

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PARKS DEPARTMENT



DATE: December 5, 2019

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Nicholas J. Calderon, Parks Director
SUBJECT: Parks Update: October 2019 – November 2019

Highlights

Autumn has been a very busy season in Parks. The Halloween Movie Night showing of Hocus Pocus at Memorial Park on October 12 was attended by 100 guests. The Department also co-hosted a Family Nature Day with POST at Huddart Park with 250 people in attendance.

On October 26, the San Mateo County Historical Association joined San Mateo County officials at the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site to commemorate the Native Americans that inhabited San Mateo County. The day's activities were highlighted by special recognition of the first people who lived at the site, the *Aramai* of the Ramaytush Ohlone village of *Pruristac*.

On November 2, County Parks collaborated with the City of Pacifica and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGRNA) to co-host Ohlone – Portolà Heritage Day, which recognized 10,000 years of Ohlone settlement in San Mateo County, and the 250-year anniversary of Gaspar de Portolà's expedition and the first European sighting of the San Francisco Bay. Approximately 1,000 people participated from all over the State of California.

Autumn is also the beginning of wildfire season in California. As firefighters battled wildfires around the state, the Department had a wildfire at San Bruno Mountain. While the wildfire grew to 11-acres, firefighters from CAL FIRE responded quickly and the wildfire was fully contained within 24 hours. Field staff from District I immediately joined the District VII field staff in supporting critical operations. The Department is very proud

of how the field staff conducted themselves during this emergency. It is important to note that no injuries were reported and at no time were homes nearby threatened by the fire; only vegetation was affected.

Parks items presented to the Board of Supervisors

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

Proposed Parks Land Acquisition and Management Assessment Process

Responsible land management and provision of quality visitor experiences requires funding for maintenance and capital repairs and adequate staffing. Increasing County park acreage - either through purchase of new properties or taking on management of property owned by other organizations - increases Department responsibilities. To promote informed decisions, the Department has developed a land acquisition and management assessment process. The Department process is based on a California State Parks process that considers opportunities, costs, and obligations associated with expanding responsibilities.

The proposed Land Acquisition and Management Assessment Process, assures that the Board of Supervisors is aware of the impacts and costs of adding new lands, either owned or managed, to the County Park system prior to making a final decision on such an action. ***The Board authorized the proposed assessment process on November 11, 2019.***

Flood Park Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Update

At its November 5 meeting, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors received a presentation on the Flood Park Landscape Plan and Environmental Impact Report from Park staff. Because the Board asked staff to provide additional information regarding the Landscape Plan and Environmental Impact Report, this item will be scheduled for a future Board of Supervisors' meeting.

Park Updates

Coyote Point Marina

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff worked towards eradication of fennel and ice plant on the jetty and center berm. They also completed tree trimming west of the inner basin in preparation for winter storms.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff continue to perform dock maintenance and repairs as needed.

Six more derelict vessels are now in Marina possession awaiting disposal by staff. Expenses incurred from disposal of the vessels will be reimbursed by the Department's Boating and Waterways Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Grant received in 2018.

New Marina management software has been acquired and implementation is underway. The new software will maintain the tenant database, billing, slip reservations, and financial accounting.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Marina staff continue to complete daily license plate logs to monitor unauthorized live-aboard activity. Marina field staff also continue routine on-water patrols of the marina and immediately adjacent waterways.

A small sailboat was wrecked and then abandoned on the launch ramp. The boat was demolished on site and removed.

Coyote Point Recreation Area

Natural Resource Management:

Eighty-five large Eucalyptus trees were removed to allow for construction of the Eastern Promenade project at Coyote Point.

Seven hazardous trees were removed from behind the Peninsula Humane Society. They were uprooting and large limbs were breaking off creating a public safety concern.

Field staff continued removal of Fennel, Oxalis, and Bristly Ox Tongue along roads and trails.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

In preparation for winter storms, storm drains, culverts and gutters were cleaned out at Coyote Point.

Construction on the Coyote Point Water Distribution project began on August 26. While the subsurface water distribution line has been installed, the contractor is waiting for the pump to be delivered. Once the pump is delivered, the project can be completed.

Field staff made repairs to the playground mat surface, and ordered various pieces of play equipment that needed to be replaced.

Staff Updates:

Ranger Laurel Finnegan is on a temporary assignment assisting Supervisor Horsley's office while his Legislative Aide is on temporary assignment at Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Ranger Kevin O'Brien is on a temporary Work-Out-of-Class assignment assisting Superintendent Lombardi with Capital Projects.

Ranger Daniela Todorcevic completed California's Peace Officer Standards and Training course PC832 on October 11, 2019. Congratulations Ranger Todorcevic!

Park and Park Office Closures:

Coyote Point Recreation Area was closed on October 9 and October 10, due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

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

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

In preparation for winter storms, storm drains, culverts and gutters were cleaned out at all Crystal Spring Regional Trail segments.

