

Robert J. Williams

Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District

Professional Summary

Certified Park & Recreation Professional with nearly 16 years' experience in parks and natural resources management; experienced with Community Service Areas (CSA), Landscape Management Districts (LMD), Permanent Road Divisions (PRD), and Park Land Dedication Ordinance (PLDO); CAPRA accreditation and reaccreditation process for two Park and Recreation Agencies. An effective leader capable of managing and leading a diverse workforce. Skilled in multiple mapping and computer software programs, including ESRI ArcGIS, Survey 123, Field Maps, Trimble GPS, virtual meeting platforms, and Basecamp. Speaker at the 2023 California Trails and Greenways, 2020 California Park & Recreation Society and 2019 Park Ranger Association of California Conferences. Recipient of numerous awards, including 2015 Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District Employee of the Year, 2016 National Collegiate Landscape Competition Superstar Award, 2020 San Diego County Parks and Recreation Directors Award, and 2021 County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer Award.

Experience

Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District (CAPRA)

Aug 2021 to Present

Bureau Chief/Natural Resources Manager

July 2016 to Apr 2020

Chief of Business Operations with direct oversight of Human Resources, Marketing, Guest Services, Special Events, Volunteer Services, and the Districts Homeless Outreach Division. Districts Public Information Specialist and Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility Liaison. Open-Space Reserve Manager of 12 wildlife reserves and 3 cultural sites covering over 30,000 acres of protected lands within Riverside County. Supervised 10 full-time and 5 part-time employees; conducted hiring and termination procedures and manage an operating budget of \$2 million. Executed the organizations long-term planning and operational goals by preparing and implementing a variety of complex strategic, fiscal, environmental, and trails plans. Actively engaged in the environmental planning, design, and development of the multi-jurisdictional Santa Ana River Trail. Knowledgeable in environmental and cultural permitting under CEQA, NEPA, and Cultural Resources. Implemented various personnel management strategies to improve employee behavior, boost morale, and increase efficiency. Completed numerous environmental reports, exotic vegetation removal, wildfire prevention plans, habitat restoration, and wildlife management plans. Managed, surveyed, and analyzed biological monitoring programs for restoration plans located on the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve. Conducted prescribe burns and post wildfire reserve management, while working with Cal-Fire and other government agencies. Supervised and reviewed research projects that were utilized by the Reserve Manager to successfully manage small mammal, avian, and plant activities. Submitted various scientific reports to federal, state, and county agencies involving long-term planning, environmental impacts, farming operations, sheep grazing, riparian habitat restoration, conservation easements, and biological surveying. Extensive knowledge of plant and animal communities and their impacts on biodiversity in California. Explained and enforced county ordinances, federal and state guidelines, and reserve management requirements. Appointed the RivCo Parks Homeless Liaison for

the Santa Ana River Watershed (over 250 active encampments) and assisted in creating the Homeless Encampment Protocol for the County of Riverside. Created, reviewed, and revised District and County policies. Knowledgeable in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and assisted with upgrading park facilities to meet federal standards. Recipient of various Federal and State grants aimed at improving the quality of life for County residents and offsetting General Fund consumption. Establishing new contracted services for the Santa Ana River Watershed intended to increase District revenue and protect sensitive habitat.

San Diego County Parks and Recreation (CAPRA)

