

**MONTEREY PENINSULA REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
STAFF REPORT**

BOARD MEETING: October 05, 2022

SUBJECT: Monthly Staff Report

PRESENTER: Rafael Payan, General Manager

REPORT: The following briefly summarizes some of the key tasks and projects the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD) Staff undertook from mid-August through mid-September 2022 in addition to performing MPRPD's regular business. This work was accomplished in compliance with the CDC's, State's, and County's COVID-related guidelines.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

- 1. California Red-legged Frogs (CRLF):** Project-B's construction was immediately halted upon MPRPD receiving confirmation that CRLF were identified at the former golf course water trap pond near the project site. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and SWCA Environmental Consultants were promptly contacted. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife was also contacted and was aligned with the direction provide to MPRPD by the USFWS and SWCA.



California Red-legged Frog

USFWS, SWCA, and MPRPD met on-site and evaluated the situation and formulated several measures to protect this listed species.

Additional Best Management Practices were developed in alignment with the USFWS's direction. These included SWCA providing a training session for Project-B's construction crews. The park's concessionaire and MPRPD personnel concurrently received training and direction on what to do – and not do, should a CRLF be encountered.

Silt fence has been erected around the construction site to reduce the potential of CRLF finding their way into the project site. MPRPD's consulting biologist performs visual sweeps of the site to determine if any frogs are within the construction zone.

The discovery of this listed species is heralded as a success in that MPRPD continues to enhance, provide, and even create and expand potential habitat for some of our threatened and endangered fellow beings including California condor, steelhead trout, and CRLF.

2. **Classification & Compensation Study:** Staff continued collaborating with consultant on classification and total compensation study. The reports are planned for presentation to MPRPD's Board during this 05 October 2022 meeting.
3. **“F.I.D.O.” (Fenced In Dog “O-rena”):** The “Dog-Park-Four,” Max's Helping Paws, and MPRPD continued to meet to advance the development of the long-awaited canine activity area at the PCRPs Rancho Canada Unit.

This amenity was included in the park's General Development Plan and, with the assistance of the Santa Lucia Conservancy's former CEO, was carefully sited adjacent to the existing dirt parking lot, due north of the parks' maintenance building and south of Carmel Valley Road.

Coordination and integration with the Floodplain and Upland Restoration Project will continue, utilizing excess fill material to provide a visual and sound buffer. Additional information will be presented as this project advances.

4. **Exhibit designs for the PCRPs Discovery Center:** Several new interpretive exhibit designs are under way. New exhibits will soon include construction of a taxidermized mountain lion (the mountain lion was unfortunately killed when it was struck by an automobile), a Rumsien house (ruk) replica and its household goods, the sixth mass extinction we may be entering, a universe exhibit in partnership with MIRA exhibit; and installation of the Carmel River Watershed 3-D model.



Mountain lion on initial display mount

- 5. Floodplain and Upland Restoration Project at PCRPD's Rancho Canada Unit:** The California Coastal Conservancy, serving as MPRPD's advisor and project manager, and McBain Associates, serving as the project's consulting engineers continued to make progress on this project, bringing it to the 65% level of design. This project team will provide a presentation during the 02 November 2022 MPRPD Board meeting.

The project engineer continued to make progress in the integration of the habitat restoration while also providing public access to the site and beyond via a pedestrian trail network that will include a new bridge spanning the Carmel River.

Staff consulted with Mr. Lundquist, the Monterey County Planning Department's Executive Director, to discuss this project and determine vital steps going forward. Mr. Lundquist stated that permits shall be required for all new or modified extant structures, including bridges. While a grading permit will not be required, MPRPD is urged to coordinate this aspect of the restoration project so that the County and MPRPD are equally informed.

- 6. Laguna Grande Meeting with JPA Members:** The cities of Monterey and Seaside, and MPRPD met to discuss next steps regarding this park and its multi-agency coordination. Several key steps will be undertaken including:
 - A.** Develop a detailed outline that identifies all key tasks and the party(ies) responsible for their successful execution;
 - B.** Complete the park's pertinent required environmental document(s);

- C. Hire outside Legal Counsel to help update the extant MOU between these agencies, help “clean-up” the site’s boundaries to ensure encroachments do not exist, and clearly identify maintenance, planning, capital improvement development, and other site-related responsibilities;
- D. Identify, assign, and pursue grant funding for the park’s capital improvements, and health/safety-related research, planning, and implementation;
- E. Assign a new Chair for this JPA;
- F. Coordinate these vital steps through our respective legislative bodies;
- G. Schedule the next JPA meeting – the sooner the better -- but no later than early March 2023, completing the steps identified herein prior said meeting.

7. Meeting Room Improvements: Staff continued discussing and testing solutions for holding meetings at the Palo Corona Regional Park Discovery Center. If lower cost options do not appear feasible, staff will develop an RFP to gather cost estimates on building modifications.

8. Multi-Benefit Community Trail at PCRP’s Rancho Canada Unit: The vast majority of this trail’s users are multi-generational hikers. The new trail provides access to nature for our visitors who do not want to – or cannot – traverse the park’s steeper, more challenging trails. Because of this, parents with young children, and folks of all ages can enjoy the park’s and Carmel River’s beauty.



Enjoying the Multi-Benefit Community Trail

For a few hours within a few weeks at the beginning of the school year, students ranging from middle school through college and their families, friends, and coaches, the Big Sur Marathon Foundation continue to work with MPRPD, unifying our region's residents and visitors through healthy outdoor running activities on this recently constructed trail.

