

# **2008 Parks Volunteer Handbook**



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## **Monterey County Parks**

### **Laguna Seca Recreation Area**

1025 Monterey/Salinas Highway 68,

Salinas, California 93908

Phone: (831) 758-3604

Fax: (831) 758-6818

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Monterey County Parks Department. Our Volunteer Program together with our professional staff is the key to the success of our County Parks Department. Volunteers are important in providing quality outdoor recreation to County residents and to families across our country.

Your involvement in our park system will help us provide an emphasis on recreation and leisure as part of the changing American lifestyle.

Thank you for your interest and enthusiasm in making this an outstanding Department.

Sincerely,

John J. Pinio  
Director of Parks  
Monterey County Parks Department

JP/ldl

## CREED

The Monterey County Parks Department's purpose is to:

**A**cquire and develop a diversified system of regional park facilities; maintained in a neat, clean and well repaired condition and operated in a friendly, courteous and equitable manner for the use and enjoyment of the general public;

**P**rovide the citizens of Monterey County and out of county visitors with unique opportunities to get in touch with themselves, with other park users and with the natural environment through meaningful recreational pursuits; and

**P**reserve, protect and interpret significant elements of the natural, historical and cultural resources, traditions and values of Monterey County.



## Mission of Monterey County

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...to excel at providing quality services for the benefit of all Monterey County residents while developing, maintaining, and enhancing the resources of the region.



## Mission of Monterey County Parks

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- maintain stewardship over a system of county parks.
- preserve, promote, and interpret the natural, historical, and cultural values of Monterey County.
- provide opportunities for the public's enjoyment, inspiration, education, personal development and cultural enrichment.

# MONTEREY COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

*This handbook has been prepared to give you information on the Monterey County Parks Department's Volunteer Program and to provide an orientation to new volunteers. The Department always welcomes new ideas on how to better serve the public.*

*All types of volunteer expertise are needed, either individual or group, and we try to design projects tailored to meeting individual and County needs. Contact our Volunteer Coordinator to find the special project that suits your talents!*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Monterey County Parks Volunteer Program is an arm of the County's Volunteer Program. Practically every county department has volunteers assisting them in meeting the needs of the public.

The Personnel Department has a Paid staff person who coordinates the entire County Volunteer Program. The County Parks Department works with this person in preparing the documents that are required by the County.

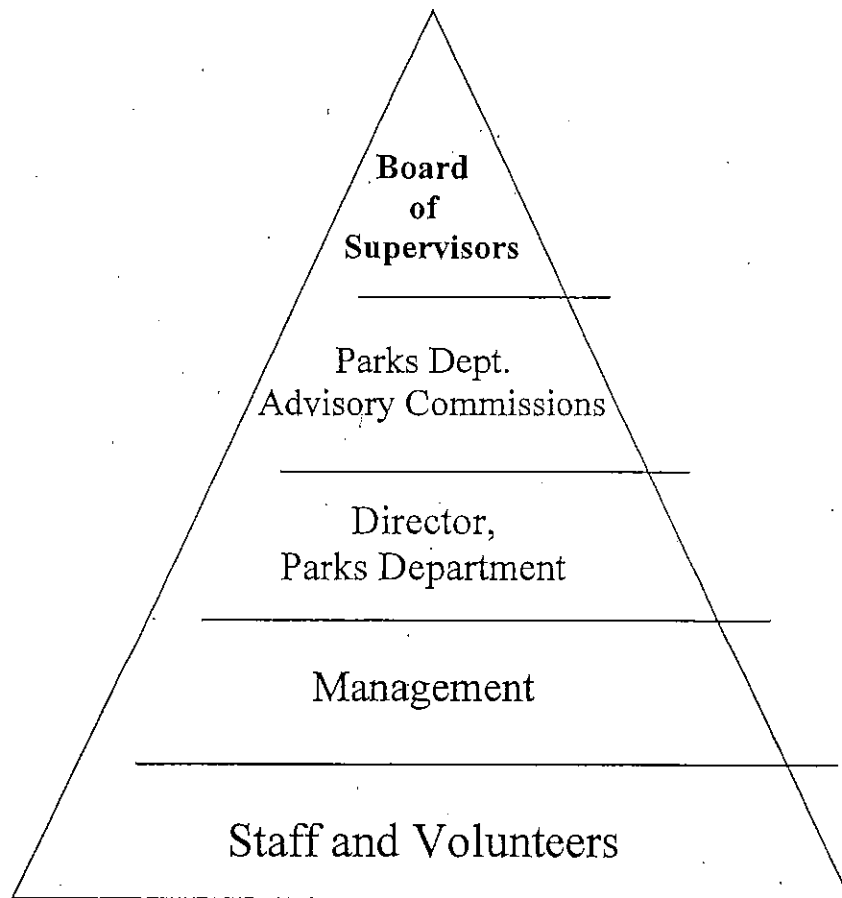
### COUNTY GOVERNMENT- Where Do We Fit?

