

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PARKS DEPARTMENT



DATE: August 1, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Peggy Jensen, Interim Parks Director
SUBJECT: Parks Update: June 2019 – July 2019

Highlights

During the months of June and July, the Parks Department hosted numerous volunteer events, welcomed over 60 harbor seal pups at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, kicked-off the on-leash dog pilot program at Junipero Serra Park, and held the annual Kite Festival at the Coyote Point Recreation Area. Department field staff have also been reducing fire fuels in an effort to enhance public safety and improve the health of our forests.

The Parks Department launched a career-development program that provides park rangers with the opportunity to work out of class as a superintendent for four months, and gain experience in project and program management, budgeting, and community engagement. There are eight rangers participating in the program. In addition to working out of class, participants are enrolled in a year-long leadership development program.

We are also pleased to report that REI and the Parks Foundation have partnered in donating three bicycle racks to the marina and REI is further donating bicycle fixit stations department wide.

Parks Items brought to Board of Supervisors

The following matters are items the Parks Commission recommended the Department present to the Board of Supervisors for consideration:

CuriOdyssey Playground Proposal

At the June 6, Parks Commission meeting, the Commission received an informational presentation from the CuriOdyssey Science and Wildlife Center regarding its proposal to construct a new Physics Play Area. While the item was not on the agenda as an action item and commissioners could not vote on the matter, commissioners verbally expressed their support for the project. On July 23, the Department presented the matter to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The Board authorized the approval of CuriOdyssey's request, and it will proceed with the development of plans for the new Physics Play Area. ***This Resolution was passed on 7/23/2019.***

Letter of Intent to Join the Bay to Sea Trail Planning Coalition

At the June 6, Parks Commission meeting, Commissioners voted to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Department sign the Bay to Sea Trail's Letter of Intent to participate on the Planning Coalition. On July 23, the Department made the recommendation to the Board that Parks staff participate on the Planning Coalition for the Bay to Sea Trail. The Board has authorized the Department's participation on the Planning Coalition and the Letter of Intent will be signed in August at join event for all participating agencies. ***This Resolution was passed on 7/23/2019.***

Park Updates

Coyote Point Marina

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

A First Friday Social was held at the Yacht Club on June 7 for all marina tenants. The next social will be on August 2. This is a great opportunity to build community and increase dialog between marina tenants.

Natural Resource Management:

There have been on-going efforts to eradicate fennel and ice plant at the marina. Daily string cutting is being conducted to further prevent weed growth.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Four derelict vessels were removed from the marina on July 14, using an on-call contracted diving and salvage company. Two more vessels will be removed at the end of July. The costs for removing these vessels will be reimbursed by the Department's California Division of Boating and Waterways Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange (SAVE) Grant.

A bathometric survey was completed to determine the harbor's depth. This will support the Department in maintaining an adequate depth within the harbor to grant ingress and egress for vessels. The survey also provides baseline information as Department plans to dredge the harbor, a process that will begin in the coming months.

A preliminary plan for replacing dock 20 was prepared by consultants. Using the plan, the Department will pursue federal grant funding for construction costs.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Routine, on-water patrols of the marina and immediately adjacent waterways continues. Marina field staff rescued stranded windsurfers and kite-boarders on three separate occasions.

Staff Updates:

Ranger Bob Gardali joined the marina team on July 18.

Coyote Point Recreation Area

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects at Coyote Point Park:

Interpretive staff, field staff from Coyote Point, and the Sheriff's Activities League (SAL), partnered to host the Fishing with a Ranger Event on June 26. Seven children spent several hours with field staff learning how to fish.

On June 29, Coyote Point Park hosted its third annual Kite Festival. The event was a huge success with more than 1,000 visitors attending over the course of the day. Guests enjoyed free refreshments sponsored by the Lions Club and Pacific Catch. The Berkeley Kite Wranglers featured a giant kite display, free kite making kits and kite flying lessons provided by the Wranglers! This event was sponsored by Supervisor Carol Groom, the Parks Foundation, Recology, Talbot's Toyland, and Peninsula Clean Energy.

Coyote Point field staff assisted Volunteer Coordinator Stuart Smith, and approximately 120 students from Menlo High School with the removal of ice plant from the Coyote Point Marina jetty.

Since mid-May, employees from Go Pro, Redaptive, Sierra Adventures, Baykeeper, Genentech, Google, and Hyatt have been participating in beach clean-up days at the Coyote Point Recreation Area.

Coyote Point continues to be in demand for large company picnics and events. Fun runs and races typically occur on the weekend, and the large company picnics are taking place midweek which shifts the focus from facility maintenance and improvement to visitor services. Three 5k events took place in May with over 900 participants in total. Two 5k events took place in June with 1,000 participants in total.

