

County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA

Monday, June 8th, 2026
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Regular Meeting

**Simpkins Family Swim Center
Community Rooms**
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Introductory Items

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

2. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Any person may address the Commission during its Oral Communication period. Speakers must not exceed three (3) minutes in length, or the time limit established by the Chair, and individuals may speak only once during Oral Communications. All Oral Communication must be directed to an item listed on today's Consent Agenda, Closed Session Agenda, yet to be heard on Regular Agenda, or a topic not on the agenda that is within the jurisdiction of the Commission. Commission members will not take actions or respond immediately to any Oral communication presented regarding topics not on the agenda but may choose to follow up later, either individually, or on a subsequent Commission Agenda. Oral communications will normally be received by the Commission for a period not to exceed thirty (30) minutes. If, at the end of this period, additional persons wish to address the Commission, the Oral Communication period may be continued to the last item on the agenda.

4. **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (items 8-9)

Regular Agenda

5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

6. **PARKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

7. **INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. [County Parks Summer Activities](#) – Sarah Shea, Parks Superintendent
- b. **Valle del Pájaro County Park Master Plan Activity** – Rob Tidmore, Principle Planner

Consent Agenda

Consent items include routine business that does not call for discussion. One roll call vote is taken for all items. Only a Commissioner may pull items from Consent to Regular Agenda. Members of the public must request that a Commissioner pull an item from the Consent Agenda prior to the start of the meeting.

- 8. **Approve minutes from April 13th, 2026**..... page 3.
- 9. **Consider Reports:**
 - a. Aquatics Section Report..... page 7.
 - b. Arts and Cultural Services Report..... page 8.
 - c. Maintenance Section Report..... page 10.
 - d. Planning Section Report..... page 12.
 - e. Recreation Section Report..... page 16.
 - f. Reservations Section Report..... page 17.
 - g. Volunteer Section Report..... page 18.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. [Letter from Lynn Dunn – Santa Cruz County EEO Officer & ADA Compliance](#)

Adjournment

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:00 PM Monday, August 10th, 2026

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. The Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms, located at 979 17th Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA, are an accessible facility. If you are a person with a disability and wish to participate in the meeting and require special assistance in order to participate, please contact the Parks, Open Spaces, & Cultural Services Department at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements. Persons with disabilities may request a copy of the agenda in an alternative format.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 13th, 2026
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Regular Meeting

**Simpkins Family Swim Center
Community Rooms**
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Introductory Items

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL** Meeting called to order by Chair Konevich at 5:00 PM.

Present: Alexis Konevich (District 1), Nick de Sieyes (District 2), Jeremy Sanford (District 3), Elizabeth Hernandez (District 4) & Anne Less (District 5)

Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez Alvarez, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha

2. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS** No modifications.
3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** 1 member of the public.
4. **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (items 9-10)

Approved consent agenda – Motion/Second: de Sieyes/Hernandez

AYES: 4
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 1

Regular Agenda

5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

District 1: Acknowledged contentious Floral Park/Dirt Farm Park items and expressed appreciation for the passion Pleasure Point residents have for their parks. Shared excitement about additional parks receiving attention in the near future. Also noted that a member of the public collaborated with County Parks to organize a volunteer day at Anna Jean Cummings County Park.

District 2: Reported on the continued active use of County Park playing fields, with activity increasing as weather conditions improve. Observed hundreds of families utilizing the fields for soccer and other sports activities. Shared that maintaining park resources for public use was one of the reasons for joining the Commission. Also noted ongoing maintenance challenges due to a limited number of County pesticide applicators and gopher activity impacting playing fields. Expressed appreciation for seeing families actively using park resources.

District 3: Arrived late; no report provided.

District 4: Reported on the first Valle del Pájaro (VDP) Master Plan workshop, which emphasized community engagement, and noted a second workshop scheduled for May 2nd. Participated in habitat restoration and data collection efforts at Scott County Park in partnership with Watsonville Wetlands Watch. Additionally reported increased dumping and flood damage concerns along Paulsen Road.

District 5: Reported on the significant volunteer-led effort at Pace Trails, highlighting opportunities to connect people with free outdoor recreation space. Noted that the park consists entirely of trails. Also shared that construction on the Pump Track at Felton Covered Bridge County Park is expected to begin later this month. At Highlands County Park, soccer and softball seasons have brought high levels of use which presents challenges related to parking and restroom access that could be areas of opportunity.

