

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Focus on Parks: Board of Supervisors Looks to Boost Visitor Numbers, Expand Access

Board subcommittee appointed to study waiving vehicle fee and other steps

Redwood City – Visitors to seven San Mateo County parks – from Coyote Point along San Francisco Bay to Memorial among the redwoods – now pay a \$6 vehicle entry fee.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors today agreed to study how waiving that fee might help more low-income residents enjoy their parks.

Among the issues to be studied by the subcommittee of Supervisor Carole Groom and Supervisor Don Horsley will be how to replace the approximately \$1 million in annual vehicle access fees. These funds now go toward everything from cleaning restrooms and maintaining trails, picnic tables and playgrounds to reducing fire-prone vegetation.

The Board's consideration of waiving vehicle entry fees for all grew from a Parks staff recommendation to drop the \$6 fee for low-income residents.

Parks staff had recommended waiving the entry fee for San Mateo County residents enrolled in Medi-Cal, CalFresh and ACE (Access and Care for Everyone, a locally funded health care program).

Currently, the vehicle entry fee is charged at Coyote Point Recreation Area, Huddart Park, Sam McDonald Park, Memorial Park, San Pedro Valley Park, Junipero Serra Park and San Bruno Mountain State and County Park. No other parks charge vehicle entry fees, and walk-in (or bicycle-in) use is always free at all parks.

San Mateo County Parks operates 24 separate parks, encompassing over 16,000 acres, and 190 miles of county and local trails, including three regional trails on an annual budget of \$26.8 million.

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