

Ventura County Grand Jury 2013 - 2014



Final Report

Ventura County Campgrounds Park Host Program

March 24, 2014

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Ventura County Campgrounds Park Host Program

Summary

Based on a public complaint, the 2013-2014 Ventura County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) chose to investigate the effectiveness of Park Hosts assigned to Ventura County (County) campgrounds to maintain order in their campgrounds and to obtain assistance when requested by campground users.

The County Parks Department, a department of the County General Services Agency (GSA), administers the operations of 24 recreational facilities throughout the County. These facilities include inland and beachfront campgrounds, trails, golf courses, and community centers. Overnight camping is permitted at ten campgrounds: seven inland and three beachfront sites. Overnight camping in tents and recreational vehicles (RV) is extremely popular in Southern California and campsites are in high demand year round but particularly in the summer months. Because of the County’s location, climate, and scenic beauty, campsites in Ventura County are particularly desirable. Eight of the ten campgrounds that permit overnight camping have full-service RV hook ups (electricity, water, sewer, and cable TV), which increases their desirability.

Overnight camping presents a unique set of problems that may detract from the overall experience for campers and County staff alike. Problems that may occur at night include excessive noise at campsites, the effects of alcohol on campers’ behavior, and illegal camping. The Grand Jury investigated the Park Host Program to determine how prepared Park Hosts were to handle these potential problems, the Park Hosts’ understanding of their duties, and to determine how the program could be improved.

The campgrounds of Ventura County are natural treasures as shown by the examples below:



Faria Beach Campground



Foster Park Campground



Rincon Parkway



Mandalay Beach Dunes

Most of the County Parks use Park Hosts for maintenance and to interface with the public. This investigation focused on the Park Hosts at those campgrounds that permit overnight camping since the complaint the Grand Jury received concerned an incident at an overnight campground. The investigation consisted of interviews with County employees and Park Hosts, as well as review and analysis of comments provided to the County by campers who had used County campgrounds. For this analysis, the Grand Jury priced alternatives of replacing the 24-hour Park Hosts in campgrounds that permit overnight camping with additional multi-shift Park Services Rangers (Rangers). The Grand Jury also investigated the cost of the Park Host Program to determine if adding more Rangers would improve the camping experience in Ventura County.

The Grand Jury found that the Park Host Program is a cost-effective method of operating and maintaining County parks due to a limited budget to hire more Rangers. In addition, the Grand Jury determined that adding more daytime service only Rangers would improve the camping experience in Ventura County. The Grand Jury recommends increasing daytime Ranger staffing to supplement the four current full-time Ranger staff, placing more emphasis on Park Host training prior to assuming their duties, and providing more flexibility to allow Park Hosts to leave their sites for short periods by instituting a Park Host substitute program.

Background

There are 35 parks and campgrounds in the County. Among the 35 parks and campgrounds, five are privately owned, six are California State facilities and the remaining 24 are County parks or campgrounds. Overnight camping in tents and RVs is permitted at ten campgrounds. [Ref-01] The County leases two of the ten campgrounds. A portion of Steckel Park is leased to Kampgrounds of America, Inc. (KOA), and Kenney Grove is leased to a private party. The County manages the other eight. A descriptive summary of campgrounds and parks where overnight camping is permitted is contained in Attachment 01. (Att-01)

To facilitate management of the campgrounds, the County uses Park Hosts to provide campground oversight and housekeeping duties. This practice was

implemented to save the County money as Park Hosts earn no salary but live in their own RVs, without charge, in the County parks. A public complaint led the Grand Jury to review the County's Park Host policies, training, duties and responsibilities, and oversight. A description of Park Host responsibilities and information regarding how to apply for the position is posted on the GSA website under the Parks Department section. A copy of this page is provided as Attachment 02 (Att-02).

