



# AUGUST

COMMUNICATOR 2020



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the summer of 2020 comes to an end, I must say it has been the strangest, most challenging time in my 46 years in the Recreation and Park field. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a summer with no swimming at our pools, lakes or beaches. No day camps, classes, or special events. Campgrounds are empty, Rec Centers and Facilities are closed. Not to mention the devastation to the State's economy.

Yet the governor and public health agencies throughout the state have recognized the essential role of parks during this pandemic and continue to define "outdoor recreation activity" as an "essential activity." Governor Newsom has declared "parks should be open for fresh air, healthful exercise and hiking."

CARPD has long promoted parks as an essential service vital to our quality of life and to our physical and mental health. The recent COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that, with undeniable clarity.

It has not been easy, with many challenges including limited staffing, rapidly changing health orders, and the need to educate the public about how to visit parks safely using masks and social distancing.

Protecting the health and safety of the public and our employees continues to be our top priority. Throughout the pandemic, huge demands are being placed on our parks and staff. However, these extraordinary times have also provided opportunities for our organizations to shine and I believe we can say that our colleagues have risen to the challenge.



CARPD President Dennis Waespi

That's where an association like CARPD is of great value. Sharing ideas and techniques to manage parks and recreation programs while protecting the health of park visitors and our employees.

Following the success of our Virtual Event in May, CARPD will be announcing new online events available to the membership intended to help educate and further develop our members' abilities to deliver excellent park and recreation services.

CARPD and other Special District advocates are working with elected representatives to make public investments in Recreation and Park Districts who have provided outdoor recreation opportunities, so essential during the pandemic, that also provide jobs — particularly for young people — that are critical for our communities. Fortunately, members of the U.S. Congress have proposed historic parks investments during this global health and economic crisis.

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Michael Seaman  
Doug Nickles  
Mark Johnson  
Stephen Fraher  
Dean Wetter

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

These legislative efforts include:

- **The Great American Outdoors Act (H.R. 1957)**, which the House passed Wednesday, the Senate had previously passed and is heading to the president for his signature. The bill would permanently allocate \$900 million annually from federal oil and gas leases to the Land and Water Conservation Fund — and infuse \$9.5 billion over five years to address maintenance needs on public lands.
- **The Special Districts Provide Essential Service Act (H.R. 7073)**, which emphasizes the need for special districts — local units of government providing specific services such as parks, hospitals, fire, water and sanitation — to be eligible for future COVID-19 emergency funding aimed at assisting local governments.
- **The Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2)**, an infrastructure package passed by the House on July 1 that invests \$1.5 trillion in infrastructure, including shoreline restoration projects, transportation alternatives (such as paved trails) and recreational trail funding.
- **The 21st Century Conservation Corps for Our Health and Our Jobs Act (S. 3684)**, which renews the call for national service to invest billions into job creation — particularly for young people challenged to find work at this time — for the psychological and physical health of our communities.

When this is all behind us, I think we will be able to look back with pride at the "essential service" Parks and Recreation provided during the pandemic of 2020.

Congratulations on the success of our 2020 Virtual Event. Staff and volunteers did a tremendous job in transitioning our Annual Conference to a virtual event that hosted 186 registered attendees from 38 different Districts. The topics were lively and informative. The Virtual Background Contest, Awards of Distinction presentations and our efforts to meet and discuss the future of parks and recreation, even though remotely, were well received. A big thank you to the 23 Sponsors who stuck with us and supported the event.

Welcome to our newest Board Member, Doug Nickles. Doug was elected at the virtual event and has served on the Conejo Recreation and Park District Board of Directors since 2018.

Finally I'd like to say farewell and thank you to CARPD Board Member David Furst. David has been a member of the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Board of Directors since 2002. He retired from the CARPD Board of Directors in May having served 6 years as a strong advocate and contributor to the parks and recreation movement. We are very fortunate to work in a field that is so very essential to the betterment of peoples lives. Especially now. Stay Strong! Stay Healthy!

**President Dennis Waespi**

## SAVE THE DATE—CARPD CONFERENCE 2021



**CARPD CONFERENCE 2021**

APRIL 28 - MAY 1, 2021

Plans are underway for the CARPD Conference in 2021! The schedule of events and the location will be announced soon, but in the interim you should mark your calendars for April 28th– May 1st for our annual Conference. More information to follow at [caparkdistricts.org](http://caparkdistricts.org)!

**April 28—May 1, 2021**

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Russ Noack  
Public Policy Advocates LLC



### Session:

Legislators returned to Sacramento on Monday, July 27, 2020 to wrap up the 2019-2020 session by August 31<sup>st</sup>, with the Senate only convening in person for floor sessions and will vote virtually for committee hearings. In-person participation during committee hearings by the public is highly discouraged, as they will continue to offer call-in testimony. Each committee will hold only one hearing, limiting the bills to mostly COVID-19 related measures.

### Childcare Licensing Exemption:

PPA has been working with CSDA to request an extension of the existing recreation exemption to childcare licensing during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist school districts and working parents with daycare and distance learning support. This issue developed from a few school districts reaching out to park and recreation districts for assistance providing childcare to students of essential worker parents. These efforts include conducting a statewide survey by CARPD to collect data of how park and recreation districts are planning and accommodating the changes and increase in demand of programs. We have made contact and are meeting with Superintendent Thurmond's Government Relations team and Early Learning & Care Division to discuss possible trailer bill language or an executive order from the governor granting a temporary extension of hours for unlicensed recreation programs. Additionally, we are preparing a letter to gather support for our efforts from members of the legislature.