Many of the cross-country meet participants have stated they would not have ever known about this park were it not for these types of events. Many vow to return to enjoy the hiking trails and natural beauty. Many of these patrons are you folks who may favorably be influenced, enhancing their love of land, being outdoors, and, hopefully, becoming staunch supporters of environment-focused causes.

- 9. PG&E Project-B Service Connection:** PG&E has completed the design work for the electrical line from the transformer near Carmel Valley Road across the drive and over to Project-B. This new service line will provide power for Project-B amenities and up to 10 EV charging stations that were part of the Project-B plans.

The District was offered an assortment of four payment options:

- 10-year Refundable Advance Option Gas & Electric (\$69,732.28)
- Non-Refundable 50% Discount Option for Gas & Electric payment (\$31,975.53)
- 10-Year Refundable Advance Option for Gas and Non-Refundable 50% Discount Option for Electric (\$31,975.53)
- Non-Refundable 50% Discount Option for Gas and 10-Year Refundable Advance Option for Electric (\$69,732.28)

In consultation with the electrical engineer the District selected the Non-Refundable 50% Discount Option for \$31,975.53. This decision was based on the lack of data needed to support the 10-year Refundable Option. It is unknown at this time if we would use enough electrical to actually obtain the discount in 10-years thus, we opted to secure the 50% Discount now.

- 10. Palo Corona's Project-B Construction:** Construction activities continued intermittently during the month of August. The restroom building roof sheeting and paper has been installed as well as the rough mechanical systems. Site work is under way and new retaining wall concrete pours have started. The new water service line has been tied into the Clubhouse services.

Progress reports are being prepared by Ranger staff and the Ausonio construction management team. The team continues to coordinate closely with Wedgewood to ensure no impacts to its events, as well as monitor site deliveries and public access to the clubhouse and modified trail entrance. The tribal monitors remain on-call to assist with any potential artifacts of historical significance. No such items were encountered in the past month. Ranger staff and Ausonio team have been working closely with SWCA biologists in efforts to protect the California Red Legged Frog while also navigating rain event delays.



Restroom roof framing and eave paint



Restroom mechanical chase



Retaining / Landscape wall footing



Retaining / Landscape wall footing

11. ParkIT! Initiative: Staff was interviewed by Spoke Consulting. This firm will help advance the ParkIT! Initiative by establishing stronger lines of communication with our communities, stakeholders, and the press.

12. Recruitment: Staff continues recruitment efforts for Environmental Education and Operations and Maintenance positions.

13. Retirement: Ranger John Palaniuk will be retiring from the District effective October 17 after fifteen years of dedicated service. Staff will host a luncheon to celebrate John and wish him well and happy trails.

14. San Jose Creek Trail (Trail) Opening Steering Committee: California State Parks Big Sur Land Trust, Point Lobos Foundation, and MPRPD continued to meet, jointly developing a multi-organizational plan that shall be implemented this November, opening the trail for public use via a permit system. Various excursion opportunities emanating from PCRP Rancho Canada Unit will be offered. These will range from unescorted out-and-back hikes to docent led excursions. Detailed information will be provided during MPRPD Board's 02 November 2022 meeting.

The EECO Division has previously piloted public docent-led hikes, with reservations for this extremely popular hike filling to capacity within minutes of being advertised.

15. Santa Lucia Conservancy (SLC) Environmental Education Programs: SLC and MPRPD met to discuss and coordinate both organizations' access and use of the PCRP Rancho Canada Unit's Non-exclusive Environmental Education Easement for various youth-based programs.

16. Wildlife Cameras: All MPRPD divisions will work together to identify various sites that will help capture wildlife activity in our parks. This data may help establish the best locations to protect, enhance or construct wildlife corridors.

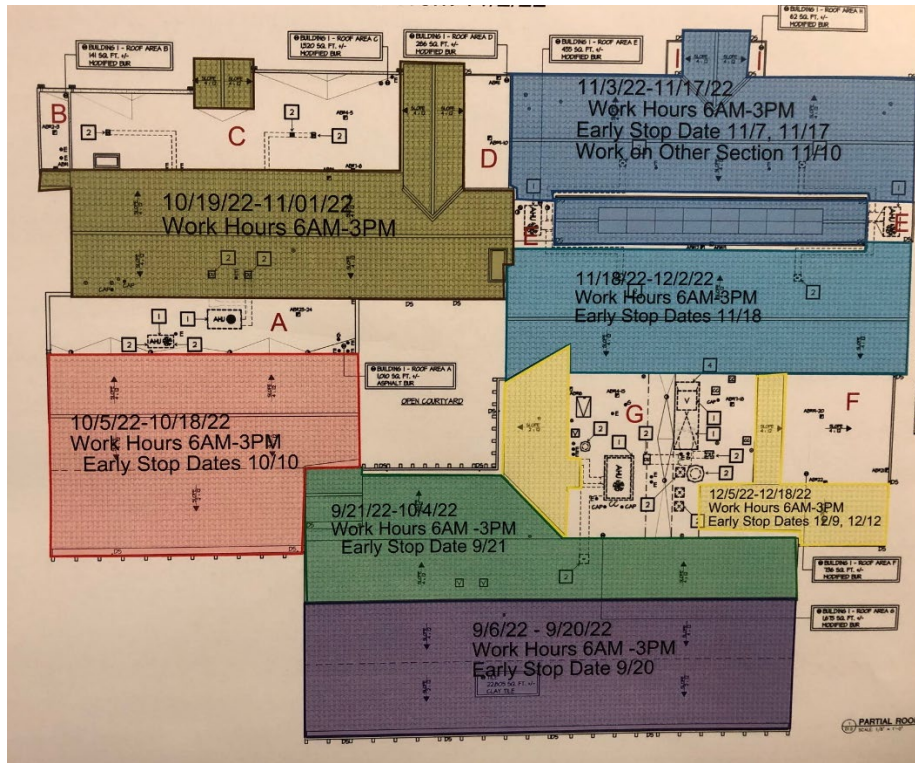
17. Annual Audit and Financial Statements: Staff continue working with District auditor's CliftonLarsonAllen on the annual audit and Financial Statements.

