

July 19, 2004

Santa Barbara County Park Commission
610 Mission Canyon Rd
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Attention:

Suzanne Perkins
Harriett Phillips
Marjorie Erickson
Gene Petersen
Frances Romero

Dear Chair Romero and Commissioners:

We are pleased to submit this letter on behalf of a majority of the members of the Goleta Beach Working Group.

After some six months of education, discussion, and debate regarding the issues concerning the future of Goleta Beach Park we seek to clarify our position on this important issue.

As members of the Goleta Beach Master Planning Group we base our position on the following premise:

1. Goleta Beach Park is an irreplaceable asset to the community at large.
2. The community values this park as a public recreation facility that is free and accessible.
3. The current usage and amenities at the park best serve the community's needs.

To date very little recognition of the value of the park by the community has been given in the process. We feel to ignore this value, would be a disservice to the members of the community we represent.

Our informed opinion that the most responsible action this group can take is to make every effort to protect and maintain the park and its infrastructure for the benefit of the community at large.

In order to achieve protection, we must first conclude that the problem that exists at Goleta Beach Park is one of a "sand deficit," allowing erosion of the parkland and destruction of the public's amenities.

The only reasonable method for managing the problem will be to promote a project that addresses preservation of the shoreline and adding and/or retaining sand on the beach.

To provide for this, we can support a project which:

1. Utilizes engineered buried rock revetments to act as a last line of defense during heavy winter storms.
2. Continues and expands on beach nourishment and opportunistic fill efforts.
3. Employs sand retention devices such as, artificial headlands, artificial reefs, groins, so sand added to the beach stays in place while mitigating wave energy.

We have a general concern regarding the concept of "managed retreat." No information about this concept gives us any level of confidence that it is a viable or appropriate alternative for the specific problem at hand. Retreat most certainly does not address the problem of retaining sand on the beach or maintaining the park. In fact, it sets a dangerous policy precedent for the County: that the park, its amenities, and facilities are disposable; especially when we have feasible alternatives that can be implemented to achieve the community goals. We will support a solution that is designed to halt further landward erosion and loss of public park.

We would also request that the language of so called "soft" or "hard" solutions, and the word "interplay" be taken out of any documentation. These terms have never been defined and are too ambiguous and charged to be incorporated in a balanced report.

There are Coastal Act policies that allow for preservation of public amenities. We ask that projects be studied that achieve preservation.

We remind you of the Santa Barbara County Parks Mission Statement:

"To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the residents and visitors of Santa Barbara County by preserving the county's most valued natural and cultural resources, and by providing opportunities for passive recreational experiences."

Sincerely,

Kristen Amyx
Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce

Ed de la Torre
Public at Large

Nancy Graham
Friends of Goleta Beach

Dave Hardy
Beachside Bar & Café

Judy Johnson
Public at Large

Mike Kanno
Goleta Water District

Tim Mahoney
Southern California Gas Company

Harriett Phillips
Park Commissioner – 2nd District

Dan Secord
City of Santa Barbara

Kathleen Werner
Goleta Sanitary District