

MEMORANDUM

Date:

To: Katie Lozano, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

From: Ranger Saldaña

SUBJECT: 1st Quarter Rancho Palos Verdes Ranger Enforcement Report

PRESERVE VISITOR CONTACTS SUMMARY

- January 1 – March 31, 2021
- 4 Rangers and 1 Parking Ambassador patrolled the Preserve during this period

This reporting period continued to be atypical as operations continued to be influenced by the Covid-19 Pandemic and public health mandates from the State and LA County. Park Rangers continue to monitor County Health mandates and to educate visitors on face coverings, social distancing, and group size. Park Rangers also continue to post signage at trailheads displaying County Health orders related to trail and open space use. Trail Counter data and ranger observations show a continued increase in public use of open spaces. This is likely due to the limitations in recreational and entertainment options during the Pandemic.

Operations under COVID-19 LA County Health Department Regulations

On Monday January 25, The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health lifted its *Targeted Temporary Safer at Home Order*. Public parks and outdoor spaces are ideal places to gather with your household and participate in recreation activities, as they can help reduce the spread of the virus from one person to another. When participating in a gathering or other activity, all park rules must be followed.

In accordance with the L.A. County Health Officer Order, private outdoor gatherings outdoors of up to 3 households and a total of 15 people are permitted. All attendees must wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing from those not in their household. In order to lower the risk of exposure to COVID-19, remember to keep gatherings short (no more than two hours), practice good hand hygiene, use single-serve disposable containers and refrain from activities that may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmissions, such as singing, chanting, shouting, or physical exertion.

Welcome Park Ranger Gonzalez!

Ranger Gonzalez joined the Open Space Management (OSM) team in December 2020, as a part-time Park Ranger, and was promoted to full-time Park Ranger in March 2021. Ranger Gonzalez will patrol the 1,400 acres of the Preserve, educating patrons about park rules and regulations, and enforcing violations. Ranger Gonzalez has previous experience in law enforcement and public safety with the City of Los Angeles.



Welcome Park Ranger Sanchez!

Ranger Moris Sanchez has joined the Open Space Management Team as a Parking Ambassador. He will educate patrons about parking issues related to the implementation of the new ParkMobile parking system on Crenshaw Boulevard and Park Place. He will be available to assist patrons and will enforce violations. Ranger Sanchez has previous experience in education and public safety, having worked with the United States Forest Service.



Trainings and Coordination:

Trail Work (January 9th): OSM staff participated in a trail work and maintenance training day to learn more about tool safety, slope, and trail grading for water erosion control.

Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Trainings & Meetings (January 14th, March 5th, March 18th): Staff attended three virtual webinars and meetings relating to the protection of MPAs and metadata collection.

ROHVA Training (February 4th and March 11th): Open Space Management participated in Recreation Off-Highway Vehicle Association (ROHVA) training to learn how to safely and responsibly operate the OSM Division's two Polaris vehicles. The vehicles have been used for patrols in the Nature Preserve, as well as in coordinating emergency rescues in areas where full-size vehicles are not able to traverse.



Water Rescue and Cave Training (March 24th): OSM staff participated in a multiagency training to learn more about water rescues and water safety at Abalone Cove Beach. Staff was able to swim into the Inspiration Point cave with Los Angeles County Fire Department Lifeguards and learned how to communicate with swimmers from dry land to hoist them up to safety, if possible. This particular location has been popularized by social media for cliff diving, and becomes hazardous during particular tidal and weather conditions. It has been the location of serious injuries and deaths in recent years.



Project Coordination & Emergency Work:

Due to significant rain, the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve closed twice, during this reporting period (January 23rd and 29th). Public notices were posted on trailheads, listserv messages were distributed, Google maps and the City's Trail Alerts and Conditions webpage were updated, and Reporting Hotline outgoing message was updated to reflect the Preserve closure. The Palos Verdes Nature Preserve may be subject to closure during significant periods of rain, including more than 0.25 inches of rain within 24 hours and will remain closed for up to 72 hours following the last period of rain for public safety and to prevent trail erosion and habitat damage.



