

**CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES
NATURE PRESERVE QUARTERLY PUBLIC FORUM
JANUARY 18, 2017**

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 Admin. Analyst/Open Space Manager
Dave Pearce – Recreation and Parks Recreation Supervisor
Sergeant Doug Shive – Lomita Sheriff Station
Deputy Pablo Jimenez – Lomita Sheriff Station
Deputy Kevin Kuwata – Lomita Sheriff Station
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/Unauthorized Spur Trail Closures: Director Mohan reported on PVPLC habitat and trail maintenance activities including habitat restoration at Alta Vicente Reserve that will take place through the summer. Trail work on Ishibashi Trail has been delayed due to rain, and PVPLC has focused unauthorized trail closures in Filiorum and Forrestal Reserves. A log of field operation activities for the previous quarter was made available.

Public Comments:

Eva Cicoria expressed that natural materials were the most desirable for trail projects and commented on the amount of time introduced (not naturally occurring) materials are left on trails.

Director Mohan indicated that natural materials were most desirable for trail work and that long term goals are to remove introduced trail project materials.

Peter Shaw indicated that there is substantial rain erosion issues on Vanderlip Trail. He also recommended sending out a listserv message to indicate when the Preserve reopens after a rain, to assist closures run more smoothly. He also requested info on why Abalone Cove Reserve may open before the rest of the Preserve.

Superintendent Larvenz indicated that Public Works is looking into long term solutions for the Vanderlip Trail erosion problem, and that in the meantime they will experiment with some barriers to prevent mudflow into the neighborhood.

Analyst Lozano reported that the park at Abalone Cove may open prior to the Reserve portion, however the City is working on better coordination to keep the Reserve portion closed.

June Trahern reported cut fencing at Vicente Bluffs, and suggested clarifying to fisherman where they can and can't fish.

Judy Bradford expressed concern with the wait time to receive a call back from the Preserve Info and Reporting Line. She also recommended filling the trail areas at Vicente Bluffs Reserve that form large puddles after a rain.

Peter Shaw asked for information about the broken drainage pipe at Garden Trail.

Maintenance Superintendent Larvenz reported that Public Works is aware and working on this longer term Garden Trail project, but that work could not be conducted until the Natural Communities Conservation Plan is complete.

Mike Malone suggested that Vicente Bluffs Reserve can remain open after a rain because the trails are decomposed granite and less susceptible to damage. He also pointed out some railing that needs repair.

Preserve Operations

Preserve Enforcement Report: Deputies Jimenez and Kuwata reported out on 4th quarter 2016 activities including trends, violations, and citations issued. The 4th quarter 2016 Preserve Enforcement Report was distributed at the meeting.

Open Space Management (OSM) Report: Recreation Supervisor Dave Pearce gave a PowerPoint presentation on OSM activities over the last quarter, including public contacts, violation trends, public outreach, and maintenance.

Review of Volunteer Trail Watch (VTW) Reports: Director Mohan provided a report on VTW activities for the previous quarter including comments on the coordinated rain closure and educational efforts helping to keep visitors out of the Preserve during closures.

Projects in the Preserve: Analyst Lozano provided information on the Public Works Department's dewatering well project in the Portuguese Bend Nature Reserve.

Vehicle Access in the Preserve: Analyst Lozano gave a PowerPoint presentation on vehicle access in the Preserve, including how roads/vehicular access trails came to be, what agencies use the trails, and frequency of use.

Public Notification Process for Preserve Projects: Analyst Lozano communicated the City and PVPLC's understanding for the need for more transparency on projects taking place in the Preserve earlier in the process. She shared that the City and PVPLC developed a better process for public notification on more significant Preserve projects. It includes discussion of projects during Quarterly Public Forum meetings earlier in the projects' process and through the Preserve listserv when projects fall in between the quarterly timeline.

Public Comments:

Eva Cicoria expressed that the frequency of vehicle use in the Preserve detracts from the peaceful experience the public is looking for and has negative impacts on the habitat. She indicated that it was not envisioned for the Preserve, and that rules enforcement by foot is preferable to enforcement using vehicles. She also requested more specific information on the assists listed in the Preserve Enforcement Report.

Director Linder expressed that the current level of enforcement is a result of requests from the PVPLC and public and was put in place by the City Council. He expressed that the City has a great understanding of the sensitivity of habitat and public experience in the Preserve, but that because the decision was made to allow public access to the Preserve, a balance must be struck between vehicle access for management purposes and the desire for tranquility. He also shared that patrolling the 1,400 acre Preserve by foot would result in significantly reduced rules compliance, habitat protection, and maintenance and would need to correspond to a lowered expectation from the public in these areas. He indicated that the City's mission is habitat protection, trails sustainability, and a safe experience.

Deputy Jimenez shared that rules compliance would be significantly negatively impacted if deputies patrolled solely by foot, as deputies would not be visible. He indicated that because the level of Preserve use has increased substantially over time, the need for adaptive management is necessary. The same methods of enforcement that may have been affective earlier, would not be affective now.

Analyst Lozano shared information on past enforcement challenges including citations dismissed in court and inappropriate signage, and expressed concern for taking away vehicles as an enforcement tool as the Preserve would suffer. She also emphasized the need to compare the impact of a small deputy vehicle on the Preserve to the impact of thousands of visitors unchecked by enforcement personnel.

PVPLC Executive Director Vona shared that PVPLC provided comments to be included in the review of the proposed vehicle access plan.

Barbara Ailor expressed some public hesitation and sensitivity on the topic trail widening, especially after the Toyon/Peppertree incident. She encouraged sharing of more information and time to build back public trust.

Randy Harwood indicated that there is a shared concern that trails in the Preserve are widening. He suggested a need for natural barriers to protect trail widths, and indicated that he would rather see nature than vehicles when enjoying the Preserve.

Preserve Interpretive Activities/Other

PVPLC-led Interpretive Activities: Director Mohan reported on PVPLC interpretive activities and provided handouts.

Los Serenos Docent/City-led Interpretive Activities: Analyst Lozano reported on Docent activities and provided handouts.

City Preserve Subcommittee: Analyst Lozano reported that a City Preserve Subcommittee has been formed consisting of two City Council Members, City staff, and 2 PVPLC Board Members, and PVPLC staff. The meetings will be open to the public, agendas will be posted, and the calendar is still being set. Public Forum meetings are still the appropriate venue to receive and give input on Preserve projects and public use issues, as the Subcommittee's scope will be narrower.

Next Public Forum: Analyst Lozano reported that the next Public Forum will be April 19th, and that the calendar for the remainder of the year is on the City's Preserve webpage.

Public Comments/Questions

None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.