



California Department of Parks and Recreation
 District Office
 3030 Avenida Del Presidente
 San Clemente, CA 92672



california state parks

DOHENY STATE BEACH GENERAL PLAN

DOHENY STATE BEACH Calendar of Events

GENERAL PLAN PROCESS AT A GLANCE

FALL 2002	WINTER 2003	SPRING/SUMMER 2003	FALL 2003	SPRING 2004
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Gathering Fieldwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of Preparation of EIR Summarize Existing Conditions PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP #1 & EIR Scoping Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss Opportunities and Constraints and Develop General Plan Alternatives PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP #2 Prepare Draft General Plan & EIR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP #3 Public Review of Draft General Plan & EIR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final General Plan & EIR Agency Approval

PARTICIPATION IS THE KEY TO A GREAT PLAN!

Contact Information

If you are not currently on our mailing list and would like to receive the newsletter and notice about future workshops, or wish to send written comments, please contact us at:

Dianna Martinez-Lilly
 California Department of Parks and Recreation
 Southern Service Center
 8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270
 San Diego, CA 92108
 619.278.3777
 (for questions or comments about the General Plan)

For general information about park use (e.g. hours, reservations), please call: 949-496-6172

Visit Our Website
www.parks.ca.gov

Click on "General Plans" under Related Links



Printed on recycled paper.

Design by



PARTNERS IN PLANNING

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is updating the General Plan for Doheny State Beach – and we'd like you to be a part of this effort! Working together with the community and park visitors, we'll develop a long-term vision for the future of Doheny State Beach and identify desired improvements. The General Plan update will also provide guidelines for protecting the park's natural resources and recommendations for enhancing the recreational and educational activities that the park offers.

From surveys conducted in the past, we know that our beach, picnic areas, campground, visitor center, and interpretive programs are very much enjoyed by our visitors. We also know that water quality is an ongoing concern, and that many of you have ideas for improving park facilities and operations.

Your participation in the planning process will help us explore a range of community and visitor suggestions for improving the park. Please take some time to share your ideas. You can start by filling out the enclosed survey and attending our first Public Planning Workshop on Tuesday, March 25, 2003. We look forward to seeing you!

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE?

Stay Informed: Two upcoming newsletters will be published to keep you informed about progress on the Doheny State Beach General Plan and further opportunities for you to participate. See the back page for information on how to get on our mailing list if you did not receive this by mail.

Fill Out the Survey: The enclosed survey will help us understand your concerns and ideas for improvements. Topics may include recreational activities, resource protection, facility improvements, and educational and interpretive programs, just to name a few. Tell us what you like about the park, what is missing, or what could work better! Please mail the survey back by April 18, 2003. If you prefer to fill it out online, please log onto our Web link at <http://www.edaw.com/survey/takesurvey.asp?surveyid=61>.

Attend the Public Planning Workshops: The first workshop is on March 25 at the Dana Point Community Center. The workshop will provide a forum to discuss the survey topics and environmental conditions in the park and the surrounding area, and to get your suggestions on park enhancements. It will also serve as the scoping meeting for the accompanying programmatic Environmental Impact Report that will be prepared. Early public participation is essential to help us identify key issues to be considered during the planning process. So please join us!



PUBLIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

Tuesday, March 25, 2003
 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
 Dana Point Community Center
 34052 Del Obispo Street
 Dana Point, California

february 2003

Doheny State Beach

A Place to Play, Learn and Relax in Nature

Doheny State Beach, adjacent to Dana Point Harbor in the City of Dana Point, has approximately 1.2 miles of shoreline. San Juan Creek flows through the park to the ocean and a small estuary is located within the park at the mouth of the river. The offshore area lies within the Dana Point Marine Life Refuge.

Visitor Facilities

The park is divided into three areas: north of the creek is a day-use picnic area with parking for about 700 cars, large turf areas, picnic tables, restrooms, showers, beach, and the main lifeguard tower. A visitor center with aquariums and a simulated tide pool, administrative offices, and a maintenance area are also located here. A campground with 122 spaces for tent or RV camping is just south of the creek. Farther south is another day-use beach area with approximately 450 parking spaces, two restroom buildings, chemical toilets, beach showers, fire rings and seasonal lifeguard stations.



Park Ecology: Essential Wildlife Habitats

Although Doheny State Beach contains relatively small areas of natural vegetation, the park provides habitat for a variety of terrestrial wildlife, including amphibians, reptiles, insects, birds and mammals. Some 200 terrestrial wildlife species have been identified within the park.

Four wetland / riparian plant communities occur within the park: coastal brackish marsh, southern willow scrub, southern sycamore riparian woodland, and mule fat scrub. These four communities are considered rare and sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Game.

Because few natural areas exist nearby, the park's diverse habitats are essential to support the common and sensitive species that occur there. Despite urban encroachment, Doheny State Beach is still a thriving ecosystem. With the destruction of many of Southern California's native habitats, places like Doheny are essential for the

survival of many plant and wildlife species. Although only a few areas in the park support natural populations of native vegetation (San Juan Creek, North Creek restoration project and the butterfly garden), they are protected and maintained by park staff as native habitat.

