



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Steve McGrath, Harbor Manager
DATE: April 23, 2013
SUBJECT: Designation of Avila Beach as a Bird Sanctuary; Recommend Support

Recommendation / Proposed Motion

- Motion: Given that the designation of Avila Beach as a bird sanctuary adds no additional regulatory impacts to the District, requires no initial or ongoing financial support from the District, and may have positive impacts for the community, direct staff to draft a letter of support for designation of Avila Beach as a bird sanctuary, for signature by the President

Policy Implications

None known at this time.

Fiscal Implications / Budget Status

None at this time.

Alternatives Considered

The following actions were considered but are not recommended at this time:

- None at this time.

Discussion

Avila resident Shirley Goetz addressed this Commission on March 26, 2013, requesting the opportunity to seek the support of the Commission for her goal of designating Avila Beach as a bird sanctuary. On March 12, Ms. Goetz received the recommendation of the Avila Valley Advisory Council for the designation.

The proposed boundary of the Avila Beach Bird Sanctuary (ABBS) is the area of the Avila Beach Specific Plan, which is the boundary of the Avila Beach Community Services District:



The Planning Area is the area within the Avila Beach Community Services District boundary.

Staff posed a series of questions to Ms. Goetz; her answers are detailed below.

What does 'bird sanctuary' mean?

It's a symbolic designation meaning that multiple bird species can be observed in their natural habitat and the area is valued as such by the community.

What is the goal?

To define Avila's future as an eco-friendly environment and distance it from the still present stigma as an oil spill clean-up site. It would benefit Avila's future by showing the eco systems have returned to health and are thriving.

Why do you want the support of the Harbor District?

I am seeking additional support and approval from the Avila Beach area before the proposal goes before the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

Who gets to designate a bird sanctuary?

The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

What are the boundaries of the bird sanctuary?

The Avila Beach specific plan area map.

The boundaries in the AB Specific plan are those of the Community Services District.

Does the CSD support this proposal?

Pete Kelley and Shannah Richards both support the proposal but I have yet to schedule an official presentation to them. AVAC has voted in support.

What are the effects of designation?

No change in existing statutes. The designation of Bird Sanctuary would attract birders and nature tourists.

What are the implicit or explicit regulations?

State Fish and Wildlife regs and the federal US Migratory Bird Treaty Act remain the controlling authorities.

Are there implementation costs and if so how will those be borne?

Only the cost is signage at the 2 key entrances to Avila Beach. The District is welcome to contribute.

Are there ongoing costs and, if so, how will those be borne?

No ongoing costs are foreseen.

The proposed ABBS overlays District responsibilities potentially on the beach, and in the parking lot, which includes a portion of the drainage swale at the north edge of the parking lot.

Due to the stated minimal impact on District facilities, the lack of additional regulatory or financial burden to the District, staff recommends that this Commission forward to the Board of Supervisors a letter of support for designation of Avila Beach as a bird sanctuary. Should an ordinance come before the Board of Supervisors for adoption, staff will review that ordinance for potential impacts to the District and return to this Commission if necessary.