

# Elopement Permit – 2019 Special Event Permit Information Packet



*The Mission of California State Parks is 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.*

Thank you for your interest in acquiring an "Elopement" Special Event Permit at Andrew Molera State Park, Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park, and/or Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. These parks are located along Highway 1 on the coast and inland in the redwoods. We allow one (1) Special Event Permit per day for the Big Sur Sector.

*Elopement Permits* are for very small, simple weddings without decorations in unconventional locations that must be hiked in to. All locations are outdoors, without any coverings.

**We highly recommend visiting the park and location you are interested in using for your event prior to applying for a Special Event Permit.**

We accept applications for "Elopement" Special Event Permits up to six (6) months in advance.

This packet contains information on how to obtain an "Elopement" Special Event Permit and the permit requirements. Please review this packet thoroughly.

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## **What Is a Special Event?**

“Special Events” include all activities beyond the normal scope of park visitor use that could impact public access or enjoyment, and activities which create a greater potential for hazard and liability to the state than incurred through typical operations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Elopements
- Weddings (requires a *standard* Special Event Permit)
- Receptions (requires a *standard* Special Event Permit)
- Tours
- Events that have vendors providing services (e.g. – photographers, officiate, etc)
- Events conducting business (for profit and non-profit) on park property.

A Special Event Permit is required when any company, association, organization, or group of persons wish to hold, conduct or participate in any celebration, wedding, religious service, picnic, exercise, or event in a state park unit. The Special Event Permit must be in accordance with State Park rules and regulations. (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 4301(j)).

## **What is the Special Event Coordinator?**

While park’s management staff permits Special Events to occur at the parks, they must take into account the impact these events can have at the parks in the Big Sur Sector. The purpose of the Special Event Coordinator’s office is to ascertain if an event can occur in the park with minimal impact on the park, environment, and public access and enjoyment.

The Special Event Coordinator will lead the applicant through the permit process. They will provide the applicant information regarding what is permitted at events at the park and what is required to obtain a permit for their event. They will also process your application and submit your permit for final approval from the sector’s management staff once all requirements are met.

The Special Event Coordinator does not plan events, scout locations, nor provide guided tours of event locations.

Although the Special Event Coordinator does not provide guided tours of event sites, conducting a self-guided tour of the park’s facilities is very easy. Day-use fees are paid upon entry to the park. You can purchase a park map at the park’s entrance kiosk. All proceeds from park map sales go towards our park’s interpretive programs. Please do not disrupt any park events or guests of the park by entering any locations/sites that are occupied or where an event/program is currently taking place. Do not enter any closed or roped off areas.

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## Special Event Permit Process

1. Review the entire Special Event Packet. Keep this packet for future reference.
2. Contact the Special Event Coordinator to check a specific date for availability and to request an application. Applications are accepted up to six (6) months in advance.

Events are not placed on the calendar until after the Special Event Coordinator's office receives the completed application and applicable non-refundable filing fee.

3. Complete the Special Event Application and mail (emailed/faxed applications will not be accepted) with the applicable non-refundable filing fee to:

**Special Event Coordinator  
California State Parks  
47555 HWY 1  
Big Sur, CA 93920**

**The submission of a filing fee and/or Special Event Application should not be construed as approval or confirmation of a Special Event Permit.**

4. If accepted, the Big Sur Sector office will email your Special Event Permit with an instructional coversheet. The following must be received by the Special Event Coordinator's office by the due date listed on the instructional coversheet, at least four (4) weeks from the date of the email or two (2) months in advance of the event date, whichever is sooner:
  - Special Event Permit. Signed and dated.
  - Remaining permit fees.
  - Refundable damage deposit.

The following must be received by the Special Event Coordinator's office at least two (2) months prior to the event date, if applicable:

- Certificate of liability insurance
- Attendance List
- Vendor List

Applications received less than two (2) months prior the event date will be subject to a shorter billing/turn-around time. Due dates will be set on a case-by-case basis.

All checks and money orders must be made payable to **CDPR**. Do not send cash through the mail. All payments received less than thirty (30) days prior to the event date must be in the form of a cashiers' check or money order.

