



Case Study: Surfers Point Managed Retreat Project

The Surfers Point Managed Shoreline Retreat Project involved the relocation of a bike path and parking lot along 1,800 feet of shoreline in City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County. The transportation assets affected by the project include a damaged bike path, a 223-space parking lot for the Ventura County Fairgrounds, and Shoreline Drive. Surfers Point is a beach and popular surf break at mouth of the Ventura River.

The relocation project was required because the beach experienced sixty feet of erosion over a 20 year period, which caused damage to the old bike path and parking lot. Access to the beach was substantially threatened by ongoing erosion of the beachfront and damage to the bike path and parking lot. While the environmental impact report for the project did analyze sea-level change at the project site, much of the damage to the beach was caused by the loss of natural sediment transport from the Ventura River caused by the Matilija Dam (the state is also working on removing this dam and restoring the river). The project involved facilities under different agency jurisdiction; the bike path was within an easement under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the parking lot and Shoreline Drive are owned and maintained by the County Fairgrounds.

The project involved relocating the bike path and parking lot 60 feet inland. By relocating these facilities the County was able to avoid developing a hard armoring project to protect the parking lot, which would have further eroded the beach and impacted the surf break. Through the project the County also removed existing

armoring and restored the eroded beach, which is a popular recreation destination.

The project was initiated in 1995 when the California Coastal Conservancy convened a working group with representatives from the City of Ventura, the County Fairgrounds, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Coastal Commission, the Ventura Chapter of Surfrider Foundation, and other interested parties. The working group was disbanded in 1996 when the group could not reach consensus on a managed retreat strategy. A second working group formed in 2001 and was able to agree on a "managed retreat" project that would relocate the bike path and parking lot 60 feet further inland and remove existing hard armoring. In the summer of 2005, the California Coastal Commission approved a permit for a renourishment project that included a five-year plan for beach replenishment at Surfer's Point. The California Coastal Conservancy provided \$1.5 million in funding for the City of Ventura to implement the Surfers Point Managed Shoreline Retreat Project. Other sources of funding include \$1.5 million from FHWA under the Transportation Enhancements program authorized by SAFETEA-LU, \$172,500 from the City of Ventura, and \$500,000 from the Ocean Protection Council.

On October 8, 2010, a construction crew began work on the project, removing trees and concrete barriers around the old bike path. On July 14, 2011, Phase One of the project was completed. Phase I included:

- removing half of the existing damaged parking lot,
- widening the beach by 60 feet,





- burying 26,000 tons of small cobblestones along the beach to provide erosion protection and importing 18,000 tons of new sand to cover the cobblestones,
- shortening Shoreline Drive and constructing a new cul-de-sac 1000 feet east of the existing cul-de-sac,
- relocating the bike path 80 feet inland and installing new path lighting,
- constructing a new inland parking area using permeable pavement,
- installing a new stormwater system, including a grass bioswale along the bikepath and a stormwater filtration system to treat runoff before discharge to Ventura River Estuary.

Construction costs for Phase I were \$1.7 million. Formal plans for Phase II of the project have not yet been announced, but sand dune restoration and stabilization work was undertaken in late 2012.

Publication Date:

January 2015

For More Information:

<http://surferspoint.org/>

Resources:

http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/initiatives/shoreline_ppr_retreat.html

http://scc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/sccbb/2008/0806/0806Board18_Surfers_Point_Ex4.pdf

http://www.resources.ca.gov/ocean/CIAP/Final_CIAP_Plan_Appendix_B_State.pdf

Prepared by the Georgetown Climate Center under cooperative agreement with the Federal Highway Administration.