OSM staff help to coordinate multiple projects within the Preserve to ensure Natural Communities Conservation Plan / Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP / HCP) compliance with PVPLC, to implement trail closures and public safety measures, and to provide public notification. Below are a list of projects OSM staff helped coordinate with PVPLC, the Public Works Department, and public utilities in the first quarter:

- Public Works Dept. Coastal Blufftop Fence Replacement Project

(August – January at Vicente Bluffs Reserve)

- California Water Company Gary's Gulch Emergency Maintenance (January at Filiorum Reserve)
- Public Works Dept. Burma Road Grade Dip Project (January at Portuguese Bend Reserve)
- Public Works Dept. Vanderlip Trail Emergency Maintenance (January 21st at Portuguese Bend Reserve)
- Public Works Dept. Sea Dahlia Trail Project (January at Abalone Cove Reserve)
- Southern California Edison Ishibashi Farm Infrastructure Maintenance (February at Portuguese Bend Reserve)
- PVPLC Acacia Removal Project (February at Portuguese Bend Reserve)
- Public Works Dept. Sea Dahlia Trail Water Pipe damage (February at Abalone Cove Reserve)
- Cox Communications infrastructure maintenance on Burma Road (February at Portuguese Bend Reserve)
- Cox Communications infrastructure maintenance on Landslide Scarp Trail (February at Portuguese Bend)
- Public Works Dept. Altamira Canyon Drainage / Erosion Control Project (March at Portuguese Bend Reserve and Abalone Cove Reserve)

OVERALL VISITOR CONTACTS:

Total Contacts: 8,387

Hikers: 7,238

Dog Walkers: 731

Cyclists: 396

Equestrians: 22

Warnings: 271

Calls for Assistance: 10

Heat exhaustion & heat stress: 4

Dog exhaustion & heat stress: 0

Basic First Aid Care (Minor cuts and rashes): 2

Other (i.e. underlying condition, sprained ankle): 4

Preserve Information and Reporting Hotline Calls: 43 calls

**No. of violations higher than the number of calls. Some calls reported multiple violations observed at once.*

Trail Status and General Information: 10

Use of Spur Trail / Closed Areas: 8

Dog on the beach or dog off leash: 6
Parking Issues: 3
Vandalism: 2
Paragliding: 2
Lost and Found: 2
Fishing / Poaching: 2
Drone: 2
COVID-19 related (including masks, social distancing violations): 1
Maintenance: 1
Removal of flora/fauna: 1
Smoking: 1
Lost Hiker: 1
Motorized Bike: 1
Medical Assistance / First Aid: 1

ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY:

Notice of Parking Citations Issued: Total 802

By Violation:

Passenger Loading Zone - 461
Park by Permit – 189
Parking Lot / Preserve / Park Hours- 81
Posted Temporary No Parking / Fire Lane – 54
Handicap Zone – 11
Other- 6

By Location:

Crenshaw Boulevard (Portuguese Bend / Filiorum adjacent) – 534
Del Cerro Park – 178
Abalone Cove Reserve – 66
City of RPV Parks – 14
Vicente Bluffs Reserve – 10
Forrestal Reserve - 1

Notice to Appear Citations Issued: Total 41

Number of violations is greater than the number of citations issued

By Violation:

Closed Area – 25
Dogs off Leash – 12
Smoking – 2
Motorized Vehicle - 2
Destruction of Flora or Fauna -1
Animals on the Beach – 1
Paragliding (Misdemeanor) – 1

By Location:

Abalone Cove Reserve – 14
Vicente Bluffs Reserve – 9
Forrestal Reserve – 6
Portuguese Bend Reserve – 5
Ocean Trails Reserve – 3
City of RPV Parks - 2
Alta Vicente Reserve -1
Filiorum Reserve –1

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. Information does also not include routine maintenance.

Abalone Cove Reserve:

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	1,471	295	74	78
Dogs	109	38	33	3
Biker	8	3	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

A group of six individuals were seen by staff on the eastern edge of the parking lot playing loud music, while drinking and smoking. Rangers notified Sheriff Deputies for assistance.

A contract vehicle with authorized access drove into Chapel View Trail, having mistaken it for Beach School Trail. As a result of recent rains, trails were slick and muddy, resulting in poor traction. The vehicle lost control and got stuck. The Los Angeles County Fire Department assisted the driver and vehicle out of the Reserve safely. No habitat was damaged, the trail sustained minor damage and ruts from the vehicle tracks.

