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CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA  
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RECORD PACKET COPY

Filed: 5/25/2000  
49<sup>th</sup> Day: 7/13/2000  
180th Day: 11/24/2000  
Staff: M.H. Capelli *CS*  
Staff Report: 5/23/2000  
Hearing Date: 6/13-16/2000  
Commission Action:

STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

**APPLICATION NO.:** 4-00-118

**APPLICANT:** Santa Barbara County Parks Department

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Goleta Beach County Park, Santa Barbara County

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Removal of 1,000+ linear feet of rock riprap seawall and temporary wire fence that was placed on Goleta Beach pursuant to an emergency permit issued by the County of Santa Barbara.

Zoning: Recreation  
Land Use Plan designation: Existing Public or Private Park/Recreation/Open Space  
Project density: NA  
Ht abv grade: 6 to 8 feet

**LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED:** County of Santa Barbara Resolution No. 00-DP-020

**SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:** Appeal A-4-STB-00-082; Santa Barbara County Local Coastal Program Emergency Permit No. 00-EMP-002; CDP Application 4-00-118.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval with special conditions regarding timing of removal and receipt of state and federal permits.

## **I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**MOTION:**        *I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 4-00-118 pursuant to the staff recommendation.*

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL:**

Staff recommends a YES vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

### **RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PERMIT:**

The Commission hereby approves a Coastal Development Permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) all feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

## **II. Standard Conditions**

1. **Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.** The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. **Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. **Compliance.** All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application for permit, subject to any special conditions set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.
4. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.

5. Inspections. The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the project during its development, subject to 24-hour advance notice.
6. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
7. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

### **III. Special Conditions**

By acceptance of the permit, the applicant agrees that:

1. Timing of Removal. Complete removal of the rock revetment seawall shall be accomplished by August 31, 2000 unless extended by the Executive Director for good cause.
2. State and Federal Permits. Approval of this Coastal Development Permit does not constitute a waiver of any other State or Federal permits that may be necessary for removal of the rock revetment seawall.

### **IV. Findings and Declarations**

#### **1. Background**

Goleta Beach County Park encompasses approximately 29 acres, with approximately 4/5 mile of sandy beach fronting the park. (See Exhibits 1 and 2.)

Between February 24 and March 3, 2000, the Santa Barbara County Parks Department installed approximately 1,000 linear feet of rock revetment along the ocean frontage of the Goleta Beach County Park as an emergency measure under the authority of Emergency Permit 00-EMP-002. The Emergency Permit was approved by the Director of the Santa Barbara County Planning Department orally on February 23, 2000 and a written Emergency Permit was subsequently issued on March 20, 2000. The purpose of the rock revetment seawall is to retard erosion of the toe of the escarpment fronting the seaward side of the Goleta Beach County Park caused by periodic high surf and tides.

Of the total linear footage of the revetment, approximately 217 feet of revetment (20%) was placed to protect approximately 22 public parking spaces (out of a total of 580 spaces); approximately 50 feet of revetment (5%) was placed to protect a public restroom; and the remaining 788 feet of revetment (75%) was placed to protect open lawn area with scattered picnic tables. The rock revetment seawall is comprised of approximately 3,000 tons of rock placed on the upper portion of the beach along the base of a low escarpment (3 to feet in height). The rock is a serpentine material and ranges in size up to 3 feet in diameter. The rocks are placed on a 1:1 to 1.5:1 slope

and extend to within 2 to 3 feet of the top of the escarpment, and are placed in a three foot deep trench excavated into the sand beach at the base of the escarpment. The rock revetment seawall varies from 4 to 6 feet in height and from 6 to 8 feet in width at its base. (See Exhibit 2.) Two Commissioners appealed the County's approval of the Emergency Permit, alleging that the decision was not consistent with the Santa Barbara County certified Local Coastal Program. The Commission continued the hearing on the matter at its May 2000 meeting. Additionally, the Commission staff has questioned the County's original coastal permitting jurisdiction over the site of the seawall because of the ambulatory nature of the mean high tide line.