The County also employs four full-time Rangers to patrol county parks. Rangers are responsible for maintaining park bulletin boards that contain campground rules and regulations. Due to the large number of parks and the extended geographical area of Ventura County, Rangers have a limited time to visit parks and collect fees deposited in fee boxes called "iron rangers" on a daily basis. Rangers are not peace officers and do not patrol after dark. Duties, responsibilities and qualifications for Rangers are found on the Ventura County Human Resources website under the headings listed below:

- Supervising Park Ranger
- Park Services Ranger I
- Park Services Ranger II

Rangers' duties include patrolling County parks, enforcing park rules, communicating with the public, collecting campers' fees, performing maintenance and custodial grounds duties, and repair of park facilities. Rangers and Park Hosts work together on a close and daily basis. [Ref-02, Ref-03, Ref-04]

Methodology

The Grand Jury reviewed all material available to the public on the Ventura County website concerning camping facilities and the Park Host Program. The Grand Jury conducted interviews with GSA Parks Department personnel including several Park Hosts at County campgrounds. The Grand Jury reviewed materials pertaining to the selection, training, duties and responsibilities, and oversight of Park Hosts. The *Park Host Operations Manual* describes the duties and responsibilities of County Park Hosts. [Ref-05]

Since one objective of the Park Host Program is to reduce park operating expenses, the Grand Jury examined the cost of the Park Host Program compared to the cost of Rangers. For this analysis, the Grand Jury priced alternatives of replacing the current 24-hour Park Hosts in campgrounds that permit overnight camping with additional multi-shift Rangers. In conducting its analysis, the Grand Jury formulated three Scenarios:

- (1) Replacing all Park Hosts with Rangers who would be assigned to more than one park;
- (2) Replacing all Park Hosts with Rangers who would be assigned to only one park;
- (3) Replacing all Park Hosts with Rangers who would be assigned to only one park and would check in campers and perform gate duties.

The results of the Grand Jury analysis are discussed in the Facts section of this report. The Grand Jury only considered the labor cost (salary and benefits) of replacing Park Hosts with Rangers. There would conceivably be other costs such as shift differentials, housing, uniforms, and equipment that are not addressed due to the wide range of options that exist in these areas.

The Parks Department also provided a database covering the period from June 2009 through December 2013. [Ref-06] This database is a record of all comments received from campers who have used County campgrounds during this period. Completion of the comment form is voluntary on the part of campground users. The Grand Jury noted that not all comments are negative; actually, positive comments outnumber negative comments by a 2 to 1 ratio. As part of this investigation, the Grand Jury interviewed four Park Hosts and conducted site surveys at the County campgrounds they maintain. [Ref-06]

Facts

- FA-01.** Ventura County utilizes the services of Park Hosts at all County campgrounds with the exception of Rincon Parkway and those that only contain Community Centers. [Ref-01]
- FA-02.** All County campgrounds that permit overnight camping have Park Hosts with the exception of Rincon Parkway. These campgrounds include Camp Comfort, Dennison Park, Foster Park, Kenney Grove, Oak Park, Steckel Park, Tapo Canyon Park, Faria Beach Park, and Hobson Beach Park. [Ref-01, Ref-07, Ref-08]
- FA-03.** Park Host positions are staffed by volunteers. [Ref-05, Ref-09]
- FA-04.** Park Hosts must have self-contained motorhomes, fifth wheels, or trailers; they are not allowed to stay in tents. [Ref-05, Ref-09]
- FA-05.** There is no charge for the Park Host's designated site. [Ref-05]
- FA-06.** Park Hosts receive no pay for their services but occupy full-service sites averaging approximately \$40 per night or \$14,600 per year.
- FA-07.** Park Hosts undergo background checks before being assigned to their positions. [Ref-05]
- FA-08.** Park Hosts are expected to perform park maintenance, cleaning, and requesting Sheriffs if the need for law enforcement arises. [Ref-05]
- FA-09.** Park Hosts are expected to volunteer at least 20 hours of work per week in their camps. [Ref-05, Ref-09]
- FA-10.** Park Hosts do not collect any camping fees.
- FA-11.** The Park Hosts at Faria Beach and Hobson Beach are concessionaires and manage the campground snack bars; in this capacity, they handle funds related only to the concessions.
- FA-12.** Park Host duties are enumerated in the *Park Host Operations Manual*. [Ref-05]