Park and Park Office Closures:

Crystal Springs Regional Trail, Sawyer Camp Trail and San Andreas segments were also closed October 27 and October 28 due to extremely high fire danger.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) closed the San Andreas trail segment from the evening of October 29 through the evening of November 2 to make repairs to a water line that traverses directly under the trail. SFPUC will resurface the areas damaged during the repairs.

Devil's Slide Trail

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements

A donation box has been installed on the north end of the trail. All donations are deposited into the Devil's Slide donation fund.

All curbs that do not allow parking have been re-painted with a fresh coat of red paint and marked "No Parking".

Park and Park Office Closures:

Devil's Slide Trail was closed on Thursday, October 10, due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Devil's Slide Trail was closed on Saturday, October 26 and Sunday, October 27 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff, and re-opened Monday, October 28.

Edgewood Park and Nature Preserve

Natural Resource Management:

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and CAL FIRE worked along the Sunset Trail service road clearing willows, coyote brush, and poison oak for improved emergency vehicle access. Coyote brush was also cleared from the park entrance to improve visibility to Edgewood Road.

PG&E began clearing trees and vegetation along their power lines at the southern border of the park on October 14. Work on this project will be finished in December.

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and Pillar Point Bluffs

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

A “smoker’s pole” cigarette receptacle and a park sign were vandalized on September 17. Both the pole and sign have been replaced.

Park Staff have installed a bike service station on the California Coastal Trail section of the park. The service station has a tire pump and tools appropriate for bike repair.

Park and Park Office Closures:

The reserve was without power on October 9, October 10, October 26, October 27, and October 28 due to PG&E’s Public Safety Power Shutoff. The lack of power did not affect park operations.

Flood Park

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff trimmed vegetation throughout the park and clearing drainages in preparation for winter.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff cleared a sewer blockage that had caused a backup in two restrooms.

Friendship Park – No Report at this Time

Huddart Park

Natural Resource Management:

CAL FIRE and the Department treated approximately 80-acres of vegetation along Kings Mountain Road and Archery Fire Road. By creating a shaded fuel break, the project improves ingress and egress and enhances ecological condition of the park. The Kings Mountain Shaded Fuel Break Project was completed on October 2.

Field staff cleared vegetation in preparation for a future equestrian crossing on the Sand Hill Trail.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff repaired a water line break on Archery Fire Road. This line is the main water line for the Park and feeds the upper part of the Park. The water line on Campground Road that serves the campground area was also repaired.

Park and Park Office Closures:

Huddart Park was closed October 9 and October 10 due to PG&E’s Public Safety Power Shutoff and a request by the Woodside Fire District.

Bicycle Sunday was canceled on October 27 due to a red flag warning. It was also canceled on November 10 in observance of the Veterans Day Holiday.

Junipero Serra Park

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

On October 16, four game cameras were installed on trails in the park. The cameras are placed low so as to not capture visitors, but rather to help the Department to monitor wildlife sightings in the park.

In November, field staff replaced worn out wooden table boards in the various picnic areas of the park.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

October 27 through October 31 were spare the air days. High fire warning signs were put up at the park entrance informing visitors of the fire danger.

Staff Updates:

On October 23, field staff attended the second dog pilot meeting with Parks management at Coyote Point. Attendees discussed how the dog pilot program was going since allowing dogs in the park in June. The meeting was very productive. The main topic was dealing with dogs off-leash and submitting the "Bite Form Report" to the Peninsula Humane Society.

Memorial Park

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Construction continues on the Wastewater Treatment Plant. As shown in the picture below, the concrete walls have been poured.
(See picture below)



Field staff installed ten concrete pads throughout the campgrounds and use areas for new recycle stations to be installed.

Contractors conducted asphalt paving of the Tan Oak access road in the Day Use Area (See picture below)



Field staff re-built the access trail to the pump house at the creek that washed out last winter. This trail is critical for accessing the water treatment system infrastructure by Pescadero Creek.

Contractors built retaining walls and pads in preparation for the installation of new potable water tanks that would supply the town of Loma Mar (See picture below).



Park and Park Office Closures:

Memorial Park was closed on October 9 and October 10 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Memorial Park was closed for three days on October 29, October 30, and October 31 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

The Sequoia Flats, Redwood Flats, Azalea Flats, and Homestead Flats campgrounds are closed for the year.

Staff Updates

Ranger II Kenneth Crampton joined District III on a transfer from District IV. Welcome Ranger Crampton!

Mirada Surf – No report at this time

Moss Beach Park – No report at this time

Pescadero Creek Park

Natural Resource Management:

Contractors completed tree clearing work around the Dark Gulch Creek crossing on the Old Haul Road in preparation for the planned culvert replacement project.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff conducted winter preparations on all trails and roads clearing culverts and maintaining drainage systems.