In response to concerns expressed by the public and the Commission for the potential impacts of the seawall on the public beach and the possible precedent set by the installation of the seawall, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, on May 2, 2000, ordered the seawall to be removed as soon as practical, pending the issuance of the necessary permits. Although the jurisdiction question remains unresolved, in response to a request of the Commission staff the County has applied for a Coastal Development Permit from the Commission to remove the seawall. Additionally, the County of Santa Barbara County Parks Department has applied for and received a local Coastal Development Permit from the County of Santa Barbara for work associated with the removal that may fall within the County's original coastal permitting jurisdiction.

## **2. Project Description**

The project proposed by the applicant (Santa Barbara County Parks Department) consists of the removal of approximately 1,000 feet of rock revetment seawall fronting the Goleta Beach County Park. Commission staff on March 7, 2000 measured the length of seawall actually installed at 1,055 feet. (See Exhibit 2.)

Removal of the rock revetment seawall will involve (1) excavation of the rock; (2) backfilling the trench created by the excavated rock area and replacement with sand within to two to three feet of the top of the adjacent escarpment; (3) hauling the rock to the west parking lot and loading it on trucks; (5) transporting the rock to a location outside the Coastal Zone (Flood Control District Debris Basin located at the corner of Hollister Avenue and San Antonio Road) for storage and future use; (6) removal of the temporary wire fence along the beach frontage; and (7) repair of the portions of the parking lot and interior park access road damaged during the seawall installation and removal process.

The equipment required for the project would include three loaders, an excavator and four semi-end dump trucks. The excavator would operate from the adjacent lawn areas and be used to dig out the rock and back fill the resulting trench with sand from the immediately adjacent beach area. One loader would be used to haul the rock from its location on the beach to west parking lot (via a temporary ramp constructed to allow load access from the beach to the parking lot). A second loader would load the rock

onto the trucks at the west parking lot. The third loader would be used at the receiver site (the debris basin) to off-load and stack the rocks.

The removal activities would be limited to weekdays only and take approximately ten working days over a one-month period. Removal activities would occur outside of high tide periods in order to allow construction vehicle access to and along the sand beach. The activities would be monitored by the Santa Barbara Parks Department and beach users directed around active demolition and grading activities to prevent short-term safety hazards.

### **3. Coastal Issues**

#### **a. Coastal Hazards**

Coastal Action Section 30253 provides, in part, that:

New development shall:

- (2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geological instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along the bluffs and cliffs.

The appeal filed by two Commissioners asserts that the rock revetment seawall has the potential to increase downcoast erosion, adversely impact lateral beach access, alter landforms, affect scenic and visual resources and environmentally sensitive habitats. The removal of the rock revetment seawall would eliminate these potential adverse effects, both immediately and in the long-term, without jeopardizing existing principal structures. (See additional discussion below regarding public access.) The County has the opportunity to investigate other options that would not have these adverse impacts, to protect the Goleta Beach County Park from damage due to storm waves, if it is necessary in the future.

The Commission therefore finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with and adequate to carry out the provisions of Coastal Act Section 30253.

#### **b. Public Access**

Coastal Act Section 30210 provides that:

In carrying out the standards of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Coastal Act Section 30211 provides that:

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

The proposed project consists of the removal of approximately 1,000 linear feet of rock revetment seawall that was recently placed along the seaward edge of the Goleta Beach County Park. Currently, the rock revetment, which varies in height from 4 to 6 feet and 6 to 8 feet in width, and the 4 foot high temporary wire fence which has been placed parallel to the seawall at the top of the adjacent escarpment, blocks vertical pedestrian access from the lawn area to the sandy beach along the entire length of the rock revetment seawall within the Goleta Beach County Park. (See Exhibit 3.)

The area immediately landward of the rock revetment seawall is part of the Goleta Beach County Park owned and maintained by the Santa Barbara County Parks Department. The beach width at Goleta Beach County Park is generally several hundred feet, but varies seasonally and also episodically in response to tides and periodic storm waves. The beach is generally narrower at the west end (up-coast) end and wider at the east (down-coast end). The Goleta beach is intensively used by local residents and visitors for a variety of recreational activities, including strolling, surfing, running, sunbathing, fishing, and scuba diving. Access to the beach is directly from the upland area, which is only slightly elevated above the adjacent beach.

