

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 21, 2021

To: Katie Lozano, Senior Administrative Analyst, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Norma Saldaña, Recreation Supervisor, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

From: Senior Park Ranger Fox

SUBJECT: 2nd Quarter Rancho Palos Verdes Ranger Enforcement Report

PRESERVE VISITOR CONTACTS SUMMARY

- April 1 – June 31, 2021
- 4 Rangers 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 monitored 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

In accordance with the L.A. County Health Officer Order, group restrictions were no longer in place for outdoor areas. The group size capped at 20, per existing City regulations, for groups within the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve, and varied by park. Individuals were still required to wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status. Masks were no longer required in outdoor spaces for vaccinated individuals as of June 17th. COVID-19 signage relating to this were removed throughout the Preserve.

Trainings and Coordination:

Los Angeles County Fire Department Brush Fire Training (May 25-28):

The drill simulated a real-time brushfire in the Preserve. Several engines were on scene and worked together to initiate an incident command post, check communication equipment and support resources (such as helicopter units),



identify access points, and simulate coordination with the City for traffic control. The drill allowed personnel to assess site topography and site-specific hazards.

Customer Service and De-escalation Training (June 2):

The online training provided tips to communicate effectively with members of the public, as well as learning when and how to de-escalate situations for officer and public safety.

Marine Protected Areas: Title 10 Training (June 4):

Park Rangers met with and participated in a training led by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Game Wardens and the Los Angeles Marine Protected Area Collaborative Network Members to learn about the City's two MPAs, coordinate response in the field, and provide a platform to ask questions and share resources across agencies to protect the Abalone Cove SMCA and Point Vicente SMCA.



Leave No Trace Training (June 29):

Park Rangers participated in an online training to learn about the 7 Leave No Trace Principles, to be able to ask questions to an expert panel, and share resources with patrons visiting the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve.

OVERALL VISITOR CONTACTS:

Total Contacts: 11,524

Hikers: 9,787

Dog Walkers: 860

Cyclists: 580

Equestrians: 14

Warnings: 283

Calls for Assistance: 11

Heat exhaustion & heat stress: 5

Dog exhaustion & heat stress: 2

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

Other (i.e. underlying condition, sprained ankle): 2

Preserve Information and Reporting Hotline Calls: 39 calls

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

Trail Status and General Information: 11
Camping: 2
Use of Spur Trail / Closed Areas: 2
Dog on the beach or dog off leash: 4
Parking Issues: 2
Lost and Found: 1
Fishing / Poaching: 4
COVID-19 related (including masks, social distancing violations): 0
Maintenance: 9
E- Bike: 2
Medical Assistance / First Aid: 2

ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY:

Notice of Parking Citations Issued: Total 562

By Violation:

Passenger Loading Zone - 283
Park by Permit – 160
Parking Lot / Preserve / Park Hours- 66
Posted Temporary No Parking / Fire Lane – 25
Handicap Zone – 9
Other- 19

By Location:

Crenshaw Boulevard (Portuguese Bend / Filiorum adjacent) – 383
Del Cerro Park – 145
Abalone Cove Reserve – 32
Other – 1
Forrestal Reserve - 1

Notice to Appear Citations Issued: Total 25

Number of violations is greater than the number of citations issued

By Violation:

Closed Area – 13
Dogs off Leash – 3
Alcohol on Beach - 2
Smoking – 1
Motorized Vehicle - 1
Animals on the Beach – 3
Paragliding (Misdemeanor) – 1
Littering – 1

By Location:

Abalone Cove Reserve – 16

Vicente Bluffs Reserve – 2
Forrestal Reserve – 1
Portuguese Bend Reserve – 1
Ocean Trails Reserve – 3
City of RPV Parks - 2

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	1,768	386	113	44
Dogs	88	53	28	3
Biker	8	0	2	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

A group of four individuals were seen by staff at Sacred Cove Beach with a table, and 18 cans of alcohol and a Hennessy bottle drinking. Staff informed them of no alcohol on City beaches or Preserve. The individuals complied and all beverages already opened were confiscated and disposed of.



On April 11, a deceased seal had washed ashore and was located by staff. The seal had several days of decomposition. Staff notified several agencies for retrieval.



