

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 10, 2023

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

Norma Saldaña, Recreation Supervisor, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

From: Taylor Fox, Senior Park Ranger

Subject: 1st Quarter Rancho Palos Verdes Park Ranger Enforcement Report

PRESERVE VISITOR CONTACTS SUMMARY

January 1 – March 31, 2023

4 Full-time Park Rangers patrolled the Preserve approximately 1,560 hours during this period.

3 Part-time Parking Enforcement assisted with education and enforcement of Park Mobile Reservation System at Crenshaw Boulevard.

This reporting period was marked by significant rainfall and storms resulting in significant periods of facility closures and trail damage. There were also significant instances of animal abandonment and lost pets.

Agency Coordination, Trainings, and Interpretive Events:

3 Monthly City-PVPLC NCCP/HCP Coordination Meetings: City and PVPLC staff meet monthly to coordinate Palos Verdes Nature Preserve (Preserve) operations and maintenance, and to implement the City's Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP).

3 Monthly City-PVPLC Volunteer Trail Crew Coordination Meetings: The City's OSM Staff has begun monthly meetings with the Volunteer Trail Crew to coordinate future trail maintenance and building projects.

2 Monthly City-PVPLC Volunteer Trail Watch Coordination Meetings: The City's OSM Staff holds bi-monthly meetings with the Volunteer Trail Watch to coordinate on public use and public education topics.

Los Angeles Water Waterkeeper (February 3): Park Rangers rode along by boat with the Los Angeles Waterkeeper Ride to coordinate operations and learn more about Marine Protected Areas off the City's coast.

Park Rangers Association of California Conference (March 6-9): Senior Park Ranger Fox and Recreation Supervisor Saldaña attended the Park Rangers Association of California Conference in Yosemite from March 6-9. Rangers met with agencies from California and Nevada to learn about park operations post- COVID-19, as well as participate in a variety of training and discussions covering various topics, including search and rescue and customer service.

Project/Operations Coordination & Emergency Work:

OSM Staff help to coordinate multiple projects within the Preserve to ensure NCCP / HCP compliance together with the Preserve Habitat Manager, the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC). Some of these coordination tasks include project management, implementing trail closures, public safety measures, and providing public notification. Below are a list of projects OSM staff helped coordinate with the Public Works Department, PVPLC, and public utilities in the first quarter:

December 14 – February 22: Rattlesnake Gate and Fence construction.

December 23-Present: Burma Gate bollard construction ongoing. Work stalled due to weather.

December 31 – January 18: Preserve temporarily closed due to significant rain.

February 23 – March 2: Preserve temporarily closed due to significant rain.

March 10 – 17: Preserve temporarily closed due to significant rain.

March 21 –March 24: Preserve temporarily closed due to significant rain.

March 23: South Bay City Council of Governments General Assembly. Park Rangers staffed a table to provide information about the Preserve.

March 29 –March 31: Palos Verdes Nature Preserve temporarily closed due to significant rain.

March 30 – June 4: Fuel Modification Coordination with Public Works Department and PVPLC Preserve-wide.

The following is a list of maintenance projects and events that transpired during the first Quarter. Maintenance work was performed by OSM Staff, and may include litter abatement, spur trail closures, signage repairs, and tread repairs, within the Preserve and Abalone Cove Park.

- Vegetation Trimming: 19
- Installing Signs: 9
- Removal of Graffiti (Additional graffiti deferred to GPC): 19
- General Maintenance: 87
- Total: 134

OVERALL VISITOR CONTACTS:

Total Contacts: 4,612

Hikers: 3,872

Dog Walkers: 495

Cyclists: 214

Equestrians: 31

Warnings: 159

Education: 753

Calls for Assistance: Transports 1

Heat exhaustion & heat stress: 1

Preserve Information and Reporting Hotline Calls: 51

Trail Status and General Information: 18

Maintenance Issue Reported: 7

Lost / Found: 5

Gate Unlocked / Condition: 3

Animals Off Leash: 3

Transients / Encampments: 3

Electric Motorcycle / Bicycle: 2

Off Trail: 2

After Hours: 2

Injured Animal: 2

Parking Inquiry: 1

Trapping / Hunting: 1

BBQ Grills: 1

Weapon: 1

Social Media Educational Outreach

OSM Staff proactively searches social media sites for group gatherings scheduled within the Preserve to educate visitors on Preserve rules and group size restrictions. Groups over twenty participants are not allowed in the Preserve for the purpose of natural resource protection. Over the last quarter, OSM Staff contacted 15 groups to monitor activity planned for the Preserve and to proactively provide information on Preserve regulations, including temporary closures.

ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY:

Parking Citations Issued: 186

By Violation:

Park by Permit – 150

Posted Temporary No Parking / Fire Lane – 28

ADA Zone – 5

After Hours – 1

Other- 2

By Location:

Crenshaw Boulevard (Portuguese Bend / Filiorum adjacent) –120
Del Cerro Park –32
Abalone Cove Reserve – 24
Forrestal Reserve – 5
Other – 2

Notice to Appear Citations Issued: 11

By Violation:

Closed Area – 9
Dogs off Leash - 2

By Location:

Portuguese Bend Reserve -8
Abalone Cove Reserve – 2
Hesse Park - 1

ACTIVITY REPORT BY RESERVE:

The next section provides further information on projects, reports, and Ranger activity/observations organized by Reserve. Trail counter data is provided for Portuguese Bend Reserve, Filiorum Reserve and Forrestal Reserve, where the City has placed a total of five counters combined. It is important to note that trail counters are placed at the most popular entry points, but do not cover every entry point. Park Ranger public contacts do not reflect actual number of individuals in the Reserve, rather those spoken to while on foot and/or vehicle patrols. Information does not include routine maintenance.

Abalone Cove Reserve:

	Public Contact	Education	Warning	Enforcement
Hikers	325	105	36	2
Dogs	22	7	5	0
Bicyclist	0	0	0	0

On January 18, L.A. County Lifeguards reported the presence of domesticated rabbits at the Beach School Trail to OSM Staff. OSM Staff confirmed and captured six rabbits that had been abandoned on the trails. It is not known how long the rabbits had been in the area. The rabbits were malnourished, tick-infested, and dehydrated. They were taken to the L.A. County Animal Care and Control Center.



On January 20, OSM Staff, with the assistance of the Volunteer Trail Crew, conducted repairs to clean out the slough from a landslide that had impeded access to Sacred Cove Beach.



BEFORE



AFTER

On January 23, PVPLC staff cut and removed several branches that had fallen over and had been blocking access to the upper section of Smuggler's Trail.



BEFORE



AFTER

On January 23, OSM Staff added an additional 12-foot section of fencing along the temporarily closed western section of Sacred Cove View Trail (closest to Smuggler's Trail). The City continues to assess temporarily-closed areas throughout the Preserve on an ongoing basis in coordination with the PVPLC to ensure public safety and habitat preservation while balancing the provision of public use. The eastern section of Sacred Cove View Trail (closest to Inspiration Point Loop Trail) remains open to the public and provides access to Sacred Cove Beach via Cliffside Trail.



BEFORE



AFTER

On January 24, OSM staff repaired a damaged "Area Closed" sign at Abalone Cove Beach. The large sign had been damaged by a combination of strong winds and high tides.



On February 4, Staff identified several instances of graffiti on overlook areas, roads, and rock steps. Staff removed some of the graffiti and submitted a report to the City's contractor for graffiti removal to address the remaining items.



On February 7, Staff was notified by the Los Angeles County Fire Department of two German Shepherds seen in the Reserve. The dogs were unleashed, with no collar or other identification tags to locate their owner. Another hiker assisted Staff and Lifeguards in identifying and informing the owner, who had been searching for the dogs a few hours before. The two dogs were returned to their owner.

On February 20, Staff was approached by two hikers who had captured an injured seagull on Abalone Cove Trail. The full extent of its injuries was unknown, however, there was a clear bone fracture, and the bird was unable to fly on its own. Staff contacted International Bird Rescue in San Pedro for medical care.

On February 27, Staff was notified of an unattended dog tethered to a nearby pole across from Sacred Cove. It is unknown how long or who may have captured the dog. However, the dog was returned to its owner.



On February 27, Rangers observed a secondary landslide/erosion event causing damage to Cliffside Trail, making it impassable until the slough is cleared and the trail bed is stabilized. Staff worked with PVPLC and the Volunteer Trail Crew on repair options.



On March 5, Staff coordinated with personnel from Marine Animal Rescue to remove an injured seal from the beach.

On March 13, a vehicle driving on Palos Verdes Drive South lost control and swerved into the perimeter of the Abalone Cove parking lot. The driver did not need medical attention. The vehicle was removed by a tow truck.



Aqua Amarga Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	0	0	0	0
Dog	0	0	0	0

No issues observed during this reporting period.

Alta Vicente Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	30	8	5	0
Dog	4	1	0	0

On February 3, Park Rangers contacted an individual using pinecones and needles on a City-provided barbecue grill at Upper Point Vicente Park. The use of pinecones and needles created a large flame, smokey conditions, and a strong smell. The individual put out the fire when asked.

