

News Release



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State and County Partnership

Old Malibu Pier to Get New Life

For years the historic Malibu Pier has had an open and closed existence, yielding to the relentless poundings Mother Nature invoked against the wooden pier and its pilings.

But the old, 780-foot pier is expected to see new life as the result of an infusion of state and Los Angeles County funds for needed repairs and a recently signed agreement between State Parks and a Malibu partnership to run the pier's concessions, California State Park officials announced today.

The concessionaire, Malibu Pier Partners, is a partnership formed in part by Jefferson Wagner, longtime owner of a nearby Malibu surf shop. Plans include sport fishing, cafes, a bait shop, water-sport rentals and a refurbished, up-scale restaurant at the Pacific Coast Highway end of the pier. Also planned is a surfing museum, with vintage boards and other memorabilia from the 1940s and 1950s.

"We are excited to bring Malibu Pier back to life," said California State Parks Acting Director Ruth Coleman. "This concession will provide high-quality services while re-creating the Southern California beach atmosphere of the 1940's."

State Park Superintendent Hayden W. Sohm of the Malibu district, added, "We're pretty excited about it. The proposal reflects a strong commitment to the historic integrity of the Malibu Pier and provides an exciting destination for our park visitors."

The state, Los Angeles County, and the City of Malibu are contributing \$6 million for repairs that will include all-new decking, railings and structural bracing. Plans also call for the revamping of twin buildings at the ocean end of the pier, with porthole windows, "ship lap siding" and other original elements left intact. The completion of this project would have been very difficult without the infusion of local park bond money from Los Angeles County and the City of Malibu.

The pier, commissioned in the early 1900s by a local businessman as a shipping wharf for hides and grains produced in the area, has enjoyed a colorful and useful past, punctuated periodically by closings brought on by ferocious storms that trashed the pier.

The pier was opened to the public in 1934, and during World War II, the pier was used by the Coast Guard as a lookout post. A storm in 1942, and again in 1983 when the pier was under State Parks ownership, demolished most of the pier. Soon after it reopened, State Parks named it a historic point of interest. But the devastating storms that plagued the pier struck again in 1993 and 1994. It was closed in 1995.

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