

# NARROW GAUGE JOURNAL

SPRING 2024



## In this issue:

- Petroleum and the South Pacific Coast Railroad, by SPC Historian John F. Hall



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The *Narrow Gauge Journal* provides historic information on Carter Bros. Builders of Newark, California; the South Pacific Coast Railroad, and other regional narrow gauge railroads; as well as updates for our members, volunteers, and the general public about our special events, activities, and volunteer opportunities. If you have any questions or comments, you can reach a staff member by email at [info@spcrr.org](mailto:info@spcrr.org) or call 510-508-8826. Our Museum's mission is the preservation, restoration and interpretation of regional narrow gauge railroad history—including Carter Bros., a pioneer railroad car builder in California. We are located at Ardenwood Historic Farm, 34600 Ardenwood Blvd, Fremont, CA. Donations are greatly appreciated through our website, or by mail to SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560. Trains operate on Thursday, Friday, Sunday; Monday holidays and special events from April to mid-November each year See our Calendar on the last page for upcoming events. To make a donation, become a member, employment opportunities, or for more information please click on the links below.

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Cover Photo: *South Pacific Coast No. 21 fresh from the Newark shops after being converted from coal to fuel oil, circa 1903.* Bruce MacGregor Collection

# Petroleum and the South Pacific Coast Railroad

by John Hall, SPC Historian

This article is AI Free



SPC Tank Cars at Agnews, Spring 1906

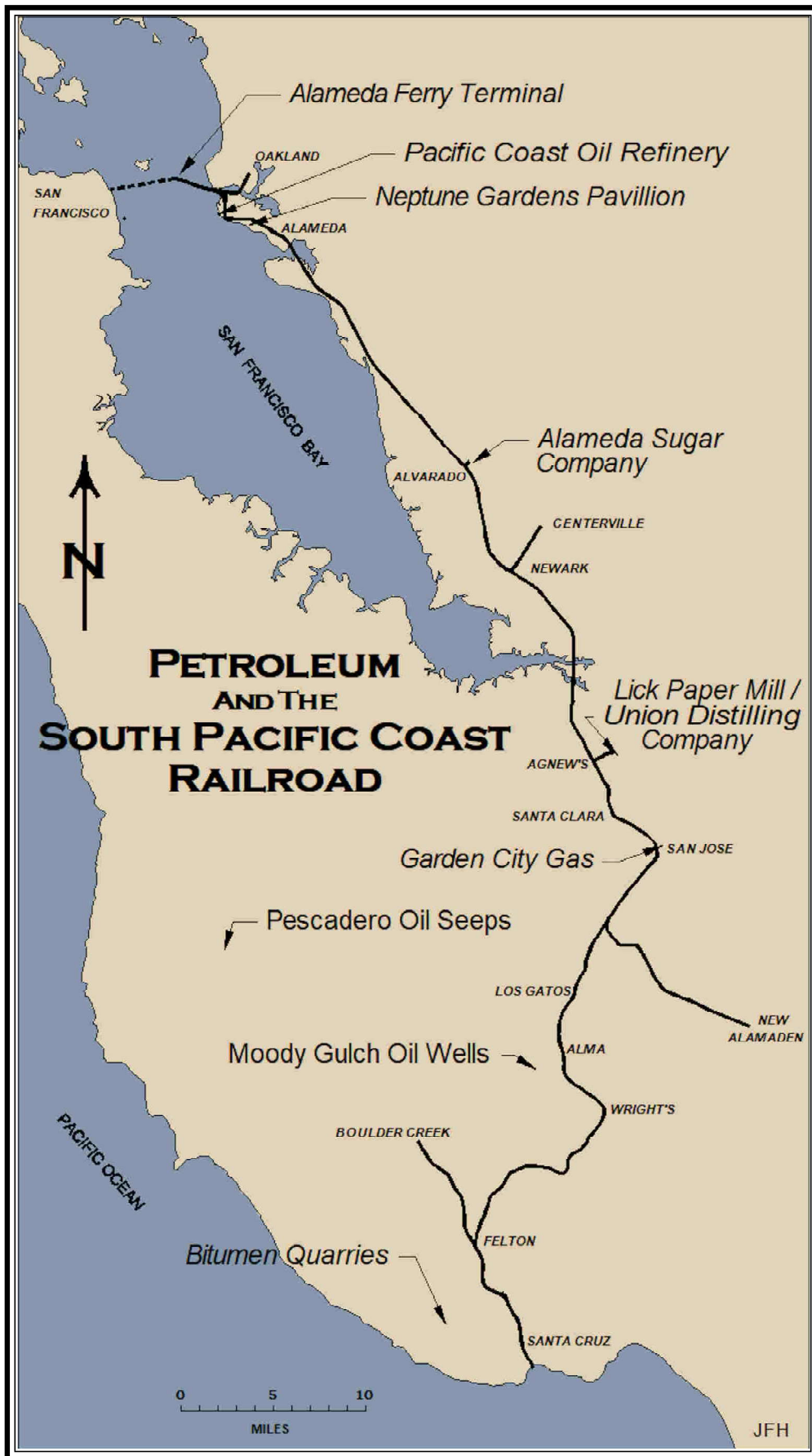
Bruce MacGregor Collection

**T**he photograph above shows three narrow gauge tank cars on the side track of the South Pacific Coast Railway at Agnew's. The cars were used to move molasses to the Union Distilling Company from holding tanks at Santa Clara. The date of this photo is between early 1906 when the narrow gauge track was prepared for widening to standard gauge, and May 2, 1906 the day before the mainline (foreground track) was widened to standard gauge. The preparation for the gauge transition can be seen from the spikes placed outside the narrow

gauge rail of the mainline so that the rail can be simply slid over and spiked in place at standard gauge. The regauging process from just south of Alameda to San Jose was done in one day.

The photo, taken by Agnew Station agent William C. Fuller, documents the horse power that was used on the distillery spur during the gauge transition. By this time the narrow gauge SPC had been around for 30 years. Did these tank cars move any other liquids? It turns out they did—**oil**.

