

CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES
PRESERVE MANAGEMENT/PUMP PUBLIC FORUM MEETING
August 7, 2013

The forum began at 6:05 p.m. in the City Hall Community Room, 30940 Hawthorne Boulevard.

ATTENDANCE

City Staff: Joel Rojas – Community Development Department Director
 Ara Mihranian – Community Development Deputy Director
 Katie Howe – Recreation and Parks Department Administrative Analyst

PVPLC Staff: Danielle Lefer – Conservation Director

MRCA Representative: Jewel Johnson – Supervising Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Ranger

Director Rojas welcomed attendees to the second Preserve Public Forum Meeting, and explained that City staff and Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC) staff will discuss ongoing projects and topics relevant to their Preserve trail management responsibilities. He shared that the Public Works Department was not represented tonight, and that former Public Works Maintenance Superintendent Emilio Blanco, who played an integral role in several Preserve-related projects, left employment with the City, and so some project delays are expected.

Status Update on PVPLC Trail Projects (Presented by Danielle Lefer)

Ongoing Trail Project Update: Smuggler's Trail connection to Palos Verdes Drive South (Abalone Cove Reserve) – Director Lefer reported that this project, which is part of the California Coastal Trail, will move forward in the fall, and will take place at the same time as some additional work including removing non-native plants and restoring habitat.

Ongoing Trail Project Update: North Spur Trail work (Alta Vicente Reserve) – Director Lefer reported that this Eagle Scout Project has been completed, rules signage is installed, and the trail is being used. It will be monitored for spur trails.

2012 HCF Grant approved for miscellaneous trail work (Preserve-wide) – Director Lefer reported that the City and PVPLC received this matching grant in the amount of \$261,600, and it will be used for connections between Three Sisters and Filiorum Reserves and interpretive and welcome signage. Public input will be solicited for the interpretive signage. Other items for which the grant may be used include Portuguese Bend Reserve and Filiorum Reserve

connections, dog waste bags, wildlife-proof garbage cans, and potentially bike racks. Over the next 3-5 years, the PVPLC and City will work together to find the best uses for the funds. The City's match is \$10,800 and the PVPLC's match is \$120,000 for a total of \$261,600.

Status Update on Unauthorized Trail Closures (Preserve-wide) – Director Lefer reported the following unauthorized trail closures:

- Forrestal Reserve: An unauthorized trail off of Purple Sage Trail has been closed using signage.
- Three Sisters Reserve: One unauthorized trail off of McCarrell Canyon Trail near the intersection at Barkentine Trail has been closed using signage.
- Three Sisters Reserve: An unauthorized trail off of Three Sisters Trail near its intersection with Barkentine Trail, and connecting with Sunshine Trail, has been closed using signage.
- Portuguese Bend Reserve: Two signs have been installed (one at Fire Station Trail, and one at Grapevine Trail) with language that the trail terminates, and that there is no connection through private property.
- Portuguese Bend Reserve: An unauthorized trail from Fire Station Trail to an area near the intersection of Grapevine and Ishibashi Trails has been closed using signage and brush.
- Portuguese Bend Reserve: Small beginnings of unauthorized trails along the Rim Trail are being closed using cactus plantings.
- Portuguese Bend Reserve: Closed unauthorized trail off the Burma Road Overlook near Crenshaw using signage.
- Filiorum Reserve: Closed unauthorized trail off of Kelvin Canyon Trail using signage.

Decal Replacement of Trail Signs (Preserve-wide) – Director Lefer reported that trail marker decal replacement began at Abalone Cove Reserve and should be completed by the end of the week. Work will begin next in Forrestal Reserve.

Implementation of the Volunteer Trail Watch Program (Preserve-wide) – Director Lefer shared that 26 volunteers completed training and graduated. The volunteers have additional opportunities to practice their learned skills, and will be paired up with experienced trainers before the program officially begins. PVPLC is working with the City on a web portal for the program.

Installation of Preserve Welcome Signs (Preserve-wide) – Director Lefer reported that HCF Grant funds will be used to fabricate and install these signs at key entry points to the Preserve. Concept designs may begin as early as this winter.