- FA-13.** Park Hosts report to the Parks Department Operations Supervisor. [Ref-05, Ref-09]
- FA-14.** Park Hosts must give 24 hours notice to the Operations Supervisor if they will be absent from their park for more than 24 hours. [Ref-05]
- FA-15.** Park Hosts must receive prior approval from the Operations Supervisor for an absence of two or more days. [Ref-05]
- FA-16.** Park Hosts interviewed did not display familiarity with the *Park Host Operations Manual*.
- FA-17.** The County employs four full-time Rangers.
- FA-18.** Seasonal Rangers supplement full-time Rangers when required.
- FA-19.** Rangers are not peace officers. [Ref-02, Ref-03, Ref-04]
- FA-20.** Ranger monthly salary ranges are: Supervising Park Ranger, \$3,112.01 to \$4,358.75; Ranger I, \$2,804.41 to \$3,765.89; Ranger II, \$2,926.98 to \$4,099.64. [Ref-02, Ref-03, Ref-04]
- FA-21.** Rangers work from dawn until 6:00 PM and are required to work rotating shifts, weekends, and holidays.
- FA-22.** Rangers make daily visits to all parks to collect camper fees and comment cards, and to post information on campground bulletin boards. [Ref-05]
- FA-23.** Rangers perform tasks that are similar to Park Host tasks. [Ref-02, Ref-03, Ref-04, Ref-05]
- FA-24.** Unlike California State campgrounds, County campgrounds do not have manned kiosks to collect fees and hand out campground materials.
- FA-25.** Campground regulations are posted on campground bulletin boards and handouts are available near bulletin boards.
- FA-26.** Campground bulletin boards do not have uniform content from campground to campground.
- FA-27.** There are no Rangers on duty at night in any park.
- FA-28.** As discussed in Methodology, Scenario (1), to replace Park Hosts with Rangers would require a minimum of ten additional Rangers if Rangers cover more than one campground. The annual cost of adding ten Rangers (1 Supervising Park Ranger, 3 Rangers II, 6 Rangers I) at entry levels would be a minimum of \$552,700. At the top of the pay scale, the cost would be \$635,094.
- FA-29.** As discussed in Methodology, Scenario (2), if Rangers were assigned to only one campground to replace Park Hosts, 20 additional Rangers would be required. The annual cost of adding 20 Rangers (2 Supervising Park Rangers, 6 Rangers II, 12 Rangers I) would be a minimum of \$1,044,678 at entry levels. At the top end of the pay scale, the cost would be \$1,428,860.

- FA-30.** As discussed in Methodology, Scenario (3), if Rangers replacing Park Hosts were assigned to check campers in and perform gate duties, an additional 25 Rangers would be required. The annual cost of adding 25 Rangers (2 Supervising Park Rangers, 8 Rangers II, 15 Rangers I) would be a minimum of \$1,304,296 at entry levels. At the top end of the pay scale the cost would be \$1,783,709.
- FA-31.** Ten County campgrounds permit overnight camping. [Ref-01]
- FA-32.** The campgrounds that permit overnight camping contain approximately 400 campsites. [Ref-01, Ref-07, Ref-08]
- FA-33.** The Park Host is responsible for maintaining order in the campground. [Ref-05]
- FA-34.** Park Hosts have no enforcement authority if campers do not comply with their requests. [Ref-05]
- FA-35.** Common situations where Park Host authority is challenged include observance of quiet hours and campground check-out times.
- FA-36.** Park Hosts do not have clothing such as shirts or ball caps that identify them as Park Hosts.
- FA-37.** Some campgrounds have experienced unauthorized entry by homeless people who enter the campgrounds late and depart early to avoid campground fees.
- FA-38.** If Park Hosts cannot control a situation, they are directed to contact the Sheriff's Department. [Ref-05]
- FA-39.** Campers are not required to contact the Park Host if they believe a situation needs law enforcement intervention; they may contact the Sheriff's Department directly.
- FA-40.** Campers can submit comments on camp conditions using comment cards.
- FA-41.** Park Hosts do not see the comment cards that campers submit; these cards are picked up by the Rangers and provided to the Parks Department. Cards can also be mailed directly to the Parks Department using prepaid mailers.
- FA-42.** The Parks Department provided a database with camper comments from April 2009 through December 31, 2013. During this period, there were 588 comment cards received from campers; 62 had no additional comments written and 526 contained additional written comments regarding the campers' experiences. Of the 526 camper comments submitted, 36 contained negative comments, shown in the table below, regarding Park Hosts. During the same period there were 73 positive comments regarding Park Hosts. Only negative comments were considered and these comments were taken directly from the database with editing to remove evidentiary data. [Ref-06]

