

What is National ParkRx Day?

National ParkRx Day is a day celebrated across the United States to promote the growing movement of prescribing parks and nature to patients to improve health. In September 2015, the U.S. Surgeon General released a call to action to promote walking and walkable communities. National ParkRx Day builds on this call to action and provides citizens with parks and green spaces to support public health. The four main goals of National ParkRx Day are:

- To amplify the visibility and viability of the ParkRx movement in parks and communities across the nation.
- To celebrate existing ParkRx programs and practitioners across the country.
- To serve as a catalyst to bring together local health providers, park agencies, community leaders, and nonprofits to develop their own ParkRx programs for improvement of their communities.
- To increase the relevance of parks for all people; how people can connect with parks daily for their improved physical, mental, and spiritual health and create a new generation of park stewards.

Developing the Healthy People Healthy Trails program has brought together community members in the medical and recreation fields to support health and wellness in Santa Barbara County using new tools like a prescription for outdoor activity and a companion trail guide.” —

Margaret Weiss
Director of Health Education, Sansum Clinic

In Santa Barbara County the **Healthy People Healthy Trails** initiative was launched in 2014 to work collaboratively with land management agencies, health care providers and community partners to improve the health and wellbeing of community members through the use and enjoyment of trails, parks and open spaces. The National Parks Service provided hands-on support to help plan and implement the program.

The **Healthy People Healthy Trails** initiative is an example of the park prescriptions concept grow-

ing out of a conceptual idea into a local program with widespread community support.

When is it?

In 2017, National ParkRx Day will be held on Sunday, April 23rd

Who is organizing National ParkRx Day events?

Community based organizations who are **Healthy People Healthy Trails** partners are organizing walks and hikes at various locations. For more information: <http://healthypeoplehealthytrails.org/events/>

Why celebrate National ParkRx Day?

Every community organization or agency involved (or interested in being involved) in a park prescription program is encouraged to celebrate National ParkRx Day to:

- **Inspire individual action:** Host an event in a park to promote visitation and renewed awareness of local green space and give the visitors a dose of the health benefits of nature.
- **Educate the community:**
Celebrate National ParkRx Day to raise awareness.
- **Connect our health care system:**
Highlight the health benefits of nature
- **Start culture change:** The link between human health and ecological health is not new knowledge, but the burgeoning movement of the healthcare sector prescribing parks to highlight this link is. This growing movement shows that park prescriptions have the potential to shift human health care to include nature-based interventions.

With the launch of the Healthy People Healthy Trails program community organizations are now supporting the National Park Rx movement designed to increase the use and enjoyment of local trails and parks to achieve a healthier lifestyle.” —

Mark Wilkinson
Executive Director, Santa Barbara County Trails Council

Suggested Celebrations

Typical events in Santa Barbara County include guided group walks in city parks, state parks, along the coast, and in the national forest. Some events will include health professionals, park rangers, or experts with knowledge of flora and fauna. Since this event coincides with Earth Day some organizations will coordinate volunteer stewardship projects such as trash clean up, clearing trails, and beautifying parks.

Social media

Online engagement is an easy way to spread the dialogue. Use #ParkRx #HealthyPeopleHealthyTrails across all channels. For the day, please use the phrase “National #ParkRx Day” because #ParkRx is an evergreen tag.

For Twitter

National #ParkRx Day is the perfect excuse spend time being active outdoors! Find a program near you <http://healthypeoplehealthytrails.org>

Celebrate **National #ParkRx Day** on April 23rd by taking a walk in the park. Doctor’s orders!
#HealthyPeopleHealthyTrails

For Facebook

On **National #ParkRx Day** Sunday, April 23rd, join health providers, park managers, and community organizations from across Santa Barbara County in building a healthier community by creating a strong connection between people and parks and open spaces.
#HealthyPeopleHealthyTrails