



COUNTY OF ORANGE

P R E S S R E L E A S E

WWW.OCGOV.COM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Molly Nichelson
Public Information Manager
(714) 834-7218
Molly.Nichelson@ocgov.com

PARKING AT COUNTY OF ORANGE REGIONAL AND WILDERNESS PARKS TO REOPEN MAY 16

Santa Ana, Calif. (May 13, 2020) – The Orange County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday voted to reopen parking lots at all County regional and wilderness parks.

Pursuant to the Board of Supervisors direction and in consultation with Dr. Nichole Quick, County Health Officer, the parking lots and restrooms will reopen to the public the morning of Saturday, May 16. Parking was originally closed March 25, following the State of California’s stay-at-home order, but parks and trails have remained open for walk-in visitors.

“Public health and safety continue to be the County’s top priority,” said Chairwoman Michelle Steel, Second District Supervisor. “By opening up our regional and wilderness park parking lots, residents will be able to enter County parks directly and have easy access to healthy family activities.”

Individual campsites at the County’s two camping parks, Caspers Wilderness Park and O’Neill Regional Park, will also be open with reduced capacity. These will only initially be available on a first-come, first-served basis with no advance reservations accepted.

“Many Orange County residents do not live within walking distance of a park, especially our seniors and disabled residents,” said Vice Chairman Andrew Do, First District Supervisor. “Now all residents have the opportunity to access County parks while adhering to social distancing guidelines.”

The parking lots reopening are at the following regional parks: Carbon Canyon, Clark, Craig, Irvine, Laguna Niguel, Mason, Mile Square, O’Neill, Peters Canyon, Santiago Oaks, Tri-City, Wieder and Yorba regional parks. Parking is also opening at Aliso and Wood Canyons, Caspers, Laguna Coast, Riley, Whiting Ranch wilderness parks and Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve. Irvine Lake is also reopening for fishing.

“The physical and mental health of the Orange County community is important to me, and I believe it’s time we start to get back to normal,” said Supervisor Donald Wagner, Third District. “Opening the parking lots so residents can spend time in our regional parks is the right thing to do.”

We ask that all visitors follow physical distancing, handwashing and public health guidelines and to avoid areas and trails that may be crowded with other users.



COUNTY OF ORANGE

P R E S S R E L E A S E

WWW.OCGOV.COM

“The County has over 60,000 acres of parks and open space,” said Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District. “Families can now safely enjoy the fresh air at one of the County’s many regional and wilderness parks.”

Some amenities will remain closed, including playgrounds, picnic shelters and nature centers. Interior facilities, including the OC Zoo and historical parks also remain closed. The grounds of Heritage Hill Historical Park will reopen, the buildings themselves will remain closed. Parking at County beaches remains closed, but County beaches other than Thousand Steps remain open for active recreation.

“The County is pleased to join neighboring Counties in modifying restrictions for responsible use of our parks,” said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District. “Opening the parking lots is the first step.”

Modified operations are subject to change and will be adjusted as Federal, State and Local orders change. Please visit OCParks.com for the most up-to-date information regarding park closures and operations.

###