

APCD_slcleanair

From: Jenny West <threelilblessings@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2022 5:28 PM
To: boardclerk@slcleanair.org
Subject: [EXT]Please continue with dust mitigation!

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Hello. My name is Jenny West. As a resident of the Arroyo Grande Mesa I am very concerned about any use of the Oceano dunes for off-road vehicles. My family has owned a home near Highway One for over 7 years. For two of those years we had moved out of the area, but held onto our house as a rental. During part of that time the dunes were closed to off-road vehicles (ORVs).

Upon returning to our residence we noticed a positive outcome. There was a noticeable decrease of dust blowing in the air, as well as newly vegetated hillsides, that were once sparse and open to wind erosion. This to us served as evidence that the closure had already started to help with the revegetation of the dunes and lead to a decrease in particulate matter that was blowing in the air. For that time my family was able to exercise outdoors without the concern of dust from ORVs.

Although there was a recent study (Scripps) that was funded by the State Park, who find it in their best interest to prove otherwise, my family can easily observe that the closure has had a positive effect environmentally. Having three children and being active outdoors, my family feels threatened by any air quality concerns on the Mesa due to the returned use of ORVs.

Many previous environmental studies have shown that with time revegetation can help decrease particulate matter in the air caused by vehicle use. (Coastal sand dunes and dune vegetation: Restoration, erosion, and storm protection December 2014 Shore and Beach 82(4):5-12)

It takes years for vehicles to grind sand into an unnaturally fine powder, that once inhaled never exits the body. Likewise, it will require a number of years and patience for revegetation to reverse the effects that the ORVs have had on the dunes. But as shown in other areas impacted similarly, recovery is possible when full closures allow for environmental healing over time. (Fuel to Burn: The Climate and Public Health Implications of Off-road Vehicle Pollution in California Principle authors: Chris Kassar and Paul Spitler May 2008 Layout & Design: Anna Mirocha)

In addition to enjoying clean air to breath, I also enjoy safely walking on the beach. I was saddened to see the return of vehicles to Oceano Beach recently. On one particular walk my friend and I had to jump out of the way several times to avoid being hit by reckless drivers on the beach. It is more the rule than the exception that these vehicles speed and endanger pedestrians.

Unfortunately, many children are the victims of these careless off-roaders, as noted by doctor Larry Foreman and many other local medical experts. (ATV Industry Straddles Safety Debate as Off-Road Deaths Mount By Myron Levin on March 23, 2010)Over 10,000 people have been killed using ORVs, and countless others injured. This argument alone should cause any logical person to acknowledge the wasteful sacrifice of life and limb to this irresponsible and selfish past time.

Some may argue that it is their right to operate ORVs on our California dunes. However, I feel that by doing so, the right to health of residents living nearby are infringed upon. The activity itself is dangerous and unnecessary. Conversely, living and breathing fresh air is vital for us all.

The impact of this activity environmentally is a hazard to everyone and all living things. Numerous studies have provided evidence globally of the dangers to air quality, water quality, living organisms and their ecosystems by ORVs. As evidenced by the loss of safe habitat to our local animals and birds, such as the snowy plovers, our local Oceano area has been attacked by ORVs long enough. (DustBusters reduce pollution, wind erosion: Though difficult to achieve, revegetation is best way to stabilize soil D Grantz, D Vaughn, R Farber, Bong Kim, Tony VanCuren, Rich Campbell, David Bainbridge, Tom Zink California Agriculture 52 (4), 8-13, 1998)

In terms of financial responsibility, as evidenced by Cal Poly professor Parrish Patel in a significant study-the recent ban on ORVs to the Oceano Dunes had no significant financial impact to our community. In fact, unpaid medical costs were seen to decrease. The State Park keeps its revenue for the State. Very little of that money is funneled back into our local community. Yet, the impact of garbage strewn across our beaches after every major weekend when ORV users trash our beach leaves a cost financially and environmentally to our local Central Coast community to clean up. (A New Take, Kasey Bubnash, New Times SLO, 2021)

The fragile habitat of the Oceano Dunes is unique and has been pummeled by decades of over use of off-road vehicles. The air quality is getting worse and worse for the poor communities that circle the dunes. Guadalupe and Oceano are underprivileged communities on the coast who do not have the resources to fight for things like good air quality. And unfortunately the groups that are fighting to keep the dunes open are not even from the local community. "The friends of Oceano Dunes" group is based out of Clovis and other central valley communities that come here, destroy our habitat and leave without feeling the devastating impact.

The numerous critical factors that oppose the use of the Dunes in any capacity for ORVs far outweigh the few weakly founded arguments in favor of this. Therefore, I strongly urge you to take every possible step to fully closing our precious Oceano Dunes to any and all ORV activity. Environmentally, ecologically, medically and economically this is the only feasible solution.

Links/Sources:

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.newtimeslo.com%2Fsanluisobispo%2Fapcd-questions-accuracy-of-scripps-study-on-dust-at-oceano-dunes%2FContent%3Foid%3D10151331&data=05%7C01%7Capcd_slcleanair%40co.slo.ca.us%7C612e370391464519e34708daa98d25b0%7C84c3c7747fdf40e2a59027b2e70f8126%7C0%7C0%7C638008720974582414%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&msdata=uMIAYr7xwpHRkjDHDFmhRnQkGeMx7CkhZC44oR5dOr0%3D&reserved=0

(PDF) Coastal sand dunes and dune vegetation: Restoration, erosion, and storm protection

How Pollution From A California State Park Is Putting A Coastal Town's Health At Risk | Center for Health Journalism

reduction of particulate matter revegetation - Google Scholar

Coronavirus: Did Oceano Dunes closure hurt SLO County economy? | San Luis Obispo Tribune

Environmental and Social Effects of ATVs and ORVs: An Annotated Bibliography and Research Assessment Patricia A. Stokowski, Ph.D. and Christopher B. LaPointe School of Natural Resources 305 Aiken Center University of Vermont Burlington, VT 05405 Tel: 802-656-3093
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Fuel to Burn:

The Climate and Public Health Implications of Off-road Vehicle Pollution in California Principle authors: Chris Kassir and Paul Spitler May 2008