



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, October 20th, 2025
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Special 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 10-11)

Regular Agenda

5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

6. **PARKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

7. **INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

a. Pinto Lake Water Quality – Zane Mortensen, Park Planner III

b. Measure Q Update – Robert Tidmore, Parks Principle Planner

8. **ACTION ITEMS**

a. All Kids Play Campaign – County Park Friends..... page 3.

b. Draft Parks & Recreation Commission 2024-25 Biennial Report..... page 4.

9. **SUBCOMMITTEE ORAL REPORTS**

a. Parks and Recreation Commission 2024-25 Work Plan..... page 7.

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.

10. **Approve minutes from August 11th, 2025**..... page 9.
11. **Consider Reports:**
- a. Aquatics Section Report..... page 14.
 - b. Arts and Cultural Services Report..... page 16.
 - c. Maintenance Section Report..... page 18.
 - d. Planning Section Report..... page 20.
 - e. Recreation Section Report..... page 24.
 - f. Reservations Section Report..... page 26.
 - g. Volunteer Section Report..... page 27.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. Email from Clinton Robustelli – Request for Consideration of a Local Pet Cemetery at the Miller Property.
- II. Letter from Santa Cruz Bird Club – Anna Jean Cummings Park Swallow Nest Removal

Adjournment

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:00 PM Monday, December 8th, 2025

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.



Invitation to Support County Park Friends' All Kids Play Campaign

County Park Friends is the nonprofit partner to the County Parks Department, raising private support so everyone can access safe, vibrant parks, trails, and nature programs.

Many children living close to Monterey Bay miss out on swimming, sports, and other enriching activities simply because of cost. Friends helps bridge that gap—connecting youth to County Parks programs and covering fees so every child can grow strong, confident, and connected.

We also help create parks where families gather and communities thrive. In collaboration with our youth leaders, we listen to residents to ensure our parks reflect the values and needs of every neighborhood—because every community deserves a place to play, rest, and belong.

Our goal: **Raise \$100,000 by December 2025**, all invested locally in Santa Cruz County. Every gift opens doors to growth, health, and joy for kids and families

The Impact of a Gift:

- \$100 can teach a child to swim
- \$250 send a kid to sports camp
- \$1000 can improve a playground

Will you support County Park Friends and their efforts to help build and improve parks and connect more people to vital recreational programs?

How the Commission can help:

- **Endorse** this campaign as a Commission
- **Amplify** the campaign through your networks
- **Share** with your District Supervisor for newsletter or media support

We will share a media kit including:

- Press Release
- Graphics and social media
- Online donation link and giving options

Thank you for helping ensure every neighborhood has access to the parks and programs that make our county thrive.





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DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION 2024 – 2025 BIENNIAL REPORT

ROLE OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Assess the needs and resources of the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services and recommend programs to satisfy those needs.

- I. Advise the Board of Supervisors and Parks Department on matters regarding parks, recreation, and open space in the County.
- II. Advise the Board of Supervisors on the preservation of historic, cultural, and natural resources in the County.
- III. Review the annual budget for County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

MEETINGS AND STRUCTURE

The Commission met quarterly in 2024 on a Monday evening at 5:00 p.m. determined by the Commission. The Commission voted to meet bimonthly in 2025 on identified Monday evenings at 5:00 p.m. The Commission will agree upon a schedule for the year's meetings at or prior to the first meeting of the year.

The Commission is made up of five members, one nominated by each Supervisor, and operates using Roberts Rules of Order. Commission meetings are governed by a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson who are elected on an annual basis each April. Staff support is provided by the Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services.

COMMISSION STAFF

Jeff Gaffney, Director
Rebecca Hurley, Deputy Director
Juan Perez Alvarez, Admin Services Manager
Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha, Admin Aide
Annalise Rodriguez, Admin Aide

ATTENDANCE

The Commissioners attendance for the past twenty-four months can be found on page **XX** of this report.

2024-2025 ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Four new commissioners were appointed:
 - a. **District 1** Alexis Konevich (6/25/2024)
 - b. **District 2** Nick de Sieyes (3/25/2025)
 - c. **District 4** Elizabeth Hernandez (12/17/2024)
 - d. **District 5** Anne Less (8/19/2025)
2. Discussed:
 - a. **XXXX**
3. Attended a Commissioner Workshop on February 12, 2024, in which the 2024-25 Commissioner Work Plan was developed and adopted.
 - a. The Commission Work Plan was amended in early 2025.

4. Modified meeting schedule from quarterly (4) to bimonthly (6).
5. Selected and recommended the name “Valle del Pajaro County Park” for the new South County Park located at 188 Whiting Road.
6. Received status reports on park improvement projects, potential projects, and fundraising endeavors including:
 - a. Mitigation planting and Natural Resource Management Plan at Anna Jean Cummings County Park
 - b. Valle del Pajaro County Park – survey for interim use, name proposal development, and master plan
 - c. Freedom Lake
 - d. Playground renovations at Floral County Park
 - e. New ADA bathrooms at Hidden Beach County Park
 - f. Moran Lake County Park - updates to the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan, wind study, and tree work
 - g. Santa Cruz Coastal Lagoons & East Cliff Drive Resiliency Study
 - h. Water quality issues at Pinto Lake County Park
7. Were informed on:
 - a. County Parks Budget
 - b. Measure Q
8. Received regular reports on the activities of the Aquatics, Arts, Maintenance, Planning, Recreation, Reservations, and Volunteers Teams
9. Were informed of new hires and changes to County Parks staff.