6. PARKS DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Gaffney reported that the lap pool is temporarily closed due to a failed circulation pump, with repairs underway. He discussed impacts related to the hiring freeze, including reduced service levels, and noted staff continue working to provide services with existing resources. Updates were provided on the Poetry Scavenger Hunt across 16 County Parks, coastal access improvements and overnight accommodation planning at Greyhound Rock, and continued progress on the Rail Trail project, including parking lot development at Panther Beach and Davenport Landing. Director Gaffney also shared that volunteers would be recognized by the Board of Supervisors on April 14th, expressed appreciation for the AmeriCorps team assisting with the Pace Trail Project, and invited commissioners to participate in the May 9th Pitch In All-County Cleanup Day at Pinto Lake County Park. Additionally, he reported that approximately 30,000 vehicles entered five regional parks over the course of approximately one month, with data collection efforts planned to continue throughout the County park system.

7. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Draft County FY 2026-27 Budget Presentation – Ryan Friedrich, Senior Admin Analyst, CEO

Senior Administrative Analyst Ryan Friedrich presented an overview of the Draft County FY 2026-27 Budget, including the County’s current fiscal challenges, such as rising operational costs, reduced federal and state funding, and ongoing structural budget deficits. He provided an overview of the County’s annual budget development process, explained how the County Parks budget is incorporated into the overall County budget, and discussed how ongoing fiscal challenges could impact the County Parks budget and department operations.

8. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approved names for the trails at the Pace Family Wilderness Park as proposed by County Parks staff – Motion/Second: Sanford/de Sieyes

AYES: 5
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 0

Public Comment

- 4 members of the public.

b. Elect Nick de Sieyes as Commission Chair and Jeremy Sanford as Vice-Chair – Motion/Second: Less/Konevich

AYES: 5
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 0

Scheduled Item – 06:00 P.M.

Scheduled Departmental item – 6:00 PM or thereafter

c. Approve amendment to the Floral County Park Master Plan to include a basketball court in lieu of the dog park – Motion/Second: Sanford/de Sieyes.

AYES: 5
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 0

Public Comment

- 28 members of the public.

Consent Agenda

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- 9. **Approve minutes from February 9th, 2026**..... page 7.
- 10. **Consider Reports:**
 - a. Aquatics Section Report..... page 10.
 - b. Arts and Cultural Services Report..... page 11.
 - c. Maintenance Section Report..... page 13.
 - d. Planning Section Report..... page 15.
 - e. Recreation Section Report..... page 20.
 - f. Reservations Section Report..... page 23.
 - g. Volunteer Section Report..... page 24.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. Email from Anne Johannes – Floral Park
- II. Email from Dan Haifley – Item 8 (c) on 4/13/26 Parks Commission Agenda: Floral Park
- III. Email from David Schwartz – Floral Park
- IV. Emails and Letter from Greg Fontana – Mountain Lion
- V. Email from Kathy Welch - 1/2 Basketball Court at Floral Park/ 18 ft. statue at Dirt Farm
- VI. Email from L Solomon – Floral Park 1/2 basketball court
- VII. Email from Matthew Balkman – Support of the Basketball Court and Other Needed Projects
- VIII. Email from Nina Donna – Simpkins Family Swim Center
- IX. Email from Save Pleasure Point – April 13 Discussion
- X. Email from Steve Miller – Low Stem Time
- XI. Email from Surely Iam Love – Half Basketball Court at Floral Street Park

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

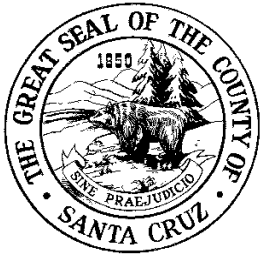
5:00 PM Monday, June 8th, 2026

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms

LATE ADDITIONS – MON. APRIL 13

Written Correspondence Listing

- XII. Email from Amber Jones – Support half basketball court at Floral Park
- XIII. Email from Ashley Muller – Yes for half basketball court at Floral Park!
- XIV. Email from Derek Draper – Enhancing Pleasure Point Park: A Proposal for Our Local Youth
- XV. Email from Jeff McGee – Floral basketball park
- XVI. Email from Julie Howard – Concern Regarding Process and Proposed Amendment to Floral Park Master Plan
- XVII. Email from Kevin Keet – Basketball court at floral
- XVIII. Email from Phoenix O'Neill – Floral park
- XIX. Email from Terry Corwin – Floral Park Half Court Improvement
- XX. Email from Yolanda Garcia – Concerns Regarding Proposed Half Basketball Hoop at Flora Park



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DIRECTOR

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

Date: May 29th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Anissa Childers, Aquatic Supervisor
Subject: Aquatic Section Report

Programming

The spring session of **swim lessons** was rounded out with 110 participants in group lessons. The Learn-to-Swim scholarship group lessons were taught by one of our private contractors, providing instruction for an additional 40 participants.

