MISSION
To inspire wonder, exploration, and appreciation of our world.

VISION
We envision Turtle Bay Exploration Park as a vibrant gathering place where our community is strengthened through education, cultural engagement, and economic growth.

CORE VALUES
- **Playfulness** – Learning is easier when it’s fun and interactive.
- **Real World Experiences** – Learning is enhanced through interaction with living and non-living collections.
- **Interdisciplinary** – Learning is enhanced when we recognize connections between art, history, and sciences.
- **Community** – We strive to make our Park accessible and value community partnerships which make us strong.
- **Lifelong Learning** – The pursuit of knowledge and the joy of learning is important at every age.
- **Integrity** – We accomplish our goals with honesty and transparency, seeking excellence in service.
- **Sustainability** – We strive to be the best stewards of natural and cultural resources for the generations to come.

CAMPUS
The Turtle Bay campus is divided into north and south, separated by the Sacramento River. On the north side is the McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, comprising 20 acres of gardens and 200 acres of savannah. The south side of campus, approximately 65 acres, contains the Turtle Bay Museum, Branch House Riverfront Bistro, and Paul Bunyan’s Forest Camp, including the Mill Building, Parrot Playhouse, Wildlife Woods, and seasonal Butterfly House.

Turtle Bay is connected by the Sundial Bridge, engineered by famous Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. The Sacramento River Trail, designated as a National Recreation Trail within the National Trail System, crosses the Sundial Bridge and extends north to Shasta Dam.

The Sheraton Redding Hotel at the Sundial Bridge is Redding’s first 4-star hotel, located near the entrance of Turtle Bay and the Sundial Bridge. A separate for-profit entity, Turtle Bay Holdings, was formed to build and operate the LEED-certified hotel and its adjacent Mosaic Restaurant. The Sheraton provides economic development and tourism benefits to our local community and especially to Turtle Bay, with profits after expenses supporting ongoing programs and operations.

AFFILIATIONS
Turtle Bay is a privately-owned and operated 501(c)3 non-profit organization, licensed by California Department of Fish & Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service and a member of the California Association of Museums (CAM). Our organization participates in reciprocal membership programs with the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) and the American Horticultural Society (AHS).

In 2023, Turtle Bay was accredited by the Zoological Association of America (ZAA), who recognize facilities with the highest standards of professionalism and responsible wildlife conservation practices.

VISITATION
- Turtle Bay had approximately 7,623 member households as of December 31, 2023.
- In 2023, more than 115,230 people visited Turtle Bay! Of these visitors, 81% are Shasta County residents and nearly 61% of Park visitors are members.

OPERATIONS
- The total annual operating budget for Turtle Bay in 2024 is approximately $8 million.
- Revenue comes from the following sources: grants (24%), retail (5%), sponsorships & donations (7%), service contracts (7%), membership (8%), admissions (8%), program revenue (4%), investment income (1%) and special events (36%).
- Expenses include the following: education & programming (2%), museum operations & exhibitions (5%), administration (5%), facilities & maintenance (7%), marketing & fundraising (15%), guest services (1%), insurance, utilities, & rental fees (10%), and payroll (55%).
- Turtle Bay has 58 full-time staff, 15 regular part-time employees, and as many as 18 seasonal employees to assist during summer and holiday months.
VOLUNTEERS
- In 2023, Turtle Bay had 178 active volunteers, including 51 teens and 127 adults. Volunteers logged more than 10,654 hours, serving vital roles in a variety of departments across our organization!

ANIMAL CARE
- Turtle Bay is home to approximately 132 non-releasable animals, most of which are native animals acquired from rehabilitation situations. In 2023, 19 new Animal Ambassadors were added to the Turtle Bay family, including a White’s Tree frog, a Magnificent Tree frog, a California Newt, six African Giant Millipedes, and six Scaly Breasted Lorikeets! Welcome also to Nzara the Guinea Turaco, Tumbleweed the Desert Tortoise, Blueberry the Blue Tongue Skink, and Bolero and Mokum the Carrot Tailed Viper Geckos.
- In 2023, Turtle Bay hosted 59,137 guests to the year-round Parrot Playhouse. The Wings of Summer Butterfly House had 21,947 visitors during its eight-week run, averaging more than 390 guests per day!
- Turtle Bay’s beloved Walk on the Wild Side animal show saw 17,131 guests in attendance during the summertime run from May-September! An additional 1,431 guests attended the popular Water Wonders program and 10,606 guests enjoyed our other educational programs and appearances.
- Construction on an upgraded new exhibit home for Digger the Badger began in 2023 and will be complete in early 2024!
- The Turtle Bay Tuesday Animal Segment continued on KRCR News Channel 7 twice monthly. This has been a very successful partnership with many positive comments from the public viewers.
- The Wonderful World of Animals segment on Weather NorCal with Mike Kruger was added in 2023. In this segment, Mike interacts with Animal Ambassadors weekly while learning interesting facts about the species. Segment recordings can be found on many platforms, including YouTube and Facebook.
- For the third year, Turtle Bay housed 330 Chinook Salmon in 2023 as part of the Conservation Head Start program in partnership with the Coleman Fish Hatchery. The goal of this project is to raise the salmon in the protected environment of our indoor pool and release them into the Sacramento River just below the Sundial Bridge when ready to spawn. This program has given Turtle Bay the opportunity to educate our guests about salmon and other endangered species groups.

ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL GARDENS
- Turtle Bay has approximately 1,000 species/cultivars in its living plant collection, focusing on plants adapted to the Mediterranean climate zone, including California native species.
- Construction began on the new Environmental Resource Building at the Turtle Bay Nursery in late spring 2023 and will be completed in early 2024. The building includes office space for Nursery and Gardens staff and volunteers, retail space for plant sales, and a 56-person classroom to enhance education programs focused on sustainable and drought tolerant gardening practices.
- Continuing our niche focus on drought tolerant plants, in 2023 we increased the number of California Native and other drought tolerant plant species offered in the Nursery. The stand-alone Nursery website (www.turtlebaynursery.org) includes plant and gardening information, upcoming classes and workshops, and a continuously updated Nursery Inventory list.

COLLECTIONS/EXHIBITS
- Turtle Bay has over 40,000 objects in the Permanent Collection, largely acquired by founding institutions, The Redding Museum of Art and History, founded in 1962, and The Forest Museum, founded in 1983.
- In 2023, Turtle Bay hosted six major traveling exhibitions in our gallery spaces, including: TreeHouses from Sciencenter in Ithaca, NY; Honor, Courage, Commitment: Marine Corps Art, 1975-2018 from the National Museum of the Marine Corps; the 7th West Coast Biennial Art Competition and Exhibition featuring local artists; Cats and Dogs from Imagine Exhibitions in France; Snow: Tiny Crystals, Global Impact from the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry; and Artificial Intelligence from the Relayer Group.
- Numerous additional in-house curated exhibitions were featured in the glass case, such as Craig Bates Retrospective and Mt. Shasta: Living Laboratory, along with two Spotlight on North State History exhibitions in the museum. In the Mill Building, we featured Indigenous Resources, It Looks Better on Them, and Recreation: The Great Outdoors and More.
- Exhibitions in the Mosaic Gallery continue to provide opportunities for local artists to share their works and the Artifact of the Month and Selections from the Collection exhibitions are always guest favorites!

EDUCATION
- 10,733 students attended Turtle Bay through our School Field Trips programming in 2023!
- The Little Explorers program saw 2,117 people – 1,145 children 0-5 years old and 972 adult caregivers – participate in this popular weekly Thursday offering.
- Saturday programs were a huge hit! Family 2nd Saturday, held on the 2nd Saturday monthly, included 2,008 participants. Science Saturday, on the 3rd Saturday monthly, had 1,540 participants. And Art Studio Saturday, offered on the 4th Saturday monthly, saw 776 attendees.
- 149 campers attended 10 sessions of Discovery Camps throughout the year. During the summertime sessions, Turtle Bay offered 12 partial scholarships to children who qualify for free or reduced lunch at school.
• Bubblepalooza! included five sessions of engaging and safe bubble machine fun and craft activities for our youngest learners inside the Butterfly House during the off-season.
• Paint Night at the Museum brought in 149 participants and three Photography Workshops with a local expert photographer engaged 40 attendees.
• A continued partnership with Shasta College and the College Corps Fellowship Program allowed Turtle Bay to hire on a Shasta College student for the school year to gain experience and training related to K-12 education, which also provides extra help for our Education programs.