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In the late 1860s and early 1870s the Santa Cruz Mountain Range was surveyed for signs of petroleum by Charles Felton and others. Oil seeps and bitumen outcroppings were found scattered in various locations on both sides of the summit.

Bitumen is a soft rock composed of what remains after an oil seep has evaporated all of the volatile components, leaving behind solid asphalt and sand. Other names for this compound include: asphaltum, tar sand, and Gilsonite.

A test oil well was drilled in a gulch running into Los Gatos Creek. The gulch was owned by the Moody brothers. A small quantity of oil was found there that triggered the first drilling.

In 1876 the South Pacific Coast Railroad was incorporated with the ultimate goal of Santa Cruz via the Los Gatos Creek canyon. Oil men, realizing that soon they would have an economical means to transport the oil, began drilling a new well at Moody's Gulch. By June 1878 the SPC had been extended to Alma and was moving up the canyon past Moody's Gulch to Wright's. A siding, later named Oil City, was added between Alma and Moody's Gulch on a narrow flat area beside the creek. Oil was piped down the gulch to tanks and transfer facilities at the siding for later transport to Garden City Gas. The Garden City Gas Company was established in San Jose near the SPC depot by the owners of the oil wells. It produced gas by the Lowe Process which used oil to produce gas for home illumination and street lights.

These same gentlemen were also drilling oil wells near Los Angeles.

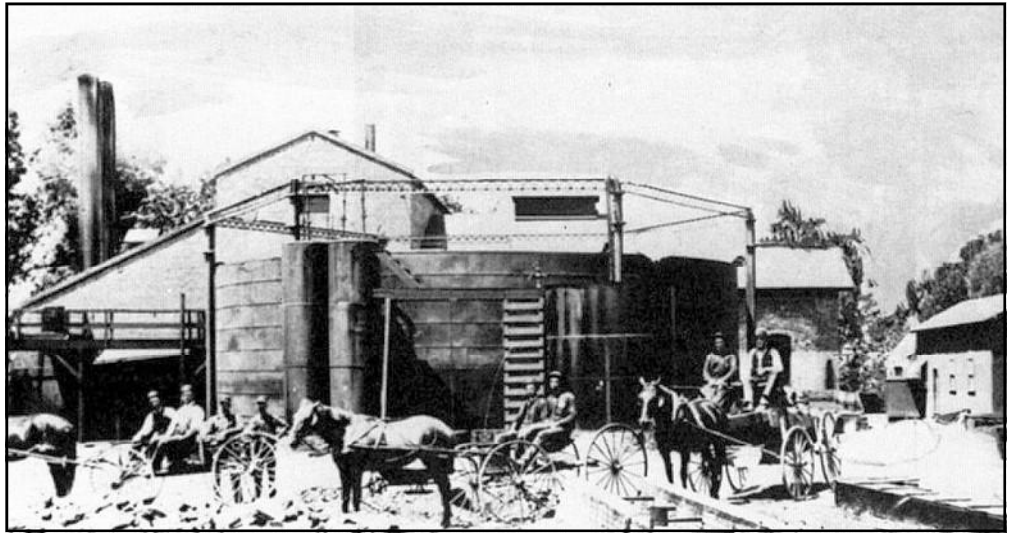
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They expected significant oil from both locations and needed a refinery to produce various petroleum products including illuminating and lubricating oils. After consideration it was decided that the refinery would be in Northern California. The location chosen was on the western end of Alameda at the intersection of the South Pacific Coast Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroad (formerly the San Francisco and Alameda Railroad). Oil from the strike at Moody's would be shipped to the refinery by the South Pacific Coast Railroad, and oil from Newhall and Ventura in Southern California would be shipped to Alameda by the Central/Southern Pacific Railroads.

The Pacific Coast Oil Company had both standard and narrow gauge tank cars built for the transportation of oil. As it turned out, the wells in the Los Gatos

and Santa Cruz areas were poor and intermittent performers. The majority of the oil refined at Alameda eventually came from Southern California in standard gauge tank cars. However those narrow gauge tank cars didn't stop carrying oil.

The boilers of the factories in the Bay Area first burned wood, then some switched to coal. Fuel oil quickly became a new fuel for those hungry boilers. Factories along the SPC line, such as the Alameda Sugar Company in Alvarado and the Lick Paper Mill at Agnew's, became regular customers of the Pacific

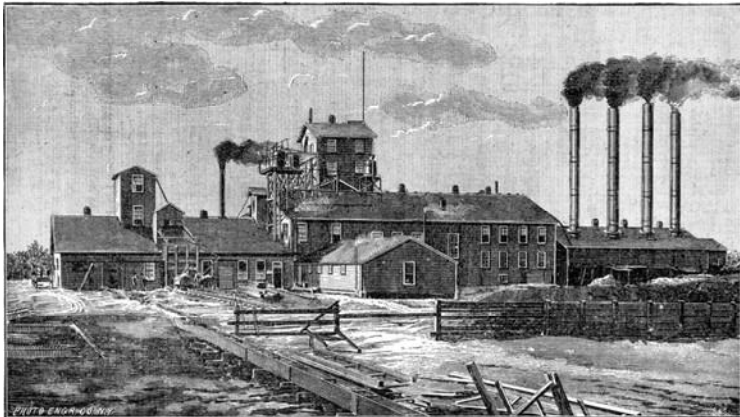


Garden City Gas Co. Today this is part of the Shark Tank parking lot.