Rangers were notified of after-hours activity taking place at the beach at Sacred Cove over the course of several nights with bonfires and group gatherings. In this reporting period, Rangers confirmed evidence of five bonfires, dismantled all evidence of bonfires, and made



contact with individuals, as able. OSM monitors open flame violations, including smoking and bonfires, or other sources of ignition within park and preserve properties. Fires are not permitted per the City's Municipal Code (12.16.070 RPMVC), and is considered a misdemeanor. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes is designated as a very high fire hazard severity zone per the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. Staff continues to educate patrons about fire safety, enforce the municipal code, and inspect areas to ensure all fires are put out safely to reduce the risk of fire.

Rangers were notified of a panga boat on the beach at Sacred Cove. Rangers assisted in securing the scene while multiple agencies responded to help with the investigation and removal of the panga, including California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Coast Guard, Los Angeles County Sheriff Department, California Border Patrol, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Los Angeles County Fire Department.



The City's "Area Closed" sign located on Gorge 1 to educate visitors of hazardous conditions and falling rocks was washed out twice due to a series of strong, gale winds and high tide events. The culmination resulted in weakening of the base. The sign was re-installed and reinforced with the assistance of the Public Works Dept. to withstand these conditions.



While on patrol, staff observed downed fencing and vehicle debris on Chapel View Trail. The night prior, at 7:23 p.m., a vehicle went over the curb from Palos Verdes Drive South, and onto the trail. Staff coordinated with PVPLC, and determined no habitat was damaged. Fencing was repaired.

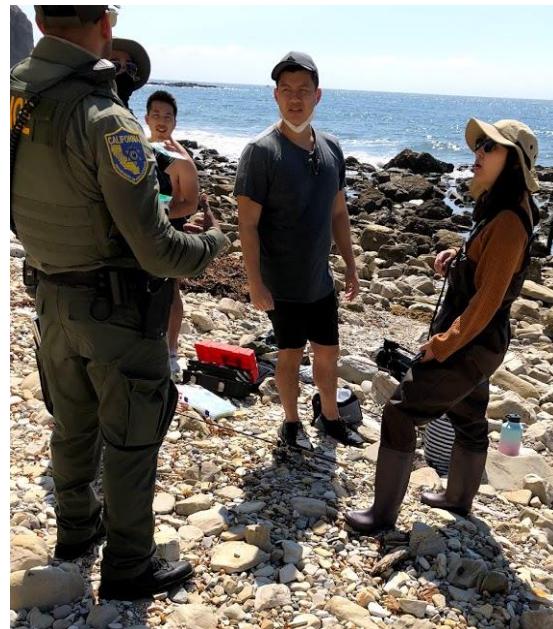


A concerned patron reported a Siberian husky dog that was left inside of a vehicle at the Abalone Cove parking lot to staff. Windows had been rolled down half an inch and had been unattended for several hours. Patron returned before further action could be taken and educated on dog safety.

Staff received multiple reports of dead or injured animals, including a baby seal, and a pelican. Staff confirmed location, and condition, and coordinated with the appropriate agencies to ensure safety or removal of the animals.

Rangers spoke with two hikers carrying small shovels while hiking in the Reserve. No evidence of trail damage or shovel use was seen. Patrons were educated and warned on no-take of flora and fauna, as well as on staying on trail and habitat damage.

On weekends, holidays, and during low-tide events, staff continued to observe high traffic in the City's two State Marine Conservation Areas, primarily, at Abalone Cove SMCA. Staff continued to educate patrons about Marine Protected Areas (MPA), and shared proper tide pool etiquette for safely viewing but not disturbing marine organisms. During this reporting period, a total of 32 violations were observed, and 62 individuals were contacted and educated by staff, resulting in the return of 114 marine organisms, and an additional 20 violations prevented by providing information and alternative locations where individuals can legally take outside of the MPA zone with a fishing license.



Additionally, staff continued to collaborate, and communicate with local agencies, including California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Los Angeles Waterkeeper, and Los Angeles Marine Protected Areas Collaborative Team.