On April 13, staff found an encampment along Altamira Canyon. No individuals were located near the premises, a notice was placed on site to inform the individuals regarding no camping permitted.



On Saturday, April 24, staff reported several instances of graffiti on the rock walls of Altamira Canyon as well as two “Hardcore Mtn” spray paint cans. Staff covered up and removed graffiti while minimizing damage to the natural habitat.



On Saturday, April 24, staff identified a secondary encampment off trail near Beach School Trail. The area had been cleared of debris and had several miscellaneous items. No individuals were located near the premises, a notice was placed on site to inform the individuals regarding no camping permitted.



On Saturday, May 1st, staff found over 6 instances of graffiti on the tower ruins at the bottom of Olmstead Trail.



On Wednesday, May 5th, and Monday, June 14th, staff located evidence of an illegal campfire along the beach in Sacred Cove. Rangers ensured all embers were fully extinguished, removed the ignition source, and disbanded the ring. Smoking, campfires, and other sources of flame are not permitted within the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve, or in coastal areas.



Staff installed and replaced faded “Warning!” Signs from NOAA located within Sacred Cove to remind park patrons to maintain a safe distance when around seals and sea lions.



On May 18, two small landslides occurred at Sacred Cove Beach. No individuals were injured. The resulting debris buried 2 existing city signs posted for “Caution / Falling Rocks on Beach.” Staff will restore the signs.



On May 19, an unauthorized motorcycle accessed the beach below the Archery Range by traversing over the rocks adjacent to the gate. Rangers were able to make contact with the individuals, educated, and issued a citation for unauthorized use.

On June 2, 2 “No Animals On the Beach” signs were installed at Sacred Cove Trail as a result of increased sightings of dogs on the beach. Staff continue to monitor activity and enforce regulations.



On Wednesday, June 16, Rangers observed a tent hidden behind the ruins at the bottom of Olmstead Trail and covered by a few cut sections of mustard stalks. Rangers were able to make contact with the individuals and informed them of the no camping rules.



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 (MPAs), and shared proper tide pool etiquette for safely viewing but not disturbing marine organisms. During this reporting period, a total of 88 violations were observed, and 177 individuals were contacted and educated by staff, resulting in the return of 667 marine organisms, and an additional 52 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. Through this partnership, additional signs were approved and provided to the City, specific to Abalone Cove SMCA (left). The sign includes language on "No hook and line from shore" as some take is permitted, including spearfishing and take of squid with handheld nets. In comparison, the Point Vicente SMCA does not permit any take and has "No fishing or Collecting" language (right).



Poaching activity dropped significantly within our MPAs, especially when compared to the activity seen during the last year. 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%.

Aqua Amarga Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	16	3	0	0
Dog	2	0	0	0
Biker	3	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Alta Vicente Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	63	8	1	0
Dog	18	6	1	0
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Park Rangers coordinated with Coast Guard personnel to ensure the bunker in the adjacent area was secured. The lock had been vandalized once during this reporting period.



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. Additional signs were installed at Alta Vicente Trail and North Spur Trail to remind visitors of the rules.

On April 8, signage was installed along the Civic Center area and Point Vicente Park in an effort to direct Preserve Shuttle patrons. Several "Preserve" and "Shuttle" signs were installed as well as 3 trash cans, 1 bench, and 2 informational kiosks with maps of the adjacent reserve: Alta Vicente.



Filiorum Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	85	7	0	0
Dog	4	0	0	0
Biker	8	2	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

A "Quiet Zone" sign had been vandalized on Crenshaw Boulevard, adjacent to Filiorum Trails. Rangers removed the graffiti and continued to monitor the area for any instances

of vandalism. Staff cemented a “Residential Quiet Zone” sign installed near the lower section of Gary’s Gulch Trail after it had been removed from the ground.



Forrestal Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	743	121	19	34
Dog	114	25	10	1
Biker	66	12	3	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Rangers received reports of unauthorized use at Ladera Linda upper fields, property of Palos Verdes Unified School District. City staff continued to coordinate efforts to deter unauthorized activity, including use of spur trails leading up to the fields from the upper parking lot. The City of Rancho Palos Verdes installed temporary barriers, including “Area Closed” signage, orange fencing, and increased patrols to educate park patrons.