The District is required to implement GASB 87 for Lease Accounting for the year under audit. The new GASB lease accounting standard for governmental organizations, GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases* (GASB 87), was proposed during 2017 and released in June of 2017. It was initially effective for reporting periods beginning subsequent to December 15, 2019.

In May 2020, the GASB issued Statement No. 95, *Postponement of the Effective Dates of Certain Authoritative Guidance*, which delayed the GASB 87 effective date by 18 months. This pronouncement now requires the adoption of GASB 87 for all fiscal years beginning subsequent to June 15, 2021.

Staff conducted an inventory of District leases and those were analyzed against the requirements of GASB 87. Results of the new reporting requirement will appear in the Audited June 30, 2022 Financial Statements.

18. Rancho Canada Unit Roofing: District's tenant Wedgewood began the reroofing project as part of their tenant improvement plan. Tile roofing is being removed in phases on the sloped roofing. Flat area roofing and HVAC replacement is slated to begin in January.



Phased roofing schedule



Courtyard entrance area roof



**Back side of the Discovery Center
(Rotted outriggers to be cut and treated)**



Back side of the Merienda Room

EECO DIVISION

1. Community Outreach:

A. 50th Anniversary Celebration -- Blue Zones Project Monterey County

(BZPMC): BZPMC and MPRPD staff are partnering to kick-off a “50 K for 50 Years” campaign in the month of November. This month-long challenge of hiking fifty kilometers in our parks and open spaces honors MPRPD’s 50th Anniversary. BZPMC’s sponsorship promotes participation in healthy lifestyles and provides t-shirts that will be available for pick-up during MPRPD’s 50th Anniversary event, scheduled to be held on December 3, 2022. Additional details will be forthcoming

B. Community Feedback:

Cross country meets are drawing in new and diverse users of all ages and backgrounds. Many participants have stated that they would never have known Palo Corona Regional Park existed were it not for these events. Many are in awe at the park’s beauty and vow to return to hike its trails, participate in MPRPD’s programs, and be inspired by this site. This reinforces MPRPD’s mission to create a more inclusive, environmentally literate society.

Following the first week of events MPRPD staff received several messages, all positive. Below are two examples:

“... I just wanted to say thanks for all you did yesterday. You all treated our event as if it were your own. I felt less like I was borrowing your facility, and more like I was joining your family. Everything was smooth and efficient I hope you felt the same way, and that all of the teams were respectful of the environment and diligent about clean up. ...It was an honor for me to be there at the beginning of what I'm sure will be a rich and historic hub for youth sports in California.” **Local High School Coach**

“While failure is an orphan, our Middle School Cross County Inaugural Meet has many parents. I was very proud to be there with all of you that contributed to making this project a reality.

Many kids ran a race for the first time. So many proud parents! Seeing parents and participants cheer like crazy over the very last runner was all we could ask for. That was the payoff for me.” **Big Sur International Marathon Director**

C. Golf Ball Clean-up:

The community rallied to clear the new Multi-Benefit Community Trail at PCPR by picking up 50 years of remnant golf balls, the majority of which were found in the former golf course driving range. Youth, coaches and parents from Salinas, Pacific Grove, and Carmel cross country teams, plus CSUMB runners, all pitched in. More than thirty students officially participated, many earning community service credits.

All told, participants removed roughly 2,000 golf balls and a few dozen other pieces of plastic and metal debris associated with the former driving range and golf course.



Approximately 2,000 golf balls were removed from the new Multi-Benefit Community Trail during a clean-up event

D. Pacific Grove Museum Open House for Teachers: Promoting MPPRD's education program, staff networked with local teachers and educators at this event. The outreach booth, with mammal skins on display, highlighted new educational resources, *Let's Go Outdoors!* activities (*LGO!*), and the up-and-coming Transportation grant.

E. Social Media Posts: Social media posts experience a short hiatus as the EECO division experienced staffing changes in the months of July and August. We are pleased to be moving forward with new and inviting posts.