PROPOSED 2026-2027 GOALS

1.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION ATTENDANCE REPORT 2024

Meeting	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Staff
Workshop – 2/12	Katherine Lee	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Absent	Monica Martinez	Jeff Gaffney, Frankie Farr, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
Feb. 12th, 2024	Katherine Lee	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Absent	Monica Martinez	Jeff Gaffney, Frankie Farr, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
May 13th, 2024	Katherine Lee	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Absent	Monica Martinez	Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez Alvarez, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
Aug. 12th, 2024	Alexis Konevich	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Vacant	Monica Martinez	Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez-Alvarez, Annalise Rodriguez, Frankie Farr
Nov. 18th, 2024	Alexis Konevich	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Vacant	Absent	Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez-Alvarez

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION ATTENDANCE REPORT 2025

Meeting	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Staff
Feb. 10th, 2025	Alexis Konevich	Tricia Wiltshire	Jeremy Sanford	Elizabeth Hernandez	Vacant	Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez-Alvarez, Annalise Rodriguez
Apr. 14th, 2025	Alexis Konevich	Nick de Sieyes	Jeremy Sanford	Elizabeth Hernandez	Vacant	Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Juan Perez-Alvarez, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
May 12th, 2025	Absent	Nick de Sieyes	Jeremy Sanford	Elizabeth Hernandez	Vacant	Jeff Gaffney, Juan Perez-Alvarez, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
Aug. 11th, 2025	Alexis Konevich	Nick de Sieyes	Jeremy Sanford	Elizabeth Hernandez	Vacant	Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
Oct. 20th, 2025						
Dec. 8th, 2025						

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION WORK PLAN 2024/25

#	Stated Goal	Members Involved	Timeline	Fiscal Impact*	Projected Outcomes
COMMUNITY OUTREACH					
1	Attend County sponsored events, serving as County ambassadors by welcoming, meeting and greeting the public, and serving in a volunteer capacity conducting various event duties as needed.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners engage and interact with citizens while remaining aware of current trends in the public use of parks, beaches, trails, recreation programming, and special events. Create outreach to the public, educating them on what the Parks & Recreation Commission does, how to engage with the Commission and local government, programs the County offers, and spaces & places to recreate. Each Commissioner participates in a minimum 2 events.
2	Connect with local City and County Commissions to better understand collaboration opportunities.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Attend meetings of area commissions, create connection with members. Better understand efforts of area commissions generating ideas for future Santa Cruz County Parks & Recreation goals and determining opportunities for collaboration where synergy exists.
3	Identify and schedule guest speakers for Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, as appropriate.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to goals outlined in this Commission Work Plan and other topics of interest.
GREAT FACILITIES					
4	Research community needs related to facility use, development, and programming.	de Sieyes, Sanford	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Generate a better understanding of community interests and needs related to facilities and programming. Identify related core and stretch objectives. Provide findings to Parks & Recreation department for consideration and planning.
EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP					
5	Examine climate resiliency efforts and advise Park & Recreation department of best practices.	Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to climate resiliency through research and connection with local organizations. Identify gaps in climate resiliency efforts/education and advice Parks & Recreation department of best practices.
6	Identify best practices for sustainability and advise Park & Recreation department of findings.	Konevich, de Sieyes	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners examine current sustainability efforts within the County and explore additional best practices in all areas of sustainability. Areas of exploration could include, but are not limited to those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as balancing recreation and conservation, restoration or enhancement, water conservation, nature programming, interpretive signage, community partnerships, etc. Provide recommendations on best practices, potential partnerships, and community outreach opportunities to Parks & Recreation department.
SPECIAL PROJECT(S)					

7	Explore Best Practices for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) related to Parks & Recreation	Konevich, Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Explore DEI best practices and make recommendations for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in all areas of parks & recreation including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as signage, health and well-being, park accessibility, recreation programming, and collaboration with non-profit groups.
ADVISE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS -- NOTE:					
	2024/25 Parks and Recreation Commission Work Plan Outcomes to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors is advised of past year work plan outcomes in Biennial Report.
	2025/26 Parks and Recreation Commission Proposed Work Plan/Goals to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors reviews proposed work plan goals and intended outcomes in Biennial Report.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 11th, 2025
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 5:05PM.

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

Vacant: District 5

Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha

2. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS** No modifications.
3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** 5 members of the public.

Lynn Dunn: Expressed concerns regarding ADA compliance at the Live Oak Library Annex and provided an update on related discussions with County staff.

Carolyn Nelson: Shared concerns about the condition of hiking trails at Anna Jean Cummings Park.

Jean Brocklebank: Thanked County staff for their work on the meeting minutes. Requested the return of trash bins near the porta potty at Corcoran Lagoon that were previously located there. Suggested that the Commission ask the Board of Supervisors for assistance in enforcing off-leash dog regulations at Corcoran Lagoon Beach. Noted that the Friends of Corcoran Lagoon Beach are willing to help fund new signage in the area.

Michael Lewis: Thanked staff for refurbishing the volleyball court at José Avenue Park and encouraged increased community outreach to promote its use.

Vivian Fenner-Evans: Thanked staff for promptly addressing a safety concern at Anna Jean Cummings Park near the top of the slide. Requested Parks staff support in reopening a trail at Anna Jean Cummings Park that has been closed due to overgrown invasive species.

4. **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (items 9-10)

Motion to approve: Sanford/2nd: Hernandez/**All in favor.**

Regular Agenda

5. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

District 1: Welcomed attendees from District 1. Expressed concern regarding the bridge at Farm Park and hopes for a resolution soon. Noted several upcoming volunteer opportunities in the district and looks forward to participating alongside community members.

District 2: Reported on a recent tour with Supervisor De Serpa and Parks staff, which provided a valuable opportunity to become more familiar with local parks.

District 3: Commended progress on the North Coast, noting it addresses one of the primary concerns raised by residents. Thanked Parks staff for their maintenance work at Anna Jean Cummings Park.

District 4: Highlighted the ribbon-cutting event at Valle del Pajaro County Park, noting it was a great opportunity to learn about the area's history and engage with local residents.

District 5: Vacant.

6. PARKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Jeff Gaffney thanked members of the public for their feedback and updates on park issues. He reported that the Natural Resource Management Plan, developed in partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, is underway, and decisions at Anna Jean Cummings Park will be guided by this plan. Invasive species removal may take additional time due to staff turnover and the absence of an AmeriCorps team this year.

