



## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**Contact:**

Rafael Payan  
Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District  
(831) 372-3196 / [payan@mprpd.org](mailto:payan@mprpd.org)

*Images Available*

### PERMIT-FREE ACCESS TO PALO CORONA THROUGH THE “RANCHO CANADA UNIT” – A PARK IN PROGRESS

**CARMEL, Calif., July 23, 2018** – “The public will soon have permit-free access to Palo Corona Regional Park’s (Palo Corona) numerous trails and some of the Central Coast’s most spectacular scenery including views of the Carmel River, Monterey Bay, rolling hills, and oak-dotted grasslands,” said Rafael Payan, the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District’s General Manager. Palo Corona has been accessible to visitors for over a decade. Until now, an access permit was required to enjoy this park. A maximum of thirteen permits were issued at the park’s Highway One entrance per day due to limited parking along the park’s Highway 1 entrance.

In **April 2018**, The Trust for Public Land conveyed the former Rancho Canada Golf Club (Rancho Canada Unit) to the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (District). “On **Saturday, July 28, 2018**, just three-months after the District took possession of the Rancho Canada Unit, the District will open the Rancho Canada Unit to the public for their enjoyment. This initial, “**Phase One Soft Opening**” will allow our residents to enjoy enhanced access to Palo Corona this summer, without the need to secure an access permit when entering the park through the Rancho Canada Unit, located at 4860 Carmel Valley Road,” reported Payan. Permits shall continue to be required when entering Palo Corona from the Highway 1 and Rancho San Carlos Road entrances. Please see MPRPD’s website for further information at [www.mprpd.org](http://www.mprpd.org).

“Visitors may notice that the Rancho Canada Unit is a ‘**park in progress.**’ The park will continue to evolve and be enhanced, transitioning from a former golf course to a natural landscape. Additional accessible and inclusive facilities, and site improvements, may also soon be forth-coming. Most importantly, the District wants our community to enjoy their park sooner rather than later,” reported Payan.

A **Dedication Ceremony** is scheduled to be held at the Rancho Canada Unit on **Friday, September 28, 2018**. Details will be forth-coming and listed on the District’s website.

The **Phase One Soft Opening** will provide pedestrian access from the former golf club’s parking area to the former West Golf Course’ cart paths and the park’s new Discovery Center. One of five bridges that span the Carmel River will provide access from these paths to the South Bank Trail, and then onto Palo Corona’s Front Ranch Unit’s trails. The Front Ranch Unit’s trails provide access to the park’s architecturally significant historic barn, and several overlooks – one of which includes a spectacular view of the Monterey Bay from Inspiration Point, after an 850-foot ascent on a wide,

view-filled scenic trail. The trail network then proceeds southward to Animas Pond. Phase One will limit public access to no further south than Animas Pond.

Phase One will allow visitors to bring their canine friends – but unlike Garland Ranch Regional Park, dogs **MUST** remain on leash at all times, and will be limited to the South Bank Trail and the Rancho Canada Unit. Cattle will continue to graze the Front Ranch thus, dogs are not allowed. Cattle provide great benefits to this park and region by reducing fuel loads that could enhance the potential for wildfire, and help control invasive plant species by eating non-native plants prior to their going to seed.

The District's Board of Directors will evaluate future phases and their respective implementation periods, additional uses, and potential new points access to Palo Corona.

The District extends its genuine thanks to everyone who made this possible including: the Fish, Hatton, Lombardo, Williams, and Taylor families; The Trust for Public Land, the Santa Lucia Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Big Sur Land Trust, Point Lobos Foundation, the Carmel Valley Association, the Riverwood Homeowners' Association, our District's Residents; the State of California's Wildlife Conservation Board, Department of Fish & Wildlife, Coastal Conservancy, Department of Natural Resources, and State Parks; County of Monterey, and many others including the District's past and current Board of Directors, Legal Counsel, Volunteers, and Staff.

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***About the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District***

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (MPRPD) has been preserving and protecting parks and open space since 1972. MPRPD is committed to being an inspirational, inclusive, respected, sustainable and valued open space district that collaborates with and serves the community and its conservation needs through interconnected open spaces, public parks, education and advocacy for the entire community. For more information on the MPRPD and its mission, vision and open spaces, please call 831.372-3196 or visit [www.mprpd.org](http://www.mprpd.org).