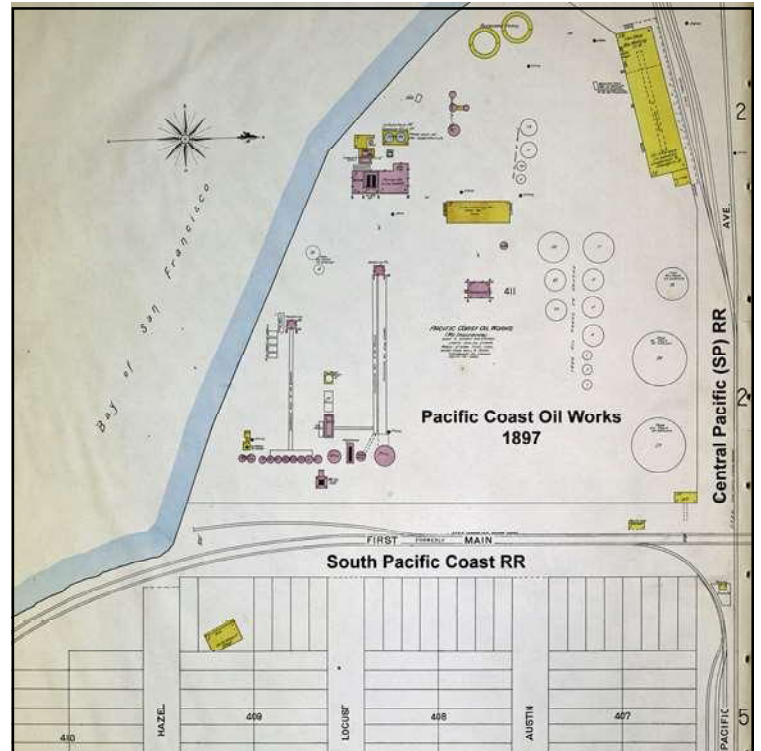
John Hall Collection



Pacific Coast Oil Refinery circa 1884

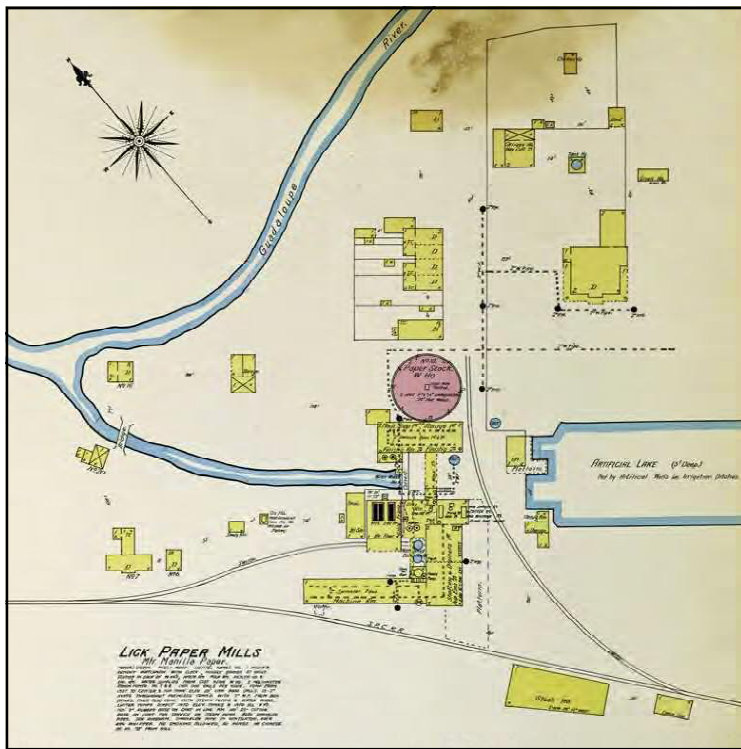


Alameda Sugar Co., Alvarado, November 13, 1884  
The engraving is from a J. A. Plummer photograph



Pacific Coast Oil Refinery 1897  
Sanborn Fire Map of Alameda 1897

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Lick Paper Mill 1887; Union Distilling Company 1902  
Sanborn Fire Map of Santa Clara 1887

Coast Oil Company's fuel oil, delivered in narrow gauge PCO tank cars.

Between 1880, when the refinery opened, and 1883 barrels of oil were transported to San Francisco by loading SPC freight cars and sending them to San Francisco via the SPC ferryboats from Alameda Point. Empty barrels were returned the same way. In 1884 the oil company ran a pipe out the old Alameda pier behind the refinery and delivered the oil via a tank on a barge hauled across the Bay circumventing the SPC railroad. However, barrels of oil products destined for ships were still carried by the SPC from the refinery to the Alameda Point wharf.

By 1902 tests had shown that locomotives could be economically powered by fuel oil. The Southern Pacific began converting all its locomotives to fuel oil, including the SPC engines. The cover photo of this issue of the *Narrow Gauge Journal* shows SPC No. 21 fresh from the Newark shops after being converted to fuel oil.

The growing automobile trade needed gasoline and those locomotives needed fuel oil but there was no room in Alameda to expand the refinery. Standard Oil relocated the refinery to Richmond in July 1902. The narrow gauge tank cars were no longer needed to move oil and its products.

## Wright's Tunnel

While petroleum provided income to the South Pacific Coast Railroad it was also an enemy. During the digging of the Wright's to Laurel tunnel between 1877 and 1880, there was continuous seepage of natural gas which caused numerous fires and two major explosions. The completion of the tunnel was delayed by one year and numerous workers were killed.

## Santa Cruz Bitumen

Oil was not the only petroleum product transported by the SPC. Charles Felton's surveys of the Santa Cruz Mountains turned up significant deposits of bitumen. When heated, bitumen melts and can be spread providing a smooth waterproof surface once it cools. Today's "asphalt" streets are paved with material similar to bitumen, but instead of a natural material the asphalt is a byproduct of refining oil which is mixed with aggregates and spread on the roadways.

The bitumen of the Santa Cruz Mountains was mainly located on the ocean side of the Ben Lomond range just west of Santa Cruz. It was brought to the SPC railhead by wagons and transported to the cities on flatcars. It was used in a number of projects including street paving, floor covering, and a skating rink. Bitumen became a significant freight on the SPC. The October 1, 1886 *Santa Cruz Sentinel* stated, "Hundreds of tons of petroleum [bitumen] lie alongside of the narrow-gauge track in this city awaiting shipment."