The event will remain on the calendar as long as all due dates are met.

5. Once all required fees, deposits, and paperwork is submitted to the Special Event Coordinator office, your permit will be submitted to the sector's management staff for final approval. This process usually takes 1-2 weeks.
6. The Special Event Coordinator will contact you once they receive your permit back from the sector's management staff.

## What Parks and Park Sites Qualify for an *Elopement Permit*?

We allow only small “elopement” Special Event Permits at *Andrew Molera State Park*, *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park*, and *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park*. “Elopement” permits are not available for *Point Sur State Historic Park*.

To determine if your event will qualify as an *Elopement Wedding*, please answer the following:

1. **Will your event have more than ten (10) people?** This number must include the wedding party, officiant/celebrant, all guests including children, any vendors such as a photographer, and any persons that will be at the event.
2. **Will your *elopement* hinder or block any park visitor’s access to a site or trail at any point during the event?**
3. **Will the *Elopement Wedding* be at or adjacent to a set Special Event site?** The following sites are set event locations:
  - Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park: The *Waterfall Overlook & Trail* and the *Redwood Picnic Area*, including the first ½ mile of the *Ewoldsen Trail* from the parking lot.
  - Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park: The *Group Picnic Areas*, the *Softball Field*, the *Campfire Center*, and *Group Camp*, including the trail access point and fire road.
4. **Will the event have or require any seating?**
5. **Will the event have any music (acoustic or amplified) or any amplified sound?**
6. **Will there be any decorations other than one (1) single hand-held bouquet?**
7. **Will your event occur outside of regular day-use hours?** Day-use hours are sunrise – sunset.
8. **Will your event have any vendors, other than the officiant/celebrant, one (1) wedding planner, and/or one (1) photographer?**
9. **Will there be a reception or food/drink served at the site/event?**

**If you have answered “YES” to any of these questions, your event will not qualify for an Elopement Permit. Your event will be required to use a set event location with a standard Special Event Permit.**

You can find out more information about standard Special Event Permits in the Big Sur Sector parks by contacting the Special Event Coordinator, [bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov](mailto:bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov) to receive the current information packet. You can also find out more information by visiting that park’s official website at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

## How Do I Find A Site For An Elopement Permit?

When choosing a park or site, we highly recommend you visit the location prior to applying for an Elopement Special Event Permit. That way you can experience the location first hand and know exactly what to expect.

If you are unsure of the name of the location you would like to use for your elopement, you may email a photo(s) of the location to the Special Event Coordinator to help you identify the location. You may also include a photo(s) of the site you propose to use for your *Elopement Wedding* with your *Elopement Special Event Permit Application*

Below we have listed some suggestions for elopement ceremony locations:

- **An Elopement in a Reserved Campsite.** Normally, you cannot have an exclusive access site for an elopement permit; however, you can if you hold your ceremony in a reserved campsite you can have exclusive access. See [page 8](#) for details.
- **An Elopement at a Trail Head.** Most trail heads have enough room to reasonably accommodate an elopement ceremony of up to ten (10) people without blocking access for regular park visitors; however, not all trail heads can accommodate an elopement event. We highly recommend that you visit the site prior to applying for a Special Event Permit.
- **An Elopement at the end of a trail.** This can take quite a bit of hiking and likely some elevation gain, but some trails do have open areas at the end or top that can accommodate an elopement and some can accommodate a group of up to ten (10) people. Be sure to hike the trail prior to applying for a Special Event Permit in order to gauge if it is too strenuous for you or your group. It is important to note, we do not permit Elopements at the top of the Valley View Trail in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. The top of that trail is too small an area to reasonably accommodate an elopement, even an elopement with as few as three (3) people.