He also shared that County Parks has resumed operations at Greyhound Rock and is working with the Sheriff's Office on a lease agreement in Davenport to establish a North County service center. Efforts are ongoing to improve water quality at Pinto Lake, enhance access to the Miller Property, and continue progress on the Pace Trail with volunteer support. Work also continues at Moran Lake County Park. Valle del Pajaro County Park is now open, and its master planning process will begin later this year, expected to take 18 months to two years. He also highlighted numerous community events happening throughout the County.

7. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Partnership Wins in Action – County Park Friends.

Mariah Roberts, Executive Director, shared that the success of their nonprofit is integrated with the success of the County Parks Department. In developing their own strategic plan, they began with County Park's Strategic Plan. She presented on the four pillars of their strategic plan, the work their organization does and how the partnership with County Parks leads to success within both organizations and more opportunities for members of the community.

Commissioner Comments

Vice-Chair Sanford and **Chair Konevich** *congratulated Mariah on the success of County Park Friends and thanked her for the presentation and information on how the commission can support their organization.*

Public Comments

Can CPF or maintenance support with repairs of the playground equipment at Leo's Haven? Mariah addressed that she cannot speak on behalf of County Parks, but this issue raises the importance of having financial support beyond the capital campaigns to maintain the parks. This is an issue that County Parks Friends is actively working through.

- b. Countywide Trails Update & Plan – Rob Tidmore, Parks Principle Planner.

Robert Tidmore, Parks Principal Planner, presented the results of the *State of the Trails Report*. The report examined the existing trail network in Santa Cruz County, the western portion of San Mateo County, and part of Santa Clara County. It was developed through a collaborative effort among the Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship Network (SCMSN), California State Parks, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen), and County Parks departments from Santa Cruz, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties.

Commissioner Comments

- **Vice-Chair Sanford:** Asked if there are trails that can be identified as having connections to local Indigenous tribes and whether there are opportunities to highlight that history. Staff responded that the Amah Mutsun Land Trust is part of the SCMSN and has participated in many meetings. Although they were not heavily involved in this specific study, there is an opportunity to collaborate with them in the future.
- **Commissioner de Sieyes:** Asked who decided to weigh the four factors equally in the report. Staff explained that this decision was made by the Technical Advisory Group.

Public Comment

- A question was raised about whether the report is available online. Staff explained it is not publicly available due to confidential information contained within the report.
- One member of the public suggested establishing priorities for different properties based on their level of use.
- Another member of the public asked whether the report considered trail difficulty in terms of equity in usage. Staff responded that while data availability varies among counties, trail user feedback indicated a strong interest in identifying trail difficulty levels.
- Mariah Roberts noted that identifying trail difficulties could support programs such as *ParksRX*. Commissioner de Sieyes added that the *AllTrails* platform is another valuable resource for accessing trail information, including difficulty levels and other data.

c. Update on Moran Tree Work.

Rob Tidmore, Parks Principal Planner, and Rebecca Hurley, Deputy Director, provided an update on ongoing tree work at Moran Lake County Park. Due to the presence of nesting birds, work began at the 40 Moran Way parcel, where all trees have been removed. County Parks is developing a restoration plan for the site. Tree work along the trail will include pruning to reduce the risk of tree failure. All work is being conducted in consultation with the County's consulting arborist.

Public Comment

- Questions were raised about maintenance of the newly planted trees to ensure their survival. Staff noted that the trees are being watered and monitored. The species were selected based on recommendations from a biologist and arborist; however, some species have not thrived under current conditions, and alternative species may be considered for future plantings.
- A member of the public asked whether there is enough time before butterfly season to complete additional trimming. Staff confirmed that there is. A question was also raised about updates to the Placer Street plan—staff reported there is no new information at this time and that work will proceed when funding becomes available.
- Several members of the public expressed concern regarding the planned regrading of the 40 Moran Way parcel and the tree trimming that occurred along the trail.

8. SUBCOMMITTEE ORAL REPORTS

a. Parks and Recreation Commission 2024-25 Work Plan.

Updates noted on page 5 of the meeting minutes.

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.

9. **Approve minutes from May 12th, 2025.**..... page 3.
10. **Consider Reports:**
- a. Aquatics Section Report..... page 7.
 - b. Arts and Cultural Services Report..... page 9.
 - c. Maintenance Section Report..... page 11.
 - d. Planning Section Report..... page 13.
 - e. Recreation Section Report..... page 17.
 - f. Reservations Section Report..... page 19.
 - g. Volunteer Section Report..... page 20.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. None.

Adjournment Motion to adjourn at 6:56 PM: Sanford/**2nd**: de Sieyes/**All in favor**.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:00 PM *Tuesday*, October 14th, 2025