The rock revetment seawall has a direct impact on lateral public beach access opportunities, by impeding vertical access to the beach, and by displacing approximately 6,000 square feet of existing beach as a result of the rock revetment seawall footprint. The seawall would also potentially have long-term effects on lateral public beach access as a result of seawall generated erosion of the sand beach.

The proposed removal of the seawall project would eliminate the direct impacts to vertical and lateral public access, as well as more long-term impacts resulting from the impacts on shoreline processes that serve to maintain the beach.

The Commission therefore finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with and adequate to carry out the provisions of Coastal Act Policies 32010 and 30211.

*c. Alteration of Landforms and Scenic and Visual Resources*

PRC Section 30251 provides, in part, that:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas . . .

Prior to the installation of the rock revetment seawall, the interface between the open space area and the sandy beach of the Goleta Beach County Park was characterized by a gentle slope or small escarpment. The installation of the rock revetment seawall has created a permanent, sharp, unnatural, and impassible transition between the upland lawn area and the sandy beach portions of Goleta Beach County Park. The installation of the rock revetment seawall has created a highly visible structure ranging in height between 4 and 6 feet and between 6 and 8 feet in width, creating a sharp transition between the upland lawn area and the sandy beach. The shoreline frontage has taken on the character of an armored. (See Exhibits 3 and 4.)

The removal of the seawall and the re-contouring of the beach and abutting escarpment using sand from the immediately adjacent beach area will eliminate those abrupt transitions between the upland lawn area and the sandy beach, and improve the visual quality of the area.

The Commission therefore finds the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with and adequate to carry out the provisions of Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

*d. Environmentally Sensitive Habitats*

Coastal Act Section 30230 provides, in relevant part, that:

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhance, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance.

Coastal Act Section 30240 provides that:

- (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses depend on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.
- (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly regard those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

The coastal strand habitat fronting the Goleta Beach County Park currently supports a number of sensitive species, including the California grunion, the Belding's Savannah sparrow, a state listed endangered species, and possibly the Western snowy plover, a federally listed threatened species.

The rock revetment seawall has displaced natural coastal strand habitat, which is used by a variety of sensitive species of plants and animals, including the Belding's Savannah sparrow, a state listed endangered species which forages on the beach at the west end of the Goleta Beach County Park. Prior to the installation of the rock revetment seawall, the site exhibited a more gradual transition between the upland areas and the adjacent sand beach, with a seasonally fluctuating small escarpment. The installation of the rock revetment seawall has created a sharp transition between the upland lawn area and the sandy beach and reduced further the areal extent of the coastal strand habitat (See Exhibit 3.)

The removal of the rock revetment seawall would restore the sand habitat displaced by the seawall as well as restore the transition zone between the sandy beach area and the upland areas.

The Commission therefore finds that proposed project, as conditioned is consistent with and adequate to carry out the provisions of Coastal Act Sections 30230 and 30240.

#### 4. CEQA

Section 13096 of the Commission's Code of Regulations requires the Commission approval of Coastal Development Permits to be supported by findings showing the permit, as conditioned, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the activity may have on the environment.

