

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

July 11, 2023

**Proclaiming Parks Make Life Better! Month**

Throughout the state of California, parks and recreation organizations will celebrate Parks Make Life Better! Month this July. Parks enhance community cohesion and improve mental and physical health, including reducing stress and increasing life expectancy. Parks help our environment by cleaning the air, capturing and cleaning stormwater, mitigating the urban heat island effect, and restoring degraded lands. Parks are also centers for community employment.

More than ever, parks are a lifeline in communities, an entry point to care and social safety nets, and an anchor for those most impacted by community instability to seek refuge, rest, and resilience. Parks are places for healing through programming and play. Parks are spaces for social cohesion where community building and integration is supported through programs and services. Parks also support the economic vitality of

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communities by partnering with local businesses, non-profits, and community-based organization.

The Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) encompasses all these benefits and more for the residents and communities of Los Angeles County.

The Department of Parks and Recreation manages a dynamic and expansive park, open space and trail system consisting of 182 parks with over 475 sports amenities, operates a network of 9 regional parks, 38 neighborhood parks, 20 community parks, 15 wildlife sanctuaries, 10 nature centers, 36 public swimming pools, equestrian facilities and staging areas, over 200 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding, beautiful botanic gardens and arboretums and the largest municipal golf system in the nation, consisting of 20 golf courses.

DPR provides critical prevention and intervention youth programs serving our most vulnerable communities. In the past fiscal year, the Department served 130,566 youth through EveryBody Plays after school program; had over 46,00 teens participate in Our Spot Program; and provided 109,386 swim lessons. The Department also had over 382,573 visitors to swim beaches, over 209,964 participants in Every Body Swims and over 16,000 families participated in Overnight Family Camping.

DPR also fosters social cohesiveness in communities by celebrating diversity, providing spaces to come together peacefully, modeling compassion, promoting social equity, connecting social networks, and ensuring all people have access. This can be seen through the high participation in DPR's diverse programming. Over 51,000 families attended seasonal and holiday programming; over 2 million visited the botanical gardens; and over 1 million rounds of golf were played across the County's golf

courses, supporting community and networking opportunities for LA County residents. Furthermore, DPR sustains and stewards our natural resources by protecting habitats and open space, connecting people to nature, and promoting the ecological function of parkland. Nearly 19,000 youth and families participated in Nature Education and Discovery at the nature centers. DPR is also a leader in stewardship of parklands as exemplified through the adoption of the Park Needs Assessment Plus Report as the County's 30x30 plan for climate resiliency.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors proclaim the month of July 2023 as Parks Make Life Better! Month, commend the employees of the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation for their hard work and continuous commitment to providing quality recreational facilities and exemplary stewardship of parklands for all to enjoy, and encourage the strengthening of recreation and aquatic programming.

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