Natural Resource Management:

Maintenance District field staff and District I field staff removed six hazardous trees at the Knoll adjacent to the Captain's House. Maintenance of the eucalyptus trees around the Captain's House and along the Bay Trail continues. With late rains, the park has experienced prolonged weed growth, which field staff continues to address.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Signage was installed promoting the rules and regulations pertaining to the on-leash dog pilot program. Closed trail signs were painted on the pathways behind CuriOdyssey in order to minimize adverse impacts associated with increased dog access.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Field staff have been documenting verbal interactions for the on-leash dog pilot program, with only a handful of ordinance violations occurring since the pilot began on June 15. All interactions regarding ordinance violations were resolved with education. No citations have been issued.

All field staff were on duty for the July 4 holiday, with all drop-in picnic sites occupied by 10:30 a.m. The park experienced heavy use all weekend and field staff made contacts for fireworks, off-leash dogs, illegal parking, and unauthorized dumping of hot charcoal.

Staff Updates:

District I welcomed new Ranger II, Daniela Todorcevic, to the team in early July. Daniela worked as a park aide at Coyote Point, the marina, and in District IV. Her expansive park experience will allow her to be a valuable team member.

Crystal Springs Trail/Sawyer Camp Trail/San Andreas Trail/South of Dam

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects at Coyote Point Park:

A dedication ceremony was held at the entrance of Sawyer Camp Trail for Officer Eugene A. Doran, who was shot and killed in the line of duty on Bunker Hill Road, on August 5, 1959. Police agencies from all over the Bay Area attended, as did District Attorney, Steve Wagstaff, for the unveiling of the Doran Memorial, which is just outside the park entrance.

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff removed two willow trees along Sawyer Camp Trail during the trail's annual mowing. The Department's equipment operator mowed all accessible portions of the trail with a tiger mower, which cuts back willow, poison oak, and small brush. Field staff used small hand tools equipment to brush back portion of the San Andreas trail.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Contractors finished replacing portions of security fencing along Sawyer Camp Trail in early June. Phase two of the fence replacement project is expected to take place this winter.

The restrooms were freshly painted during the annual trail closure. A non-potable water tank was installed at the South of Dam restroom so field staff can clean the restrooms.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity

Field staff were posted at either end of the trail closure during mowing to keep people from entering the closed area. The equipment operator had over 20 people jump the secured fence to access the trail during the closure. These encounters were troublesome because the tiger mower can throw debris several hundred yards, making it unsafe for people to be around. Rangers acted immediately to resolve the safety risk.

Park and Park Office Closures

For annual mowing, the trail closures were as follows: Sawyer Camp Trail from June 10-14, San Andreas Trail from June 17-19, South of Dam Trail from June 20-21.

Devil's Slide

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects

The Committee for Green Foothills honored Lenny Roberts on June 21, with a ceremony and sign unveiling. Ms. Roberts was a champion for the Devil's Slide tunnel. She has been a powerful environmental advocate with the Committee for Green Foothills since 1968.

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff conducted string cutting of invasive plants along the roadway in an effort to eradicate non-native vegetation and restore ecological value within the park.

Edgewood Park and Nature Preserve

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

Wildflower hikes began in March and ran through end of June. Hikes are led by docents with the Friends of Edgewood and are open to the public. On June 18, the final hike at the park had approximately 20 people in attendance. The hikes are promoted on the Friends of Edgewood website and the Parks Department website.

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff have been brushing back poison oak along the Sylvan, Serpentine, and Old Stage trails. They have also been string cutting along the entrances to the park at Clarkia Trail, Edgewood Trail and around the day use restrooms and reservation areas. A tree contractor also removed hazard trees along the service road near the Education Center.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements

A plumbing contractor replaced the old water shut off valves to the distribution lines that supply water to the day use restrooms, Education Center, and residence. They also installed new drinking fountains. Four security cameras were installed at the education center at the request of the Friends of Edgewood's insurance company.

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and Pillar Point Bluffs

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

A Junior Ranger event was held on June 8, with 30 attendees participating in a scavenger hunt and making conservation posters for the park.

Natural Resource Management:

There have been approximately 65 harbor seal pups within the reserve this season.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

A memorial bench at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve was re-installed on the ramp after it was removed during the winter due to erosion.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity

Field staff are continuing dog contacts with those visitors who bring pets to restricted areas. Generally, positive contacts are resulting in compliance. No citations have been written.

Staff Updates

Ranger Cala will be working out of class as a Ranger III through November. Ranger Rodgers will be working out of class as District IV's Ranger IV during the same period.

