

NEWS RELEASE



SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY AND MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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SOME CONSERVANCY PARKLAND CLOSED BY RECENT FIRES

Los Angeles—The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy announced today that the recent Southern California fires have necessitated the temporary closure of some Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) parks in the Simi Hills.

The largest park affected by the closure is the Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve (formerly Ahmanson Ranch). All 5,393 acres of the park are closed to the public effective immediately. This includes both park entrances--at the trailhead at the terminus of Victory Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles, and at the trailhead at the northern terminus of Las Virgenes Canyon Road in the City of Calabasas. Also closed is Sage Ranch Park in the Simi Hills adjacent to the Boeing Rocketdyne facility.

The Topanga fire burned through major portions of both parks in a thirty-six hour period beginning in the afternoon of September 28, 2005. During the fire, MRCA Rangers and park staff, who are certified firefighters, coordinated with personnel from

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County, City, federal, and Statewide jurisdictions to successfully protect all developed park structures and facilities.

Both parks will be closed at least a week while MRCA staff conduct natural resource and public safety assessments. “It is vital for everyone’s safety that the public respect park closure signs and barricades, and do not try to enter a closed park or trail,” said Walt Young, Chief Ranger of the MRCA. “Park rangers are patrolling the parks, but conditions can be extremely unpredictable and dangerous. This is not a situation to take any risks.”

In addition to Conservancy and MRCA parkland, in the Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area, the National Park Service has announced due to increased fire danger Cheeseboro Canyon, Palo Comado Canyon, Liberty Canyon, and Upper Las Virgenes Canyon sites are closed until further notice. For further information contact the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area visitor center at (805) 370-2301 or <http://www.nps.gov/samo/>.

Future updates will be issued as soon as more information becomes available.

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and its Joint Powers partner, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority are dedicated to the preservation and creation of parkland within the Santa Monica Mountains, and the Rim of the Valley Corridor including the Santa Clarita, La Crescenta, Simi and Conejo Valleys.

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