When looking for a site for your elopement ceremony, keep in mind the following:

- **Find a location where you won't block access.** Remember, elopements cannot block any trails, day-use areas, or any other locations that regular park visitors normally have access.
- **Find a location that won't trample vegetation.** The various park's ecosystems are precious and can be damaged easily. When looking for a site, make sure that the ground is clear in the site and any access points to the site. *A good rule of thumb is that it is okay to be on dirt and duff, but not okay to step on any plants or flowers.*
- **Find a location that is not closed or roped off.** Areas that are closed to the public are done so for a reason. The area could be unsafe (unstable cliffs, "widow maker" trees, etc). The area may environmentally sensitive and undergoing reseeding/regrowth efforts. The area could be an archeological site and walking on the site could be detrimental to any artifacts or remains.
- **Find a location that can reasonably accommodate your entire group (maximum of 10 people).** Most of the Big Sur Sector park's trails are 1-2 people wide and cannot accommodate a group stopping to hold a ceremony. If the location you choose cannot accommodate ten (10) people, your event maximum may be limited to a lower number of people permitted to be present at said event. (See [page 12](#)).
- **Make sure your entire group can reach the site.** Most elopement locations must be hiked to. When picking a site, be sure reaching it will not be too strenuous for you or your group.
- **Most hike in location will require hiking clothing and gear.** Wearing standard wedding attire (such as a wedding dress, suit/tux, nice shoes, etc) is not feasible nor recommended for most locations for elopement ceremonies. We recommend that you and your guests break out your "finest" hiking attire in order to have an enjoyable and safe event.

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## Permit Fees

### Standard Elopement Permits

**Permit Fees:** For permits received more than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the event.

- ✓ **\$25 Non-refundable Filing Fee.** To be sent in with the applicant's initial application and received at least thirty (30) days prior event date.
- ✓ **\$275 for a standard permit (up to four (4) hours).** A separate check to be sent in with the applicant Special Event Permit (DPR246) after the application has been processed. Includes Site Fee (\$150) and Non-Refundable Processing Fee (\$125). If additional time is required, additional fees will be required.

### Damage Deposit:

- ✓ **\$400 to \$1500** (refundable). Must be submitted separately. Amount depends on type of event and activities. The event deposit may be partially or completely forfeited due to damage inflicted upon the venue, failure to adhere to the terms, conditions, and time parameters of the permit, or failure to clean sufficiently upon departure. Rush permits will require the deposit in the form of a cashier's check or money order. Deposit refunds are issued by the State of California and may take up to 6-8 weeks to be received.

### RUSH Elopement Permits

**RUSH Events:** For applications received less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the event. RUSH permits require all payments and deposits be submitted in the form of cashier's checks or money orders. Personal checks will not be accepted for Rush permits.

**Below fees and damage deposit must be included with the application:**

- ✓ **\$375 Permit fees.** This includes the non-refundable *RUSH* filing fee (\$100), non-refundable processing fee (\$125) and the site fee (\$150) (**cashier's check or money order only**). To be sent in with the applicant's initial application.
- ✓ **\$400 Refundable Damage Deposit (cashier's check or money order only).**

### Additional Fees, if applicable

### Monitor Fees:

- **\$120 for up to four (4) hours:** Park Aid and/or Maintenance monitor as determined by Special Event Coordinator based on the event location and specific details.
- **\$316 for up to four (4) hours:** Peace Officer monitor as determined by Special Event Coordinator based on the event location and specific details.

### Campsite Fees:

- **\$25-\$50 per site per night (check-in at 2pm, check-out at 12pm):** The campsite fees are required in addition to the permit fees for campsite weddings. Campsites must be reserved and paid in advance through [www.reservecalifornia.com](http://www.reservecalifornia.com).

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## Liability Insurance Requirements

**When is Liability Insurance Required?** Insurance is required when a vendor (such as an event planner, photographer, monitor, etc.) is present at your event, or the event and its specific details pose a greater risk to the environment or persons involved in the event.

**How do I obtain Liability Insurance?** If proof of insurance is required, please contact a qualified insurance company for the insurance policy; your current renters or home-owner's insurance provider is a good place to start. There are also insurance companies that specialize in event liability insurance

**Do you recommend any companies or insurance providers?** No, we do not recommend nor endorse any particular company or insurer.

### **What are the requirements for Liability Insurance?**

The Certificate of Insurance must be received at least sixty (60) days in advance of the event.

