



OC Parks Trail Ambassador Program

OC Parks Trails Subcommittee — March 27, 2023



Discussion Topics

- Background and Program Overview
- Trail Ambassador Deployment Locations
 - Irvine Regional Park
 - Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
 - Peters Canyon Regional Park
 - Santiago Oaks Regional Park
 - Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park
- Recommended Action

Background

- 2017 – Trails Subcommittee recommended the formation of a Trail Ambassador Program to share information about trail safety, etiquette, wayfinding, and natural resources with OC Parks visitors. Staff began developing the Trail Ambassador role, elements, and task descriptions and drafting a Training Manual.
- 2019 – OC Parks contractor Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC) began refining the Training Manual and building a training program for Ambassadors.
- 2022 – The Training Manual was finalized and volunteer training initiated.



A Trail Ambassador:

- *Educates visitors about responsible trail use*
- *Helps ensure a safe and enjoyable visit for all trail users*
- *Promotes and protects local wildlife and natural habitats*



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Roles & Responsibilities

Public Interaction

- Engage park visitors in a positive, respectful manner
- Provide information about trail etiquette, safety, park rules, trail/park closures, and maps



Wayfinding

- Use park maps, directional signage, and landmarks to help trail users **navigate** during their park visit
- Match visitors with the right trail for their skills/desired **experience**



Wildlife Encounters

- Educate visitors about what wildlife they may see and how to stay safe while on the trails



Trail Closures

- Provide information about closures or re-routes of park trails, whether due to weather, sensitive habitats, wildlife, fire, or other circumstances

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Program Overview

Volunteer Trail Ambassadors

- Receive specialized training in trail safety and etiquette and are familiarized with each park at which they serve
- Stationed at trailheads, intersections, and designated points along a variety of park facilities and trail types



Locations Under Consideration

- Irvine Regional Park
 - Horseshoe Loop and Santiago Creek Trailhead near Park Entrance
 - Near Parking Lot T
- Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
 - Willow Trailhead
- Peters Canyon Regional Park
 - North Loop Trailhead
 - East Ridge View Trail (Big Red) and Peters Canyon Trail
- Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park
 - Borrego Canyon Trailhead
- Santiago Oaks Regional Park
 - Windes/Pacifica Trailhead
 - Santiago Creek Trail Stepping Stones

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Trail Ambassador Deployment Locations

Irvine Regional Park

- Horseshoe Loop and Santiago Creek Trailhead near Park Entrance
- Near Parking Lot T, by OC Zoo and Nature Center



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Trail Ambassador Deployment Locations

Peters Canyon Regional Park

- North Loop Trailhead
- East Ridge View Trail and Peters Canyon Trail



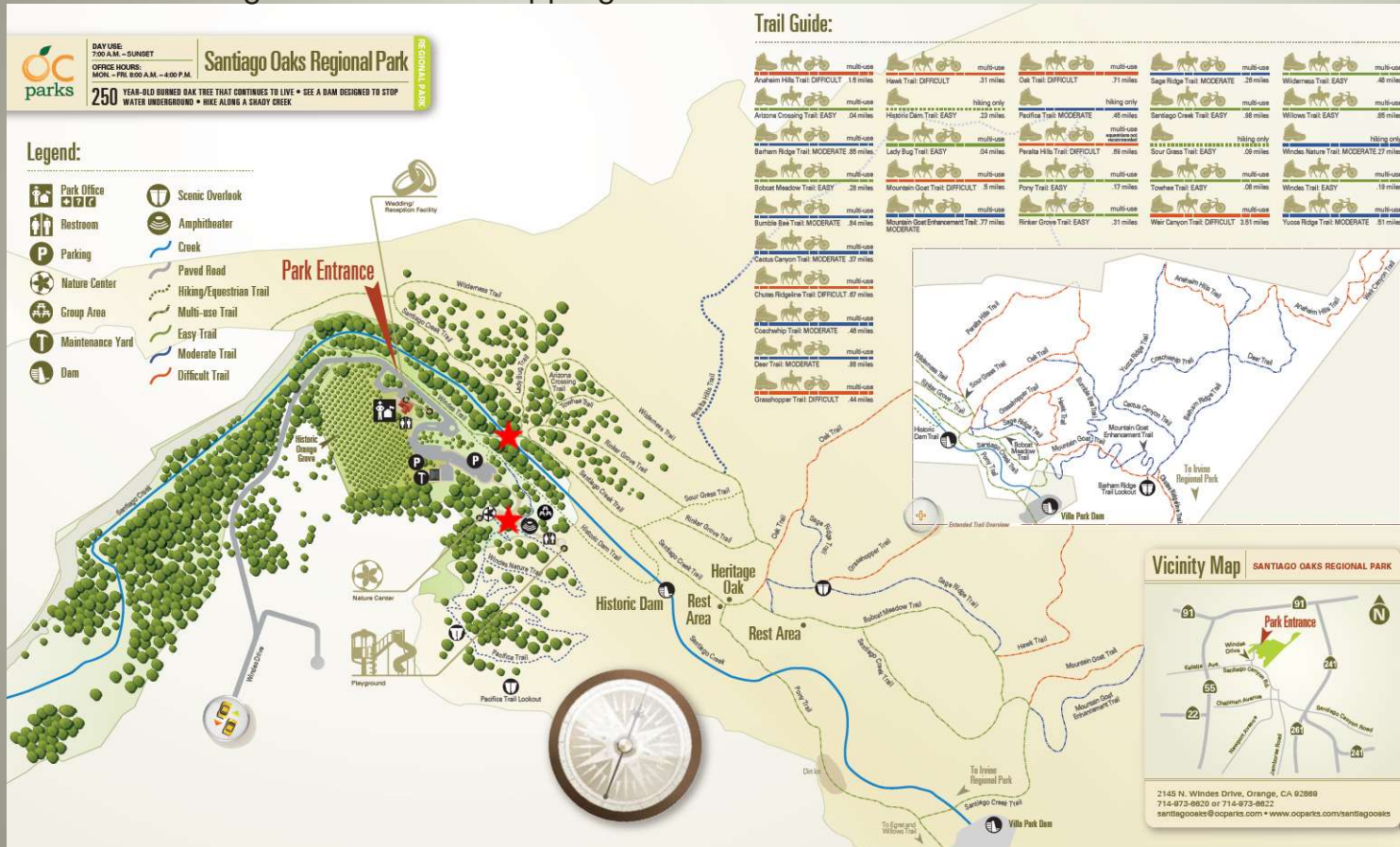
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Trail Ambassador Deployment Locations