Flood Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects

On June 15 and 16, the annual Dad & Me @ the Park was held. The event was hosted by the Human Services Agency's Dad's Workgroup and included family games, the County Library's Imagination Playground, and free books.

Natural Resource Management:

Mowing and string cutting by field staff has been on-going throughout the park to manage the overgrowth of vegetation. A tree contractor also removed seven large hazardous trees.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Security cameras were installed at the corporation yard and the gatehouse. These cameras will record activity occurring in Parking Lot 1 and at the entrance and exit of the park. A plumbing contractor was called to the park on June 20 to clear the sewer line due to a backup in Restrooms A and B. Field staff replaced a BBQ in the Manzanita Area.

Friendship Park – No Report this time

Huddart Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

Two Take A Hike events were held on June 1 and June 19, with approximately 30 participants at each. Field staff helped lead the hikes which went along the Crystal Springs and Dean Trails as well as the Bay Tree Trail. The Peninsula Girl Scout Day Camp began a two-week camp which ran from July 6 to July 19. Approximately 700 girl scouts attend the two-week long day camp.

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff continue efforts to remove fallen trees and brush back vegetation to keep trails clear of hazards. Mowing and string cutting is on-going in the reservation and drop-in areas to accommodate heavy summer usage.

A tree contractor removed several hazardous Tan Oaks in the Toyon Group Campground Area in preparation for the camping season. Annual fire prevention mowing was completed on South County Trails (Alpine Trail, Sand Hill Trail and Lawler Ranch Rd trail).

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff repaired a leak in the Toyon Group Campground waterline. Base rock has been spread along Toyon Group Campground Road from the lower gate up to the campground to improve the condition of the road in preparation for heavy traffic during the camping season. Field staff continue to patch potholes throughout the park. A damaged section of asphalt was repaired on the Ralston Bike Trail.

Park and Park Office Closures:

Bicycle Sunday was canceled on May 19 due to weather and on May 26 for the Memorial Day holiday.

Junipero Serra Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

On June 14, approximately 25 people and 15 dogs attended the kick-off of the on-leash dog pilot program event at the Willow Shelter. There were refreshments for both humans and dogs. The Department also gave out leashes, dog waste bag holders, maps and a list of other parks that allow dogs. On June 15, dogs were granted access to Junipero Serra Park for the first time. Throughout the first weekend approximately eight dogs enjoyed the park. Field staff will be hiking the trails on a weekly basis looking for any issues such as dog waste or dog waste bags left on the trails and will be reporting on the "Verbal Enforcement Documentation Dog Pilot" sheets.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

In late May, and early June, a tree contractor provided free pruning of various oak and eucalyptus trees in various picnic sites in the park in exchange for areas to use for training. Collaborations like this allow tree contractors to train employees while also reducing hazards within County parks. A four-foot cyclone fence was installed around both park playgrounds to prevent unauthorized dog access. This project was funded by Measure K. Field staff installed six dog waste bag stations with the dog rule signs posted underneath.

Park and Park Office Closures:

"No Fireworks" signs were put at all entrances to the park as well as near the restrooms and kiosks. Temporary "HIGH FIRE DANGER" signs were installed at the entrances of the park due to hot weather. Signs were taken down mid-week after the temperature reduced.

Memorial Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

The Naturalist Program has a steady weekend attendance of 50-100 campers per day for the guided nature hikes, arts and crafts activities, and movie showings at the amphitheater. Three park aides have been hired for the summer to assist with the program.

Natural Resource Management:

Fire fuel reduction work was carried out on the three acres within the corporation yard and Loma Mar Fire Station property. Field staff and contractors continued tree management work throughout all use areas in collaboration with the Department's arborist.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

New fire pits were installed at the Redwood Flat and Wurr Flats group campgrounds. Field staff installed and rebuilt wooden tables and bollards in the campgrounds. Hydro-flushing and cleaning of the wastewater collection system was completed by the park ranger wastewater operator and contractors. Field staff worked with a contractor to replace almost 2,000 linear feet of antiquated

collection system pipe. Field staff and maintenance district staff conducted road repairs in all campgrounds and day use Areas. Plumbers repaired and replaced 10 water spigot stations, adding important shut off valves for water conservation (project was funded by San Mateo County Office of Sustainability).

Moss Beach Park

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements

Field staff completed demolition of playground tower structure and installed drain rock and playground fiber in its place. The new playground has been ordered and will be delivered by the end of fall.

Pescadero Creek Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

Volunteer trail work days occurred in May and June. Trail work typically includes trail clearing (which is clearing the trails of a downed tree or something else that may be blocking the path), and tread work (which is repairing the trail bed from erosion or other damage, so you can walk safely on a smooth trail).