### **The State Of California requires the following regarding liability insurance:**

1. Must be on an **ACORD25** form.
2. The name of the permittee must be the same as the insured.
3. The **Certificate Holder** must be listed as:

**The State of California  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001**

4. A **Special Endorsement** **MUST** Read:

**The State of California, its officers, employees, and servants are included as additional insured, but only with respect to work performed for the State of California under this contract.**

**OR**

**The certificate holder is added as an additional insured, but only with respect to the liability arising out of the operations of the insured named above.**

5. The **Insurance Requirement** Amount must be a combined single limit (CSL) **\$1,000,000 per occurrence.**

Location addresses for the parks are as follows:

1. Andrew Molera State Park, 45500 Hwy 1, Big Sur, CA 93920
2. Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, 47231 Hwy 1, Big Sur, CA 93920
3. Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park, 52801 Hwy 1, Big Sur, CA 93920

Do not list these locations or parks as the *Certificate Holder* or in the *Certificate Holder* field on the ACORD25 form.

**Please note: If any of the above information from lines 1-5 is missing or if any additional names and/or verbiage is added to the Certificate Holder or Special Endorsement, the certificate will not be accepted and will be returned to the applicant for correction.**

## **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

All park rules and regulations must be observed. Information on some of the park rules and regulations are listed below. Complete rules and regulations can be obtained on the California State Park website at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) under publications.

### **How Do I Obtain A Special Event Permit?**

Contact the Special Event Permit office for the Big Sur Sector to check the availability of a date(s). If a date is available for your event, request an application. An application will be emailed to you. If you require an application to be mailed to you, be sure to notify the Special Event Coordinator. Email: [bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov](mailto:bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov) Phone: 831-667-0507

Remember, events are not placed on the sector's event calendar until the Special Event Permit office receives a completed application and the applicable filing fee.

See page 3 of for more details.

### **What Can I Expect With A Special Event Permit?**

With an "Elopement" Special Event Permit, you will be permitted to use a specific location at the park specified on the permit for your elopement wedding. The permit is for up four (4) hour which includes your hike-in and hike-out times.

**Does my event have exclusive access to the location of my elopement event?** No, other than campsite elopements (see *Campground Elopement Weddings* section below), the public will still be permitted to access the location. The permittee and anyone attending the event may not block nor hinder access to any other park visitor.

**Are day-use parking passes or campsites included with a Special Event Permit?** No.

**Does my permit allow for rehearsal time?** No.

### **Alcohol**

**Can I Have Alcohol At My Event?** No. Alcohol is not permitted at elopement weddings.

**Can I have wine as part of my wedding ceremony?** Normally, alcohol is not permitted at elopement weddings; however, wine as part of the wedding ceremony (e.g. *Seven Blessings*) may be allowed, but it must be preapproved on the permit and under specific instruction. You can submit a request on a separate page with your event application. Be sure to include a brief description of how the wine will be included in the ceremony.

### **Campground Elopement Weddings**

**Can I have my wedding at a campsite?** Yes, except at *Andrew Molera State Park*.

Elopements in a campsite may have up to eight (8) people at the campsite in order to comply with each park's campsite maximum occupancy.

- Campsite Elopement ceremonies at *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park* must have both campsites reserved for the date of the event prior to applying for an Elopement Special Event Permit.
- Elopement ceremonies are not permitted in the campground at *Andrew Molera State Park*.

**Can I have my wedding in multiple campsites?** No, this will overly tax the campground resources and may become a nuisance to other campers, except at *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park*. *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park* has only 2 environmental campsites, the applicant must reserve both campsites in order to apply for an *Elopement Special Event Permit* in the campground at that park.

**Can I reserve my campsite at the same time as I apply for a Special Event Permit?** No, campsites must be reserved through Reserve California at [www.reservecalifornia.com](http://www.reservecalifornia.com) or 1-800-444-7275 for *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park* and *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park*.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **Cancellations and Refunds**

**How close to the event can I cancel and still get a refund on my permit fees?** Events cancelled less than fifteen (15) days in advance or event no-shows will not be refunded any permit fees. The refundable damage deposit will be refunded.