The **Simpkins Sharks Swim Club** had a strong finish to the non-competitive season with 37 participants in April and the beginning of May.

We hosted a **Junior Guard** and **Little Guard Kick-Off** that saw over 500 participants including campers, parents, and siblings. The event was an overwhelming success with participants getting the opportunity to take a swim test, submit emergency contact information, and pick up program outfitting. We sold out of all youth sizes for pool guards sweatshirts and sweatpants and are expecting a smooth start to the first day of pool guards thanks to the kick-off.

Hiring and Training

Multiple American Red Cross Lifeguarding classes were led by our staff, certifying 20 new lifeguards.

We are preparing to bring on 19 new lifeguards and head lifeguards during a week-long new hire training beginning on June 1st. This includes swim instructor-in-training lessons, which will provide 213 youths and adults with discounted swim lessons while providing new staff an opportunity to learn from mentor instructors.

Facility Usage and Adult Programming

Adult Fitness programming had 1,316 participants from mid-April to the present, while **Water Aerobics** saw 787 participants.

We are gearing up for summer Lap Swim which saw 4,457 pass holder check-ins from mid-April to the present, and the Warm Water Pool saw 1,181 pass holder check-ins. Drop in entries are not included.

Upcoming Programming and Events

Summer programming begins on June 8th, where we prepare for 412 Junior Guards campers and 196 Little Guards over 9 weeks. Summer group swim lessons already have 254 registrations, and we will continue to offer private lessons through our contractors throughout the summer.

Learn-to-Swim lessons will continue to be offered through the summer, providing scholarship swim lessons alongside County Park Friends and private contractor Sunshine.



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(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

Date: May 27th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Kathy DeWild, Arts Program Coordinator
Subject: Arts & Cultural and Quail Hollow Ranch Interpretive Programs - Section Report



Pictured: "Path to Wilder" by Tish Bertino



Spotlight Award for Emerging Artists

Through the Spotlight Award, the County Arts Commission publicly recognizes individuals who have achieved a high level of excellence and creativity in their work, but who have not received widespread acknowledgment of their talent. This annual award recognizes younger artists as well as those who are discovering their artistic voice later in life for work in the following mediums: visual art, performing arts, and literary arts.

The 2026 recipients are Barbara Martin, drummer and multi-percussionist, and Tish Bertino, visual artist. The awardees' work will be on exhibition on the 5th floor of the County Government Center Aug. 3 through mid-October.

Art Exhibitions

At 701 Ocean St. (1st & 5th floors) now through mid-July:

- ❖ Paul Smith - Handmade exotic & domestic hardwood items
- ❖ Beth Purcell - Vibrant ceramic, glass and tile mosaics
- ❖ Donna Maurillo - Photography
- ❖ Jason Cohen - Modern impressionistic oil paintings
- ❖ F.J. Andersen – Oil Paintings (pictured: "Feathered")
- ❖ Travis Adams – Ceramics

At the Simpkins Family Swim Center/Live Oak Library Annex now through September:

- ❖ Vanessa Stafford - Acrylic Paintings
- ❖ Ross Sheehan – Paintings, Drawings, and Prints

At 500 Westridge now through September:

- ❖ Vanessa Stafford - Acrylic Paintings
- ❖ Ross Sheehan – Paintings, Drawings, and Prints

Pace Trail Public Art Project

Wyatt Hersey was recently approved by the Board of Supervisors as the Public Artist for the Pace Trail Project. The Pace property represents one of Santa Cruz County's most remarkable natural assets—an ecologically unique landscape shaped by sandhills habitat, endemic species, and quiet pockets of oak woodland and stunted redwoods. Wyatt's project, "Sandhills Sentinels," is comprised of four powder-coated steel sculptures that will be installed along the trail



Each sculpture will highlight an insect or plant endemic to the Sandhills habitat, which the Pace Trail traverses: Ben Lomond Spineflower, Ben Lomond Wallflower, Mount Hermon June Beetle, and Zayante Band-Winged Grasshopper. The names of each will be included at the bottom of the sculpture in both English and Spanish.

