

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Th8a

2-22-0004 (Pacifica Surf Camps and Schools)

May 11, 2023

Correspondence



SURF EQUITY

The Waves Do Not Discriminate

Website: surfequity.org

Instagram: @SurfEquity

Twitter: @SurfEquity

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

Chair Donne Brownsey and Commissioners
California Coastal Commission
455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: SUPPORT STAFF — CDP Application [2-22-0004](#) — Pacifica Surf Camps & Surf Schools

Dear Chair Donne Brownsey,

We would like to acknowledge the work of Coastal staff and thank them for requiring a CDP to help correct racial discrimination, sexism, nepotism and anti-LGBTQIA+ bigotry at Pacifica State Beach. Please support all staff recommendations.

In 2021, Surf Equity participated in several City of Pacifica Surf Camp/School Task Force meetings. We voiced concerns throughout the process and sent the City's Task Force a [letter](#). Unfortunately, a majority of Task Force members [failed to recommend](#) a program that provided meaningful equity and beach access at Pacifica State Beach.

Historically, beach access has been prohibited and restricted because of racial discrimination, homophobia, transphobia and sexism. Discriminatory policies, practices and retaliation has harmed Black and Brown families, women, girls and LGBTQIA+ families. Sadly, discriminatory behavior is still a problem at Pacifica State Beach, it manifests as hate speech, threats of violence and assault. Thankfully, surf culture in California is slowly changing for the better.

In the spirit of inclusivity, the Committee for Equity in Women's Surfing changed its name to 'Surf Equity' in June 2020. Please follow us on Instagram [@SurfEquity](#) and visit our website SurfEquity.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sabrina".

Sabrina Brennan (she/her)

Director, Surf Equity Sabrina@surfequity.org

Co-Founder, Committee for Equity in Women's Surfing

May 5th, 2023

To: Donne Brownsey, Chair, California Coastal Commission
Cc: Kate Huckelbridge, Executive Director, California Coastal Commission
Dan Carl, District Director, California Coastal Commission
Erik Martinez, Coastal Planner, California Coastal Commission

Sent via e-mail

Re: Support for Staff Recommendations to CDP Number 2-22-0004 - Pacifica Surf Camps and Schools

Dear Chair Brownsey and Commissioners,

On behalf of the "Surf Justice Collective," a network of nonprofit and community-based organizations working to ensure all Californians have equitable access to nature and the coast, we are writing to express our support for the staff recommendations on Coastal Development Permit (CDP) Number 2-22-0004 - Pacifica Surf Camps and Schools. **We respectfully urge you to approve this CDP with conditions that fully incorporate all staff recommendations.** Only by adopting all staff recommendations will this CDP enhance equity in access to the California coast, and help the Commission meet its stated focus on "ensuring that California's coast is accessible to all Californians, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or place of residence."¹

Since 2018, our members have advocated for the revision of an antiquated permitting system at Pacifica State Beach that operated without a sanctioned CDP. Within this prior system, the same four commercial schools held exclusive access to permits for nearly two decades, with no turnover or opportunities for new applicants. Without a mechanism for the inclusion of additional groups, including non-profits who provide access for community members who face barriers to coastal access, the city's system has been effectively exclusionary on multiple levels.

The Commission itself has documented the persistent inequities across race and class – including discriminatory housing policies, redlining, intergenerational wealth gaps, and deficits in public transportation – that have created barriers for many historically-marginalized communities to reside in, access, and enjoy coastal areas, despite their equal rights to coastal access under law.² Compounded with an exclusionary coastal recreation permitting system and the many aspects of Californian surf culture which are rooted in colonialist notions of coastal ownership and localism, it is no wonder the communities we serve have consistently felt unwelcome at the coast, and in the world of surfing.

Recognizing the barriers that their prohibitive permitting system upheld, the City of Pacifica convened a Task Force on the issue prior to the submission of their CDP application, which included the voices of nonprofits, small business owners, and community members in the area. While we are grateful for the time and thought put into this effort, we firmly believe that the first iteration of recommendations, as submitted by the Task Force, did not go far enough to prioritize beach access for those who have been historically excluded. We fully support the additional comments as recommended by the Coastal Commission staff on this issue, given that they more adequately address equity and public access in the permitting process.