Monterey County is governed by a five member Board of Supervisors. Each Supervisor is elected by popular vote, and represents one of the County's five Districts.

It is the Supervisors' responsibility to pass ordinances, review and adopt County budgets, and oversee all functions of the County's 82 departments. An important part of the duties of the Board is to set policies and procedures for County departments.

The County Parks Department, like all other County departments, operates under the policies set by the Board of Supervisors. Such policies include: Camping and day-use fees, park rules and regulations, and how parks are to be used.

The Parks Commission, the Historical Advisory Commission and the Fish and Game Commission are advisory commissions appointed by the Board of Supervisors to advise them and the Parks Department on major policy decisions in their respective areas of interest. They provide citizens input and serve as a sounding board to the Parks Director and the Board of Supervisors.



**Live-On Volunteer** — This position requires a minimum of 20 hours per week of scheduled duties in exchange for a free campsite and utilities for a motor home or trailer. Duties may include general clean-up, entry station operation, campground host and a variety of other assignments.

**General Volunteer**— This position requires a minimum of 20 hours per week of scheduled duties. Duties may include general clean-up, entry station operation, camp host and a variety of other assignments. This is a volunteer who comes to a park on a regular scheduled basis to perform volunteer services, but does not live in the park.

**Uniform Description:**

1. Live-On Volunteers

The County Parks Department provides for each participating Live-On Volunteer: one hat, one shirt, one volunteer patch, one I.D. card, and one nametag.



### Procedures for Live-On Volunteer Applicants

1. Complete and submit application form to the Volunteer Coordinator, a County Ranger, or to the North/South County Parks Manager.
2. Screening of applicants
3. Interview
4. Reference check of considered candidate
5. Complete and sign a Letter of Understanding
6. Orientation
7. Start assigned job
8. Fill out time cards as required

## BEING A SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER

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### Smile! You ARE County Parks

Whenever you volunteer, you are representative of Monterey County Parks. The public's opinion of us is up to you! You are the friendly face that our park visitors see and depend on.

The formula for making our visitors happy is a simple one- it's a mixture of smiles, cooperation, dedication, patience and flexibility, all topped-off by hard work.

Remember! What you say is as important as what you do! Key words like: "Thank you"- "Please"- "May I help you?"- "It's been a pleasure to have you with us"-Glad you came"- "We hope you will visit us again soon," make all the difference. Using courteous language shows genuine interest in our park visitors and allows you to turn any complaint into a compliment. Above all – **KEEP SMILING!**

### Keep a Positive Attitude!

To help our visitors enjoy their stay at our parks, we want to provide them with as "Quality" an operation as possible. So if things go wrong (and they sometimes will!), let's keep it in the family and take appropriate action to improve our operations.

### Visitors Complaints

Yes, we will have occasional complaints, some serious, some minor. If you do receive a complaint, try to contact a Supervising Ranger, Senior Ranger, or Park Ranger. If unable to contact a Ranger, ask the customer to fill out a customer response card for follow-up by a Park Supervisor and then take any action that is within the scope of your training and authorization to solve the problem.

### Looking Good and Feeling Great

You are often the first person and maybe the only person that the park visitor may see on their trip to the park. You are our best public relations person.

