



Ocean Beach Fires – Public Meeting

February 5, 2015

Public Comments

Comment Cards

The GGNP Conservancy revenue last year was \$46M and they have \$42M in assets. I would hope they would want to use some of that largess to fund maintenance of fire pits – to expand recreational access for people, as is in the enabling legislation. There is plenty of money available, if you look for it and if you try to get it. The proposed Dog Plan is estimated to cost \$2.6M to implement. The GGNRA appears to have no problem getting \$2.6M to restrict recreational access. Why is there so much trouble finding \$300K to keep bonfires and that recreational activity going? You have not found the money because you haven't really wanted to find it. Also more trash cans!! More fire pits!

Sally Stephens

I am in favor of permits/deposit:

Permit = \$50

Deposit = \$50

Deposit returned after proof of clean site

Anonymous

My concern is in protecting my granddaughter's interest in nocturnal fires at the beach with friends. There are very few free events where they (youth) can find community in open space. More education can happen in schools to make them more aware of ecological hazards. My young people see themselves as environmentalists. They are our future. Let's educate them to take over our city. They will.

Sylvia Ramirez

Ocean Beach should remain a place where people can go and party – and yes, build fires- with safety guidelines of course. But a beach has multiple uses and multiple users- including kids who want to bonfire and party.

Bill Morgan

Easel Comments

Group One – General Information

- Garbage cans next to the fire pit (like in SoCal)
- Need better education to explain the what and why of the rules
- Some fire pits permitted and a handful of “community pits”
- Give OB back to SF – partnership clarification
- Seek the support of the GGNPC
- Are there any other fees anticipated in the OB corridor?
- Better signage (check out the Santa Cruz beach signs)
- Revenue neutral – there is no right to have fire pits on the beach! If fee is \$300K, so be it! Only a very small group of people in SF want bonfires on the beach. Stop the entitlement!

- More/Larger signs +1 – Perhaps a larger one in the parking lots
- No permits or issue in parking lot
- Have SF sell firewood and install toilets in lot
- Curfew=to parking lot times
- 20+ rings=enough for all
- Use of Ocean Beach can be controlled by access – limit access by closing parking lot with a gate and/or parking meters at certain times. The revenue from those meters would go directly to beach fire cost issues.
- As was stated by one of the fire pit artists, there hasn't really been education ore ven proper signage.
- Light the signs with the rules! Face rules at the beach.
- Let people know (if they have permit) that they are allowed to still hang out after they put the fire out.
- There is no signage at pits. Add upon entry and at pits
- Increase # of pits to meet demand and institute volunteer pit “adoption” programs like hwy clean-up efforts have.
- Fires should end @ 10 pm, not 9 pm and not earlier. Give people chance to wind down and burn responsibly. Add water bucket mechanism so people have way to put out fires with water instead sand.
- Pit permits entitle you to free, clean firewood salvaged from GGNRA downed trees, GG Park, SF tree limbs, etc. (which are otherwise chipped)
- Fire pits should be designed to inspire civic participation and discussion.
- More signs! On the sand including “pack it out” and “leave no trace” language
- Metal sings. Not wood (so not burnable)
- LE Rangers partner with SFPD
- Bigger or more trash cans
- Tash cans near fire pits!
- Can a low-income person earn a permit for work in place of cash?

Group Two – Permits/Seasonal Restrictions

- Study other city’s programs that have attempted to permit fires
- Lower price for permit (carrot!), additional charge if problems (stick), or security deposit
- What about spontaneous use? And folks who don’t have a credit card? [Rec.Gov 24 hours or more, but not less?
- Higher cost for a permit...;leads to a sense of entitlement instead of community (lesson from SF soccer field)
- No permits or issue on site = low cost
- No fires on spare the air days
- Cite violators
- Better signage
- Metal boxes w/permit fee & contact info, etc. in envelops similar to parks, assigning pit #
- Refundable deposit – Paypal – if clean
- Add additional smaller pits at lower permit fee
- Allocate % of pits as first-come, first-served
- Please figure out how to keep it fee. Not in favor of permits. In favor of citing violators. Increase signage
- No fires on spare the air days
- Why talk about price and permit when ongoing City commitment still unknown? Seems to be support.
- Admin/system cost a major concern

- Would permit system allow for more pits to be added if the system was to actually work? Could ease the task of enforcement if too crowded
- Would a permit let you go later?
- Alert via flag on-site & twitter on spare the air days so folks know
- Create phone app-refundable deposit Paypal-send phone photograph of clean site (with time of departure)
- What about folks who wait to join existing group?
- Lit info signs
- What about an app or on site (last minute) system for some pits?
- Could permit cost include clean wood? Maybe from the park clean-up?
- Tier pricing system – goes up[in price closer to desired time slot, incentives for early planning, i.e. 2 months out is \$10, 24 hours is \$30, etc.
- With permit system, what will be method to enforce people who will inevitably make fire w/o permit?
- Will issuance of permit clearly indicate no alcohol in glass bottles?
- Educate public that this Ocean Beach is a National Park not an empty lot to be trashed (to be respected)
- If there is a seasonal closure, could an exemption be made for solstice/Christmas/First Amendment?
- Check how Santa Cruz does beach fires
- 10 pm curfew /4 pits? Summer sunsets? Winter is the best time for fires (early sunsets). It seems weird to ban fires for that period
- Can we have fee free days like we do at Muir Woods?
- If there is a reservation system, for summer it could be booked fully in advance...not cool
- Can there be some pits that are “non-reserve” every night?
- Better signs on the sea wall
- Permitting will inevitably create a sense of entitlement that is so counter to the community building of the beach fires
- Need to have a survey of how the burn pits are used and not just misused at the ‘pilot’ program did. This will help to 1) set a smart # of pits and 2) how popular/possible permits would be
- Am I liable if I set a permit & someone uses it (badly) after me?
- How many times does a ranger check the permit for each fire?
- Do you have a “check out” process to release your liability?
- Permit agreement – Leave No Trace
- OCBE host like a camp host
- Educate into a culture shift so that leave no trace is the new go outside to smoke
- Share the rules with folks non-stop because always new people
- Look @ other locales. Maybe we have it pretty good

