

**Moro Canyon
Crystal Cove State Park
Newport Coast, California**

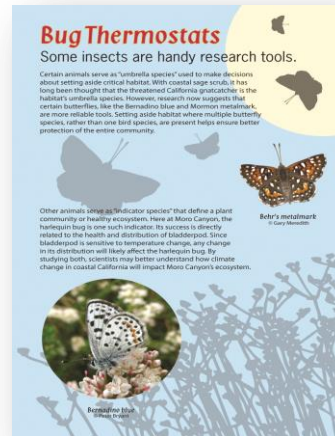


At Moro Canyon, we faced a challenge. How do you entice the recreating public to contribute to serious scientific research while on their way to the beach? Now with 32 acres restored, infrastructure rebuilt, and field stations established, Moro Canyon has been transformed into a dynamic and unique site for exploration and engagement.

In 2012-2013 The Acorn Group assisted California State Parks and the Crystal Cove Alliance in “revisoning” visitor experiences at Moro Canyon, a 32-acre coastal canyon in Crystal Cove State Park, Newport Coast, California. The Acorn Group coalesced divergent opinions to arrive at a common strategy for interpretation at what was once the Moro Beach Trailer Park.

The Acorn Group facilitated planning sessions, developed the project’s interpretive themes and storylines, and defined the visitor’s experiences using innovative approaches to citizen science. We also created a series of nonformal

education programs based on these approaches and designed the interpretive media for the site. These included interpretive panels, rubbing plates, flip books, and banners for each of six “investigation nodes” along the Berns Environmental Study Loop.



The unique aspect of this project is its emphasis on citizen science – visitors take part in ongoing research studies by recording observations and collecting information on the canyon’s birds, insects, weather conditions, erosion rates, and invasive species. Hands-on, inquiry-based opportunities engage them in learning about science and the environment. Their observations in turn help generate useful data that contribute to the body of scientific knowledge.