



Public Workshop, Beach Fires December 4, 2014

Outline of Presentation

- Background
- Objectives
- Air Quality
- Community Input
- Proposal
- Discussion

Background

- Community concerns of deterioration of sand and air quality from beach fires brought to Forest and Beach Commission
- Research on other jurisdictions' approaches to managing beach fires
- Carmel is the last public beach in California that allows unlimited fires and that allows fires directly on the sand
- In July, City Council adopted guiding principles:
 - No fires directly on sand
 - Limit on the number of fires
- Workshop intended to obtain input on proposal for implementation

Community Concerns

- Air Quality
- Glass and other trash left on beach and path
- Safety issues related to fires left burning on beach or put out with sand leaving hot coals buried
- Graffiti destroying sandstone, revetments torn apart to make fire pits
- Burning of toxic substances
- Debris washed into the bay, comes back in storms
- Banks eroded by people dragging fire materials
- Reputation of beach as “pristine, white sand” at risk



Safety issues, fires left burning, put out with sand leaving hot coals buried



Graffiti, revetments torn apart to make fire pits.



Banks eroded by people dragging fire materials.



Debris washes into bay and comes back in storms.



- Carmel is one of very few white sand beaches in Ca. Made up of sand formed from wave action off of native granite. Charcoal is graying sand.



Reputation of beach for “pristine white sand” at risk.



Burning of toxic substances



Eliminate charcoal and burned logs from the sand



Reduce the amount of wood smoke to residents affected by beach fires.

Richard Stedman, Director
Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District

Objectives/Principles

Objectives:

- Eliminate charcoal and burned logs from the sand
- Reduce the amount of wood smoke to residents affected by beach fires

Principles:

- Limit the number of fires on the sand
- No fires directly on sand

Purpose:

- Find middle approach to address objectives while allowing tradition of beach fires. No status quo. No ban fires.

Research - California Beach Fire Rules

- 435 Beaches in California, 38 allow fires
- The state recently removed 7 beaches from allowing fires
- Natl.ParkService, Ocean Beach pilot begun this summer to address toxic materials, broken glass, metal, hot coals and nails, fires not being extinguished properly, unauthorized fires—pilot installs 12 fire rings (only place for fires), fires must be out by 9PM, no fires on Spare the Air days.
- Newport Beach—starting this summer, only lump charcoal may be burned in the fire pits, purpose is to address same issues as above while still providing warmth and cooking
- No public beach in California allows fires directly on the sand
- No public beach in California allows an unlimited number of fires
- Some beaches require permits
- Some permit fires only in summer months

Community Input

- Carmel Resident Association (CRA)
- Sustainable Carmel
- Friends of the Forest
- SAND
- Carmel Innkeepers Board
- Chamber of Commerce Board
- Carmel Police Chief
- Citizens, Council Members
- Coastal Commission

Coastal Commission Staff Input

- Overall objective: affordable access for all users of the beach
- Current land use plan allows for limiting number of fires and for taking fires off sand
- Use of permits would require CC approval
- Use of motorized rakes would require CC approval for each use— concern is for harm to kelp and intrusion into visitors space, also does not pick up fine ash
- Charging for setting up fires, would require CC approval
- Recognize need to reduce number in winter
- Some concern expressed for current number of large events which limit access to both beach and parking

Proposal: One Year Pilot to Achieve Guiding Principles

- No change in fire allowed locations
- 26 Containment devices: 2 at each staircase (10th to Martin Way) and 4 in each cove, supplied by city, cleaned by city
- Additional portable propane fire pits allowed, supplied by individuals, pack it in, pack it out
- Use of off-the-shelf product during one year pilot period
- No permits: first come, first served during pilot
- Containment device removed in winter, propane-only fires during those months
- Continuation of current security and police support

Examples: off-the-shelf wood fire pits



Examples: off-the-shelf, portable propane fire pits



After Pilot: Examples of Questions

- Did we achieve objectives: Cleaner sand, cleaner air
- How did pits work: attractive, durable, clean
- Public comments, ease of use, need for permits

Next Steps

- Forest and Beach review and recommendation
- Planning Commission review and recommendation
- City Council Review and approval
- Coastal Commission review and approval, if required
- Signage and public education to be developed
- Implementation of pilot: May, 2015 to May, 2016
- Evaluation and adjustments

Discussion



- Location
- Number of fires
- Type of fuel
- Ring examples
- Permits / User fee
 - Recovery for cleaning
- Evaluation criteria