

ENVIRONMENTAL

CONSERVATION

Conservation is the wise management of natural and man-made resources to assure their continued availability for use, appreciation, and enjoyment. It is a respect for our environment which yields a better quality of life.

Natural resources in Hermosa Beach include the beach, the sand hills, the underlying bedrock, the soils spread over the bedrock, the natural land forms, and the vegetation whose roots penetrate the soil. Additional resources are areas where mineral resources may be extracted, site of archaeological or historical significance, and buildings of aesthetic or historical interest.

Objectives

The objectives of the conservation plan is to preserve and enhance the nature environment consistent with human needs. Excessive water runoff from the hills must be avoided. Erosion of the soil must be minimized. Fire hazards must be reduced. Outfalls of pollutants on our beach must be minimized. Prevention of damage to structures must be achieved with the least possible alteration of the natural ecology. Enhancement of the aesthetic environment must be consistent with human recreational needs and the preservation of wildlife habitat. The quality of air and water must be improved by providing pollution-free areas for percolation into the water table and the preservation of salt water intrusion and healthy vegetation for photosynthesis.

Identification of Nature Resources in Hermosa Beach

1. Water Resources

The City of Hermosa Beach includes within its corporate boundaries approximately 5.4 square miles of ocean area.

This ocean area is used primarily for recreational purposes: surfing, swimming, and sport fishing. Commercial vessels occasionally pass through the area, however, commercial fishing is not active within the area.

"Except as follows, no oil drilling or other mining shall take place within the City boundaries (although there are a few old pumping stations). Oil and gas drilling shall be allowed only if it has been or is approved by a vote of the people."

2. Sand Beach

A sand beach of between 250 and 450 feet in depth abuts the ocean area. The beach is about 1.8 miles long within the City limits and is part of the beach complex that rings the Santa Monica Bay. It is one of the widest beaches on the public shoreline and is used as a regional recreation resource. It is known as an excellent surfing beach. The beach is accreting at a relatively rapid rate. This condition has existed since the construction of King Harbor Marina at the south boundary of the City. It has been assumed that this condition will continue until a sufficient beach width has been achieved to allow free passage of sand around the groin protecting the Marina.

3. Others

No other natural resource is known to exist in Hermosa Beach except sub-surface oil deposits.

Relationship Between Resources.

The usability of the ocean and beach resource is directly related to the quality of the resource. The beach cannot be kept clean and safe for human use if the ocean is despoiled.

The ocean will become despoiled if the beach is misused or abused. For this reason, the Beach Development Plan (following) considers these two as inseparable resources.

"Drilling or mining of any natural resources directly on the beach area or from off-shore platforms may result in the spoiling of both beach and ocean. If done off-shore, it would present an especially high risk for both the ocean and the beach."

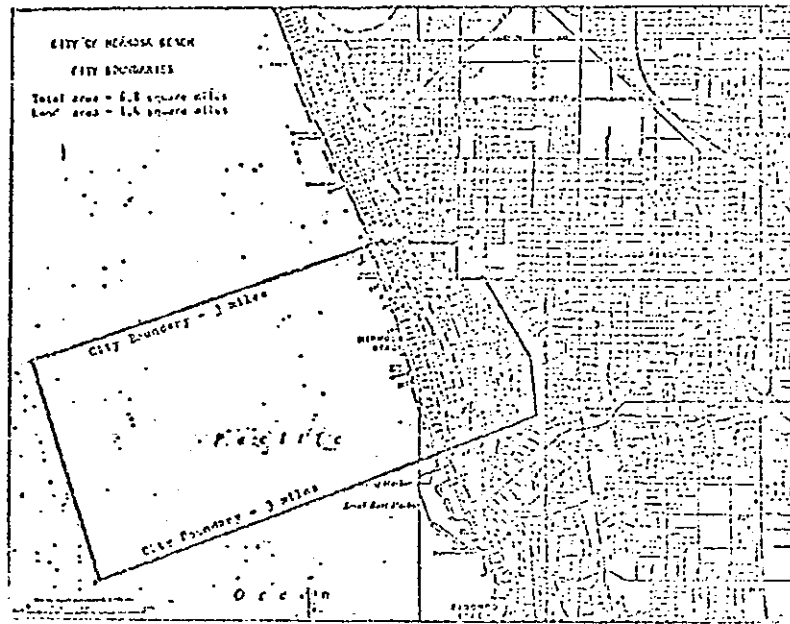
What Can Be Done to Conserve Resources?

Excessive runoff of storm waters presents problems for the environment and for the human occupants of an area. Problems include erosion, siltation, and street flooding.

Policy 1: Neither the ocean or beach will support private development of any sort. The ocean is placed in the Open Space zone under the provisions of the Open Space Plan, and is not subject to development of any sort. Use is restricted to navigation of ocean going vessels and recreation. It is to be considered public trust to be retained in open and safe public usage without treatment of major pollutants. The tidelands grant includes the ocean area to the three-mile limit. The City owns the beach area by several methods; dedication for beach purpose, dedication as public right-of-way, fee simple purchase and tidelands grant.