For this reporting period, posts consisted of park event news and educational content relating to flora and fauna of MPPRD parks. Posts promoted upcoming *LGO!* programming, the release of the new Fall/Winter *LGO!* activities guide, the Palo Corona volunteer golf ball cleanup, California Biodiversity Day, Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz, and educational nature content. The following of MPPRD social media accounts grew in August-September. (NOTE: Please disregard the images' distortion below)

- i. Facebook stats - @MPRegionalParkDistrict:
 1. September 15 follower count: 1,972 (+64)
 2. Facebook Page Reach: 1,424 (↓ 60.5%)
 3. Top 3 most popular posts: Aug 15 – Sep 15
 - a. 8/31 Bird Walk (*Let's Go Outdoors!* program) (806 views)

- b. 8/31 Golf ball volunteer cleanup at Palo Corona (398 views)
- c. 9/15 New Let's Go Outdoors! guide announcement (336 views)

ii. Instagram stats - @mprpd_lgo:

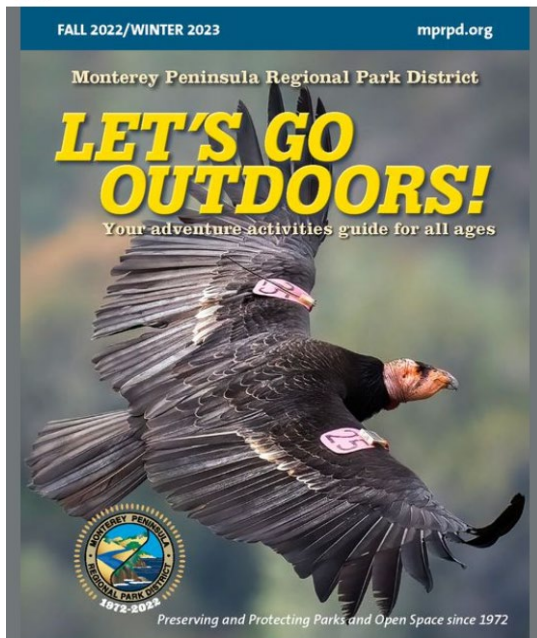
- 1. Sep 15 follower count: 906 (+62)
- 2. Instagram Page Reach: 395 (↓ 6.6%)
- 3. Top 3 most popular posts: Aug 15 – Sep 15
 - a. 9/3 California Wild Rose educational post (250 views)
 - b. 9/7 California Biodiversity Day educational post (203 views)
 - c. 8/31 Bird Walk (Let's Go Outdoors! program) (201 views)


Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD)
 September 16 at 2:02 AM · 🌐

📢 **Announcement!**
 The new Let's Go Outdoors! Fall and Winter activities guide is now available. 🌲 🍂

📄 Online registration for the new season starts September 15th (today 🗓️) at our website: <https://secure.rec1.com/monterey-peninsula./catalog>. Check out the digital guide as well!


📍 **Regi...** See more




👍👍 9

2 Shares




mprpd_lgo



mprpd_lgo 🌸 Do you smell that? 🌸
 Look for the fragrant California Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*) throughout Garland Ranch Regional Park and in the Native Plant Garden by the Visitor Center. 📍 As a native, thicket forming shrub this plant provides important shelter and nesting habitat to local animals. 🌿 🐾

Did you know that the California Wild Rose has fragrant fruit called hips that resemble a small apple and are rich in vitamin C? 🍏

📖 Look for the down curving thorns with a wide base, persistent sepals that remain on the hip, and larger flowers to distinguish the California Wild Rose from other native rose species. 🌹

What are some of your favorite plants found at Garland Ranch? Let us know in the comments below! 🌿 🌲 🍂

📷 Photo featuring the hips and flower and close up photo of thorns from the California Wild Rose.
 #mprpdandme #mprpd_lgo #nature #hikingtrails #botany #nativeplants #conservation

2w

[View insights](#)

❤️ 🔍 🗑️

🌿 Liked by santaluciapreserve and 31 others

SEPTEMBER 3

Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPPRD)
 September 1 at 3:00 AM
 🌱 Another successful golf ball cleanup at Palo Corona Regional Park this past weekend! Thanks to hardworking volunteers an estimated 2,000 🏌️ golf balls were removed from the former Rancho Cañada Golf Course (1970-2016) area. The Palo Corona Park environment thanks them!

Check out these pictures from the cleanup 📸 and Palo Corona Discovery Center historical exhibits 📖. Come by the Discovery Center on weekends from 10 am to 4 pm to learn about the cultural and natural history of the area! 🌲

#cleanup #restoration #parks #openspace #wildlife #habitat #environment #montereycounty #letsgetoutdoors #mpprdandme



👍👍 22



mpprd_igo
 mpprd_igo 📸 The voice and soul of the oaks 🌲 ~unknown Or in this case...of the Flannel Bush!
 🌿 One of the most common birds found in oak woodlands of California, the vocal Oak Titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*) nests in cavities and generally mates for life. (https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Oak_Titmouse/overview)

📸 Check out these pictures of a perched Oak Titmouse that was happily gleaning the foliage for insects in a California Flannel Bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) shrub in the Garland Ranch Regional Park native plant arboretum! 🌿

What birds have you seen or heard lately at Garland Ranch? Let us know in the comments! 🗨️

#mpprdandme #letsgetoutdoors #nativeplant #birds #birdphotography #birdsinstagram #nature #birdsong #wildlife #cabiodiversityday