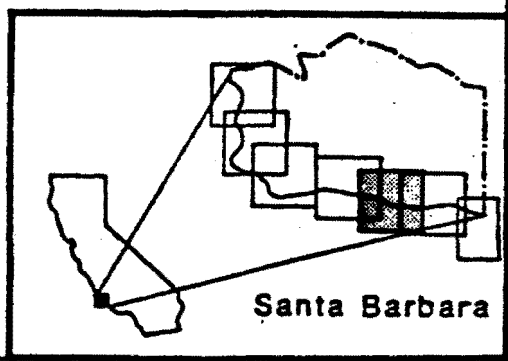
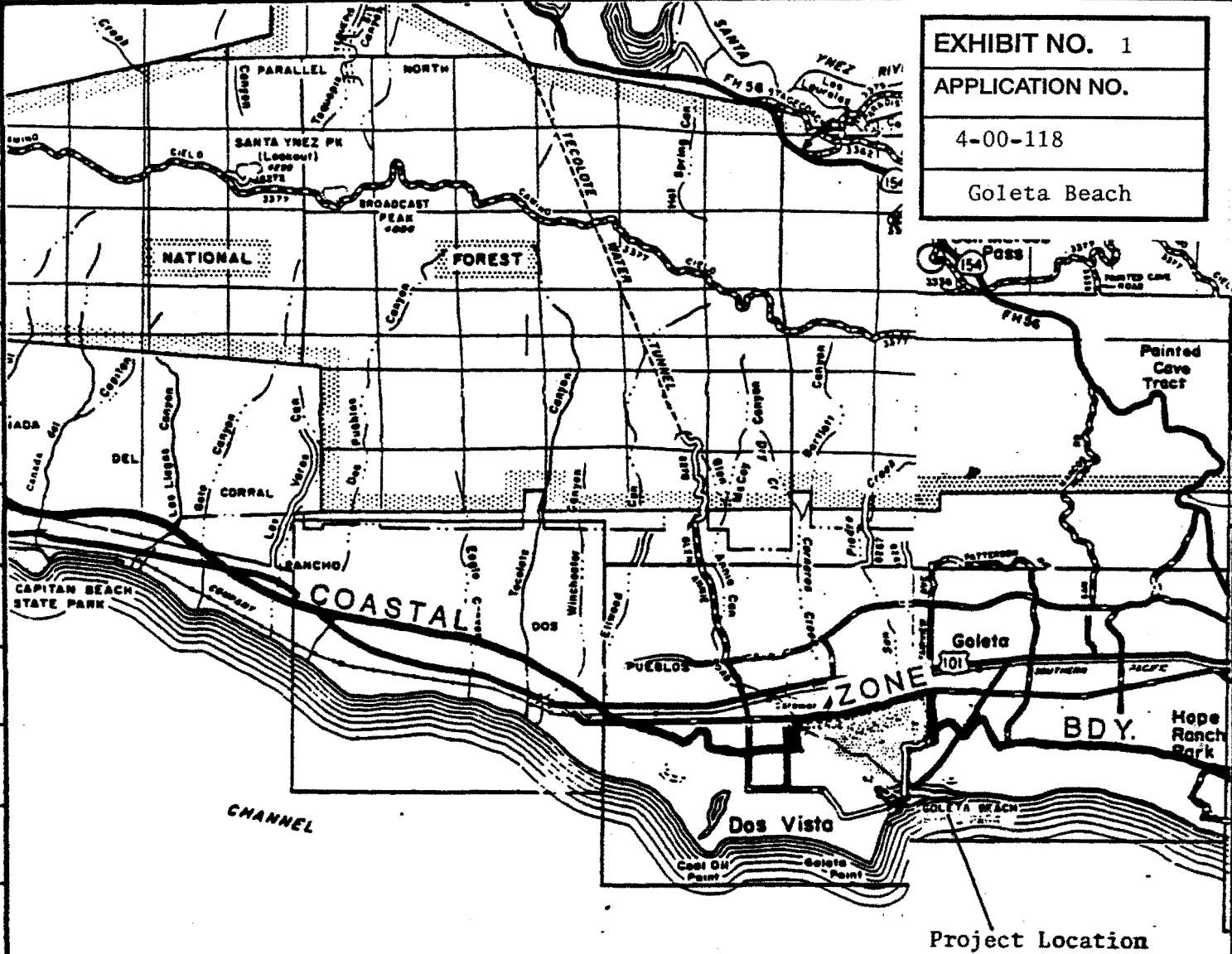
The proposed project is consistent with the geologic hazards, public access, environmental sensitive habitats, and scenic and visual protection policies of the Coastal Act and the project will minimize all adverse effects of the project, and there are no other measures available, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effects, which the project may have on the environment.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with and adequate to carry out the provisions of Coastal Act Sections and the California Environmental Quality Act.



