

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH

June 25, 2024

HILDA L. SOLIS

**In Recognition of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Celebration of the Outdoor Children's Bill of Rights**

“In the same way that protecting water and protecting air are strategies for promoting public health, protecting natural landscapes can be seen as a powerful form of preventive medicine.” Howard Frumkin, the former Director of the National Center for Environmental Health at Centers for Disease Control, used these words to describe the clear benefits of experiences of nature to healthy child development and to adult well-being. Connecting Los Angeles County residents to parks and nature for community well-being are at the core of the work of the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) since its founding 80 years ago.

On July 1, 1944, the Board of Supervisors merged the Department of Parks and the Department of Recreation, Camps and Playgrounds to form DPR. At its establishment, DPR was responsible for 15 park and recreation areas with a total of approximately 1,000 acres, and 9 beach properties spanning 7.42 miles of shoreline. Today, DPR manages over 71,000+ acres of parkland; 183 park facilities; 15 wildlife

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and wildflower sanctuaries; 20 golf courses (the largest municipal golf system in the nation); 36 public swimming pools; 25 equestrian amenities including equestrian parks, centers, and staging areas; 14 bodies of water, including 3 recreational and boating lakes; 10 nature centers; more than 210 miles of multi-use trails; 475 sport facilities; and 2 first-class concert facilities, the Hollywood Bowl and John Anson Ford theater. In 1993, the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Garden was merged with DPR to include the Los Angeles County Arboretum, Descanso Gardens, Virginia Robinson Gardens and South Coast Botanic Garden.

In 1992, through Proposition A, the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) was created and included as a Division within DPR to sustain park infrastructure countywide. In 1996, voters approved Proposition A and in 2016 Measure A. To date, RPOSD has awarded over \$1.6 billion in LA County for parks, open spaces, beaches, trails, natural areas, and public parklands in LA County.

DPR is a proud steward of parks and facilities that have played a significant role in the history of Los Angeles County, from the civil rights movement to the preservation of sites of ecological and cultural significance, including:

- Chester Washington Golf Course was one of the first major golf courses to be racially integrated. Chester Washington became the home golf course of Dr. Charlie Sifford; one of the first Black golfers to play in a PGA tournament.
- On September 17, 1970, Laguna Park in East Los Angeles was renamed in honor of journalist Ruben Salazar, one of three individuals killed during the National Chicano Moratorium march on August 29, 1970. Nearly 30,000 people marched that day. Protesters began the march on East Third Street in front of the

East Los Angeles Civic Center, walked through Obregon Park and then to Laguna Park in protest of the disproportionate number of Chicanxs who were dying in the Vietnam War. Today, it is well-known for the 2001 mural by Paul Botello titled, "The Wall That Speaks, Sings, and Shouts."

- Virginia Robinson Gardens is the first estate and first swimming pool built in Beverly Hills, and currently, operates as an historic display garden, which includes the largest stand of King Palms outside of Queensland, Australia, offering visitors a forest of over 1,000 palm trees to explore. Built in 1911, it was once the residence of Virginia and Harry Robinson.
- South Coast Botanic Garden is one of the world's first botanical gardens to be developed over a landfill. The Garden is a living example of how land regeneration results in creating a beautiful landscape enriching the community for generations to come.
- The Hollywood Bowl, for more than 100 years since its opening in 1922, has been the premier destination for live music, hosting everyone from Billie Holiday to The Beatles to Yo-Yo Ma under the iconic silhouette of its concentric-arched band shell, financed through RPOSD and funding generated by Proposition A.
- Vasquez Rocks is federally recognized as an archeological site with protected features including spectacular rock formations that began in prehistoric times when the sandstone rocks were uplifted at a picturesque angle, showing their jagged red features. Vasquez Rocks is also the site of the Ancient Village of Mapipinga, the cherished homeland of the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians.

