Pirates Cove Rec Area access

Robinson, Daniel@Coastal to: rhostetter@co.slo.ca.us 09/11/2013 11:07 AM
Cc: "'Nancy Orton (norton@co.slo.ca.us)'"

From: "Robinson, Daniel@Coastal" <Daniel.Robinson@coastal.ca.gov>
To: "rhostetter@co.slo.ca.us" <rhostetter@co.slo.ca.us>
Cc: "'Nancy Orton (norton@co.slo.ca.us)'" <norton@co.slo.ca.us>
History: This message has been forwarded.

Hi Ryan-

Following up on my voicemail, we wanted to have our thoughts on this in writing, since this is a perennially hot topic issue at the Commission.
Please see to it that this is before your Board on October 8th, 2013.

In general, and as you know, the beach is always open 24/7 and thus so should beach access including some nearby parking. Instead of a beach/recreation area/park closure sign, we would be supportive of some type of "No Lifeguard on Duty" signage like "Park Not Patrolled Midnight- 5am," which also could inform users of the trail ruggedness, other dangers, and places them on notice that they are responsible for their actions.

In addition, signage should also indicate that while the County Park facilities are closed at night, the public retains the right to walk from the public road, down the stairway to and along the entire beach 24/7 (at their own risk). The County could certainly put up No Fires, No Camping, No alcohol, etc. signs so that if people on the beach are doing illegal things they could be cited. But if you are on the beach at 2 am watching the stars, that would NOT be considered an illegal activity.

In terms of access, there needs to be some street parking (when the lot is technically closed). From our discussions with the County, we understand public parking is still available and free overnight along Cave Landing Road, and thus this shouldn't be a problem to us.

Lastly, we don't believe that the liability concerns are warranted, as the County could be held liable in most any adverse situation that occurs throughout daily life in unincorporated SLO County. We believe informational warning signs are an appropriate tool, weighed against state requirements for open public access to the beach, to put people on notice to the dangers of a particular area after hours and to warn them that they are responsible for their own well-being.

Hope this helps and thanks for coordinating with us on this.
Daniel