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION WORK PLAN 2024/25							Update #7 08.11.2025
#	Stated Goal	Members Involved	Timeline	Fiscal Impact*	Projected Outcomes		
COMMUNITY OUTREACH							
1	Attend County sponsored events, serving as County ambassadors by welcoming, meeting and greeting the public, and serving in a volunteer capacity conducting various event duties as needed.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners engage and interact with citizens while remaining aware of current trends in the public use of parks, beaches, trails, recreation programming, and special events. Create outreach to the public, educating them on what the Parks & Recreation Commission does, how to engage with the Commission and local government, programs the County offers, and spaces & places to recreate. Each Commissioner participates in a minimum 2 events.	de Sieyes - Went out to the location in Aptos village, where members of the community are discussing the potential of a parcel being donated to County Parks. Beginning conversation. Hernandez - Attended the Valle del Pajaro County Park grand opening. Spoke to neighbors, heard their concerns and connected them with resources that could address the concerns. Konevich - Plans to attend some volunteer events in the fall.	
2	Connect with local City and County Commissions to better understand collaboration opportunities.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Attend meetings of area commissions, create connection with members. Better understand efforts of area commissions generating ideas for future Santa Cruz County Parks & Recreation goals and determining opportunities for collaboration where synergy exists.	No update provided.	
3	Identify and schedule guest speakers for Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, as appropriate.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to goals outlined in this Commission Work Plan and other topics of interest.	Konevich - Reached out to Mariah Roberts to have County Park Friends regularly attend meetings and provide commission with updates on their activities/programs.	
GREAT FACILITIES							
4	Research community needs related to facility use, development, and programming.	de Sieyes, Sanford	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Generate a better understanding of community interests and needs related to facilities and programming. Identify related core and stretch objectives. Provide findings to Parks & Recreation department for consideration and planning.	Sanford - Heard from some constituents that limited field usage in the winter creates an impediment in growing their sports programs. de Sieyes - Has heard some excitement from constituents on the modification to the County's reservation systems. There is a hope that other organizations will follow in suit and modernize their systems.	
EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP							
5	Examine climate resiliency efforts and advise Park & Recreation department of best practices.	Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to climate resiliency through research and connection with local organizations. Identify gaps in climate resiliency efforts/education and advise Parks & Recreation department of best practices.	No update provided.	
6	Identify best practices for sustainability and advise Park & Recreation department of findings.	Konevich, de Sieyes	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners examine current sustainability efforts within the County and explore additional best practices in all areas of sustainability. Areas of exploration could include, but are not limited to those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as balancing recreation and conservation, restoration or enhancement, water conservation, nature programming, interpretive signage, community partnerships, etc. Provide recommendations on best practices, potential partnerships, and community outreach opportunities to Parks & Recreation department.	No update provided.	
SPECIAL PROJECT(S)							
7	Explore Best Practices for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) related to Parks & Recreation	Konevich, Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Explore DEI best practices and make recommendations for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in all areas of parks & recreation including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as signage, health and well-being, park accessibility, recreation programming, and collaboration with non-profit groups.	Hernandez - While networking with CPFA and Young Outdoor Leaders at the ribbon cutting, some of the group expressed wanting to create a plaque that discusses the history of the land.	
ADVISE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS -- NOTE:							
	2024/25 Parks and Recreation Commission Work Plan Outcomes to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors is advised of past year work plan outcomes in Biennial Report.		
	2025/26 Parks and Recreation Commission Proposed Work Plan/Goals to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors reviews proposed work plan goals and intended outcomes in Biennial Report.		



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Date: October 10th, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Anissa Childers, Aquatic Supervisor
Subject: Aquatic Section Report

Programming

Group Swim Lessons

- 194 participants currently enrolled.
- 114 on the waitlist, indicating continued high demand.
- 216 total participants have gone through our swim lesson program this fall.

Private Swim Lessons

- Welcomed new contractor Sunshine at the end of September; she has already worked with 24 families and is quickly becoming a sought-after instructor.
- Our two long-standing private contractors remain fully booked, collectively serving 35 families.

Learn to Swim Program

- The County Park Friends Learn to Swim Program successfully wrapped up its third session of the year, serving 40 participants.
- 85% of participants advanced to the next level our highest improvement rate across all three sessions to date.

Noodle Ball Program

- Continues to be a popular offering with 32 active participants.

New Program: Simpkins Sharks Swim Club

- We proudly launched the Simpkins Sharks Swim Club, a non-competitive recreational swim team for ages 5–15.
- All 38 children who tried out were accepted, and practices are set to begin soon.
- This new program expands our aquatics offerings and provides a positive, skill-building environment for youth.

Facility Updates

- Shoreline Middle School's 8th-grade PE swim unit is using our pool during the month of October, with 164 students participating and many experiencing formal swim instruction for the first time.
- We have continued morning adult Fitness classes on M/W/F at 6am and 7:15am and in mid-August, added a new Adult Fitness Workout Class at noon. Participation for the morning class are extremely high and our noon numbers have been ramping up. From August to now we have had a total of 1,682 participants check in.
- We continue to offer Water Aerobics Monday-Friday at noon which continue to have high enrollment. From August to now, we have had a total 1,624 participants check in.

Lifeguard Training & Staffing

- Successfully certified 8 new lifeguards this season.
- Two certification classes have already been offered this fall, with two more scheduled before year-end.

- 19 people are currently enrolled, with enrollment expected to increase to 34.
- Brought in 4 new lifeguards and are in the process of hiring an additional 3 lifeguards and 2 head lifeguards to ensure coverage as school schedules affect availability.

Events

- We hosted a well-attended Free Community Swim on Labor Day, welcoming families from 12:00–4:00 PM for an afternoon of fun and connection.
- We have our annual Floating Pumpkin Patch event coming up on October 18th! We have 250 tickets for sale which also include a pumpkin with a ticket purchase. This event will have games, food trucks, prizes, and free hot chocolate and apple cider.

Upcoming Program: Camp Splashgiving

- Camp Splashgiving will run during Thanksgiving break (9:00 AM–2:00 PM), offering aquatic games and fall-themed activities for kids ages 5–10. 30 spots will be available; registration has not yet opened, but we anticipate a quick fill based on past program interest.

It's been a great couple of months for our Aquatics Team, we have had successful programs, we've grown new programs, welcomed new participants, and kept things fun and safe for everyone. We're excited to keep the community happy and engaged with a safe facility, fun events, and great programming as we head into the holiday season.



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

Date: October 20, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Kathy DeWild, Arts Programs Coordinator
Subject: Arts & Cultural Services Section Report

Percent for Art Public Art Projects



Bruce Harman recently installed the public artwork at the **Sobering Center**. The 12'x8' mural, "Butterflies on the River," was installed on the river-facing side of the facility. In the mural foreground are butterflies, a universal symbol of transformation and beauty, with a background showing a tranquil San Lorenzo River, anchoring the mural in its locale. The image provides a soothing landscape with bright splashes of color to enliven the viewer's mood.