The works will be designed in a style that features bold, modern linework translated into sculptural form through precisely CNC-cut steel, finished in durable, UV-stable powder coat. This aesthetic harmonizes well with the understated character of the trail network while offering impactful visual markers for hikers encountering the artworks.

The sculptures will be mounted on posts set into the earth with a small poured-concrete anchor, allowing installation using only hand tools and minimal ground disturbance in accordance with the Pace property deed and habitat-protection requirements. Each post-mounted sculpture will stand approximately 3–4 feet above grade, ensuring visibility while maintaining an unobtrusive footprint. The work will require no concrete footings and will be installed using tamped native soil and compact hand-dug post holes to protect the fragile terrain.

Quail Hollow Ranch Interpretive Activities

Beginning Birding – June 7, 8-10AM

Join Park Docent Jim Maughn for a leisurely hike through Quail Hollow Ranch County Park, in search of our fine, feathered friends. Previous birding experience not required; open to anyone interested in birds and their antics. Wear warm clothing and comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars and a field guide (if you have them), and some drinking water. For ages 12 & up; an adult must accompany ages 15 and under.



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(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

Date: May 29th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jesse Williams, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Maintenance Section Report

North County, Highlands and Emeline Maintenance Shops

North County maintenance had an all-crew day at **Greyhound Rock Coastal Access**. Extensive work was done to clean up the parking lot areas as well as access down to the beach. Winter storms had severely impacted this area, and a new section of trail was cut to make it safe to get down to the beach and explore the coastline.

Lots of work is being done on the northern parcel of **Greyhound Rock** in preparation for summer programming and coastal camping experiences. The two large barns on this property have been cleaned up for programming. The area is being prepared for a park host to be the onsite presence for the North Coast and a representative of the Parks Department in this area. An interim campground plan is being developed as well as a connecting trail that takes you from the northern property to the Greyhound parking lot and to the beach.

The large gates at the front of **Ben Lomond County Park** have been removed. The intention is to have this park align with the others in our park system where we don't have fenced/gated off areas and to create a more welcoming, open feeling at this park in downtown Ben Lomond.

Now that Spring/Summer is upon us, lots of work is being done along **East Cliff** at our coastal access points to keep them safe and clean.

Some of our park amenities have begun showing their age. An example of this is the **Winkle Farm County Park** playground which unfortunately had to be closed recently due to an unsafe environment from deteriorating parts. Solutions are being explored to restore or replace this playground.

Mid County, Simpkins and Felt Street Maintenance Shop

In the last section report **Simpkins Family Swim Center** was closed due to a pump failure for the 50-meter pool. Since then, our maintenance staff successfully replaced a failing sump pump and successfully replaced the 50-meter pump several days ahead of the projected schedule. In addition to these major upgrades our staff replaced the circulation pump for the front locker room water heaters, resulting in more consistent water temperatures for our locker room showers.

Staff rebuilt and installed the restroom doors at **Brommer Street County Park** that had been removed due to ongoing vandalism in the area. The restrooms can now be safely locked at night.

South County, Pinto Lake and Aptos Polo Grounds Maintenance Shops

South County Maintenance mowed the property and removed invasive pompous grass near the generators at the **Rountree Medium Facility** in South County.

At **Scott County Park** and **Pinto Lake County Park** staff worked on the removal of fallen trees and limbs to clean up the park areas.

At **Polo Grounds County Park**, the maintenance team replaced and adjusted sprinkler heads on the soccer fields and baseball fields. For the athletic fields that have not received renovations, the maintenance team is planning a major renovation starting in September. In the meantime, work will be done on the irrigation system, rodent control, and drainage to ensure that this renovation in the off season is successful.

There were several water leaks in South County. The **Freedom Annex** had a water leak that has now been repaired, as well as a water leak at a park property on **Merk Road**.

Seasonal Maintenance or Upcoming Maintenance County Wide

Seasonal high weed mowing is underway. While some areas can be mowed early, others require a later scheduled mowing. The Parks Department is careful to consider the balance between park usability, fire safety, and environmental impacts such as seasonal wildflowers, pollinators, and ground nesting birds. Our goal as always is to have everything safely mowed before we reach peak fire season in the dry time of year.

Wedding season is upon us, our park facilities such as **Highlands County Park**, **Quail Hollow Ranch**, **Valencia Hall**, and **Aptos Village Park** require extra attention to prepare for special events on the weekends as well as clean up following the events.