| Date | Comments |
|----------------|---|
| 5/16/09 | The lady was not friendly at all and made her own rules, her dogs and birds were very noisy |
| 5/20/09 | Host's dog barked all night |
| 7/3/09 | You need to get rid of (name) he is very rude and doesn't know how to run a park |
| 7/4/09 | Park is not well maintained by host |
| 7/8/09 | (Name) was rude, gave warning for being 1 inch over white line |
| 7/11/09 | Need to enforce reasonable restriction on amplified music |
| 7/14/09 | (Name) the camp host looked like she was on drugs |
| 7/22/09 | Park is in need of cleaning, grass area is gross, toilets stopped up, no one to call |
| 7/25/09 | (Name) needs anger management class or should retire |
| 8/10/09 | Campsites are dirty, no maintenance whatsoever, trash left for next camper to pick up |
| 8/11/09 | Park keeper not nice |
| 3/16/10 | Unreasonable encroachment regulations, overzealous enforcement |
| 3/24/10 | (Name) needs PR training, ban all dogs, owners don't obey leash laws |
| 5/15/10 | Screaming and yelling coming from camp host site |
| 5/15/10 | Camp hosts were fighting in front of their site, bathrooms locked, trash cans full |
| 3/15/11 | Trash laying around, people not friendly, area needs to be policed up |
| 6/9/11 | (Name) saved space for late arrival, park is first come, first served |
| 7/5/11 | There is a lack of authoritative presence at night |
| 7/23/11 | Hard to find camp site, camp host was no help |
| 8/2/11 | Moved from one site to another, was told there was a \$10 charge, told them this was not posted on the rules |
| 9/1/11 | Complained about weeds, speeding cars, (name) was rude, uninterested, and unkempt |
| 9/11/11 | The camp host had very noisy dogs, shower drains plugged |
| 9/21/11 | (Name) was not helpful re parking for additional vehicles, restrooms dirty |
| 4/3/12 | Hosts dogs constantly barked, woke us up at 2:00 AM |
| 4/12/12 | (Name) wasn't aware of our event and worker at gate was very aggressive to our guests about paid parking |
| 4/26/12 | The host was rude and the bathroom was filthy |
| 5/12/12 | We've camped here at least 10 times and have always been disturbed by people who arrive late, party all night and leave early |
| 5/26/12 | (Name) is not friendly and very rude with an attitude |
| 3/30/13 | Noisy neighbors, kids and dogs barking |
| 5/18/13 | Camp host did not enforce quiet hours, young people partying into early hours, being loud and ruining the experience |
| 6/17/13 | (Name) touched my child, cussed out my kids, screamed and threatened |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 6/17/13 | (Name) touched my friend’s child, cussed me out and threatened and touched our dogs, very mean people |
| 6/18/13 | Camp host’s dog was loose and threatened me and my dog |
| 7/30/13 | There are dumpster divers after dark, strongly suggest locking dumpsters after 10:00 PM |
| 8/29/13 | Posted quiet hours, no music after 10:00 PM should be enforced, morning quiet hours should be enforced |
| 9/26/13 | Barking dogs at dumpsite, but could not find anyone to open dump, not sure where to walk dogs |

FA-43. The comment cards also included numerical rankings (1-4), which the Parks Department totaled and computed for the entire four-year period and for each year. Numerical rankings were assigned to each of the following criteria:

- Reservations
- Campground Appearance
- Restrooms
- Staff

[Ref-06]

FA-44. Numerical scores on comment cards equated to: 4 – Excellent; 3 – Good; 2 – Fair; 1 - Poor. [Ref-06]

FA-45. Yearly average scores based on the scoring criteria above were calculated and are provided in the table below:

| Period Begin | Period End | Score Reservations | Score Appearance | Score Restrooms | Score Staff |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 01/01/09 | 12/31/09 | 3.08 | 3.18 | 3.03 | 3.37 |
| 01/01/10 | 12/31/10 | 3.25 | 3.45 | 3.20 | 3.56 |
| 01/01/11 | 12/31/11 | 3.18 | 3.48 | 3.23 | 3.55 |
| 01/01/12 | 12/31/12 | 3.25 | 3.45 | 3.28 | 3.51 |
| 01/01/13 | 12/31/13 | 3.24 | 3.27 | 3.07 | 3.58 |

