

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Parks Department



DATE: May 19, 2016
COMMISSION MEETING DATE: June 2, 2016

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

RECOMMENDATION:

Read report.

BACKGROUND:

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

DISCUSSION:

Volunteer Activities

Earth Day Beach Clean Up, Coyote Point, April 23: More than 294 people celebrated Earth Day and helped clean up Coyote Point beach. Groups, including Salesforce employees, students, scout and faith-based groups and made this the largest volunteer event of the year thus far. Parks and CuriOdyssey partnered in managing the event and invited young volunteers to visit the museum and enjoy the park following their work.

Invasive Plant Removal, Huddart Park, April 24: Students from Temple Shalom worked with staff to remove Broom, an invasive plant that is removed by hand.

Restoration Project, San Bruno Mountain, May 13: Thirty employees with Thermo Fisher in South San Francisco worked with Natural Resource Management staff to remove invasive plants and contribute to healthy butterfly habitat. This is the third year Thermo Fisher has volunteered with the Department.

Eagle Scout Project, Coyote Point, April-May: An Eagle Scout and fellow scouts have been improving an area near the Captain's House in Coyote Point by weeding, landscaping, and installing a retaining wall near the parking area.

Upcoming Volunteer Events

Trail Build, Sam McDonald Park, June 25: Volunteers with the Trail Center will work with Park staff to improve the Forest Trail, from 8:30 to 3p.m. Volunteers can register at <http://www.trailcenter.org/>

Edgewood Park Weed Warriors, Every Friday, 9 a.m.: Join a team of dedicated volunteers who work to remove invasive plants and thereby contribute to greater biodiversity, natural habitats, and those beautiful wildflower displays. For meeting location, go to FriendsofEdgewood.org

Community Engagement and Education Activities

Night Hike at San Pedro Valley Park, May 13: Approximately 20 people joined a ranger-led night hike to experience the park after hours and learn about the animals that come out when the sun goes down.

Take A Hike, San Bruno Mountain, May 7: Cancelled due to rain.

Facebook Farmers Market, April 30: San Mateo County Parks hosted a booth at Facebook's initial event of the year located at its corporate offices in Menlo Park. The event featured fresh produce, food trucks, music and informational booths. The Parks site had many visitors who stopped by to learn about park services and pick up park brochures. Neighbors of Flood Park stopped by to learn more about the Reimagine Flood Park project.

Brunch at the Reserve, April 30: Park rangers welcomed close to 150 people who snacked on treats while learning about harbor seals, pupping season, and how to admire the newborn seals from afar in order to protect them.

Upcoming Community Activities

Take A Hike, Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, June 4: Join park staff and volunteers on a hike of the bluff and coastal trail. Please try to car pool as parking is limited.

History Hike, Wunderlich Park, June 4, 9 – 11 a.m.: Join the Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich as they hike through the history of the Folger family and answer many questions such as why there are so many eucalyptus trees, what happened at Salamander Flat and what is that old building near the parking lot. The hike will take about two hours and will cover 2.5 miles with a moderate climb of a few hundred feet. Meet at 9am at the stable.

Take A Hike, Junipero Serra Park, July 9: Take A Hike moves to the second Saturday of this month in consideration of the July 4 weekend. Meet us at 9 a.m. near the Take A Hike sign.

Special Projects

Park Visitor Study: The Department began the second phase of the visitor study in partnership with San Francisco State University on April 25. In this phase, park staff will

intercept visitors and ask them to respond to questions on tablets that are intended to help the Department assess the experience of park visitors and their satisfaction with interaction of other visitors and staff. To date, more than 1330 surveys have been complete. During the six-week period surveys will be conducted at least one, three-hour period each weekday and two, survey periods on weekends.

The purpose of this project is to examine attitudes, experiences, use patterns, and preferences of park users and identify any barriers that may prevent those who either don't visit the parks or do so infrequently. This information will assist the Department in more effectively engaging park users and in identifying the best ways to reach those who aren't familiar with our parks.

Communications

Print and Electronic Media Outreach: The Department used a variety of vehicles to inform the public about park services and events in February and March.

- Press Releases:
 - April 29, San Mateo County Parks Asking Visitors about their Park Experience

- Facebook and Twitter Posts:
 - May 17 – Movie Night at Flood Park, May 21
 - May 16 – Mystery Mondays, What Park Will you Find....
 - May 9 – Happy Mothers Day – Harbor Seal moms, too ...
 - May 8 – Take A Hike, May 9, cancelled
 - May 2 – Mystery Monday, What is this?
 - April 30 – Three posts: OpenRoad series promotion, Join Us at the Facebook Farmer's Market, Visitor Study in Progress
 - April 29 – Happy Arbor Day
 - April 28 – Join Us: Streets Alive Parks Alive, Coyote Point
 - April 27 – Wunderlich Parking Lot closed
 - April 19 – Pupping Season at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve
 - April 13 – Info graph – Redwoods Help People and Wildlife