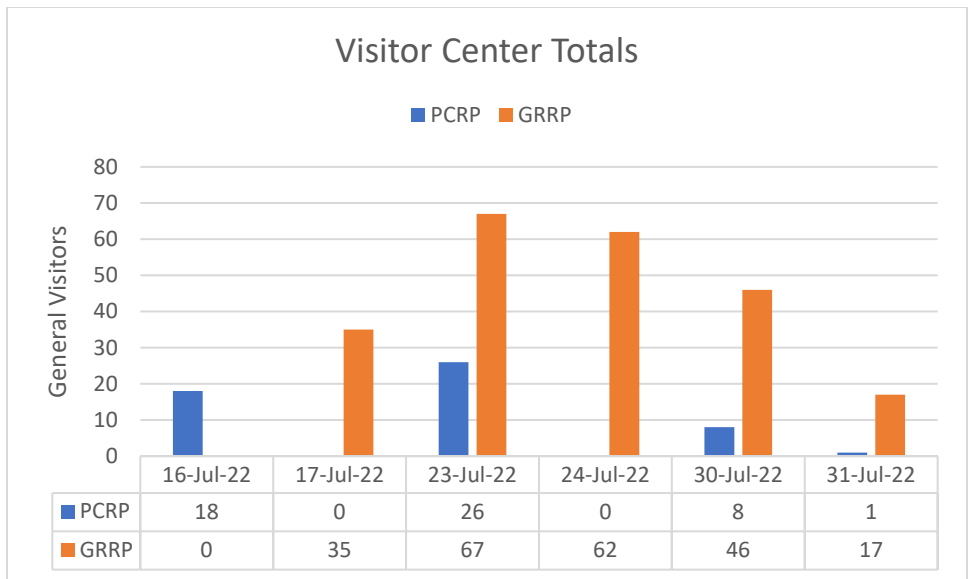
janetsyn35 ❤️❤️❤️❤️
 Ed 1 like Reply

View insights

👍👍👍 Liked by mbardaq and 24 others

SEPTEMBER 12

F. Visitor Center Totals: Transitioning for being closed to open, due to the persistence of the COVID19 outbreak, staff has been monitoring and collecting visitation data at both the PCRPD Discovery Center (DC) and GRRP Visitor Center (VC). Below is a chart summarizing weekend visitor contacts in August 2022 (**note:** the sharp increase at PCRPD on 28 August 2022 is due to the new volunteer duty of “Park Greeter.” Park Greeters are stationed at park trailheads to welcome and orient visitors.)



Centers were closed during periods of COVID-19 related zero visitation and the DC's visitation is currently impacted by area construction

G. Education:

1. Education Webpages:

- i. Staff has identified, and continues to research, areas to improve the MPRPD educational webpages on www.mprpd.org by offering a center information page, educational videos, 3D virtual tours, and teacher resource pool.

2. K-12 Education Programs:

- i. Staff continues to network and develop partnerships with state and local entities such as CA State Parks PORTS program, Santa Lucia Conservancy, and Pacific Grove Museum Community Science & Outdoor Learning Collaborative.
- ii. Staff is piloting MPRPD educational programs for 7-12 grades, reaching out to other communities, networking with teachers and environmental education constituents, co-hosting at teacher development workshop, and building on the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History MOU. Outings held at GRRP and PCRP.

COMMUNITY SCIENCE & OUTDOOR LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

JANUARY 4-6, 2023

COMMUNITY BASED PARTNERS

Want to develop a deeper understanding of how outdoor experiences augment standards-based classroom learning outcomes while collaborating with classroom teachers?

Join us for a 3 day workshop in October and at least 3 of 6 family friendly half day natural history outings. Facilitate or co-facilitate one outing

2023

WHAT YOU WILL RECEIVE

Opportunities to connect with classroom teachers to develop meaningful curriculum

Organizational reimbursement for participation in the 3 day workshop, 3 follow-up outings and for delivering Meaningful Watershed Education Experience (MWEE) to SUHSD students

ENROLL UP TO TWO EDUCATORS FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION

<https://bit.ly/3A1hvZ2>

PACIFIC GROVE MUSEUM of NATURAL HISTORY

THE BIRD SCHOOL PROJECT

SUHSD

H. Exhibits:

1. **Carmel River Stream Cross-section:** Staff is working with the fabricator of the 3-D Carmel River cross section exhibit on maintenance and reconstruction of portions of the exhibit at GRRP.
2. **PCPR Kiosk and Entrance Signage:** The PCPR Rancho Canada Unit's Project-B plans includes an entrance plaza that features a three-panel informational kiosk. Staff is working closely with all divisions to create a Welcome/Trail Map, listing of Rules/Regulations, and a graphic depiction showing MPRPD's parks and preserves.

- I. **Interns:** Cady DeLay, CSUMB's Scientific Illustrator Intern, created draft illustrations for a wayside panel interpreting the Snowy Plovers of Marina Dunes Preserve. This is one of three educational panels highlighting the important resources in the dune environment.

J. *Let's Go Outdoors! (LGO!)* Guide and Programs:

1. **Publishing Guide:** The special 50th Year Anniversary edition of the *LGO!* guide was printed and delivered to all district residents by the last week of September.
2. **Program Updates:** New courses may include medicinal use of plants, birding on the Odello Property located on State Parks' land, how to become a naturalist, monarch sanctuary strolls with Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, and experiencing nature with children with the Ventana Wilderness Society. San Jose Creek hikes will be a joint effort between State Parks Interpreters and MPRPD volunteer naturalists. Limited indoor programming at our discovery and visitor centers will begin in October.

- K. **Service Learners:** Staff recruited four service learners from California State University's schools of Computing and Design, Humanities and Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences, and College of Arts, to collaborate with staff as a team to update and create pdf versions of the nearly five hundred identification cards for the Annual Wildflower Show. The team is also creating concept designs for the Wildflower Show's posters, thank you cards for volunteers, and historic ward posters commemorating MPRPD's 50th Year Anniversary.

- L. **Special Use Permits:** The following Special Use Permits (SUP) were issued during the period from July-September:

1. **Big Sur Marathon Foundation (BSMF):** BSMF and MPRPD collaborated closely with Legal Counsel to create and authorize a SUP for the 2022

Youth-focused cross-country season for middle school through college student age groups.