A ribbon cutting for the **Hope Forward | Esperanza Adelante** facility was held in September. The facility will provide mental health services to youth in crisis, giving them the chance to heal close to home and their support network. The public artwork for the project was created by muralist Joey Rose, who painted 11 interior and exterior murals featuring local flora and fauna, providing calm and uplifting imagery for the youth who will receive services at the center.



A "Call to Artists" for the **Pace Trails public art project** will soon go out the public. The Pace Trail Construction Project will expand the existing 4.5-mile Quail Hollow Ranch trail network by connecting to the Pace property with a half-mile Access Trail, finally opening public access to the property. Artists will be invited to submit a proposal for a site-specific artwork which enhances the experience of Pace Trail hikers, featuring imagery that reflects the area's unique habitat, plants, and animals. Information about what to submit will be available on the Parks website on October 31.

Art Exhibitions

Now showing at the **Simpkins Family Swim Center/Live Oak Library Annex**: “*Surf Live Oak.*” An exhibition highlighting surf history in Live Oak. On exhibit through January 25, 2026, the show is in conjunction with the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History’s (MAH) exhibition, *Princes of Surf 2025: He’e Nalu Santa Cruz*, on view through January 4, 2026 at the MAH.



Cristie Buckminster’s pastel paintings are on exhibition at the South County Government Center, **500 Westridge**, through January 16, 2026.

Visitors to **500 Westridge** can also see one of the three schools of **Equity Expo fish**. Local artist Abi Mustapha led the project at the Expo, where county staff, executives, and community partners contributed to the artwork – ceramic fish with colorful glazes. After the Expo, the artwork continued to expand and grow, with youth and staff at the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall adding their contributions to the piece. The completed artwork is now displayed at three locations: 3rd floor of the Government Center (701 Ocean St.), the Aptos Library, and 500 Westridge.





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: October 8, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jesse Williams, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Maintenance Section Report

North County, Highlands and Emeline Maintenance Shops

In North County, Maintenance staff opened a new parking lot area and trail head at the **Miller Property** in Boulder Creek. This project includes the installation of a new monument sign, road signage, picnic tables, foot bridge, drive in gates, trash cans, and parking area lined with split rail fencing.

The maintenance team worked with volunteers to add wood chips and succulents to beautify the front entrance of the government center at **701 Ocean Street**. Parks Staff rejuvenated all planter boxes in the Atrium at the courthouse with selective pruning and fresh mulch.

Up the **North Coast**, staff replaced and repaired dilapidated memorial benches. The Parks Department resumed service at **Greyhound Rock Coastal Access**. Parks re-installed signage and refreshed the property and restrooms.

Staff also installed a new memorial bench at **Floral Park**.

In **Ben Lomond**, river access was opened, and a flagpole was restored at Ben Lomond Dam Park. Parks assisted GSD in some dead tree removals and brush clearing behind the County Fleet Shop to accommodate additional parking.

At **Moran Lake County Park**, staff repainted curbs, repainted restrooms inside and out, installed new toilets, and patched asphalt around the restroom. Staff have also been correcting drainage along the Moran Lagoon before winter.

Maintenance cleaned all gutters and roofs at North County facilities in preparation for winter.

Winter turf management included fertilizing **Highlands Park** and **Anna Jean Cummings** athletic fields. Staff performed trail maintenance at Anna Jean Cummings Park for school cross country races.

Mid County, Simpkins and Felt Street Maintenance Shop

At **Simpkins Family Swim Center** staff installed a new drinking fountain and water bottle filler. Maintenance staff also installed wood chips on the parking lot islands.

Maintenance installed a new memorial bench at **Twin Lakes County Park** and freshened up the area with new woodchips.

Mid county Maintenance has been busy at **Jose Avenue Park**. Maintenance efforts include:

- Turf restoration and gopher abatement.

- Replacement of a spiral slide in the playground.
- The parking lot area was recently restriped, and visibility was improved by trimming shrubs and trees.
- The area was also weeded, and new wood chips were installed in the planters.

South County, Pinto Lake and Aptos Polo Grounds Maintenance Shops

In South County our maintenance staff installed two new memorial benches at **Willowbrook County Park** as well as upgraded the park pathway lighting to LED fixtures and bulbs.

At **Aptos Village Park**, the parking lot lighting was upgraded to LED's and the doors and posts at the clubhouse received a new stain coat.

Staff replaced the handrails and stained the decking on the exterior of **Valencia Hall**.

Maintenance cleaned out the sediment basin at **Pinto Lake County Park** to prepare for winter rains and run off from the adjacent Agriculture fields.

At the Government Center at the **Freedom Annex** our staff removed the remnants of the Master Gardeners old community garden to create a new space for staff to enjoy, as well as installation of DG pathways from the parking areas to the facility.

After the Green Valley Road Pedestrian Pathway project, irrigation and fencing were reinstalled at both **Mesa Village County Park** and **Pinto Lake County Park**. Parks partnered with Watsonville Wetlands Watch to plant new trees at Mesa Village Park.

Staff replaced tarps on the roof of the **Bert Scott Estate** to prepare for the rainy season.

At **Aptos Polo Grounds**, Maintenance cleaned up the maintenance corp yard areas, cut back poison oak, black berries, and stinging nettles around the park, and cleared around the back of baseball field A to accommodate native plants.

Seasonal Maintenance County Wide

Seasonal maintenance consists of:

- Roof and gutter cleaning at all park facilities
- Clearing any drains or drainage ditches and swales
- Seasonal seeding and fertilizing of athletic fields
- Clean up of Corp yards to reduce the risk of fuel, fertilizer, or other contaminants from getting into our storm water systems.
- Storm water reporting.

Maintenance Staffing Changes

One new Maintenance Worker I position was approved at the September 30th Board of Supervisors meeting.

Vehicle/Equipment Update

Parks received a new Dodge Ram 2500 utility box truck.



