

MEMORANDUM

Date: Tuesday, October 13th, 2020

To: Katie Lozano, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

From: Ranger Saldaña

SUBJECT: 3rd Quarter Rancho Palos Verdes Ranger Enforcement Report

PRESERVE VISITOR CONTACTS SUMMARY

- July 01, 2020 - September 30, 2020
 - 4 Rangers* patrolled the reserves during this period
- *Approximately 130 hours per week.

This reporting period continued to be atypical as operations continued to be driven by public health mandates from the State and LA County regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Operations under COVID-19 LA County Health Department Regulations

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, group size was limited to no more than 10. Rangers educated patrons about social distancing, facial coverings, and other restrictions as mandated by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, and responded to various calls for service for reports of patrons in non-compliance with these mandates. During routine patrols, Rangers saw 70% compliance, and educated users on temporary trail guidelines. Reports for compliance from the public were significantly lower than those observed by Rangers.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health ordered Los Angeles County beaches closed from July 3rd through July 6th at 5:00am related to COVID-19. OSM assisted in setting barricades, and educating trail users on mandated closures. Rangers patrolled areas to ensure compliance was met.

Lastly, during this quarter, Rangers patrolled and monitored patrons on trails as a result of a series of advisories and warnings issued by the National Weather Service, including: Excessive Heat Watch, Extreme Fire Weather, Heat Advisory and Red Flag Warnings. Smoke Advisory was also in effect due to active wildfires, such as the Bobcat Fire, which began on September 6th, 2020.

OVERALL VISITOR CONTACTS:

Total Contacts: 6,269

Hikers: 5,732

Dog Walkers: 282

Cyclists: 255

Equestrians: 2
Warnings: 378

Calls for Assistance:

Heat exhaustion & heat stress: 24
Dog exhaustion & heat stress: 2
Other (i.e. underlying condition, sprained ankle): 6

Additionally, Rangers patrolled and monitored patrons on trails as a result of a series of advisories and warnings issued by the National Weather Service, including: Excessive Heat Watch, Extreme Fire Weather, Heat Advisory and Red Flag Warnings, a minimum of 17 days affected during this period. As a result, 32 transports were made to patrons exhibiting signs of heat exhaustion or heat stress.

Smoke Advisory was also in effect by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) due to active wildfires, such as the Bobcat Fire, which began on September 6th, 2020.

Preserve Information and Reporting Hotline Calls: 73 calls

COVID-19 related (including masks, social distancing, one-way signage): 2
Use of Spur Trail: 17
Vandalism: 1
Paragliding: 4
Maintenance: 0
Parking Issues: 5
Trail Status and General Information: 33
Dog on the beach: 2
Fishing / Poaching: 3
Smoking: 1
Other Violations: 5

ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY:

Notice of Parking Citations Issued: 422 Total*

Number of violations is greater than the number of citations issued

By Violation:

Failure to Obey Signs - 88
Posted Temporary No Parking / Fire Lane – 9
Passenger Loading Zone - 12
Park by Permit – 275
Handicap Zone – 29
Other - 17

By Location:

Abalone Cove Reserve – 140
Crenshaw Boulevard (Portuguese Bend / Filiorum adjacent) – 20
Del Cerro – 258
Ocean Trails Reserve – 1
City of RPV Parks – 1
Vicente Bluffs Reserve – 2

Notice to Appear Citations Issued: 21 Total

By Violation:

Closed Area – 18
Protection of Flora / Fauna – 1
Dogs off Leash – 2

By Location:

Abalone Cove Reserve – 4
Agua Amarga Reserve – 0
Filiorum Reserve – 0
Forrestal Reserve – 1
Ocean Trails Reserve – 2
Portuguese Bend Reserve – 0
San Ramon Reserve – 0
Vicente Bluffs Reserve – 14

ACTIVITY REPORT BY RESERVE:

The next section provides further information on projects, reports, and observations received by Rangers from the public, organized per Reserve. Numbers do not reflect actual number of individuals in the Reserve, rather those spoken to while on foot and/or vehicle patrols.

Abalone Cove Reserve:

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	820	103	96	154
Dogs	22	5	6	0
Biker	7	0	1	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers educated and informed patrons of Reserve rules for various violations observed, including dogs off leash, dogs on the beach, entering closed area, and drones prohibited.

Rangers have also worked closely with the Department of Fish and Wildlife Game Wardens, and the Los Angeles Marine Protected Areas Collaborative Team to educate visitors about Abalone Cove and Vicente Bluffs State Marine Protection Areas. Rangers have assisted in reporting, educating, and enforcement aspect to deter poaching in and around Abalone Cove. The City also installed temporary signage to educate patrons about our MPAs. Official signage is still being developed and approved by CDFW.



Since June 28th, 2020, Open Space Management has begun tracking the number of organisms observed and/or deterred. A total of 216 individuals were spoken to regarding MPA violations, and educated on rules, permit process, and alternative locations outside of the MPA zone. Staff confirmed 631 marine organisms deterred from take in the MPA zone, primarily from Abalone Cove SMCA including over 50 reports from the public (i.e. phone calls, or staff being flagged down during patrols). The organisms included mussels, purple sea urchins, sea stars, limpets, turban snails, shore hermits, hermit crabs, as well as rocks, and sea shells.



Staff installed an “Area Closed” sign at the bottom of Sacred Cove View Trail West.



During this period, staff received multiple reports from the public regarding injured wildlife. Staff responded to confirm the location and notify the corresponding agencies for assistance. The injured wildlife included seagull with a broken leg, seagull with a hook imbedded in its tongue, deceased dolphin, and a raccoon with visible scarring and partially removed jaw.