SPECIAL EVENTS
• The Redding Garden of Lights continued for the fourth holiday season, with more than 91,452 visitors traveling from near and far to see our garden’s space transformed by over one-million lights! The 2023-2024 season was open from November 17, 2023-January 7, 2024. Additions this year included a Model Train Town exhibit, glowing swings, new music and menu items, and VIP Igloo Experience for groups of up to 8 to enjoy their own private space with the light show!
• Turtle Bay hosts four major fundraising events annually in support of our education programs, animals, and exhibitions, including the Turtle Bay Auction in March, Brews by the Bridge in June, Oktoberfest in October, and New Year’s Eve at the Garden of Lights in December.
• We added some additional events this year to enhance the community experience and bring more people to enjoy the Gardens. 464 guests attended Easter in the Gardens in April and 437 guests attended Harvest in the Gardens in October.
• Three 21+ After Hours events at the Museum were included to feature our exhibitions for new audiences. Each evening included access to the Museum, food and drink for purchase provided by Mosaic, a fun photo backdrop, animal interactions, and activities. We saw an impressive 618 guests throughout these events, many of whom were nonmembers and had not visited Turtle Bay as adults.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY
• With the help of donors on North State Giving Tuesday in November 2023, Turtle Bay donated 54 FREE Family-level memberships to local families through our “You Give, We Give” initiative.
• In 2023, Turtle Bay provided more than $26,000 in donated park tickets and memberships to 250 organizations and schools in both Shasta County and throughout the country to aid in their fundraising efforts and provide access for the underserved.
• Four Sensory Hour events were hosted in the Museum for families of children with Autism spectrum disorder. This offering includes free early access to the Museum and modifications to the guest experience to accommodate sensory challenges like overhead lighting, excessive noise, and crowding. Three additional events offered a modified sensory experience during our Redding Garden of Lights show, with free entry prior to the public for 761 participants in attendance!
• Turtle Bay served as a destination along the annual Redding Cultural Cruise in January, offering free evening admission for guests to view the two available exhibitions, the West Coast Biennial and Honor, Courage, Commitment: Marine Corps Art, 1975-2018, as well as the Famous Artists Children’s Art Show with artwork from local elementary school students participating in our Famous Artists Portfolio program.
• With support from the Union Pacific Foundation, Train Day at Turtle Bay has become an annual event coinciding with National Train Day in early May. Reduced admission helps more train-enthusiasts to be able to participate in the day’s festivities, including train-themed educational activities, an up-close look at train artifacts, local train expert speakers, and raffle prizes! This event was a big hit, with more than 2,000 visitors to the Museum. We are excited to bring this event back for another year in 2024!
• Through generous support from Redding Electric Utility, Turtle Bay offers discounted admission on the first Thursday of each month with the Discount Day at Turtle Bay access program.
• Test Drive Turtle Bay offers 10 family memberships available year-round for check-out at the Redding Library.
• Turtle Bay for All, supported by Drs. PK & Promila Dhanuka and Family, works to encourage families of all backgrounds to visit museums regularly. Through this initiative, every child and family with an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card has access to our high-quality museum experience for a reduced cost.
• Turtle Bay continues to provide discounts on general admission and annual memberships to active-duty Military, Veterans, and Teachers.

ADDED IN 2023
• Maintenance projects for 2023 included replacing irrigation systems and exhibit cases, refinishing the Aquarium glass and adding height to the enclosure fence for Timber the Beaver as part of the upgrade started in 2022, adding a visual barrier to the perimeter fencing in Wildlife Woods, and completing the redesign of the Donor Wall in the Museum.
• Working with community stakeholders, a Master Plan was developed by Turtle Bay to refresh and redesign three permanent exhibitions in the Museum, with help from the original consulting firm Aldrich Pears, who helped design and build the Museum more than 20 years ago. The areas of focus include the Resource Gallery, River Lab, and People of the Sacramento exhibit areas.
RECENT RECOGNITIONS

- Early in 2023, Chief Operating Officer Laurinda Willard was elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the California Association of Museums.
- In 2023, Turtle Bay was accredited by the Zoological Association of America (ZAA). To become a ZAA accredited facility, Turtle Bay underwent a rigorous inspection process. This included demonstrating our educational programming, safety protocols, veterinarian care, and husbandry practices. This accreditation lends credibility to our facility, letting community members know they can trust Turtle Bay to always put the welfare of our animals first.
- The Animal Care team was involved in multiple film productions in 2023. Stay tuned to see Buzz the Turkey Vulture featured in an upcoming PBS International documentary about raptors and Digger and Timber in a BBC documentary! Opportunities like these provide additional ways for Turtle Bay to educate people across the globe about our amazing animals.
- Turtle Bay was named “Best Park” and “Best Family Amusement” in the 2023 Record Searchlight Best of the North State awards.
- In the Trip Advisor “15 Best Things to Do in Redding,” the Sundial Bridge is ranked #1, followed closely by Turtle Bay as #2 and McConnell Arboretum & Botanical Gardens as #11. On the Planet Ware “13 Top-Rated Attractions & Things to Do in Redding” list, Turtle Bay is ranked #1, followed by the Sundial Bridge at #2 and McConnell Arboretum & Botanical Gardens at #6.
- The Turtle Bay campus was featured multiple times by Visit California, including mention of the Sundial Bridge as “one of the coolest things you can do in California,” highlighted in a post about Shasta County, and ranked #1 on the “8 Family-Favorite Science Centers & Museums” list, outranking museums in the Bay Area, San Diego, and Santa Barbara!
- The Redding Garden of Lights was featured by numerous media outlets during the 2023-2024 season, including the following blogs and news outlets: Taking the Kids, Little Family Adventure, Family Travel Forum, KRCR News Channel 7, Action News Now, ABC10 Sacramento, and many more!

NEW PROJECTS FOR 2024

- We are excited to launch our new spring event, Glowing Wild - An Illuminated Wildlife Lantern Festival available in the gardens in Spring 2024! This event will feature 10 acres of botanical gardens filled with impressively large illuminated Asian lanterns, music and cultural entertainment on a community stage, themed food and beverage by Mosaic, everyone’s favorite glowing swings, and other features for all ages. Glowing Wild will also offer a VIP Lantern Lounge Experience for groups of up to eight.
- Turtle Bay's Education team is looking forward to expanding Discovery Camp into the new Environmental Resource Building! This new indoor space will allow us to offer additional camps for our community.