



Surfrider Foundation, San Diego County Chapter

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Solana Beach Seawall Decision Marks Major Victory for Surfrider

San Diego, California – In a major victory for the **San Diego Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation**, the city of Solana Beach had the land-use portion of their Local Coastal Plan (LCP) certified by the California Coastal Commission during a closely-watched meeting in Chula Vista on Wednesday, March 7th.

The certification affects seawalls built on private property along the coast in Solana Beach. **Jim Jaffee**, a volunteer with the San Diego Surfrider chapter and a long-time Solana Beach resident says, “The certification ensures compensation and mitigation for the encroachment of seawalls on publicly-owned beaches and bluffs. Due to rising sea levels and diminishing sand supplies, seawalls already jeopardize beach access and recreation in Solana Beach.”

The decision is the culmination of more than 10 years of work on the part of the chapter. Dozens of Surfrider activists took the day off from work to attend the California Coastal Commission meeting and show their support.

Under the agreement, the city of Solana Beach agrees to complete a fee study within 18 months to set an appropriate Land Lease and Recreation Fee. During this time, coastal commission staff will work on developing a statewide method for evaluating recreation and biological values which can be assigned to beaches. Both the coastal commission and the San Diego Surfrider chapter are committed to working with Solana Beach to help establish the city’s Land Lease and Recreation Fee for the final component of the Local Implementation Plan.

Without a standing Land Lease and Recreation Fee, commissioners felt Solana Beach would be entering into a “reverse takings” of public land for private use. Solana Beach has been collecting a \$1,000 deposit on hundreds of feet of seawalls to be put toward a projected Land Lease and Recreation Fee since 2007, with the city promising to determine the actual fee at a later date. With the direction of the coastal commission to complete the study as part of a Local Implementation Plan, Solana Beach citizens won’t be in the dark as to what the fee might be, and beach users won’t be forced to wait for mitigating impacts to recreation and access to take effect. This, in turn, will have positive effects on beach quality up and down the San Diego coast.

According to **Jim Jaffee**, “The best thing Solana Beach did before finally submitting the Local Implementation Plan last year was to add a provision recognizing seawalls in Solana Beach use public land, and property owners need to pay an appropriate Land Lease and Recreation Fee for impacts to this public land. We were pleased the Commissioners weighed this fact heavily in their decision.”

The certification marks the first time a 20-year sunset clause has been applied to permits for seawalls in Solana Beach. This will require seawall applicants to re-apply for seawalls every two decades, establish the continued need for such a wall, and demonstrate seawall impacts are mitigated and continued encroachment on public land is justified.

For more on the San Diego County chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, including Surfrider’s Beach Preservation campaign, go to: <http://surfridersd.org>.

The Surfrider Foundation is a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the Surfrider Foundation now maintains over 50,000 members and 90 chapters worldwide. For an overview of the San Diego Chapter’s current programs and events, log on to our website at <http://sandiego.surfrider.org/> or contact us at info@surfridersd.org.