



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

"Parks Make Life Better!"

Russ Guiney, Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WANT TO LIVE LIFE AT TRAILS' PACE?
NEW WEBSITE IS PATHWAY TO UNIQUE EXPERIENCES IN NATURE**

Recognizing the growing popularity of outdoor recreation enjoyed on paths through parks and natural areas, the Department of Parks and Recreation on Wednesday will unveil a new website dedicated exclusively to information about trails throughout Los Angeles County.

Years in the making, **trails.lacounty.gov** is a one-stop resource for hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians and anyone in need of detailed, regularly-updated information on trail conditions, directions, elevation, weather, air quality and much more. At launch, the site will cover 367 miles of trails that have been GPS-mapped and collected into a GIS database. They include trails maintained by a number of partners in the development of the website: the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, California State Parks, Mountains Restoration Trust, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

"Los Angeles County is home to one of the world's most diverse and expansive multi-use trail systems, and a growing number of people of all ages and backgrounds are using these trails in a variety of ways," said Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, who spearheaded a trails information program that began in the Fifth Supervisorial District and grew into every area of the County, with strong support and participation from all members of the Board of Supervisors.

"Whether it is for hiking, biking, horseback riding, personal discovery or simply taking the family out for a walk in nature, trails in L.A. County have something for everyone. **Trails.lacounty.gov** is a very comprehensive, highly interactive website that will expose more people to these inimitable natural resources, deepen their knowledge about them and expand opportunities to enjoy healthy outdoor recreation."

The specific emphasis on trails is supported by data: According to the 2014 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report released by the non-profit Outdoor Foundation, running/jogging/trail running, bicycling and hiking were all among the top five most popular outdoor activities among youth/young adults (ages 6-24) and adults (ages 25+) last year.

In Los Angeles County, residents and visitors can take advantage of a regional network of trails that connect beach communities with the far reaches of the Santa Monica Mountains, Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, through the Puente Hills and into the Baldwin Hills, from the desert and foothill communities, along rivers and channels, and into the urban core.

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“Whatever their recreational preference, trail users are among the most passionate and informed outdoor enthusiasts,” said Department of Parks and Recreation Director Russ Guiney. “The evidence is clear: Recreation in nature brings a number of wellness benefits to those who enjoy it. This website is part of our mission to encourage that type of recreation — and increase the level of participation — by making it as accessible and user-friendly as possible.”

Among the features on **trails.lacounty.gov**: a comprehensive list of trails that includes such vital information as trail length, elevation gain and permitted uses; a locator with the ability to search by city name, ZIP code or trail name (the mobile version will allow searches by current location); interactive digital maps enabling users to view the steepness or surface type on trails; and downloadable and printable QuickGuides that include trail maps, descriptions, directions, photos and elevation profiles.

The Nov. 5 unveiling of **trails.lacounty.gov** is the first in a series of County initiatives meant to assist those who already use L.A. County trails and encourage more people to take advantage of this incomparable form of recreation. A mobile version of the website is expected to be completed by late December, and a mobile application and expanded trail signage program are due to roll out in 2015.

“Many of the features that users will find at **trails.lacounty.gov** are inspired by frequently-asked questions that we receive from people looking to visit a trail in Los Angeles County,” said Norma E. Garcia, deputy director of the Department of Parks and Recreation’s Planning & Development Agency. “The website is tailored to suit not only the needs of regular trail users, but to also help encourage first-timers and others to consider the many recreational, fitness and educational opportunities that are available to them on L.A. County trails.”