[Ref-06]

FA-46. The most common complaints were: violation of quiet hours, park maintenance and cleanliness, Park Host attitude, and dog control. [Ref-06]

FA-47. The Parks Director reviews comment cards and annotates negative comments or comments requiring action and assigns them to department staff personnel for appropriate action. [Ref-06]

Findings

- FI-01.** Compared to staffing all parks with full-time Rangers on a 24-hour basis, the Park Host Program provides a cost-effective means of operating, maintaining, and providing security in County campgrounds. (FA-01, FA-05, FA-06, FA-08, FA-28, FA-29, FA-30)
- FI-02.** Lack of enforcement authority makes some aspects of Park Hosts' duties difficult to perform; this includes enforcement of camper check-out times and quiet hours. (FA-33, FA-34, FA-35)
- FI-03.** It is difficult for Park Hosts to leave their campgrounds in the event of personal emergencies. (FA-14, FA-15)
- FI-04.** Providing visibility to Park Hosts by supplying shirts and ball caps identifying them as Park Hosts would demonstrate their authoritative capacity to campers. (FA-33, FA-34, FA-35, FA-36)
- FI-05.** Of 588 comment cards reviewed, the average scores for the entire period were Reservations 3.23, Appearance 3.37, Restrooms 3.16, Staff 3.50. (FA-42, FA-43, FA-44, FA-45)
- FI-06.** The comment card score most directly attributable to Park Host performance is the Staff score. (FA-43, FA-45)
- FI-07.** Significant improvement in Parks staff performance is indicated by increased Staff scores between 2009 and 2013. (FA-45)
- FI-08.** Oversight of Park Hosts and analysis of comments and metrics are effective tools for improving the camping experience in the County. (FA-42, FA-43, FA-44, FA-45, FA-47)
- FI-09.** Hiring additional staff to perform routine maintenance and other functions beyond the 20-hour commitment performed by Park Hosts would improve the scores for park appearance and restrooms. (FA-08, FA-09, FA-17, FA-23)
- FI-10.** The content of campground bulletin boards is not standardized, making it difficult to find essential information at some campgrounds. (FA-22, FA-24, FA-25, FA-26)
- FI-11.** Some Park Hosts appear not to be familiar with the contents of the *Park Host Operations Manual*. (FA-12, FA-13, FA-16)

Recommendations

- R-01.** The Grand Jury recommends that GSA hire additional full-time, daytime service only, Park Services Rangers to assist Park Hosts in enforcing campground regulations such as check-out times. (FI-02)
- R-02.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Parks Director continue to maintain performance metrics and action item follow-up procedures to ensure that County campgrounds continue to improve the camping experience for residents and visitors. (FI-05, FI-06, FI-07, FI-08)

- R-03.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Parks Department institute a more formal orientation program using the *Park Host Operations Manual* as its basis to ensure that Park Hosts understand their responsibilities. (FI-11)
- R-04.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Parks Department design and procure, at a minimum, shirts and ball caps emblazoned with the County logo and the words "Park Host." (FI-02, FI-04)
- R-05.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Parks Department develop a program of qualified Park Host substitutes, who could be called upon to relieve Park Hosts when necessary. (FI-03)
- R-06.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Parks Department work with experienced Park Hosts to develop a standard organization for campground bulletin boards so campers can find similar information, including rules and regulations, at the same location on any County campground bulletin board. (FI-10)

Responses

Responses Required From:

Ventura County Board of Supervisors (FI-03, FI-04) (R-01, R-02, R-03, R-04, R-05, R-06)

Responses Requested From:

Ventura County General Services Agency (FI-03, FI-04) (R-01, R-02, R-03, R-04, R-05, R-06)

Commendations

The Ventura County Grand Jury would like to thank and commend the Ventura County Parks Department for their cooperation, information, and insight in preparing this report. They were helpful in assisting the Grand Jury to understand the problems and the challenges that exist in County campgrounds.

