

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE:	August 9, 2023
MEMO TO:	Board of Directors
THROUGH:	Ana Ruiz, General Manager SC
FROM:	Deborah Bazar, Management Analyst II, Visitor Services Matt Anderson, Chief Ranger, Visitor Services
SUBJECT:	Ranger Public Safety Report for Calendar Year 2022

SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the enforcement and incident response activities Rangers initiated or responded to on and off Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) lands during calendar year 2022. Historical information about the preceding four years is included for perspective. The total number of non-parking violations declined during COVID and have remained flat since then. The number of parking violations peaked during COVID and have returned to pre-COVID levels with the exception of a significant increase of no parking violations at lower Purisima Creek Open Space Preserve. Incident responses went up while fire incidents were down in 2022, with a combined 22% increase compared to the 5-year average. Of all the incident responses, 28% occurred outside District lands, with Rangers primarily assisting other response agencies with public roadway accidents.

DISCUSSION

Information for this report was generated from two sources: 1) the Incidents Database, which was placed in service for data collection in January 2010 and retired in January 2022, and 2) the Omnigo software platform, which was launched in January 2022 as the new repository for ranger records. The two systems operate and capture/query records differently. Visitor Services Department staff invested significant effort to verify the information across the platforms to ensure the two datasets were as consistent as possible.

The focus of law enforcement contacts made by Rangers is the protection of resources and public safety. Each contact that a Ranger makes is considered educational in nature regardless of the final action taken. Actions taken include verbal and written warnings, citations, and on rare occasions, a physical arrest. Physical arrests, if they occur, are turned over to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction for transportation and booking. Many violations can be addressed and corrected with a verbal warning and thus represent a significant effort by Rangers to educate visitors and gain compliance.

The number of recorded violations, including parking violations, has declined since 2018, with an exception in 2020 when parking violations significantly increased primarily due to high

visitation experienced during the pandemic. Much of the dip in recorded non-parking violations for 2020 can be attributed to direction provided to Rangers, to limit their direct contact with visitors to only safety or egregious violations. This safety protocol aimed to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure to protect Rangers and the public and to reduce potential impacts to staffing due to illness. Veteran Rangers have also shared that they attribute fewer violations to more responsible land use, especially amongst bicyclists, particularly for helmet compliance.

The number of recorded violations depends both on the number of actual violations occurring and Ranger time spent enforcing regulations. Ranger staffing is key to consistent enforcement, providing a highly visible, proactive presence and response in District preserves. During 2021 and 2022, Rangers were not fully staffed, making consistent enforcement efforts challenging as the District continued to recruit, train, and develop new Rangers to perform their duties independently. This effect is magnified when the District is at minimum staffing since on-duty staff concentrates their efforts on incident response and checking high volume use areas, typically limiting foot patrols and the ability to focus on less visited areas with potential violation issues.

For this report, the charts, tables, and summaries only include contacts that resulted in some form of written record, such as an incident report, written warning, citation, or mutual aid assistance. One of the advantages of the new Omnigo system is that it allows data entry in the field, making it easier to record verbal warnings that make up the majority of all Ranger contacts for violations of District ordinances. Verbal warnings were not captured electronically prior to the implementation of Omnigo in 2022, and therefore are not included in this report to ensure consistent comparison between years. For future reports, verbal warnings will be incorporated in the enforcement section to provide a more holistic picture of Ranger efforts.

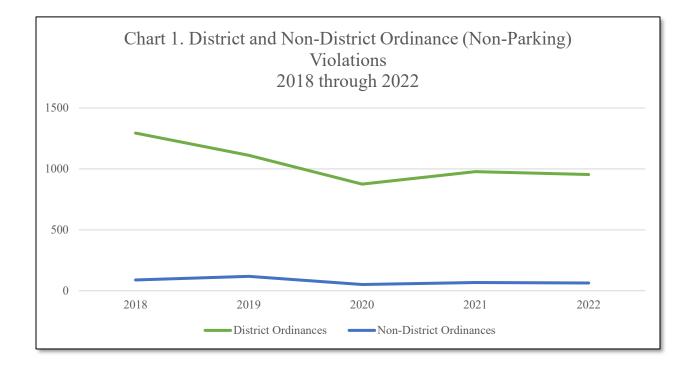
A high-level review of 2022 verbal warnings data reflects that the top violation categories resolved with verbal warnings area: *After Hours* (851), *Dogs Prohibited* (385), and *Trail Use Speed Limit* (250). A complete list is provided in Attachment 1.

