



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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RECREATION AREAS TO REMAIN OPEN

In order to provide safe recreation opportunities while preventing the spread of COVID-19, the County of Santa Cruz in coordination with local cities are reassuring local residents that parks remain open through the Shelter-in-Place order.

Residents are asked to continue following physical distancing guidelines of at least six feet unless in the company of immediate family members, as well as other recommended protocols while enjoying outdoor recreational areas. The County and the cities of Watsonville, Capitola, Scotts Valley and Santa Cruz, under guidance from the County's Health Officer, have reached an agreement on a unified policy to contain exposure to the COVID-19 virus while recognizing the need for exercise to maintain physical and mental health through outdoor experiences.

"With so many people at home we are seeing violations at beaches, trails, parks and paths as they become overloaded," Santa Cruz County Parks Director Jeff Gaffney said. "We are asking everyone to be thoughtful while they are out walking and hiking, including maintaining social distance. We want our entire community to enjoy all of their parks spaces, and we want them to engage in safe health practices at the same time."

Under the agreement, skate parks, dog parks, disc golf, pump tracks, bike parks, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, soccer fields, baseball fields and bocce ball throughout Santa Cruz County remain open but will be subject to requirements of Santa Cruz County Health Officer Dr. Gail Newel's March 31 Order, including hand washing and distancing requirements. Sharing of sports and recreational equipment is only allowed between members of the same household, and the use of high-touch playground equipment is prohibited. Basketball courts, disc golf, skate parks and soccer fields will be closed in the city of Santa Cruz but open everywhere else.

Parking lots for beach and park access will remain open for County residents but with some restricted access. City of Santa Cruz beach access parking lots are closed, as are the



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large city parking lots adjacent to City Hall in the City of Capitola. County parking lots have been modified to create social distancing spacing.

“We all recognize this is an evolving situation, and things may change,” said Santa Cruz City Manager, Martin Bernal.

“We are asking all community members to do their part to help keep our parks open by adhering to the health order,” stated Watsonville City Manager, Matt Huffaker

Under California Health and Safety Code § 120295, failing to comply with a Health Officer’s order is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

For local information on COVID-19, go to www.santacruzhealth.org/coronavirus, call 211 or text “COVID19” to 211211. Residents may also call (831) 454-4242 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., seven days a week