Park Activities

Beach activities, picnics, and camping remain the park's primary public attractions. Beach-oriented recreational activities include swimming, surfing, windsurfing, fishing, diving, volleyball and horseshoes. An active year-round interpretive program also offers community education and visitor activities. The interpretive program, highlighted by the park's tide pool program, provides an introduction to marine ecology and intertidal habitats. A living re-creation of a tide pool in the visitor center is populated with locally collected species and supplemented by five aquariums, each with a different habitat and fish found in local waters. The center also features a natural history museum of local wildlife.



Special Events

Special events occur throughout the year, many in conjunction with Dana Point Harbor activities, such as the Festival of Whales in March and local events such as fun runs, Earth Day, and holiday celebrations. Special events include the Doheny Blues Festival in May and Doheny Days Music Festival in September. Surf contests, a "woodie" car show, outrigger canoe race and Native American celebrations are also held at the park.

General Plan Issues

The earliest park facilities were developed in the mid-1930s. The northern day-use area was significantly upgraded in 1970. The existing Resource Management Plan and General Development Plan for Doheny State Beach was adopted in 1972 and amended in 1982.

Doheny State Beach is classified by the California Department of Parks and Recreation as a State Recreation Unit

(per Section 5019.56 of the California Public Resources Code). Under this classification, State Beaches are defined as "consisting of areas with frontage on the ocean or bays designed to provide swimming, boating, fishing, and other beach-oriented recreational activities." While camping is a permitted activity at State Beaches, "improvements to provide for urban or indoor, formalized recreational activities are normally not permitted."

Regional Planning Influences

Doheny State Beach is closely linked to Dana Point, the harbor and Orange County's suburban communities. Regional land use issues, coastal access, traffic, circulation, natural and cultural resources, water quality, public safety and local tourism are key topics that the General Plan process will consider.

Water Quality

Doheny State Beach is located at the mouth of the 176 square mile San Juan Creek watershed. Water pollution from upstream sources is a major concern to park staff and resulted in seven temporary beach closures (each lasting from two to seven days) in 2001. The reported source of contaminants in each case was upstream sewer lines. Warning signs were also posted year-round at North Beach and the San Juan Creek mouth in 2001 because of water quality concerns.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report on existing water quality is included in the San Juan Creek Watershed Management Study. The study found that water quality problems also are attributable to stormwater runoff from urbanized areas, with San Juan Creek receiving urban runoff primarily from the city of San Juan Capistrano.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report, urban runoff contaminants include roadway oil and grease; illegal dumping of petroleum products; pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers from golf courses, parks and residential neighborhoods. Urban runoff may contain high bacterial counts and viruses, can carry garbage that litters the beaches, and can kill or injure marine life. A cooperative regional effort is needed to solve water quality problems at Doheny Beach.

Population Growth

Doheny State Beach draws visitors from local neighborhoods and the larger region. Orange County's population has increased steadily since Doheny State Beach first became a park in 1931. In 1930, 119,000 people lived in Orange County. By 1970, the population had grown to 1.4 million. There were 1.9 million residents in 1980 and by 2000, the total had reached 2.8 million – almost double the 1970 population.



And this growth is expected to continue. By 2020, Orange County's population is projected to reach nearly 3.3 million. The challenge of the General Plan update will be to determine how best to prepare for the increase in demand for visitor access and services, while still preserving the natural resources that make Doheny State Beach so special. We look forward to hearing your ideas.

How Did Doheny State Beach Get its Name?

Doheny is more than just the name of a surf spot memorialized in the Beach Boys hit Surfin' USA. The park is named after the family who donated the land to the State of California in 1931.

Edward L. Doheny – who was later to become California's first oil baron – was an unsuccessful silver miner living at a boarding house in downtown Los Angeles when he noticed an old wagon hauling "brea" (Spanish for "pitch") and realized its potential as a cheap substitute for coal. In 1893, he developed the first oil well at the La Brea Tar Pits. From these humble beginnings, Doheny created a vast oil empire in Southern California and Mexico.

During the 1920s, his son Edward L. (Ned) Doheny, Jr. began development of 1,000 acres in the Capistrano Beach area and built several large residences and three local landmarks: Capistrano Beach Club, a pier and a gazebo. The son died in 1929 in a tragic shooting at the home his father had built for him, the Greystone Mansion in Beverly Hills. The father's health suffered from events of the 1920s, and he died in 1935.

His wife Carrie Estelle Doheny shared the family fortune to endow libraries at the University of Southern California and St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, and created the Estelle Doheny Eye Foundation at St. Vincent's Hospital. The Dohenys built two other surviving LA landmarks, Doheny Mansion on Chester Place south of downtown and St. Vincent's Church on Figueroa St. (Reference: Albert Greenstein 1999, Historical Society of Southern California at www.socalhistory.org)