Future reports will also include an analysis of Ranger activity logs. Ranger activity logs are completed daily by Rangers in Omnigo to capture all daily activities or tasks performed. An analysis of the cumulative data will be performed to reflect the percent of time spent on tasks and the number of occurrences.

District and Non-District Ordinance Violation Summary

Calendar year 2022 saw a 9% decrease in the total number of violations recorded (District ordinances, and non-District Ordinances, excluding parking violations) in comparison with the 5-year average. See Table 1 and Chart 1 below. Violations of District ordinances represent the majority of reportable issues. The most common District violations (excluding parking) continue to be *After-Hours Use, Dog Violations*, and *Entry into Closed Areas*. In addition to District ordinances, there are specific local, state, and federal laws that can be enforced by Rangers on or adjacent to District lands, including Santa Clara County (SCC) Park Ordinances in any SCC Park that is contiguous to District lands or across the street from District lands. Violations of these non-district ordinances fall under *Other Crimes* as illustrated in Attachment 2, Table 2. The second most common non-district ordinance violation is the reporting of *Auto Burglaries*. The frequency of each violation is illustrated in Attachment 2, Tables 1 and 2.

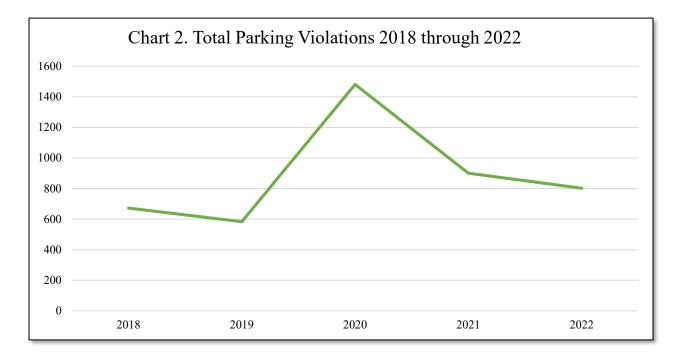
TABLE 1. VIOLATION TYPE, EXCLUDING PARKING VIOLATIONS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-Year Average	2022 %Difference from 5-Year Average
District ordinances	1294	1111	875	977	954	1042	-8%
Non-District ordinances	88	118	51	68	64	78	-18%
Total	1382	1229	926	1045	1018	1120	-9%



Recorded non-parking violations were predictably down in 2020 as Rangers were directed to minimize detentions and direct contact with visitors to reduce potential exposure to COVID-19.

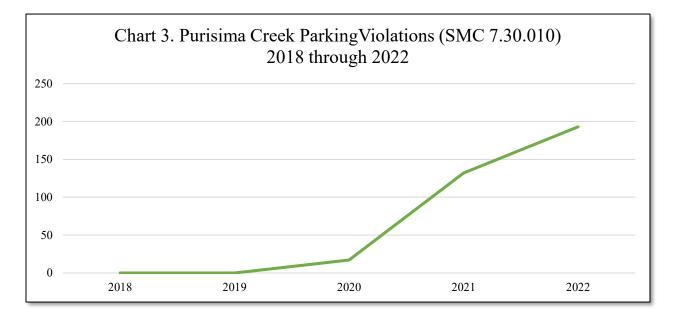
Parking Violations

Chart 2 below displays the total number of parking citations by year, from 2018 through 2022. There were 802 parking citations issued in 2022, which represent a 10% decrease from the 5-year average. See Attachment 2, Table 3 for more information.