Palos Verdes Unified School District installed signage to inform visitors of Permit Only field use.

On May 13, Rangers were notified of 2 widening holes at the ocean side of Conquerer Trail as a result of water erosion. This area is of concern as the trail narrows. Staff continued to monitor this area and is working with the Public Works Department on the issue.



Throughout this reporting period, Rangers received several reports of dogs off leash and dog feces on trails. Rangers focused patrols to educate patrons and enforce where appropriate.

Ocean Trails Reserve

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	670	96	28	2
Dog	52	8	5	0
Biker	5	2	2	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

On April 1st, Rangers met with Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy Staff to learn about sustainable harvesting of a coastal variety of prickly pear cacti for restoration areas. Among other topics discussed, the Conservancy discussed the importance of the cacti as suitable habitat for endangered species, such as the California gnatcatcher.

On April 13, staff installed “Tidepool Collecting” signs, provided by the Los Angeles Marine Protected Area Collaborative Team for use outside of MPAs. The signs were mounted on 3 existing wooden boards along East Boundary and Sagebrush Walk Trail.



On April 19, and 22, staff replanted 150 prickly pear cacti and cholla plants in a denuded habitat area, measuring .10 acres in size, caused by illegal activity in a closed area. Staff installed additional "Area Closed" signs and added barriers to deter unauthorized use while allowing the area to naturally grow. This particular area is habitat suitable for bright green dudleya.





On May 11, staff was notified of vandalism that occurred on the restoration area, with the removal of 140 plants, and 4 stumps that had been cemented in place were removed and 3 others that had been wired into the ground



were also removed and thrown down the cliffside. The City continues to monitor this area and any trespassing.



On May 14, the City closed the easternmost bridge on Catalina Trail near Lakeview Trail as a safety concern. The western end of the bridge had evidence of cracking. Staff coordinated with Trump National Golf to set up appropriate closure signage and educate patrons on safety concerns. Despite signage, staff continued to observe individuals crossing barriers, and creating spur trails in an effort to avoid the bridge.



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. One Volunteer Beach Clean Up event was scheduled on June 19th during this reporting period by the Recreation & Parks Department, adhering to COVID-19 restrictions. Rangers assisted in retrieval of 2 lobster traps and trash bags collected during the event. Additional trash cans were requested by Trump National Golf to secure litter and deter wildlife from accessing trash.

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	5,924	244	29	365
Dog	533	40	20	0
Biker	483	33	14	0
Equestrian	14	2	0	0

On April 6, signage was installed along the lower section of Portuguese Bend Reserve in an effort to direct Preserve Shuttle patrons. Several “Preserve” and “Shuttle” signs were installed as well as a portable restroom, 1 trash can, and an informational kiosk with maps of the adjacent reserves: Portuguese Bend Reserve and Forrester Reserve.



New hours of operation signs were installed for Burma Road gate, one of the main access points into Portuguese Bend Reserve. The gate opens manually at 7:00am daily, and closing time varies based on the sunset times.

San Ramon Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	0	0	0	0
Dog	0	0	0	0
Biker	3	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

No activity reported during this period.

Three Sisters Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	60	16	0	0
Dog	8	0	0	0
Biker	0	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

Vicente Bluffs Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	439	63	7	3
Dog	41	4	1	0

Biker	4	0	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0

On Friday, April 9, a rescue took place on Terranea Trail as Los Angeles County Fire Department personnel attempted to locate and safely hoist an individual who had climbed over the fence in order to have a closer view of the ocean. Conditions were unsafe for personnel, a helicopter was called in to assist. No individuals were injured.



“See Something, Say Something” Signs were mounted along various coastline trails to encourage the public to report suspicious activity related to smuggling or panga boats.



On April 12, a panga boat landed at unknown hours. No individuals were seen. Several life jackets and other items had been discarded along adjacent beach and along Tovemore Trail.



On May 13, Rangers patrolled the beach below Vicente Bluffs and counted at least 12 instances of graffiti on medium sized rocks located on the beach. Clean up was coordinated.



On June 1st, a panga boat was sighted at the along the cove in Pelican Cove. A member of the public had called in the docked panga boat around 0800 hours.



Vista del Norte Reserve

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

No activity reported during this period.

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.