An on-call vendor conducted septic pumping of the Shaw Flat and Tarwater Flats Trail Camps' restrooms.

Field staff cut brush and tree overgrowth away from the Worley Flat Road that leads from the YMCA Camp Loma Mar property into Worley Flats. Once the road was cleared by field staff, the Parks Maintenance Division Operator conducted repairs to a large sink hole on the road.

The recently completed Towne Creek Bridge re-opened access to the West Brook Trail (see picture below).



Park and Park Office Closures:

Pescadero Creek Park was closed on October 9 and October 10 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff. The park was also closed October 29 through October 31, due to the Cabrillo Fire.

Pillar Point Bluff – No Report at this Time

Quarry Park, Mirada East and West

Park and Park Office Closures:

Quarry Park was closed on October 9, October 10 and October 29 through October 31, due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Sam McDonald Park

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff removed trees that were obstructing the data signal to the Information Services Department (ISD) radio tower above the Towne Fire Road.

The Parks Maintenance Division rocked the 1.3-mile Ridge Road that leads to the Jack Brooks Horse Camp.

Contractors replaced three power poles above the Towne Fire Road as part of a PG&E project.

Field staff conducted winter season preparation on all trails and access roads and cleared drainage culverts.

Park and Park Office Closures:

Sam McDonald Park was closed on October 9 and October 10 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff. The park was also closed October 29 through October 31, due to the Cabrillo Fire.

San Bruno Mountain

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

At the end of October, field staff replaced and refurbished worn signs and gates throughout the park.

In November, field staff replaced six small benches on the Bog Trail. Field staff also painted the informational kiosk in the main parking lot.

Natural Resource Management:

After the fire on San Bruno Mountain, field staff from Districts VII, II, and IV worked with the Natural Resources team on vegetation rehabilitation for the fire line that was cut by CAL FIRE. The work was done with hand tools, and straw wattles were installed to prevent erosion during winter rains. Straw wattles are an erosion and sediment control device used to minimize erosion at construction sites. Wattles assist in stabilizing

construction disturbances by shortening the slope lengths, reducing water flow velocities and trapping sediment on site.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

On October 10, field staff responded to a brush fire on the Brisbane side of the mountain. CAL FIRE, Brisbane Fire and North County Fire responded to the incident. Field staff evacuated the park and posted "PARK CLOSED" at all the park entrances. The cause of the fire is still being investigated. While the wildfire grew to 11-acres, firefighters from CAL FIRE responded very quickly and the blaze was fully contained within 24-hours. The park remained closed the next day until all fire personnel cleared the park.

Sanchez Adobe

Natural Resource Management:

In preparation of the October 26 dedication, native plants were installed by field staff around the new Sanchez Adobe Interpretive Center.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

The San Mateo County Historical Society is installing displays in the museum section of the new Visitor Center. The displays reflect and depict different periods in the history of the Sanchez Adobe.

Park and Park Office Closures:

The Adobe was closed Monday through Friday for the first four weeks of October due to construction of the new Visitor Center. With external construction of the new Visitor Center completed, Sanchez Adobe is now open seven days a week.

San Pedro Valley Park

Natural Resource Management:

Field staff and CAL FIRE are continuing to remove Eucalyptus trees on the edges of San Pedro Valley Park at Park Pacifica Blvd. An additional fourteen trees were removed in November bringing the total Eucalyptus trees removed to approximately 49.

A contractor removed and treated jubata grass (aka pampas grass) from Brooks Falls Trail. Jubata grass is highly invasive and this removal will slow its progress at San Pedro Valley Park.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

Field staff re-furbished the Bridge to the Plaskon trail. New planks and posts were installed.

Field staff worked with Boy Scout Semisi Silipalvi Kioa on his Eagle Scout Project at San Pedro Valley Park. A group of 20 volunteers leveled out a hole by adding four tons of soil, and erected 85-feet of split rail fencing between the picnic area and the creek. This project helped define the reservation site and keep people away from the creek.

Staff Updates:

Ranger Lisa Di Lorenzo, Ranger III, will transfer from District VII to District IV.

Public Safety and Social Service Activity:

Rangers Matthew Tolmasoff and Thomas Hart have worked with California State Parks to lead a hike honoring Ohlone-Portolá Heritage Day. On November 2, a celebration was held commemorating 10,000 years of Ohlone settlement in San Mateo County and the 250-Anniversary of the Portola' Expedition sighting of San Francisco Bay. A group of one hundred people hiked to Sweeney Ridge.

Park and Park Office Closures:

San Pedro Valley Park was closed on October 9, October 10, and October 29 through October 31, due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Tunitas Creek Beach

Natural Resource Management:

The number of Western Snowy Plover identified on Tunitas Creek Beach has increased to an average of ten to fifteen birds a day.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

A new fence and gate will be built at the entrance to Tunitas Creek Beach.