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Date: October 14, 2025
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 10 and 11: Updated cost estimates from August 2025 indicate that the project is overbudget by approximately \$37M. Cost increases due to escalation and increases in local bid prices contributed to a majority of the cost increases, offsetting modest savings from the value engineering study conducted in 2024. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is considering options for delivery of the project within available funding. Those include different alternatives for scope changes that would result in building less of the Ultimate Trail (trail next to the tracks) than was originally proposed or potentially modifying the design to build the trail in place of the tracks, also known as the Interim Trail. Regardless of the project direction, additional funding is needed for final design and right-of-way phases, and the RTC will consider funding options at their November meeting.

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. Additional pedestrian and bicycle classes at area schools are scheduled for Fall 2025.

North Coast Rail Trail (Segment 5): The RTC is coordinating with County Parks and other agencies to potentially open the Panther/Yellowbank parking lot to the public prior to the rest of the project opening in Summer 2026. The purpose of the early opening of the parking lot would be to minimize impacts to public coastal access. The trail itself will not be open. As part of the Maintenance Agreement for the project, County Parks and Public Works will be maintaining the trail on behalf of the RTC. An addendum to the Maintenance Agreement went to the Board of Supervisors on August 5th for approval for Parks staff to begin early maintenance of the parking lot.

Freedom Lake Restoration Plan

Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW) is actively maintaining the area where Acacia was previously removed, and native vegetation was installed. The native plantings are establishing well, and efforts to control Acacia resprouts are ongoing.

Maintenance activities will soon expand to include the area cleared by the County along Freedom Boulevard. Remaining cut material will be processed, and the site will be covered with weed matting. This area will also be added to WWW's regular maintenance schedule.



In parallel, WWW is collecting background data to inform planning studies. Through December, the Working Group will prepare a background memo outlining preferred alternatives for the site.

Parks staff are currently working on pre-applications to the Coastal Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board for Prop 4 funding to expand the restoration removal of invasives to include aquatic species within the lake.



Greyhound Rock

Biological and cultural draft reports have been submitted, and seismic trenching is currently underway under biological and cultural monitoring. The biological, cultural, and geological studies will help identify suitable locations for developing the environmental education center and cabins. Results from the initial feasibility phase are expected in Fall 2025.

Moran Lake County Park

Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan (HMP): Staff are working on updating the draft HMP to clarify that habitat management will prioritize public safety, protection of monarch habitat, and restoration of native species and habitat for biodiversity, in that order. The HMP will also outline regularly recurring, proactive arborist inspections to assess grove risk, hazard abatements as identified, regular maintenance of trimmed trees, continued drainage improvements to reduce ponding at the base of trees, and ongoing native tree and shrub planting. County Parks' consulting arborist is in the process of a risk assessment of all the trees in the park. Parks staff are currently working on pre-applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board for Prop 4 funding for a large-scale habitat restoration project in the park.

Tree Work: October 15 marks the beginning of Monarch season and a moratorium on non-emergency tree work. County Parks conducted a significant amount of tree work this summer that was funded by the County's Risk Management fund. All the trees in the South and North Lakeside area were pruned to reduce risk, and the trees along the Placer Street edge received restoration pruning and removal of dead branches in October. This work is science-based and is part of Parks' ongoing efforts to improve the monarch habitat at Moran Lake while prioritizing public safety and increasing climate resilience.

40 Moran Way: All the eucalyptus trees on the 40 Moran Way parcel were removed earlier this summer. The 40 Moran Way parcel was recently re-graded to improve drainage on that property. The site has also been seeded with an annual cover crop to reduce erosion and improve soil health and to prepare the site for planting native trees and shrubs next winter. Parks will be organizing volunteer days next year for the replanting efforts. Stay tuned! See photos on the next page of the lot's transformation!



During Tree Removal – June 2025



During Grading – September 2025



Grading Complete – October 2025

Pace Property Connection Trails

Parks staff have assisted with volunteer coordination and intermittent saw work to remove downed trees. A larger volunteer-supported trail building effort is planned for the fall after the Mount Hermon June Beetle flight season. Parks' Volunteer Coordinator will work with Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewardship (SCMTS) to recruit volunteers for this work. Trail construction will be a coordinated effort between Parks staff, the trail design crew from SCMTS, California Conservation Corps, and local volunteers, with an estimated volunteer percentage of 35%-45% for the trail construction.

Pinto Lake

County Parks, in partnership with the City of Watsonville, and County Environmental Health, continues to address long-standing water quality issues 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) that must be met by 2029. Excess phosphorus from both internal sediments and upstream runoff has fueled recurring harmful algal blooms (HABs), impacting aquatic habitat, wildlife, and public recreation. Current efforts focus on developing a comprehensive implementation strategy that integrates both in-lake and upstream watershed

measures to achieve long-term water quality improvement.

Staff have prepared a pre-application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for Proposition 4 funding and are coordinating with the City of Watsonville to pursue the State Water Board NPS 319(h) grant. These funding efforts will support planning and implementation of key restoration measures, including in-lake phosphorus sequestration, habitat restoration, and upstream improvements, such as sediment basins, drainage retrofits, partnerships with farmers and adjacent landowners, and riparian restoration to reduce nutrient loading and enhance lake health. The County and project partners have also expanded monitoring efforts to establish baseline conditions and track progress toward meeting TMDL targets and maintaining long-term water quality.



Santa Cruz Coastal Lagoons & East Cliff Drive Resiliency Study

County Parks was awarded a \$650,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy to develop an initial planning-level feasibility study of nature-based adaptation strategies to sea level rise for East Cliff Drive at the three coastal lagoons (Schwan Lagoon, Corcoran Lagoon, and Moran Lagoon) in mid-Santa Cruz County. The goal of the project is to identify a preferred adaptation strategy for each location that prioritizes nature-based solutions, protection of coastal resources and ecosystems, maintenance of coastal access, and protection of infrastructure and property.

