



TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: July 1, 2013

AGENDA OF: July 15, 2013
DEPARTMENT: Public Works
SUBJECT: Cowell Beach / Update

RECOMMENDATION: For Information Only

BACKGROUND: Cowell's Beach (Cowell's) is one of the most popular beaches in Santa Cruz; however, over the last several years it has frequently been posted as "unsafe" due to high bacteria concentrations in the near shore waters. There are a number of potential sources of the high bacterial concentrations at the beach:

As soon as we determine what might help to improve the beach we move on it as quickly as possible. The current work schedule to improve Cowell Beach is as follows:

1. Fix gutter seep on Pacific that is still "hot" by diverting to sanitary sewer. Work is scheduled to be performed after Labor Day as this is a high pedestrian traffic location. Work will be completed by September 30th. To eliminate impacts from this gutter seep the outlet from the catch basin that this gutter drains to is now plugged so that gutter flow is contained. We will keep this catch basin plugged for the rest of the summer. We have inspected all of the properties in this area and have found no additional private sewer lateral problems.
2. Storm drain manhole at end of Bay Street has had high bacterial levels. We have plugged the outlet from that manhole and are following up with more testing including human marker testing. The manhole will remain plugged for the rest of the summer.
3. Having County and Stanford University perform human marker testing at 10 locations throughout the summer. Locations include Cowell's Beach, several manholes on Neary to Cowell's pipeline and several locations in Neary Lagoon.
4. We are submitting an application for installing a gate to shut off Neary Lagoon from the beach. We will need Coastal, Fish and Game, railroad permissions and maybe the Army Corps of Engineers. We hope to install in October.

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