



NEWS RELEASE

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New Park Offers Environmental Education, Preservation, and New Recreation in the Santa Maria Valley. Ribbon Cutting Saturday June 27, 2009.

Come experience a rare mix of environmental education, land preservation, cultural resources and recreation at the central coast's newest park, Los Flores Ranch Park! The official grand opening of the park is Saturday, June 27, 2009. Los Flores Ranch Park is a regional open space park on the central coast and the first of it's kind in the Santa Maria Valley. The property lies about 8 miles south of Santa Maria between Orcutt and Los Alamos on the East side of Highway 101 in Solomon Hills and is located on 6271 Dominion Road. It's proximity to Highway 101 and the nearby communities of Santa Maria and Los Alamos make it an attractive destination for both local area residents and tourists. Be the first to observe diverse habitats, rare central coast scenery and spectacular views from a trail!

The Los Flores Ranch grand opening along with opening speeches, given by our Recreation and Parks Leaders and Community Partners, will begin at 9:00 a.m. on June 27th, 2009. Speeches will be followed by the ribbon cutting at 9:30 a.m. and self-guided nature walks, mountain bicycling, and equestrian tours will start at 9:45 a.m.

The City of Santa Maria is excited to open this park to the community according to the Director of Recreation and Park's, Alex Posada. "Santa Maria residents now have a unique new venue for outdoor education. Many residents have never been exposed to environmental education and this unique spot will be in their backyard," states Posada. An outdoor education center is currently under development. There will be outdoor environmental education classes offered focusing on topics ranging from ecosystems to land management. Los Flores Ranch Park is also leading an oak tree nursery program which includes 500 trees. To date, around 20 trees have been planted by local school students who grew the trees from acorns. On June 5, 2009 Fesler Junior High School students will be planting 60 additional trees.

Los Flores Ranch Park is comprised of about 1,800 acres of rolling hills south of the City of Santa Maria. The park coordinator, Billy Vinnedge, is looking forward to "caring for the beautiful property and ensuring that the community has a safe, memorable and environmentally friendly experience at the park. He urges the public to "come out and enjoy the outdoors!"



The open space contains about 8 miles of trails. Habitats range from maritime chaparral to riparian. Wildlife inhabiting the park includes but is not limited to numerous species of birds, wild hogs, squirrels, rabbits and bob cats. Cattle and calves also make their home at Los Flores Ranch Park.

The park protects the natural and cultural resources and sensitive lands and provides compatible recreation opportunities that do not damage sensitive lands. Guided docent tours are required as there is much to learn about this new park.

Recreation activities such as hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking and trail running will be available and these activity groups are encouraged to get an early glimpse of Los Flores Ranch Park and it's amenities.

Volunteer recruitment is also underway to fill critical park maintenance, docent and hiking guide roles. Training will be provided for all volunteers.

The People for Leisure and Youth, Inc. (P.L.A.Y., Inc.) is a partner of Los Flores Ranch Park and is setting up a fund to maintain Los Flores Ranch Park for future years to come.

Los Flores Ranch Park's proximity to the City of Santa Maria, the communities of Orcutt, Los Alamos and Highway 101 make it an attractive place for central coast residents and visitors to experience the great outdoors.

For additional information about Los Flores Ranch Park, please contact the City of Santa Maria Recreation and Park's Department at (805) 925-0951, extension 260.

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