Group 3 – Law Enforcement/Curfew

- CITE ALL VIOLATORS -> \$ to man fenere.* (*unreadable)
- Enforce the ruler that ar3e already in place
- How will permits make a difference in enforcement i.e -> permittee gets a permit cleans up -> another group comes will I be held accountable for the debris that the second group left behind?
- Statistics – before curfew (hourly) all incidents that occur on the beach – time (published) # of pits – not enough Time – fires 9pm->8pm step in the wrong direction
- Men’s group – changing curfew to 9pm. Does not allocate group to meet – no alcohol/drugs involved
- Sunday afternoons There is a great deal of trash from picnics on the Beach, nothing to do with fires
- 6 citations issued during project period – what citations issued??
- Demographics/SF Residents??

- Sunset mid-summer: 8:48pm we need a 10pm curfew.
- Jan - (72f) Super Bowl was 76 - in SF is warmer than July (52f) – Beach must be open year round to fires
- The Yeashore community is a Jewish community that has gathered on OB for 19 years we gather Saturday night to say Farwell to the Sabbath. It must be after sundown to be a proper Haudalah ritual. With the 9pm curfew we have been unable to have our Jewish Ritual on Ocean Beach. 10pm or 11pm Summer time would be much better.
- How many ppl injured by 3 most common hazardous material?
- Positive Signs?? Education
- As a woman I feel A LOT SAFER with fires at the beach at night. I live 4 blocks from the beach and its very important to me to walk at night at the Beach. Should be later than 9pm – like before the pilot program. Staff would have a lot less fires to snuff out if they could go to 11pm + provide alternative natural place for youth + others.
- Turn over law enforcement to the SFPD – NPS/GGNRA has said it over + over – “We don’t have the resources to administer this beach.” We believe you! Turn it over to City of SF for administration, SFPD for law enforcement and Recology for clean-up.
 - +1
 - YES
 - Yes I agree
 - Get NPS out of OB
- If I get a permit & leave @ 8pm, am I legally liable for anyone else that night?
- No Permits! Lets make it easier to enjoy the beach fires!
- Does the beach belong to the people? Or does it belong to the pigs at the NPS?

Group Four – Maintenance

- No fires – we need a safe clean beach – not a dirty dangerous beach.
- 20+ fire rings, no reservations or permit on site
- Use bigger trash cans
- Signage at top of stair well & bottom @ sand* (*see image)
- No fires on spare the air days (FiAs* system? (*unreadable)
- SF sell firewoods/smores & etc. in parking lot = more eyes & revenue
- Website info./education re: permit process.
- Create/Educate everyone on how to clean up SAFELY hazardous material, since we are always surrounded with it.
- Provide trash-bags for parties to clean up their sites.
- Current pits are designed for burning (receptacle) and not the clean-up process (residue mgmt.)
- More bigger signs
- More trash cans
- Redesign fire pits
- Redesign trash/recycle collection sites
- Trash cans near the firepits
- Make use of cleaning crews from SF community service programs – they know how to handle needles & haz. Waste

Group Five – City Partnership

- Why not 25-30 pits?
- Permit system will lock out our young people
- How do they deal with these issues at other bonfire beach locations? (East coast i.e.)
- No fires: we need a safe clean beach. If the beach is dirty and dangerous we shouldn’t allow fires

- Permit- but no fee.
- There is always gonna be trash – like from picnics – that trash has NOTHING to do with fires
STOPPING FIRES wont crystal clean beach
- 20+ rings
- Permits on site – SF sell firewood & s’mores fixings in parking lot = revenue
- No permits or issue them onsite
- Larger garbage cans
- Pay for parking = LOADS of cash for beach
- Unfairness of problems caused by later burners layed on earlier permit holder
- GGNRA, ignore City of SF concerns on Ocean Beach when it is convenient to GGNRA. NPS did not attend city Govertment hearings.
- Widen area where pits are placed
- Distribute an attractive friendly brochure to educate about the rules
- Have a “check out” sweep by law enforcement/rangers to sign out people who had a pit (time they would have spent anyway at the end of the night)
- Elevate the issue via city-wide education plan to encourage responsible use
- Develop volunteer programs to adopt pits
- Develop an app that lets people reserve a fire pit on the spot. Can upload a picture of cleaned pit to get security deposit back. (ie: like lyft) Tab for transfer of responsibility, if someone takes over fire.
- Creative and engaging signage that engages people. Draws the eye, and educates about how to put out fire (no sand) instead of punitive ones that just gives a laundry list of no’s that people turn away from.
- Strict enforcement – cordon off an approved area for fires – ANY violation rec3eives a \$300.00 citation + mandatory a weekend beach cleanup!
- Tweak ideas & try new things before throwing out or completely revamping program altogether - more rings & more signage before permit system. Which inspires ownership & entitlement instead of community & sharing.
- Check out City of Santa Cruz beach rule signage @ Boardwalk