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## Small Donations Pay Off at Busy Sawyer Camp Trail

**SAN MATEO, Calif.** – No one likes a pay toilet. But paying for a better toilet is another matter.

That's certainly true at Sawyer Camp Trail, one of the Bay Area's busiest trails where hikers, cyclists, and other trail users have donated about \$200 a week in small change toward better bathrooms.

The Parks Department is pleased to announce that new concrete restrooms have replaced six well-used plastic porta-potties at the southern entrance. With concrete walls and windows, the new restrooms have all new fixtures and are fully accessible.

“The County Parks Department is happy to complete a long needed improvement for our trail users, and put their contributions to work” said Parks Director Dave Holland. “We've had people dropping their loose change into the donation box so everyone can enjoy the trail a bit more.”

Stretching from the San Mateo/Burlingame border to Millbrae, the six-mile paved trail attracts about 300,000 visitors a year. It's popular with seniors and a family because it's mostly level and offers spectacular views of Lower Crystal Springs Reservoir, birds and wildlife.

“In all honesty, the porta-potties really detracted from the outdoor experience,” Holland said. “But replacing those porta-potties was an expensive undertaking that we could not have accomplished without the help of our dedicated visitors.”

The \$95,000 project includes four new prefabricated concrete vault toilet buildings. This change also reduces the overall cost of maintenance and operation while providing cleaner facilities for public use.

The majority of the donations were small amounts from anonymous donors usually left in the donation box at the south entrance to Sawyer Camp Trail. The box filled with about \$200 a week in donations.

San Mateo County Park planners are now focusing on a way to bring drinking water to the south entrance of the trail. But cost is a significant issue that will need to be addressed before this becomes a reality.

“We're happy about the toilets but we'd also very much like to provide drinking water for our 300,000 or more visitors a year that use the trail,” Holland said.

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