## Street and Sidewalk Paving

A street and sidewalk in Santa Cruz were paved with bitumen and proved to be an excellent street pavement. After that the use of bitumen spread rapidly throughout the Bay Area. The cities of San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose all began to experiment with street paving using bitumen. The Santa Cruz Bituminous Rock Paving Company, a major supplier, initially made proposals to cities to pave a block for a discounted price just to show the benefit of their product. The contracts included options to pave more of the street. Flatcar loads of bitumen rolled north out of Santa Cruz dropping off loads along the way. At Alameda Point the flatcars were loaded on the ferryboat *Garden City* for delivery in San Francisco. It was not unusual for a carload of bitumen to drop into the bay when a track switch was set the wrong way. The bitumen was lifted out of the water, put on new flatcars and sent on its way with no damage done to the bitumen.

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SPC Alameda Ferry Terminal prior to the November 1902 Fire.

Bruce MacGregor Collection

### The Alameda Mole

In March 1884 the SPC opened its new Alameda Ferry Terminal 2.5 miles out in the bay. The terminal building was built on top of a massive wharf with eight tracks inside the building and room for more. To finish the floor and make it more comfortable for passengers, bitumen was spread across the floor. Heath & Drennan, of Santa Cruz, supplied 200 tons of what was called *Santa Cruz Petroleum* [bitumen] for the floor covering.

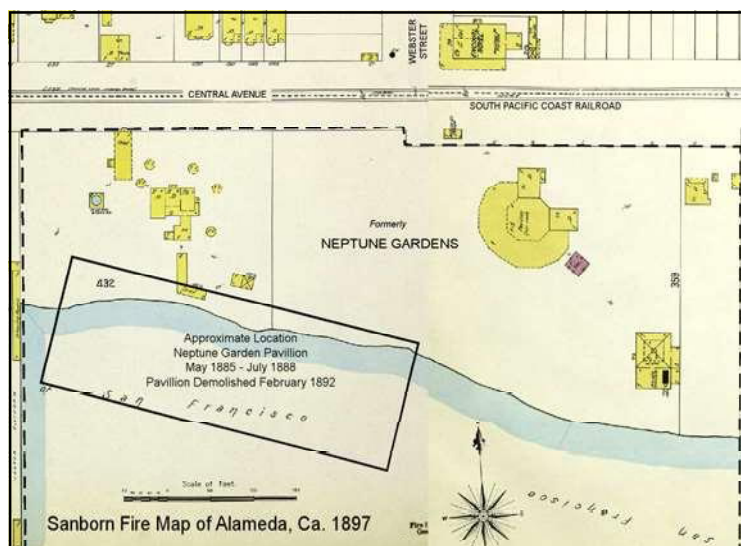
A forewarning of a future disaster occurred during application of the bitumen. While melting a batch of bitumen, a small fire broke out on the newly covered floor. The fire spread quickly as it melted more floor covering. However a quick response from the construction crew brought the fire under control and it was soon out.

Eighteen years later during a dry windy November night another fire broke out. The wind was out of the north and blowing hard. The ferryboat *Oakland's* crew was asleep along with other railroad employees who slept at the terminal. Night Watchman J. W. Stroemer discovered the initial fire on the north side of the building. The heat of the fire was melting the bitumen floor which dripped, burning between the boards and igniting the underside of the bulkhead. The strong north winds whipped up the flames so quickly that the only response was to flee for their lives. The ferryboat *Oakland* barely had time to get up steam and back

out of its slip away to get away from the fire; scarring and blackening the pilot house, deck and lifeboats. The entire terminal building burned and dropped what was left of 28 passenger coaches into the Bay.

### The Neptune Gardens Pavilion

In January 1885 the owners of the SPC purchased two rundown Alameda Bathing establishments. The properties were combined and improved in hopes of creating a new attraction for the Sunday leisure crowds from San Francisco and Oakland. Double SPC tracks ran along the northern side of the property and a side track was added in front. The venue was named Neptune Gardens. A large multi-use pavilion, 533 feet by 166 feet, was constructed



Neptune Gardens, Alameda,

Sanborn Fire Map of Alameda, 1897

*continued next page*

on the bay shore. It was expected that the pavilion would be used for assemblies, band concerts, dueling demonstrations, bike races, and roller skating.

After the success of the floor of the Alameda ferry building it was decided to use bitumen on the floor of the new pavilion. Unfortunately, rather than using the thick floor planks of the ferry terminal, the pavilion used thinner planks which warped when the hot asphalt was applied. In addition, it was discovered that the bitumen covering the floor was too soft to put chairs on for assemblies. The chair legs sank into the bitumen and created holes which destroyed the surface for roller skating. One half of the floor was torn up and replaced with a wood floor suitable for skating.

However, all that effort came to nothing. Two and a half years after its opening in October 1885, Neptune Gardens fell victim to a new Alameda ordinance establishing a \$500 annual fee (\$17,250 in 2023 dollars) on entertainment venues serving alcohol. The purpose of the fee was to reduce the drunkenness and

hooliganism perpetrated by the crowds of visitors. The ordinance effectively closed both Neptune Gardens and the newly opened SPC Base-ballfield just across the street, along with other Alameda establishments. The huge pavilion was demolished in 1892.

### **Felton & Pescadero Railroad**

Have you ever wondered why the SPC branch to Boulder Creek was called the Felton & Pescadero Railroad? The Felton part makes sense as that was where the branch started. But Pescadero seems like an unlikely terminus. Pescadero was a tiny community on the coast of San Mateo County. The Pescadero Creek watershed was an enormous old growth forest area but there were closer lumber resources elsewhere along the San Lorenzo River canyon and its tributaries.