### The "Name" of the Game

When you speak to someone face to face, it's a lot easier to talk when you know the person's name. For the reason, we give nametags to all of you, so our visitors will find it easier to talk to you. Nametags must be worn at all times while on duty.

### Our Special Visitors

Remember that every visitor is a VIP in Monterey County Parks. We sometimes have officials with us who need special attention. All courtesies should be extended to them without inconveniencing other park visitors. Often, throughout the year, there are members of the media visiting our parks to develop stories or to take photos. Remember that one member of the media who is favorably impressed with County Parks can influence thousands of others by what he/she writes, photographs, or broadcasts.

As a Park Volunteer, you will be required to conduct yourself in the same responsible manner of personal conduct as is required of other park personnel. You are considered to be an unpaid employee of the Parks Department. You will report directly to the Supervising Park Ranger, or his/her designee, who will assign your respective duties and work schedule with your mutual agreement.

## VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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As a Park Volunteer you will be required to conduct yourself in the same responsible manner of personal conduct as is required of other park personnel. You will report directly to the Supervising Park Ranger (or Volunteer Coordinator), who will assign your respective duties and work schedule with your mutual agreement.

As a Volunteer, you have certain rights and can expect these rights to be upheld by the Parks staff. If you feel your rights are being violated, speak with your Supervising Park Ranger and/or the Volunteer Coordinator. Your basic rights are as follows:

1. You complement the paid staff.
2. You are to have adequate orientation and training to perform your duties satisfactorily.
3. You are to have adequate supervision.
4. You are to have adequate and safe working conditions.
5. You are to be treated with the same respect as paid employees.
6. You are to be kept informed about policies and procedures of the Parks Department that pertain to your volunteer activities.

In addition to your rights, you have certain responsibilities to the Parks Department, Volunteer Coordinator, staff, and yourself. You owe it to them and yourself to carry out the following responsibilities:

1. Be able to work well with other people.
2. Be dependable and reliable.
3. You and your campsite must be neat and clean in appearance at all times.
4. Be responsible to the Senior Ranger/Supervisor and notify him/her when you cannot work as scheduled.
5. Accept supervision from Parks Department staff.
6. Carry out your duties and ask for assistance whenever you need it.
7. Maintain confidentiality when appropriate.
8. Make suggestions for improvements.
9. Follow established policies and procedures of the Parks Department.

#### Insurance/Injuries/Time Cards/Use of County and/or Private Motor Vehicles

As a county park volunteer, you will be provided with accident insurance. This will cover you during the hours you are actually volunteering your services at the Park to which you are assigned. Coverage information will be provided by your Volunteer Coordinator.

If you do incur an injury during your volunteer hours, you must **immediately** notify the Supervising Park Ranger or his/her designee and complete the Parks Department accident report. The Supervising Park Ranger will let you know where these reports are kept. It you **your** responsibility to report all injuries and accidents as they happen.

All non-paid employees must fill out time cards on a daily basis (service groups and organizations need only fill out the long form for project volunteers, with total number hours worked and total number of people).

If you will be operating your own private motor vehicle as part of your volunteer duties, you must possess a valid (any state) operating license, you must file a certification of insurance coverage (\$100,000 liability) with policy limits not less than those set forth in California Vehicle Code, Sections 16450, et seq.

If you will be operating a county vehicle, you will operate under county vehicle policy.

#### Out of State Vehicle Registration – California Vehicle Code – Section 516

The California Department of Motor Vehicles has made the following comments pertaining to out of state vehicle registration:

1. Live-on volunteers must register out of state vehicles with the State of California:
  - a. stay in California more than 6 months, in a 12-month period
  - b. take up residence, and/or
  - c. are gainfully employed

The Department of County Counsel of Monterey County has determined live-on volunteers, or volunteers, to be considered as employees of the Parks Department in a non-paid status. Since volunteers are non-paid, the State of California considers them not to be gainfully employed and may stay within the state for up to six months before being required to register their vehicles with the State of California.

You are urged to be aware of the California Vehicle Code, Section 516.