Today, DPR continues to lead the nation in its research and policy work to create park access for all. Its nationally awarded 2016 County of Los Angeles Comprehensive Park Needs Assessment (PNA) courageously spotlighted the inequality of parks for disadvantaged populations and communities of color. Building upon DPR's acclaimed PNA, the Prevention Institute and University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) introduced new research that found "adding parks could increase life expectancy... Targeted investments in park infrastructure would significantly benefit the health of Latino and Black residents. Calculating gains specifically for these two groups, such investments would result in an increase of almost 118,000 years of life expectancy." In 2022, DPR took the PNA to another policy level, expanding its research to a countywide parcel assessment of available land for conservation and degraded lands, which became the PNA Plus. The report found that 84% of people of color live in communities with degraded lands, in many of these communities that is the only land that is left and available for the regeneration of parks. The LA County Board of Supervisors adopted the PNA Plus as LA County's 30 by 30 framework, which now guides the County's approach to environmental conservation and restoration in connection with the statewide and national goal of conserving 30 percent of lands and coastal waters by 2030 to address climate change and protect biodiversity.

While DPR operates world-class facilities, stewards, and restores our ecosystems, what makes parks truly special are the dedicated staff who bring parks programs to life in every park community. The Department has 2,500 employees with more than 150 job classifications in a variety of fields including recreation, grounds maintenance, landscape architecture, planning and development, golf, contracts, special districts and

administration. Over 20 million visitors enjoy recreational opportunities at local, community and regional parks, lakes, golf courses, gardens, cultural and entertainment venues each year. DPR staff are critical to ensuring safe and well-maintained facilities, organizing engaging programs and events, and providing informative guidance to visitors. Their dedication and expertise contribute significantly to creating enjoyable and enriching experiences for park-goers, fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the outdoors and recreation.

In honor of its 80th anniversary, and in celebration of connecting children and their families to the outdoors, DPR will launch the "Let's Play Outside" campaign for the month of July. Free programming at parks throughout the County will be in alignment with the California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, which was adopted by the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism in 2012. The Roundtable sought to address concerns about youth detachment from outdoor activities, lack of physical exercise, and increased health risks, and recommended a list of fundamental experiences every child in California would benefit from experiencing before entering high school. Numerous studies have shown that children who partake in these types of activities are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-image, and lead more fulfilled lives. The Outdoor Children's Bill of Rights commits to providing all children - regardless of race, income, gender identity, ability, geographic location and/or type of home - outdoor experiences such as fishing, riding a bike, or boating in a lake.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Find that the proposed actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) according to sections 15322 and 15323 of the State CEQA

Guidelines and Classes 22 and 23 of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G. because the actions will provide educational programs involving no physical changes and normal operations of facilities for public gatherings.

2. Commend the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation and its staff for 80 years of public service to the community and continuous commitment to providing stewardship of parklands and open spaces, quality recreational programs for all to enjoy, and the strengthening of community cohesion and connection to the outdoors.
3. Adopt the attached resolution (Attachment A) declaring the County of Los Angeles Outdoor Children's Bill of Rights.
4. Direct and authorize Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation to offer free programming during the month of July as part of the "Let's Play Outside" campaign.

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**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE OUTDOOR CHILDREN’S BILL OF RIGHTS IN  
CELEBRATION OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PARKS  
AND RECREATION’S 80<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2024, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation celebrates 80 years of bringing access to parks, recreation, and the outdoors for County of Los Angeles residents, and;

WHEREAS, the benefits of the outdoors for children have been found to contribute to mental health and social emotional development, and;

WHEREAS, in celebration of connecting children and their families to the outdoors, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation will launch the “Let’s Play Outside” initiative offering free programming for the month of July.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, State of California as follows:

**THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OUTDOOR CHILDREN’S BILL OF RIGHTS**

The County of Los Angeles hereby adopts the County of Los Angeles Outdoor Children’s Bill of Rights, as a model for parents, guardians, parks, communities, private enterprises to encourage every child living in the County of Los Angeles to experience each of the activities listed within the County of Los Angeles Children’s Bill of Rights.

It is every child’s right to:

1. Play Outdoors
2. Explore Nature
3. Splash in a Pool
4. Go Fishing
5. Follow a Trail
6. Camp Under the Stars
7. Ride a Bike
8. Go Boating in a Lake
9. Connect with Wildlife

10. Plant a Seed



Edward Yen, Executive Officer  
Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dawyn R. Harrison  
County Counsel

By *Sonia L. Chan*  
Senior Deputy County Counsel