In 1877, before the final route of the SPC through the Santa Cruz Mountains had been finalized, Alfred E. Davis, President of the South Pacific Coast Railroad, had asked Santa Cruz locals if a railroad could be built between the San Lorenzo River and the

*continued next page*



*San Francisco Ferry Building - SPC offices and ferries are on the far right—circa 1882.*

*John Hall Collection*



Pescadero Creek basins. The answer was “yes,” with tunnels. But why would he have asked that question prior to making a choice of the route for the SPC? It turns out the answer was **Oil!**

Alfred E. Davis was always on the lookout for new investment opportunities. His partner in San Francisco real estate development, Lloyd Tevis, was extremely interested in oil. Tevis was one of the major investors in the Moody Gulch wells, the Southern California wells, and the Pacific Coast Oil refinery.

The details are sketchy, but Alfred E. Davis also invested in oil. Early in 1879 A. E. Davis became the President of the Pacific Coast Petroleum Company. The company’s interests were in the Pescadero Creek basin. By March 1879 exploratory wells were being drilled in the area.

It is very likely that none of the exploratory wells ever produced in quantity, but Mr. Davis remained President of the Pacific Coast Petroleum Company until its demise in 1883. The San Francisco Directory included entries for the petroleum company and its President. Its offices were the same as the SPC offices, including the move to the San Francisco ferry building. That was the original wooden ferry building, not the massive stone and steel structure that stands today.

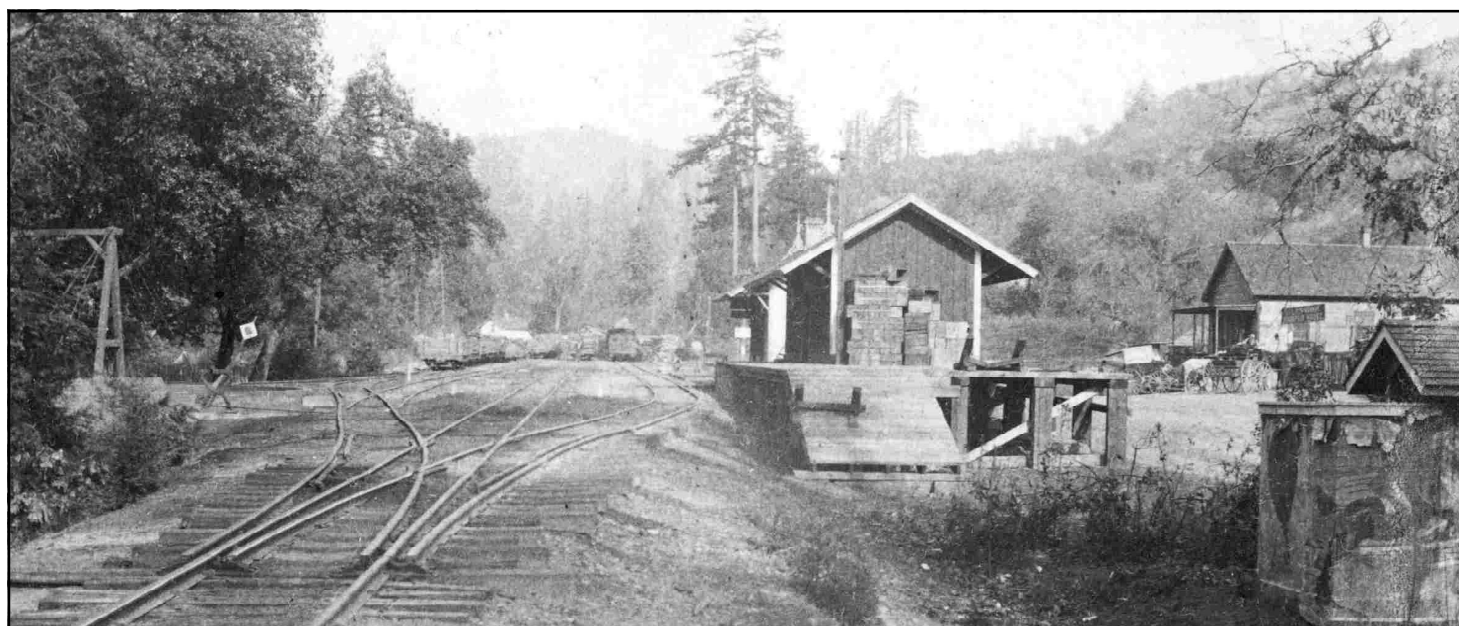
The Felton & Pescadero Railroad was incorporated in June 1883. It opened to Boulder Creek in May 1885. If the exploratory wells had ever been gushers, the

extension of the F & P Railroad to Pescadero would probably have been built. Strings of narrow gauge oil tank cars might have been a regular sight along the road.

### **Epilogue – Molasses**

The Union Distilling Company opened August 1902 in the old Lick Paper Mill buildings. The company’s purpose was to distill molasses into alcohol. Molasses, from the Spreckels Sugar Beet Refinery in Spreckels, California (near Salinas) was moved by standard gauge tank cars via the Southern Pacific Railroad to Santa Clara, California. A tank was erected in Santa Clara at the Water Works (today’s police station), for temporary storage of the molasses until it was transferred into narrow gauge tank cars and moved to the siding at Agnews via the narrow gauge South Pacific Coast Railway. At Agnews the cars were then moved to the distillery by narrow gauge locomotives until 1906, just prior to when the line was standard gauged. Horse power was implemented on the narrow gauge branch in preparation for the standard gauging. The track gauge change was delayed until May 3, 1906 from the planned date of April 18 due to the San Francisco Earthquake. Horsepower continued on the spur until August 4, 1906 when the spur was converted to standard gauge.

The narrow gauge tank cars were sold or transferred to other railroads. The exact number of oil tank cars is unknown, but it is possible that the three tank cars in the opening photograph were the entire fleet.



Glenwood Station, January 1891.

John Hall Collection

# President's Telegraph

by John Goldie  
President & Track Manager

Photos by the Author

Looking forward into 2024, we have some exciting projects ahead!

- NWP caboose 6101 is nearing completion with detail work on the inside, lettering and roof work left to complete.
- With the success of WSL 222 returned to passenger service as a gondola, we have started work to make WSL 308 into a gondola as well. Currently it is disassembled and we will need to replace all of the wood in the car.
- Work also continues on the Whitcomb locomotive project and it is well along in its re-assembly.

