Their population was decimated through disease and violence and means of subsistence in the agricultural practices of the mission. Mission system, leaving behind their settlements, and adopting new State Park. Many of the indigenous people were taken into the established only a few miles from what is now Montaña de Oro through Alta California, Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa was In 1772, only three years after the Portolá expedition came to the landscape and lifeways of the indigenous people. closely behind, precipitating sudden, drastic and irrevocable changes expedition made inroads for Spanish missionaries who followed to the interior valleys and back to procure their diet of fish and.

For at least nine thousand years the ancestors of today’s MONTANA DE ORO - The way it was For at least nine thousand years the ancestors of today’s Chumash and Salinan people inhabited the San Luis Obispo county coast, adapting to needed to climate and environmental changes. They lived in small extended family groups, traveling from the coast to the interior valleys and back to procure their diet of fall and shellfish, small and large game, waterfront, grains, and seeds. Shelter, tools and clothing were fashioned using resources available in the immediate area, and what could not be obtained or produced locally was provided through extensive trade networks. In 1769, the first European overland expedition, led by Don Gaspar de Portoles, an emissary of the Spanish government, made its way up the coast of California from San Diego to Monterey. The expedition made friends with Spanish missionaries who followed closely behind, precipitating sudden, drastic and irrevocable changes to the landscape and lifeways of the indigenous people. In 1772, only three years after the Portolá expedition came through Alta California, Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa was established only a few miles from what is now Montaña de Oro State Park. Many of the indigenous people were taken into the mission system, leaving behind their settlements, and adopting new means of subsistence in the agricultural practices of the mission. Their population was decimated through disease and violence and long standing cultural traditions were practiced only in secret.

In 1821 Mexico gained independence from Spain. The Mexican government secularized the missions in 1838. After the mission period ended, native people and their descendants worked locally in agriculture, fishing and many other industries. Descendants of the native people continue to live in the area and have played an important role in the history of San Luis Obispo County. Modern Chumash and Salinan people today work diligently to protect and perpetuate their cultural traditions. Following secularization of the missions, the Mexican government granted large tracts of what had been mission lands to political allies. Rancho Cañada de los Osos y Pecho y Islay was granted in 1845 by Governor Pío Pico to James Scott and John Wilson. The grant extended from the Pacific coast along Los Osos Creek and the Los Osos Valley almost to San Luis Obispo, and encompassed Montaña de Oro State Park and Los Osos.

The property changed hands several times. In the early 1890’s, Alden B. Spooner II established a farm, dairy, and logging operation on a portion of the land, ultimately purchasing it in 1902. By 1917 Spooner was operating 9,000 acres with six miles of ocean frontage. Spooner built a ranch house, a reservoir, several barns, a creamery, powered by a water wheel, stables, and a road system to transport his goods to market, Spooner built a warehouse on the south bluff above Spooner’s Cove. Adjacent to the warehouse was a long chute 200 feet long which could be directly onto ships. Land on the massive herds was leased to Japanese farmers who lived and grew vegetables until their internment during World War II. Spooner’s neighbor to the north was Alexander S. Hazard who also raised crops and operated a dairy. Hoping to cash in on California’s growing need for timber, in 1908 Hazard planted hundreds of Eucalyptus trees. Eucalyptus proved unsatisfactory for commercial use; however Hazard’s legacy, row upon row of Eucalyptus trees, remains in the park today.

In the early 1940’s Oliver C. Field purchased the ranch from the Spooner family, selling it 10 years later to Irene McAllister. In 1965 the land was purchased by the State of California for use as a park. It was decided to keep the name McAllister had given it. Montaña de Oro.

The Visitor Center and Park headquarters occupy the old Spooner Ranch House. The property changed hands several times. In the early 1890’s, Alden B. Spooner II established a farm, dairy, and logging operation on a portion of the land, ultimately purchasing it in 1902. By 1917 Spooner was operating 9,000 acres with six miles of ocean frontage. Spooner built a ranch house, a reservoir, several barns, a creamery, powered by a water wheel, stables, and a road system to transport his goods to market, Spooner built a warehouse on the south bluff above Spooner’s Cove. Adjacent to the warehouse was a long chute 200 feet long which could be directly onto ships. Land on the massive herds was leased to Japanese farmers who lived and grew vegetables until their internment during World War II. Spooner’s neighbor to the north was Alexander S. Hazard who also raised crops and operated a dairy. Hoping to cash in on California’s growing need for timber, in 1908 Hazard planted hundreds of Eucalyptus trees. Eucalyptus proved unsatisfactory for commercial use; however Hazard’s legacy, row upon row of Eucalyptus trees, remains in the park today.

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**Siren Info**

If you hear a steady siren, go indoors and tune to a local radio or television station for information. When at sea, tune to Marine Channel 16.

**Emergencies in the Park**

Emergency situations occur in the park from time to time. If you encounter one, immediately notify park personnel of its nature and location. If you cannot find park personnel quickly, call 9-1-1 and give the information to the emergency dispatcher. There are telephones at the Ranch House and Sand Spit Day Use area.

Other community-threatening emergencies, such as a hazardous materials spill, tsunami (tidal wave), fire or an emergency at the Diablo Canyon Power Plant, may cause early warning system sirens to emit a steady sound for three to five minutes. Those sirens can be heard throughout the park. If you hear the siren while visiting the park, return to your car immediately. Tune your radio to a local station, i.e. 920 or 1400 AM or 98.1 FM for more information. If action is required, you will be told what to do.

Park personnel may also notify you of an emergency through a public address system or by visiting camping areas. Helicopters may be used to alert hikers in the back country. If you are asked to leave the park or take some other action, do so safely and as quickly as possible.

You may see siren information signs throughout the park. They are reminders of how to get emergency information.

No one expects an emergency to arise — but it’s smart to be prepared for the unexpected.