On March 23 and 24, Rangers contacted two separate individuals who were seen collecting *Foeniculum vulgare* (fennel) and bagging it up in plastic bags. This plant is an invasive species within the Preserve, however, damaging or taking of any plants is not permitted. City Staff and PVPLC volunteers work to identify and remove invasive and non-native species with care taken to minimize damage to the habitat.

Filiorum Reserve

	Trail Counter	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	8,192	27	6	2	0
Dog	NA	2	1	1	0
Biker	720	1	1	0	0
Equestrian	0	0	0	0	0

On January 19, OSM Staff cleared the slough from several rockslides caused by the recent rains. The larger rocks were broken down into smaller pieces and moved off the trail.



On January 20, OSM Staff trimmed back acacia branches that had fallen onto Kelvin Canyon Trail and made it impassable for equestrians and bicycle riders.



On February 28, Staff installed regulatory and informational signage on the newly installed Rattlesnake Gate to remind visitors of the gate hours. Approximately 150 ft of fencing was added to the existing green fencing to deter after hours use.



Forrestal Reserve

	Trail Counter	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	9,545	232	33	0	0
Dog	NA	57	11	0	0
Biker	53	30	8	0	0

On January 1, Rangers observed and reported two portable restrooms located at the end of Forrestal Drive had been knocked over. Public Works was notified and assisted in notifying the contractor and uprighting the portable restrooms.

On January 13, Rangers received a call on the Preserve Information Reporting Hotline reporting a missing dog. It is believed that the dog may have accessed a nearby canyon in Forrestal Reserve. Staff searched for the dog as well as inspected the condition of the trails before the next rain event, which was forecast for that night. The dog was not found, and the individual who placed the original call was updated.

On January 21, Recreation and Parks Staff reported evidence of vandalism to the entry chain at the Forrestal Drive gate to Park Rangers. Upon further inquiry, it was confirmed one of the links had been tampered with and broken, and a storage shed on School District property had been burglarized. A police report was submitted, the school district was notified, and the chain was repaired.

On February 12, Park Rangers were notified of two dogs off-leash and unattended. One of the dogs had a collar, and the other did not. The two dogs were secured and returned to the owner without further incident.

In December, Rangers were notified of damage to Flying Mane switchbacks, including new spur trails, and posts and cables on both sides of the trail dug out and tossed aside. The vandalism persisted in this reporting period, with the most recent incident occurring in late March. Rangers continue to monitor this area, and are coordinating with PVPLC on ongoing repairs.



On February 16, Staff installed an additional “No Bike” sign at the bottom of Exultant Trail and Forrestal Drive to remind bicyclists that no bicycles are permitted on this trail as misuse has been observed and reported.



On February 20, Park Rangers received a call from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department regarding a report of a lost hiker. The hiker had wandered off trail near Cristo Que Viento and was unable to return to her vehicle. Rangers assisted Sheriff Deputies in the search for the individual, who was located within an hour, and escorted back to her vehicle.

On February 28, Staff received a report of damage to the trail counter located on Purple Sage Trail. The cap on the top had been pried off during the strong winds and was found in the adjacent habitat. The trail counter will be repaired.

Ocean Trails Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	193	9	0	0
Dog	16	4	2	0
Biker	0	0	0	0

On February 2, Trump National Golf Club notified the City of recent issues at the public restrooms managed by Trump National. Club staff has seen an increase in individuals locking themselves in the restrooms, vandalizing the walls, and flooding the sinks. Trump National is working with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to address this issue, and Park Rangers are increasing patrols in the area to monitor activity.

On February 19, Park Rangers contacted a patron with a digging tool at Rancho Palos Verdes Beach. The patron indicated they wanted to collect sea glass but was not aware of the rules and was compliant in returning the tool to their vehicle before resuming their hike.

Portuguese Bend Reserve

	Trail Counter	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	16,529	2,614	382	56	8
Dog	NA	331	107	37	0
Biker	559	177	23	3	0
Equestrian	59	31	0	2	0

On February 14, Staff inspected and filled in a fissure on the temporarily closed section of Rim Trail. The trail remains temporarily closed while Staff coordinates with the PVPLC to assess alternative routes and trail conditions.



On February 17, a hiker reported a leak on the fire hydrant at Barn Owl Trail and Burma Road Trail. Rangers confirmed the leak was a slow leak and notified California Water Services.



On February 26, an off-leash, unattended dog was found near Burma Rd Trail. The dog did not have any identification tags, and Los Angeles County Animal Control was notified.

