



Ventura County
Chapter of the
**California Special
Districts Association**
Building Community, Making Connections

Newsletter

August/September
2026

President's Message

Dear VCSDA members,

With the celebrations this summer for the 250th, it caused me to reflect on the history of our local area; where we've been and where we're headed as a county and as a network of special districts.

Ventura County was founded in 1872, when it separated from Santa Barbara County. At that time, our region was largely rural, with small communities just beginning to take shape. Over the past 150+ years, Ventura County has grown into a vibrant and diverse place to live, work, and raise a family. Through every stage of that growth, special districts have played a vital role in supporting our communities.

From providing safe and reliable water, to protecting lives and property through fire service, to maintaining parks, ports, open space, sanitation, and so much more. Special districts are the backbone of the essential services that residents depend on every day. Often working quietly behind the scenes, our districts ensure that Ventura County continues to thrive.

With growth comes new challenges. Increasing service demands, aging infrastructure, environmental concerns, and the need for innovation all require thoughtful leadership and collaboration. That is why opportunities like the upcoming California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Annual Conference are so important. Later this month, many of us will gather with colleagues from across the state to share ideas, learn best practices, and bring valuable insights back to Ventura County.

I am proud of the work being done by our member districts and the commitment you each bring to serving your communities. As we look ahead, I am confident that by working together, we will continue to meet the evolving needs of our county while honoring the strong foundation built over generations.

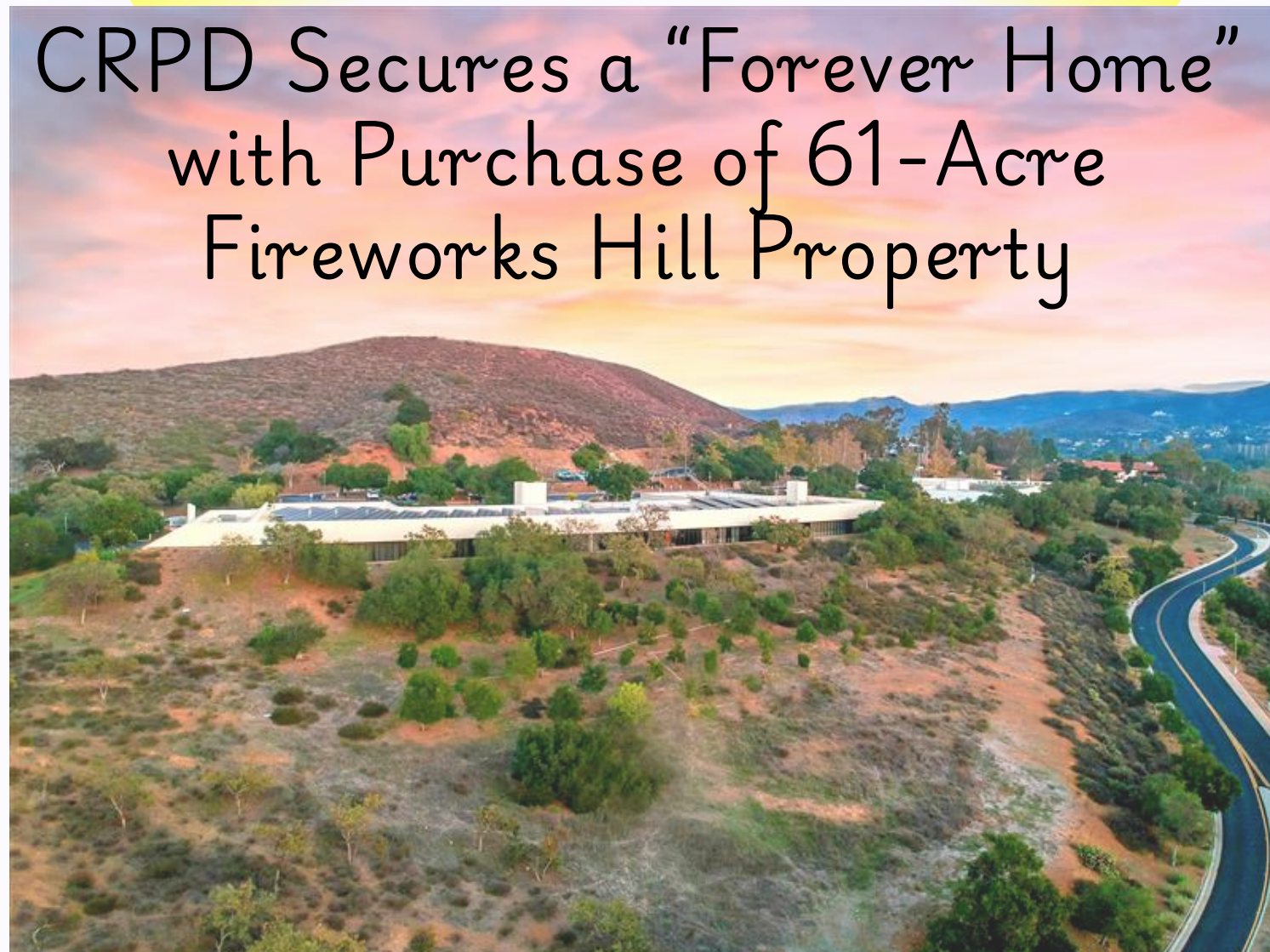
Thank you for your continued dedication and service to Ventura County.

Sincerely,

Nellie Cusworth, President
Ventura County Special Districts Association

VCSDA Spotlight

CRPD Secures a "Forever Home" with Purchase of 61-Acre Fireworks Hill Property



Conejo Recreation and Park District (CRPD) has purchased the 61-acre Fireworks Hill property, including the Hillcrest Center campus, securing a permanent home for District headquarters and valuable public parkland for the future.

Since 2002, CRPD has leased the 34,000-square-foot building at 403 W. Hillcrest Drive, home to its administrative headquarters and the Hillcrest Center for the Arts. With the 25-year lease nearing its end, the City of Thousand Oaks announced plans to sell the property to help fund its Downtown mixed-use project.

CRPD purchased the property for its \$30.4 million fair market value. The acquisition includes the Hillcrest Center building and a vacant 21,000-square-foot building formerly occupied by the National Park Service. Funding included \$13.4 million in District funds, a \$2 million grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and \$15 million in 20-year financing. Annual debt-service payments of approximately \$1.2 million will be covered by existing District revenues.

CRPD will continue operating its headquarters and the Hillcrest Center for the Arts at the property. Subject to Board approval, the neighboring building could provide space for community programs, Therapeutic Recreation, and a potential event center. Public access and selected park areas may also be improved as funding becomes available.

As Thousand Oaks continues to grow, acquiring Fireworks Hill helps preserve parkland for current and future residents while providing CRPD with a permanent home and a long-term investment in parks, recreation, and community spaces.

June Meeting Recap