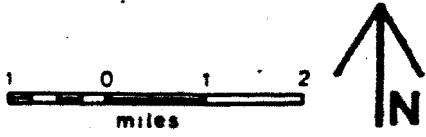
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EXHIBIT NO. 1
APPLICATION NO.
4-00-118
Goleta Beach



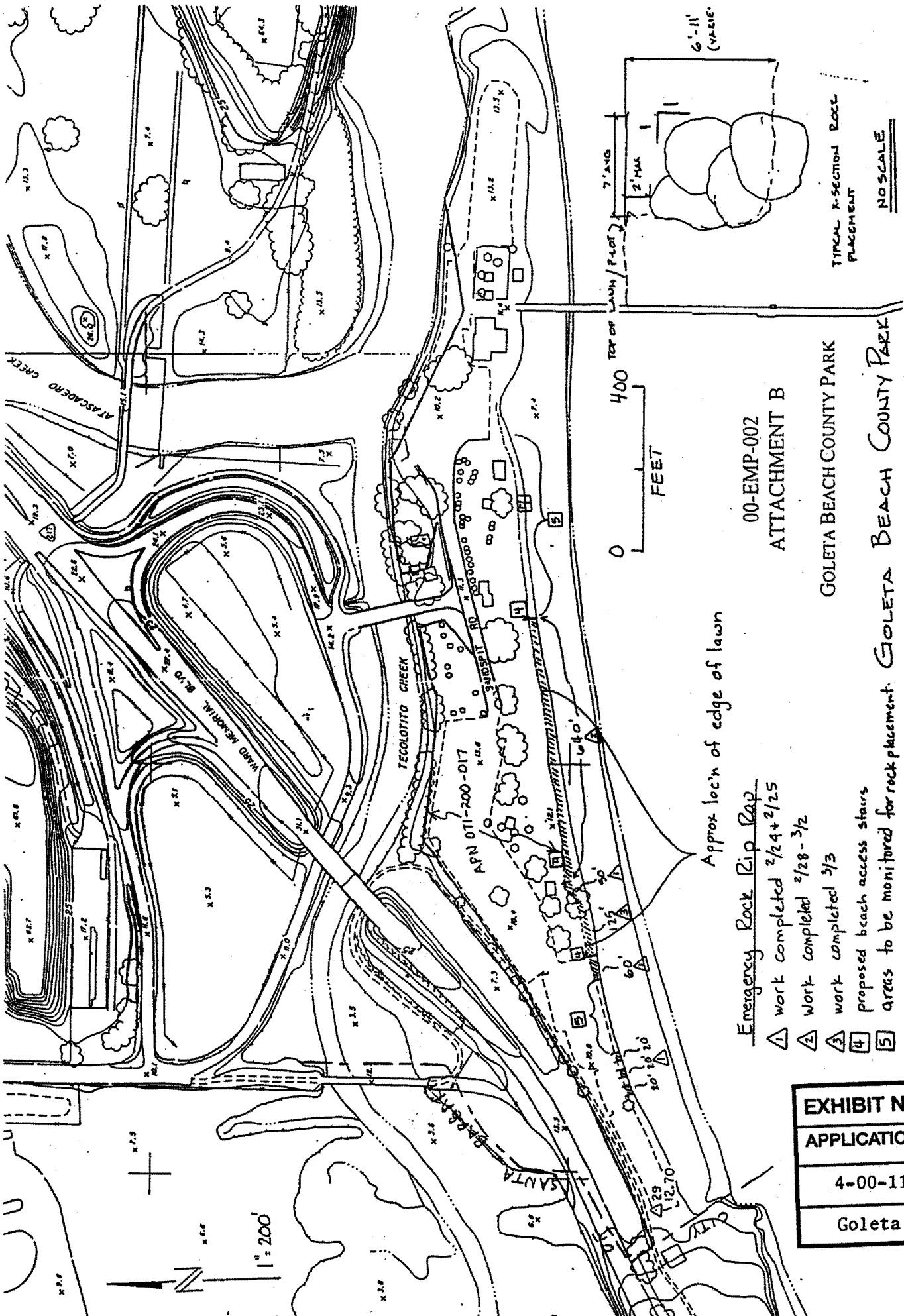
California Coastal Commission

# LOCATION MAP



## County of Santa Barbara

## Sheet 5 of 7



00-EMP-002  
ATTACHMENT B

GOLETA BEACH COUNTY PARK

GOLETA BEACH COUNTY PARK

Approx loc'n of edge of lawn

Emergency Rock Rip Rap

- ▲ work completed 2/24 + 2/25
- ▲ work completed 2/28 - 3/2
- ▲ work completed 3/3
- ▲ proposed beach access stairs
- 5 areas to be monitored for rock placement.

EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO.
4-00-118
Goleta Beach

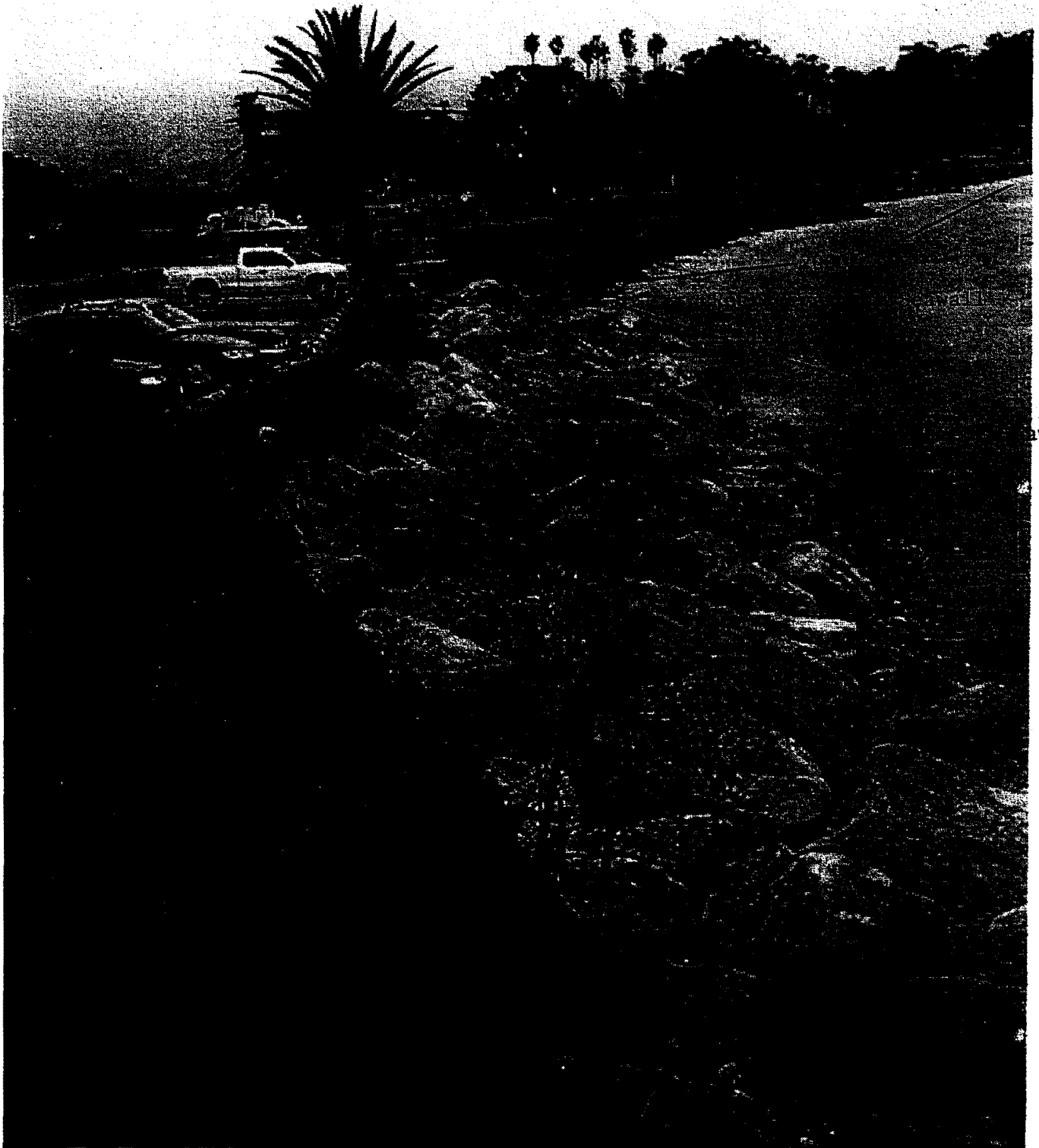
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APPLICATION NO.