2. **Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT):** Staff issued three SUPs to the BSLT to utilize the Palo Corona Regional Park parking area and enter the park's backcountry trails. The permits are part of the annual SUP permitting process developed between BSLT and MRPPD.

Future plans include the development of a multi-agency event calendar with the Lobos-Corona Parkland Project members, CA State Parks (CSP), Point Lobos Foundation (PLF), BSLT and, MRPPD to coordinate, track, and monitor activities.

3. **CAL-AM Encroachment Permit:** An encroachment permit was issued to conduct borehole drilling and take samples of the aquifer, to determine ability to support water well for the new Rancho Canada Village development. The test well proved unproductive.
4. **Cattle Round-up:** PCRP remains a working cattle ranch. BSLT's cattle grazer moved cattle from the Odello Fields to PCRP's Front Ranch corrals.
5. **Cross-country Practices:**
 - i. The following schools were issued SUPs for students and their coaches to run the Multi-benefit Community Trail for the cross-country season of August-November:
 1. CA State University Monterey Bay
 2. Carmel Unified School District:
 - a. Carmel Middle School
 - b. High School
 3. Robert Lewis Stevenson
 4. Pacific Grove (pending)

6. **CSUMB:**

- i. Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) hosted a "mindful walking in nature" class at Garland Park.
- ii. Professor John Olson brought students from the Freshwater Ecology Course to train and practice collecting freshwater invertebrates and making habitat measurements following the California Water Board SWAMP protocol. Training and practice were conducted in the Carmel River, accessed at Garland Ranch Regional Park.

7. **2nd Annual Wunderwoman Walk:** Lorna Monroe was a much beloved teacher at Santa Catalina School, health advocate, and lover of nature. Her passing a few years ago hit her community hard. In honoring her memory, her family hosted the second annual Wunderwoman Walk on the Multi-Benefit Community Trail.

M. Staffing:

1. **Environmental Education Specialists:** Environmental Education Specialists, Claire Ackland, and Jonathan David, have begun working at the Palo Corona Discovery Center and Garland Visitor Center on weekends, staffing outreach programs and events, and working on social media. Tasks include assisting and facilitating *LGO!* programs, editing the *LGO!* guide, producing and distributing park maps, posting signage, training in MPRPD standard operating procedures, and assisting with the monitoring of cross-country meets.

2. Interdivisional Solutions & Collaboration:

- i. **Shared Master Calendaring:** Staff have identified the need for shared calendaring for multifaced uses of District property. This is especially vital as Staff works inter-divisionally.

EECO staff identified two potential solutions for a shared calendaring system that may provide enhancement in the coordination of the following options: Reservation or Special Use Permit use of facilities, cross-country meet scheduling, *LGO!* program scheduling, future school program booking, special event reservations, and allowing partner organizations to manage their own calendar of events on shared land and/or facilities. The two proposed systems being explored include Outlook Calendar and CivicRec. Both systems are currently utilized by EECO Staff for internal and external calendaring of individual and *LGO!* program happenings. Additional detail will be provided in future reports.

- ii. **Hybrid meetings:** EECO Staff have identified and will pilot hybrid-style meetings with the help of portable microphones, smart phones/tablets, and tripods. The goal is to provide a solution to both the remote and in-person participants at future Board, public, and workday meetings.

N. Training: Staff participated in “Public Service Training: Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of Public Employees” webinar.

O. Volunteers: Staff continue recruiting volunteers for guiding hikes, facilitating programs for the new Fall/Winter *LGO!* programs, and staffing of visitor centers and trailheads.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE DIVISION

- 1. Cal-am Test Well for Rancho Canada Village:** Staff facilitated a site visit and access for Cal-Am's drilling subcontractor (Cascade Drilling) to drill a test well on MPRPD property. The purpose of this well would serve as a back-up to the primary well for the Rancho Canada Village Development Project (Project). The results of the drill test determined the site to be unsuitable.

Subsequent to the test well being drilled, Rancho Canada Village Development informed MPRPD that the existing well on the development's property is looking favorable and may provide sufficient water service to the Project site.



Test Well Drill Rig

- 2. Multi-benefit Community Trail (Trail) Preparation:** Rangers spent several days preparing the Trail and entrance drive in anticipation of the inaugural cross-country event at Palo Corona Regional Park's Rancho Canada Unit. This included brushing back shrubs, trimming trees, pulling weeds, and dragging the sections of the Trail.



Rangers clearing and brushing entrance drive

Rangers and other MPRPD staff participated in the first four events to ensure public and spectator compliance with MPRPD's regulations. Rangers also escorted news media (KSBW) during the September 14th event. Tope's Tree Service was hired to grind-out a stump on the path to the spectator viewing area, which Rangers later surfaced with wood chips.



View from Windmill Hill of Inaugural Event



Tope's Tree Service grinding tree stump

- 3. Eagle Scout Project at Garland Ranch Regional Park:** Rangers facilitated an Eagle Scout Project coordinated by the candidate from local Troop 127. This project involved the construction and installation of two (2) owl boxes at the District's

Dedampierre ballfields. Ideally, owls will inhabit these boxes and provide some much-needed, naturally occurring, environmentally friendly rodent control at the ballfields. Rangers approved the design and assisted with determining the placement locations, but all construction and coordination was performed by the candidate Eagle Scout and his volunteer work crew.



