

CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES
PRESERVE MANAGEMENT/PUMP PUBLIC FORUM MEETING
MAY 6, 2015

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

ATTENDANCE

City Staff: Ara Mihranian – Community Development Deputy Director
 Sean Larvenz – Public Works Maintenance Superintendent
 Katie Lozano – Recreation and Parks Department Administrative Analyst

MRCA Staff: Senior Ranger Jewel Johnson

PVPLC Staff: Danielle Lefer – Conservation Director

Deputy Director Mihranian and Administrative Analyst Lozano initiated the forum.

Preserve Maintenance

Review of Active Habitat/Trail Projects including Trail Crew activities: Director Lefer reported that PVPLC is finishing planting in the Peacock Flats area, and working on weed control in the Portuguese Bend Reserve. The Volunteer Trail Crew is working on Flying Mane and Conqueror spur trails, improving North Spur Trail at Alta Vicente Reserve, and improving the stability of Cave Trail.

Unauthorized/Spur Trail Closures: Director Lefer reported that the new full-time field operations staff member is working to control overgrown vegetation along trails and close spur trails; specifically spur trails near Rim Trail and in Abalone Cove and Forrestal Reserves.

Monument Signage, Entry Kiosks, and Welcome Signage: Director Lefer reported that PVPLC is working with Hunt Design on a signage plan to include monument signage, kiosks, garbage cans, mutt mitts, and bike racks. The public will be invited to give input on the plan in the upcoming weeks.

Yield Signage: Director Lefer reported that yield signage is currently being constructed and should be in place within the month at key multiuse trails.

Toyon/Peppertree Grading Follow-up: Analyst Lozano reported that the City has proposed remediation/solutions to the grading conducted on Toyon, and will meet with PVPLC next week to discuss the proposal.

City Preserve Maintenance Logs: Analyst Lozano reported that City maintenance logs are available at the front table. Maintenance needs remain somewhat consistent, with the last quarter seeing an uptick in reports of graffiti. Also, large fissures have opened up on Sacred Cove View Trail which prompted the City to close a small portion of the trail.

Public Comments/Questions

Sandy Valerie introduced herself as an equestrian who uses Portuguese Bend and Filiorum Reserves. She also stables her horse within the Portuguese Bend Community. She expressed concern with cactus being planted too close to trails; it becomes problematic for horses. She will follow up with the specific names of the trails.

Nari Okui introduced herself as a PVPLC Volunteer Trail Watch member. She asked if anything could be done to improve blind corners on Rattlesnake Trail caused by large bushes, or if “blind curve” or “caution” signs could be installed. She also asked if the stairs at Filiorum Reserve were open for public use.

Director Lefer indicated that the bushes were not planted by PVPLC, but that PVPLC can trim them.

Deputy Director Mihranian expressed that the City and PVPLC are careful not to introduce too many signs in the Preserve to prevent a proliferation of signs. He explained that Preserve users assume liability using unimproved trails.

Barbara Ailor asked if the City would be held liable if a mountain biker were to hit and injure a child on a blind curve.

Deputy Director Mihranian indicated that the City has immunity, and that the case would be a civil case between the child/parent and mountain biker.

Analyst Lozano clarified that the stairs at Filiorum are not open for public use, and that the City is looking into the best way to close access to them.

Preserve Operations

Ranger Report: Senior Ranger Jewel Johnson reviewed MRCA’s quarterly report for January – March 2015, which breaks down issues and patterns by Reserve. The report is available on the City’s website, and was made available at the meeting.

City Preserve Public Use Logs: Analyst Lozano shared that the City’s public use logs are available at the front table, and that use has been consistent over the past quarter. The City and Rangers continue to get many questions on legal fishing locations and are trying to reach out to the busses that stop at Abalone Cove, park illegally, and drop large numbers of people off. Paragliding has also picked up slightly.

User Group Etiquette Brochure: Analyst Lozano shared that the City and PVPLC are working together on a user group etiquette brochure which is nearly finalized. User group feedback is being solicited.

Lomita Sheriff Posse: Analyst Lozano shared that the Lomita Sheriff Station’s equestrian volunteers, the Posse, will begin patrolling in the Nature Preserve soon to provide extra presence and public education.

Review of Volunteer Trail Watch Reports: Director Lefer reported that the main violation Volunteer Trail Watchers see is dogs off leash. They are making great progress educating the public. They are also helping to report spur trail closures that are being opened back up by trail users. They are seeing bikers on non-bike trails and graffiti. Overall, they are encountering good compliance.

Managing Private Entry Points to the Preserve: Analyst Lozano shared that the City and PVPLC are continuing to close unauthorized entry points to the Preserve from the private Portuguese Bend Community. These unauthorized entry points also result in unauthorized/spur trails and habitat damage. A recent closure has been vandalized and will be replaced.

Public Comments/Questions

Sandy Valerie expressed concern that a group of trail users feel that the Preserve is the private backyard of the Portuguese Bend Community, and to have equestrian access to the Preserve, one must own a home in that community. She clarified that the horse facilities in the community are the Pony Club and the Portuguese Bend Riding Club.

Director Lefer shared that equestrians using the horse facilities within the community are allowed to use the authorized access points to the Preserve.

Barbara Ailor recommended the City and PVPLC team up to focus on hotspots needing extra attention and create a team approach to working together to solve the specific hotspots.

Director Lefer indicated that the City and PVPLC had met recently and are devising a plan to do just that, and it will begin soon.

Sandy Valerie shared that as an equestrian, she has had great interactions with hikers and mountain bikers. They act respectfully, and are careful to work with her on the trail with her horse. She recognizes that there are a few rule breakers, and hopes the behavior of a few does not tarnish the overall reputation of all mountain bikers.

Ranger Johnson reiterated that overall compliance in the Preserve is good, but there are some specific problem areas that continue to need work.

Nari Okui expressed the benefit of having all user groups represented in the Volunteer Trail Watch so that user groups can educate their peers, and because each user group has special knowledge about the users within their groups.

Sandy Valerie inquired as to whether the City would put aside some trails specifically for mountain bikers to go fast and practice their skills.

Director Lefer shared that if the City were to take this action, it would not be within the Nature Preserve, because the activity is not compatible with habitat conservation.

Preserve Interpretive Activities

PVPLC-led nature walks: Director Lefer shared that a schedule of PVPLC nature walks is available at the front table and on the PVPLC website.

Los Serenos de Point Vicente Docent-led Nature Walks: Analyst Lozano shared that a schedule of Los Serenos de Point Vicente nature walks is available at the front table and on the City's website.

Junior Ranger Program: Analyst Lozano shared that the City's Junior Ranger Program continues to be very popular and the latest class of 30 Junior Rangers graduated May 2nd. The program will resume in the fall.

Public Comments/Questions

None.

Analyst Lozano thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.