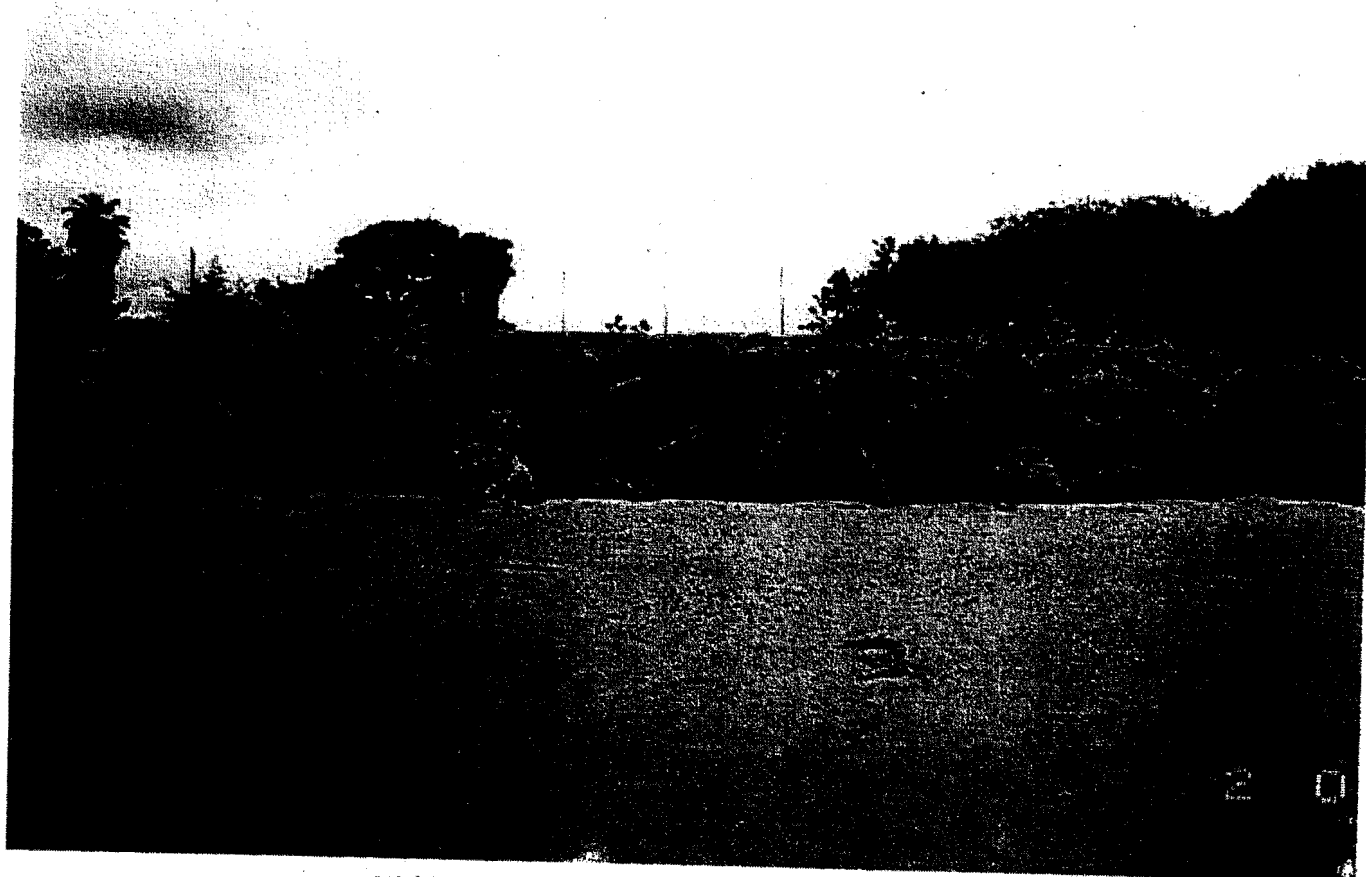
4-00-118

Goleta Beach

Page 1 of 3



awall



Middle Section Goleta Beach Park

3/7/2000



East End Goleta Beach Park

3/7/2000



West End Goleta Beach Park

2/23/2009

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
SOUTH CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT

EXHIBIT NO.	4
APPLICATION NO.	4-00-118
Goleta Beach	



West End Goleta Beach Park

2/23/2000

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SOUTH CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT



Middle Section Goleta Beach Park

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