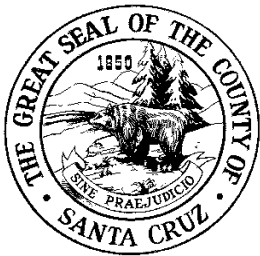
Maintenance Staffing Changes

The newest addition to the park maintenance crew is **Andrew Reveno**, Park Maintenance Worker II. Andrew is joining us as a full time employee and currently working out of the Felt Street Maintenance Shop, focusing on the Simpkins Family Swim Center and surrounding parks.

We also successfully onboarded an extra help seasonal maintenance worker. This PMW will help us cover the work required on weekends in South County at Pinto Lake County Park. We are in the process of onboarding more extra help employees to cover weekends and holidays as well as a long-awaited full-time position for a new Park Maintenance Worker I, who is currently being processed with a conditional job offer pending a background check and references.

Vehicle/Equipment Update

The Parks Department is in the process of obtaining a new full-size truck as part of the maintenance contract for the North Coast rail trail.



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DIRECTOR

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

Date: May 28th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Park Planners - Rob Tidmore, Mariana Colibri-Urgo, Mike Pruitt, Zane Mortensen
Subject: Planning Section Report

Coastal Rail Trail

Segments 8-11: The Board of Supervisors approved a contract amendment with RRM Design Group on February 24th to begin work on the Interim Trail. An analysis of Interim Trail designs is expected to go before the RTC for a decision in August.

Ecology Action is continuing to lead the non-infrastructure programming portion of the project, coordinating with 10 area schools on bicycle and pedestrian education classes, and the creation of a community incentive program that will target low-income monolingual Spanish speaking residents of Live Oak, Pleasure Point, and Capitola.

North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5): The Panther/Yellowbank parking lot is now officially open to the public. The permanent bathrooms are now open. The Davenport parking lot is now under construction, and the trail is expected to open to the public this fall.

Freedom Lake Restoration Plan

Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW), in partnership with Santa Cruz County Parks, is advancing restoration planning and implementation at Freedom Lake with a focus on improving habitat, water quality, ecological function, and long-term resilience of the system. Recent efforts have included a combination of habitat restoration, technical studies, water quality monitoring, and conceptual restoration planning to help guide future implementation efforts.

Recent restoration work has focused on upstream and adjacent habitat areas, including invasive vegetation removal and native habitat restoration efforts within the upland riparian corridor. Ongoing efforts include installation of erosion control blankets and a community volunteer planting event to stabilize disturbed areas and support establishment of native vegetation. The project team has also significantly expanded technical investigations and monitoring efforts to better understand existing lake conditions and inform future restoration actions. Recent work has included installation of a stream monitoring gage, inlet and outlet channel surveys, bathymetric mapping of the lake, ongoing water quality monitoring and analysis, and eDNA sampling as part of the biological review efforts.

Current planning efforts are focused on developing a phased restoration strategy that combines habitat enhancement, invasive species management, water quality monitoring, and targeted restoration actions to improve ecological function while minimizing impacts to sensitive species and habitats. A Conceptual Restoration Alternatives Analysis is also being developed to evaluate potential habitat enhancement, water

quality improvement, and recreation strategies that can help guide future restoration and management decisions at Freedom Lake.



Greyhound Rock

Consultant proposals were received on April 10th. The project manager finalized the contract negotiations with the selected consultant, and a tentative contract will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for approval on June 9.

Moran Lake County Park

Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan (HMP): A public hearing to approve the HMP is expected to go to the Board of Supervisors on June 30, 2026. Staff will publicly notice the hearing after the Board official sets the date of the hearing at the June 9 Board of Supervisors meeting. Notices will be posted in the park, mailed to neighbors, and sent via email.

Tree Work: Staff are working with County Parks' consulting arborist to compile a prioritized list of recommended tree work for the upcoming late summer/early fall tree work window. Staff will seek funding for tree work during upcoming budget negotiations. In the event that there is insufficient budget to complete all recommended tree work, the arborist's recommendations will be used to prioritize work based on risk.

40 Moran Way: Planting the site with native trees and shrubs is expected to occur next rainy season. Staff are working with volunteers to source plant material via donations.

Pace Property Connection Trails

Construction of the trails is complete and they are open to the public. Response to the project has been overwhelmingly positive and the community is enjoying the new trails. Volunteers have been instrumental on the trail work. Park staff are awaiting schedule coordination with the California Conservation Corps to perform finishing work on the project as a part of the grant requirements.

