



San Mateo County Harbor District

Board of Harbor Commissioners

Tom Mattusch, President
Nicole David, Vice President
Robert Bernardo, Secretary
Pietro Parravano, Treasurer
Sabrina Brennan, Commissioner

Glenn Lazof, Interim General Manager

Item 13

Replacement Letter



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August 19, 2015

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
99 Pacific Street, Bldg. 455A
Monterey, CA 93940

Dear Mr. Michel,

The San Mateo County Harbor District is looking forward to addressing erosion at Surfer's Beach and to coordinating our efforts with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. We thank Superintendent Maria Brown and her team for her supportive letter and are excited about the opportunity to collaboratively develop short-term and long-term solutions for shoreline protection at Surfer's Beach.

While two harbors in the Santa Cruz Littoral Cell have optimized dredging operations with beneficial use of sand on adjacent beaches, the third one, Pillar Point Harbor, remains one of the few harbors on the coast of California without a beach nourishment effort. Because of this, much-needed sand gets stuck behind the Harbor breakwater, and is not allowed to continue on its natural north-to-south path, resulting in sand-starved beaches down the coast.

Over the past 50 years, an estimated 250,000 cubic yards of sand has been deposited in the Harbor, the same sand that should have continued to replenish the coast to the south. At the same time, beach erosion accelerated from inches to several feet per year to the south of the Harbor. This significant, rapid erosion and beach loss have threatened sandy beach habitat, greatly diminished opportunities for public recreation, and continues to put beaches, roadways, bike paths, and structures at risk.

It is our understanding that MBNMS is initiating a process to update its management plan this year. As part of this update, we strongly urge you to amend your plan and regulations (CFR 922.132(f)) to allow for the placement of clean dredged material within the sanctuaries for beneficial beach nourishment if the effort mitigates shoreline erosion. We believe these important changes would be consistent with the goal outlined in your Coastal Armoring Action Plan "to reduce expansion of hard coastal armoring in the coastal areas near the MBNMS through proactive regional planning, project tracking, and comprehensive permit analysis and compliance". Further, it would allow Surfer's Beach to receive sand from Pillar Point Harbor that, without the presence of the breakwater, would have naturally been deposited in this area as a result of the natural sediment transport processes of the Santa Cruz Littoral



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Cell. Utilizing clean sand as a resource will provide the much-needed beach replenishment and reduce erosion at this site, and it will also reduce the risk of erosion and impacts to sandy beaches further down the coast.

Not only is this a cost-effective and practical solution to sustain the economic viability of Pillar Point Harbor, but it fulfills the need for a more durable and sustainable solution to erosion control for Highway One. We understand the need for some short-term solutions, such as the emergency revetment to be installed by Caltrans this fall. However, longer-term solutions are also needed and a pilot beach nourishment project would be an important step to provide local agencies the ability to manage their own finite and eroding recreational resources at a time of increased public usage. Simultaneously, developing a longer-term solution with continuous beach nourishment will result in shoreline protection that does not rely on further coastal armoring.

Sincerely,

Tom Mattusch, President
San Mateo County Harbor District

Cc:

Maria Brown, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
Max Delaney, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
Charles Lester, California Coastal Commission
Renee Ananda, California Coastal Commission
Clifton Davenport, California Sediment Management Plan
Chris Potter, California Sediment Management Plan
Ron Moriguchi, California Department of Transportation
Bob Solatar, California Department of Transportation
Tom Kendall, US Army Corps of Engineers
Tessa Beach, US Army Corps of Engineers
James Zoulas, US Army Corps of Engineers
Brian Ross, US Environmental Protection Agency
William Douros, ONMS West Coast Regional Director
Nicholas Calderon, County of San Mateo, Supervisor Don Horsley's Office