Apr 2020 to August 2021

Chief of Departmental Operations

Managed Park Operations for 152 facilities, including regional parks, community centers, campgrounds, local parks, wildlife preserves, and 360 miles of trail within the County of San Diego. Oversight of 10 Park Region Managers with over 100 FTE and 200 seasonal staff, an annual operating budget of \$40 million, Capital Improvement Funds of \$65 million, and \$11 million in Major Maintenance Improvement Projects. Directed, organized, and coordinated multi-disciplinary professional and non-professional staff to carry out various department programs that involve oversight of planning and development, financial, budgetary, and related administrative functions. Established community advisory committees, participated in community services area meetings, and worked directly with the Land Use and Environment Group to support the County of San Diego vision to protect, preserve and provide recreation for residents. Reviewed programs for risk, progress, and implementation in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. Utilized grants and general funds to design and construct multimillion-dollar park facilities including campgrounds, community parks, and infrastructure upgrades. Created community engagement plans for future park development projects, which included surveys, outreach meetings, and social media campaigns. Developed weed abatement management plans and fire mitigation programs for State Responsibility Areas (SRA) and County Preserves. Submitted Board Letters and conducted presentations to the County Board of Supervisors, Park Advisory Committee, community stakeholders, and non-profit groups. Successfully implemented COVID-19 Safe Reopening Plans, Public Health Protocols, State Industry Guidance, and local health orders to protect park personnel and improve the quality of life of County residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Developed a mentorship program that promoted professional development and organizational acumen. Developed a 5-year forecast, annual reports, Climate Action Plans, and Park Master Plans to ensure both short and long-range goals are being accomplished. Created and managed numerous lease agreements, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agreements. Established fee waiver programs and obtained funds for essential workers under the CARES Act and ARPA federal programs. Participated in the National Recreation and Park Association CAPRA reaccreditation and was section leader on for numerous Standards. Engaged County Counsel to address potential lawsuits against the County and Freedom of Informational Act (FOIA) request.

Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District**Feb 2013 to July 2016****Park Ranger Supervisor**

Supervised and evaluated the work of Open-Space staff conducting wildlife management, exotic vegetation removal, habitat restoration projects located at Hidden Valley Wildlife Area and Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. Efficiently managed sensitive conservation areas under the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Directed the Arundo Invasive Plant Removal Program located on the Santa Ana River. Conducted farming and pond management for migratory birds, while abiding by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Conversant in environmental permits including Clean Water Act section 401/404 permits and Cal Fish and Wildlife 1600 Streambed Alteration Permits.

Supervised and monitored endangered species restoration projects, while engaging with US Fish & Wildlife Service. Conducted hiring, work monitoring, evaluations, and discipline of seasonal and full-time personnel. Skilled and trained in FMLA, Worker Compensation, union negotiations, and other Human Resources related items. Prepared documents for services, contracts, and purchase orders for park projects. Monitored and restored over 100 miles of equestrian, bike, and hiking trails in Riverside County. Developed and managed programs with budgets totaling \$1.3 million annually.

Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District**Aug 2007 to Feb 2013****Park Ranger I & II**

Explained and enforced Riverside County Ordinances and State Fish and Wildlife regulations to park visitors as a patrol Ranger for the Natural Resources Division. Created interpretive programs for the Hidden Valley Nature Center that focused on wildlife, water management, and insects. Manufactured and installed gates, fences, and irrigation on Open-Space lands. Organized Work Release Program workers and Cal-Fire inmate crews for various projects including vegetation management and fire protection. Conducted habitat restoration in riparian and grassland habitats. Experienced in various off-road vehicles and heavy equipment operations comprising of ATVs, 4x4 trucks, bobcats, tractors, and excavators. Participated in contract bids for capital improvement projects.

United States Army**2002 to 2010****Infantryman**

Combat infantryman trained in leadership, combative, and weapons drills. Achieved team leader in Iraq and served in both active duty and reserves. Trained, directed, disciplined, and evaluated soldier performances while on active duty and in the reserves.

Specialized Certifications

- Certified Park & Recreation Professional (NRPA)
- Strategic Leadership Academy (COR)
- Qualified Applicators License- Category B/F (CADPR)
- PC 832 - Arrest, Search and Seizure

- Environmental Leadership
- Baton (RCB) / Pepper Spray (OC)

Memberships

- National Recreation and Park Association
- California Park & Recreation Society
- National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (NACPRO)
- California Invasive Plant Council
- Park Ranger Association of California

Education

California Baptist University

Master of Public Administration, 2021

Related courses include Leadership, Ethics, Conflict Management, Public Finance and Budgeting, and Personnel Management.

Cal State San Marcos

Environmental Leadership Academy, 2017

Cal Poly Pomona

Bachelors of Science in Plant Science, 2016

Related courses include Botany, Horticulture, Integrated Pest Management, Water Management, and Environmental Planning, Leadership.

Mt. SAC Community College

Related courses include Park Management, Sports Turf, and Irrigation Design.