### SB 217 (Portantino) – Camps:

Senate Bill 217 by Senator Portantino would, among other things, require organized and recreational camps to become licensed and would establish the Recreational Camp Safety Advisory Council to oversee policy matters relating to recreational camps. As the language of the bill refers to for-profit and nonprofit recreational camps, PPA is having ongoing discussions to clarify that SB 217 will not negatively impact public park and recreation districts.

### Special District Provide Essential Services Act:

HR 7073 by Congressman Garamendi would allow special districts direct access to the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund. Senators Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., and John Cornyn, R-Texas have also introduced the Senate's counterpart bill. An outline summary of the text is below:

- Require states to distribute 5 percent of future Coronavirus Relief Fund allocations to special districts within their states within 60 days of receiving funds from the U.S. Treasury.
- Require districts applying for funding to demonstrate how they have experienced or anticipate COVID-19-related revenue loss, grant/inter-governmental revenue loss and increased expenditures.
- Caps an eligible special districts funding matching any quarter in 2019. Districts providing services the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (sub-agency of the Department of Homeland Security) deems to be within a "critical infrastructure sector" would be exempt from limitations.
- Allow states with excess funds reserved for special districts to file a waiver with U.S. Treasury demonstrating how the state distributed its special districts funding. If approved, the state may use the balance of the funds for other purposes.
- "Special district" would be defined as a "political subdivision of a State, formed pursuant to general law or special act of the State, for the purpose of performing one or more governmental or proprietary functions."
- Require the U.S. Department of Treasury to consider special districts as eligible issuers to take advantage of the Municipal Liquidity Facility, as established in the CARES Act, for access to capital during the current financial downturn.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



CAPRI & CARPD invite you to welcome the newest member of our team: Jordan Coyle!

Jordan is originally an Oregon native, but she has found a home here in California. She enjoys everything outdoors including hiking, kayaking, camping, fishing, and archery. Of course, she also enjoys travelling — particularly trips to the coast and through the California Redwoods. Jordan's active lifestyle and positive attitude will help her fit in well with our CAPRI and CARPD membership.

As Administrative Assistant, Jordan will most likely be the friendly voice on the other end of the line when you call our office. So, next time you give us a ring, please feel free to introduce yourself and welcome Jordan to the CARPD community!

## COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

By Kirk Andre  
Safety Analyst, CAPRI

On July 28, 2020 the State of California released its updated guidance for employers to help them plan and prepare for reopening. This guidance is in a form of a playbook which can be found at: <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/employer-playbook-for-safe-reopening--en.pdf>

A safe re-opening requires compliance with both state and local public health guidance. The playbook also has links to Cal/OSHA General Guidelines on Protecting Workers and guidelines from the CDC.

The table of contents has four major areas that the playbook addresses.

- Steps employers can take to open safely
- What to do if a COVID-19 case occurs in the workplace
- Enforcement and compliance
- Worker education

There are many useful links throughout the playbook as well as appendices with resources for employers and workers, enforcement, and compliance contacts, as well as a case study. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to CAPRI.

## 2020 VIRTUAL EVENT REVIEW



The reviews are in and the membership agrees—the 2020 Virtual Event was a huge success! With over 180+ registrants and almost 40 recreation and park districts in attendance, CARPD was proud to deliver an opportunity for members to learn and discuss the ever-changing roles of and rules affecting recreation and park districts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff would like to give a special thanks to our sponsors and the Event speakers including Patti Eyres, Esq. (Eyres Law Firm), Michelle Lacy (Pleasant Hill RPD), Patrick Larkin (Cordova RPD), Osa Wolff (SMW Law), and Sloane Dell'Orto (Streamline). Recordings of the event are available for those interested. Thanks again to all!

## BEAUMONT CHERRY-VALLEY RPD RESPONSE TO APPLE FIRE

By Matthew Duarte  
Executive Director, CAPRI & CARPD

In recent years, devastating wildfires throughout our State have resulted in the loss of life and property for thousands of Californians. These tragic events have impacted our CARPD membership greatly. As recreation and park districts, we have been forced to take pause and reflect upon our role in assisting the community in the event of a catastrophe. For our agencies, that means transitioning our services into whatever it is that their community may need at that given moment.

Over the past 10 days, the Apple Fire has burned approximately 33,000 acres (50 square miles) and resulted in mandatory evacuations in parts of San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Firefighters and other emergency responders from all over Southern California have been called in to fight the blaze that threatened structures throughout the region. As of this writing, the fire is 45% contained.

CARPD member, **Beaumont-Cherry Valley Recreation and Park District**, already serving as a community COVID-19 testing site, was immediately forced to expand its role as a public service provider to include host of the local Emergency Operations Center. With flames and smoke just a few hundred yards away, BCVRPD Staff worked until the late hours to assist and coordinate logistics of the emergency response. Since that time, the District has housed hundreds of emergency response workers on site as the teams worked diligently to save homes and structures throughout the Cherry Valley.



Additionally, given the proximity of the fire, the newly refurbished pond at recently acquired Bogart Park served an instrumental role in fire suppression. Cal Fire aircraft collected water from the District's pond as part of its aerial attack.

Beaumont-Cherry Valley's General Manager, Duane Burk, was quick to thank his Board of Directors for their vision in supporting the investment in emergency operations infrastructure and recognizing the important role the park district could play in emergency response. Said Mr. Burk, "I am proud of our District response and I know we will be ready for whatever Mother Nature may bring next."

On behalf of CARPD, we are glad to hear our friends at BCVRPD are safe, and that they were able to rise to this challenge and help serve their community when it needed them the most.