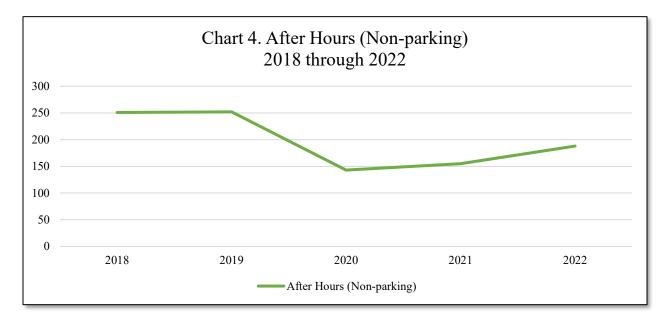
The most frequent District-ordinance parking violation in 2022 continues to be *After Hours Parking*, with most of them (138, 44%) occurring at Rancho San Antonio County Park. While this is typical, the percentage is lower than most previous years. See Attachment 2, Chart 1 for details on trends of the percentage of afterhours parking violations issued at Rancho San Antonio County Park.

If non-District parking ordinances are considered, the most frequent parking violation in 2022 was for parking in a no-parking zone (259, 81%). The majority of those (193, 75%) occurred at Purisima Creek Redwoods along Purisima Creek Road. This was due to the enforcement of a no-parking zone established in cooperation with San Mateo County at the request of residents to address safety concerns along the narrow road created by roadside parking because of the high visitation. The significant increase in citations issued on Purisima Creek Road in recent years compared to previous years can be seen below in Chart 3.



After Hours (Non-parking)

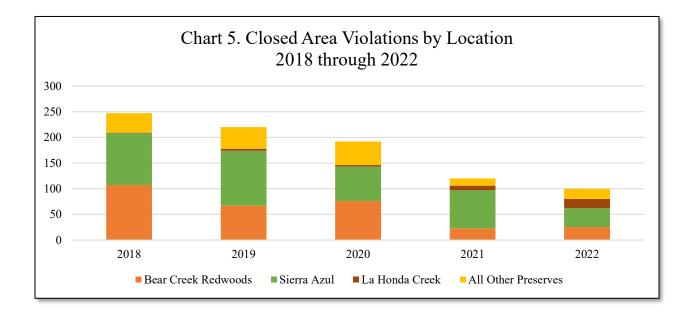
Chart 4 below shows the total after hours (non-parking) violations from 2018 through 2022. There were 188 after hours citations issued, which is a 5% decrease from the 5-year average. See Attachment 2, Table 1 for more information.



Closed Areas

The biggest change in closed area violations is related to the opening of Bear Creek Open Space Preserve in 2019 and the Alma Cultural Landscape in the preserve in 2022. Providing legitimate planned access has led to a decrease in closed area violations.

Chart 5 below shows the closed area violations according to top three locations with the highest average violation from 2018 through 2022, with all the other preserves summed for comparison. There were 100 closed area violations issued in 2022, which was down 43% from the 5-year average. See Attachment 2, Table 4 for more information.



Dog Violations

Chart 6 shows the total dog violations for 2022, which totaled 337, a 1% increase from the 5year average. The majority of the dog violations in 2022 were for *dog off-leash* (179), a 6% increase from the 5-year average. The other offense was *dogs in a prohibited area* (158), a 3% decrease from the 5-year average. See Attachment 2, Table 5 for more information.

