



News Release

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San Luis Obispo County Superior Court mandates the California Coastal Commission vacate its decision to close the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area.

Today, Friends of Oceano Dunes scored a huge victory for OHV recreation at Oceano Dunes SVRA. The San Luis Obispo County Superior Court ruled that the California Coastal Commission does not have the authority under state law to ban all OHV at Oceano Dunes.

The Court's ruling covered four lawsuits – three brought by Friends of Oceano Dunes, and one by EcoLogic Partners.

The Court made clear that if the Coastal Commission wants to attempt to ban OHV recreation at the park, it must convince San Luis Obispo County to amend its local coastal plan or compel the State Legislature to change the County's local coastal plan.

Friends argued that the local coastal plan only authorizes the County, not the Coastal Commission, to close the park, and even then, the closure may only be temporary. The Court agreed with that analysis and agreed that the Commission's effort to ban OHV unlawfully attempted to amend the County's plan in violation of the Coastal Act.

The Court also ruled in favor of Friends' argument that the Commission failed to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, because it failed to do a proper traffic impact analysis when it decided to close Pier Avenue as a vehicle access point to the beach.

As a result, the Court overturned the Coastal Commission's March 2021 amendment to the permit that attempted to end all OHV at Oceano Dunes.

Thus, the OHV ban will NOT go into effect, and Pier Avenue beach access will NOT be closed!

This court victory also protects jobs and local businesses. A recent study showed that Oceano Dunes visitors from outside San Luis Obispo County generated a total economic impact of over \$500 million in 2019.

Friends' Board of Directors have made clear that Friends will continue to pursue all legal remedies to protect beach driving, camping and OHV recreation at Oceano Dunes SVRA the way it has been occurring for the last 100 years.

Friends of Oceano Dunes is a 501(C)(3) California not-for-profit corporation expressly created in 2001 to preserve camping and off-highway vehicle recreation at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area (ODSVRA). Friends is a grass root volunteer organization which represents approximately 28,000 members and users of the Oceano Dunes SVRA. www.oceanodunes.org

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