Approval of Pacifica's CDP, with staff's suggested special conditions, would allow for the creation of a new system that does not prioritize for-profit businesses over nonprofit organizations in terms of scheduling, location, and length of time on the beach. It would reduce fees for non-profit organizations by extending the length of time a non-profit permit is valid, and would decrease the number of arbitrary administrative and logistical barriers non-profits must face in order to

¹ <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/env-justice/>

² Report on the Historical Roots of Housing Inequity and Impacts on Coastal Zone Demographic Patterns: <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2022/6/TH6d/Th6d-6-2022-report.pdf>

facilitate beach access. Also, by requiring all surf school operators to agree to a collaboratively-authored set of “Community Surf Agreements,” it would foster a beach environment where all individuals feel like they belong, feel safe, and are welcome, as is their legal right under the Coastal Act’s provisions related to coastal access.

We commend the staff for their thorough review of the Environmental Justice implications of the Pacifica permitting system, and we believe that future permit reauthorizations should build on this progress to further dismantle the logistical and financial barriers to beach access. This includes free or discounted parking for non-profit vehicles, given the lack of public transportation to Pacifica State Beach, and the prohibitive costs of parking for volunteers, community members, and staff members working with limited budgets.

Systematically-excluded communities have for too long faced inequitable access to the beach, the ocean, and surfing. Now is the time to re-write a history of prohibitive and discriminatory systemic barriers to coastal access. If the Commission is truly an agency “committed to protecting coastal natural resources and providing public access and lower-cost recreation opportunities for everyone,”³ it will support the passage of the City of Pacifica’s CDP only with staff recommendations.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and we welcome any questions.

Sincerely,



Adrianna Guerrero-Nardone
Executive Director
Brown Girl Surf



Johnny Irwin
Executive Director
City Surf Project



Mario Ordoñez-Calderón
Executive Director
Un Mar de Colores



Ben McCue
Executive Director
Outdoor Outreach



Lexie Gritfeld
Director
California Outdoor
Recreation Partnership



Nic Brisebois & Kyla
Langen
Co-Directors, Queersurf

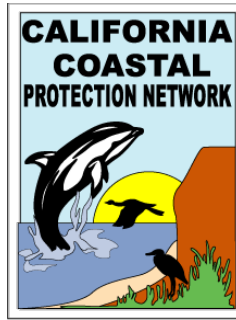


Eddie Donnellan
Executive Director
MeWater Foundation



Kayiita Johnson
Founder
black surfers

³ https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/assets/env-justice/CCC_EJ_Policy_FINAL.pdf



May 5th, 2023

To: Donne Brownsey, Chair, California Coastal Commission
Cc: Kate Huckelbridge, Executive Director, California Coastal Commission
Dan Carl, District Director, California Coastal Commission
Erik Martinez, Coastal Planner, California Coastal Commission

Re: Support for Staff Recommendations to CDP Number 2-22-0004 - Pacifica Surf Camps and Schools

Dear Chair Brownsey and Commissioners,

On behalf of the Surfrider Foundation and the California Coastal Protection Network, we submit our support for the staff recommendations on Coastal Development Permit (CDP) Number 2-22-0004 - Pacifica Surf Camps and Schools. Our organizations are dedicated to the protection of our coastline and equitable access to it, and we echo the comments of the Surf Justice Collective on this matter.

Historically marginalized communities face many barriers to accessing the coast - an inequitable permit system is an easily correctable barrier under the purview of this Commission that helps to address access and cultural exclusion in Pacifica. Approval of the CDP with all suggested special conditions will:

- Extend the time that permits are valid, reducing fees for non-profit organizations focused on facilitating coastal enjoyment
- Decrease administrative and logistical barriers for non-profits in facilitating beach access
- Foster a more equitable beach culture by requiring surf school operators to agree on Community Surf Agreement principles

Adopting these recommendations enhances equity in access to the California coast and enables the Commission to apply its environmental justice goals, including the Environmental Justice Policy commitment to focus on “ensuring that California’s coast is accessible to all Californians, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or place of residence.”¹ Pacifica is one of the only ‘beginner friendly’ beaches near the demographically diverse Bay Area. A more welcoming culture to all people begins with leadership and fair decisionmaking on the matter of coastal access.

¹ <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/env-justice/>

We appreciate the staff's thorough consideration of this matter with a focus on environmental justice.

Sincerely,

Laura Walsh
California Policy Manager
Surfrider Foundation

Susan Jordan
Executive Director
California Coastal
Protection Network