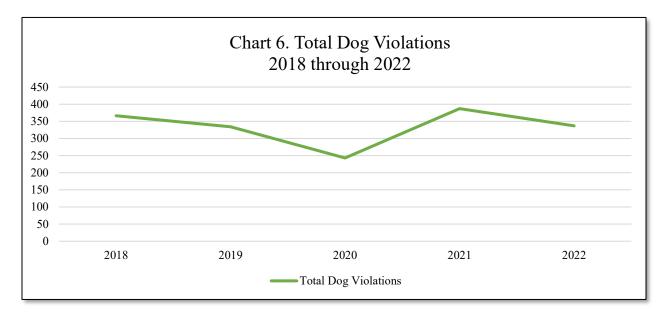
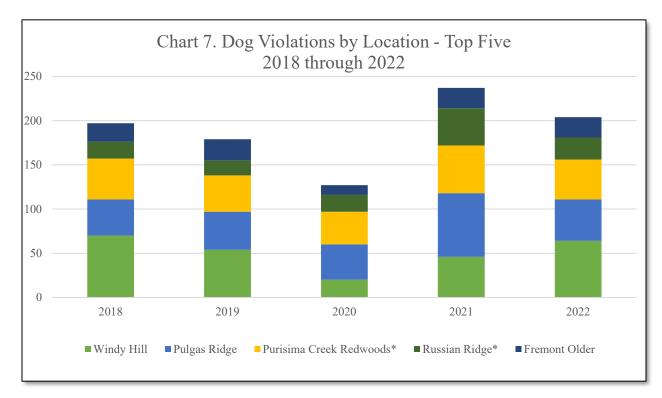
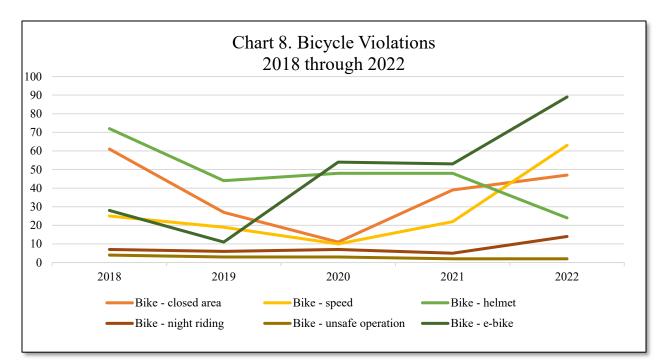


Chart 7 below shows the total dog violations according to frequency at the preserves with the five highest average violations. The preserves with asterisks next to the names do not allow dogs. See Attachment 2, Table 6 for details.



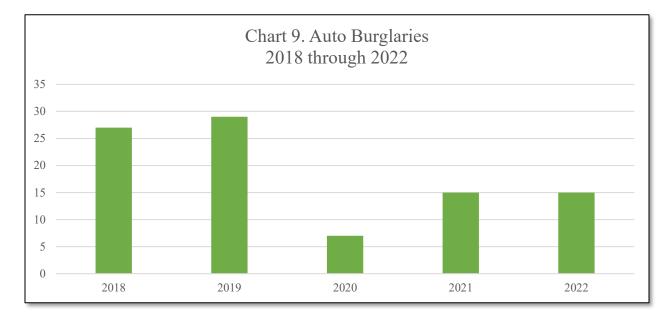
Bicycle Violations

Chart 8 below shows the distribution of bicycle offenses by violation since 2018. Total bicycle violations for 2022 (239) increased by 41% from the 5-year average, with the most frequent violation being *e-bike violations* (89, 37%). See Attachment 2, Table 7 for more information. Rangers also report many e-bike contacts do not result in a citation or warning because the rider states they are using the device due to a mobility disability (under the District's OPDMD policy).



Auto Burglaries

Chart 9 shows the total auto burglaries by year. Auto burglaries in 2022 (15) decreased 19% from the 5-year average. See Attachment 2, Table 8 for a list by location.



The majority of auto burglaries during 2022 occurred at Rancho San Antonio County Park (53%). See Attachment 2, Chart 2 for details on trends of the percentage of burglaries occurring at Rancho San Antonio County Park since 2018.

Incident Response

The total number of responses to non-fire incidents (152) and fire incidents (9) was 161 in 2022, a 22% increase from the 5-year average of 132 (see Attachment 2, Table 9 for details). Non-fire incidents were up 25% from the 5-year average of 121. The cause of the increase in non-fire incidents is unclear. However, the most prominent increase is in vehicle accidents of which 26 of the 44 were off District lands. Fire incidents were down 20% from the 5-year average of 11.

A total of 43 of 152 non-fire incidents and 3 of 9 fire incidents occurred off District land in 2022. Of the 109 non-fire incidents occurring on District land, 18 were vehicle accidents, 21 were bicycle accidents, 18 were hiking/running accidents, 2 were equestrian accidents, 2 were search and rescue, 44 were other medical aid, and 4 were other (e.g., animal incidents, traffic control).