Owl Box at East Field



Owl Box at West Field

- 4. Garland Ranch Regional Park (GRRP) ADA Improvements:** A Request for Proposal (RFP) was posted on ProcureNow on September 20th soliciting proposals from qualified consultants for this project. A mandatory pre-proposal on-site tour will be hosted on September 28th, after which answers to questions will be provided.

This project will include a comprehensive assessment of ADA compliance and deficiencies at the GRRP Ranger Station, Restroom, and Meeting Room. Following completion of the subject site assessments and development of plans and specifications, and budget development, a qualified contractor will be competitively hired to implement the consultant's recommendations.

- 5. Kahn Ranch Fire Clearance Inspection:** The Monterey County Regional Fire District's (MCRFD) Inspectors visited the Kahn Ranch in early September to conduct a Wildland Fire Safety Inspection. Staff met with MCRFD staff on-site to discuss,

identify, and mark areas of concern and identify what actions are necessary to satisfy MCRFD's concerns.

MPPRPD took immediate action, scheduling workdays and an inmate crew to address those areas of concern. This was followed by a reinspection by MCRFD, resulting in no violations being noted.



Gabilan Inmate Crew clearing brush

- 6. Memorial Bench on Gabilan Trail:** The old bench on Gabilan Trail has been replaced with a new redwood slab memorial bench. This new bench required Rangers to carry it into the remote site by hand using a wheeled dolly. It took three (3) Rangers the better part of a day to get materials to the site and complete installation. Well worth it!



New memorial bench on Gabilan Trail

7. **Palo Corona Front Ranch Mowing:** Rangers conducted a final round of mowing at the Palo Corona Front Ranch Barn area. This area is not grazed by cattle thus, requires the use of mechanized equipment and hand work to control invasive weeds and reduce fire fuels. The District's masticator mower was used for open areas, and hand-held weed whips for areas around the Palo Corona Barn.



Front Ranch Barn Unit post-mowing

8. **Project-B Construction Project:** Rangers continue to be engaged with Avila Construction and provide support to the Admin Division on Project-B. This includes addressing on-site and unforeseen issues, updating construction signage, enforcing construction closures, and participating in weekly check-in meetings. Recently, Rangers dealt with multiple instances of the Project-B construction fence blowing over during high-wind storm events, requiring the assistance of on-call and Wedgewood staff to re-erect the fence panels.



Project-B construction fence blown over by wind

- 9. Septic Tank and Sewer Systems:** Rangers discovered the Garland Ranch Regional Park Ranger Station's septic tank backed up and immediately commissioned a septic service contractor's need for a pump truck. The contractor responded that same day. Rangers assisted by removing debris covering the septic tank lids, thereby providing MPRPD some cost savings. A deteriorated cast-iron fitting under MPRPD's headquarters needed to be replaced to prevent wastewater from leaking.



GRRP Ranger Station septic tank lids exposed



**Corroded cast-iron fitting
under MPRPD's HQ**

- 10. Trees, Trees, and more Trees:** The first storm of the season dropped approximately 1.6" of rain at Palo Corona Regional Park. This was very surprising for a late summer event, typically the region's dry season. With rainfall and gusty

winds came downed trees and branches on MPRPD's trails, which Rangers spent several days clearing.



Ranger Hatton removing fallen tree on Spring Trail



Ranger Hatton removing fallen tree on Saddle Trail



Downed tree on Osborne Ridge Trail

11. Vegetation Fire on Laureles Grade: On 22 September 2022, a car fire on ignited a small vegetation fire at Laureles Grade Road near Garland Ranch Regional Park. Rangers monitored the situation visually and via “fire radio.” Fortunately, Monterey County Regional Fire District and Cal Fire were able to extinguish the conflagration very quickly, keeping it to under two (2) acres. Ranger Niewenhuis took the following photos from Garland Ranch Regional Park’s Ranger Station.



Wildfire started by car fire on Laureles Grade



Cal Fire air-drops fire retardant



Cal Fire air-drops water on wildfire hot spots

12. Ranger John Palaniuk is retiring from MPRPD: After serving the Park District for 15 years, Ranger John Palaniuk is calling it a career. John has been an exceedingly dedicated, brilliant problem-solving employee and a respected member of the Ranger's Team. John is admired by all MPRPD staff, and many of our region's residents since he started his MPRPD tour-of-duty in 2007. He leaves the District after having been instrumental in projects including the Garland Ranch Regional Park Visitor Center remodel, the Frog Pond rehabilitation project, replacement of bridge handrails at Rancho Canada, reroofing all buildings/structures at the Kahn Ranch, Discovery Center exhibit construction, and much more. John will soon be leaving California's Central Coast for the beautiful and great State of Oregon. We sincerely wish John the absolute best. He made a wonderful place even greater!



Happy Trails Ranger John, we'll sincerely miss you!

PLANNING & CONSERVATION DIVISION

- 1. California Red-Legged Frog (*Rana draytonii*) Protective Irrigation Screen Installation:** In August 2022, staff became aware of a breeding population of California red-legged frogs at the irrigation pond (pond) immediately west of the parking area at Palo Corona Regional Park's Rancho Canada Unit.

As has been the case since the former golf course's construction, this pond continues to be used to store water that is pumped for irrigation of the turf area surrounding that body of water and the park's entrance landscaped area.

Irrigation activities have ceased until protective wire mesh screens are installed on pipes drawing water from the pond, preventing animals from entering the irrigation pump system. Irrigation activities are expected to be able to resume once protective wire mesh screens are installed at the pond.