If you cancel your event more than fifteen (15) days in advance of the event date, you will be refunded all refundable permit fees. The filing and processing fees are not refundable.

See *Damage Deposit and Refunds* section below for details on refunds.

**What if my event is cancelled by the sector or district office due to park or area closure?** In the event of a park or area closure, we will attempt to reschedule your event for an open calendar date at the same or comparable site. If the fees for a comparable site are less than the fees paid, you will be refunded the difference. If rescheduling your event is not possible, you will be refunded the permit fees, except for the non-refundable filing and processing fees, and your refundable damage deposit.

## **Changing My Event and Permit**

**Can I make changes to my event or permit after I send in my application?** Yes, it is possible to make changes to the event or permit after we receive your applications. If we receive the changes before your remit due date, you might not be charged an additional processing fee.

**What if I want to make a change to my permit after I remit the permit and fees?** You may still do so; however, you may be charged an additional processing fee of \$125 to change the permit.

**Is there a deadline for making changes to my event or permit?** Yes, we do not accept any changes to the event or permit less than thirty (30) days from the event date.

## **Damage Deposit and Refunds**

**Do all events require a damage deposit?** Yes. The refundable damage deposit is required for all events to prevent damage to the site and to ensure permit compliance.

**What events may occur to cause me to lose my damage deposit?** The Sector's Superintendent will decide if a damage deposit will be held, fully or in part. A damage deposit may be held due to:

- If there is damage to the site or park property due to the event.
- If the permittee, attendees, or vendors do not comply with the permit parameters or violate any laws.
- If a Park Ranger or other peace officer(s) must contact your event for law enforcement reasons.  
***Should any person involved in the special event be detained, cited, or arrested by State Park law enforcement personnel for violation of any of these conditions or other unlawful behavior, the applicant shall be liable for the cost of staff time at a rate of time and one half under the authority of the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 4301 (j) and California Government Code section 53156 and may result in the cancellation of the event and forfeit of all fees and/or deposits.***

**How are refunds issued?** The sector office processes sends refund requests to the accounting office at the beginning of each month for the previous month's events.

**How long does it take for a refund to be issued?** Refunds usually take 4-8 weeks to be processed and issued by the accounting office. Checks are issued by the *State of California*.

**How are refunds initiated?** The Special Event Coordinator will email you within 2 weeks after your event or cancellation to verify the name, address, and phone number of the refund recipient to process the refund. The refund for the damage deposit and permit fees (for cancellations, if applicable) will be sent as separate checks. It is not unusual for the refunds to arrive a few days/weeks apart.

**Can I receive a refund of any permit fees if there is inclement weather during my event?** No.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **Decorations**

**Can I have decorations at my event?** Only one (1) handheld decoration (e.g. a bouquet) is permitted.

**Can I have any large decorations, such as an arbor or a chuppah?** No, large decorations are not permitted at *Elopement* events, however a chuppah may be at a campsite wedding with preapproval.

**Can I have any glass or porcelain at my event?** No.

**Can I have the *Breaking of the Glass* as part of the elopement ceremony?** This may be allowed at a campsite wedding only, but must be preapproved on the permit with specific instructions. If you would like this as part of your ceremony, include your request on a separate page with your application for your event.

**Can I have decorations with flames (e.g. candles, lanterns, etc) at my elopement event?** No.

**Can I scatter rice, birdseed, flowers, flower petals, or confetti at my elopement event?** No.

**Can I have bubbles at my elopement event?** No.

**Can I dispose of my decorations in the trashcans and/or dumpsters at the park after my event?**

No, all decorations must be removed from the park at the conclusion of your event.

## **Environment and Natural Hazards**

The Big Sur Sector of California State Parks is committed to maintaining and protecting the delicate ecosystem of the Big Sur area. Some “hazards” do exist. Remaining in event areas and on designated trails will help minimize your exposure.

