

**CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES
NATURE PRESERVE QUARTERLY PUBLIC FORUM
JULY 20, 2016**

The forum began at 6:05 p.m. in the City Hall Community Room, 30940 Hawthorne Boulevard.

ATTENDANCE

City of RPV: Cory Linder-Recreation and Parks Director
Sean Larvenz – Public Works Maintenance Superintendent
Katie Lozano – Recreation and Parks Administrative Analyst
Sergeant Doug Shive – Lomita Sheriff’s Department
Deputy Kevin Kuwata – Lomita Sheriff’s Department
Deputy Pablo Jimenez – Lomita Sheriff’s Department
PVPLC: Adrienne Mohan – Conservation Director

Analyst Lozano thanked the group for attending and explained that the purpose of the forum is to share information on Preserve projects and public use, and to solicit public feedback. City and PVPLC staff introductions were made.

Preserve Maintenance

Review of Active Habitat/Trail Projects and Unauthorized/Spur Trail Closures – Director Mohan shared information on Volunteer Trail Crew and field staff operations, and made the information available in a handout. She also shared that PVPLC is reviewing bids for the irrigation for the Alta Vicente restoration project.

City Preserve Maintenance Report: Analyst Lozano shared information on a maintenance project to move the authorized access point from the private Port. Bend Community to the Port. Bend Reserve. The City and PVPLC will work together to effect the closure, including closing the unauthorized trail, installing signage, outreaching to the community, and updating maps.

Analyst Lozano reported that the closure of a portion of the Abalone Cove tide pools due to falling rock danger will remain in effect indefinitely, and permanent signage has been installed at the beach. Analyst Lozano shared that the City has made its maintenance projects/logs available at the front table and is happy to further discuss any of the maintenance efforts.

Director Linder reported that the City is considering a coyote management/education plan that will include signage and education. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Preserve Signage Plan: Director Mohan reported that City Council approved the Preserve Signage Plan in June, and that PVPLC is working with the City to finalize language. Existing grant

funding will be used to sign Alta Vicente Reserve, and additional grant funding will be pursued for remaining signage. Director Mohan brought a copy of the signage plan for public review.

Public Comments/Questions

Eva Cicoria indicated that mountain bikers need to be reminded of the content in the Public Use Master Plan. She reported a missing private property sign near the intersection to Water Tank and Vanderlip Trails. She commented on coyotes' valuable and balancing effect on the Preserve ecosystem. And she asked if the Ranger Hotline service would continue.

Analyst Lozano shared that the hotline service would continue, and the phone number will remain the same.

Rod Jensen asked the City to be cognizant of the potential of signage pollution, and expressed support for the use of QR codes to increase awareness.

Christine Campbell reported a damaged handrail near the lifeguard stand at Abalone Cove. She also expressed concern that Abalone Cove visitors are not complying with the closure.

Sergeant Shive indicated that he would contact lifeguards at Abalone Cove Beach to ask if they need support.

Sandi Valeri expressed appreciation for the new authorized access point from the Portuguese Bend Community into the Portuguese Bend Reserve, and for the improvements the Volunteer Trail Crew made to Zote's Cut Across Trail. She shared that the trail would accommodate equestrians if its width was increased.

Christine Campbell expressed her belief that mountain bikers are widening Preserve trails, and Three Sisters Reserve is suffering the worst damage. She doesn't feel mountain biking is consistent with nature conservation.

Barbara Ailor presented statistics and charts expressing that Preserve misuse is increasing at an alarming rate and that she is concerned that in five years the Preserve will be destroyed.

Anke Raue shared her belief that the Preserve should be closed to mountain bikers, and asked what would be necessary to make that change.

Director Linder clarified that trail use is established by the Council approved Preserve Trails Plan, and that in order to alter the plan, evidence would need to be presented to City Council. He also expressed optimism that visitor behavior will improve due to the doubling of

enforcement and introduction of Open Space staff. He indicated that the City's doubled enforcement has only been in effect for 20 days.