Monitoring work at the three lagoons has been occurring in partnership with California State Parks and Santa Cruz County Environmental Health. The project team is developing a Technical Advisory Committee and Interested Party List for communication and distribution of project materials. A public-facing project website is expected to be ready this fall with background information. The team is finalizing a community engagement plan.

Valle del Pájaro

In 2024, County Parks, in collaboration with its nonprofit partner County Park Friends, hosted and participated in a series of community events to gather feedback on potential temporary uses for the site, which is currently zoned for Commercial Agriculture. Through these outreach efforts, over 1,000 community members shared their input by ranking their top three preferred temporary park features. The highest-ranked priorities included a natural play area, picnic areas, and natural trails.

In response to this community input, and with the goal of beginning to provide public access to the future park—County Parks implemented a small parking lot, an access pathway, and a half-mile loop trail with benches and picnic tables. These amenities were officially opened to the public on July 11.

As for long-term planning, the County has selected a consultant (Mithun) to lead the development of a Master Plan, with a strong emphasis on community engagement throughout the process. The Master Plan work is expected to begin this fall.





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Date: October 10, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jaime Jimenez, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Recreation Section Report

Partnerships with Local Recreation Departments

The County Parks and Recreation Department continues to build strong partnerships with local organizations to provide engaging community programs. One ongoing initiative is the Mall Walkers program, held at Capitola Mall through a standing agreement, which offers regular walking sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:30 to 11 a.m. In collaboration with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, the South County Task Force, the District Attorney's Office, and the Probation Department, the team is preparing to host its **annual Trunk or Treat events on October 24th, 2025**. These free public events will feature participation from various local agencies, with the Live Oak event taking place at the Sheriff's Headquarters (5200 Soquel Ave.) starting at 4 p.m., and the South County event being held at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds beginning at 3 p.m.

Additionally, the department recently hosted the Super Simpkins Kids Triathlon on Saturday, September 27th, at the Simpkins Family Swim Center. The event welcomed children ages 3 to 12 to take part in a fun and active swim, bike, and run course, with support from partnering organizations including Ecology Action (Modo) and the Quicksilver Swim Club. Lastly, the Recreation team collaborated with the City of Watsonville Parks and Community Services Department on September 10th in a trip to the San Francisco Giants game for adults by picking up 14 participants from Watsonville at one of the scheduled bus stops at the Watsonville Square Shopping Center.



Recreation Programs & Contractual Agreements



The fall season began with the continued contract and offering of our after-school child enrichment (ACE) programs at Mar Vista Elementary and Rio Del Mar Elementary Schools. These programs run Monday through Friday from 2 to 6 p.m. and are provided in partnership with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District's Extended Learning Opportunity Program. We are currently serving 120 students. Looking ahead, the recreation team is preparing for winter camps that will be held at four locations across the county: Highlands County Park, Quail Hollow Ranch County Park, Mesa Village County Park, and Aptos Village County Park. These camps offer a diverse mix of enrichment activities, including games, arts and crafts, sports,

cooking classes, and local field trips. In addition, the County Parks team did in fact extend their partnership with El Palomar Ballroom to continue offering Big East Swing classes and Cha Cha for active adult participants this fall at Aptos Village Park.

Marketing Efforts

The Department is currently in the process of developing the Winter and Spring Activity Guide, which will highlight upcoming seasonal programs scheduled to take place between December 2025 and May 2026. As part of ongoing marketing efforts, the team continues to produce bilingual flyers in both Spanish and English and regularly updates social media platforms to promote events and programs to the broader community.



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Date: October 10, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Garrett Smart, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Reservations Section Report

Recreation Program Specialist

Our new Recreation Program Specialist is settling in wonderfully and quickly learning the ins and outs of the role. She is leading social media projects as part of her broader duties and is responsible for the refreshed look and aesthetic of our large digital sign slides, which she manages as one of her programs. Her work is already bringing a modern, engaging feel to our communications and connecting with the community in new ways.

Parks and Rex

Our Annual Dog pool party event had another successful year with 400+ people in attendance. Over \$10,000 was raised to continue to support our programs and our partner in this event, Santa Cruz County Animal Services.

Cliffside Coffee Bar

Cliffside Coffee Bar is a new small business concessionaire at Pleasure Point County Park, providing a unique and inviting coffee experience for park users. This addition adds to the amenities and enjoyment of the park, creating a space where visitors can relax and connect.

Winter Wonderland

Coming Saturday, December 13th, Winter Wonderland returns to Simpkins Family Swim Center. Following the success of last year's event, which featured breakfast with Santa and a local vendor and craft market, this year's celebration will feature breakfast with the Grinch! We are excited to welcome the community once again to enjoy the festivities and support this special event.



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Date: October 07, 2025
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Emma Lee, Volunteer Program Coordinator
Subject: Volunteer Section Report

701 Ocean St. County Building

The succulent planting and beautification project is ongoing at the County building! We've added new mulch to the front entrance sign as well as continued along the front of the building, planting succulents in the refreshed spaces. We have an upcoming community volunteer day on October 8th from 2:00pm – 5:00pm, as well as three more scheduled in 2026: January 30th, February 13th, and February 27th from 2:00pm – 5:00pm. We'll continue to weed, amend soil, plant donated succulents, and spread mulch.



Ben Lomond County Park

In partnership with the Ben Lomond Village Alliance, we organized a volunteer day on October 2nd to weed and rake leaves at Ben Lomond Park! With the help of ten awesome volunteers, we bagged over 20 large bags of leaves and weeds, beautifying the park!

East Cliff Drive County Parkway

Following a successful East Cliff community volunteer day on August 16th, the succulent planters were watered, weeded, and the perimeters were reinforced with new twine and stakes. We'll have 2026 dates scheduled soon, with the intent to continue to weed, water, and maintain the community spaces.

Felton Discovery County Park

We have one more 2025 Garden Work Party scheduled on November 1st from 9:00am – 12:00pm to continue the park beautification! We will be weeding, pruning, and amending soil with composted horse manure from Quail Hollow Ranch during this community volunteer day. Quarterly dates for 2026 will be coming soon!

