the Friends of Sutter's Fort (the non-profit foundation that raises funds for Sutter's Fort SHP) to restore the historic walls and gates at the Fort.

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**Exterior Walls**

Rebuilt for the first time in the 1890s (to replace the adobe structure with more sturdy brick) then resurfaced in the 1950s (after damaging vines were removed), the iconic exterior walls of the Fort are once again in dire need of restoration to preserve the historic masonry. The current restoration project will include repointing mortar, repairing cracks and applying fresh “breathable” paint to protect the surface.

**East & South Gates**

Recently completed, much-needed restoration of the historic gates was concluded in late 2014. The rehabilitation work included the replacement of the east gates and the repair of the south gates to the Fort. As background, the east gate was previously rebuilt in 1956 and the south gate in 1991. As part of this current restoration process for the historic east gate, “new” redwood was used (repurposed from a previous State Parks project) and the aging hardware for both gates was refurbished and reinstalled in good working order.

**Seismic Stabilization of the Central Building**

Seismic stabilization of the historic Central Building will provide much needed support and stiffen the structure in the case of a seismic event. The Central Building is the only lasting original structure in the Fort that dates back to John Sutter’s time.

**Pathways**

As part of the restoration efforts happening at the Fort in the summer of 2015, various pathways in and around the Fort – including the exterior pathway from the east gate to the bus stop -- will be addressed. New grading, enhanced drainage and resurfacing will a more solid surface for greater ease and accessibility that will not wash away during heavy storms.

**Outdoor Lighting**

Additionally, specially-designed outdoor event lighting will be installed in 2016 to the Fort’s interior courtyards to enhance the safety and festive atmosphere for guests during increasingly popular evening events.

While the public will be able to visit the Fort as usual for most of 2015 – and be able to see glimpses of the important restoration progress underway -- the work will require the Fort to be closed to the public for 30 days beginning July 13, 2015, to maximize guest safety and project efficiency (note the dates could slide a few days earlier or later if needed)\*. Additionally, rehabilitation work will continue through November and possibly into December. To find out if there will be any impacts during planned visits to the Fort, please call 916-445-4422.

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Updated information about these restoration efforts or about Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) in general is available at [www.suttersfort.org](http://www.suttersfort.org). For community members and/or businesses interested in contributing to the current or future rehabilitation efforts are encouraged to call 916-323-7626.

*\*California State Parks encourages visitors to visit other historic Sacramento-area State parks, including the nearby State Indian Museum celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary that is located at 2618 K Street. Operated by California State Parks and supported by the California Indian Heritage Center Foundation, the State Indian Museum is open daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day) for self-guided tours and school group visits. Current exhibits include traditional basketry, beadwork, ceremonial regalia and hunting & fishing items associated with many of the tribes of California, as well as contemporary artwork. For more information, please call (916) 324-0971 or visit [www.parks.ca.gov/indianmuseum](http://www.parks.ca.gov/indianmuseum).*

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*To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.*