Eva Cicoria express concern with increased vehicle use in the Preserve and edging effects vehicles have when they park slightly off trail. She inquired as to the trails Deputies will use. She also expressed concern about a rumor she heard that things would be better for mountain bikers as a result of the new Open Space Management staff.

Deputy Kuwata shared that deputies will be sensitive to habitat, and are learning the trails and analyzing routes needed for public safety and access. He expressed that vehicles are necessary to affectively cover 1,400 acres and to respond to issues.

Director Linder indicated that he is unaware of such a rumor or its source, and he clarified that the City does not give preferential treatment to or exercise bias against any user group.

June Trahern expressed that mountain bikers are aware they are breaking rules and it has been an issue over the years. She is concerned for the safety of children who use the Preserve.

Sandi Valeri recommended suggesting to mountain bikers that the City is considering taking mountain bike access from them if their behavior does not improve. Her children have experienced problems with mountain bikers in Forrestal Reserve, but she has not seen mountain bike issues where she rides in Filiorum Reserve.

Deputy Jimenez communicated that Preserve deputies are dedicated to improving public safety and rules compliance. He reiterated that Deputies have been in the Preserve for only 20 days, but to give them time to make a difference. He also shared that Deputies have been learning trails and talking with residents and trail users about specific concerns.

Deputy Kuwata clarified that nighttime calls should go to the Lomita Sheriff's Department Watch Commander, and from there, calls are triaged by level of importance relative to public safety. He also shared that he appreciates receiving the weekly VTW reports via email.

Randy Harwood asked if Deputies would like VTW to take pictures of violations.

Deputy Kuwata indicated that pictures are helpful, but the volunteer's safety comes first. He also clarified that Deputies cannot issue citations with pictures only as evidence. He also shared that Deputies are looking into off-road motorcycles to assist with patrol.

Preserve Operations

Preserve Enforcement Report – Analyst Lozano reported that the City began contracting with the Lomita Sheriff's Department July 1st, and introduced Deputies Kuwata and Jimenez who are dedicated to the Preserve for a total of 80 hours per week.

Deputies Kuwata and Jimenez shared that they are getting to know the trails, are talking with Preserve visitors and nearby residents and getting a feel for the task. They are dedicated to enforcement and making a positive change, and are looking forward to the challenge.

Sergeant Shive shared his contact number, and indicated that he has been out (not in uniform) on horseback also exploring the Preserve. So far he has seen good compliance, and he is also familiarizing himself with the trails and Preserve. He shared that local firemen train on mountain bikes in the Preserve and he will reach out to them for some peer education.

Open Space Management Report – Analyst Lozano and Recreation Specialist Pearce gave a report on the City's new Open Space Management (OSM) staff. They have been fully staffed for nearly three months, patrol the Preserve approximately 75 hrs/week, and have made over 7,000 contacts and completed numerous maintenance tasks.

Review of Volunteer Trail Watch Reports – Director Mohan thanked VTW members for attending, and reported that the most common violations VTW are seeing in the Preserve are mountain bike misuse and vegetation edging along trails.

Preserve Interpretive Activities/Other

Director Mohan shared information on upcoming PVPLC public hikes and volunteer opportunities.

Analyst Lozano shared information on upcoming City public hikes and volunteer opportunities.

Public Comments/Questions

James Ichley indicated that he heard the City may consider parking Portuguese Bend Reserve visitors at the Promenade mall and shuttling them to the Preserve.

Director Linder clarified that this option was considered by Council but has not been pursued, and that the Public Works Dept. will be bringing an agenda item to Council in the future.

Sandi Valeri expressed concern that the Outreach Table survey showed so many visitors from out of town, and that the City is covering maintenance costs for recreation for the larger community. She suggested paid parking may help alleviate maintenance costs.

Nari Okui inquired as to the cost of a mountain bike citation.

Analyst Lozano shared that the base fee for reckless trail use is \$100, but with court fees added, can total to about \$300. However, she clarified that the fine is at the discretion of the Torrance Courthouse/judge.

Sergeant Shive indicated that he will be visiting with Torrance Courthouse representatives to communicate the importance of citations that protect the habitat so fewer are thrown out/reduced in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.