Policy 2: the ocean "Drilling or mining of any natural resources directly on the beach or by off-shore platform in the ocean is to be prohibited. Oil and gas drilling may be done by means of slant drilling from an on-shore drill site, except for the beach area, into the tidelands if it has been or is approved by a vote of the people."

Policy 3: The City has selected the New Zealand Christmas Tree as its official tree. The Daisy has been selected as the City Flower. The City Council has declared the City a Wild Bird Refuge. The Greenwood Park has been declared a Roadside Rest.



Policy 4: The beach should remain the property of the City with maintenance and lifeguard services contracted by the County, as is now done.

Policy 5: No additional structures should be allowed on the beach, except public restrooms where absolutely necessary, and should be held to a minimum both in size and number. Lifeguard structures should be held to a minimum, both in size and number, consistent with good safety practices. Structures on the beach usually detract from the natural beauty of the beach. However, some structures, such as lifeguard stands, are necessary.

Policy 6: Improved and more functional lighting on the Strand.

Policy 7: Vehicular traffic, including lifeguard trucks and police cars, should be barred from the beach and the Strand except for emergencies and for necessary cleaning functions. Vehicular traffic on the beach is both disturbing and hazardous to the beach users. In fact, the legal instrument which dedicated the majority of the beach to the City specifically prohibits vehicular traffic on that portion so dedicated. Motorized equipment, however, is necessary to effectively clean the beach.

Policy 8: There shall be expansion of recreational activities on the beach, both during the daylight hours and night hours.

Policy 9: The beach should always be considered and treated as a recreational asset and never as a commercial enterprise.

Policy 10: Existing structures (lifeguard stands and play equipment) should be examined to confirm the need for the present number of such structures. The Parks and Recreation Department should pursue this with the County Department of Beaches. At the same time, the Department of Parks and Recreation should explore the availability of lifeguard stand structures that are more attractive, and of moving unneeded stations from the beach during the off-season.

Policy 11: Any landscaping on the beach should be based on a precise plan that encompasses the entire beach.

For the present, landscaping on the beach should be restricted to that considered desirable around the new lifeguard headquarters, around the proposed restroom at the north end of the beach, and at the south end of the beach.

Landscaping by abutting residents and other property owners should be encouraged. The City should offer assistance in plant selections and placement.

Policy 12: The City should now do some interim repairs to the Strand where it is most badly needed. Lighting should be adequate to provide for the safe use of the Strand during the evening hours.

The Strand, between 11th and 15th Streets, should be modified with landscaping in conjunction with the lifeguard headquarters and the downtown business area.

The City should modify the Strand or regulate its uses so as to prevent hazardous congestion and conflict of uses.

Policy 13: Additional and different recreational activities should be encouraged. Table A is a list of good recreational activities. This Committee recommends that all items listed be considered by that particular emphasis be placed on consideration of night surfing, diving and fishing tournaments. Children's recreation equipment should be limited to slides, swings, and climbing apparatus of a non-obstructive design. These should be located near major or primary entrances to the beach, at least 100 feet from the Strand wall.

Policy 14: Encourage programs to improve the quality of storm water runoff. Minimize the effects of water runoff.

Two programs should be pursued to put this policy into effects.

TABLE A

RECREATION ACTIVITIES

Dory Races
Water Skiing
Surf Ski Races
Sailboat Races
Distance Running
Badminton Courts
Sport Fishing Boats
Kite Flying Contest
Water Polo in the Surf
Flag and Touch Football
Underwater Safety Courses
Board Surfing and Lessons
Swimming and Swimming Lessons
Over-the-Line Softball Tournament
Volleyball Instruction and League Tournament
Fishing Classes, Derbys and Clubs, Fishing Pier
Skin Diving Instruction and Club
Swimming Instruction and Club
Sailing Instruction and Club
Body Surfing and Lessons
Tandem Surfboard Races
Sand Castle Building
Skate Board Contest
Life Saving Courses
Frisbee Contest
Sailing Regattas
Water Carnival
Stilt Races
Foot Races

Program 1: Review Hermosa Beach's grading ordinance and revise it where necessary.

The grading ordinance should be constantly reviewed and revised to keep it current with new knowledge. Erosion can be minimized by controlling grading and the removal of ground cover.

Program 2: Require as much planting as is feasible for new construction on major remodels. This should be required as part of the review process of new development.

Policy 15: Prevent salt water intrusion by injecting water underground to create a barrier.

Policy 16: More City-owned land, not presently landscaped, could be opened to public use for garden plots. Some private owners of larger prime soil areas already provide garden land to their employees or other groups. This practice could be expanded.