The concessionaire and MPRPD continue working together to redesign that area to reduce the amount of water and maintenance required for that site.

- 2. Coastal Conservancy Wildfire Resilience Grant Awarded:** MPRPD was awarded \$591,700 from the Coastal Conservancy's (Conservancy) Wildfire Resilience Grant Program (Grant) to implement fuel load reduction projects and facilitate wildfire event response planning within Garland Ranch Regional Park (GRRP).

This Grant award will allow MPRPD to begin implementing priority vegetation management and wildfire response projects at GRRP, including thinning and removal of invasive eucalyptus trees, creation of a shaded fuel break along East Garzas Road, treatment and removal of highly flammable invasive weed population, and development of a wildlife event response plan and supporting GIS mapping data.

This Grant will help augment the scope of the GRRP Fuel Mitigation and Fire Response Plan (FMFMP) planning process that is currently underway. Staff expect to have an executed grant agreement with the Conservancy by January 2023, and will augment additional funds from the Monterey County Resource Conservation District's Carmel Valley Fuel Break Project grant to begin implementing high priority projects at GRRP by late spring/ early summer 2023.

- 3. Garland Ranch Regional Park (GRRP) Fuel Mitigation and Management Plan (FMFMP):** The project team has chosen to reschedule the first FMFMP Community outreach meeting to late October 2022. This will allow more time for advertising the event, and preparing and availing the array of initial work products for that meeting.

The project team is currently focused on compiling and refining spatial data that will be used to develop a Wildfire Risk Model for GRRP. The Wildfire risk Model will consider multiple criteria related to wildfire hazards and vulnerabilities.

- 4. Garland Ranch Regional Park (GRRP) Ranger Station Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvement Planning:** Staff are working with MPRPD's Rangers to develop designs for ADA compatible improvements to the GRRP Ranger Station. A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been released for this project.
- 5. GIS - Expanded Roads and Trails Inventory:** Staff are beginning to audit and expand mapped trails and roads within MPRPD lands, including historic roads and trails, which could support emergency/wildfire evacuation and access response. These routes may also support expanded public access when not used for emergency response. Staff are using detailed Digital Elevation Models (DEMs) to be able to identify these features remotely, including those sections of routes that might not be discernable due to dense canopy cover (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Aerial image (left) and digital elevation model (right) of the same area within Garland Ranch Regional Park, revealing a historic road cut within the Park

- 6. GIS - Assessor's Parcel Data Research:** Staff have received detailed Monterey County Assessor's Parcel data, enabling staff to conduct a variety of real property assessments, including auditing County records for MPRPD properties, aggregating parcel information to map property boundaries by owner, understanding the nature and density of development surrounding MPRPD lands, and having access to property owner information for land conservation planning and outreach purposes.
- 7. Marina Dunes Preserve PG&E Mitigation Project:** Staff continue to work with the California Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy) to receive its authorization to proceed with the PG&E Mitigation Project at the Marina Dunes Preserve. Staff are currently developing a response to the Conservancy's request for more information on the project. Staff will continue to provide updates at key milestones.
- 8. Palo Corona Regional Park Rancho Canada Unit's Multi-benefit Community Trail (Trail):** Staff are working to secure a consultant to design and implement soil stabilization and revegetation work adjacent to the recently constructed Trail at the park's east side, immediately adjacent to two former, presently dry, golf course water-trap ponds.
- 9. Rancho Canada Unit Acquisition 1707 Instream Flow Dedication Meeting with State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB):** Staff met with the SWRCB to answer questions related to MPRPD's petition to dedicate 185 acre-feet of the property's groundwater right to support the Carmel River's instream flows. Barring any unforeseen delays, staff expect the dedication to be formalized by the SWRCB in summer 2023. Staff will continue to provide updates at key milestones.
- 10. Rancho Canada Unit Floodplain Restoration Project:** The project team is finalizing the 65% basis of design memo to share with the project's Technical Advisory

Committee (TAC). The TAC shall review, discuss, and provide input during this November's TAC Meeting.

The project team has also submitted a grant application to NOAA/NMFS's Transformation Habitat Restoration & Coastal Resilience Grant Program for \$15M. To-date the project team has applied for \$36M in grant funding from various federal, state, and regional grant funding programs. Staff will provide a project update presentation during MPRPD's Board 07 December 2022 meeting.

11. San Jose Creek Trail Public Access Planning: MPRPD, working in partnership with California State Park (CSP), the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) and Point Lobos Foundation (PLF) is preparing to begin offering reservation-based access permits for the San Jose Creek Trail (Trail) starting in November 2022.

These permits will enable the public to have unsupervised access to the Trail entering from Palo Corona Regional Park's Rancho Canada Unit, and shall include accessing a portion of the Trail on CSP land in proximity to the bridges spanning San Jose Creek. This next phase of expanded public access to the Trail also includes more docent led hike offerings, with eleven separate docent-led events planned between now and April 2023.

Staff are working on site preparation, developing wayfinding materials and guidance for the public, interagency emergency response and communication protocols, and identifying locations of sensitive natural and cultural resources. Ongoing monitoring of sensitive resources areas will allow CSP and MPRPD to adaptively manage access to the Trail, ensuring that this next phase of expanded access minimizes impacts to sensitive resources. Monitoring will also inform the Trail's potential to expand access in the future. MPRPD, BSLT, and the PLF shall provide a presentation during MPRPD's November Board Meeting.