

Public Statement from the Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District
About Cancellation of the 2026 South Coast Youth Swim Lessons at Sea Ranch

Consistent with Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District practice over the past two decades, District staff began coordinating with The Sea Ranch Association (TSRA) in November 2025 on planning and approvals for the 2026 South Coast Youth Swim Lessons. On December 17, 2025, TSRA staff told District staff that charging registration fees for youth swimming lessons is prohibited by TSRA rules. The District sent a letter to the TSRA staff on January 8, 2026, that acknowledged the TSRA prohibition of user fees and informed TSRA that failure to recover taxpayer costs for the swimming lessons would be a gift of public funds, which is prohibited by the California Constitution. The District told TSRA that it cannot provide swimming lessons without a way to offset taxpayer costs.

Regrettably, a TSRA rule has forced the District to cancel youth swimming lessons at Ohlson Pool this summer, after years of charging registration fees to offset taxpayer costs. At this point, there is no practical way for the District to recover the long lead time needed to organize and deliver the program in 2026. Nevertheless, the District will continue to explore other programs that provide Sea Ranch residents and visitors with access to active recreational opportunities.