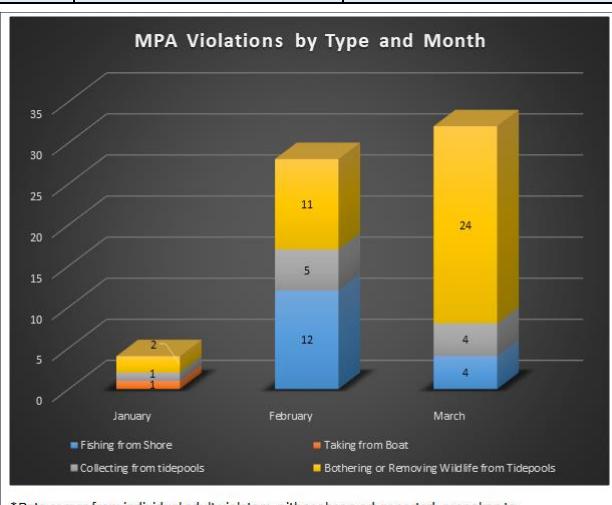
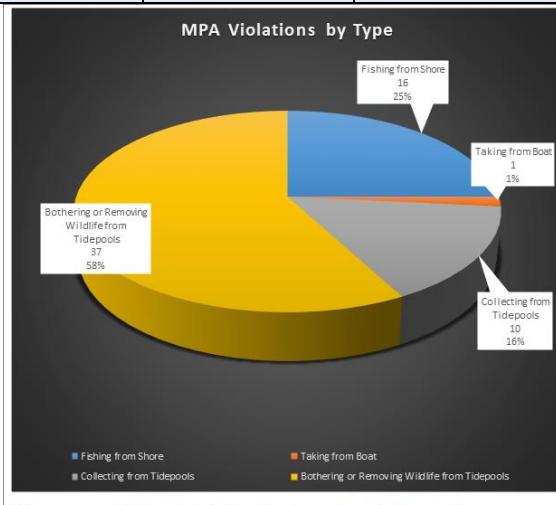
Poaching activity dropped significantly within our MPAs, especially when compared to the activity seen during the previous reporting period. However, as the weather has warmed up, there has been a visible increase with more people visiting to coastal areas. Overall, despite record high levels of activity within our MPAs, instances of violations are still low, and those that are observed are mostly non-consumptive. For

the future, OSM will continue to patrol MPAs within the City jurisdiction (Abalone Cove State Marine Conservation Area and Point Vicente State Marine Conservation Area) and install signage to educate patrons and combat poaching activity. Compliance rates among groups contacted by staff remains at 100%.

Data Overview

Type of MPA Violation by Individual				
	Fishing from Shore	Taking from Boat	Collecting from Tidepools	Bothering or Removing Wildlife from Tidepools
January	0	1	1	2
February	12	0	5	11
March	4	0	4	24
Total	16	1	10	37

Other Statistics				
	Total Violations	Violators Spoken to	Wildlife Returned	Violations Prevented
January	3	4	8	2
February	16	26	68	9
March	13	32	38	9
Total	32	62	114	20



Aqua Amarga Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	13	5	0	0
Dog	7	2	0	0
Biker	1	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers found a string of solar powered lights secured onto a boulder within the Reserve. No other items were found in the vicinity, but were located off-trail.

Rangers received a report of unsafe biking conditions along Lunada Canyon Trail as well as an increase of dogs off leash. Reporting individual stated an individual broke their arm during an interaction in an attempt to yield.

Alta Vicente Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	111	18	0	0
Dog	33	6	7	2
Biker	5	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Park Rangers received several reports of encampments within the Reserve and a transient individual in the habitat. No encampments or property was found.

Park Rangers received a report about a Coast Guard bunker that had been potentially used as a homeless shelter. The area near the Reserve including the bunker and surrounding land is property of the United States Coast Guard. OSM increased patrols to keep patrons out and contacted Coast Guard personnel to secure the unmanned facility.

OSM staff has observed increased use at Alta Vicente Reserve and an increase in violations, including dogs off leash and people off trail, encroaching into native habitat. Staff and PVPLC continued to monitor activity and educate patrons about authorized trail use, and ensuring all patrons comply with the Preserve rules.

Filiorum Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	295	35	20	0
Dog	20	2	0	0
Biker	9	2	2	0
Equestrian	2	0	2	0

The trail counter located within the Reserve was found vandalized, resulting in loss of data for several days during this reporting period until repairs were made. Staff repaired the counter and ensured it was able to provide accurate count of trail users to capture trail use data.

Rangers observed an unauthorized vehicle on McBride Trail. It was confirmed the individual was a tree trimmer who was conducting work on an adjacent residential property and had accessed the trails for better access. The contractor was contacted and asked to leave the area. Pictures of damage to trails were taken and reported. Coordination with the Department of Public Works, Code Enforcement, and PVPLC took place to assess habitat damage, vandalism and repairs of City barriers, and in contacting responsible parties for damages and repairs.