**What kind of “natural hazards” can I expect?** Gopher and ground squirrel holes, rattlesnakes, wasps, bees, and poison oak naturally occur in the Big Sur area. Branches and other debris may fall from any locations that have tree cover. Unstable cliffs in closed areas may give way. Much of these “hazards” can be avoided by being aware of your surroundings, staying on-trail, and staying out of closed or roped off areas.

**Can I trim any tree branches/shrubs or cut any of the grasses in the site or at the park for my event?** No, you may not alter the environment in any way.

**Will any of the local wildlife visit my event?** It is unlikely that a large predator (e.g. mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes) will enter an area that has some “noisy” humans. Rattlesnakes usually flee from humans making noise. Smaller animals (e.g. Stellar’s Jays or ground squirrels) may venture close; however, **DO NOT FEED THE WILDLIFE.**

**What do I do if a rattlesnake is at the site I want to be at for my elopement ceremony?** If a rattlesnake is at your site, give it a way to escape or move to a different location and wait for it to leave. If it is at a campsite, contact a member of the park’s staff to have it removed. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE OR ENGAGE THE SNAKE. DO NOT KILL THE SNAKE.**

**Can I release birds or butterflies at my event?** No. **What if it is not an invasive species?** No.

**Can I scatter or throw rice, birdseed, ashes, confetti, flowers, or flower petals at my event?** No. This is littering. Litter includes leaving, depositing, or scattering of flowers, flower petals, ashes, rice, confetti, seeds, or any other litter at the park except in a receptacle designed for that purpose. In other words, if you are not throwing these items into a trash can or dumpster, it would be considered littering.

**Are there indoor locations that I can move to if there is wind, rain, or inclement weather?** No.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **Event Times and Dates**

**What dates are available for events?** The parks are open 365 days a year; however, not all areas are open year-round. See the park's website for details. [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

**Can I have my event on the same date as another event?** No, the Big Sur Sector permits one (1) event per day for the sector.

**Can I have my elopement event on a holiday or a holiday weekend?** No, the Big Sur area and parks are inundated with visitors during holidays and holiday weekends, even during the "off-season". It is not feasible to attempt to have an elopement on a holiday or holiday weekend without causing negative impact on regular park visitors and park resources as well as your own event.

**Can I have my event in a location that is closed or closed for the season?** No. We do not permit any events in closed areas or areas closed for the season.

**What location can I have an evening or night event?** The only park where you can have an evening or night event is at *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park* and only with a *standard Special Event Permit* in specific locations. Contact the Big Sur Sector Special Event Permit office for more information.

**Is there a maximum time for events?** Yes, the permit is for up to four (4) hours. This includes your hike-in and hike-out time.

**How long does hike-in and hike-out usually take?** It depends on the location. We highly recommend you visit your proposed site prior to applying for a permit.

## **Film Permits**

**Do I need a film permit for my event?** Most Special Events, including elopements, do not require an additional film permit issued by the California Film Commission (CFC). An additional film permit would be required for any film, motion or still, that will be published, used for advertisement, used commercially, etc.

**Do I need a film permit if I want to have a film or photo shoot on a different date and/or at a different location or park than is listed on my Special Event Permit?** Yes, it is likely you will need a film permit. Any photo shoots and/or filming that will occur outside of exclusive access sites and/or Special Event Permit times require a film permit issued by the CFC.

**Can my photographer or I apply for a film permit after my event occurs?** No, film permits are not issued retroactively.

**How does my photographer or I acquire a film permit?** You can apply on the CFC website at [www.film.ca.gov](http://www.film.ca.gov). Film permits take a minimum of two (2) weeks to complete from the date the sector office receives the pending application from the CFC.

## **Fires**

**Can I have a fire at my elopement event?** Only in designated park fire rings at a campsite elopement.

**Can I have a fire on the beach at Andrew Molera State Park?** No, there are no fires allowed on any beaches at Andrew Molera State Park (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 4311 (a)). Any person(s) attempting to light a fire on a beach will be subject to citation, ejection from the park, and may be held liable for any/all firefighting costs.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **Locations**

**How do I pick a location for my elopement event?** See pages 4 and 5 for information.

**Will I have exclusive access at the site?** No, other than a campsite elopement, the public will still be allowed to access the area you have proposed to use for your elopement.