Of the fire incidents on District lands in 2022, two (2) were live fires, two (2) were evidence of fires, one (1) was a downed power line, and one (1) was a response to a report of a strong smoke odor, though the source of the odor was unable to be located. See Attachment 2, Table 10 for more information.

Rangers responded to one (1) confirmed fatality during 2022, caused by a vehicle accident off District land.

NEXT STEPS

This report and analysis are used by command staff and supervisors to assist in identifying patrol and outreach priorities to address areas of concern. Areas of focus will include continued outreach for multi-use trail awareness and education, consistent education and enforcement of ebike use, dogs off leash, closed area patrols, and bicycle speed.

The District is in the midst of two Ranger recruitments to fill all existing vacancies, including two overfill positions approved by the Board for FY22 and FY23. The intent of the positions is to modulate the impact of staff vacancies and leaves of absence. Full staffing will provide for more consistent education, enforcement, and incident response.

Attachment

Attachment 1 - Verbal Warning Data Attachment 2 - Ranger Activity Data

TABLE 1. VERBAL WARNING VIOLATIONS IN 2022	Count
805.3 After Hours Use Prohibited	851
701.1(B) Dogs Prohibited	385
500.1 Trail Use Speed Limit	250
502.4(A) Helmet Required	171
701.1(C) Leash Required	150
409.9 Segways And Electric Bicycles	133
805.2(A) Temporary Or Regular Closures	113
7.30.010 No Parking Zone	54
404.2 Smoking - Undesignated Area	48
801.1(I) Prohibited Areas (After Hours)	48
408.1 Permit Violations Infraction	48
502.1 Operation Of Bicycles	38
409.4 Model Craft	33
702.1 Plants	31
805.4 Bicycle Operation After Hours	31
801.1(D) Prohibited Areas (Blocking Gate)	30
801.1(L) Prohibited Areas (Nondesignated Area)	26
701.4 Other Pets	22
801.1(A) Prohibited Areas (Signed)	20
502.4(B) Helmet Possession Required	20
22505(B) Parking on State Highway	18
502.2 Closed Area - Bicycle	18
411.3 Obeying Signs	16
22507.8(A) Disabled Parking - Handicapped Space	15
10.40.020(B) Parking In Violation Of Sign.	14
502.7 Headsets/Earplugs	14
409.6 Skating Scooters Coasting Sledding Prohibited	13
407.2 Interference With Use Of District Lands	11
801.1(K) Disabled Parking: Permit Required Unpaved	11
21212(A) Minor Bicycling Without Helmet	9
801.1(B) Prohibited Areas (On Fire Trail)	9
404.1 Fire Without Permit	9
505 Off Trail Use	9
801.1(H) Prohibited Areas (Red Curb)	8
410.1 Alcoholic Beverages-Beer/Wine Only	8
700.3 Carry Or Possess Fishing Equipment	8
802.1 Vehicles Prohibited	6
702.3 Geological Features	6
701.1(B) Dog In Prohibited Area	6
700.2 Fishing	6
503.1 Climb In Designated Areas Only	6
411.2 Unauthorized Signs	6
B12-120 No Parking I	6