AmeriCorps team installed the trail benches, picnic tables, and trail directional signs. The interpretive signs design process is underway. The artist has been chosen for the project and the kick off meeting is in June. The project team is striving for a summer installation of the interpretive signs, public art, and approved trail name signs, with final completion end of summer to early fall 2026.

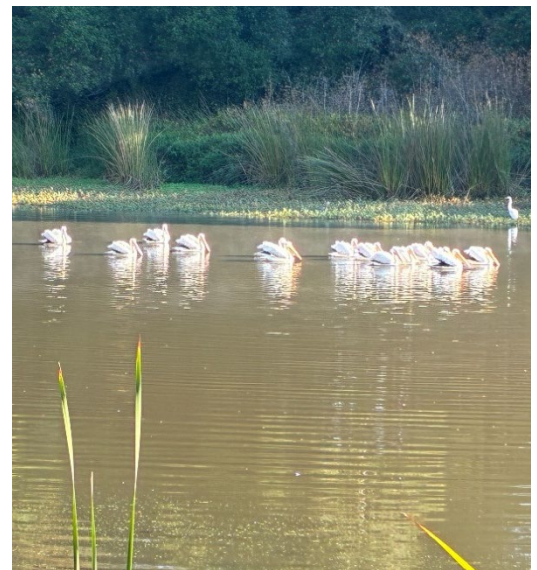


Pinto Lake

County Parks, in partnership with the City of Watsonville and County Environmental Health, continues to advance coordinated efforts to address long-standing water quality impairments at Pinto Lake. The lake is listed as impaired under the Clean Water Act for nutrients and cyanotoxins and is subject to a phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) with a 2029 compliance target. Over the past year, partner agencies have expanded water quality and flow monitoring, along with hydrologic studies and water quality analysis, to better understand contaminant input sources and help identify and appropriately scale treatment alternatives that provide sustainable solutions to both internal loading and watershed contributions.

The County is currently awaiting the results of an NPS 319(h) grant application submitted to the State Water Board in December 2025. If awarded, the funding would support planning and implementation of key restoration measures such as in-lake phosphorus sequestration, aeration, and invasive species removal, along with upstream improvements like sediment basin and drainage retrofits and partnerships with farmers and adjacent landowners to reduce nutrient loading.

The County is continuing to refine its in-lake management approach and maintain ongoing monitoring to better understand source contributions and support adaptive management. The County is actively pursuing funding to implement a robust watershed and in-lake monitoring program intended to inform future implementation efforts focused on long-term water quality improvements and HAB reduction. Together, these efforts are intended to better align in-lake treatment with upstream BMP implementation and support progress toward TMDL compliance.



Santa Cruz Coastal Lagoons & East Cliff Drive Resiliency Study

County Parks was awarded a \$650,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy to prepare a planning-level feasibility study of nature-based adaptation strategies to address sea-level rise along East Cliff Drive at three coastal lagoons—Schwan Lagoon, Corcoran Lagoon, and Moran Lagoon—in mid-Santa Cruz County. The project seeks to identify preferred adaptation strategies for each location that prioritize nature-based solutions, protection of coastal resources and ecosystems, maintenance of coastal access, and resilience of critical infrastructure.

Monitoring at the three lagoons is ongoing in partnership with California State Parks and Santa Cruz County Environmental Health. ESA has completed multiple field efforts, including RTK-GPS topographic surveys, bathymetric mapping, sediment and water quality sampling, and planning for long-term monitoring installations. The County has also completed the Existing Conditions Report, which compiles historical data, prior studies, and recent field findings to establish a comprehensive project baseline.

The project has transitioned into Phase 1 community engagement, focused on sharing existing conditions and

gathering input on key issues, constraints, and opportunities. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) engagement is underway, with the first TAC meeting completed. Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meetings for Ecology, Recreation, and Neighbors/Businesses were completed on April 28, 29, and 30, 2026 to gather early input from community organizations, agencies, and stakeholder groups. Upcoming outreach efforts include tabling events at the Live Oak Farmers Market on May 31, 2026 and the Pleasure Point Street Fair on June 27, 2026, as well as the first public community meeting scheduled for June 25, 2026. The project website is now live and includes additional project information, resources, and a public survey for community members to provide input on the future of East Cliff Drive and the coastal lagoons.



