

CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES  
NATURE PRESERVE QUARTERLY PUBLIC FORUM  
DECEMBER 16, 2015

The forum began at 6 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 & Parks Administrative Analyst  
                    Dave Pearce – Recreation & Parks Recreation Specialist  
                    Jewel Johnson – MRCA Park Ranger

PVPLC Staff: Danielle Lefer – Conservation Director

Deputy Director Mihranian facilitated the forum. About ten members of the public were in attendance.

**Preserve Maintenance**

Review of Active Habitat/Trail Projects including Trail Crew activities: Director Lefer reported that the focus has been in Portuguese Bend and Abalone Cove Reserves. PVPLC will begin planting 5 acres in Portuguese Bend once the rain starts.

Unauthorized/Spur Trail Closures: Director Lefer reported that the Trail Crew has been focused on trail work in Portuguese Bend and Abalone Cove Reserves, but have also completed projects in Forrester, Filiorum, and Three Sisters Reserves.

Three Sisters / Filiorum Connection: Director Lefer reported that PVPLC will reach out to the property owner in this location to discuss again the possibility of an easement across the property to allow the connecting trail. Deputy Director Mihranian reported that the City Council will consider an item in January that could be the first step towards an easement across property near Narcissa Road that would allow desired equestrian access.

Pony Trail Update: Conservation Director Lefer reported that the new portion of the Pony Trail has been delineated. The Trail Crew is working on improving drainage and a small bridge for the trail. The project has been designed and approved.

Toyon/Peppertree Grading Follow-up: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported the City and PVPLC will be reviewing a project schedule in the upcoming weeks, and are hopeful that work will begin early in 2016.

Zote's Cutacross Trail Improvements: Conservation Director Lefer reported that the PVPLC Trail Crew has improved the western ravine crossing by smoothing out the path and making it easier to traverse.

Preserve Signage Plan: Conservation Director Lefer reported that PVPLC is close to a final plan and it is projected to go before City Council in February 2016 for approval.

City Preserve Maintenance Logs: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported the logs are available at the front table and provided general information about what is in the logs.

### *Public Comments/Questions*

Doug Davies inquired about legal entry points to Three Sisters Reserve.

Deputy Director Mihranian responded that there are easements that allow people to traverse between homes to McBride Trail without crossing private property.

Sandy Valerie asked about access from the Portuguese Bend community to Pony Trail.

Deputy Director Mihranian reported that the H.O.A. has obtained easements from the lower properties, but those are not public easements and are only useable by the H.O.A. Easements through the upper properties may be pursued as well. City Council will consider an exemption category to the Municipal Code in February 2016 that will affect the ability to obtain an easement.

Doug Davies inquired about the staircase that parallels part of Rattlesnake Trail and whether it is going to be closed off.

Deputy Director Mihranian responded that those steps are not intended or designed for public use and that they are the responsibility of Los Angeles County. Some individuals are destroying habitat by creating spur trails between the stairs and Filiorum Reserve.

Sandy Valerie shared that equestrians from the Portuguese Bend neighborhood prefer to use the unofficial trail north and west of Narcissa Road to access Gary's Gulch Trail, because it is easier for horses to traverse. Deputy Director Mihranian responded that during the next PUMP review, the City would consider opening the trail, and as a trade-off, closing Vanderlip Trail.

### **Preserve Operations**

Preserve Enforcement / Ranger Report: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported the City Council approved enforcement hours in the Preserve increasing from 40 to 80 hours per week and that over a period of 3 to 6 months, the City will transition from MRCA Rangers to Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept. Ranger Johnson reported that the Rangers are putting emphasis on patrolling Forrestral and Portuguese Bend Reserves, that Rangers met with PVPLC and Recreation & Parks to help improve signage at several key trail junctions, that mountain bikers are now coming in from Rolling Hills, that Rangers have responded to incidents regarding professional dog-walkers, issuing first-aid, professional photographers taking pictures while off trail, and people camping in Forrestral Reserve (including the need to upgrade the Bail Schedule to be able to cite for illegal camping).

Share the Trails Brochure: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported that the brochures have been sent to a professional printer and will be distributed soon.

Recreation & Parks Staff Presence in the Preserve: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported the Preserve has been budgeted for almost 4,000 staff hours for the current fiscal year. The City is recruiting for the positions, and hiring will begin in early 2016.

City Preserve Public Use Logs: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported the logs are available at the front table and provided general information about what is in the logs.

Review of Volunteer Trail Watch Reports: Director Lefer announced that during 2015, there were 100 reports of hikers or bikers off trail, 25 reports of unsafe use of trails, 97 reports of dogs off leash and 353 opportunities of public education.

Volunteer Trail Watch Recruitment: Director Lefer announced 2016 VTW training is open for interested persons on January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> and on February 7<sup>th</sup> at the Ladera Linda Community Center.

Portuguese Bend Reserve Entry Points from Narcissa Road: Deputy Director Mihranian reported that a new, authorized western entry point is under consideration.

#### *Public Comments/Questions*

A general discussion ensued as to what type of entry point or gate would be most suitable for equestrians at the location mentioned above.

Doug Davies asked for information on the irrigation pipes in parts of the Preserve.

Conservation Director Lefer explained that newly planted vegetation needs the extra water for a year or so until they are established. After plantings are growing on their own, the pipes will be removed.

Sandy Valerie asked PVPLC to remove cactus and vegetation growing onto the trails, because it affects the ability of equestrians to safely use those trails.

#### **Preserve Interpretive Activities**

PVPLC-led Nature Walks: Director Lefer shared that a schedule of PVPLC nature walks was 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 was available at the front table and on the City's website.

Ranger-led Night Hikes: Analyst Lozano shared that a schedule of the Ranger-led Night Hikes was available at the front table and on the City's website.

Junior Ranger Program: Administrative Analyst Lozano reported that the City's Junior Ranger Program finished its fall program successfully and continues to be very popular with the public.

*Public Comments/Questions* -- None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.