

APPROVED

June 20 2021

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

BOARD REPORT

NO. 24-136

DATE June 20, 2024

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: RUNYON CANYON PARK – EARLY CLOSURE ON JULY 3, 4, AND 5, 2024 FOR THE INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY

* B. Aguirre	<u>BA</u>	M. Rudnick	_____
B. Jones	_____	C. Santo Domingo	_____
C. Stoneham	_____	N. Williams	_____



 General Manager

Approved X

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve a temporary modification of the operating hours of Runyon Canyon Park to close at 5:00 p.m. on July 3, 4, and 5, 2024.

SUMMARY

Our Nation’s Independence Day is celebrated with a number of fireworks displays in the skies over Los Angeles. However, Independence Day also invites the use of illegal fireworks at Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) parks. Illegal fireworks pose a potential fire risk to the various hillside and brush areas throughout the City. Due to the risk that these fireworks pose to the hillsides, it is important that measures be taken to discourage the use of illegal fireworks to ensure that the public is safe from any potential fire danger.

Runyon Canyon Park (Runyon Canyon) is a popular viewing area where many people gather on hill tops to view fireworks displays from afar. Due to the number of fireworks displays on July 3, 4, and 5 of each year, RAP staff believes there would be an unusually high number of visitors visiting Runyon Canyon at night to view fireworks displays on these days. RAP staff also believes that the high number of expected visitors to Runyon Canyon, along with the topography of Runyon Canyon composed of hillsides and brush areas, pose an abnormally high risk of fire danger from visitors that may bring and discharge fireworks illegally in Runyon Canyon. Also, it would be particularly challenging for the Park Rangers to police such illegal activities because of the high number of expected visitors and the large area of Runyon Canyon.

Due to the above considerations, it is recommended that Runyon Canyon be closed at 5:00 p.m. on July 3, 4, and 5, 2024. Runyon Canyon’s current hours of operation per Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 63.44 B.14(c) are “closed one hour after sunset, and open one hour before sunrise.” Park Rangers and officers from the Los Angeles Police Department’s Security Services Division plan to have units available to perform this early closure and to perform extra patrols until all fire danger from possible fireworks has subsided. This suggested early closure of Runyon

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all fire danger from possible fireworks has subsided. This suggested early closure of Runyon Canyon on July 3, 4, and 5, 2024 is meant to address the unique fire risk hazards from illegal fireworks that are posed on these early closure days, and they have been implemented for these days every year for the past several years. The 5:00 p.m. closure time will allow Park Rangers and staff sufficient time to clear out the park prior to sunset.

Council District 4, the Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council, Region Operations staff and Maintenance staff concur with this recommendation to temporarily modify the hours of operation at Runyon Canyon Park to close at 5:00 p.m. on July 3, 4, and 5, 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed Project consists in the early closure of a park and such action does not have the potential to result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment. Article 20, Section 15378 of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines define a "Project" as an activity undertaken by any public agency, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. The proposed Project does not qualify as a "Project" as defined by CEQA, therefore staff recommends that the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners take no CEQA action on this matter.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND GOALS

Approval of this Report advances RAP's strategic Plan by supporting:

Goal No. 5: Ensure an Environmentally Sustainable Park System

Outcome No. 2: A healthy urban forest across the park system

Key Metric: Prevent potential fire risk to the various hillside and brush areas.

Result: Angelenos will have continued access to Griffith Park and Runyon Canyon Park.

This Report was prepared by Stefanie Smith, Superintendent of Griffith Region.