**Can I block members of the public from entering my elopement site?** No, neither you nor any members of your party can block public access at any time to any area that is open to the public. These areas include, but are not limited to, trails, trail heads, picnic tables, the beach, etc.

**How can I get a site with exclusive access?** You can either have your elopement ceremony in a campsite or have it in a *set event site* that has exclusive access; however, ceremonies in set event sites do not qualify for an *Elopement Special Event Permit*. They must have a *standard Special Event Permit*.

**Can I have my event in a closed area?** No.

## **Maximum Number Of People**

**What is the maximum number of people I can have at my elopement event?** Ten (10) people, location permitting, or eight (8) people for a *Campsite Elopement*. However, the sector's management staff may limit that number further if they believe your proposed elopement will adversely impact the event location, park resources, or park visitors. *Please keep this in mind when selecting your elopement site.*

**Does my officiant/celebrant and/or my photographer count towards my maximum?** Yes.

**Do children count towards my maximum?** Yes.

**What if I plan to have more people at the event than the site and permit will allow?** You must either pare down your group size to meet the set maximum or apply for a standard Special Event Permit at a site that can accommodate the size of your group.

## **Monitors**

**What is an event monitor?** An event monitor is a member of the sector or district staff that is assigned by said sector or district to be at your event. They are there to observe the event and report any issues to the Ranger staff.

**Is it common for an elopement event to require a monitor?** No, it is very uncommon. However, whether a monitor is required for your event is not determined until after we receive the completed application and non-refundable filing fee.

**Does the State Park monitor(s) count towards my maximum number of people?** No.

## **Music and Sound**

**Can I have music at my elopement?** No.

**Can I have acoustic music at my elopement?** No.

**Can I have any amplified sound at my elopement, such as a PA system or sound from my smart phone?** No.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **On-Site Contact Person**

**What/Who is the on-site contact person and what will they do?** This is a person in your party that can be contacted at any time during the entire course of the event by the sector's staff. They will also be the person that will conduct the pre-event and post-event walk-throughs, if applicable.

**Who should I pick as my on-site contact person?** It is best to pick a responsible person that will be at the site for the entire permit time and can maintain their full faculties throughout the entire event.

**Can the bride or groom be the on-site contact person for the event?** Yes, but we do not recommend this. Remember, if the park's staff must speak with the contact person during the ceremony, it will interrupt the event if that contact person is the bride or groom.

## **Parking**

**Is day-use parking included with my elopement event permit?** No.

**Can I prepay for day-use passes for my elopement event during the application process?** No.

**Can I prepay for day-use passes at the park's entrance kiosk?** Yes, but this must be done on the day of the event and you must distribute the passes to those attending yourself.

**Can a parking lot or parking spaces be reserved for my event?** No, parking is first-come-first-serve.

**Can I receive a refund for any unused day-use passes?** No, day-use passes are non-refundable.

**What passes can be used to enter the day-use areas of the parks?**

- California State Parks day-use pass that is issued the same day.
- California State Parks annual passes. See [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) for more information.
- California State Parks campground pass valid on the date of the event.
- **Pfeiffer Big Sur SP only:** Big Sur Lodge guest parking pass valid on the date of the event.

## **Payments**

**When are the fees and deposits due?** See page 3 for details.

**What happens if I apply for an event date that is less than two (2) months away?** All payments are due at least thirty (30) days from the event date, but it would depend on when the sector office receives your application and non-refundable filing fee.

**What happens if I apply for an event date that is less than thirty (30) days away?** All payments are due at least two (2) weeks from the event date and must be in the form of a cashier's check or money order.

**What form of payments are accepted?** We accept personally checks, company/business checks, cashier's checks, and/or money orders made out to **CDPR**. However, any payments received less than thirty (30) days from the event date must be the form of cashier's checks and/or money orders only.