Wunderlich Park

Natural Resource Management:

A tree contractor removed several large Eucalyptus trees at the south east corner of the park.

PG&E's restoration project within Wunderlich Park, which removed 16 acres of eucalyptus trees, concluded in early November. All trees were removed and processed on site. Road improvements and grading have all been completed prior to the first major rain with exception of one culvert whose replacement has been postponed until spring 2020.

Facility and Infrastructure Improvement:

Field staff assisted the Parks Maintenance Division with replacing the bridge along Bear Gulch Trail.

Field staff are working to improve the horse turnouts by installing large rubber mats. This is a safety precaution for the rainy season. This gives the horses a dry area to stand and be fed on when the ground is wet.

Park and Park Office Closures:

The park was closed on October 9 and October 10 due to PG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Updates from Special Units

Maintenance Unit

Facility and Infrastructure Improvements:

The maintenance unit has been working on road improvements along the Ridge Road at Memorial Park for several weeks. The project involved re-establishing proper road width and repairing surface tread. Also, field staff were able to re-establish proper drainage along the road providing a safe entrance and exit for park visitors into the Jack Brook Horse camp.

The maintenance unit has completed work on the Tan Oak day use loop at Memorial Park. Field staff prepared the subgrade for the road so that new asphalt could be installed.

The maintenance unit has been making shop improvements at Huddart Park and Flood Park by rebuilding adequate tool sheds.

The maintenance unit also corrected a major drainage issue along the Sawyer Camp Trail. The culvert had been blocked for several years causing the trail to flood during winter months. With the use of new equipment, specifically a new back hoe and compaction roller, the Department were able to complete this park improvement to keep the trail from flooding, allowing the public to safely use the trail during the winter.

Park Planning Projects

Flood Park Landscape Plan Revised EIR:

At the November 5 meeting, the Board of Supervisors considered the Revised EIR for certification, and the Landscape Plan for approval. The Board asked for additional information and the item was continued to a future date to be determined.

Ohlone – Portol`a Heritage Day November 2, 2019 – County Parks, GGNRA and the City of Pacifica collaborated on an event recognizing Ohlone life in San Mateo County. The groups were celebrating the 250-year anniversary of the Gaspar de Portol`a expedition, which was very well attended by approximately 1000 people. The event included participation of living descendants of the Ramaytush Ohlone and Los Californianos, who are the living descendants of the Portol`a and Juan Bautista de Anza expedition.

Natural Resource Management Program

In addition to the Natural Resource Management activities listed for each of the parks, the Natural Resource Management program has been overseeing and working on the following projects:

- 1) Dark Gulch – Old Haul Road Sediment reduction project. The Department has ongoing coordination with the San Mateo RCD to complete phase IV of the Old Haul Road projects – which involves actual construction activities for the stream

crossing at Dark Gulch Creek. The permitting and construction planning process is ongoing this fall and winter.

- 2) San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan – NRM has been coordinating vegetation management activities for the fall, with contractors to complete scrub removal and other invasive species treatments for the benefit of listed butterfly habitat at the park.
- 3) The county-wide vegetation mapping project is continuing to progress, with all field verification of on-the-ground vegetation communities throughout the county taking place this summer. This data will be used to create the county-wide vegetation communities map.
- 4) San Vicente Creek Restoration – contractors are continuing maintenance and expansion of the restoration efforts at the San Vicente creek restoration project site, with weeding and in-channel vegetation removal
- 5) The NRM program has been conducting monitoring in the parks for on-leash dog pilots, and participating in the dog workgroup meetings to provide advice and insight into natural resource management concerns around dog recreation within county Parks properties.
- 6) Two large fire fuel reduction projects were completed at Huddart Park and Quarry Park that were implemented by CAL FIRE. These projects established shaded fuel breaks along the Kings Mountain Road corridor, and along the majority of fire roads throughout Quarry Park, to reduce the risk of fire spread through the park properties and to adjacent homes, should a wildfire occur. These projects began in mid-august and were completed in mid-October. Plans to continue ongoing treatment and maintenance of these fuel breaks are in development.
- 7) PG&E is implementing an oak woodland mitigation project at Wunderlich. The work began in mid-September, with eucalyptus removal being completed by late October. Work on road and culvert repairs associated with the projects ongoing through mid-November.

Updates provided by:

Pricilla Alvarez, Ranger IV
Mark Bettis, Harbormaster
Joe Immethun, Ranger III
Laurel Finnegan, Ranger IV
Mark Rogers, Ranger III
David Vasquez, Ranger IV

Staff Reports from:

Sam Herzberg
Hannah Ormshaw
Katherine Wright, Ranger III