

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** November 26, 2014

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** December 4, 2014

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

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and accept report.

**BACKGROUND:**

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

**DISCUSSION:**

**Volunteer Activities**

REI/Ridge Trail Service Day, November 1: Now in its third year, this service day brings together volunteers connected with REI, The Bay Area Ridge Trail, the Trail Center and San Mateo County Parks. The common draw is the opportunity to volunteer side-by-side those who use the trail, promote hiking and support volunteer trail efforts. In spite of a cold drizzle in the morning, 50 volunteers came out to work on the segment of the Ridge Trail which connects Huddart Park to Wunderlich Park. Lunch was provided by Chipotle.

REI, Parks Foundation, Friends of San Pedro Valley Park Service Day, November 15:

REI has been a strong supporter of the San Mateo County Parks volunteer program through a grant awarded to the San Mateo County Parks Foundation. This year, REI and the Foundation hosted a service day at San Pedro Valley Park which drew 40 volunteers who prepared hiking trails for winter and removed invasive cape weed from the meadow along Weiler Ranch Road. After the morning's work volunteers were treated to lunch and REI gifts of water bottles, t-shirts, folding camp chair and travel mugs.

Foundation Funded Volunteer Grants:

Each year San Mateo County Parks makes funding available to our community partners and park staff to financially support volunteer projects in the parks. Funding for this program is provided by San Mateo County Parks Foundation. This year 28 applications were received. Proposals included funding requests for volunteer-led nature hikes in Huddart Park, Picnic Table restoration on Sawyer Camp trail, Native Garden Sign installation, Moss Beach Park 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary work day, Trail repair at Memorial Park, and habitat and trail maintenance at San Pedro Valley Park. A review committee comprised of Superintendent Scott Lombardi, Natural Resource Manager Ramona Arechiga, Community Programs Specialist Carla Schoof, and Ranger II Katherine Wright considered all applications. Nineteen proposals have been approved and awarded the funds. Six program applications were considered worthy of funding but through other sources and three applications were pending further information.

**Upcoming Volunteer Activities**

Volunteer Recognition Event, December 6

You can never say “thank you” too often to volunteers. At the annual volunteer recognition event we want to express our appreciation in a big way and with as many volunteers present as possible. This year, the event will be held at San Pedro Valley County Park in Pacifica on Saturday, December 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Park commissioners and the Board of Supervisors have been invited.

**Community Activities**

Take A Hike 2014 Season: The 2014 season of Take A Hike began at Flood Park on March 1. The kick-off event served as a way to announce the Take A Hike calendar, and distribute t-shirts, flyers and general park information, including maps and reservation information. This season ran March through October with hikes on the first Saturday of each month. Funding from corporate sponsors, including Recology, Kaiser Permanente and San Mateo County Parks Foundation cover program costs of t-shirts, snacks and water.

This season drew a consistently high number of hikers, with more than 70 participants at San Bruno Mountain in April and close to 80 hikers at the final hike at Devil’s Slide Trail. In general, participants enjoy the combination of interpretive information with hikes that are at least 3 miles in length. When possible, we offer alternative hikes for those who are interested in shorter distances. During the Thanksgiving weekend, hikers are encouraged to Pick A Park and Take A Hike and share photos and information about their visits on the Facebook page.

In the 2015 season, Take A Hike will be co-branded with the Healthy Parks Health People Bay Area initiative: Bay Area.

Devil’s Slide Trail Recognized by MTC: The Parks Department and Caltrans received an Award of Merit at the Metropolitan Transit Commissions’ award ceremony on October 23. The award recognized the design and construction of the Devil’s Slide Trail which converted a “hellish stretch of highway into a sublime experience.” The Commission cited the collaborative approach by the designers, engineers and

contractors and an engaged community as factors that contributed to the project's success. Supervisor Adrienne Tissier presented the award to the Department. You can see a video about all award recipients on the Department's website under "About Us".