On March 3, Staff and local trail expert and volunteer Kurt Loheit removed several large boulders from Burma Road. The boulders were part of a significant rock fall during the recent storms and had been blocking vehicle access on this fire road. Staff and Mr. Loheit spent approximately five hours breaking the enormous boulders into smaller boulders that could be moved out of the fire road.



BEFORE



AFTER

On March 17, Staff worked to clear debris from a mudslide and rockslide on Burma Road Trail to ensure the trail remains accessible for authorized vehicles. Staff continue to monitor trail conditions after rains to conduct repairs.



On March 19, Rangers repaired the lower sections of Burma Road Trail near the Barn Owl Trail by creating a small grade dip to help water flow away from the trail bed and into the adjacent habitat.



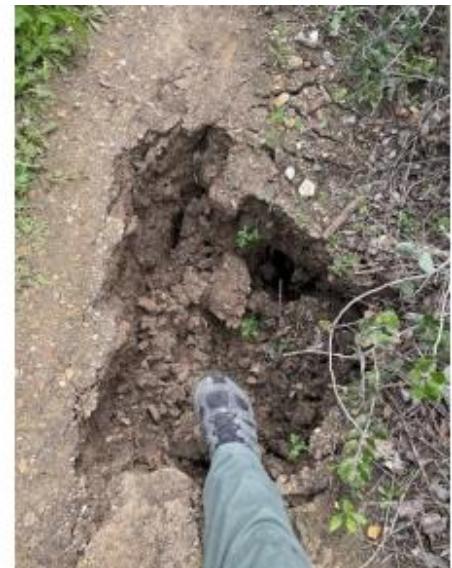
On March 19, the bottom section of Peppertree Trail between Ishibashi Farm Trail and Sandbox Trail is temporarily closed. An approximately 7-foot-deep trench has been created by the recent rains, resulting in the narrowing of the trail.



On March 19, a rockslide occurred on Peppertree, halfway between Sandbox Trail and Klondike Canyon Trail. As a result, trail users are advised to use caution.



On March 20, Garden Trail was temporarily closed due to land movement and fissures that have opened up on the trail. The City will be working with the City Geologist and PVPLC to discuss solutions.



On March 20, Rangers filled in a fissure on Peppertree Trail just below Landslide Scarp Trail that had caused an 18-inch step down from the trailbed. The trailbed has been repaired and will continue to be monitored.



On March 24, Rangers identified a water leak on Cal Water infrastructure located on Burma Road Trail. Cal Water was notified, and crews arrived shortly after to perform repairs. Crews worked approximately 5 hours to realign the pipe, which had moved due to land movement.



On March 25, Rangers performed repairs on a section of Burma Road Trail located above Landslide Scarp Trail to smooth out the road, as it continues to be eroded by a nearby pipe.



On March 28, Staff was informed of three motor bikes seen on Ishibashi Trail. Hikers on the trail were able to contact the riders, informed them of the City's Municipal Code regarding no motorized vehicles in the Preserve and turned the riders around towards the exit.



San Ramon Reserve

No contacts made or issues observed during this reporting period.

Three Sisters Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	19	8	2	0
Dog	4	3	1	0
Biker	0	0	0	0

No issues observed during this reporting period.

Vicente Bluffs Reserve

	Public Contacts	Education	Warnings	Enforcement
Hikers	432	31	1	0
Dog	59	1	0	0
Biker	6	4	6	0

On February 9, Park Rangers received a report from a patron of unidentified organs on the trails. The reporting party was concerned they could belong to a human, and wanted to report the issue in the event additional investigation was warranted. OSM Staff proceeded to the reported location, Seascapes Trail, and did confirm the presence of organs, likely a stomach and liver. Due to the size and inside contents, the organs were believed to be that of small herbivorous animal, such as a rabbit.

On February 11, Park Rangers identified a water leak on Golden Cove Trail. Park Rangers worked with the Public Works Department, monitored the condition of the trail, and worked with the public to address concerns.

On February 16, Staff installed a “No Bike” sign on Seascapes Trail and Interpretive Trail to remind bicyclists entering from Lower Point Vicente Park that bicycles are not permitted in this Reserve as misuse has been observed and reported. Bicycles are permitted in Lower Point Vicente Park.

Vista del Norte Reserve

No contacts made or issues observed during this reporting period.

City Parks and Beaches

Rangers educated patrons in City Parks and beaches regarding the City’s Municipal Code, including homeless individuals locked in restrooms, dogs off leash, photography without a permit, and after hours use.