

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 2/11/02
Department Name: Parks
Department No.: 052
Agenda Date: 3/5/02
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 1 1/2 hours
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jennifer Briggs
Director of Parks

STAFF CONTACT: Coleen Lund, P.E.
Project Manager, x2470

SUBJECT: Goleta Beach Long Term Beach Restoration and Shoreline Management Plan;
Second Supervisorial District

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Approve the Goleta Beach Long Term Beach Restoration and Shoreline Management Plan (Plan) as required by the California Coastal Commission as a condition prior to the issuance of further permits for protective sand berms at the park and direct staff as follows:

1. In cooperation with the Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON), monitor the effectiveness of the proposed BEACON Demonstration Project anticipated to commence in Fall 2002 at Goleta Beach County Park. Report back in Fall 2003, approximately 1 year after the completion of the BEACON project, or earlier if necessary, to direct further action depending on the following potential alternative scenarios:
 - a. An effective BEACON beach nourishment project:
Continue monitoring and report back in successive years.
 - b. A partially effective BEACON beach nourishment project:
Consider continuing sand berm construction and seeking funding for either a second beach nourishment project and/or hard structure protection as recommended in the Long Term Management Plan.
 - c. An ineffective BEACON beach nourishment project:
Consider continuing sand berm construction and /or seek funding for hard structure protection as recommended in the Long Term Management Plan.
2. Pursue a multi-year permit from the regulatory agencies to continue placement of a protective sand berm at Goleta Beach County Park with specific criteria and field conditions to be developed that would warrant placement of the berm each year as recommended in the Long Term Management Plan.
3. Seek a permit from the regulatory agencies for the existing revetments to remain in place at the east and west ends of the park as recommended in the Long Term Management Plan.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan: The recommendations are primarily aligned with: Goal No. 5. A High Quality of Life for All Residents. and Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Goleta Beach County Park, located in the unincorporated area of Goleta, is the only fully accessible public beach in the Goleta area. Goleta Beach Park facilitates and accommodates over 1.5 million visitors annually providing many recreational opportunities while providing for important surrounding ecological communities.

The purpose of the Goleta Beach Long Term Beach Restoration and Shoreline Management Plan is to address the long term objectives of maintaining a recreational beach with parking and coastal access, maintaining or improving environmental conditions at the park, and minimizing costs, in part by protecting assets such as parking lots, buildings and utility lines. In particular, the report considers alternatives to the current practice of constructing a sand dike each fall to protect the park infrastructure. The Plan also meets Special Condition No. 4 of the Coastal Commission's Permit 4-00-193 issued for the construction of a sand berm in winter 2000-01. Special Condition 4 of this permit states:

“If the applicant proposes to expand or restore the approved berm, or construct a new berm after Memorial Day 2001, then the applicant shall submit as part of any application to the Commission for such development a detailed evaluation of the feasibility of all long-term solutions and potential alternatives to the proposed project (including importation of donor sand material from on offsite inland source and coordination with the Santa Barbara County Flood Control District in order to utilize sand material from local dredging projects for construction of the berm.)”

Some of the recreational opportunities provided at Goleta Beach County Park include swimming, sunbathing, fishing from the Goleta Pier, boating, jet skiing, picnicking, barbecuing, a children's playground and dining at the Beachside Café and Bar. The Park also provides several public restrooms, parking areas, structures used for storage of Park equipment and vehicles, a launch ramp, a boat launch crane and residential structures occupied by the Park Rangers. Goleta Beach is the only significant public beach in the Goleta area and is therefore heavily used and a valuable public amenity. El Capitan State Beach, approximately 13 miles west of Goleta Beach and Arroyo Burro Beach County Park approximately 9.5 miles east are the next two closest beach recreation areas offering similar amenities to those offered at Goleta Beach County Park.

Goleta Beach Park is surrounded by the 360-acre Goleta Slough. This undeveloped and natural lagoon and marsh is important to many birds as an area for feeding and nesting.

Over the years, Goleta Beach Park and beach area has exhibited serious erosion. It has been impacted by the 1995 and 1998 El Niño events as well as seasonable storm waves combined with high tidal events in 1999, 2000 and 2001, all causing a significant loss of sandy beach and lawn area, and causing damage to the parking lots. Utility lines (pressure sewer, reclaimed water main, pressure gas main, gravity sewer, electrical, water and telephone) running through the park are in jeopardy if erosion continues.

A temporary rock revetment was constructed to protect the upland area in March 2000. This rock was removed in November 2000 at the direction of the County Board of Supervisors. An interim sand berm was constructed from sand at the park and material dredged from Goleta Slough and its tributaries, and placed in front of the park area over the winter season of 2000-01 and more recently this winter storm season.

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The berm has performed well to protect the upland park area, although erosion has still occurred. Repeated construction of the dike as a long-term solution to the beach erosion could be considered potentially undesirable unless weighed against other alternative measures. In July 2001, a contract was let to Moffatt & Nichol Engineers to analyze potential alternatives, consult with local stakeholders and the general public, and make recommendations for long-term beach restoration and shoreline erosion management.