Valle del Pájaro

Long-term planning is underway. The project manager is working with a consultant leading the development of the Master Plan, with a strong emphasis on community engagement throughout the process. The consultant and the project manager, in collaboration with County Parks Friends – based on the community engagement framework – have hosted two on-site workshops where the community was asked for feedback on the park's future programs and amenities. The workshops have been well attended, and the community has been actively engaged in the process.

In addition, during the Department's all-hands meetings, the project manager presented the materials used in the on-site workshops to Parks staff and gathered their feedback on programs and amenities.

On-site Workshop 4 will take place in late August or early September, when school is back in session. In addition to these on-site workshops, Parks, in collaboration with County Parks Friends, will take a "meet people where they are" approach. Between Workshop 3 and Workshop 4, the County anticipates conducting up to five targeted outreach meetings with previously identified key community groups. This effort is intentionally aligned with well-attended community events occurring between July and August, building on lessons learned from the Strategic Plan update process. Additionally, the consultant is completing the site analysis.



Valle del Pájaro County Park
188 Whiting Road, Watsonville, CA

¡Participa para tener la oportunidad de ganar un regalo y participar en la rifa de un gran premio!

Join for a chance to win a gift and enter a raffle for a grand prize!

¡Comparte tu visión del futuro del parque en cuatro talleres que se realizarán próximamente!

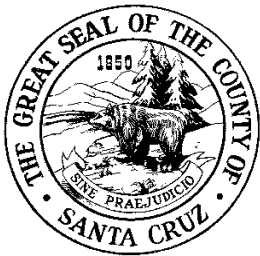
Sesión 3: Martes, 23 de junio de 2026 - 5PM en el parque del condado Valle del Pájaro
Las primeras 50 personas se llevarán un árbol frutal o planta nativa.

Share your vision for the park at upcoming workshops!

Session 3: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 @ 5PM at Valle del Pájaro County Park
First 50 people will bring home a fruit tree or native plant.

Donations possible through a collaboration with Watsonville Wetlands Watch

Donations made possible in partnership with Watsonville Wetlands Watch



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

Date: May 27th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jaime Jimenez, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Recreation Section Report

Partnerships with Local Recreation Departments

County Parks & the Personnel team connected on Saturday, March 28th from 9am-1pm at the Simpkins Family Swim Center to offer a Pop-Up Hiring Event for Parks, Recreation, Cultural Workers (PRCW's). A total of 27 Extra Help employees will assist the recreation team this summer.

County Parks collaborated with the Live Oak School District and the Live Oak Education Foundation by participating in their Live Oak Jack Rabbit 1K FUNdraiser held on Saturday, April 19th at the Shoreline Middle School athletic field. Approximately 250 people were in attendance. The opening ceremonies started at 8:45am followed by track races & relays. Those not participating in the races were able to enjoy free family activities, view student art and watch live performances while enjoying delicious treats from a local food truck. All the proceeds support TK-8th grade arts.

Santa Cruz County Parks and the City of Scotts Valley are kicking off a fun-filled soccer weekend for all ages! These FREE events consist of a **Kick-Off Soccer Clinic with Central Coast FC on Saturday, June 13th** at Anna Jean Cummings Park in Soquel (1–4 PM), featuring skill-building, games, teamwork, and recreation fun for all skill levels. Then head to the **Wacky 5v5 Soccer Tournament on Sunday, June 14th** at Skypark in Scotts Valley (11 AM–3 PM) for creative, multi-generational competition with guaranteed games, themed jerseys, prizes, and more. Tournament participants will also be entered to win two World Cup tickets. Special thanks to our sponsors: District 3, PG&E, Comcast, Kaiser, New Leaf, and Togo's!

Recreation Programs & Contractual Agreements

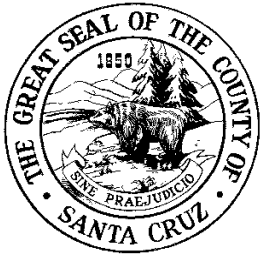
Recreation staff provided four (4) Recreation Spring Camps the week of April 6-10. The programs served youth between the ages of 6-12.

Recreation staff hosted a series of Late Night Glow Nights on Friday, March 13th, 28th and April 24th. The programs took place at Aptos Village Park from 7-10 pm and served 127 youth between the ages of 6-12.

Marketing Efforts

The Summer/Fall 2026 Activity Guide is [here!](#) It can be found online at our website and copies have been distributed County wide. The guide is available in both English and Spanish.

The Department continues to create marketing flyers in both Spanish/English. As well as social media posts and updates.



