



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### REGIONAL FIRE ACADEMY TO AID COUNTY PARKS

On Friday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, Santa Cruz Regional Fire Academy recruits will assist Santa Cruz County Parks by conducting repairs and maintenance operations at Anna Jean Cumming County Park.

Throughout the day, the Fire Academy will be conducting a Community Service Project. Academy recruits will be replacing fences, mending trails, and generally providing labor County Parks otherwise would not have.

"This is a great project for our Academy recruits to learn about public service," said Larry Achen, Training & Safety Officer for Central Fire Protection District of Santa Cruz County. "As firefighters, one of our core values is, 'Service before self,' which is emphasized even with our Academy recruits. Through a hands-on effort, we hope reinforce that value at Anna Jean Cummings Park.

The 95-acre Anna Jean Cummings Park opened in summer of 2001, and is well-liked by visitors and community members alike. But the park's popularity has stretched County resources, and extra help is welcome when it comes to maintaining public assets.

"Anna Jean Cummings is a unique public space that offers both sports and recreation, hiking and nature areas, all in one park," said Eric Sturm, County Parks Superintendent. "Our visitors take a lot of pride in caring for this park, but some of our amenities could use some help. The Fire Academy's assistance is going to be a big boost for us."

The Santa Cruz Regional Fire Academy is made up of four entities: Santa Cruz City Fire Department, Watsonville City Fire Department, Central Fire Protection District of Santa Cruz County, and Cabrillo College Fire Technology Program.