Los Angeles County Fire Department responded to a call regarding an injured hiker at an unknown location within Filiorum Reserve. Rangers assisted first responders in patrolling trails to locate the injured party. Rangers were able to escort an ambulance down Burma Road to make contact with the injured party.

While on patrol, Rangers were flagged down by patrons regarding a series of vehicle break-ins along Crenshaw Boulevard. The exact time of the break-ins was unknown, Rangers were notified around noon. Rangers remained on scene and assisted patrons in contacting the Sheriff Department to file a police report. At least three vehicles had damage.



Forrestal Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	552	80	26	4
Dog	108	19	4	4
Biker	37	4	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers contacted a female transient who had set a tent on Forrestal Drive near the communication enclosure. She had been seen as early as 6 a.m. The female was informed that camping is not allowed and asked to leave the area. The female was noncompliant, and Rangers notified LASD Deputies who were able to identify the woman. Two additional reports were made regarding encampments on Ladera Linda fields. Rangers patrolled area and took action, as appropriate.



Rangers were notified of a dog fight involving three dogs, and two owners at Ladera Linda Park adjacent to Forrestal Reserve. Rangers assisted in exchange of contact information. Neither party wanted to press charges.

Rangers received multiple reports of individuals with dogs off leash, in park and Reserve property. In most instances, the dogs were aggressive, or in narrow sections of the trail. One individual indicated she fell as a result of dogs being off leash in a narrow section of the trail where they were unable to safely pass through. The individual suffered no injuries, and Rangers were unable to locate the individual.

Malaga Canyon Reserve

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

Rangers received several calls of unauthorized trail building. Rangers patrolled the Reserve and confirmed three separate areas had evidence of unauthorized trail building, including cut lemonade berry, spur trail built, and tools found and retrieved. No individuals were found. Unauthorized trail building results in unsafe conditions, loose and exposed soil and damage to the surrounding habitat and native vegetation. Rangers continue to patrol and monitor the Reserve.



Rangers received a report from residents regarding a shelter erected along the wash within the Reserve. Rangers confirmed the location and found several items, including a sofa, tire, a seat cushion, and several food waste containers. OSM conducted a thorough inspection and removed all items from the area.



Ocean Trails Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	976	106	14	2
Dog	122	39	34	1
Biker	7	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0



Rangers continued to receive reports of increased dog use at Rancho Palos Verdes Beach. Animals are not allowed on any beach in the City of Rancho Palos Verdes. Dogs are allowed on the trails, if they are on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length. The City is working with Trump National Staff to enforce the Municipal Code.

On January 7th, a group of peaceful protestors were gathering at Trump National Golf Course, outside of Ocean Trails Reserve. Los Angeles County Sheriff Deputies were notified. No further action was taken.

While on patrol, OSM identified a deceased Barn Owl. The cause of death was unknown. Staff reported to location for retrieval by Animal Control.

Staff made contact with an individual who was seen collecting rocks along the beach and placing them into a bag. Staff educated the man on Preserve rules and regulations, including no take of any item from the Preserve or City beaches.

The Recreation and Parks Department is coordinating with the Public Works Department to identify and address trash issues at RPV Beach. The City will be coordinating with their contractor to increase service in an effort to address increased use of RPV beach. Currently, the City has three trash cans on the beach. Two are located at the bottom of Sunset Trail, and one is located at the bottom of Sunrise Trail. Additional trash cans are located on the bluff top trail at Catalina Trail.

OSM staff continued to monitor and address illegal paragliding activity. Launching from or landing on City property is a misdemeanor, and in this particular instance has permanently denuded sensitive habitat, including the mariposa lily. Associated violations include vandalism, unauthorized access, trampling of native vegetation, and intentional removal / take of habitat. Staff will continue to reinforce closures with natural barriers, and ensure signage is in place to educate patrons. All authorized trails are marked on Reserve maps, which are available on the City's website under Nature Preserve Information and Trail Maps as well as on major trailheads.

Portuguese Bend Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	3,396	327	16	536
Dog	286	13	8	1
Biker	293	22	7	2
Equestrian	20	0	0	0

In January, trail closures were lifted following completion of trail work and repairs on Vanderlip Trail, Kubota Trail, and Gary's Gulch Trail. On January 7th, Gary's Gulch Trail access was closed for several days as a result of a broken pipe. Cal Water was notified of the incident as well as Public Works.

The Acacia Removal Project continued during this period with Phase 2, resulting on the completion of Eagle's Nest Trail and Ailor Trail. Intermittent closures were needed as crews work on Burma Road Trail.