Director Rojas clarified that these signs were discussed at the May Preserve Forum meeting, and that they are monument signs that identify the area as a nature preserve.

Public Comments/Questions:

Kelvin Vanderlip commented on the need to deter use of a popular steep spur trail off of Rattlesnake Trail. He also recommended the City and PVPLC address the issue of a popular dead-end trail near Narcissa Road.

Anke Raue reiterated Mr. Vanderlip's concern with the spur trail off of Rattlesnake Trail, and opined that Rattlesnake Trail is too steep to safely allow downhill mountain bike use.

Mr. Vanderlip agreed with Ms. Raue's opinion that Rattlesnake Trail is too steep to safely accommodate downhill mountain biking.

Ranger Johnson added that the spur trail off of Rattlesnake Trail is being used more often by fitness groups who seek the challenge of such a steep trail.

Eva Cicoria commented on heavy use and trenching at Sandbox Trail and mountain bike use of a spur trail that begins near Panorama Trail. She also expressed concern with heavy use of trails near Sacred Cove in sensitive habitat, and a need to place signage on spur trails in the area. She brought to staff's attention a small burned area at Forrestal off the Conqueror Trail, and shared that around August 1st there was a lot of water, and possible a leak, on the Vanderlip Trail. She also witnessed several mountain bikers in San Ramon on July 27th.

Ranger Johnson added that rangers are seeing more large groups starting at Forrestal Reserve, and going to Sacred Cove and Abalone Cove.

Director Rojas shared that staff is aware of mountain bike activity in San Ramon Reserve, have removed some bicycle jumps, and are working with rangers to monitor the area.

Deputy Director Mihranian added that new Preserve rule signage is expected to improve behavior.

Status Update of RPV Public Works Projects (Presented by Ara Mihranian)

Director Rojas clarified that rules signage and entry signage are the responsibilities of the City and that trail markers and interpretive signage is the responsibility of the PVPLC.

Installation of Additional "No Trespassing Signage" at Peppertree Trail (Portuguese Bend Reserve) – Deputy Director Mihranian reported that this sign has been installed.

Installation of Closed Spur Trail Sign at Del Cerro Park (Filiorum Reserve) – Deputy Director Mihranian reported that this sign has been installed.

Dropping of Dead Eucalyptus Trees along Burma Road (Portuguese Bend Reserve) – Deputy Director Mihranian reported that this remains an action item, and PVPLC will monitor the tree dropping, conducted by the City, to make sure habitat is not damaged.

Mr. Vanderlip added that there is also a Eucalyptus tree down near Vanderlip Trail and Narcissa Drive. He also emphasized the need for clear and effective Preserve signage.

Director Rojas clarified that the intent is not to remove every dead or decaying tree in the Preserve. The trees scheduled for dropping negatively impact a trail.

Deputy Director Mihranian added that the City and PVPLC's goals for the Preserve-wide signage plan include keeping the proliferation of signage down and clearly signing the areas of entry to the Preserve from Rolling Hills.

Installation of "Walk Bike" Signs (Filiorum Reserve) – Deputy Director Mihranian reported that these signs are being designed and will be installed shortly after fabrication. The signs will cite the applicable RPVMC section.

Status Update of RPV Community Development Projects (Presented by Joel Rojas)

Use Agreement between City and Jim York for Jack's Hat Trail (Three Sisters and Filiorum Reserves) – Director Rojas reported that Mr. York has been very cooperative working with the City on this agreement. Staff is hopeful it will appear on the September 3rd Council meeting agenda for Council approval.

Possible Use Agreements for Peppertree Trail (Portuguese Bend Reserve) – Director Rojas reported that staff will pursue an agreement for the use of a privately owned portion of Peppertree Trail after the use agreement with Jim York is completed.

Installation of Preserve Rules Signs (Preserve-wide) – Deputy Director Mihranian reported that Preserve rules signs will be installed at 58 Preserve entry points, and approximately half have already been installed.