TABLE 1. VERBAL WARNING VIOLATIONS IN 2022	Count
502.5 Walk-Only Zone	б
803.1 Speeding	5
805.2(B) Sensitive Or Hazardous Closures	5
408.2 Failure To Comply With A Permit	4
703.4 Possession Of Construction Or Maintenance Tools	4
502.1 Closed Area - Bicycle	4
594(A)(1) Vandalism - Graffiti	4
407.3 Noise	4
405.5 Urination	4
148(A)(1) Resist Obstruct Delay Peace Officer	4
808.1 Unauthorized Aircraft Or Helicopter Operations	3
411.1 Defacement	3
7.32.010 No Parking - Specified Hours 701.5 Removal Of Dog Excrement	3
701.1(G) Dogs In Water Area	3
501.1 Closed Area- Horses Or Pack Animal	3
11362.3(A)(2)Â Smoking Tobacco Is Prohib	3
374.4(A) Littering	3
B14-42.3(D)(2) Bicycle Speed Greater Than 15 Mph	3
11357(A)(1)Â Concentrated Cannabis Less Than18 Yrs	2
B14-14.3 Entering Remaining After Hours	2
22507.8(A) Disabled Parking - Handicapped Space	2
12814.6(B)(1)(B) Provisional License	2
405.4 Defecation	2
11.24.050 Parking In Violation Of Sign	2
602.2 Possession Of Cultivation Tools Prohibited	2
403.1(A) Possession Of/Discharging Weapon	2
148.9(B) False Information To A Peace Officer	2
701.1(D) Lead Length Restrictions	2
701.1(F) Nuisance Dogs	2
400.1 Camping Without Permit	2
602.1 Harvesting/Planting Without Permission B14-34.1(A)(4) Designated Off Leasg/Dog Under Control	2
408.3 Permit - Individual Participation	1
23103(B) Reckless Driving - Off-Street Parking Facility	1
703.2 Unlawful Construction	1
B14-22.1(A) Littering	1
703.3 Unlawful Maintenance	1
702.5 Special Permission	1
604 Commercial Uses	1
B12-120 No Parking	1
409.3 Golf	1
B14-21.2(B) Extinguish Fire Before Leaving	1
403.1(B) Possession Of/Discharging Paint Ball Gun Bb Gun	1
B14-33.2(A)2 Parking In Undesignated Area	1
406.1 Use Of Metal Detector	1

TABLE 1. VERBAL WARNING VIOLATIONS IN 2022	Count
B14-42.3(E) Under 18 W/O Helmet - Bike Scooter Skate	1
801.1(F) Prohibited Areas (Blocking Traffic)	1
597.7(A) Leave Or Confine An Animal In Any Unattended	1
502.4(A) Helmets Use Required	1
701.7 Depositing Of Animal Remains	1
700.6 Feeding	1
702.1 Damaging / Removing Plants	1
407.1 Obstructing Free Passage	1
B14-21.2(A) No Fires Except Where Designated	1
14601(A) Driving While Suspended/Revoked	1
B14-21.5(A) No Fireworks	1
16430 No Proof Of Financial Liability (Insurance)	1
B14-23.1(A) Picking/Taking Vegetation/Natural Resources	1
407.4 Lawful Order	1
B14-34.1(A)(2) Pets/Dogs On 6 Foot Leash	1
803.3 Unsafe Driving	1
603.1 Commercial Filming Without Permit	1
405.2 Improper Use Of Sanitation Facility	1
B14-42.3(F) Bicycle Helmet Required - 18 Years & Older	1
408.1 Permit Violations Misdemeanor	1
805.3 After Hours	1
Total	2866

Attachment 2. Ranger Activity Data

TABLE 1. VIOLATIONS OF NON- PARKING DISTRICT ODDED OF						-	%Difference
ORDINANCES, IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY IN 2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-year Average	From 5-year Average
After hours	251	252	143	155	188	198	-5%
Dogs - off leash	203	185	100	179	179	169	6%
Dogs - prohibited	159	149	142	206	158	163	-3%
Closed area	247	220	192	120	100	176	-43%
Bike - e-bike	28	11	54	53	89	47	89%
Bike - speed	25	19	10	22	63	28	127%
Other violations	189	155	147	117	63	134	-53%
Bike - closed area	61	27	11	39	47	37	27%
Bike - helmet	72	44	48	48	24	47	-49%
Camping	5	6	1	11	15	8	97%
Bike - night riding	7	6	7	5	14	8	79%
Fishing	6	7	4	9	8	7	18%
Campfires	5	6	4	4	3	4	-32%
Bike - unsafe operation	4	3	3	2	2	3	-29%
Off road vehicle	19	13	7	3	1	9	-88%
Vandalism	12	8	2	4	0	5	-100%
Dump/Litter	1	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
Total	1294	1111	875	977	954	1042	-8%

