

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** January 25, 2016

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** February 4, 2016

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Carla Schoof, Community Programs Specialist  
**SUBJECT:** Report on Volunteer and Community Programs

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and accept report.

**BACKGROUND:**

Volunteer and Community Program updates and items of interest to the Commission.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Volunteer Activities**

In addition to the ongoing support from partner organizations, the following groups volunteered their time in San Mateo County Parks October through December 2015:

- Thirty-two biology students from the College of San Mateo cleared brush near the De Anza Playground in Junipero Serra Park.
- More than 52 members of the local Presbyterian Church spread wood chips and improved the area around the popular Magic Mountain Playground in Coyote Point Recreation Area.
- Three Eagle Scout projects were completed at San Bruno Mountain. The Scouts focused on improving the Bacciocco Youth Camp area and the amphitheater and removing Pampass grass.
- Trail projects at Huddart: San Mateo County Parks, the Trail Center and REI partnered to improve a section of the Skyline Trail in November as part of Ridge Trail Day. Thirty-two volunteers worked on the trail. On December 5, 25 volunteers, led by the Trail Center and Parks staff, worked on the Chaparral Trail to improve trail tread and drainage.
- A Boy Scout troop of seven worked with rangers to install a trail sign at Memorial Park.

### **Upcoming Volunteer Events**

Saturday, February 6: Trail Center Work Day, Junipero Serra Park: Volunteers will address erosion, tread damage, and drainage needs of the popular Quail Loop Trail.

### **Community Engagement Activities**

Reimagine Flood Park Community Sessions: Park staff and representatives with Gates+Associates presented the preferred plan at meetings on December 9 in Menlo Park and December 16 at the Fair Oaks Community Center. The plan reflects the prioritizations and ideas for park enhancements generated by park users at community meetings that began May 2015. The presentation materials used at the meetings are posted on the Department's website: SMCOParks.org. Park staff are reviewing plan details in order to outline permitting steps while consulting firm staff develop project cost estimates. These details will be incorporated into a presentation at an upcoming Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

### Assessment of 2014-15 Interpretive and Community Engagement Programs:

In late 2014, the Department received funding through Measure A to hire a Park Ranger Interpretive Specialist to develop an interpretive plan aimed at fulfilling environmental education goals identified in the Department's Strategic Plan. A total of 54 events were provided by Ranger/Interpretive Specialist Katherine Wright in 2014-15 and included three BioBlitz events, ranger-led nature and history hikes, a reading ranger program in county libraries and,

At the end of the 2015 calendar year, the Department invited participants of the interpretive and engagement programs and Take A Hike program to share their satisfaction and ideas for improvement. The survey method was through an on-line link. To encourage participation, survey respondents were entered into a drawing for 10 San Mateo County Parks water bottles. The data below reflects some of the information collected.

#### Interpretive and Engagement Programs

Q: How would you rate the event: 100% rated the events as good or better, with 70% rating as excellent

Q: How likely are you to recommend event to a friend: 90%) were very likely or extremely likely to recommend.

Q: Would you attend again in the future: 100% said "yes".

Q: Which events would you attend in the future: Top three events were Movie Night in the Park, Night Hike, and Family Nature Hikes.

#### Take A Hike

Q: How would you rate the quality of the event: 100% evaluated the event as good or better; 60% rated as excellent.

Q: In general, do you think the length of hikes are too long, too short or just right: 71% rated hikes as about right; 25% wanted longer hikes.

Q: How informative and interesting was the content presented at the event: More than 80% categorized the information as positive.

Q: Of the Take A Hike events listed, please indicate if this was the first time you visited this park. Percentage of first-time visits were: Sheep Camp Trail (43.4%), Sam McDonald Park (37.7%), San Bruno Mountain (32%), San Pedro Valley (32%)

## **Upcoming Community Activities**

### **Communications**

The Department and San Mateo County Parks Foundation are underwriters of the OpenRoad Series which introduces local natural, historical and cultural treasures of the Bay Area. The Parks Department's Devil's Slide Trail was featured as a segment of the season premiere on January 24 on the local NBC station. Those interested can view The Devil's Slide segment of the show can be viewed on the Department's website.

Print and Electronic Media Outreach: The Department used a variety of vehicles to inform the public about park services and events in October through mid-January.

- Press Releases:
  - Reimagine Flood Park Meetings, December 9 and 16
- Facebook:
  - Coyote Point Recreation Area Closes Knoll area due to high winds, November 24
  - OptOutside Black Friday – encouraging exploring San Mateo County Parks during the Thanksgiving weekend, November 24
  - Family Nature Hike: Steelhead Trout at Memorial Park, December 2
  - Northern Gannet spotted on Egg Rock at Devil's Slide Trail, December 3
  - Reimagine Flood Park Meeting Reminder, December 8
  - Be In the Know Before You Go: Marine Protected Area Public Service Announcement video, December 10
  - Bicycle Sunday cancelled for holiday weekends, December 29
  - SCA/San Mateo County Parks' Day of Service with 90 volunteers, January 18
  - OpenRoad on Sunday, Jan. 24 to feature Devil's Slide Trail, January 21
- Twitter:
  - Advisory - Devil's Slide Trail Parking Affected by commercial filming, November 18
  - Coyote Point Knoll Area closed due to high winds, November 24
  - Join OptOutside on Black Friday, November 24
  - Northern Gannet spotted at Devil's Slide Trail, December 3
  - Reminder: Reimagine Flood Park meetings 9 & 16, December 8

- Be in the Know – Marine Protected Area Public Service Announcement, December 10
- SCA and Parks 90 plus on Day of Service at San Bruno Mountain, January 18
- See OpenRoad Season Opener-Devil's Slide Trail, January 20