References

- Ref-01.** Ventura County General Services Agency website, Parks Department, Guide to County Campgrounds, [http://vcportal.ventura.org/GSA/parksdepartment/docs/Guide to VC Parks Flyer-Facility Matrix.pdf](http://vcportal.ventura.org/GSA/parksdepartment/docs/Guide_to_VC_Parks_Flyer-Facility_Matrix.pdf) (accessed February 18, 2014)
- Ref-02.** Ventura County Human Resources website, Job Description Supervising Park Ranger Class Code 00873, <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/ventura/default.cfm?action=viewclassspec&classSpecID=727219&agency=43&viewOnly=yes> (accessed February 18, 2014)
- Ref-03.** Ventura County Human Resources website, Job Description Park Services Ranger I Class Code 00602,

<http://agency.governmentjobs.com/ventura/default.cfm?action=viewclassspec&classSpecID=8056&agency=43&viewOnly=yes> (accessed February 18, 2014)

- Ref-04.** Ventura County Human Resources website, Job Description Park Services Ranger II Class Code 00603,
<http://agency.governmentjobs.com/ventura/default.cfm?action=viewclassspec&classSpecID=8057&agency=43&viewOnly=yes> (accessed February 18, 2014)
- Ref-05.** Ventura County General Services Agency, Parks Department *Park Host Operations Manual* (available on request from Parks Department)
- Ref-06.** Ventura County General Services Agency, Parks Department, Ventura County Campgrounds, Guest Comments Tracking Log (available on request from Parks Department)
- Ref-07.** Ventura County General Services Agency website, Parks Department, Guide to County Campgrounds, Beach Front Parks,
<http://www.ventura.org/gsa/parks/beach-front-parks> (accessed February 18, 2014)
- Ref-08.** Ventura County General Services Agency website, Parks Department, Guide to County Campgrounds, Inland Parks,
<http://www.ventura.org/inland-parks> (accessed February 18, 2014)
- Ref-09.** Ventura County General Services Agency website, Parks Department, Job Opportunities, Park Host Information Flyer,
<http://vcportal.ventura.org/GSA/parksdepartment/docs/HOSTINFOFLYER.pdf> (accessed February 18, 2014)

Attachments

- Att-01.** Description of Ventura County Parks and Campgrounds (Excerpts from Ventura County website)
- Att-02.** Information from Ventura County Website (Verbatim), General Services Agency Parks Department, Park Host Information

Glossary

TERM

DEFINITION

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| County | Ventura County |
| Fifth Wheel | Large Tow-Behind Trailer |
| Grand Jury | 2013-2014 Ventura County Grand Jury |
| GSA | General Services Agency |
| KOA | Kampgrounds of America, Inc. |
| Ranger | Park Services Ranger |
| RV | Recreational Vehicle |
| Trailer | Travel Trailer, non-self-propelled |

Attachment 01

Description of Ventura County Parks and Campgrounds (Excerpts from Parks Department website)

Beachfront Parks

Rincon Parkway

This scenic stretch of roadway offers outstanding views of the Pacific coastline and the Channel Islands. The Parkway is located between Faria Beach Park and Hobson Beach Park on Highway 1 off the Ventura Freeway. 127 parking spaces are available for Recreational Vehicle (RV) use. Tent camping is not allowed per County of Ventura Ordinance. All RV's must be fully self-contained units, as there are no electrical hook ups, dump stations, shower/bathroom facilities or water onsite.

Hobson Beach Park

Hobson Beach Park is located North of Faria Beach Park and the Rincon Parkway. Similar to Faria Park, Hobson Park is wedged between the Pacific Ocean and the base of the Santa Ynez mountains along Highway 1 off the Ventura Freeway. The views of the Channel Islands are exceptional, and are most notable at dusk. This park is footsteps away from the Pacific Ocean.

Faria Beach Park

The park lies between the Pacific Ocean and the base of the Santa Ynez mountains along Highway 1 off the Ventura Freeway. The views of the Channel Islands are breathtaking, and are most notable at dusk. Campsites are highly sought after at this small picturesque park, which is footsteps away from the Pacific Ocean.