TABLE 2. VIOLATIONS OF NON- DISTRICT NON-PARKING ORDINANCES, IN ORDER OF						5-year	2022 %Difference From 5-year
FREQUENCY IN 2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average	Average
Other crimes	42	65	37	41	43	46	-6%
Auto burglaries	27	29	7	15	15	19	-19%
Resisting peace officer	10	11	4	5	3	7	-55%
False information	5	7	1	3	1	3	-71%
Assault	2	4	2	1	2	2	-9%
Alcohol - possession by minor	2	2	0	3	0	1	-100%
Total	88	118	51	68	64	78	-18%

TABLE 3. PARKING VIOLATIONS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-Year Average	2022 Difference From 5-Year Average
Non-District parking violations	77	52	457	281	320	237	35%
District parking after hours	331	305	607	406	314	393	-20%
All other District parking violations	264	226	417	213	168	258	-35%
Total	672	583	1481	900	802	888	-10%

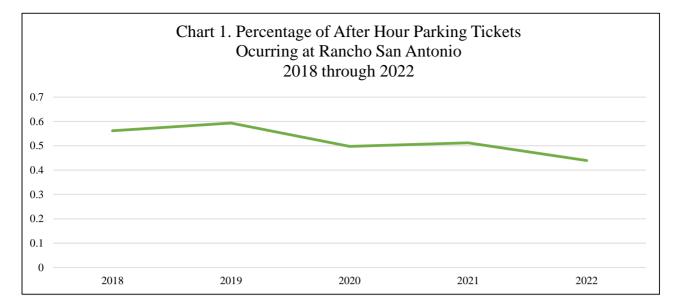
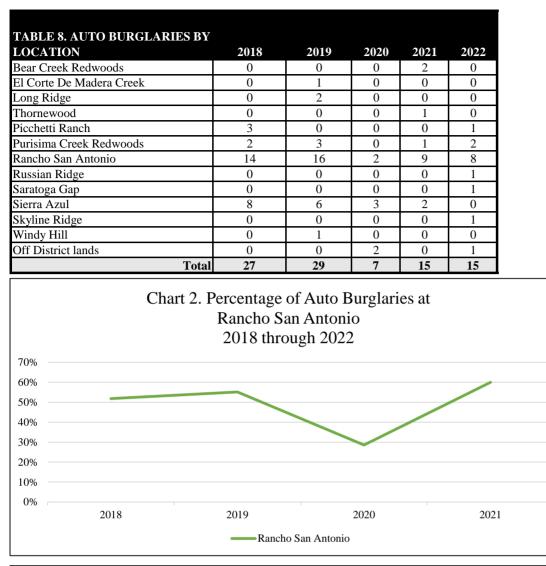


TABLE 4. CLOSED AREA VIOLATIONS BY LOCATION	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-year	2022 %Difference From 5-Year
Bear Creek Redwoods	2018 107	2019 67	2020 76	2021	2022	Average	Average -58%
Sierra Azul	34	51	51	41	23	40	-38%
La Honda Creek	1	4	3	9	18	40	-47%
Sierra Azul - Loma Prieta Ridge	26	21	4	0	8	12	-32%
Sierra Azul - Mt. Umunhum	34	34	11	33	7	24	-71%
Thornewood	0	0	0	1	7	2	338%
Coal Creek	0	0	0	0	6	1	400%
El Corte de Madera Creek	14	4	3	5	3	6	-48%
Rancho San Antonio	7	8	2	0	2	4	-47%
Long Ridge	0	8	6	1	1	3	-69%
Russian Ridge	0	0	7	0	1	2	-38%
Sierra Azul - Cathedral Oaks	1	0	0	0	1	0	150%
Monte Bello	10	11	5	1	0	5	-100%
Purisima Creek Redwoods	2	7	14	6	0	6	-100%
Ravenswood	0	1	0	0	0	0	-100%
Saratoga Gap	1	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
Sierra Azul - Rancho de Guadalupe	3	1	0	0	0	1	-100%
Sierra Azul - Twin Creeks	3	0	1	0	0	1	-100%
Skyline Ridge	0	1	5	0	0	1	-100%
Windy Hill	4	2	4	0	0	2	-100%
Total	247	220	192	120	100	176	-43%

