



Memorandum

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION

FROM: Julie Edmonds-Mares

SUBJECT: PARK RANGER REPORT

DATE: December 16, 2013

Approved

Date

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) accept the Park Ranger Report.

OUTCOME

The PRC will be updated on the current status of the Park Ranger program.

BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2012 Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department (PRNS) provided the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) with a report on the Park Ranger program. The report provided the history of the 40 year old program, status of the current program and emerging trends to protect and preserve the waterways. Within the report PRNS outlined the implementation of the Pilot Trail Patrol program to enforce no trespassing, no camping and environmental protection laws along two specific waterways; Guadalupe River from Hedding to Julian Streets and Coyote Creek within Kelley Park. On September 3, 2013 PRNS returned to the PRC to provide an update on the Pilot Trail Patrol program, noting the expansion of the Park Ranger Program to support the watershed protection initiative and collaboration with Santa Clara Valley Water District, Housing and Environmental Services. This report will provide an update of the Park Ranger hiring process, Park Ranger program elements and outcomes of the Trail Patrol Watershed Protection Program through October 2013.

Hiring Update

As outlined in the September update 14 individuals applied for the Senior Park Ranger position. Of the 14 applicants, six met the minimum qualifications and were invited to interviews. Interviews were conducted on October 8, 2013 and Park Ranger Pamela Helmke was selected to fill the temporary Senior Park Ranger position. Senior Ranger Helmke is a veteran San Jose Park Ranger and will participate on the multi-jurisdictional Joint Trash Committee and provide the leadership and direction for development of the Park Ranger program. Of the 164 applications for Park Ranger, PRNS was able to make a tentative job offer for the one full time position and has seven strong part time candidates going through the background process. Once all backgrounds are finalized, the full time candidate will attend a twelve week Park Ranger Academy in Santa Rosa, CA and then must successfully complete six months of field training to obtain Peace Officer status as a San Jose Park Ranger. The new part time Park Rangers will support park and trail operations complementing the 5.46 PT FTEs.

Program Key Elements

The key elements of the Park Ranger program include Resource Management, Maintenance, Education & Outreach, and Safety & Compliance. Due to the reduction in resources and calls for service, San Jose Park Rangers have focused a significant amount of time on Safety & Compliance and minimal time in Education & Outreach. Use of volunteers has increased our ability to provide maintenance and interpretation and over the next fiscal year it is our desire to grow volunteer support in these categories.

SAN JOSE PARK RANGER PROGRAM KEY ELEMENTS									
July 1, 2012 - November 25, 2013									
	LAW ENFORCEMENT				PARKING	INTERPRETATION		VOLUNTEERS	
	Warnings	Citations	Arrests	PD Reports	Parking	Programs	Participants	Hours	Participants
SUM	15038	63	19	54	597	40	1134	1599	524
ALP	2184	1	0	2	304	20	525	51.5	21
ARP	164	1	0	0	21	1	14	188	56
GRP	255	34	8	13	1	0	0	0	0
KP	2161	17	5	28	107	9	196	324.5	64
LCRP	5669	8	6	9	156	1	28	1002	370
OG	161	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PFP	4444	2	0	2	8	9	371	33	13

Park Rangers have been performing the key elements throughout the Regional Parks system, which includes: Almaden Lake Park (ALP), Alum Rock Park (ARP), Guadalupe River Park (GRP), Kelley Park (KP), Lake Cunningham Regional Park (LCRP), Overfelt Gardens (OG), and Prusch Farm Park (PFP)

Resource Management/Watershed Protection Program

The City's partnership with Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) has increased the Park Ranger presence with resource management along the watersheds. The success of the Pilot Trail Patrol Team has garnered a funding partnership with SCVWD for one year with a five year option for renewals depending upon the success of the program. City Council has approved one time funding to support the City's portion of funding and each year City Council must approve funding for the four new positions supporting this effort.

The performance measures for the Encampment Clean-Up program focuses on the clean-up of Active Encampment sites within the City of San Jose. Clean-up activities are typically conducted during the week with an expectation that SCVWD and the City will conduct 48 clean-ups per year.

Performance Measures for San Jose Park Rangers includes the following:

1. Patrol and enforce rules and regulations along the watersheds;
2. Assist in posting for clean-up events;
3. Assist in conducting clean ups;
4. Patrol creek areas to suppress illegal camping, dumping and prevention of re-encampment;
5. Prepare daily reports;
6. Issue citations;
7. Provide referrals for human services to homeless population

The desired outcomes of the performance measures are outlined below:

1. Address public safety and criminal activity along the watershed;
2. Reduce and suppress illegal camping, dumping and prevent re-encampment;
3. Reduce stream pollution and litter in the riparian corridor;
4. Protect water quality, fish and wildlife, and provide flood protection along the watersheds

Since July 2, 2013 the Pilot Trail Patrol Team and SCVWD have made significant improvements along the Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek watersheds. The Teams have also provided clean-up activities along Lower Silver Creek, Thompson Creek, Penitencia Creek and Los Gatos Creek. The program has been receiving positive feedback from several communities which has resulted in an increase in volunteer efforts to support litter pick up along the adjacent trails and organizations such as The Friends of Los Gatos Creek and Restore Coyote Creek have emerged to assist with watershed clean-up events as well. The matrix below summarizes the effectiveness of the Pilot Trail Patrol Team program through October 31, 2013.

July 2 – Oct 31, 2013	Guadalupe	Coyote	Los Gatos	Others	Totals
Encampment Deterrence Patrols	41	35	6	10	92
Violation Warnings	63	59	6	1	129
Citations	4	11	3	0	18
Arrests	1	4	0	0	5
Referrals to EHC	42	53	9	1	105
Encampments Removed	46	88	7	2	143
Est. Volume of Trash (cubic yards)	5	110	20	41	176
Ranger Hours	217	154.75	13	18	402.75
Totals per Site	419	514.75	64	73	

NEXT STEPS

The goal for the San Jose Park Ranger program is to serve the residents of San José by ensuring our urban park and trail systems are safe and enjoyable. San José has a rich park history and with the expansion of the trail network to include 100 miles of trails, the opportunities to achieve the goal are limited only by financial means. Securing on-going funding for the four end-dated positions is paramount for the program’s success as well as increasing the Park Ranger ranks to readily respond to calls for service in regional and neighborhood parks as well as along trails that are minimally patrolled. Moving forward, the program will continue to utilize available resources for the preservation and management of trails and parks and fulfill the communities concerns for safety and education in an outdoor setting.

/s/
JULIE EDMONDS-MARES
 Director of Parks, Recreation and
 Neighborhood Services

For questions please contact Steve Hammack, Deputy Director, at (408) 793-5579.



**PRNS, Parks Division
Park Ranger Program**

City of San José

PRC AGENDA: 1-8-2014
ITEM: VI. C.

San Jose Park Rangers

January 8, 2014





Park Ranger Program



*Alum Rock Rangers and Cal Fire
Short Haul Rescue
of Stranded Hiker*

*Ranger Led
Interpretive Program
with Junior Rangers*





Park Ranger Program



*Water Rescue and
National Boaters Safety Training
with US Coast Guard*

*Wildland Fire
Prevention and
Suppression*





Park Ranger Program

SAN JOSE PARK RANGER PROGRAM KEY ELEMENTS

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Park Ranger Program

Watershed Protection Team

<i>Guadalupe River</i>	<i>Coyote Creek</i>	<i>Los Gatos Creek</i>	<i>Other Watersheds</i>	<i>Totals</i>	<i>July 2, 2013 to Oct 31, 2013</i>
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Park Ranger Program

Watershed Protection Team