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVE-ON VOLUNTEERS

1. This is a temporary, indefinite position and is not a permanent position. Volunteers agree to vacate the park upon request and immediately upon the expiration of your volunteer status.
2. Volunteers must have a self-contained trailer, fifth wheel or motor home. Mobile homes, house trailers, or construction trailers will not be allowed. All volunteer living units must be approved by the Supervising Ranger prior to being sited at a park unit. The site may only be used as the private residence of the Volunteer and her/his immediately family, and may not be sublet or assigned to another.
3. Recreational vehicle skirting (excluding canvas skirting), fencing, storage areas or sheds will not be allowed. Some landscaping with prior approval of the Supervising Ranger may be permitted.
4. This program is not designed to accommodate children; the provided site is limited to no more than two (2) adult residents. Occasional, infrequent overnight visitors and guests may be allowed if the Volunteer's obligations are not impaired, the accommodations are appropriate, and there is no additional expense to the County.
5. Pets are only allowed with the written approval of the Supervising Ranger. Dogs must have current certificate of rabies and be leashed at all times when outside your rig.
6. Volunteers, spouses, and their guests must abide by all rules, regulations, and policies of the facility and the Volunteer program, and act in a manner that will not cause embarrassment or discredit to the County. Altercations, disturbing the peace, intoxication, drug usage, careless operation of County or privately

owned vehicles and any other acts of indiscretion will be grounds for termination of the volunteer status.

7. Volunteer shall not keep or have on the premises any article or thing of a dangerous inflammable or explosive character (personal firearms excepted if existence is disclosed to facility supervising ranger prior to establishing live-on status; failure to disclose may warrant termination from the program).
8. County shall provide the following basic utilities at no cost to the participant: sewer, potable water, and 110 volt/30 amp minimum electrical service. Volunteer shall be responsible for any other desired service costs.

### Recognition

Both the County Board of Supervisors and the Monterey County Parks Department has formal programs to recognize the contributions made by volunteers serving in their various programs. Contact your Park Volunteer Coordinator for details.

### The Real Benefit

As a Monterey County Park volunteer you will be enhancing services to the general public, contributing to others' enjoyment of the outdoors and the environment, and finding pleasure and satisfaction from your efforts.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

During the course of your service with the County Parks Department, you must be aware of emergency situations and how to respond. It is not uncommon to have fires, medical emergencies, and visitor problems. As a volunteer you are to respond **only** in the following manner:

1. **Fires/Medical Emergencies** – Contact 911. Contact available ranger staff. Each Park Unit is unique and will give you orientation as to your response during emergency procedures, which **must be followed**.

During any emergency, the volunteers must be aware of their limitations. Volunteers must not respond if they can become injured or victimized by person(s) included in the incident.

Enforcement of park rules and regulations must be left up to County Parks' personnel or local law enforcement agency.

2. **Visitor Problems** – Volunteers must not respond to any situation where their health and/or safety may be jeopardized. Volunteers must not respond to

incidents such as fights, drunken behavior, belligerent or inappropriate actions, reckless driving, or any other activity that is harmful to the public's use of county recreational facilities.

Incidents such as those mentioned above should be reported immediately to Ranger staff. If not available, volunteer must contact local law enforcement agencies by dialing 911.

3. In some cases a written report about the incident will be required.

## DEPARTMENT PHONE DIRECTORY

Lake San Antonio – South Shore	805-472-2311
Lake San Antonio – North Shore	805-472-2456
Lake Nacimiento	805-238-2376
San Lorenzo Park	831-385-5964
Laguna Seca Recreation Area	831-758-3604
Toro Park	831-484-1108
Jacks Peak Park	831-372-8551
Royal Oaks Park/Manzanita Parks	831-663-0859
Parks Department Headquarters – Salinas	831-755-4895

## IN CONCLUSION

It is hoped this handbook will be a benefit to you now and as a future reference. Your assistance to the Monterey County Parks Department will allow us to better meet the needs of the general public.

We deeply appreciate your time and efforts. **The most important aspect of your volunteer assignment is to enjoy and find pleasure in what you are doing.**

# MONTEREY COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - FY 00/01

Item #3