Inland Parks

Camp Comfort, Ojai

The San Antonio Creek flows through this beautiful, lush park. There are an ample number of mature shade trees throughout. The campground is ideal for group camping and the spacious, newly renovated clubhouse is perfect for parties, reunions, company picnics, weddings, etc. Camp Comfort is approximately 1 mile from downtown Ojai.

Dennison Park, Ojai

This serene, quiet park offers outstanding views of the Ojai Valley. With mature shade trees throughout, large shrubs and numerous campsites located off the main road, you get a feeling of total seclusion in this rustic park, similar to being "out in the woods." There are covered family/group barbecue areas near the entrance of the park available by reservation only.

Foster Park, Ventura

A series of beautiful green hill ranges serve as the backdrop for this picturesque park. The Ventura River flows through the park, which lends to the beautiful landscape of lush green vegetation that thrives among the adult shade trees. There is a separate Day Use area and two different campgrounds to choose from, Residence Campground and Red Mountain Campground. The Ojai Valley Trail (equestrian, bike, and walking) runs through the park.

Kenney Grove Park, Fillmore

Kenney Grove Park is a developed RV campground. Most RV sites have water and electrical hookups (some sites also have fire rings and tables). Park use is by reservation only.

Oak Park, Simi Valley

Mature Oak trees enhance this rustic 100.5 acre open space park that is surrounded by gentle, rolling hills and an abundance of coastal sage scrub brush. This natural environment supports a multitude of California native wildlife species, such as a raptors, roadrunners, sagebrush lizards, and alligator lizards. The park is ideal for group RV camping in a secluded setting.

Steckel Park, Santa Paula

Santa Paula Creek flows through this picturesque park that is surrounded by rolling hills, rugged mountain peaks, citrus groves and avocado groves. The natural beauty of the terrain coupled with large mature shade trees makes this a popular location for picnics, creek side camping, fishing, hiking, biking, or wilderness exploring. Bird watchers enjoy woodpeckers, raptors, warblers, kinglets, and vireos. A large aviary in the park houses a variety of common birds and peafowl. The private campground north of Santa Paula Creek is leased to the Ventura Ranch KOA.

Tapo Canyon, Simi Valley

Tapo Canyon Regional Park is located in the midst of the rolling hills and canyons of the Santa Susana Mountains north of Simi Valley. Hikers, equestrian riders, and mountain bikers enjoy this rugged and rural park, which features picnic areas, an equestrian arena and an RV campground with 16 full hook ups.

Attachment 02

Information from Ventura County Website (Verbatim)

General Services Agency

Parks Department

Park Host Information

General Host Information

Become a Park Host or Community Center Host and you can camp free in your RV or trailer (electric, water/sewer hookups at all locations) for a minimum of 180 days at any of 13 sites in exchange for your volunteer services. Applicants must have their own RV, trailer or 5th Wheel to live in onsite, and an extra vehicle is strongly recommended for personal transportation. No salary or stipend is provided. A minimum of 20 hours per week of service is required. Experience in camping, or prior campground/park host service is desirable. Experience working with the public and/or maintenance or administrative skills are considered during the selection process.

Park Host

Job Responsibilities: Greet campers, answer questions, give directions, open and close park gates, maintain campgrounds by picking up litter, clean campsites after visitors leave, clean and re-stock restrooms, check for park passes, and other related assignments as needed. You must be able to understand and explain park rules to campers, if necessary. Occasionally, Park Hosts must call law enforcement personnel or Parks Staff to report problems in the park. Hosts must be onsite overnight and be available to campers that have complaints. Parks Host campsites must be kept clean at all times.

Community Center Host

Job Responsibilities for Community Center Hosts are the same as Park Host above, with the following added responsibilities: schedule reservations for the facility and oversee calendar, answer walk-in and telephone inquires from the general public, open and close main gate and secure facility as required, and clean/maintain the facility. Community Centers must be kept in a "ready for business" state at all times.

How to Apply

Call Pam Gallo, Park Host Coordinator at 805-654-3934, or e-mail county.parks@ventura.org. You can also print an Application Form and send it to County Parks Department, 800 S. Victoria Avenue L#1030, Ventura, CA 93009 or fax it to 805-659-6992.

Related Links

-  [Ventura County Hosts Application Form](#)
-  [Park Host Information Flyer](#)
-  [Email Us](#)