TABLE 5. TOTAL DOG VIOLATIONS		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-Year Average	2022 %Difference From 5-Year Average
Other violations		4	0	1	2	0	1	-100%
Dogs - prohibited		159	149	142	206	158	163	-3%
Dogs - off leash		203	185	100	179	179	169	6%
	Total	366	334	243	387	337	333	1%

							2022 %Difference
TABLE 6. DOG VIOLATIONS BY						5-year	%Difference from 5-year
PRESERVE LOCATION	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average	Average
Windy Hill	70	54	20	46	64	51	26%
Pulgas Ridge	41	43	40	72	47	49	-3%
Purisima Creek Redwoods*	46	41	37	54	45	45	1%
Russian Ridge*	19	17	19	42	25	24	2%
Fremont Older	21	24	11	23	23	20	13%
Thornewood	14	29	5	20	22	18	22%
El Corte de Madera Creek	9	3	5	24	17	12	47%
Sierra Azul	13	26	15	1	13	14	-4%
St. Joseph's Hill	16	10	7	7	11	10	8%
Bear Creek Redwoods	1	8	8	12	9	8	18%
La Honda Creek	1	6	3	5	9	5	88%
Los Trancos	6	3	2	4	9	5	88%
Rancho San Antonio*	22	26	18	19	9	19	-52%
Skyline Ridge	8	7	6	11	9	8	10%
Sierra Azul - Mt. Umunhum	14	10	13	5	8	10	-20%
Long Ridge	19	4	8	13	7	10	-31%
Monte Bello	5	5	8	13	4	7	-43%
Picchetti Ranch	5	9	10	6	2	6	-69%
Coal Creek	7	3	1	4	1	3	-69%
No Preserve	3	0	1	0	1	1	0%
Saratoga Gap	1	0	3	0	1	1	0%
Sierra Azul - Kennedy-Limekiln	0	0	1	3	1	1	0%
El Sereno	6	2	1	2	0	2	-100%
Foothills	2	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
Ravenswood	14	3	0	0	0	3	-100%
Sierra Azul - Loma Prieta Ridge	1	1	0	0	0	0	-100%
Sierra Azul - Rancho de Guadalupe	1	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
Teague Hill	1	0	1	1	0	1	-100%
Total	366	334	243	387	337	333	1%

							2022 %Difference
TABLE 7. TOTAL BICYCLE						5-Year	from 5-Year
VIOLATIONS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average	Average
Bike - e-bike	28	11	54	53	89	47	89%
Bike - speed	25	19	10	22	63	28	127%
Bike - closed area	61	27	11	39	47	37	27%
Bike - helmet	72	44	48	48	24	47	-49%
Bike - night riding	7	6	7	5	14	8	79%
Bike - unsafe operation	4	3	3	2	2	3	-29%
Tot	al 197	110	133	169	239	170	41%



							2022
							%Difference
						5-year	from 5-Year
TABLE 9. INCIDENT RESPONSE	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average	Average
Vehicle accident	44	34	29	21	44	34	28%
Bicycle accident	31	22	25	22	25	25	0%
Hiking/Running accident	23	15	25	33	18	23	-21%
Equestrian accident	1	1	3	5	2	2	-17%
Search & rescue	2	2	3	1	2	2	0%
Other first aid	27	22	28	24	47	30	59%
HazMat	0	0	1	0	0	0	0%
Other (animal incidents, traffic ctrl etc.)	2	2	3	3	14	5	192%
Total (non-fire)	130	98	117	109	152	121	25%
Fire incident	11	12	17	7	9	11	-20%
Total (all)	141	110	134	116	161	132	22%

TABLE 10. FIRE INCIDENTS IN 2022	On District Land		Total
Live fire	2	2	4
Fire evidence	2	0	2
Other	2	1	3
Total	6	3	9