If you have not volunteered with us before, come out to the park and lend a hand. With more hands more can be accomplished. Workdays are held most Sundays (contact me first to check dates/times) from 10am to 4 pm. My email is [president@spcrr.org](mailto:president@spcrr.org), or call/text me at 408-784-1611.

The railroad experience continues to grow in popularity thanks to our wonderful operating crew, newly restored cars, and the expanded ride. Having the opportunity to ride vintage narrow gauge cars is the main way the public enjoys and experiences the group's collection as they were intended... rolling down the track.

Opening season on April 4 was delayed because we were waiting on an update from the park about the Bald Eagle nest site. The birds have been seen around the park, but it is too late for them to lay an egg, so we were just given clearance to begin operating, hopefully next week.

The start of summer will kick off with Rail Fair on the new date: Memorial Day Weekend. We are working on some surprises at Rail Fair, so stay tuned to our Facebook page and website. We also have some opportunities for new interpretation events at the Car Barn this year.

Thank you for your past support! I'm looking forward to a great 2024!



*NWP caboose 6101 recently had many interior details finished and is looking great.*



*WSLCo gondola 222 adds color contrast to the train and supports ADA riders.*

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND  
**MAY 25, 26, 27, 2024**  
10am - 4pm

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### EXHIBITORS

Bay Area Garden Railroad Society Live Steam Railroad, California Central Coast On30, Diablo Pacific Shortline Railroad, Golden State Toy Train Operators, Train Rides, Live Music, Toddler Trains, Train Book Library, Historic Railroad Cars, and Family Activities. We also have some surprises in the works!

FACEBOOK/SPCRRmuseum  
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# Curator's Report

by Andrew Cary, Curator

Photos by the Author

Curatorial work continues on NWP caboose 6101 and WSLCo "gondola" 222. The majority of work has been on flat car/gondola WSLCo 222, but work has continued on NWP 6101 as well. The caboose was set aside to prepare the passenger cars for their annual inspection and the upcoming season.

The cupola on the caboose has been under repair with rot in the cupola base getting repaired, window tracks replaced and rebuilt, and platform grab irons installed. For passenger safety a non-prototypical gate was made to keep passengers out of the cupola and baggage compartments.

WSLCo 222 has become the ADA compliant car for our operating consist. This means that the existing drop plank side gates had to be converted to swing gates to allow wheelchairs to move from the lift/ramps on and off the car. The new gates were fabricated from the existing drop gate planks and open outward.

The evaluation and restoration planning for SP combine 1010, NS flat car 1725, WSLCo flat car 205, Oakland RR horse car 2, and SPC combine 47 continues.



New railings and air brakes on NWP caboose 6101.



New passenger gate on WSLCo gondola 222.

In addition, Operations Manager Tom Sturm sanded and touched up paint on the excursion cars and improved their railings and hand grabs for passenger safety.

## Restoration Goals for 2024

- NWP caboose 6101: finish outfitting and painting the interior; finish the cupola and glazing; apply a weather-tight roof; apply the final coat of exterior paint and lettering; install the side, cupola top, end ladder, and roof grab irons; and mount the ladders.

*continued next page*

- SP combine 1010 - repair rot on windows of car side; sand and paint exterior; reletter car; make roof weather tight.

**Stretch/Future Goals**

- Oakland Railroad horsecar 2 - fix cracked posts; paint exterior of car; seal roof; reletter car.
- WSLCo flat car 205 - rebuild car as passenger-carrying gondola.
- NS flat car 1725 - remove deck; replace or repair sill rot and redeck; restore as picnic car.

We welcome everyone interested in restoration! All abilities are welcome and you do not need experience. You can reach me at [curator@spcrr.org](mailto:curator@spcrr.org) or call/text 510-324-6817.



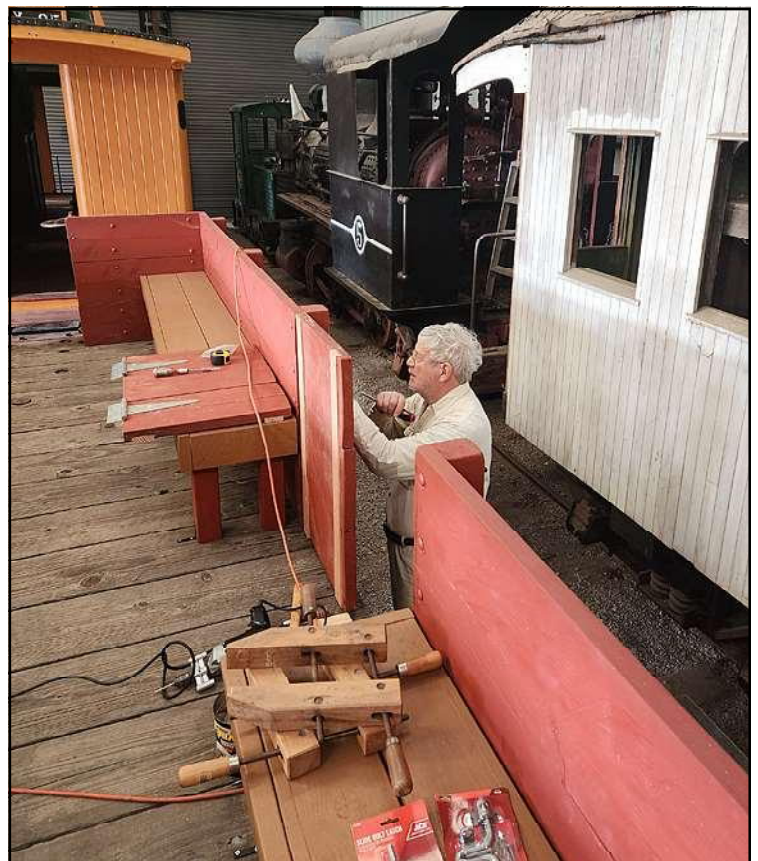
*Working on the new doors on WSLCo 222.*



*Here are the doors with the hardware installed.*



*David Waterman fitting the new doors onto WSL Co. 222.*



*John Stutz working on the new doors for WSL Co. 222.*

# Donations: January-March 2024

by Jacque Burgess, Treasurer

I have had the pleasure of holding every position on the Board of Directors except Treasurer on and off over my 42 years of being a member of SPCRR, plus I was the first General Manager appointed back in 1994-95. It's been a couple of decades since then, and I am excited to once again be back on the Board of Directors, this time as SPCRR's Treasurer.

