



Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve and Visitor Center Remains Closed in Wake of Tenaja Fire

September 12, 2019 – Murrieta, CA – The Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve including the Visitor Center and Sylvan Meadows remain closed indefinitely as a result of the Tenaja Fire, which began burning on 9/4/19 at approximately 4 p.m. The fire has burned over 1,900 acres and is still considered active. Guests tempted to visit will be turned away while fire crews continue to work in the area. There is no timeline for re-opening the Reserve or visitor center as managers of the land still need to assess damage and determine priorities for repair and restoration.

Riverside County Regional Park & Open-Space District (RivCoParks) is pleased to report the Visitor Center, located at 39400 Clinton Keith Road in Murrieta, did not sustain damage as a result of the blaze. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection successfully protected the center along with other buildings and assets on the Reserve, including the historic Moreno and Machado Adobes and the vernal pools.

“This area hasn’t burned significantly in 40 years. Fortunately, the Plateau Visitor Center and the entire southwestern portion of the reserve was spared,” First District Supervisor Kevin Jeffries said. “The portion that did burn will need time to recover. There will likely be hot spots and damaged trees that pose risks to visitors.”



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The public is encouraged to heed warning and closure signs and respect the staff and volunteers working to protect the Reserve. “Safety is our number one priority,” said Scott Bangle, general manager for RivCoParks.

“Our staff and partners are working to assess damage and develop a plan to make repairs. We need volunteers now to help enforce the closure and will need even more volunteers once restoration efforts get underway,” Bangle said.

Those interested in volunteering may sign up by visiting www.rivcoparks.org/volunteers/ or by calling (800) 234-PARK.

For more information about the Reserve or for updates on current conditions, visit www.rivcoparks.org.

About the Reserve

The Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve includes over 9,000 acres including oak woodlands, riparian wetlands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grasslands, vernal pools and over 40 miles of trails. The Reserve is home to more than 200 species of birds and 49 endangered, threatened or rare animals including mule deer, mountain lions, badgers, bobcats, western pond turtles, white-tailed kites and fairy shrimp.

The Reserve is jointly managed by the Center for Natural Lands Management, The Nature Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Wildlife , Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

The Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District (RivCoParks)

Our Mission is to acquire, protect, develop, manage, and interpret for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of all people, a well-balanced system of park related places of outstanding scenic, recreational, and historic importance. Our Vision is to be the regional leader in improving lives through people, parks, places and programs.