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Date: May 27th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Garrett Smart, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Reservations Section Report

Kick Off Santa Cruz Event Series:

Staff have been leading planning and coordination efforts for the upcoming Kick Off Santa Cruz soccer events in partnership with Scotts Valley Recreation. The weekend of activities supports the countywide celebration of the FIFA World Cup coming to Santa Clara and will include a free Skills & Drills Clinic at Anna Jean Cummings County Park and a Wacky Soccer Tournament at Skypark in Scotts Valley. Staff continue to coordinate logistics, outreach, vendors, and event operations in preparation for the June events.

New Batting Cages at Anna Jean Cummings County Park:

County Parks is excited to celebrate the opening of two new batting cages at Anna Jean Cummings County Park. The project was made possible through community fundraising efforts and donations from Cabrillo Gals and Capitola-Soquel Little League. The new facilities are now in active use and provide expanded recreational opportunities for local youth athletes.

Parks and Rex Dog Pool Party:

Preparations are underway for the annual Parks and Rex Dog Pool Party at Simpkins Family Swim Center. Registration opens on June 1, with the event scheduled for August 15. Staff are coordinating registration, marketing, and event logistics for another fun community tradition.

Park Service Officer Recruitment:

Staff recently completed the department's first formal recruitment for Extra Help Park Service Officer positions in many years. The department is currently looking to fill several Extra Help PSO positions ahead of the busy summer season. Historically, these positions have been filled through a different application process, but staff are hopeful this expanded recruitment effort will help attract strong candidates and rebuild staffing levels needed to support park operations and keep summer events running smoothly.



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Date: May 29th, 2026
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jesse Williams, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Volunteer Section Report

Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Program

Recently our Volunteer Program Coordinator, Emma Lee, who oversaw volunteer operations moved out of the area. Before her departure she worked diligently on writing a training program for the next program coordinator. Unfortunately, the county is in a temporary hiring freeze, so County Parks is doing everything we can to find a path and resources to backfill this important position. In the meantime, the program will continue to offer great volunteer opportunities for residents of Santa Cruz County to get involved with our department and give back to their communities.

It is hard to put into words the incredible value and impact our volunteers have on our department and on the people who enjoy our County Parks! Understandably, we are doing everything we can to maintain the level of volunteerism that we currently have even if this means limiting the number of new volunteers we onboard, until we can fill this vital role to ensure program success.

Anna Jean Cummings County Park

We'll be pulling invasive plants along the trails on **Saturday, June 27th from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM**. Pulling these invasives will create increased trail access and restore the native habitats!

RSVP here: [Sign Up Sheet](#)

Felton Discovery County Park

Join us at our next **Felton Discovery Park Volunteer Garden Work Party** on **Saturday, June 27th from 9:00 AM-11:00 AM!**

RSVP here: [Sign Up Sheet](#)

Floral County Park

We'll be weeding the newly planted pollinator garden! Join us on **Saturday, June 6th from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM**. We'll be there with gloves, tools, and snacks!

RSVP here: [Sign Up Sheet](#).

VOLUNTEER
Garden Work Party

Help care for the native plants at
Felton Discovery Park!
We'll be beautifying the park by gardening and
removing weeds.

Join us from 9:00am - 11:00am:

- April 25
- May 30
- June 27
- September 26
- October 24

121 Gushee St in Felton

[Sign Up Sheet](#)

volunteer@parks.santacruzcountyca.gov

Pace Property & AmeriCorps

A huge thank you to **Team Grizzly 4** (pictured on the right)!

Over their month with our department, the team helped complete the Pace Trail Project. They hauled materials to locations for five benches and two picnic tables, built and set benches, cleared duff (organic matter) and poison oak, and leveled and renaturalized an area of the trail.

Explore the recently opened Pace Trails and see this team and our volunteers' hard work firsthand!



Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

We celebrated more than 4,000 volunteer hours at Quail Hollow Ranch in 2025 during our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on May 8! Volunteers were recognized with milestone pins honoring their contributions, including 100, 250, and 500 hours of service. Several volunteers also received the coveted Quail pin in recognition of their dedication and impact.



Park Hosts

Shout out to our Park Hosts, Beth, Steve, Kris, Liz, and Alex (who recently left us, you will be missed), who have continued to host volunteer events, greet park visitors, and enhance our parks!

Click here to visit the Santa Cruz County Parks website to view the Volunteer Calendar and sign up for volunteer opportunities!

