



Caring for Our Coast

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May 28, 2025

TO: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn

FROM: Gary Jones, Director

SUBJECT: **LOS ANGELES COUNTY RECOVERY EFFORTS AND BUILDING
URGENCY INTO IMPLEMENTATION OF LONG-TERM DISASTER
SUPPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT (ITEM 13-C, AGENDA OF
JANUARY 28, 2025)**

On January 28, 2025, your Board authorized the Director of the Department of Beaches and Harbors (DBH) to waive all fees, execute and amend all permits, licenses, and leases, in consultation with County Counsel, as applicable, and suspend applicable restrictions, for use of property and facilities under the control of DBH necessary to support emergency response and recovery activities required because of the LA County fires. Your Board further directed that DBH provide a written report within 30 days, and quarterly thereafter, detailing the actions taken and verifying the need for continued emergency measures.

Actions Taken:

Provision of Staging Areas:

DBH streamlined the right of entry permit process to facilitate all emergency operations, including, but not limited to, SoCalGas service restoration work, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's hazardous material remediation process, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' debris removal activities, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power infrastructure work. DBH also participated in the CEO Real Estate Division's effort to develop a Countywide record-keeping system for tracking all fire-related permits.



Providing Shelter to Individuals Displaced by Fire:

Since February 2025, DBH has provided shelter at the Dockweiler RV Park, ranging from intermittent to continuous stays, to five patrons who have been displaced by the fires. Four of the five guests have stayed longer than the 21 days DBH allows for stays within a 60-day period, pursuant to authority previously granted by the Board of Supervisors.

Multi-agency Collaborations for Beach Restoration:

DBH participated in several multi-agency and stakeholder collaborations aimed at controlling fire-related debris flows and assessing how best to manage run-off on beaches, including timber and metal from burnt structures, dark/charred vegetation, and silty materials. Participants included the California Office of Emergency Services, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (L.A. Water Board), the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW), as well as Heal the Bay and other environmentally-focused organizations/experts.

As a result of these collaborations, appropriate agencies responded to DBH's request that sediment on some beaches be tested and that a means of removing sediment be identified, should doing so be necessary. Initial results of tests conducted by DPW after the January 26th storm on sediment samples taken from tidal stormwater outlet areas at Will Rogers State Beach and Topanga Beach were reviewed, and it was determined that most substances of concern were not detected in the samples, with only minor traces found in limited instances. Importantly, none of the detected levels exceeded safety thresholds – i.e., the tests indicated that the sediment was not hazardous.

L.A. Water Board took additional sediment samples from more than a dozen sites along the Santa Monica Bay the week of February 24th following significant rainstorms. Results are available on L.A. Water Board's website. None of the tested substances exceeded California or U.S. environmental quality standards for residential soils or background levels.

DBH continues to meet regularly with Federal, State, and local stakeholders for ongoing coordination and collaboration on this matter.

Larger debris that washes up along the beach at Will Rogers and Topanga, is picked up by maintenance crews daily. Initially, debris was piled up at various locations on the beach until DBH secured approval to dispose the collected material at the Calabasas Landfill. Since securing approval from the Los Angeles County Sanitation District to dispose at the Calabasas Landfill, DBH has collected over 450 tons of debris.

Enhanced Public Information on Post-Fire Beach Cleanup:

In coordination with the Joint Information Center (JIC), and following collaboration with County and regional partners to identify any hazards, DBH led discussions to develop and refine consistent messaging on post-fire beach cleanup operations, share sediment test results, and educate the public about the difference between an ocean water closure and a beach closure. This messaging is integrated into a dedicated webpage, located at beaches.lacounty.gov/wildfires, and is aligned with the DPH post-fire assessment plan to ensure that the public and stakeholders receive timely, accurate updates on recovery efforts, test results, and beach and water safety.

Accommodations to Summer Use License Operators:

To accommodate the six operators, who currently hold a multi-year Summer Use License (SUL) to conduct recreational camps at Will Rogers State Beach and whose summer operations are impacted by the Palisades Fire, DBH offered each licensee the option of operating at another LA County-owned and operated beach or withdrawing from operating during the 2025 season. Three licensees elected to relocate to another beach and will pay the County 20% of their actual gross receipts. Per SUL terms, operators must either pay their location bid amount or 20% of actual gross receipts, whichever is greater. The remaining licensee holders chose not to operate this summer; thus, they do not owe the County any fees.

Ongoing Need:

The actions DBH has taken so far are further being refined to meet the operational needs of the stakeholders involved in the cleanup and fire damage restoration. At this time, the emergency measures should be maintained to the extent they accommodate these types of activities.

GJ:AC

c: Beach Board Deputies
Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Officer
Office of Emergency Management