Stakeholder and Public Input

An initial inventory of alternatives for long-term beach restoration and shoreline erosion management was developed by Moffatt & Nichol Engineers and was presented to a group of stakeholders on August 21, 2001. Appendix A of the Plan provides the attendance list for this and the second stakeholder meeting, as well as the invitation list for the second stakeholder meeting. The alternatives described at this first meeting are consistent with California's State Draft Policy for beach erosion (Resources Agency of California, 2001) and included the following:

- Relocation of park facilities or managed retreat;
- Beach nourishment;
- Continued construction of the winter sand berm;
- Beach nourishment combined with sand retention structures such as breakwaters or groins;
- Buried or shaped shoreline protection structures (seawalls or revetments), alone or in combination with beach nourishment.

At the first stakeholder meeting, it was agreed that beach nourishment alone, and beach nourishment combined with sand retention structures would be considered further. Managed retreat would not be considered feasible in this location, and seawalls or revetments alone would not be considered since they would not expand the beach area, the primary goal of the Plan.

The results of the initial engineering analysis of alternatives were posted on Santa Barbara County Parks' Web site as the 80% draft Plan, and were presented at a second stakeholder meeting on October 15, 2001. The options of beach nourishment alone, and beach nourishment in combination with either a groin or one or more breakwaters were described. Additionally, the usefulness of dune planting, and the future of the existing rock revetments were discussed. At this meeting, there were extensive discussions of the acceptability of buried rock revetments used as a last line of defense in combination with beach nourishment.

A similar presentation was given at a public meeting on October 27, 2001. Unfortunately, one of the public notices gave the wrong date for this meeting, and the attendance was rather small. The effectiveness of a rock revetment in protecting park infrastructure, although not the beach, was again raised at this meeting. The attending public also proposed two alternative measures for beach management included planting giant kelp and moving the mouth of Goleta Slough up coast at this meeting.

The Plan was also presented during an evening hearing in front of the Santa Barbara County Park Commission on December 6, 2001. The Park Commission approved the Plan for purposes of forwarding it on to your Board for approval.

The attached Plan takes into account the comments at the second stakeholder, the public meeting, and the Park Commission meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PLAN

In following with the State Resources Agency's plan for shoreline management, the Goleta Beach Long Term Beach Restoration and Shoreline Management Plan recommends continuing to move forward with the proposed BEACON demonstration project. The Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON) is a California Joint Powers agency established to deal with coastal erosion and beach problems on the Central Coast of California. The agencies making up BEACON are Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties and the cities of Port Hueneme, Oxnard, San Buenaventura, Carpinteria and Santa Barbara. This project, primarily funded with a grant from the Coastal Conservancy, will pump approximately 250,000 cubic yards of beach quality sand directly onto Goleta Beach. This effort has been underway for the past 2 years and is anticipated to begin fall 2002. Rough estimations of the length of time that this sand will remain on Goleta Beach in a quantity large enough to protect the park during the high winter storm tides is approximately two years. After this, the Plan recommends a second beach nourishment effort. Monitoring of the initial BEACON project will assist in providing County Parks and your Board with the data necessary to predict whether this effort will be worth pursuing in future years or if other alternatives as recommended in the Plan will be required.

Until the beach nourishment efforts can be considered as an effective long term treatment and solution for Goleta Beach, the Plan recommends that the County continue with the permitting for the winter sand berm and repairing the existing revetments that have been protecting the park for over the last 16 – 30 years. The requirements of the sand berm would be such that only if the beach began to show signs of erosion and loss as witnessed over the last 2-3 winters, would the berm be put in place. If the BEACON demonstration project proves effective, no berm would be placed. If the BEACON project is not effective, the berm will be required as a back up to protecting the park. The permit must be in place and ready for implementation for this to occur. A 5-year permit will allow the County to move forward as necessary without having to return to the permitting agencies each year for a permit. The application process for a berm each year must start in June or July, previous to the winter anticipated for placement of the berm. With the BEACON project, the fate of the beach nourishment efforts may not be known until much later, at which time it would be too late to apply for the sand berm permits. The Army Corp of Engineers has already granted a 5-year permit (without these proposed site conditions). Other multi-year permits for the berm are proposed to be requested from the County Planning & Development, the California Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission.

The existing revetments serve as an important protection to the existing parking areas and restroom at the park. Records indicate that rock was first placed at the east end of the beach in the 1950's and 1960's. The western revetment was installed after the El Nino events of 1984-85 and requires a permit to remain in place. Over the years, the rock has become displaced expanding out onto the sandy beach area. This has made the revetments less effective. Results of the lack of proper maintenance of the rock has resulted in the parking areas behind the revetments becoming undermined and eroded. The repairs would consist of placing rock up into the revetment and relocating and adding rock as necessary to stabilize the revetment. No expansion in length to the east end revetment would occur. The Long Term Plan recommends that the County inquire with UCSB as to their willingness to participate in a small westerly extension to the western revetment to cover the existing bluff 'pocket' in front of the existing UCSB sewer pump station.

Mandates and Service Levels: No mandate or impact to existing levels of service with these actions.

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Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: Funds to process a multi-year berm permit and the estimated cost to repair the revetments are available in the park accumulative capital outlay budget and include funds used to repair the sand berm in winter 2001 that have been reimbursed from OES.

Special Instructions: Clerk of the Board to provide a copy of the minute order to County Parks.

Attachment: Goleta Beach Long Term Beach Restoration and Shoreline Management Plan
(The Plan is also available on line at www.sbparcs.org.)