



January 8, 2020

Mr. Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish & Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

SUBJECT: Surf Fishing at Surf Beach, Lompoc, Ca

Dear Mr. Bonham:

This letter is being sent to you to by the City of Lompoc, to formally request a minor modification to the area of Surf Beach known as the Vandenberg Marine Preserve. This Preserve is located adjacent to Vandenberg Air Force Base, which itself is located directly adjacent to the City of Lompoc.

From the time of the earliest inhabitants, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, to many generations of settlers thereafter, and to the citizens of Lompoc (established in 1888), Surf Beach has been used as a resource by many. Not only was the beach used for fishing to provide food to eat for their families, fishing was also enjoyed by many for its simple enjoyment and relaxation.

The opportunity to fish at Surf Beach was available until 2007, when the Vandenberg Marine Preserve was created. This preservation area, encompassing approximately 33 square miles of marine protection, has had a detrimental impact on the City of Lompoc and its surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the creation of the Preserve removed any opportunity for fishing from the beach, located at what is known as Surf Beach. As mentioned earlier, this new preserve designation, implemented with little to no true input from the citizens or City of Lompoc, has placed a great hardship upon the City, in terms of family subsistence, as well as creating a negative financial impact on the City of Lompoc due to a reduction in tourism related revenues.

The City of Lompoc is a regionally isolated community, and is also recognized as a disadvantaged community by the State of California. The residents of the City and surrounding areas are limited in many areas including recreational activities, particularly those offered at a low or no-cost level of participation. Surf Beach fishing is one of the activities that was eliminated by the creation of the marine preserve.

The City's formal request for consideration by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife is a small modification to the existing marine preserve restrictions. This request would be to allow fishing on the one-half mile stretch of beach known as Surf Beach. The City sees this modification as a minor request considering that the entire preserve is approximately 33 square miles., However small, the modification would allow for families to once again fish for subsistence, and/or provide a low cost/no-cost recreational alternative for the residents of Lompoc and the surrounding area.

Mr. Charlton H. Bonham, Director
January 8, 2020
Page 2 of 2

The City's belief is that there will be, on average, no more than three or four individuals fishing at any given time. This level of 'take' from the Preserve should pose no harm to the Preserve as the act of fishing has been going on for centuries, but at least from the 1800's when Lompoc was settled, with no true harm to the volume of marine life.

Should the Department of Fish & Wildlife decide to modify the restrictions to allow surf fishing, but impose a limit on the number of fish that could be caught by a single, licensed individual, the City of Lompoc requests that a minimum of four (4) fish caught per day be allowed, such that families using fishing for subsistence can survive on the limit.

The City is requesting a response from the Department of Fish & Wildlife by February 28, 2020, such that there will be a modification to the existing marine preserve restrictions, or a response informing the City of Lompoc on the proper procedures to follow to request a modification.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jim Throop
City Manager

Cc: Gavin Newsom, Governor
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary of Natural Resources
Jenelle Osborne, Mayor
Dirk Starbuck, Mayor Pro-tem
Victor Vega, Council Member
Jim Mosby, Council Member
Gilda Cordova, Council Member