Consequently, to allow connectivity among Portuguese Bend Reserve, both one-way trails were removed, including Ishibashi Trail and Peacock Flats Trail, to allow two-way traffic through and around work areas. Patrons are required to wear face coverings / masks when 6 foot distance among other hikers is not possible, and to plan accordingly to avoid crowds.

Erosion control improvement work on Burma Road took place in January. Repairs included the addition of a drainage swale on the side of a segment of the trail, and drainage dips at numerous locations. All work was coordinated with the PVPLC to minimize impacts to native habitat, and City staff expects that this work will greatly reduce the impacts of erosion on that regularly occurs after heavy rains.



Rangers were notified of a broken pipe resulting in water leak. Staff coordinated with Public Works Dept to identify repairs and assess damage on adjacent trails. No confirmed cause.



An unidentified vehicle driving on Palos Verdes Drive South in late hours, swerved onto the adjacent vegetation at lower Portuguese Bend Reserve, resulting in the damage and removal of a wooden post that secured a vehicle access point into the Reserve. The vehicle did not drive into the Reserve, and repairs were made by Public Works to reinstall and secure this access point. Excessive speed may have been a cause in this incident.

At the request from the City of Rolling Hills, two existing "Trail Ends" signs located at the end of Fire Station Trail were moved to a location for better visibility and to mark the jurisdictional boundary among the two cities.



Burma Pedestrian Gate was vandalized twice during this reporting period. OSM staff removed both instances of graffiti.



After a series of instances of vandalism on the three “Residential Quiet Zone” signs located at the start of Burma Road trail, OSM staff, with assistance from Public Works Staff, strengthened existing signs to deter individual(s) from bending the sign. The sign continued to be vandalized with graffiti at least eight different instances during this reporting period. All instances were removed by staff.



Staff observed a female patron walking in the vehicle lane at Palos Verdes Drive South on the bottom portion of Portuguese Bend Reserve. Rangers were unable to make contact with the individual, but followed behind her to ensure she was not hit by oncoming traffic and notified LASD Deputies to assist. Deputies arrived and were able to talk with her safely on the curb and provided transport.

An increased use of unauthorized dirt bikes has been observed in the Portuguese Bend Reserve. Rangers made contact with three individuals, each with a bike and informed them on no motorized vehicles. These dirt bikes have a motor, throttle, max speeds of 31 mph, and stationary pedals.

San Ramon Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	1	0	1	0
Dog	0	0	0	0
Biker	2	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers received a call regarding individuals throwing rocks from Palos Verdes Drive East Road into the Reserve. The group was warned and educated on trails below and safety concerns.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Department notified Rangers of a report regarding dirt bike on trails. Rangers responded but were unable to locate a dirt bike or evidence of use on San Ramon trails.

OSM staff continues to monitor any evidence of an unauthorized shelter built along the wash. An unknown individual or group of individuals continue to secure materials on site.

Staff observed multiple counts of graffiti on guard rails, trashcans, signs, and on the pavement along the switchbacks in Palos Verdes Drive East. The graffiti was removed.

Three Sisters Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	54	17	0	0
Dog	4	2	0	0
Biker	4	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Three signs were vandalized including the Filiorum Monument Sign, Preserve Rules sign, and Three Sisters monument sign. All counts of graffiti were removed.

Staff were notified of numerous visitors parking illegally on Barkentine Road to access Three Sisters Reserve on weekends. Specifically, the area is restricted to park by permit only. Park Rangers will continue to monitor the area and work with LASD Deputies to monitor and enforce parking violations.

Vicente Bluffs Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	369	79	22	19
Dog	42	3	1	0
Biker	1	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

OSM installed a new MPA sign (generously provided by the Los Angeles MPA Collaborative) to educate visitors on the no fishing or collecting regulations at Pelican Cove area in Vicente Bluffs Reserve.



Rangers received an inquiry regarding use of metal detector. The individual had been previously advised that it is not permitted in the Nature Preserve given use of additional tools, such as a shovel or pick to dig up or move dirt to expose potential findings.

Rangers found a "Rattlesnake" City sign damaged. There were obvious signs of vandalism in an attempt to remove the sign from its current location, along the Western section of the Reserve.

City Parks

Rangers educated patrons in City Parks regarding the City's Municipal Code, including use of drones, dogs off-leash, motorized bicycles, large group gatherings, unauthorized special events, and park hours.