Status Update of RPV Recreation and Parks Projects (Presented by Katie Howe and Ranger Jewel Johnson)

Review of Enforcement Issues in the Preserve (Preserve-wide)– Ranger Johnson reported on several enforcement issues rangers have observed and addressed over the past three months.

Filiorum/Portuguese Bend/Forrestal Reserves: Rangers have spent time focusing on Portuguese Bend Reserve's problem areas. In the previous quarter, rangers focused on mountain bike activity. This quarter, rangers are seeing less mountain bike use of previously popular spur trails. However, due to increased enforcement, mountain bike activity is moving to other areas of the Preserve, including Forrestal Reserve.

Forrestal Reserve is seeing overall more use, including use by large groups. Rangers have focused on identifying spur trails. The spur trail closure methods in the Peppertree area are holding.

Rangers have been educating Preserve users before they enter the Preserve on spur trails and rules. Rangers have also observed use of the spur trail starting near Rattlesnake Trail heading up towards Del Cerro Park and note that is popular with training/fitness groups because of its steepness. Rangers have been recommending alternative challenging trails to visitors.

Rangers have observed an overall increased use at Filiorum Reserve, and that mountain bikers are entering Filiorum Reserve to access Portuguese Bend Reserve.

Rangers have observed evidence of afterhours vehicle use of Portuguese Bend Reserve and that cars are stopped at the Portuguese Bend Reserve gate on Palos Verdes Drive South to pick up/drop off Preserve users. No parking signage is recommended.

San Ramon Reserve: Rangers continue to monitor mountain bike and remote controlled aircraft activity in San Ramon Reserve. They also are watching for previously reported motorcycle use, but have not witnessed it.

Abalone Cove Reserve: Rangers continue to see evidence of afterhours use at Abalone Cove. Rangers encountered photographers filming without appropriate permits.

Alta Vicente Reserve: Rangers have witnessed an uptick in homeless activity in and adjacent to the Preserve, and recommend locking porta-potties at Alta Vicente Reserve, as its location makes it an attractive area for the homeless.

Rancho Palos Verdes Beach/Ocean Trails Reserve: Rangers are working with Los Angeles County Lifeguards to address an increase of dogs on Rancho Palos Verdes Beach. Rangers are also patrolling with the Department of Fish and Game to learn more about poaching regulations. Paragliders are coming back to the area, and Rancho Palos Verdes is a known hotspot for paragliding.

Deputy Director Mihranian clarified that a local paragliding chapter approached the City in 2002 about obtaining paragliding permits. Council, however, has prohibited paragliding in the Preserve for reasons including safety, destruction of habitat in landing/take off areas, and privacy of residents beneath paragliders.

Nature Preserve Interpretive Programming (Preserve-wide): Analyst Howe shared information on upcoming Los Serenos de Point Vicente Docent-led public hikes and MRCA night hikes. In addition, the annual Coastal Clean-up Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 21st from 9 a.m. – noon at Abalone Cove Shoreline Park, and the City will hold a grand opening event for the new Discovery Room at the Ladera Linda Community Center on Sunday, October 20th from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Also the Fall Junior Ranger Program will begin in late September.

Ms. Cicoria commented on the abundance of litter on the beach below Ocean Trails Reserve, and proposed moving the beach clean-up to this location. She inquired about the progress opening up parking off of Palos Verdes Drive South.

Director Rojas shared that creation of a parking lot off of Palos Verdes Drive South has been delayed due to the need to reconfigure the roadway due to slide movement in the Gateway Park area. The City is currently designing a Palos Verdes Drive South roadway realignment project which will include a parking area further away from the roadway and connections to the California Coastal Trail Project.

Ms. Raue asked how often garbage is collected at Abalone Cove Beach, and asked that doggie bags be replenished in Preserve dispensers. She notices some visitors take quite a few which depletes the supply quickly.

Deputy Director Mihranian believes trash is collected twice during the week in the summer months, and once per week during the rest of the year, and he will verify this information with Public Works staff. He also shared that staff is working to transition to garbage cans with wildlife tamper-proof lids. He also shared that the Public Works Department recently increased their budget for dog waste bags.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.