Floral County Park

We have monthly community volunteer days scheduled at Floral County Park to weed and maintain the Native Pollinator Garden while the new plants continue to grow and establish. These events are on the first Saturday of every month, starting in October and currently extending through February from 9:00am – 12:00pm. Park Host Kris will be leading these efforts!



Pinto Lake County Park

We have an upcoming volunteer day scheduled at Pinto Lake County Park on November 2nd from 9:00am – 12:00pm. Park Hosts will be leading the event, and volunteers will be prepping the front island entrance of the park for native planting next Spring! This will include weeding, replacing the weed barrier, and raking soil. In collaboration with the Master Gardeners and our maintenance team, the volunteer program is working towards refreshing the space to help create a welcoming environment that can be seen from the road!

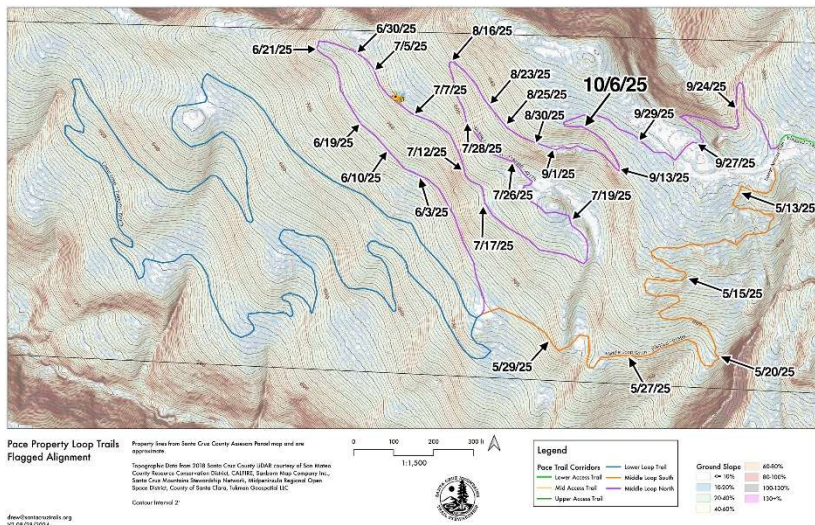
Polo Grounds County Park

The volunteer project at the large dog park at Polo Grounds County Park has been completed! Thanks to increased community involvement, we removed weeds and added new mulch to the park, helping to improve safety for pets and refresh the space.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

We have lots happening at Quail Hollow Ranch! Our dedicated Trail Crew continue to monitor and maintain the trails every Tuesday and our ranch house Docents open the visitors center every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. With assistance from our Quail Hollow Park Hosts, we're also currently opening the visitors center on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our Friends of Quail Hollow Ranch nonprofit continue to update the visitors center calendar on their website for interested park goers.

Students at Highlands High will once again be volunteering at Quail Hollow on October 16th. Under the supervision of Park Host Beth, they'll be sprucing up the front garden area and the planter boxes!



Pace Property

We've continued the habitat restoration and trail building efforts at the Pace Property. Thanks to our amazing volunteers, we've logged over 128 volunteer hours for this project in August and September, with volunteer leads Zack Steinkamp and Jeff Ustick leading the charge. They're making fantastic progress on the trail and are close to being finished with the first loop. The updated progress map is on the left.

We have more volunteer days scheduled in October, November, December, and January. We'll be out on the trail, weather

permitting, most Mondays and Saturdays from 9:00am – 1:00pm. Our Santa Cruz County Parks website now has a volunteer calendar that lists the full range of dates and allows interested folks to sign up in advance.

Valle del Pajaro

Park Hosts Kris, Alex, and Elizabeth have added Valle del Pajaro to their weekly routines. They are often there to greet community members, pick up litter, and continue general beautification efforts, focusing on park stewardship.

AmeriCorps

We have applied for another AmeriCorps team! We'll know in January whether we've been awarded a team. If so, they'll be with us from March – May 2026.

Park Hosts

Bert Scott Estate: Kris has continued to clean up around the property at Bert Scott, focusing on the vegetation around the house and fire abatement. Kris also regularly greets visitors at Pinto Lake County Park, Polo Grounds County Park, Scott County Park, and Valle del Pajaro. Beginning on October 1st, he's also now locking the gate and restrooms at Scott County Park at closing.

Kris has helped to create flyers for our volunteer events and is leading the monthly Floral County Park volunteer days.

Kris, along with Park Host Alex, tabled at Aptos High School on September 24th to promote our volunteer opportunities.

Pinto Lake County Park: Park Host Alex continues to landscape around the historic Pinto Lake home, greet park users, and close the park at night. Alex has also helped with the monthly volunteer events at Floral County Park and Pinto Lake County Park volunteer days. Beginning on October 1st, he's now locking the gate at Valle del Pajaro at closing.

Alex, as well as Park Host Elizabeth, will be leading the volunteer day at Pinto Lake County Park on November 2nd.

Elizabeth continues to assist Alex in closing the park at night and landscapes around the front house. She has been helping to maintain the Park Host trailers, greet community members, and visit Valle del Pajaro. Beginning on October 1st, she's now locking the restrooms at Mesa Village County Park at closing.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park: Beth and Steve continue their projects around Quail, including painting, watering, walking the trails, and maintaining the volunteer tool shed. They open and close the park gates and greet visitors daily!

Steve will be opening the visitor center at Quail on Wednesdays and Thursdays for the foreseeable future, giving folks information about the park, upcoming programming, volunteer efforts, and house history! We've received positive feedback about the house being open consistently throughout the week.

Beth has been at every Pace Project volunteer day to check in volunteers! Beth also helped at the Ben Lomond Park volunteer day and the events at 701 Ocean Street. Beth will continue to supervise the Felton Discovery Park volunteer days, with the next on November 1st.