



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Subject: Beach Ecology and Maintenance Policy	Index: Public Service Facilities & Activities
	Number: 702-6
Effective Date: February 5, 2013	Prepared By: Beaches, Parks & Recreation Department
Supersedes: New	Approved By: <i>Rahit Bar</i>

1.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to provide direction for the management and maintenance of the City's beach that seeks to protect, maintain, and where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the beach environment.

Rationale: San Clemente's beach is an important environmental resource for the City that provides coastal protection from erosion and extreme weather and oceanic events, natural habitat for marine and coastal species, recreational activities and space, and an economic revenue source. To continue to provide these services, the beach must be maintained and managed in way that ensures the public's safety and enjoyment, as well as a sustainable beach ecosystem. (A sustainable beach is structurally safe, ecologically healthy, productive and resilient, and aesthetically enjoyable and memorable to citizens and visitors.)

2.0 ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED:

All Departments and Divisions

3.0 REFERENCES:

San Clemente General Plan
San Clemente Beaches, Parks and Recreation Master Plan
San Clemente Policy # 702-2: Management of Beach Facilities
San Clemente Policy # 702-3: Beach Sand Nourishment
San Clemente Sustainability Action Plan
California Climate Change Adaptation Policy Guide Draft 2012
California Coastal Act of 1976
California Environmental Quality Act 2012-update

Coastal Zone Management Act 2012-update
Endangered Species Act 2012-update
National Environmental Policy Act 2012
Orange County Coastal Regional Sediment Management Plan Draft 2012

4.0 POLICY:

Recognizing the vital importance of San Clemente's beach, and its duty to protect, maintain, and whenever feasible, enhance and restore the natural environment for present and future generations, the City of San Clemente shall employ an integrated beach management and maintenance approach that considers the entire beach ecosystem. This approach shall sustain the beach ecosystem in a safe, healthy, productive and resilient condition by:

- 4.1 Recognizing changes and connections within and across the ecosystem
- 4.2 Addressing cumulative impacts
- 4.3 Managing for multiple objectives and users

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 5.1 **"City"** shall mean the City of San Clemente.
- 5.2 **"Ecosystem"** shall mean a natural unit consisting of all living organisms (biotic factors) in an area functioning together with all of the non-living physical (abiotic) factors of the environment.
- 5.3 **"Sustainable"** shall mean the capability of a unit or system to continue to function and of being maintained at a steady level, resilient to failure and damage, and without the need for exhausting energy and resource inputs. (A sustainable beach would function in a healthy, productive and resilient condition, without the need for exhausting energy and resource inputs for its maintenance.)

6.0 PROCEDURE:

6.1 General Provisions

- 6.1.1 The Beaches, Parks and Recreation Department shall be the lead department for the implementation of this Policy.
- 6.1.2 The lead department shall seek to develop educational and training programs for staff and contractors involved in the implementation of this Policy.
- 6.1.3 The lead department shall seek to develop monitoring and reporting tools, and coordinate with other departments for the implementation of this Policy.

6.2 Safety

6.2.1 Recognizing that maximizing the safety, health and wellbeing of the public at the beach is a primary concern, and the use of emergency and maintenance vehicles and equipment is necessary to ensure this safety: and public safety shall take precedence in implementation of this policy and operational practices.

6.3 Cobble

6.3.1 Recognizing that Cobble is a native geomorphological feature of San Clemente's beach, occurring due to natural processes, and its removal has unknown consequences to the health of the beach structure, the City shall not remove Cobble from the beach.

6.4 Kelp

6.4.1 Recognizing that Kelp has an important role in the ecological and structural condition of the beach, provides habitat and nutrients for coastal marine animal and vegetative species, and provides direct and indirect support for sand retention, the City shall:

- 6.4.1.1 Remove excessive Kelp, in the dry sand areas, during the summer season, May 15th through September 15th, to provide maximum towel space for public use while protecting grunion-spawning grounds in the wet sand areas;
- 6.4.1.2 Allow Kelp to remain on the beach during the winter season, September 16th through May 14th;
- 6.4.1.3 At any time, remove excessive Kelp in cases of extreme Kelp buildup, at the direction of the City Manager or his designee.

6.5 Native Beach Vegetation

6.5.1 Recognizing that Native Beach Vegetation has a natural role in the ecological, structural and aesthetical conditions of the San Clemente Beach, providing habitat for coastal marine species, and sand retention support, the City shall:

- 6.5.1.1 Protect existing native beach vegetation in established sand hummocks and dunes;
- 6.5.1.2 Seek to identify locations where planting of native beach vegetation can be established and work with volunteer and non-profit groups for planting and establishment.

6.6 Driftwood and Large Debris

6.6.1 Recognizing that Driftwood and Large Debris can wash up on the beach, and while mostly comprised of natural materials, their size and/or shape can create potential dangers from wave action, or by its presence on the sand, the City shall:

6.5.1.1 Remove large driftwood and debris.

6.6 Sand

6.6.1 Recognizing that Sand has a primary role in the use and enjoyment that San Clemente's Beach provides, the City shall:

6.6.1.1 Conduct scheduled sand grooming during the summer season, May 15th through September 15th, on dry sand areas, avoiding the wet sand areas in an effort to protect grunion-spawning grounds and Kelp wracks;

6.6.1.2 Conduct sand pushing twice a year, or as directed by the City Manager. Sand pushing is the action of moving sand mechanically with the intention to:

- Create berms in order to protect beach facilities
- Attempt to stockpile sand, whenever available in late autumn and early winter
- Prevent loss of towel space into the ocean
- Remove man made berms in the late spring to prepare the beach for towel space during the summer season

6.7 Recreation

6.7.1 Recognizing that Recreation is a vital aspect of San Clemente's Beach, and that non-permanent facilities such as fire rings, volleyball courts, picnic tables, exercise and play equipment contribute to the use and enjoyment, the City shall:

6.7.1.1 Maintain the existing inventory of play and exercise equipment, volleyball courts, fire rings and picnic areas at a service level C;

6.7.1.2 Review changes or additions through the Beaches, Parks & Recreation commission, and gain approval from the City Council.

6.8 Education

6.8.1 Recognizing that the Education of the public has an important role in sustaining San Clemente's Beach, the City Shall:

6.8.1.1 Develop educational messages on beach safety, ecosystems, and the role of the kelp, cobble, native beach

vegetation, sand, and human impacts in maintaining the beach in a sustainable condition.

6.8.1.2 Use existing communication channels, such as City and Department website, public service announcements, public signage and outreach events, and develop new sources to provide public education.

6.8.1.3 Provide support for volunteer and non-profit based groups to provide educational messages and events promoting the importance of the City's program for sustaining a healthy beach ecosystem.