**Do you accept credit card payments?** No, not at this time.

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# FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines

## Pets

**Are pets permitted at Big Sur Sector parks?** Pets are permitted at *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park* and the parking lot at *Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park*. Pets are not permitted at *Andrew Molera State Park*. See each park's website for specifics at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

**Can my pet be at my elopement event?** Only at campsite elopements at *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park*. Here are some basic guidelines:

- Pets are not permitted on any park trails nor at *Group Camp*.
- Dogs and cats must be on a leash (6 foot max. length) and under the handler's physical control at all times or must be crated. Pets are not permitted to run loose, even in reserved event areas.
- The handler must clean up after the dog or cat and provide their own "poop bags".
- Pets may not be left unattended in vehicles.

**Can I bring a bird, snake, or an exotic animal to my event?** This would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**How can I have my pet considered for approval on the permit?** Include a page with your application that details the type of pet(s), number of pets, photo of the animal(s), and how they will be secured.

## Signs

**Will the park post a sign at my event location to denote my event?** No, the elopement event will not be at an exclusive access site, so a sign will not be posted.

**Can I bring in a sign or signs to help my guest find my event location?** Sign(s) are not permitted for elopements on trails, trail heads, or any sites that are not campsites; however, you can have one (1) sign at a *Campsite Elopement*, but the sign must be preapproved on the permit. Additionally the verbiage on the signs must be preapproved. Profane language or images will not be permitted.

**Where can I set up my sign?** You can only set up your sign inside the campsite you have reserved for your elopement.

**What kind of sign am I permitted to bring and use?** Only a freestanding sign, such as easel or sandwich board style, may be used.

**Can I attach my sign to a tree, park bulletin board, or any park structure?** No.

**Can I use "wire sign", such as the ones that you drive or stake into the ground?** No.

## Receptions

**Can I have a reception as part of my elopement event?** No, this must be permitted separately with a standard Special Event Permit. The Group Picnic Areas and Group Camp at *Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park* are the only locations where receptions are permitted in the Big Sur Sector.

**Would a regular camping meal post ceremony considered a reception?** No, not as long as the meal does not exceed what would be a typical camping meal. A catered meal or meal with music, noise, abundance of decorations or other celebratory/event elements that would affect other campers or park visitors would be considered to be a reception

In other words, if it feels like a reception, it would be considered a reception.

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# **FAQ and Special Event Permit Guidelines**

## **Vendors**

**What is a vendor?** A vendor is any persons or company that will provide a service at your event for a fee (paid by you or your guests/participants), for trade, or as a complementary service. A wedding photographer would be considered a vendor.

**Do all vendors at my event have to be listed on my permit?** Yes, any vendors not listed on your permit will not be admitted to the park.

**What type of vendors are permitted at an elopement event?** Only one (1) photographer, one (1) wedding planner, and one (1) officiant/celebrant is permitted at elopement events.

**Does my vendor need a day-use pass to enter the park?** Yes, even for drop-offs. It is important to note that California State Park annual passes may not be used by vendors to enter the park.

**Can my vendor arrive early to set-up prior to my permit time?** No, all set-up, including dropped off items, must be during the time listed on your permit.

**What happens if my vendor violates the park rules or the terms of my permit?** You and/or your vendor could be cited, the permit cancelled, and you could also lose your deposit. Remember, you are responsible for the conduct of your vendor(s) and their staff.

**Can the sector staff send a copy of my permit to my vendors?** No, your permit contains information that we consider private (addresses, phone number, etc); however, you may send a copy of the permit to your vendor.

## **WiFi and Cell Service**

Wi-Fi and cell phone service are spotty on the Big Sur Coast. Trees and mountains hinder cell phone signals. We highly recommend downloading any files to your device prior to coming to Big Sur.

**Are there any cell service providers in Big Sur?** Both Verizon and AT&T have limited coverage in the area and spotty coverage in our parks. There are no other cell service providers in the area.

**Is there high-speed internet in Big Sur?** Some businesses offer Wi-Fi access; however, it will not be close to the speed that is available in urban or suburban areas.

**Is there public WiFi access in any of the Big Sur Sector parks?** No.

For more information regarding California State Parks, please visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) for an email link to [bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov](mailto:bigsurevents@parks.ca.gov) or phone the Special Event Coordinator at (831) 667-0507.