Santiago Oaks Regional Park

- Windes/Pacifica Trailhead
- Santiago Creek Trail Stepping Stones



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Trail Ambassador Deployment Locations

Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park

- Borrego Canyon Trailhead

Vicinity Map

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 166, Trabuco Canyon, CA 92678
949.923.2246 • whitingranch@ocparks.com
www.ocparks.com/whitingranch

Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park

NEW ESTABLISHMENT
DAY USE: 7:00 A.M. - SUNSET
2500 ACRES FOR HORSEBACK RIDING, HIKING AND WORLD-CLASS MOUNTAIN BIKING
• EVER SEE A RED-TAILED HAWK? • HIKE TO A SANDSTONE CANYON

Legend:

	Park Office		Equestrian Center
	Outhouse		Scenic Overlook
	Parking		Multi-use Trail
	Water		Hiking Trail
			Paved Road
			Easy Trail
			Moderate Trail
			Difficult Trail

Trail Guide:

	Hiking only		Billy Goat Trail: DIFFICULT 0.0 Miles
	Multi-use		Borrego Canyon Trail: EASY 1.3 Miles
	Multi-use		Cactus Hill Trail: MODERATE 0.6 Miles
	Multi-use		Gale Pond Loop Trail: MODERATE 0.2 Miles
	Multi-use		Conejo Road: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Coyote Brush Road: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Crawled Hill Road: DIFFICULT 1.3 Miles
	Multi-use		Edison Road: EASY 1.1 Miles
	Multi-use		Live Oak Trail: EASY 0.5 Miles
	Multi-use		Luna Shack Road: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Mustard Road: DIFFICULT 2.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Raptor Road: EASY 0.4 Miles
	Hiking only		Red Rock Canyon Trail: EASY 0.5 Miles
	Multi-use		Stage Scrub Trail: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Santiago Ranch Road: MODERATE 0.6 Miles
	Multi-use		Sierrita Road: EASY 0.5 Miles
	Multi-use		Sierrita Cow Trail: EASY 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Sleepy Hollow Trail: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Vista Lookout Road: MODERATE 0.3 Miles
	Multi-use		Vulture View Road: EASY 0.5 Miles
	Multi-use		Water Tank Road: EASY 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Whiting Road: MODERATE 0.4 Miles
	Multi-use		Whiting Spar Road: MODERATE 0.3 Miles

Recommended Action

Recommend to OC Parks staff that Trail Ambassadors be initially deployed to identified locations, including but not limited to:

- Irvine Regional Park
 - Horseshoe Loop and Santiago Creek Trailhead near Park Entrance
 - Near Parking Lot T, by OC Zoo and Nature Center
- Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
 - Willow Trailhead
- Peters Canyon Regional Park
 - North Loop Trailhead
 - East Ridge View Trail and Peters Canyon Trail
- Santiago Oaks Regional Park
 - Windes/Pacifica Trailhead
 - Santiago Creek Trail Stepping Stones
- Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park
 - Borrego Canyon Trailhead