Three encampments were found, in Abalone Cove, two of which were vacated. Staff responded and tagged both vacated sites, which requires the posting of a public notice to vacate the property within 72 hours of the notice. After the 72 hour period, staff returned to the site and removed the items. The third encampment was located on Inspiration Point trail, a mere 5 feet away from the cliff. The individuals complied when asked to retrieve and remove their tent from the trail as it is not permissible in the Nature Preserve.



Agua Amarga Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	5	0	0	0
Dog	1	0	0	0
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

During this quarter, few patrons were observed during patrols at Agua Amarga Reserve. No activity to report.

Alta Vicente Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	27	0	4	0
Dog	7	0	0	0
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers received reports and spoke with a homeless individual who had been seen in Alta Vicente Reserve and Point Vicente Interpretive Center Park area. The public had reported the individual had chased a group of hikers from the trail with a stick, while yelling at them.

Over this reporting period, ranger continued to monitor Alta Vicente for increased use resulting from the City’s public education campaign to encourage visitors to explore new Reserve areas with ample parking and amenities.

Filiorum Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	247	34	0	0
Dog	8	0	0	0
Biker	3	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

No activity to report.

Forrestal Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	187	49	1	0
Dog	19	0	1	1
Biker	12	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

On August 6th, Staff received a report of damage to the wooden bridge on Mariposa Trail. Staff consulted with PVPLC and Trail Crew to restore the bridge.



Staff received reports of two rattlesnakes at Ladera Linda Park. Staff educated patrons about snake behavior, and maintaining a safe distance. Staff monitored the rattlesnakes to ensure they were able to retreat to their burrows. Staff noticed one of the rattlesnakes had an injury from a previous incident. The rattlesnake had tangled itself in plastic netting earlier in its life, and as it grew, the netting began to constrict and cause tearing on the skin and scales. Animal Control was called, but as it posed no immediate health risk, the snake was released.

Rangers educated a group of two regarding hoverboards in the Nature Preserve. Hoverboards are considered a motorized vehicle with lithium batteries, and are not permitted in the Nature Preserve.

Rangers are monitoring use levels at Forrestal Reserve to assess whether parking and access changes on Crenshaw Blvd. south of Crest Rd. are impacting use at this location. While Rangers have noticed a slight increase in use, staff will continue to monitor and establish monitoring techniques.



Ocean Trails Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	506	60	18	2
Dog	32	2	10	1
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers continued to receive numerous reports regarding illegal paragliding / hang glider activity in Ocean Trails Reserve. Rangers patrolled area and ensured closure signage was in place to educate, warn, and cite violators as appropriate. Additionally, with the assistance of Open Space Management, spur trail were closed off to deter activity.

Individuals were contacted by the Sheriff's Department to pursue legal action in the event they are seen paragliding in the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

Portuguese Bend Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	3,247	161	40	20
Dog	166	5	2	0
Biker	224	5	1	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

On July 1st, 2020, a small one acre brush fire, cause unknown broke out into the late hours on Sweetbay Drive. The burned area did not reach Portuguese Bend Reserve.

Starting September 4th, 2020 public parking was restricted on Crenshaw Boulevard south of Crest Road. Signage was posted on affected trailheads to inform the public and request public input.



Rangers found over a dozen deceased coy fish discarded along Narcissa Drive and Water Tank Trail.

On August 8th, Rangers received a call regarding a female and two children with a riffle in the Reserve on Burma Trail. Rangers notified Deputies and confirmed the individual was shooting at aluminum cans along Burma Road.

Rangers also monitored and proactively reached out to Hash House Harriers organizers to remind them of organized activities, and permitted use of the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve. The

San Ramon Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	8	3	1	0
Dog	0	0	0	0
Biker	7	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

On August 30th, staff removed trash from the turnout at San Ramon parking area, including 6 – 30 gallon trash bags, chain link fence, and 3 porcelain figures. After consulting with the habitat land manager, the closed section of Wanderer Trail due to the fire that had burned on July 8th was reopened to the public.



Dirt jumps were illegally installed on Switchback Trail. They will be scheduled for removal.

Rangers received a report of an illegal structure located on the wash at San Ramon. The structure was vacant, with the exception of a few tools, including a shovel head, hammer, hedge trimmer blade, and hand saw.



Three Sisters Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	6	0	0	0
Dog	1	0	0	0
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

No activity to report.

Vicente Bluffs Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	691	155	192	16
Dog	30	0	1	0
Biker	2	0	3	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers responded to multiple reports of people climbing over the fence near the scenic look out adjacent to Calle Entradero Parking Lot. Open Space Management staff assisted Rangers in educating many individuals on public safety concerns regarding steep and unstable cliffs and unauthorized spur trails.

The City also received information regarding high use of drones, which are not permitted in the Vicente Bluffs Reserve, or adjacent areas. The City is working on signage, and is enforcing users with drones.

The Vicente Bluffs Replacement Fence Project began August 10th, 2020 with collaboration from Public Works Department, which included changes to trails at Vicente Bluffs. Initially, sections of Sea Scape Trail were one-way directional trail to allow work to resume during weekdays. Due to delays, and poor product satisfaction, the entire Sea Scape Trail was closed to the public.



City Parks

In addition to the 1,400 acres of open space in the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve, Rangers also assisted Parks and Recreation Staff in responding to calls for service and assistance in matters related to enforcement. These calls were related to homeless individuals and encampments, paragliders, group use (during COVID-19 mandated group size of no more than 10), and unauthorized use of sports / athletic fields (city permit required to use fields).