Natural Resource Management

A tree contractor removed trees and vegetation along Baker Fire Road, in support of fire fuel reduction effort.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Parks staff, including Scott Lombardi, Mario Nastari, and David Vasquez, met with CAL FIRE, State Parks, and an adjacent property owner to replace the Trestle Creek Bridge replacement. Field staff cleared a large dangerous Bay tree that had fallen and was obstructing the East Brook trail. Trail work continued to maintain usability of equestrian trails and other trails with tree obstructions. The Towne Creek Bridge replacement project continues with the bridge footings poured.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity

Field staff responded to afterhours reports of missing hikers; all hikers were found safe. The San Mateo County Sheriff's Search and Rescue training program took place on Saturday, June 22.

Pillar Point Bluff

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

The property lines at Pillar Point Bluff have been surveyed and boundary markers will be installed and fuel breaks will be created along the property boundaries. String cutting and brushing on trails from trailhead parking lot to the bluff continue.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity

Field staff have continued dog contacts and education, using report sheets to collect and record information. The education effort is intended to help visitors understand regulations and have a good experience with their dog.

Quarry Park, Mirada East and West

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects

Eagle Scout Johnson led a project with 17 volunteers, restoring a pathway by the playground, rocking a new trail, and installing a culvert for drainage.

Natural Resource Management:

CAL FIRE and the Department are collaborating to create 100 acres of shaded fuel breaks throughout the park as part of the Governor's 45-day order. The project is anticipated to start in mid-August.

Sam McDonald Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

Volunteer trail work days occurred in May and June. Trail work typically includes trail clearing (which is clearing the trails of a downed tree or something else that may be blocking the path), and tread work (which is repairing the trail bed from erosion or other damage, so you can walk safely on a smooth trail).

San Bruno Mountain

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

On June 18, field staff installed several disabled parking signs in various sections of the park and repainted parking markers on the ground and curbs blue.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Field staff assisted North County Fire in escorting an elderly female hiker with chest pains out of the park and into an ambulance.

San Pedro Valley Park/ Sanchez Adobe

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

Parca held a fundraiser run on June 8 with approximately 550 in attendance. Sanchez Adobe's new visitor center work has broken ground. Water lines have been installed and the foundation has been poured. Work continues through the summer with the pre-fabricated building anticipated to arrive in July. The Sanchez Adobe school program has been using the Walnut Reservation area and visitor's center during construction.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff are building a parking shade structure in Weiler yard for parks equipment storage. The annual trail brushing has been completed on most trails. A paving contractor completed and executed a contract to pave at South Walnut from sidewalk to new ADA ramp. This resulted in ADA compliant asphalt path to the restroom. The Parks Maintenance equipment operator has completed mowing of the parks fields.

Tunitas Creek Beach

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Field staff worked late shifts through the July 4 weekend to enforce the camping and fireworks prohibition.

Wunderlich Park

Parks Events, Programs and Volunteer Projects:

The Folger Stable Speaker Series held their annual event at the Carriage House on June 16.

Natural Resource Management:

Mowing and string cutting by field staff continues throughout the park to manage vegetation overgrowth. Field staff removed low hanging branches along Bear Gulch Road as requested by the Woodside Fire District.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvement:

A water line at the Folger's barn was repaired by field staff. The Carriage House improvements and remodel were completed and it has been reopened.

Park and Park Office Closures

On June 18, the park was closed at the request of the San Mateo Sherriff's Office because of an active criminal investigation taking place within and around the area of the park. The Park was reopened at noon.

Updates from Special Units

Maintenance Unit

Natural Resource Management:

The Parks equipment operator mowed all open spaces in all districts to meet the July 4 deadline for fire prevention and also general natural resource management.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

The Maintenance Unit has begun work on the Tan Oak day use road in Memorial Park to prepare for a large asphalt improvement project. The Parks electrician is starting a project at the Marina to assist with the installation of new key card readers for each of the dock entrances. In addition, the Maintenance Unit has started to

replace a total of six back flow (potable water protection) devices at the Coyote Point Marina. The Maintenance Unit also completed trail repairs on the Ralston Bike Trail. The shoulder of the trail was damaged and the unit had to remove old asphalt, compact the subgrade and add new asphalt to make the final repairs.

Updates provided by:

Pricilla Alvarez, Ranger IV
Mark Bettis, Harbormaster
Rogelio Castaneda, Ranger IV
Laurel Finnegan, Ranger IV
Mark Rogers, Ranger III
Kevin Scott, Ranger IV
David Vasquez, Ranger IV