I have some big shoes to fill after Jack's amazing leadership as Treasurer since 2018. Jack faced some

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## Donations Received January-March 2024

### Donations \$20-\$500

Mitchell Bonner  
 Donald Buchholz  
 Spencer Ferrington  
 Curtis Jones  
 Ed Lindgren  
 Steve Paluso  
 Richard Patchin  
 Texas Instruments-John Goldie match\*  
 Benevity-Intel-John Goldie match\*  
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### Material Donations

John Goldie - Parts Bead Blaster  
 Steve Rusconi - Numerous supplies and paint  
 Anonymous-DeWalt power portable grinder 4.5"

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You can use any major credit card (you do not need a PayPal account). If you prefer to mail a check, please make it payable to SPCRR and send it to: SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560.

All donations of \$100 or more will receive a letter from SPCRR confirming your donation for tax purposes (this includes the Track Crew's Amazon Wish List purchases of \$100 or more). For donations under \$100, you can use your PayPal receipt, Amazon receipt, or your cancelled check.

If you would like to donate in someone's honor or memory, please email us and let us know. If you have any questions, please send an email to [info@spcrr.org](mailto:info@spcrr.org) or call/text 510-508-8826.

# A poem about the train at Ardenwood

by Vivek Kaluska  
 Contributing Member  
 and new volunteer

Vivek Kaluskar contacted SPCRR because he loves trains and wants to volunteer. Vivek loves our train so much, he purchased a townhouse that has a view of our track where it crosses the entry road near the Car Barn..Vivek had to compete for the house with many other buyers, so he came up with the idea of writing a poem to the seller of the townhouse that Vivek hoped would make a difference. It worked! The seller accepted his offer over the higher cash offers.

## Dear Seller

*We hope this poem finds you well.  
 It's about a home where we hope to someday dwell.  
 A cozy home by the Ardenwood railroad tracks,  
 With its soothing clickity-clacks.*

*The sound of the wheels a symphony,  
 A melody that's music to our ears, you see.  
 We see ourselves sitting by the fire,  
 With the trains rolling like a choir.*

*This home has captured our hearts,  
 And we hope it'll be where our new chapter starts.  
 We've fallen in love with its charm,  
 Greenery and all, right next to Ardenwood Farm.*

*The trains that we would build with love and care  
 If we volunteered at the busy workshop in there  
 Working hard to do our share  
 At the society for preservation of the railway.*

*The house itself, a warm embrace,  
 With its cozy rooms and inviting space,  
 We can't help but feel at home,  
 In this charming abode.*

*We thank you, dear seller,  
 For offering us this cozy dweller,  
 We hope to make it our own,  
 And call it our forever home.  
 Where the trains sing us to sleep,  
 And our hearts forever keep.*

# Membership News

by Julie Boyer, Membership Manager

## Welcome New Members!

Mitchell Bonner, San Francisco CA - LIFE

John LaBarba, Santa Cruz CA - LIFE

Don Buchholz, Union City CA - Contributing

### To become a member or renew your dues...

Join today so you don't miss future editions of the *Narrow Gauge Journal*, as well as access to special events and news about our museum. Our annual membership is **just \$20** and you will receive a year's subscription to the *NGJ*.

Support a great cause and help us preserve our museum's amazing 19th century narrow gauge railroad collection. Your dues and donations support our museum's restoration and track projects.

To become a new member, or to renew your membership (or give someone else the gift of membership) click here: [www.spcrr.org/joining.htm](http://www.spcrr.org/joining.htm), or mail a check to SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560.

Annual dues for Contributing Members are **just \$20**, or you can become a LIFE Member for a one-time donation of \$250 and you never pay dues again.

All dues and donations are tax deductible. SPCRR will send a letter for tax purposes for all Life Member payments, and for any donations over \$100. For Contributing memberships (and for donations under \$100), you can use your PayPal receipt or cancelled check for tax purposes. SPCRR is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

If you need any information about your membership or how to become a new member, feel free to contact me at [membership@spcrr.org](mailto:membership@spcrr.org), or call/text 510-508-8826.

### Donations - continued from previous page

daunting challenges during his five terms as Treasurer, especially dealing with the Covid pandemic. I am proud to say that our museum was one of the few nonprofits that came out of that terrible period with the same bank balance as it had before the pandemic began.

This will be my first time to hold the office of Treasurer, but I am not new to financial planning. I was responsible for multi-million dollar project budgets during my career at the City of Newark. I am very conservative, which I feel is especially important with a small nonprofit like ours. Upcoming projects include renegotiating our five year contract with the East Bay Regional Park District. Making predictions for five years in the future is a huge challenge, especially with the way costs have risen the past few years.

As Jack has reported in the past few newsletters, since the IRS increased the standard deduction it means that most people have more money in their pockets, but in exchange that means that most people cannot write off donations anymore except on their California taxes. The perception of not getting a federal tax write-off has resulted in a big loss in donations and membership renewals.

I hope that you will please consider re-supporting SPCRR if you are able. All donations and memberships are deductible on your state taxes, and SPCRR would be very grateful for your help. Thank you in advance for supporting our museum!



Conductor's desk - NWP caboose 6101. Lantern donated by Bruce Sorel.  
Photo by Jacque Burgess

# January-March 2024 Track Report

by John Goldie, President and Track Manager

Photos by Author

**A** huge thank you to the track crew: Bruce, Steve, David, John G, Damian, Nick, Isaac, Vivek, Colin, and Ken K. In total they have volunteered 388 hours and there is still one track day left in this quarter as I am writing this. The big focus this quarter was changing out ties in Jack's Curve and out towards SeaBee Curve. This stretch of the track is now 39 years old.

After years of horse-power many of the ties are in need of change out. In addition to the track work, we focused on clearing the vegetation from along the right-of-way including the notorious blackberries. It is very important to provide the train crew with a good line-of-sight... Safety First!

We also cut back and removed some large brush along the field fence, and installed the new swing

gates built by Ralphie with wood and hardware donated from Steve. This gate allows us to use the service road so we no longer need to use the fields to gain access to this area. Other projects included some additional work on the "shed" and track-side area that doubles as a hand car display for the riders of the train.

The track crew works most Sundays, weather permitting. Contact me if you would like to come out and join us. We have large and small projects on our backlog list. For example, the "Inspiration Junction" switch target (the future lead towards the Farm Yard) needs wire brushing and painting. This is a project that anyone can do and we would really appreciate the help. Come on out and have some fun!

*continued next page*



An active project for April is to connect up this harp stand - it will lead to additional yard tracks.



Digging out 39 year old oak ties is a good workout, January-March is the best time to dig for soil conditions.





*Changing ties in flat ground is tough, we need to dig a slot to slide out the old tie and insert the new tie.*



*Is the year 1894 or 2024? Fun scenes along the right-of-way.*



*Years of horse power have worn out the middle of many ties, thus it is time for a change out.*



*New gates replaced the old, rotted gates. This now gives us direct access to the track.*

To order from the Track Crew's Amazon Wish List, click on the following link. Please be sure to check the box that the item is a gift, and fill out your name on the gift message so we know who donated the item (there is no other way for us to find out who sends us wish list items). **IMPORTANT:** choose the shipping address called "**SPCRR's Gift Registry Address:**" [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3UEP6ICIB5BUK?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3UEP6ICIB5BUK?ref_=wl_share)

# 2024 SPECIAL EVENT CALENDAR

For updates on activities and workdays join the **SPCRR\_Members group** at [www.groups.io](http://www.groups.io). Also check our website and Facebook page for special event info:

[www.spcrr.org](http://www.spcrr.org) [www.facebook.com/spcrrMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/spcrrMuseum)

**MAY**  
25, 26, 27 - RAIL FAIR

**NEW DATE!**  
**MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**

**OCTOBER**  
18, 19, 20 - HAUNTED TRAIN  
25, 26, 27 - HAUNTED TRAIN

Tickets go on sale Sept. 15 at 8 am on [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com). They sell out fast!

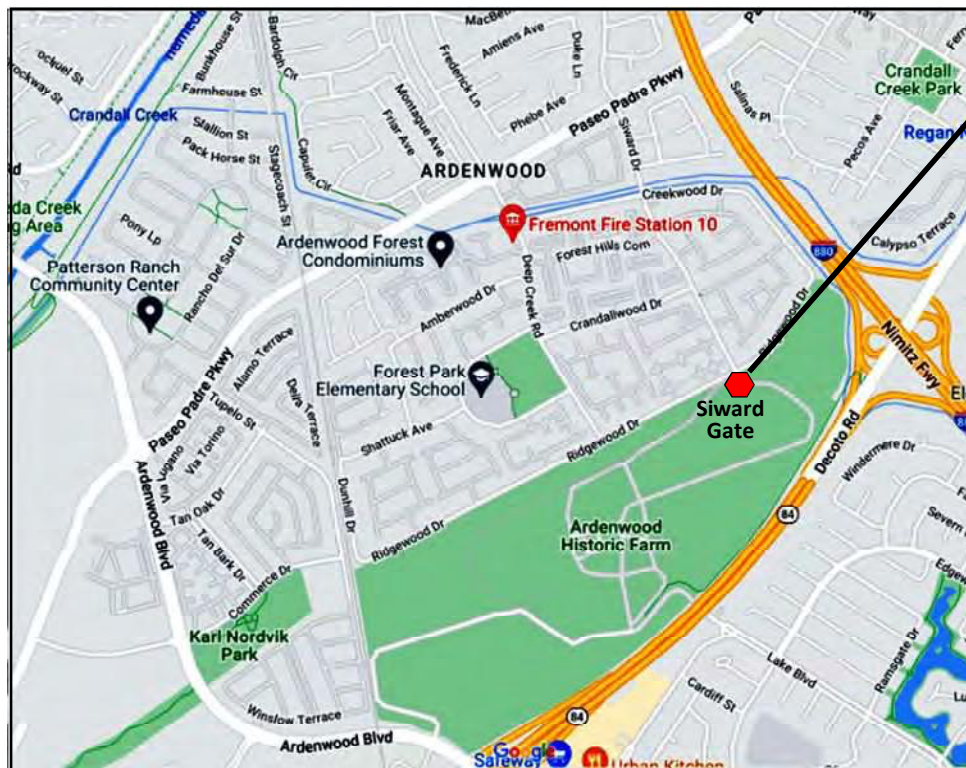
## TRACK CREW'S WISH LIST

To order from the Track Crew's Amazon Wish List, click on the following link. **IMPORTANT:** choose the shipping address called "**SPCRR's Gift Registry Address**": [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3UEP6CIB5BUK?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3UEP6CIB5BUK?ref=wl_share)

**NOTICE TO VOLUNTEERS:** To get all of the up-to-date info on the workdays, it's important to join the **SPCRR\_Members group** at [www.groups.io](http://www.groups.io)

## DIRECTIONS FOR WORKDAYS

If you are a new volunteer, the gate is locked so you must call/text the project manager before the workday to get instructions on how to enter. Always use the Siward Dr. gate entrance (*never drive through the park*). *Click on the map below for directions on Google Maps.*



**GATE at the corner of Siward Dr and Ridgewood Dr**